Lesson Title: Art that Moves
Grade Level: 2nd and 3rd

Overview

This lesson focuses on kinetic art sculpture and how to take the ideas behind 'moving art' and implement them into creating student's own moving sculptures. This lesson will particularly focus on contemporary artist, Theo Jansen's 'Stranbeests.' Students will view videos of Jansen's animalistic kinetic sculptures and demonstrate their understanding of what a moving sculpture is by creating their own moving puppet sculpture inspired by a combination of their two favorite animals.

Enduring Ideas/Essential Questions

What does the word 'kinetic' mean?
What is a kinetic sculpture?
How do we know when a sculpture is a kinetic sculpture?
How can artists create new forms of life?

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson, the students will: (1) be able to define and recognize what kinetic sculpture is, (2) recall and use various paper cutting and folding methods, (3) use examples of Theo Jansen's work as inspiration to create their own kinetic animal puppet that combines their two favorite animals.

Tools and Materials

Various colored and patterned paper, paper straws OR wooden sticks (see procedures), white glue, glue sticks, tape, scissors, crayons, markers

Introduction

Begin the lesson by introducing featured artist Theo Jensen via YouTube video (see link below). After the video, stimulate class discussion by asking questions such as:

- What are some words you could use to describe the Stranbeests?
- What is different about these sculptures compared to other sculptures you have seen before?
- Why do you think the artist created the Stranbeests?
- Why do you think the artist chose to have the Stranbeests at the beach?
- Where are other places art can be displayed?

After this discussion write the words 'kinetic energy' on the board. Ask students 'What does this mean?' The point of this discussion is for students to understand that kinetic energy is energy that moves an object and that many different forces can put objects into motion. Leading questions may include:

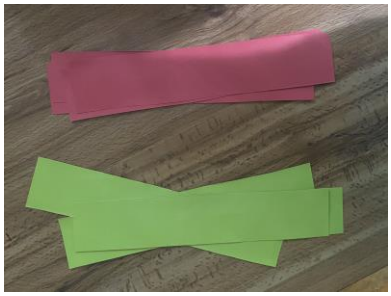
- Where the Stanbeests standing still all the time or could they move?
- What types of things helped/allowed the Stranbeests to move?

Finally ask the question, 'How can sculpture and kinetic energy be related?'
After this, the project will be introduced.

Procedure

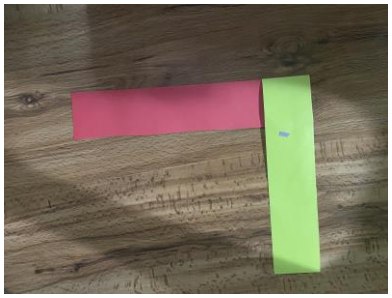
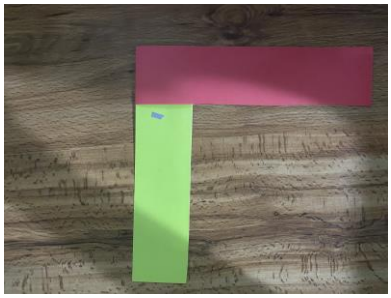
1) Before beginning, students must identify their animals that they would like to depict in their puppet. Students will then make a sketch of how they would like their animal puppet to look in their sketchbooks.
2) The teacher will conduct a 'follow along' demonstration with the students. Simultaneously, the teacher will teach students how to accurately construct the body and handles for the puppet as the students follow along and create their bodies and handles for their puppets.

Instructions for the demonstration are as follows:

Students will fold 2 different papers into 4 equal sections 'hot dog' style. After that, students will cut along those folds to create 8 strips of paper.

Students will glue two of the different colored strips together in an 'L' shape, making sure the corners match up.


Students will fold the top strip (green) overtop the second strip (red). Then students will fold the second strip (red) over the first strip (green). Repeat this series of folds until there is only one fold possible left (far right photo).

Have students glue their second series of strips onto the first like so. Repeat the folding procedure in the steps above. Keep attaching the new strips (the third and fourth) in the same fashion demonstrated above.

There will be one flap left after all of the strips have been attached and folds have been done. Simply glue this flap down to the back of the last square (the green paper).

Pull apart gently and you have your body!

To attach the handles, simply tape wooden sticks or paper straws to an inner part of one of the folds near the end of the ‘body.’ This is so it can be hidden.

The body and handles of the puppet are complete!

3) Upon competing, the class will finish off the day by having their own ‘kinetic animal puppet dance party’ and enjoy making their creations dance to music.