

Media Project #2:

Are you ready? It's Art Attack time!

1. Art Attack was a TV show that was popular for children in the 1990's and early 2000's. It featured Neil Buchanan, a friendly artist who did many projects including what he called "Big Art Attacks". Each member of our group had, in some way been aware of or had been connected to the TV show. Some of us had even watched the show regularly and tried out projects that were featured. Needless to say it was something we all had positive memories of and it was also very educational.

The genesis of our idea came up in small group discussion when we were reflecting on our enjoyment of the show as children. We liked how multimodal the show was, as it was on television, it used visual literacy and taught tangible skills to young viewers. We also liked how it was very interactive as it encouraged the viewer to try out each skill they learned and to engage with the medium they were being introduced to.

Our group decided to undertake a "Big Art Attack". This basically entails creating a large image on a surface that can be viewed from above, with materials that can be laid out on the ground. We spent lots of time trying to decide what kind of image we should create and with what. After brainstorming, looking up images and weighing the practicality of an idea with the inspiration behind it, we came up with the ideas of the "Inquire, Imagine, Inspire" logo or a camera. We decided the logo would be too challenging to create with the materials we had at hand (fabric) and so we underwent a trial run with the camera. We soon discovered that the camera was not as exciting as we had originally thought and finally decided to create an iPhone. This fit into our concept and ideation of a digital piece, while still referencing the traditional style of artistry that had inspired our ideas. It is also a commentary on how a small device like an iPhone has so much information on it that it actually becomes quite a large and powerful device. Our Art Attack has taken away some of its digital power, but we have made it symbolically large.

Finally we wanted to make sure our project would be commented on and discussed in the digital world and so we decided to encourage the viewers to take an active role in the documentation of the process as well as the finished product. By setting up various social media sites for this Art Attack we will hopefully engage a wider audience than who simply was present at the time of creation.

2. For our Big Art Attack we had watched several videos of the old style to see what Neil did, what kinds of materials he used and how we could tie it into media. We considered filming it and showing the video in-class, but then we thought it might be much more interesting for the class if we turned it into a participatory, crowd-sourced project. Maggie had been to see the Douglas Coupland exhibit at the VAG and brought up how so many of Coupland's pieces were smart-phone-interactive, and our idea was born. We decided to do a live Art Attack and ask the class to video and photograph the event, and tweet or instagram their videos and photos to create our media project.

As far as materials, we thought about building a camera as a meta-commentary on the idea that we are pointing a camera at them at the same time as they are photographing and taping us. We brought bags and bags of sheets, towels and clothing to experiment outdoors. We knew we would need to be seen from above so we chose the mezzanine between the libraries as our venue,

and headed out to practice. When we discovered we wouldn't have enough material for the camera, we came up with the idea for the iPhone, which we realized works even better. We took pictures to experiment with various views and so that we could remember how we built the Art Attack.

Our plan is that on the day of the performance, we will have one person introduce the project, have the class access the twitter and instagram accounts we have set up (@UBCArtAttack) and lead the class to the venue. We will play music and perform our Art Attack, then bring the class back and access the accounts to see what kind of footage we came up with.

3. For our Art Attack we divided the workload by having each group member bring as many supplies as possible. Because our original concept was a camera, each group member brought blankets, sheets, towels and clothes that were grey, black and white. However, since we ended up with a wider range colours we decided to change our original idea to an iPhone. We also used our class time to come up with a concept and then practiced setting it up and editing it.

4. In order to assess this activity, the teacher would need to be aware of two main criteria: the execution of a *live* Art Attack (as a performance) and the preparation required for this activity.

Because Art Attack is traditionally performed and filmed, and then replayed at an fast-forwarded pace, there are elements that a live Art Attack would not be able to duplicate. Firstly, speeding up the action to match the speed in the videos would not be possible, and secondly, the performers lack the ability to make video edits, crop out mistakes, and add other polished details to the final product. As such, the assessment for our Art Attack would need to assess preparedness in lieu of video editing.

The multimedia involved in this project are the materials chosen for the Art Attack and the involvement of the viewers, as they try to guess what is being created. Ideally, group members will think of the Art Attack as a way to convey a theme or symbol that is present in a work of literature covered in class, and have a rationale for the symbol or image they chose. Thus, the teacher would need to assess the students based on how effective the chosen materials and props are to convey the final message of the Art Attack, as well as the aesthetics of said materials when seen together as a work of art. This portion can be assessed summatively.

Meanwhile, the digital media aspect of this project would be undertaken by the classmates witnessing the performance, and this portion would be assessed formatively, to see whether the classmates are able to make insightful and educated guesses as to what is being created. As such, classmates would be involved in active participation, as opposed to passive participation (which is the norm for most performances). Group members would be responsible to give the participants (the classmates) clear instructions as to what they need to be doing during the Art Attack.

The collaborative aspect of this project is harder to gauge, as the bulk of the preparation is carried out before the presentation date. A peer evaluation could be carried out in order to make sure that all group members are responsible for their share of the load, and making these evaluations anonymous can help greatly in telling the teacher whether or not group members were equally invested in the project. The questionnaire attached below shows an example of how a peer evaluation sheet might look.

