

**Open and Shut:
Artists' Doors**

Teacher Curriculum Guide

**Kidspace at MASS MoCA
Spring 2001**

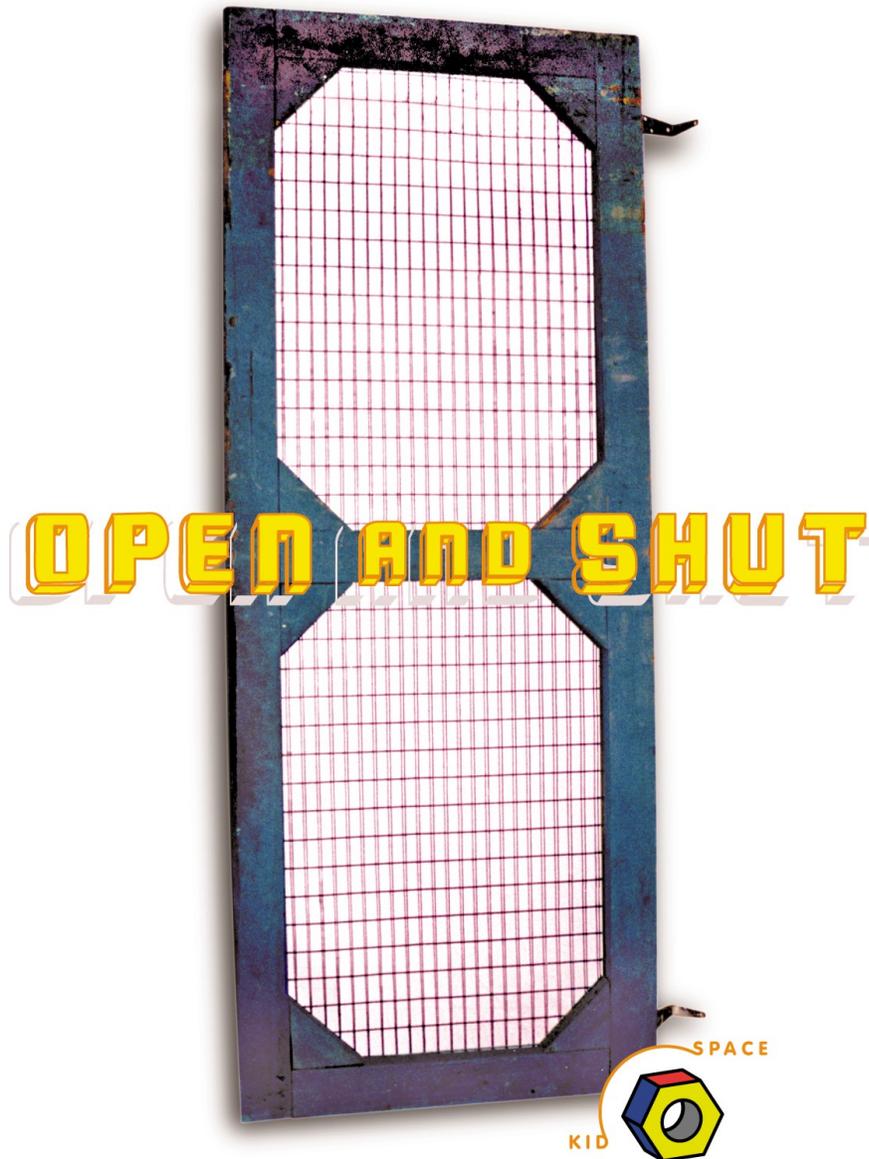


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STAGE 1: *INSPIRATION*

Each of these activities is designed to be a relatively short, introductory exercise that will inspire you and your students to think creatively about something we encounter every day but rarely stop to consider—doors. These activities should involve a minimum of preparation and materials on your part. Most important, they should be fun, and will start your students on their way to being careful observers of the spaces in which they live.

§ **About the Artists**

This activity is designed to introduce your students to the type of artwork and planning that six artists did for the spring 2001 exhibition in Kidspace. These activities will give your students an idea of the different ways of thinking that go into the beginning stages of a project such as *Open and Shut: Artists' Doors*.

§ *Doors Remembered*

This activity is a memory exercise and a way to get your students thinking about what specific features of a door tell us about the location and/or function of that door.

§ *Take a Closer Look*

This lesson includes suggestions for activities that will inspire your students to look more closely for and at doors—both in the physical spaces around them and/or in the books they read, the films they watch, and the music they hear. The more students are on the lookout for doors, the more they will realize just how many different kinds of doors (and stories behind—or in front of—those doors) exist. And hopefully, looking for and at doors will inspire your students to notice many other things about their surroundings as well.

§ *Beyond the Frame: Mood and Metaphor*

In this activity students will explore how the design or look of a door can give us hints about what lies on the other side of its frame, as well as affect our mood and method of approaching the door. Older students will also discuss how in language and in art, doorways are commonly used as metaphors for ideas about “passage” or “access” to some object, feeling, experience, or place that is beyond its physical, literal frame.

÷ § **Sizing It Up**

An important part of making any sculpture is figuring out what materials to use and how big the artwork should be. In this activity, students will use their math skills to make “guesstimates,” measurements, solve basic geometry problems, and even determine averages.

§ Act Like a Door

In this activity, your students will have a chance to exercise their dramatic talents by performing pantomimes about doors.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Grades K-5

Part 1: Discussion

Begin by telling your students that in the spring of 2001 Kidspace featured large-scale sculptures that were made especially for this exhibition by six different artists. These artists responded to a “Call for Proposals” that Kidspace wrote by sending in ideas for sculptures based on the theme of doors. Many artists submitted drawings and written descriptions of their ideas, and six were chosen to be in the show.

Materials:

- *Thinking About Doors* sheets (provided by Kidspace)
- pencils or crayons

Teacher preparation

Choose one (or more if you'd like) of the *Thinking About Doors* sheets and photocopy enough for the entire class.

