



Curriculum Writer: Dannielle Arneson, Howard's Grove Middle School, Howard's Grove, WI

# I Am.....We Are...

## Part 1: Personal Reflective Looms

## Part 2: Illustrated Journals

### Suggested time frame: 3-5 class periods

In this lesson, students will draw inspiration from the work of artist Lenore Tawney to create visual representations of themselves. First, they will create "I am..." poems and collect objects with personal meaning to incorporate into their artworks—a weaving and an illustrated journal. With their finished pieces, students will reflect together about how their artworks connect to each other and to their viewer, discussing specifically: *How does the creating, presenting, and sharing of objects, artifacts, & artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences?*

### Objectives

Students will...

- Visually represent their unique personality using a written "I Am..." poem and including personally significant or symbolic items within an artwork.
- Explore and manipulate a variety of media and techniques to create personal artworks.
- Analyze and select ways in which to present their own personal work as just one part of a collaborative artwork that connects with their peers.

### National Core Art Standards

- VA:Cn10.1 Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- VA:Cn10.1.6-Generate a collection of ideas reflecting current interests and concerns that could be investigated in art-making.
- VA:Cr1.1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- VA:Cr1.1.6 Combine concepts collaboratively to generate innovative ideas for creating art.
- VA:Pr5.1 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- VA:Pr5.1.6 Individually or collaboratively, develop a visual plan for displaying works of art, analyzing exhibit space, the needs of the viewer, and the layout of the exhibit.



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5th-8th Grade

## Discuss

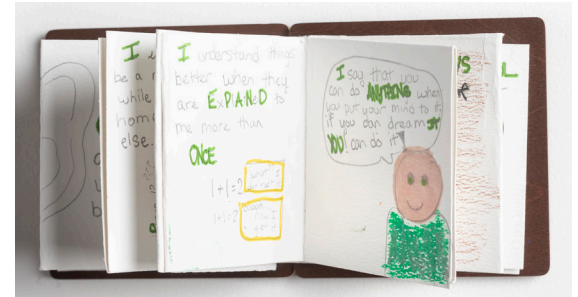
- How can I create a visual representation of myself?
- How can I find connections to other artists and artworks through conversations and dialogue?
- How can an artist communicate with a viewer without being physically present in the room?
- How does a non-traditional presentation of a work of art change or enhance the meaning?



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## Step-by-Step

1. Students will create an "I am..." poem that connects to their writing curriculum (if possible). Using ideas from the poem, students will collect meaningful materials/objects that they can infuse into their artworks.
2. Students will explore the works of artist Lenore Tawney as well as other contemporary artists who use fibers, found objects, and illustrated text in their work.
3. (personal reflective looms) Students will use a loom and select items from their personal collection or provided materials to weave. While students weave, they will be encouraged to be mindful of not only what they use to weave, but also how they weave. Objects and techniques should be personal to the student and describe themselves in relationship to their "I Am..." poem.
4. After finishing their weavings, students will participate in an activity that helps them find connections with each other. One student starts with a large ball of string and starts describing him/herself, during the description, if another student can relate or has the same experience, they will shout out "Connect!" and the ball of string will be tossed to that student (while the first student still holds the end.) The two that connected need to look at their weavings and find something similar about them. Then the second student begins to describe him/herself and the activity continues while they hold the string. This continues through the entire group. Once complete, the string should represent a web that connects them all. Ideally, after the project is completed, the woven pieces would be numbered and displayed in the same order of the connected students as one collaborative artwork.
5. (illustrated journal) Students will write their "I am..." poems in a mini book (either created by them or pre-constructed.) Students will use a variety of media (pens, markers, pencils, etc.) to write the words throughout the book. Students will consider the use of all the pages for the poem. They will be asked to add illustrated details as well as collaged elements (decorated papers, small personal objects, etc.) to express themselves visually throughout the pages.
6. Once complete, students will present their works collaboratively, for example, in a "card catalogue" of drawers that invite viewers to open the drawers to discover the books.



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## Materials

Wooden frames for looms (empty stretched canvas frames work well)

Nails and string to warp the loom

Small books (either created or purchased)

Variety of writing tools: pens, pencils, markers, etc.

Variety of materials to weave and collage: yarn, string, wire, raffia, sticks, fabric, tape, food boxes, papers, tape, trinkets, fishing line, etc.

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