

Lesson Plan: Digital Art & Design

Overview

Goal: Students learn core digital art concepts (layers, brushes/shapes, color, and composition) and create a simple original piece (poster, pixel character, or logo badge).

End Product: A shareable PNG/JPG exported with correct naming.

Success Criteria:

- 1) I can use layers to organize my artwork.
- 2) I can choose colors and shapes/brushes for a purpose.
- 3) I can export my work correctly and explain one design choice.

Materials & Setup

- Devices (laptops/Chromebooks/tablets) with a browser or app (Photopea, Pixlr, Krita, Sketchbook, Canva).
- Projector for live demo.
- Headphones (optional), mice for finer control.
- Shared class folder or LMS for turning in files.
- Prep: Open a blank canvas template at 1080×1080 px; preload 2–3 sample images.

Key Vocabulary

Pixel: Tiny dot of color on the screen.

Canvas: The digital “page” you draw on.

Layer: A stackable sheet—lets you edit parts independently.

Opacity: How transparent something is.

Brush/Shape Tool: Ways to put marks/forms on the canvas.

Palette: The set of colors you choose for your design.

Export: Save out a final image file to share (PNG/JPG).

Timeline & Teacher Moves

0–5 min — Hook: See Like a Designer

Show 3 contrasting images. Ask students what stands out.

Introduce elements: color, contrast, shape, space, hierarchy.

5–12 min — Live Demo

Model how to: set canvas, create/rename layers, use brushes/shapes, pick colors, resize, adjust opacity, erase.

12–15 min — Skill Drills

Students: make 2 layers, add 1 shape + 1 brush stroke, lower opacity of one element.
Teacher circulates and checks completion.

15–35 min — Create!

Students pick one project: Poster, Pixel Character, or Logo Badge.
Include at least 3 layers, 3 colors, clear focal point.

35–43 min — Gallery Walk

Students export drafts, view classmates' work, give feedback on focal points and contrast.

43–48 min — Polish & Final Export

Students revise and export final file as PNG/JPG with proper naming.

48–50 min — Exit Ticket

Students answer: One tool I used and why. Circle: I can manage layers (Yes / Kind of / Not yet).

Assessment

Rubric (10 pts total):

- Layers & Organization (0–3)
- Design Choices (0–3)
- Craft & Completion (0–2)
- Process & Reflection (0–2)

Differentiation & Supports

- Scaffold: Provide starter palettes or templates.
- Stretch: Add drop shadow/gradient, alternate palette.
- Accessibility: High-contrast palettes, mouse/trackpad options.

Digital Citizenship & Ethics

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Student Task Sheet

Circle your project: Poster / Pixel Character / Logo

Checklist:

- At least 3 layers (named)
- 3-color palette
- Clear focal point
- Adjusted opacity/shadow/outline
- Exported correctly (Period_Last_First_ProjectType.png)

Exit Reflection: One design decision I made on purpose was: _____