Sarah Rutherford

Author/Compiler: Drew Allaire, Peyton Nolan

Suggested Age Group: K-9th

Lessons/Themes: Sarah Rutherford, Rochester Artists, Activism

Topic Overview:
This lesson plan includes a short description of Sarah Rutherford’s most well-known works, as well as her approaches to creating art. In addition to this background there is a mural activity for students. This activity encourages students to connect with the important and impactful women in their lives, and paint their role models. There are additional links to videos and articles with more information about the works of Sarah Rutherford.

For More Information, Please Reach out:
Eron Demercy,
edemercy@rmsc.org
Sarah Rutherford

Sarah Rutherford, a talented muralist that currently resides in the greater Rochester area, was originally born and raised in Boston. Well known for her project *Her Voice Carries*, Sarah can be seen as an advocate for women and a prominent example of a changemaker. Her work seeks to inspire, drive, and motivate women to use their voices throughout the community to promote positive change. Although her murals are restricted to the Rochester area, Sarah has ambitions to grow the project to a national level in an effort to extend and deepen her collective message.

Rutherford paints murals throughout the state of New York, implementing naturalistic, spiritual and Native American elements into her work. Trying to bring people and communities together through art, she believes that murals work their way into the fabric of people’s daily lives and therefore should be accessible to all and never be owned by someone entirely.

**Her Voice Carries**

Sarah Rutherford's most famous project *Her Voice Carries* embodies five women's stories in different murals located throughout the city of Rochester. The idea behind these murals is to highlight people in the Rochester area who lift up the voices of others and promote positive change. The women depicted in these five murals are very different, but share a similar goal of lifting up others and spreading a positive message.
What is a Mural?

A mural, in simple terms, is a form of artwork that consists of painting directly onto a wall or ceiling. This form of artwork can provide a means for expression and serve as a tool for community engagement, social awareness, and activism. Murals have been around since the beginning of humankind when the first humans created cave paintings on the walls. Murals can have a significant impact on the communities in which they are created, promoting social awareness and engagement.

![Cave Painting](image)

Depicted above is an example of a mural, specifically a cave painting that seems to be painted on a rock-like object used as a form of expression.

Description of Activity

In this activity, we want children to make a mural from scratch; depicting a changemaker in their own life. To start the activity, children should choose a woman that has impacted and changed their lives in a positive way. This impactful figure can be anyone from a mother, grandmother, sister, or someone that is a role-model in various aspects. Children are encouraged to be creative in the mural, utilize creative thinking, and have fun! The creation of the mural can be done in a group setting, or individually designed. If working in a group, children are asked to be cooperative, understanding, and open minded. In order to complete this activity, children must be creative, thoughtful, and artistic. Furthermore, materials will be provided and proper steps are listed.
Materials

- Tarp/Cloth
- Paint
- Paint Brushes
- Sponges
- Paint Rollers
- Face Masks
- Gloves
- Paint Tray
- Goggles

Guide for Creating a Mural (Mural Guide)

- Planning Phase
  - Choose mural surface
  - Determine objectives and scope of the project
  - Get permission on your mural idea
- Implementation Phase
  - Confirm scope, gather materials for project
  - Ensure timeline is set
  - Create roles
  - Arrange materials
  - Decide which method will be used to create the mural
- Installation Phase
  - Document site before, during & after installation (photos)
  - Prepare Cloth/Tarp for mural creation
  - Create the mural being sure to use safety precautions
  - Make sure the final painted/installed mural is finished
  - Clean up
- Evaluation and Completion Phase
  - Evaluate the mural
  - Finish up any loose ends
  - Make sure it is exactly how it's supposed to be
  - Final photographs should be taken and documented
  - Share your work!
Learning Goal

Murals, despite being a form of artwork, can also be used as communication tools. In order to accomplish a successful activity, we encourage students to convey messages and ideas through their artwork. For example, a mural might be created to raise awareness about a particular issue, or highlight an important individual within a given community. Students should learn how to collaborate in a group setting and properly utilize expression in the form of artwork. Lastly, students should learn and witness firsthand the various effects a mural can make on its surrounding community.

Sources/Links/Videos

Videos for teaching purposes:
- Sarah Rutherford Mural Art
- Her Voice Carries
- Sarah C. Rutherford Wall Therapy

Sources for information:


