

An abstract painting featuring several hands in various shades of blue and green, reaching upwards to hold a large, bright yellow sun. The background is a mix of blue and green, with some white highlights. The overall style is expressive and colorful.

MASS MoCA

KIDSPACE  
**TEACHER  
WORKBOOK**

2018–2019



# ART 4 CHANGE

The four-year **ART 4 CHANGE** project engages children with art in ways that promote empathy, optimism, and courage, with the ultimate goal that they become more self-aware, confident, and open to participation in the problem-solving process to effect social change.

## 2015–2016 PEAK 1: EMPATHY

**Understanding others and acting with compassion.**

It is empathy that lets us **identify** problems and relate to others.

## 2016–2017 PEAK 2: OPTIMISM

**Being hopeful and having confidence in a positive outcome.**

We need optimism to **believe** that a problem can be addressed before initiating a solution.

## 2017–2018 PEAK 3: COURAGE

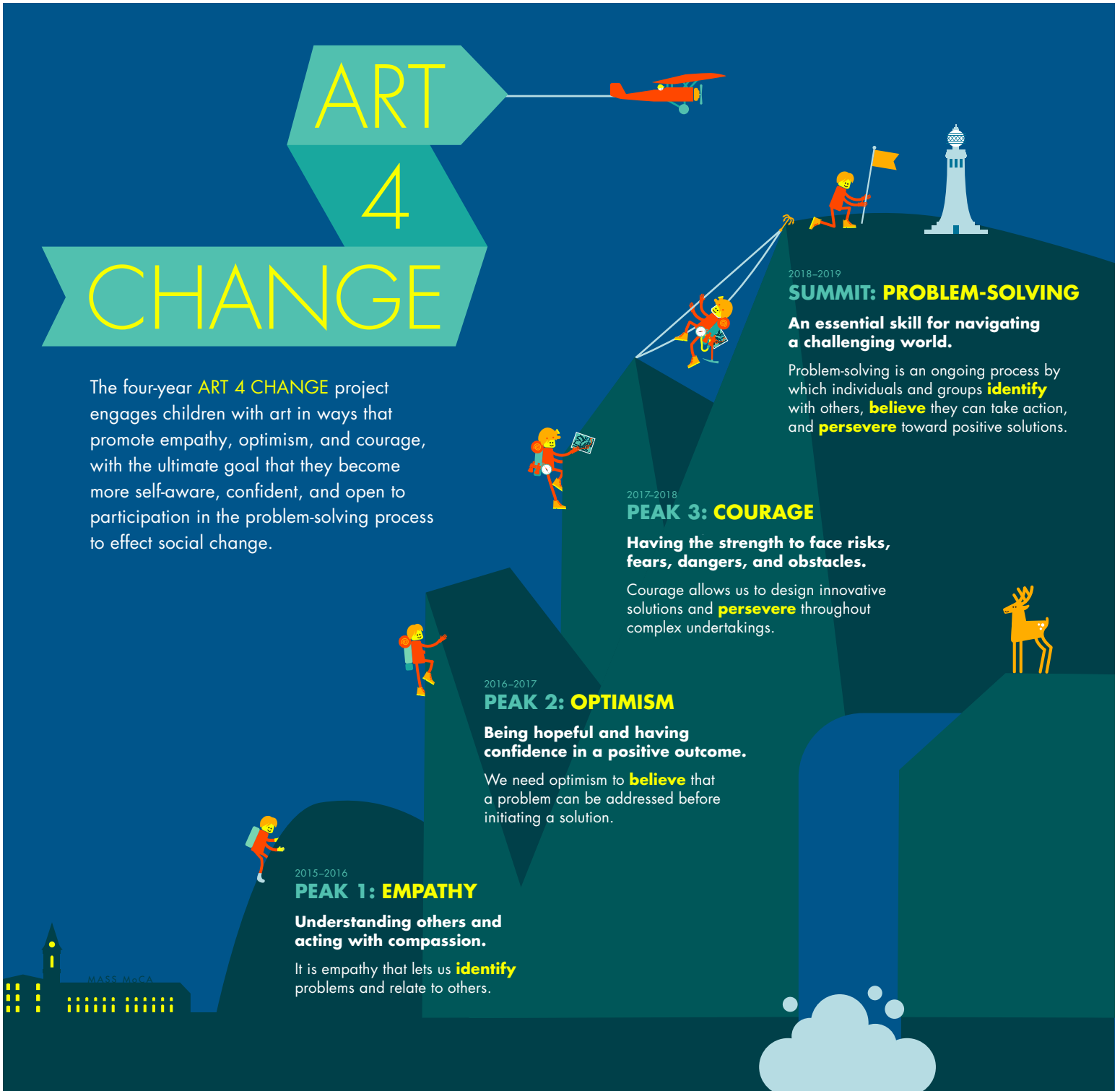
**Having the strength to face risks, fears, dangers, and obstacles.**

