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# Art Lesson Plan

*I have always been a fan of Laurel Burch's designs and owned several products with her images over the years. The vibrant colors, stylized faces, and intricate designs are mesmerizing. When several of my students appeared to be getting frustrated as they attempted to draw animals (specifically dogs and cats) in their free time, I began to generate a basic lesson, but wanted to make it more meaningful. The day I stumbled upon some lessons based on Burch's felines, I knew I had found what I was looking for. This lesson became a favorite of my students, and it has resulted in some beautiful work.*

<i>Title</i>	Laurel Burch Inspired Cats and Other Fanciful Creatures
<i>Teacher</i>	Corinn Simpkins
<i>Grade level</i>	3-4
<i>Time duration</i>	2-3, 45 minute Sessions
<i>Overview</i>	Students will learn about the life and work of Laurel Burch. We begin by analyzing and discussing her work. Following direct instruction, students will create their own image of a cat as inspired by Burch.
<i>Objective/Elements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the artistic style of Laurel Burch.</li><li>• Work with line, shape and color values to create a unique and colorful animal.</li><li>• Follow step-by-step instructions (verbal and written).</li><li>• Demonstrate an understanding of contour drawing, line types, color and shape.</li><li>• Understand and explain 'center of mass'.</li><li>• Work independently.</li><li>• Respond positively and constructively to peers.</li></ul>
<i>Materials</i>	Black construction paper (9x12) White drawing paper (9x12) Pencil Colored pencils (oil pastels ok, will require fixative) white drawing pencil scissors glue **Special needs students: large light colored construction paper, crayons, oil pastels.

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*Activities and procedures*

Technology Requirements:

- Projector
- Internet enabled device (iPad, Apple TV, laptop, desktop computer) connected to the projector.
- Projection onto whiteboard recommended.

1. Display and discuss the work of Laurel Burch.

\*\*Projecting on a white board is preferable, as it is easy to demonstrate how to break down the figure by drawing on top of the projection on the whiteboard later.

Essential Questions:

- What do you think inspired Laurel to create these images?
- How did she apply the Elements of Art (color, line, shape, space, value)?
- What do you notice about her use of the elements?
- What processes and materials do you think she used to create her work?

2. Project an image of Burch's cats (fig. 1). Then explain how to break the object into familiar shapes, starting at the center of mass (body).

Ask the students if they can identify the shape(s) of the cat's body. Typical answers include capital 'D', lowercase 'a'. Draw the contour of the shape on top of the projection.

Next, identify the head shape and placement. Again, prompt students to identify something familiar. They may see a 'w' as the base shape of the lower face, and an 'M' on the top (I will prompt for letter recognition first, then have students share other images that they see).

For the nose we add the elongated 'U' shape that touches the middle of the 'w', then expands up the face. Next we create eyebrows by connecting the ends of the 'u' to the outside of the face by drawing a rainbow shaped curve. Add almond shaped eyes and a lower lip like a smiley face.

For the legs, we make another 'w' at lower corner of the body under the face and extend the middle of the 'w' halfway to the face.

Finally, we talk about the tail. What shape(s) do you see? Does the tail have to stay inside the confines of the body? How might the tail change the expression or mood of your cat?

Lastly, we discuss color choices, decorations and details. If possible, show examples from other students.

NOTES: Students often get frustrated thinking their proportions need to be perfect. To alleviate the stress, display some of Burch's other feline art that addresses contorted forms. Proceed by drawing several bodies of different sizes and shapes with somewhat distorted head shapes to show how the differences make a fun and unique piece.

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3. In some cases, students, or classes, may be ready to start immediately. With younger students, and those with learning disabilities, I lead them step-by-step through the process again as I draw on paper with them.

\*\*NOTE: Student often draw very small, therefore, clearly illustrate the value of drawing a larger body and head so it is easier to add design elements.

4. When the cats are completed, students design a background for their cat using a white pencil on black paper. Their background needs to demonstrate at least four line types, and touch all sides of the paper. Alternative option is a background that provides additional information about the characteristic of the cat but students still must use the variety of line types. For example, one student gave his cat an eye-patch and sword, then drew a ship and water scene in the background. "Captain Patch!"

5. Cut out your cat (animal) and glue to your black paper.

\*\*In some cases students still may have drawn their cat very small. Encourage them to draw a second or even third cat that they can add to their black paper.

6. Group Critique: Once all students have completed the project, we take up to 2 sessions to get through our group critique. All the work is put on display. Students describe what they were thinking about when they created their work, they may choose to describe what they like about it and what they would change if they did it again (about 2 min each, if that). As an audience member, students share what they like about the work (I have students take 5-6 comments). When they are finished, the presenter chooses the next work to be discussed.

### *Differentiation/Reflection*

Drawing just a large cat face is also great way to get the idea across in case the entire cat process is simply too much for some students. This can also become an extension for those who finish.

For Life-Skills or special needs students, I presented Burch's art, and allowed them to comment on what they saw and like about it. The discussion focuses more on color, lines and shape. Then, I provided larger light colored construction paper and a black crayon and led them through a step-by-step process of creating the basic image and allowed them to draw shapes and designs on their cat. Following the design phase, I take the black crayon away and provide them with oil pastels.

#### **Accelerated:**

Options:

1. Challenge students to create a different animal by changing characteristics such as ears, tail and body shape.
2. Make a series of faces only with different expressions.
3. Create a cat in motion.

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*Standards*

**Washington State EALRs – Visual Arts**

GLE: 1.1.1 Selects, uses and produces a variety of types and qualities of line to create an imaginative drawing.

GLE: 1.1.2 Applies, analyzes, and creates the elements of shape and form when producing a work of art.

GLE: 1.1.3 Applies, analyzes, and creates the element value when producing a work of art.

GLE: 1.1.5 Plans, selects and uses the element space and spatial devices in various environments.

GLE: 1.1.6 Applies, analyzes, and creates the element color when producing a work of art.

GLE: 1.1.7 Applies, analyzes, and creates repetition/pattern, contrast, variety, balance, movement/rhythm, and proportion in a work of art.

GLE: 1.3.1 Applies, analyzes, and creates artworks using visual art genres and styles of various artist, cultures, places, and times.

GLE: 2.1.1 Demonstrates a creative process by exploring elements, gathering information, implementing choices of the element and principles, and reflecting for the purpose of self-evaluation.

GLE: 2.2.1 Applies a presentation process by reflecting upon the process used to create artwork and self-evaluates.

GLE: 2.3.1 Applies a responding process by communicating what is perceived and experienced.

*References*

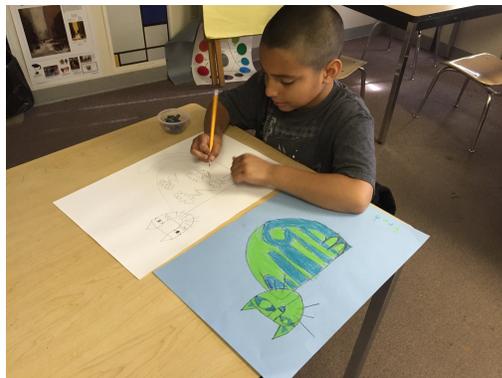
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Fig. 1  
Examples of Student Work:



Life Skills Option