

## TEACHING TIPS

### Critical Questions

- Why do people collect things?
- How can we find out more about items we collect?
- How can people share their collections with others?

### Overview

Students will view the COLLECTORS episode, focusing on the segment featuring art collector and entertainer Cheech Marin and the museum named for him that features his collection of Chicano art. Using the questions on Worksheet 1: Building a Collection, the teacher guides the class to listen for and record information about Cheech Marin's collection. The teacher demonstrates the mini museum project and, in small groups, students spend a class period creating a collection from items found in the classroom. Meanwhile, students are thinking about their final collection and what they will choose to collect.

Using Worksheet 2: You, the Expert, students (individually or in small groups) search and select images for their own choice of a collection. Research on the collection occurs alongside choosing objects. Students prepare the image collection by mounting the images on cardboard and preparing labels for each item. Students then use Worksheet 3: People have to see this! to plan and prepare a gallery opening to present their collections to each other, and to any invited guests.

A note about collections: While many students likely have actual collections, in this lesson all students form a collection by finding and gathering images online. They print the images and mount them on cardboard for display, using the mounted prints to represent the actual objects. This allows all students to "collect" expensive or hard to obtain objects including artworks, jewelry, antiques, natural specimens, pop culture collectibles, etc. Students who already have an actual collection about which they are passionate can follow the same process to represent their collection, add to it, and research more about it.

Size and display: Because the collections will be shared at an opening, it is a good idea to limit the size and number of collection images so that there is room for them all to be effectively displayed. Students may fit the images on a 3 by 5-inch index card, similar to art postcards sold in museums. Six or so images might be enough for a desk-sized display.

### Before Viewing

Introduce the scope of the lesson to students, sharing the key concepts, critical questions, and objectives. Let them know they will be looking at a museum collection and that they will create their own facsimile of a collection. Ask for volunteers to record some responses on the board to the following questions:

- What have you collected in the past? Remind students of how young children often collect things from nature or toys.
- Where did you keep your collection?
- What do you collect now?
- How have you displayed the objects you collected?
- Do you know anyone among your friends or family members who has a collection?
- How do they display their collections?

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- If money were no object, what would you like to collect? Students who have had a collection in the past or have one now may want to share why they collect what they collect. Invite students to share how they started their collections.
- Did they start with just one object and slowly add to the collection, or did they begin with several objects at one time? Explain that in the video they will encounter an individual who collects artworks. Suggest that as they watch the video, they should try to determine why the collector collects what he does and how he displays his collection.

Have students review the questions on Worksheet 1: Building a Collection before showing the video. While viewing, pause the video at different times so students can record their answers. Students may want to work together in small groups to spot and share the answers to the questions. (See the teacher discussion guide for possible answers.) Class discussion can happen during and after viewing. Address new vocabulary when appropriate. For example, with question one, define criteria with students when Cheech first talks about what he collects.

### After Viewing

Learn about collectors and collections

Refer to the questions on the worksheet and review student responses. Elicit from the students that Cheech created a museum to house his collection of Chicano art. Ask the following questions:

- How is The Cheech museum similar to and different from art museums you have encountered?
- What kinds of collections does an art museum typically have?
- What other kinds of museums are there? And what are in their collections?

Possible answers: There are larger museums with themes of cultures, history, science, computers, nature, aquariums, and small niche museums focused on neon signs, dolls, pinball machines, and all manner of objects.) The lists on the board become a reference for students to brainstorm ideas for their own collections.

This may be a good time to elicit student responses about ideas for their collections, as some may already have ideas. The Chicano art in the video shows many interesting and beautiful works. Students may want to make Chicano Art the focus of their collection!

### Assessment

By conversing with students throughout the lesson, by witnessing the students' collecting, curating, researching and presenting work, and by examining the students' worksheets; and it should be evident that the student:

- formed and curated a collection using criteria.
- researched items in their collection.
- presented their collection to an audience.

### Extensions

#### 1. Look more closely at Chicano art and artists

Consider an in depth exploration of one or more of the Chicano artists featured in the video, including those listed here:

- Francisco Palomares
- Yolanda González

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## *BUILDING A COLLECTION EDUCATION GUIDE*

- Frank Romero
- Jaime "Germs" Zacarias
- Shizu Saldamando

### 2. Create multiple artworks for trading and collecting

A simple printing project can allow for the fast production of multiple works of art.

Students can design index card-sized prints to share and trade with each other to create an art collection. Making a printing plate from craft foam is a fast, simple and effective technique, especially if specialized printing tools are not available. You will need: index cards, craft foam, cardboard such as cereal and cracker boxes, scissors, white glue, acrylic or tempera paint, kitchen sponges cut into 1-inch squares, and lids from plastic containers to hold paint.

To make a printing block, use scissors to cut a piece of cardboard to the 3 by 5-inch size of an index card. Students may decide to glue an extra layer of cardboard to the first to make a sturdier base. Students should follow these steps: Sketch design ideas in a sketchbook and then choose one. Draw the shape or shapes needed on the craft foam and cut them out. Glue the shapes to the printing plate, keeping in mind the images should be reversed (for example, a letter or number) so they will print correctly and not backwards. Let printing plate glue dry thoroughly.

To print, pour a small puddle of paint on a lid. Dampen a sponge cube with water and squeeze out as much water as possible. (A damp sponge will allow the paint to be picked up and yet stay on the sponge surface for dabbing on the printing plate; otherwise the dry sponge will simply absorb all the paint.) Dab the sponge on paint, and then on a second clean plastic lid to remove blobs of paint; then dab on the foam areas of the printing plate and quickly turn the plate over onto the index card. Press firmly and evenly to transfer the paint. Lift off the printing plate to reveal the print. Repeat painting of plate to continue printing. Plates can be gently cleaned with damp, not soaked, paper towels and can be used for a quantity of prints before wearing out. After prints dry, use a pencil to sign each print with the date and your name in the lower right corner. Again using pencil, number the edition (the total number of prints you made) in the lower left corner in this way: Count the total number of prints. In an edition of ten prints, the first print would be numbered 1/10, the next 2/10, then 3/10, etc. Now they are ready to trade and collect.