Courage allows us to design innovative solutions and **persevere** throughout complex undertakings.

## 2018–2019 SUMMIT: PROBLEM-SOLVING

**An essential skill for navigating a challenging world.**

Problem-solving is an ongoing process by which individuals and groups **identify** with others, **believe** they can take action, and **persevere** toward positive solutions.



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# ON PROBLEM-SOLVING

Art 4 Change (A4C) grew out of our concerns with problem-solving. We were feeling overwhelmed with the rampant problems in the world — which have arguably only grown more entrenched and more alarming in the four years of this project — and questioning how to support effective and creative problem-solving. From climate change to widespread gun violence to deepening social divisions and animosity, we struggled with what our role as individuals, as educators, and as an institution should be in addressing these concerns — and knew that if we as adults felt confusion and dismay, our students must also.

A4C initially set out to better prepare our students to solve these problems. Its fundamental premise was that searching for and enacting solutions to these pressing problems are impossible without three basic characteristics: empathy, optimism, and courage. Without empathy, who cares about the fact that problems exist? Without optimism, who could face the magnitude of these problems? Without courage, who could take risks and persist in the face of obstacles? The preceding three years focused on building students' awareness of these three habits of mind, with the goal that they become more conscious of their own capacity for these traits and of opportunities to put them in action.

But what these three years reinforced is that we have as much to learn from our students as they do from the artists and educators we presented to them. We were confident that students would someday make changes in their adult lives, but we were reminded of the ways they are already doing so: on a large scale through solidarity with and participation in movements such as the March for Our Lives and on a small scale, with local recycling campaigns and small but crucial gestures of welcoming and allyship to peers who are different.

So, Year 4 is about these students, and amplifying their voices and building confidence and awareness of how young people can effect change. Let's hope they bring the rest of us along with them.

# ABOUT THE 2018-19 EXHIBITION

## *Come to Your Senses: Art to See, Smell, Hear, Taste, and Touch*

*Come to Your Senses* begins with the paintings of local children, serving as inspiration for the creation of new works by 46 adult professional artists. Organized in collaboration with Sally Taylor, founder of the non-profit *Consenses*, artists were asked to respond to one another's artwork and express it in their own mediums in the vein of a game of 'Telephone.'

The word "consensus" is defined as like-minded groups agreeing on a viewpoint, feeling, thought, or belief; Taylor's "*Consenses*" builds on this by celebrating the distinct perspectives of individuals while encouraging connectivity through empathy, optimism, and courage (the three themes around which the previous three exhibitions at Kidspace were organized).

The exhibition aims to expand the traditional problem-solving technique by activating all five human senses: sight, taste, touch, smell, and hearing. Sensory art in a diversity of mediums — including painting and photography, dance, music, and even brownies, tea, and perfume! — provides an opportunity to consider our daily experiences from a multiplicity of points of view. Each chain of art was initially triggered from a work of art by a local student that focused on the child's feelings of joy and fear. This aspect of the exhibition speaks to the current youth movement in which young people are finding ways to articulate their concerns around societal problems that have confounded adults.

*Come to Your Senses*, a project of Sally Taylor's *Consenses*, invites professional artists to create multisensory works based on the paintings of local children, embracing the inclusion of multiple perspectives in problem-solving.

