

KID WISDOM



SPREADING JOY

Teachers and students in California created a public art project that has attracted a global audience for its positive message.

LEXILE: 1000L (840L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Production, Distribution, Consumption
COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.4, W.6-8.2

ENGAGE THE READER

Tell students that they will read about a public art project created by students. First, discuss the following: What is public art and what is its purpose? How is experiencing art in public different from seeing it in a museum or gallery? Have students scroll through the photos in the article for ideas, or do a quick search online for public art in their area. Continue the discussion by asking: What does public art contribute to a community? Do we need public art? Explain.

QUESTIONS FOR CLOSE READING AND DISCUSSION

- Describe the two parts of the PepToc art project. What can PepToc teach us about public art and its function? How does PepToc compare to other artworks that you know about?
- How would you describe the value of the PepToc project to its creators? What do artists get out of their work?
- Why do you think PepToc has gotten so much attention? Do you think art can usually have this kind of effect? Explain.

EXTEND LEARNING

Challenge students to plan their own public art project. Point out that PepToc was a project that every student could contribute to, and that it required few materials. But since students are just planning their project (for now), they should let their imaginations and aspirations run free.

First, have groups brainstorm potential projects. They should ask: What would we like our public art project to achieve? What values would it express? Where will it appear, and how will it affect the landscape? What materials would we need to create the project? How much time would we need to complete the project? Encourage students to draw up a proposal. Then have the groups present their proposals to the class and invite questions and suggestions. Have students consider whether one, or all, of these projects might be achieved.

COVER STORY QUIZ + ANSWER KEY

The cover quiz can be found on page 3 of this guide.
For the Google Forms quiz, click [here](#).

1. C (RI.2) 2. D (RI.1) 3. B (RI.5) 4. A (RI.7) 5. B (RI.5)
6. A (RI.1) 7. Answers will vary. (W.8)



A SYMBOL OF PEACE

People around the world are displaying sunflowers to show their support for Ukraine.

LEXILE: 1080L (970L alternate reading level)

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Time, Continuity, and Change

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.1, RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.6, RI.6-8.7

BEFORE READING

Have students scroll through the photographs in the article. Ask: What do you see? Why are the people in the photographs displaying sunflowers? Why would an object, such as a sunflower, take on meaning? What makes symbols effective in communicating ideas? Have you seen signs of support for Ukrainians in your community? Explain. If you would like to provide background on the war in Ukraine, have students read [“War in Ukraine”](#) (March 4, 2022) and [“News, Interrupted”](#) (March 11, 2022).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- According to the article, what meanings have people associated with sunflowers? Why do you think the world has adopted the sunflower as an image for communicating its response to the war in Ukraine?
- What does the article tell us about Ukraine’s history? Why is history essential to understanding the meaning of sunflowers today?



WHY WE REMEMBER MUSIC AND FORGET EVERYTHING ELSE

SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) STANDARD: Science, Technology, and Society

COMMON CORE (CCSS) STANDARDS: RI.6-8.3, RI.6-8.4, RI.6-8.8, W.6-8.2

BEFORE READING

Open the lesson with a discussion. Ask: Have you ever had a song stuck in your head? Why does that happen? How does it make you feel? What might that experience tell us about music and its effect on our minds?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Describe what an earworm is. Where does an earworm come from? What can it tell us about musical memory?
- Music psychology professor Kelly Jakubowski says, “Music is inherently bound up with personal identity.” What does that mean? Illustrate this concept with an example from your own experience with music.

WRITING

Psychology professor Andrea Halpern says, “Orienting yourself towards the emotional message actually helps you remember the actual music better.” Have students write an essay about a song that has emotional meaning for them. Encourage students to think about how the song’s emotional meaning reflects their life experiences, in addition to thinking about the music and lyrics themselves. Students might tell stories, as well as describe the musical qualities of the song.