Teamwork can also be gauged by how well the group members interact with each other during the Art Attack performance. It will become obvious if group members have not rehearsed the Art Attack together beforehand, as it will show in the seamlessness of the execution and the communication between group members as they create the art.

Taking all these aspects into consideration, the following questionnaire and rubric can be used to assess the Art Attack performance.

5. Some of the greatest challenges in presenting an Art Attack was the preparation that happened beforehand. In order for it to have been successful, there was a lot of group collaboration that was required, as well as some time management. On a side note, thank you Teresa for giving us time at the end of class to work on our projects. Continuing with the idea of our media project, this wasn't a project where we could have simply split the tasks without making the effort to meet up once or twice. To be successful, we needed to all be there for each and every step – from beginning to end. And so, group collaboration was crucial in order for us to develop a clear vision of our end product.

Returning to this idea of timing, it actually played a much more significant role than just the manner in which we managed it. Art Attack can take some time to do, and so we needed to figure out the most efficient way to portray this art piece. This brought up a small problem as we didn't know how we could go about presenting this media project without taking too much of the class's time. At one point, we thought of filming it live, which we then could have simply played on-screen in the classroom. However, we realized that this wouldn't have had the same affect as it would of if our classmates weren't given the chance to witness it themselves, out in the beautiful University of British Columbia. And so we agreed to present our Art Attack live, asking our classmates to take out their phones, so as to take a picture of our work, which they could then share publicly with the world.

Another issue we came across was this potential for 'location' to be a problem, if the following assignment were given to high school students. After all, Art Attack involves having a lot of open space, which classrooms do not normally provide for students. A higher viewing point is also necessary if students wished to see the finished product at the end. Because UBC Vancouver is an enormous campus, finding a good spot for the Art Attack did not cause for too much difficulty, whereas some schools may not have such a location available for them. In that case, students would have to learn to improvise and to do the best with what they were given.

Another obstacle in which we found ourselves facing was this unfortunate barrier of having a lack of resources. Our initial idea was to create an image of a camera using a variety of clothes we had brought from home. However, half way in creating our Art Attack, we came to this unfortunate realization that we hadn't brought a sufficient amount of supplies in order to fully portray the vision in which we initially had. And so, we adapted and decided to go with something else. Personally, I think that the final image we had decided on was, as a matter of fact, more relevant to the types of discussions we'd been having lately regarding technology. As such, giving students the opportunity to encounter problems and to overcome them, by either adapting their project in its entirety or by taking it elsewhere, is an extremely important learning moment. Things will never *always* go the way you envision it, which is rightly so. Sometimes, we learn more by getting out of our comfort zone and attempting to do something completely new. This is what we call learning, not failure.

In conclusion, our media project on Art Attack serves as a reminder for both teachers and students that improvisation, team collaboration, timing, and creativity remain important factors

when it comes to building and shaping specific ideas and messages that one wishes to convey with others. We hope you enjoy our Art Attack!

Here is an example of Neil Buchanan, from the original children's television series, doing a Big Art Attack!

Neil Buchanan creating a Big Art Attack of himself on *Art Attack*

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AriIRjB1ZdM>

References

Art Attack. ITV Network (CITV). UK, 1990-2007. Television.

Centralfan94. "Art Attack clip 8 – Neil does a Big Art Attack...of himself!" Online video clip.

YouTube. YouTube, 11 Oct. 2011. Web. 15 July. 2014.

Art Attack: Peer evaluation

Group member 1: _____

Group member 2: _____

Group member 3: _____

Was the contribution equal?

Very equally divided -----Somewhat equally divided-----Not
equally divided

If it was NOT equal, list people in the order of who did the most work:

Worked most: _____

Worked some: _____

Worked least: _____

Did your group members collaborate well (did you get along and take each other's ideas?)

Collaborated well-----Collaborated somewhat-----Made
things difficult

If you did NOT feel like there was good collaboration, explain what happened:

Is there anything else you want the teacher to know?

Live Art Attack Rubric

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
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Preparedness	Student is completely prepared and has obviously rehearsed.	Student seems pretty prepared but might have needed a couple more rehearsals.	The student is somewhat prepared, but it is clear that rehearsal was lacking.	Student does not seem at all prepared to present.
Purpose	Purpose of the Art Attack is clearly stated and well-explained.	Purpose of the Art Attack is clearly stated.	Purpose of the Art Attack is partially stated.	Purpose of the Art Attack is unclear.
Directions to classmates	Student gives clear directions to the viewers of the Art Attack and assumes the position of leader.	Student gives clear directions to the viewers of the Art Attack.	Student gives directions, but they either lack organization or conviction.	Student does not give directions.
Props/materials	Student uses props and materials that show considerable work/creativity and which make the presentation better.	Student uses props and materials that shows some work/creativity and which make the presentation better.	Student uses a prop or material that does not support the presentation.	The student uses no extra props or materials.
Cooperation and teamwork	Student worked well with his/her peers and executed the Art Attack seamlessly.	Student worked with his/her peers.	Student was absent or not fully collaborative with his/her peers.	Student made little to no contribution in the process.