Part 2: Action

- 1) Give each student a copy of the *Thinking About Doors* sheet(s) that you have chosen. Read it over together.
- 2) Your students can then work independently or with partners on the worksheet. (**Younger grades** might work together as a class.) Encourage students to share their ideas with one another; there are no “right” answers.
- 3) When your students are finished, discuss as a class your students’ answers, and see what other ideas arise as a result of the class discussion.

Part 3: Reflection

What new ideas do your students have about the inclusion of doors in art? Review with your students what doors can be made of, where they can be placed, what their functions can be, what they can make us think about.

DOORS REMEMBERED

Grades K-5

Part 1: Discussion

1. Ask your students what they can remember about the doors they come into contact with every day (i.e. the front door to their house, the door to the bus, the refrigerator door, or the door to the supermarket). What details can they remember about these doors? Can they recall how they look, sound, or feel to open and close? Can they remember what the handles, doorknobs, hinges, and locks look like?

2. Test your students' memories by picking a specific door in your school that they all know and see if they can tell you:

- the color, shape, and size of the door
- the sound the door makes when it's opened
- if it's easy or difficult to open
- what else the door has on it: doorknobs, locks, numbers, molding, pictures, etc.

If you'd like, ask your students to try and imagine some doors they might **not have seen** before, like the door to a jail cell, an airplane, or the White House. Can they guess what these doors look like? (color, shape, etc.)

You might draw pictures or make a list on the blackboard as your students describe the doors, **or have them make a list in their workbooks**, of the ideas and descriptions that they generate.

You could also play a game of "20 Questions." Think of a door either that your students already know or know of, and have them ask yes/no questions to figure

Materials:

- paper or student workbooks/sketchpads
- crayons, pencils, or markers
- *Door Attributes* sheet (provided by Kidspac)

Teacher preparation

Cut up the list of "door attributes" on the sheet provided by Kidspac, and put the slips in a hat or bowl. (You may need to make a copy so that there are enough attributes to go around—it's ok if more than one student has the same attribute.)

out where the door is or what kind of door it is. (E.g.: Is the door red? What does it sound like around that door? Does this door let animals or people in? Is this a door to a house or to a public building?)

Part 2: Action

1. Ask each student to draw one “door attribute” from the hat.
2. Now ask each student to think about a real door (one they know or know of) that has the attribute they selected. Then have them draw a picture on a sheet of paper or in their sketchpad of a door that has the “door attribute” they selected. (E.g.: if they selected “hinges on bottom,” they might draw an oven door. If they selected “round,” they might draw a submarine door. They should **not** write the words describing the attribute on their picture.)
3. Remind your students to include as many features as possible (in addition to the one attribute they already selected) that distinguish this door, including its color, shape, size, and any other special features it has.
4. Then have students trade pictures or put them up at the front of the room so that other students can try to guess where this door is, where it leads, and/or what kind of door it is.
5. Make sure students articulate what clue they are responding to, when making their guesses. (For example, a front door might be BIG and have a street number or knocker on it, a cupboard door might be MADE OF GLASS and reveal shelves and foodstuffs, a garage door might HAVE A BIG HANDLE and a horizontal orientation.)

Part 3: Reflection

Ask your students what doors “tell” us, and how they do so? What are some of the things that a door says to us? (I am the entrance to a house. I am the entrance to a very clean house. I am the entrance to a house for animals. I am the entrance to a store, an office.) For a challenge: ask students to imagine how an artist could use a door in a work of art.

For Fun:

Ask students to think of their own door attributes to put in the hat. Repeat the activity with the new attributes, or challenge students by having them draw 2 or 3 attributes from the hat and then draw a door with ALL those features.

DOOR ATTRIBUTES

BIG

MADE OF GLASS

SMALL

UP HIGH

ROUND

DOWN LOW

HAS A WINDOW IN IT

LOTS OF LOCKS

**ONE OF MANY
ON IT**

HAS NUMBERS or WRITING

HINGES ON TOP

HAS A BIG HANDLE

HINGES ON BOTTOM

DOESN'T HAVE A HANDLE

THICK AND HEAVY

CAN'T BE LOCKED

SWINGS

REVOLVES

TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

Grades K-2

Part 1: Discussion

- 1) Start by looking at the Image sheet together as a class. (Option: You might also have each student make their own image sheet by cutting out a variety of different and unusual doors from magazines, etc. Have the students then glue them on sheet as a reference source.)
 - 2) Referring to the image sheets, discuss the different types of doors and their many different functions.
 - 3) What shapes, sizes, special features, etc. do your students see?
- What do all the doors have in common?
 - What is something each door has that is unique?
 - What kind of door is it? What is its function? What in the picture tells you that?
 - Who uses these kinds of doors? How often do they use them?
 - To what kinds of **rooms or environments do these** doors lead?

Materials

Image sheet (for younger students, provided by Kidspace)

Take a Closer Look worksheet (for older students, provided by Kidspace)

paper or workbooks/sketchpads

pencils and crayons

disposable camera (optional)

old magazines (optional)

Teacher preparation

Part 2: Action

Have your students make up a story or draw a picture of what they imagine is behind or in front of one of these doors. This activity can be done as a class or individually.

Part 3: Reflection

Encourage your students to be on the lookout for more doors — at home, in stores, in different parts of their town. Ask them to tell the class if they find a new type of door.

Grades 3-8

Parts 1 & 2: Discussion and Action

Read over the *Take a Closer Look* worksheet as a class and give students a time frame for completing the assignment. This will depend on whether you decide that they will a) use a disposable camera to take a photo of a “real” door, b) sketch a “real” door at home, or c) look for doors in books, music, or films. Or they could do all three!

The door that your students select for this activity should be one that is interesting to them — perhaps a door that is uncommon or special in some way: a trap door, a door to an attic, a cellar door, a garage door, or a revolving door.

Once your students have completed their worksheets, discuss as a class (and have them record in their workbooks/sketchbooks):

- How many different kinds/types of doors did the class find altogether?
- What do all the doors in their pictures have in common?
- What is something that is unique, unusual, or extraordinary about any one of their doors — function, size, shape, color, doorknobs, any special decorative features?

