

ART CAREERS INTERIOR DECORATOR

ART AND CAREERS

GRADE LEVEL: MIDDLE AND SECONDARY

MATERIALS

a variety of interior design and architectural magazines such as *Architectural Digest* and *House and Garden*.

assortment of paint, tile and fabric samples (optional)

matboard

graph paper

measuring tapes and rulers

glue sticks and/or white glue

scissors

camera (optional)

VOCABULARY

scale: a proportion between two sets of dimensions (as between those of a drawing and its original)

OBJECTIVE

After learning about the career specifics, training requirements, and design considerations of an interior decorator, students will:

1. Choose and document with photographs a space in the school that needs an “extreme makeover” based on lack of aesthetic qualities or poor use of space. A member of the school community who works in this environment may be interviewed in order to consider his/her preferences as part of the design process.
2. Create presentation boards of their makeover designs that illustrate the use of color, lighting, texture, fabric, furniture, etc. Included will be a floor plan drawn to scale accompanied by a written explanation of how various design elements and principles were implemented.
3. Evaluate the success of their makeover designs based on “client” satisfaction and comparison to original space as documented in photographs.

BACKGROUND

Interior decorators design the interiors of buildings such as homes, restaurants, hotels, and offices. Decorators differ slightly from interior designers in terms of education and specialization. Interior designers often earn a bachelor’s or master’s degree and typically work in design and architectural firms. Interior decorators usually earn a two-year associate’s degree and some work for commercial firms, such as furniture stores. Others offer their services for private residences and may even specialize in particular areas of the home, such as bathrooms and kitchens. Often interior decorators and designers own their own businesses and do freelance work.

Interior decorators and designers must be able to combine the practical considerations of their client’s needs, preferences, budget, and physical/spatial parameters with aesthetic considerations, such as color, space, texture, light, form, pattern, and unity. They might also research historical design in order to create the kind of look a client desires. Once a design is developed, it is presented to the client in the form of models, computer-aided diagrams, or on presentation boards that show in detail the types of paint, fabrics, wall coverings, flooring, and furniture that will be used.

Interior decorators must stay current with the newest trends in design, recent technological development of materials, and comply with building and safety codes. Those who run their own businesses must also develop business contacts, do administrative tasks such as scheduling and billing, and ordering necessary materials and equipment.

CLASS EXPERIENCE

PROCEDURE

- Ask students if they have seen the television show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* or similar types of programs (or show a short segment), and ask them what they think an interior decorator/designer does.
- Present information about interior decorators/designers: education, job description, etc. For this particular lesson, a designer visited the classroom, explained her training and showing examples of her work.
- Students are then divided into design teams. Each team should choose an area in their school environment that could use an “extreme makeover”. This area can be photographed, and any people who use the space (i.e. the secretary in the principal’s office) can be interviewed to gather information used for the redesign. This information might include color or lighting preferences, the desire for a particular style, or the desire for more efficient use of space, etc.
- The space is carefully measured and a floor plan is drawn to scale.
- Each team begins the design process by choosing furniture, fabrics, and accessories (from magazines) that will help to achieve the specified look. (For further research, students participating in this lesson went to a hardware store and gathered paint chips and flooring and wallpaper samples. Fabric swatches were also collected.)
- The presentation boards are assembled incorporating the floor plan, the samples, pictures, and “before” photos. A description of their makeover, details on the mood they hoped to achieve, an explanation of the various design elements and principles used, and an evaluation of their overall design is attached to the back of the presentation board.

ASSESSMENT

1. Were students able to explain why the space they chose needed an extreme makeover? Did they come up with questions for the “clients” that would give them the necessary information to develop their designs?
2. Did the presentation boards illustrate the students’ ideas clearly? Were they assembled using good craft and design? Was the floor plan measured and drawn correctly? Was the use of the elements and principles of design described thoroughly and accurately? Was the descriptive paragraph written using correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar?
3. Was the design appropriate for the function of the space? Did the “client” approve of the design? Were the students satisfied with their efforts? Can they explain why?

NATIONAL STANDARDS

VISUAL ARTS

1. Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes related to the visual arts.
2. Knows how to use structures (e.g. sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features) and functions of art.
3. Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts.
4. Understands the characteristics and merits of one’s own artwork and the artwork of others.

MATHEMATICS

5. Understands and applies basic and advanced properties of the concepts of measurement.