# THE ARTISTS

*Come to Your Senses:  
Art to See, Smell, Hear, Taste, and Touch*

|                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Justen Ahren        | Josh Larson            |
| Dahlia Al-Habiel    | Seth Larson            |
| Karni Arieli        | Alison Manning         |
| Natasha Bedingfield | Kendall Martin         |
| Brynna Bloomfield   | Trey McIntyre          |
| Felix Buccellato    | Kaitlyn Mongeon        |
| Mikyra Burnell      | Andrew Myers           |
| Patricia Choux      | Brooke Naylor          |
| Jeff Cirio          | Andile Ndlovu          |
| Aidan Crofts        | Fran Ogilvie           |
| Heather Day         | Erick Oh               |
| Jamie Diamond       | Mike Parkman           |
| Cobus du Toit       | Elise Paschen          |
| Christopher Eichorn | Chris Price            |
| Saul Freed          | David Saw              |
| Naima Green         | Heidi Schmidt          |
| Laura Hendricks     | Carly Simon            |
| Gisella Hildabrand  | Chris Stills           |
| Meghan Hildebrand   | Rose Styron            |
| Sophie Hiller       | Patrick Sutton         |
| Susanna Hoffs       | Susan Swartz           |
| Anthony Howe        | Ben Taylor             |
| Janie Howland       | James Taylor           |
| Whitney Jensen      | Cristina Todesco       |
| Jesse Keller        | Ozzie Weber            |
| Kim Klopstock       | Terry Tempest Williams |
| Jim Krivda          | Jenny Wright           |
| Carter LaCasse      |                        |

# ABOUT CONSENSSES



*Consenses* is like an artistic game of ‘Telephone,’ in which a painting inspires a song, the song inspires a dance, the dance inspires a poem, the poem inspires a photograph, the photograph inspires a perfume, the perfume inspires a sculpture, and so on until all five senses are fully engaged. Despite the artists’ lack of contact and knowledge about each other’s work, there seem to be common threads that run through each “chain,” proof that despite our seeming separateness, we are not alone. *Consenses* believes we need ways to find stronger connections in this fragmented world, to understand one another and feel understood, without fear of judgment. This is the essence of *Consenses*: to promote tolerance, empathy, and understanding through the arts.

—Sally Taylor, *Consenses* founder



# CONTEMPLATING ART: SAMPLE QUESTIONS



Meghan Hildebrand, *Untitled* (2017), acrylic on wood

*Consenses* is a multisensory experience — one that to appreciate fully requires being physically present in the gallery. The following images, however, can be used to prepare students for a class visit to *Come to Your Senses* or to reinforce learning following the visit. Contact Amanda Tobin, K-12 Education Manager, for high-resolution digital copies of these images ([atobin@massmoca.org](mailto:atobin@massmoca.org)).

1. What is going on in this painting?
2. Notice the lines in the painting. What words would you use to describe them? What kind of movement do you think they represent? Can you make a similar movement with your body?
3. If this painting were a smell, what would it smell like? Why?





Naima Green, *Twentynine Palms Highway*, 2017 (2017), inkjet print

1. Identify all the different elements in this photograph.  
How would you describe this place? What might it sound like there?
2. What emotions does this photo make you feel?
3. Who do you imagine lives there, or travels on that road? Why?





Andrew Myers, *Coffee & Cream* (2017), painted screws on panel

1. What's going on in this image?
2. What does the texture of this piece remind you of? How might it be different if this were simply a painting instead of painted screws?
3. What do the objects in the image (a flower, a coffee pot) make you think of? What about the objects (screws) that the work is made from? What do all of those objects together make you think of?

# SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES

## Ekphrasis

**GRADES 4–8**

*ELA, Visual Arts*

Ekphrastic poetry is a traditional form of writing poetry based on a visual work of art — often focusing on rich description. Ask students to read ekphrastic poetry examples, such as those compiled by the Poetry Foundation (available at: <https://www.poetryfoundation.org/learn/glossary-terms/ekphrasis>). Instruct them to read the poems first, and then research the related visual artworks, comparing the two forms through a group discussion. How does this art form connect to the *Consenses* project? How is it different?