Each student can tell the class:

- If any special stories, events, or circumstances go along with their door. (My door has never been opened, because...)
- If the door they chose means something special to them and/or how they feel when they go through this door.
- Who uses their door and how often.
- Where their door leads and what its function is.

Other discussion points might include:

- How interior and exterior doors differ (color, shape, size, handles, etc.).

- How people design, use, and go through “public doors” and “private doors” differently.
- If they observed anybody entering or exiting the door they photographed/sketched, was the body language of the person being observed different depending upon the door? (I.e.: the door to a government building vs. the door to a bedroom.)

If the students drew from books or songs, discuss:

- What role does the door play in the story, song or poem?
- How the door makes the reader/listener feel. Scared, confused, excited?
- Does the door promise/provide passage to a new and exciting world?
- Does the door force the characters in the story to do something strange or out of the ordinary to get through it?

Part 3: Reflection

Are your students surprised at how many different kinds of doors (or how many references to doors in literature) they found? What is something they noticed for the first time about the doors they use, the built environment, or the spaces in which they live?

BEYOND THE FRAME: *MOOD AND METAPHOR*

Grades K-2

Materials

Door Drawings (*provided by
Kidspace*)

DOORS AND MOODS

Part 1: Discussion

1. Look at the *Door Drawings* and any other pictures of doors that you have brought in together as a class, and ask your students what kind of feelings these doors evoke. Do they look welcoming, mysterious, or scary? What specifically about the doors (shape or special features) creates the mood? What kinds of things or people can they imagine are on the other sides of these doors? Would they want to see what's on the other side?
2. Discuss with your students the idea that doors provide a physical entrance into a space and establish moods, making us feel or act a certain way as we approach and pass through them. Color, shape, size, and special features like decorations, glass panels, or heavy locks contribute to a door's "personality."

Part 2: Action

1. Ask your students to think of materials, shapes, or special features that would make an interesting door. Put the attributes they think of in four columns on the blackboard according to color, shape, material, and special features (such as doorknobs, decorations, etc.).
2. Have each student choose an attribute from each of the four lists and make his/her own picture of a door that includes those four traits.
3. Now ask each student to describe the overall mood of the door he/she has created. Is it welcoming? Scary? Funny? Did the student choose the mood first before the adjectives or is that the feeling conveyed while the work evolved? How would each student feel or act when entering his/her door?

4. Have students share their pictures and imagine what kinds of things or people could be on the other side of their classmate's door. Be sure they support their ideas.

Part 3: Reflection

Ask your students if they can think of any doors they've seen before—at home or in their town—that establish a mood or make them feel a certain way as they approach those doors.

Grades 3-8

DOORS AND METAPHORS

Materials:

Image sheets & Teacher Information
sheet (provided by Kidspage)
paper or workbooks/sketchpads

Part 1: Discussion

Begin by discussing with your students the idea that doors and doorways are commonly used as metaphors in everyday language as well as in art and literature. Doors often suggest the possibility or impossibility of gaining access to places, ideas, or feelings.

Door Metaphors in Figures of Speech:

Doors (and windows) are often used as metaphors in the English language. A metaphor is a phrase or expression that makes an idea concrete or visible. For example, we often say "time flies"—of course, time doesn't *really* fly, but we use this expression to create a picture for ourselves of how time can pass quickly.

Talk with your students about the following examples and ask them if they can think of any other metaphors that have something to do with doors or passageways:

- "open-door policy" (freedom of access for all)
- "closed-door meeting" and "behind closed doors" (public and press not allowed)

- “he’s on his way out the door” (he’s about to be fired from a job)
- “doorway to success” (means by which to achieve something)

Windows: “a window of opportunity” (a brief moment for improvement; good timing)

For extra fun, ask you students if they can figure out what the metaphor “open and shut” (the title of the Kidspage exhibition) means!

Ask students to record any metaphors the class thinks of in their workbooks and to be on the lookout in their reading for metaphors or metaphorical language.

You could also ask your students to illustrate the metaphor of their choice in order to reinforce the idea that metaphors create pictures in our minds of ideas, or make ideas visible. E.g.: for time flies, one could draw a clock with wings.

Door Metaphors in Art:

Artists often create images that operate metaphorically, using objects like doorways and windows to stand in for or suggest an idea. The idea of linking us to or closing us off from other worlds, moods, or experiences is one of the most frequent examples of how doorways are used metaphorically in pictures.

Look with your students at the copies of each of the *Image* sheets (provided by Kidspage) in which the artist uses a doorway as a metaphor to stand for or suggest something about what’s beyond or on the other side of its frame. Consider the following questions as a class:

Is the door in the picture open or shut?

If there is a person in the picture, how does he/she relate to the door or doorway?
(Are they close to the door or far away? Are they leaning against it or looking through?)

What kinds of people and/or settings are on either side of the door? What, if anything, can be seen through the doorway?

With these observations in mind, ask your students what the artist might be using the doorway for in his/her picture. Can they determine if the doorway is being used as a metaphor for some idea or feeling that the artist wants to convey? Does this doorway have something to do with gaining access to (or being blocked off from) some other world or state of being?

Ideas about metaphors in these works of art are included on the *Teacher Information* sheet. Before telling your students what your ideas are, see if your students are able to generate their own ideas for the questions listed above.

Part 3: Reflection

Review the concept of metaphor once more as a class. If your students have a good grasp of the meaning and usage of metaphors in language and art, discuss how metaphors differ from similes and symbols.

For Fun:

Have your students write a story, explaining how and why the person in an image of a door arrived at the door and where they are going next. Have them begin the story or poem with "A metaphor of (joy, sadness, curiosity, or...), this doorway opens up to/separates us from/makes me wonder about...." Remind your students to support their assertions about the doorway with observations of what they actually see in the picture.

TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

Hansel Mieth, *Boys on the Road*, 1936:

Gelatin Silver Print

Things to notice:

- The two young men in this photograph are looking out of the large barely opened doors of a train car.
- Each young man looks in a different direction.

The photographer might want to convey a sense of ambiguity or uncertainty; or, perhaps the position of the two young men, looking out beyond the confines of the train car, could suggest a sense of hope for the future.

Giorgio de Chirico, *The Soothsayer's Recompense*, 1913:

Philadelphia Museum of Art; The Louise & Walter Arensberg Collection

Things to notice:

- A sculpture of a female is reclining near the arched doorway. Her position suggests sleep and dreaming.
- In the distance, through the doorway, are two palm trees.
- A train moves away from the palm trees.
- A big brick wall lies between the viewer and the palm trees.

The artist might want to convey a sense of paradise with the inclusion of the palm trees, one that we can see (or dream about), but are not able to reach. The door is open, but the wall is in the way, and the train has left the station.

Rembrandt, *The Artist in His Studio*, c. 1629:

Boston Museum of Fine Arts

Things to notice:

- The door is closed and locked.
- The door is very short.
- What do you think the artist is painting — the world outside his studio?

The artist might want to convey a feeling of being closed in his studio and separated from the rest of the world while he is painting. Ideas for making art exist in our minds and imaginations, which are separated from the outside world just as is an artist's studio.

Caspar David Friedrich, *Cemetery Entrance*, c. 1824-6:

Gemaldegalerie, Dresden

Things to notice:

- A large gate opens onto a cemetery
- Two people are at the gate; one peers around the edge.

The gate could symbolize the threshold between life and death. The people are cautious even to look into the world of the dead. Like most, this pair seems anxious about death, but also curious.

SIZING IT UP

Grades K-5

Part 1: Discussion

Talk about how to make “guesstimates” with your students. You can discuss units of measurement with which they are familiar (feet, inches, centimeters, hands, arm-spans, etc.).

Materials

Size It Up worksheet (provided by Kidspace)
rulers and/or yardsticks (optional)
pencils
paper or workbooks/sketchpads

Teacher preparation

Xerox a copy of the *Size It Up* worksheet for each student.

Part 2: Action

- 1) Ask students to make guesses about how big the door to your classroom is (in whatever units of measurement you want them to use). Write on the blackboard how wide and tall they think the opening is. (**Older students** can use their guesstimates to compute the **area** and **perimeter** of the opening.) Based on their guesstimates, ask your students to make a list of what kinds of things could fit through the classroom door. People can pass through the door, but could a bicycle, a car, an elephant?
- 2) You may also choose to have your students make educated guesses about the materials from which the door is made. Ask them if they think the classroom door is wood, metal, or something else. What do they know about the **properties** of these materials? (Hard, soft, heavy, thick, etc.)
- 3) Now it's time to measure the classroom door. Using a ruler or yardstick (or hand, arm, etc., if body parts are your unit of measurement), have volunteers from the class measure the **dimensions** (width and height, and thickness if they'd like) of the door. Write these measurements on the board. How close are their “guesstimates” to the actual measurements? Older students can re-compute **area** and **perimeter**, using the actual dimensions.
- 4) Now, distribute a copy of the *Size It Up* worksheet to each student. Read it over as a class. You can decide whether to have students complete this at

school or at home. You can also decide what units of measurement your students should use.

Part 3: Reflection

When students have completed the worksheet, review their findings and discuss the **average dimensions** of all doors. (**Older students** might actually want to calculate averages; teachers of **younger students** can make a general statement.) How tall on average are doors for people? How big are refrigerator doors, cupboard doors, bedroom doors, doors to public buildings like restaurants, a church or synagogue, or the Mayor's office?

Ask your students why they think entrances to public buildings are on average bigger than entrances to domestic spaces.

For fun, ask your students what the smallest door they can think of is...what about the biggest?

ACT LIKE A DOOR

Grades K-5

Parts 1 & 2: Discussion and Action

- 1) You can begin the activity by pantomiming one or more of the motions one makes when going through a door. Have your students guess what specific action you're pantomiming (this might include ringing a doorbell, slamming a door, knocking, wiping your feet, unlocking with a key, or having trouble with a sticky doorknob, etc.). Do it again for your students until they guess the action; you may want to add sounds.
- 2) Talk about what kinds of motions or movements our bodies make when we go through doors (stepping, pushing, pulling, twisting, etc.). You have just demonstrated some of these actions; ask your students to describe some of the other ways we move through doors. Have a few students demonstrate through pantomime the action they mentioned.
- 3) Have each student draw a slip from the hat or bowl containing the different scenarios, and ask each student to take a turn pantomiming the action of opening, going through (if possible!) and shutting the door that they selected. Can the other students guess what kind of door is being "dramatized"?
- 4) You may want to videotape or photograph your students' performances.

Materials

Act Like a Door scenarios (provided by Kidspace)
a video camera or camera to record the "performances" (optional)

Teacher preparation

Cut out each suggested scenario from the sheet provided, and place the slips in a hat or bowl.

Part 3: Reflection

Ask your students how our body language changes depending on what kind of door we go through. How do we act differently as we move through the door to the Mayor's office vs. the door to our bedrooms? What are some other comparisons students can think of?

ACT LIKE A DOOR SCENARIOS

Doggie door

Door to a video arcade

Garage door

Door to the Mayor's office

Door to a safe

Door to a house of worship

Door to an igloo

Door to a local supermarket

Shower door

Revolving door

Tent door

Car door

Door to your bedroom

Cage door

Dollhouse door

Door to your refrigerator

INTRODUCTION TO THE DOORS CURRICULUM GUIDE

This curriculum guide accompanied the spring 2001 exhibition in Kidspace, “Open and Shut: Artists’ Doors.” The guide includes three sections that investigate three themes:

- 1) **Inspiration** (thinking creatively and taking a closer look at something we come into contact with everyday—doors)
- 2) **Invention** (developing designs and ideas for new doors)
- 3) **Construction** (creating an inventive new door for your classroom)

The three stages that these sections describe are designed to be followed sequentially. However, within each stage there are several options; please choose the activities you feel would work best in your classroom.

