

# Affirmations in Art

## Words that Uplift

### Art Studio 10 Unit Plan

Can be adapted for Primary & Intermediate

Submitted by Sapira Sutton

LA Matheson Secondary School (SD#36)

#### BIG IDEAS

- Growth as an artist requires time, patience, and reflection.
- Visual arts offer unique ways of exploring our identity and sense of belonging.

#### COMPETENCIES

- Explore artistic possibilities and take creative risks
- Express meaning, intent, and emotion through visual art
- Develop personal answers to aesthetic questions
- Demonstrate respect for self, others, and place
- Communicate ideas through art making
- Create artistic works that demonstrate personal, cultural, and historical contexts

#### CONCEPTS

- elements of visual art
- principles of design
- image development strategies
- materials, techniques, and technologies
- creative processes
- use of symbols and metaphors to represent ideas and perspectives

#### MATERIALS & TECHNOLOGIES

- Pencils
- Erasers
- Sharpeners
- Rough copy paper
- 12 by 12 inch tagboard or good quality drawing paper
- Soft artist pencil crayons
- Blending Pencils

This unit engages students in expressing identity and emotional awareness through affirmations, encouraging experimentation with materials (e.g., colored pencil blending, layout design), and supporting personal growth and communication through visual language.

#### PRE-CLASS PREPARATION

- Cut the tagboard/paper to 12 by 12 inches.
- Put the pencil crayons on the front table.
- Superglue finger puppets to the blending pencils so they don't disappear into students pencil cases by accident.

#### INTRODUCTION TO AFFIRMATIONS

- Begin with a class discussion about affirmations and how they are used in daily life to support emotional resilience.
- Share examples from creators such as:
  - @wholeheartedschoolcounseling** – playful affirmations for emotional clarity
  - @emotionalsupportlady** – reflective, therapy-informed affirmations
  - @florencegiven** – bold, feminist messaging through art and design
- Share personal examples of affirmations and when they're helpful.
- Invite responses by posing scenarios (e.g., failing a test, dealing with rejection), asking for affirmations that might help in each case.
- Review a selection of past student work (if available) to visualize the possibilities of the project.

#### ART TECHNIQUES – BLENDING & LAYERING

- Demonstrate how to layer and blend colors using soft colored pencils and blending pencils, to make new colours.
- Guide students through a short, low-pressure blending activity (e.g., coloring a cupcake template) to gain comfort with techniques.
- Emphasize color value, transitions, and visual harmony.

#### PLANNING THE ARTWORK

- Introduce the planning phase where students brainstorm meaningful affirmations that reflect personal identity or

experiences.

- Using rough copy paper, sketch early versions of layout, lettering, and imagery.
- Meet with each student individually to provide suggestions around message clarity, design, and technique.
- Encourage revisions as needed, emphasizing the importance of thoughtful composition.

### FINAL ARTWORK CREATION

- Once approved, transfer the refined design to high-quality art paper.
- Begin work on the final version, applying pencil first, then moving into color with blending and layering techniques.
- Offer feedback throughout to support craftsmanship, thoughtful use of color, and visual clarity of the affirmation.

### REFLECTION & DISPLAY

- Conclude the unit with a written reflection exploring the personal meaning of the affirmation, technical decisions, and challenges overcome.
- Invite students to opt-in to a classroom display where their affirmations can support and uplift peers.
- Optionally, host a gallery walk or quiet celebration where the works are shared and appreciated.



Affirmation project by Kanishka B., L.A. Matheson Sec.

### ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION

- Does the art piece feature a personal affirmation?
- Does the image symbolize the affirmation through visual language?
- Are new colours created by layering different colour pencil crayons?
- Does the student blend using white or the blending pencil.

### ADAPTATIONS & MODIFICATIONS

- Crayola pencil crayons and pencil grips offered as alternative medium.
- Personal instruction, chunking, and directed drawing.
- Using alphabet stencils instead of writing.
- Using a scribe.