## Tanka Poetry

**GRADES 4–8**

*ELA*

*Tanka: Flight* by Elise Paschen in the Freedom chain is a *tanka* poem, a traditional Japanese 31-syllable poem that originated in the seventh century. *Tanka* poems take the form of a 5/7/5/7/7 syllable count, in which each number refers to the number of syllables in each line of the poem. Students may be familiar with *haiku*, a similar Japanese poetry tradition that has a 5/7/5 syllable count. Encourage students to draw comparisons between the two forms. Then have students create their own *tanka* poem, counting the syllables of each line as they write. Discuss the experience of writing a poem with specific guidelines versus complete freedom. How is the process different? Ask students to share their poems with the class, noting the different topics represented. Then ask them to compare the shared form of the *tanka* poems with the students' various subjects, emphasizing everyone's capability for individual expression within a set structure.

## The Blind Men and the Elephant

**ALL AGES**

*SEL, ELA*

Share the fable of *The Blind Men and the Elephant*. (A recommended picture book version for PreK-2 is *The Blind Men and the Elephant*, retold by Karen Backstein and illustrated by Annie Mitra.) Encourage the group to consider such questions as: Do problems like this happen in real life? Think of times when arguments or misunderstandings have occurred because people saw situations from different points of view. What happened? How does it feel when another person doesn't "see" something the way you do? How can you address those differences in perceptions?

**PRE-READING ACTIVITY:**

## Sensory Bag

**PRE-K, K**

*Science, Biology*

Place an object into a bag (e.g. a rock, unsharpened pencil, or apple). Have each student reach into the bag without looking and guess what they are feeling. Is everyone feeling the same thing? What other senses could we use to get a better idea of what is inside the bag?

## Essences Game

**ALL AGES**

*ELA, Visual Arts, SEL*

To create the first painting in each chain of *Come to Your Senses*, students were asked to paint an image that communicated the essences of joy and then fear. In the process, students considered the following questions: If joy (or fear) were a color, what color would it be? If joy (or fear) were a scent, what scent

would it be? If joy (or fear) were a material, what material would it be? Remind students of the definition of *metaphor*, and the power of using metaphors to express themselves. Encourage students to respond to these questions, creating metaphors that could be incorporated into a story or a poem. What additional questions might be useful for determining the essence of an emotion?

## Drought

**GRADES 1 AND UP**  
*Science, Visual Arts*

Define drought. Explain that the photograph, *Twentynine Palms Highway* by Naima Green in the Fear Chain, depicts the dry desert terrain of Joshua Tree, California. Have students conduct research into the potential problems of a drought as well as possible solutions: What could happen if there was no rain for an extended period of time? How could we work to save water during these times? For older students: How is drought connected to the current epidemic of wildfires in California?

## Five Senses

**PREK—K**  
*Science, Biology*

Identify the five senses and the different parts of the body associated with each. Have students play a modified game of “I Spy,” encouraging them to use all five senses and using prompts such as “I smell with my little nose,” “I hear with my little ears,” “I touch with my little fingers,” and “I taste with my little tongue.”

## Grassroots Movements

**GRADES 4–8**  
*Social Studies, SEL, Current Events*

Explain that the initial source of inspiration for every piece in this exhibition is the work of a fifth-grade student. Have students conduct research on various grassroots movements, especially those started by young people, such as the historic Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) that advocated for civil rights during the 1960s by supporting the Freedom Rides, as well as the March on Washington (1963) or the contemporary student reaction to the 2018 Parkland school shooting. Further the discussion by asking students how they can effect change, get involved, and inspire those around them to action.

## Scented Lotions

**K–5**  
*Chemistry, Biology*

Four of the chains in the exhibition activate our sense of smell with the inclusion of perfumes. Have students make their own scented lotions using essential oils, pipettes, and small glass bottles or jars. Encourage students to smell the different oils before creating their mixtures. Have students make hypotheses about how the oils and their scents will combine. Then, have students write down the recipes and instructions for their perfumes on a small note card, using the correct measurements and terminology.



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