

Lesson #22 Printed Figures

Grade Level: K-6

Description/Objective

Students learn how to create action figures. Students begin to understand body proportions.

Time

1 hour

Materials

Life-size human skeleton, rubber or cardboard

3" x 1-1/4" x 1/2" rectangular bath sponges (1 per group)

Mat board 1-1/4" square for arms and 1-1/2" square for legs (1 per student)

10" x 15" Cookie sheet covered with newspaper (1 per group)

Cotton swabs (2-3 for each student)

White tempera paint, 1/4 cup poured onto small tray for each group

White colored pencils (2 per group)

12" x 18" black or dark colored construction paper (1 per student)

3" x 4" kitchen sponge (1 per group)

Procedure

1. Name and discuss the main parts of the skeleton: skull, neck, torso, arms, legs, shoulders, elbows, wrists, hands, hips, knees, ankles and feet. Most students draw their legs and arms too short. Demonstrate that from the top of the head to the hips and from the hips to the toes is approximately the same distance. Raise your arms above your head. The elbow is just about even with the top of the head. The elbow can touch the hip bone. Therefore, the upper arm bone is approximately the same length as the shoulder to the top of the hip bone. Your arms and legs each have two bones.
2. Explain how the supplies are organized. Each group of four to six students has a cookie sheet or large tray covered with half a sheet of newspaper for easy clean up. A small shallow dish is in the center of the cookie sheet. The dish holds a damp sponge (spread evenly with white tempera to make a printing pad) and a small amount of tempera poured into the dish. Other supplies on the cookie sheet are: the rectangle sponge, cotton swabs, mat board arm and leg squares and a few white pencils.
3. Demonstrate printing the torso with the rectangular sponge. Use the smallest side, 1/2" x 1-1/4", for printing. Lightly place the rectangle on the sponge coated with white tempera. Stamp the shape in the middle of the dark construction paper.
4. Dip the cotton swab into the white tempera and paint a solid white neck and head. The head is a circle with a chin on it. Start out small and make the head bigger until it looks proportioned.
5. Add two diagonal oval shaped hip bones to the bottom of the rectangular torso with the cotton swabs.

6. Use the side of the small square to print the arms. First print shoulder to elbow and then elbow to wrist. Demonstrate different arm gestures, so students can visualize better. A baseball player or a person skiing are good examples.

7. Let's look at our hands. Your hands are approximately as big as your face, from your chin to the middle of your forehead. First, use the cotton swab to paint the shape of your hand. The shape looks like a slice of bread. The finger bones are as long as the hand shape. Draw the fingers with the white pencil. The thumb is a diagonal line at the bottom of the hand shape.

8. The leg bones can be vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Decide if you want the legs to stand, jump or dance. Dip the cardboard into the white tempera and print hip to knee and then knee to ankle.

9. Add the foot shape with the cotton swab and tempera paint. Draw toes with the white pencil.

10. Repeat the process until you have completed four or five figures on the paper.

11. After painting the figures have the students draw a figure on a piece of drawing paper. Remember to use two bones for legs and arms.

12. The students can pick their favorite printed action figure. Place tracing paper over the figure and turn the drawing into a cartoon character.

Variations/Extensions

1. This same lesson can be successfully adapted to printing one large figure. Use the large side of the sponge and print the body. Print the arms and legs. Note that the arm is equal to the longest length of the rectangle. Introduce the artist Matisse. He often painted a figure surrounded by pattern. Have the students print a peach colored figure on white paper. Let the paint dry. Use the tempera paint lesson plan to mix several beautiful colors. Have the students use cotton swabs to paint the figure's clothing and paint the background with patterns.

2. Have the students look for photographs of athletes in the sports section of the newspaper. The students can use a black crayon and loosely draw right on top of these action figures. Their understanding of the figure and drawing skills will improve.