CREATIVE CONSTRAINTS: ART RESEARCH & EXPLORATION

After this lesson you will be able to:
- Collect, transform, and combine recycled or reused materials to create an artwork.

Suggested Vocabulary:
- **Constraint**: a constraint is a limitation or restriction. It is something you are unable to have, even if you may want or need it.

**THINK**

What do you know already? Answer the following questions and prompts to begin exploring ideas.
- When artists don’t have or can’t afford materials, they need to create what can they do?
- What constraints or restrictions are you facing?
- How have you used recycled materials to create works of art?

**LEARN**

How do artists find opportunities when challenged? Read about the following artist spotlight, study works by the artist, and answer the reflection questions.

**ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: El Anatsui**

Watch these videos to learn about El Anatsui and his methods for creating art works:

**ARTWORK:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>艺术家: El Anatsui</th>
<th>标题: New World Map</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>题材: 铝和铜线</td>
<td>日期: 2009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>描述: Anatsui's large scale works are made of flattened metal bottle caps connected to each other with copper wire. Thousands of caps are needed to complete the works. When they are put together and hung on the wall the heavy art works sag and drape giving it the appearance of fabric.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>图片: <a href="https://www.jackshainman.com/artists/el-anatsui/">https://www.jackshainman.com/artists/el-anatsui/</a></td>
<td></td>
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ARTWORK:

**ARTWORK:**

**Trova**
- **Artist:** El Anatsui
- **Title:** Trova
- **Media:** Aluminum and copper wire
- **Date:** 2016
- **Description:** Anatsui wants people to think about the fact that there are places where people don’t have access to art supplies. They reuse and recycled materials because that is what is available to them.

What materials do you have available for making art?

**Trains of Thought II, Bukpa Old Town**
- **Artist:** El Anatsui
- **Title:** Trains of Thought II, Bukpa Old Town
- **Media:** aluminum and copper wire
- **Date:** 2015
- **Description:** Once the pieces are finished and sent to museums or galleries El Anatsui lets the curators decide how they should be displayed. He feels they should be a part of the process as well.

Look closely at the artworks. Create a list of adjectives that describe what you notice. If possible, visit the website above to see larger images of Anatsui’s work.

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**TRY**

**Complete the following activities to explore media and techniques**

**Grade 3 Try-it**
- **With a grown-up, go on a hunt for materials in your home. Check to make sure you can use them!**
  - Find 1 colorful material
  - Find 1 material that bends
  - Find 2 different materials made of paper
  - Find 1 material made of cardboard
  - Find 1 material that is rigid
  - Find 2 different materials that make marks
  - Also, find anything you could use to link them together – tape, yarn, thread, glue...
- **Play around with your materials. How can you change them? Can you combine two or more things to create interesting shapes or forms? Can you use folding, tying, lacing or weaving to join pieces together? Can you cut or rip them?**
- **You can use paper from magazines or newspapers and practice transforming it before working with your found materials. Try folding, cutting, fringing, rolling, twisting, and weaving. What other ideas do you have?**

**Grade 4 Try-it**
- **Go on a hunt for materials in your home. Challenge yourself to find 8 things that might be used for making art. Make a list and talk it over with a grown-up checking to be sure it’s okay to use them.**
- **Play around with your materials. How can you change them? Can you combine two or more things to create interesting shapes or forms? Can you use folding, tying, lacing or weaving to join pieces together?**
Intermediate Elementary Art  
Grades 3-5

TRY
Complete the following activities to explore media and techniques

- Use paper from magazines or newspapers and practice transforming it. Try folding, cutting, fringing, rolling, twisting, and weaving. What other ideas do you have?

Grade 5 Try-it

- Go on a hunt for things in your home that are different materials. Challenge yourself to find as many things as you can that might be used for making art. Make a list and talk it over with a grown-up checking to be sure it’s okay to use them.
- Play around with your materials. How can you change them? Can you combine two or more things to create interesting shapes or forms? Do their colors help you arrange them? Can you use sewing, tying, lacing or weaving to join pieces together?
- Use paper from magazines or newspapers; cardboard from cereal boxes or packages; empty cans or containers and practice transforming it. What other ideas do you have?

SHOW
Choose from the following creative challenges to demonstrate what you have learned
1. Using the materials, techniques, and ideas you discovered, create a series of small shapes or forms that can be joined together to make a larger artwork. Does your artwork have a meaning to you? Did you overcome your constraints?
2. Once you have it put together ask a family member to decide how it should be displayed without your help.
3. Do you like their suggestion, or would you do it differently?