The artists participating in *Open and Shut: Artists’ Doors* considered the functional, decorative, and/or symbolic aspects of doors in making a sculpture for Kidspace. The sequence of work your students will follow will mirror the process these artists undertook in creating their sculptures. Kidspace staff met with the artists who submitted proposals to talk about their designs and ways to develop their ideas further. The artists then made changes and clarified details in their designs. We would like your students to go through these same steps in order to gain an understanding of the process artists undertake in researching, designing, and creating original artwork that is based on a theme, like doors.

- 1) **Inspiration:** Many artists research and gather ideas from outside sources before they begin the actual design and construction of an artwork. Artists’ work is also inspired and informed by personal experiences. The activities in this stage include lessons in art, literature, and math that will spark your students’ imagination and start them on their way to thinking creatively about the spaces around them and designing an original work of art.
- 2) **Invention:** In developing their own design for a door, your students will have the opportunity to take the ideas they’ve gathered and the inspiration they’ve acquired and incorporate them into a plan for a work of art. In this stage you may choose to have your students present their design ideas to their classmates, allowing them to develop their communication skills by giving and receiving feedback on their work.

- 3) **Construction:** Artists must consider *how* they are going to build their artwork once they have an idea for a project. In this stage your students will think about materials and process and then construct a door of their own design or decorate their classroom door.

Tying Kidspace Projects to Your Curriculum

The aim of this curriculum is to strengthen and build upon the work you already do with your students and to offer new approaches for including art-based projects in your classroom. The following symbols will signal the primary subject areas covered in each activity:

§ Arts (fine or performing)

📖 Language Arts

÷ Math

Saving Work

You may want to keep your students' work done as part of this curriculum in one place like a folder or sketchpad. At the end of the semester, this "portfolio" will clearly show the process that your students undertook in thinking about, designing, and creating artwork based on the theme of doors.

Bulletin Board Ideas

Throughout this project, ask your students to look for pictures of doors. They can cut images of doors out of magazines, print them out from a web site, photocopy them from an art or architecture book, and then display all that they find in your classroom.

STAGE 2: *INVENTION*

Each of the activities in Stage 2: Invention is designed to take more time than the activities in the previous stage and intended to draw from and build upon the work your students have done in the earlier activities. By inventing new and original designs for doors, your students will begin the process of transferring their ideas about doors into a preliminary plan for a work of art. You should find that these projects do not require a huge number of materials. Creativity and imagination are the most important ingredients!

§ ÷ **Call for Artists**

In this activity your students will each receive a “Call for Artists” similar to the one

Kidspace distributed to professional artists during the summer of 2000. This “call” challenges students to invent an original artwork based on the theme of doors. By making multiple sketches and presenting their designs to the class for feedback, students will go through a similar process to the one that the artists in the *Open and Shut* exhibition undertook in designing their original works of art for Kidspace.

Teachers of **younger grades** who choose to do this activity may want to complete the project together as a class.

§ *Door Portraits*

Portraits and self-portraits can tell us a great deal about the personality and interests of the person (model or artist) in the picture. In this activity students will create a door around a self-portrait that expresses something about their personality and special interests. The image of the door will serve as a metaphor for an “opening” into each student’s personal story.

CALL FOR ARTISTS!

Grades 2-6

Part 1: Discussion

- 1) Talk with your students about the *Call for Artists* to which the artists in *Open and Shut* responded. Tell them a bit about the process that these artists undertook in submitting their work to Kidspage for review: artists first gathered ideas about doors, and then started to design plans for a sculpture
- 2) If you have done any of the previous projects you might review the concepts addressed in those activities.

Part 2: Action

- 1) Distribute the worksheet and read it over as a class; make sure your students understand the challenge at hand.
- 2) Ask your students to think about the door they will invent in the context of some of the ideas about doors they have been considering while working on the previous projects. Be sure to emphasize that in this activity, they — as the inventors — are being challenged to create an original work of art of their own!
- 3) Have students complete the *Calling All Artists* worksheet.
- 4) Once students have finished the worksheet, distribute paper (or sketchpads) to each student on which they can make a first drawing of the door (preliminary or rough sketch) they are inventing.

Materials:

Call for Artists (for teachers' reference, provided by Kidspage)
Calling All Artists worksheet (for students, provided by Kidspage)
paper or student workbooks/sketchpads
pencils and crayons
paint (optional)
clay, Popsicle sticks, and other materials for modeling (optional)

Teacher preparation

Photocopy *Calling All Artists* worksheet for each student.
Read *Call for Artists* for reference

- 5) Ask each student to present his/her sketch to the class and articulate why they made the choices that they did in their design. Be sure to encourage your students to talk about where their inspiration came from and what they like about their work. Ask all the students to discuss what is good and what could be improved about each design.
- 6) Now ask students to draw their door design again with crayons or markers (or paint if you'd like), making changes as inspired by their classmates' suggestions. You can repeat the presentation process, and have students make as many drafts and presentations as time allows.
- 7) Optional: have students create a 3-dimensional model for their door out of materials like cardboard, clay, Popsicle sticks, twigs, or other available materials that fit their design concept.

Part 3: Reflection

Remind your students again that the process they just undertook is very similar to what the artists in the *Open and Shut* exhibition at Kidspace did as well as other artists who receive commissions to do public and private art. What have they learned about the process that artists undertake in designing a new work of art?

For Fun:

Older grades might want to do further math-related work. Use the estimated cost of their invented doors (see last question on students' worksheet) as the starting point for an activity on budgets. Give students a fixed sum, say \$50 or \$100. Ask them to list the materials they have chosen for their door sculpture and, next to each material, how much they think it would cost. Have them add up the cost of their materials to see if they can come in "on budget." You might also have your students estimate the cost of labor that they think would be involved in the fabrication of their sculpture. Encourage students to be as realistic as possible about their estimates. If you have access to building-supply or art-supply catalogs, challenge your students by using **real** prices for materials.

DOOR PORTRAITS

Grades K-5

Part 1: Discussion

Explain that a **portrait** is a picture of a person, and a **self-portrait** is a portrait of oneself made by oneself. You may want to show students example of portraits and self portraits made by artists from books or postcards you may have, or even by doing a simple search on the Internet. If you do so, ask your students what they can discern about the person in each of the images. What kind of expression and body language does he or she have? What kind of personality do they think the person has? How old do they think he or she is; what do they think the person's hobbies or interests might be? What do they think the people in these pictures might be thinking or feeling at the moment their portrait was made? For fun, what do they think the door to the home or office of the people in the artwork looks like?

Part 2: Action

- 1) Each student should have a photograph (a portrait of them made by a photographer) or a drawn self-portrait of themselves and one sheet of oak tag or stiff paper at their desks. (If you're not using a photograph, have students use markers or crayons to draw a self-portrait that is about 5" high x 8" wide.)
- 2) Doors can often reveal things about the environment behind them. Explain to students that in this activity they will create a door that tells others something about them since their portrait/self-portrait will be behind the door.

Materials

cardstock or oak tag (heavy, stiff paper of some kind)
Polaroid or school photograph of each student or drawn self-portrait (see step 1 below)
markers or crayons
glue and scissors
pencils
miscellaneous materials such as beads, buttons, colored papers
"How to Make a Door Portrait" (provided by Kidspage)

Teacher preparation

Xerox a copy of "How to make a Door Portrait" for each student.

- 3) Have students think about their own personalities, hobbies, and interests. Other people often know us by these “outside” features. Students will draw representations of one or more of these characteristics on the outside of the door around their portrait/self-portrait.
- 4) Now ask students to think about the feelings, ideas, plans for the future, and/or experiences that they keep “inside” — something they might not have told their friends yet about themselves. On the inside of the door to their portrait/self-portrait, they will draw a picture of something that represents part of their “inside”(private) personality, thoughts, or feelings.
- 5) Use the guide —“How to Make a Door Portrait” — to assist your students in creating an oak tag door around their portrait/self-portrait. Students will need pencils, scissors and glue in addition to their picture. You may want to photocopy this guide for students so that they may refer to it at their desks. (Teachers will need to help younger students with, or even prepare in advance, this portion of the activity.)
- 6) Now students can begin drawing on the outside and inside of the door to their portrait/self-portrait (see steps 3 and 4 above). Students might want to make some sketches first. In addition to representing their “outside” and “inside” personalities on their door, students might also want to add typical door features, like doorknobs, handles, hinges, locks, etc. These features could represent them as well. If they like animals, maybe the handle to their door could be in the shape of a dog!

Part 3: Reflection

Have students present their work to the class and explain what they expressed about themselves in the representations on the outside and inside of their door. If they think of something that they would like to add or change that would express their ideas better, you could allow time for further work on this project or provide materials for them to create additional self-portraits.

STAGE 3: CONSTRUCTION

§ ÷ A Door for Every Classroom

In this stage your students will draw from all that they have learned in the first two stages, Inspiration and Invention, and construct a door sculpture for their classroom. This door can be as simple as stacked milk cartons with an opening or decorated paper over your classroom door. The most important part of this project is group discussion and collaboration, **not** engineering skill! You and your class will have to consider where your door sculpture will be displayed. A great way for other students, teachers, and parents to see your work of art would be to install it on the **outside** of your classroom door or on one of the walls in the hallway.

A DOOR FOR EVERY CLASSROOM

Grades K-8

A Note on Materials:

The choices your students make in the course of collaborating on this project will determine what materials will be necessary for your door construction. You will be the voice of practicality in this process. You will probably need to complete the construction part of this activity a week or more after you begin the project in order to give your students time to collect their materials.

Basic materials you'll probably need include:

- cardboard or foam-core
- glue
- string & twine
- scissors
- masking or duct tape
- big sheets of paper and/or student workbooks/sketchpads
- pens, pencils, crayons and markers
- *Kidspace Artists' Doors* sheet (provided by Kidspace)

Part 1: Discussion

Review the work your class has done together as part of the *Doors Curriculum Guide*. If you have accumulated images on a wall or stored work in a notebook, get everything out and look at it together as a class. Ask your students what new ideas and inspiration they have acquired about doors since they began the Kidspace curriculum. Below are some ideas to get started.

1. Make a short list going down the board of 6 or fewer types of doors familiar to the class (maybe ones you have already discussed).
2. Make four lists with the headings "Theme," "Materials," "Size," and "Construction" on the board. Under each of these headings, write down the materials, size, and ways to construct a door that correspond with the doors that you listed in step 1.
3. Now start a **new** list in a column going down the board entitled "Themes." Have students invent ideas for new door sculptures, and

write down their themes on the board. Themes might be inspired by nature, animals, sports, different cultures, etc.

4. With these themes in place, make three parallel columns for "Materials," approximate "Sizes," and "Construction Methods," and fill in these columns to correspond with each theme.

Part 2: Plan

Using the lists you have developed as inspiration, the class will need to decide on one concept for their classroom door. That means agreeing on the theme, materials, size, and means of construction for their work of art. Start from the lists and eliminate materials, sizes, etc. that are just not possible in your classroom.

Theme: Have the class decide what they would like the subject of their door to be. Themes might be based on sports, cultural events, literature, movies, life in their hometown, etc. Have the class make a plan for the general look of the sculpture. A door with the theme of bears might have the shape and appearance of a cave entrance. Could a door with the theme of nature be decorated to resemble plant life?

Materials: What will the door be constructed of? (There can be more than one material.) Some materials that you might use are cardboard, paper, pipe cleaners, bottle caps, plastic, egg cartons, magazine cutouts, etc. If possible, have your students help with the collection of these materials; this way, they will have to consider what is available to them.

