

How Much of Learning is Inquiry?

Grades 6–12

Objective

Students will study artist Chloë Bass’s multimedia artwork and discuss the power of questions to prompt close looking and discovery. Then students will make their own artwork as a tool for reflection.

Materials — [Worksheets available on Google Slides](#)

- [Images of Chloë Bass’s artwork](#)
- “How Much of Learning is Inquiry” worksheet
- “Self-Reflection” worksheet (optional)

Class Activity

1. Have students define what **inquiry** means in a class discussion. (See resources below for some working definitions.)

2. Let’s inquire about ourselves. Pick a question for everyone to answer:

What is one thing you’re obsessed with right now? It can be anything.
Don’t think too hard or judge yourself!

What are you entering the room with today that you’re having a difficult time letting go of?

What is an important thing about you that impacts your learning which you are willing to share with this group, but would need help sharing otherwise?

3. Explore Chloë Bass’s artwork, *Wayfinding*, an outdoor exhibition that was on view at the Skirball Cultural Center. Talk about the sculptures: Why a mirrored surface? Why so large? Remember, Chloë Bass is a conceptual artist, meaning her work focuses on big ideas or questions, and often uses nontraditional art materials, like billboards. With your students, consider the questions Bass asks:

How much of life is coping?

How much of care is patience?

How much of love is attention?

How much of belief is encounter?

How much of hope is forgetting?

4. Lead a ten-minute guided self-awareness [meditation by Chris Willitts](#). Run through Willitts's script or one of your choosing with similar themes. With this script, rather than stopping with awareness, run the second part again, focusing on the world you're a part of.
5. Break students into small groups of no more than three to discuss the meditative experience. What was the experience like for your students?
6. Allow students to take ten minutes to silently and individually capture their guided meditation experience. Have students write down their reflections or emotional or poetic responses about their experience.
7. As a larger group, discuss the previous activity and consider the following questions:

How would you describe the experience of turning the internal landscape you created during the meditation into language or words on a page?

What do you feel was lost? What was gained?

When writing about your experience, did you focus on things that surprised you? Are there things that now feel less clear or accurate to you?

Optional: Use the Skirball's "[Build Community](#)" lesson plan, which focuses on students' values, to complement this lesson plan.

Student Instructions

Following the class activity, what are you still pondering? Using artist Chloë Bass's work as a springboard, make a simple artwork with this question or questions in mind.

Share Out

Display your student's art around your classroom and lead a gallery walk.

In pairs or as a class, ask students to share their questions. Also consider the following questions, and reflect with your peers:

- What did you learn about yourself through this process?
- How can your question or questions help you, and others, learn and grow?

Curriculum Connections

Social and Emotional Learning Standards

1.B.4., 1.C.3., 1.E.3., 2.E.4., 3.B.3.

Social Justice Standards

DI.K-2.8, DI.K-2.10, DI.6-8.9

Common Core English Language Arts and Literacy Standards

SL.6.1, SL.7.2, SL.8.5, SL.9-10.1, SL.11-12.1, SL.11-12.4, SL.11-12.6

California Arts Standards

8.VA:Cr1.1, Prof.VA:Cr1.2, 6.VA:Cr2.1, Prof.VA:Cr2.3, 7.VA:Pr5, 8.VA:Pr6, Prof.VA:Re7.1, Prof.VA:Re7.2, 6.VA:Re8, 8.VA:Cn11

Connect with Us

Our educators are here to help! If you have questions about this curriculum or would like to share your students' writing or artwork with us, please email teacherprograms@skirball.org.

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Resources

Resources about artist Chloë Bass

[Chloë Bass's website](#)

[Chloë Bass: Wayfinding audio artwork](#)

[Images of the five billboards in Chloë Bass: Wayfinding](#)

[Chloë Bass Artist Talk from the New York City Museum Educators Roundtable Conference](#)

[Chloë Bass: Wayfinding a Skirball Cultural Center talk](#)

Resources on Inquiry, Close Looking, and Conceptual Art

[What is Inquiry? from the Exploratorium](#)

[Read about jump-starting class discussions from Boston University](#)

[See video on how to lead an image discussion from the MOMA](#)

[A Guide to Slow Looking from the Tate Museum](#)

[Learn about conceptual art from Tate Museum Kids](#)



About the Artist

Chloë Bass is a multiform conceptual artist working in performance, situation, conversation, publication, and installation. Her work uses daily life as a site of deep research to address scales of intimacy, where patterns hold and break as group sizes expand. Bass's projects have appeared nationally and internationally, including exhibitions at the Skirball Cultural Center, the California African American Museum, the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, The Studio Museum in Harlem, and the Brooklyn Public Library, among others.

Name:

Following the class activity, what are you still pondering? Using artist Chloë Bass's work as a springboard, make a simple artwork with this question or questions in mind. Either use Chloë's question format or make your own.

How much of _____

is _____ ?

Name:

Self-Reflection

Reflect on your experience with the activity you completed and share what you learned about yourself, your values, your traditions, or your community.

Three things I learned about myself:

Two things I learned from hearing someone else's story:

One thing I am curious to learn more about:

My greatest challenge with this activity was:

After completing the activity, I am most proud of:

A lasting impact I hope to have on my community is:

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