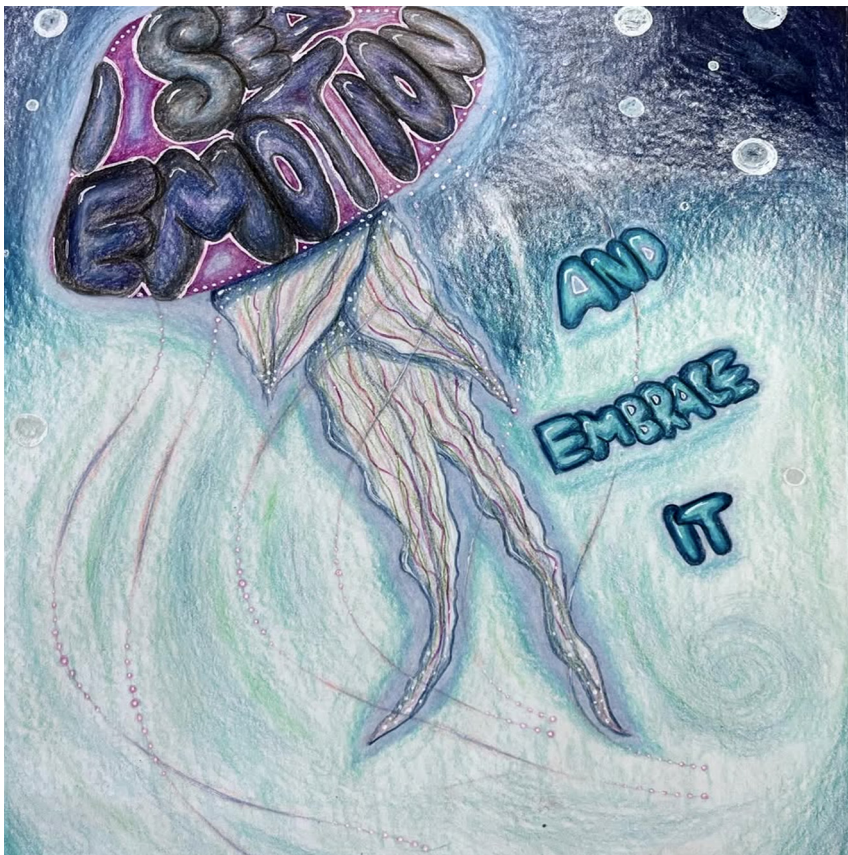
### CROSS-CURRICULAR CONNECTIONS

- This unit could connect to leadership and careers classes, as self-reflection is an important quality in leadership and careers.
- It also works well with the grade 8 program, as affirmations can be useful tools when navigating high school for the first time.

### RESOURCES & REFERENCES



@wholeheartedschoolcounseling  
@emotionalsupportlady  
@florencegivent



Affirmation project by Eren S., L.A. Matheson Secondary School



# Affirmations in Art

## Student Reflection

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your affirmation? Why did you choose it? What does it mean to you personally?

Describe your creative process. What did you try during rough copy planning? Did you make any major changes along the way?

How did you use colour, blending, or layout to support the feeling or message of your affirmation?

What challenges did you face, and how did you overcome them?

How did you grow as an artist or thinker during this project?

Would you be comfortable sharing your affirmation on a public class display?

☐ Yes    ☐ No    ☐ Yes, but only anonymously



Affirmation project by Jazz A., L.A. Matheson Sec.



Affirmation project by Chloe W., L.A. Matheson Sec.

# Affirmations in Art Assessment Rubric

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CRITERIA	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
<b>Personal Meaning</b> <i>Affirmation is thoughtful, relevant, and connected to student's voice</i>	Student voice or meaning needs to be more clear	Connection to personal ideas needs to be developed further	Clear personal voice and relevance	Insightful, authentic message with emotional depth
<b>Planning &amp; Development</b> <i>Rough copies, revisions, and feedback used in final piece</i>	Minimal planning or rough work shown	Some evidence of planning and revision	Purposeful planning and use of feedback	Extensive planning and thoughtful revisions
<b>Design &amp; Layout</b> <i>Composition is balanced and visually engaging</i>	Layout needs to be balanced	Some layout consideration; font could be used more effectively	Effective use of space and text placement	Excellent composition with strong visual impact
<b>Use of Techniques</b> <i>Blending, layering, and color choices enhance the artwork</i>	Colour is flat rather than blended or layered; more thought could have been given to colour choice	Some attempt at layering and blending; colours fit the affirmation	Consistent, effective use of blending and layering; colours work well with the affirmation	Mastery of blending and layering with expressive color use
<b>Craftsmanship</b> <i>Precision, skill, and attention to detail</i>	Rushing the work has impacted the execution	Some care in execution	Good attention to detail and skill development	The work is polished and demonstrates unique style and skill
<b>Effort &amp; Engagement</b> <i>Focused use of class time; perseverance shown</i>	Rarely on task; minimal effort	Inconsistent focus or engagement	Good use of time; sustained effort	Fully engaged throughout; went beyond expectations