Size: What will the height and entrance of the door be like? Is the entrance just big enough for children or is it big enough for even grown ups to enter? What **shape** is the opening?

Construction: Where will the newly created door be **located**? Over the existing classroom door? On the wall in the hall? In your classroom? How will it be **installed** in its location? Will the door be attached to the existing door and doorframe with tape or fun-tak? Will it stand independent of the existing door, held up by bookends? Will it be suspended from the ceiling on fishing line and hooks?

Part 3: Draw your plans

On big sheets of paper or in their workbooks/sketchpads, have your students sketch rough plans for their door. If possible, indicate dimensions, color, any special features or decorative elements (like a handle or hinges) estimated quantity of materials needed, etc. Save these drawings for the construction phase.

Part 4: Collect Materials

Once your students have selected the materials they will use, have them bring these materials in to school, or find a way to collect them as a class.

Part 5: Construction

Once the class thinks they have enough materials, begin construction. Try to follow your plans, but if the class wants to change something, allow time for them to re-work their ideas. You may choose to break the class up into groups, assigning several students to one part or aspect of the door construction. Be sure to allow opportunities for the different groups to check in with each other to get updates on the progress of each group.

Part 6: Reflection

Reflect on the activity. Some possible questions for discussions are:

- What was most difficult about planning and constructing a door in the classroom? What were some of your favorite parts of this activity?
- What does the door say about the class?
- Did you have to compromise some of your individual ideas for the group? How would you change the door if it were only up to you?

Part 7: Presentation

Once everyone on the hall has completed the project, you could arrange an "opening" reception for parents, students, and teachers. Allow students the opportunity to present their ideas about their artwork to others. Encourage your students to explain the process they undertook in creating their door sculpture and the theme and/or meaning of their work of art.

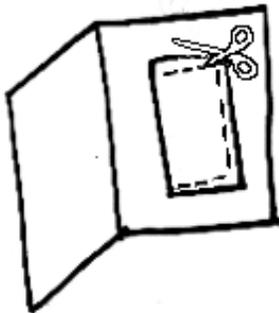
How to **Make** a *Door Portrait*...



1. fold the oak tag in half



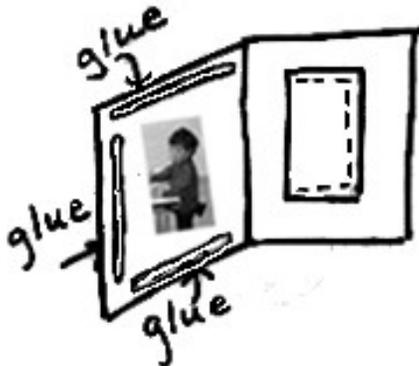
2. trace the outline of
your
photo (or self-portrait) on
the inside of the folded
oak tag DO NOT GLUE!



3. Cut just inside
(about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch) the traced line on
three of the four sides



4. paste your picture on the
inside of the oak tag,
opposite the "door" you
have just cut out



5. glue together the two sides of



6. decorate the outside and

the oak tag, sandwiching the picture inside of the door that leads inside
to you

Open Doors at the Clark Art Institute

If you would like to see some examples of how artists of the past have incorporated doors and windows, and 'openings' of other kinds, in their work, you could visit the **Clark Art Institute**, which has a great collection of European and American Paintings, some of which relate to the "Open and Shut: Artists' Doors" theme.

For some of these artists, a picture's frame is like a window through which we see a painted world, a two-dimensional illusion of figures or buildings or countryside. Other artists have included representations of doors and windows in the paintings themselves: to create an illusion of distance, to suggest a kind of gateway from one space to another space, sometimes even to suggest a feeling of mystery – we may not always know what we would find if we were to pass through the door into the area beyond.

The painting ***Interior at Arcachon***, by Edouard Manet shows two people sitting at a table in a small room. Behind them there is a blank wall, covered with patterned gray paper. In the middle of the wall there is a pair of 'French doors' (or 'French windows') open to let in light and a breath of air. Both figures seem to be staring into space, lost in their own thoughts.

The house in which the picture was painted was near Bordeaux, on the Atlantic coast of France. Manet and his family were staying there because political unrest prevented them from returning to their home in Paris. Through the open doors we can see the Bay of Biscay and a thin strip of land on the distant shore. The sky looks gray and over-cast, but nevertheless, soft daylight streams into the room and lights up the face of the painter's wife, the figure on the left.

She seems to have stopped writing to gaze into the distance through the open doors. Is she composing her next sentence?

The young man on the right is her son. He too seems to have stopped what he was doing. Is he thinking about the book open on his knee, or pausing for a moment to smoke his cigarette?

Are they simply acting as the artist's models, or are they thinking wistfully about their distant home?

Rouen Cathedral, Façade in Sunlight, was painted by Claude Monet in 1894. The painting shows the cathedral's West front, with its large central doorway, flanked by two smaller doors, each of them set back from the four verticals supporting the upper parts of the medieval church. Bright, hot sun hits the carved stone, which rises like a rugged cliff that has been eroded by centuries of wind and rain.

If you stand too close to the picture, the building 'dissolves' into thick strokes of creamy paint that overlap in uneven layers. Pale blues, peachy oranges, dark violets and mauves, rich warm pinks, etc., jostle each other on the surface of the canvas. But if you look at the picture from a distance of two or three paces, the colors coalesce and the image comes into focus. Towers rise into the sky, pinnacles and windows appear, and receding Gothic arches lead our eyes back and down to the church's doors.

How would you describe the light and the weather in the painting?

What time of day do you think it is (you can probably work this out if you remember that this is the cathedral's West front)?

How long do you think it might take to make a painting like this? Remember, the oil paint is very thick; it would take a long time to dry, and the sun and shadows would be constantly changing.

In fact, Monet might work on a number of paintings of the same subject in one day, setting one aside and taking up another as time passed or if the light changed. This is one of almost 30 canvases that show essentially the same view of Rouen Cathedral at different times of day and in different light.

There are doorways on either side of the narrow alley in John Singer Sargent's painting of **A Street in Venice**, but the one to which our attention is drawn is the one on the right. The figures of a man and a woman stand together in the alley; the man looks at the woman, the woman seems to look at us as she steps over the threshold into the building.

Can we be sure what is going on here? Can we tell what the relationship is between these two people? Is the building on the right a house, a bar

(there is a bottle hanging by the side of the door), or... what? Is this situation safe or dangerous? Should we even be looking on in this way?

Door Hunts at the Williams College Museum of Art

Museum of Doors Hunt

Materials:

- Paper and pencil for each student

Give each student a pad of paper (or a clipboard and paper) and a pencil. Divide into smaller groups, with one adult supervising each group.

Walk around WCMA and hunt for doors, window, arches, and openings! Every time someone in the group finds one, have each student draw a picture of their discovery on their own paper. You may want to keep a running list of MATERIALS used to make the doors and SHAPES found in or around the doors.

When your group has finished, sit down in a gallery, and using the sketches and notes you've all made, make a nice big picture of ALL of the doors, windows, passageways etc.

Re-group your whole class and compare what you've found. If groups have made different discoveries, switch lists and each group can search out what another group found!

Some special things to look for on your DOOR HUNT:

- ❖ Doors and Windows that used to be here...but are no longer!
- ❖ Fancy patterns around doorways, windows, and openings
- ❖ Doors that you are not allowed to go through!

- ❖ Arches
- ❖ Tall skinny doors
- ❖ Double doors

THE ART OF THE DOOR HUNT

There are five works of art currently on view at the Williams College Museum of Art that you might want to look at with your class. In each work of art there is a door; in each work of art the door asks questions, poses problems, or is reminiscent of something else. The doors are not the subject, but rather a detail in each work. Focussing on a detail is a good way to help students increase their attention span, and to help them look more closely at a work of art.

The pieces are:

Edward Hopper *Morning in the City*—found at the top of the stairs. This painting contains a naked lady, so proceed at your own risk!

Ann Hamilton *Body Object Series*—found in the 1954 gallery, to the right when you reach the top of the stairs. This photograph is a lot of fun and a bit mysterious too. Why would someone replace his or her body with a door?

David Hockney *Gregory Masurousky*—also found in the 1954 gallery, this painting contains a door to....where does your class think it leads? What clues did the artist provide?

Giorgio de Chirico, *La Surprise*—found in the small Prendergast Gallery across the bridge and to your right. What mood is created in this dark painting? Why are there so many arches, and where do they lead to?

Kay Sage, Page—Also in the Small Prendergast Gallery. Has anyone ever seen a place like this before? Perhaps in a dream? Could you open a door and find yourself here?

Ask your students to sit in front of the artwork and look at it quietly for a moment. Then ask them, “What’s going on in this picture?” followed by “Can you find a door in this picture?”

These questions might be enough to get your class talking. If you feel that they need more, ask them, “Why do you think the artist put this door in his/her painting/photograph?” “Where do you think the door leads to?” “Could this door be a *symbol* for something else?” “Does this door give the picture a certain mood?”

Depending upon the age and personality of your class, you could choose to take these suggested questions and turn them into a simple worksheet. If you work this way, remember to give students a chance to share their answers after they’ve written.

DOORS-RELATED WEB SITES AND BOOKS

Following are a few web sites and books (fiction and non-fiction) related to doors, architecture, and passageways to other worlds. If you find additional web sites, books, or anything else related to doors, please pass the references on to Kidspac staff. Enjoy!

WEB SITES AND NON-FICTION:

- ❖ Pictures of all sorts of doors at www.heritagewoodwork.net
- ❖ **DOORS**, by Alexandra Bonfante-Warren, 1998. For all ages. Full color pictures of doors from all over the world.
- ❖ **MY HOUSE**, by Lisa Desimini 1997. For ages 5 – 7. Describes a house in different weather and light conditions.
- ❖ **BUILDING**, by Phillip Wilkinson, 1995. For ages 9 – 12. Topics concerning architecture, house construction, and building materials, including stone and its uses, doors and doorways, timber-framed buildings, roofing, and columns and arches.
- ❖ **HOUSES AND HOMES**, by Chris Oxlade, Martin Chillmaid, and Raymond Turvey, 1994. For ages 10 – 12. Provides information on ancient, medieval, and modern houses and homes, and gives instructions for making models of five different dwellings and a solar heater.

FICTION:

- ❖ **ALICE IN WONDERLAND AND THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS**, by Lewis Carroll, 1946.
- ❖ **CHARLIE AND THE GREAT GLASS ELEVATOR: the Further Adventures of Charlie Bucket and Willie Wonka, Chocolate-maker Extraordinaire**, by Raold Dahl, 1972.
- ❖ **THE DOOR IN THE AIR AND OTHER STORIES**, by Margaret Mahy, 1991. Short Stories with references to doors, bridges, towers, etc.
- ❖ **HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERERS STONE**, J. K. Rowling, 1998.

- ❖ ***THE HOUSE WITH NO DOOR: AFRICAN RIDDLE POEMS***, by Brian Swan, 1998. A collection of original poems created from riddles of various African tribes.
- ❖ ***THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE***, by C. S. Lewis, 1950.
- ❖ ***THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR***, by Jeff Moss, 1991. A collection of humorous and fanciful stories about a variety of situations, both real and imaginary.
- ❖ ***THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH***, by Norman Juster and Jules Feiffer, 1988.
- ❖ ***THE SECRET GARDEN***, by Frances Hodgson Burnett, 1987.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- ❖ A site all about **architecture** in the classroom at www.why.org/aie
- ❖ Fun ideas for art projects and more at the **Art Room**, www.arts.ufl.edu/art/rt_room
- ❖ **KIDZART** displays children's art at www.kidzart.org
- ❖ **KIDSART** has art ideas and links to online art museums at www.kidsart.com
- ❖ **KINDERART** has over 650 free art and craft lessons at www.kinderart.com