

EXQUISITE CORPSE

A FUN AND EASY DRAWING GAME - TEACHERS' EDITION

HISTORY

"Exquisite Corpse" is a century-old collaborative game where players secretly and sequentially add text or images to a work of art. Started by Surrealists, this game's features continue to surface in new art waves and movements. "Exquisite Corpse" artwork has even ended up in the New York MoMA! From Marcel Duchamp to Marcel Dzama, artists around the world continue to be inspired by this cooperative - and always surprising - artistic exercise.

GAME REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum of two people
- One piece of paper per person
- An open mind

TEACHERS' NOTES

Why is this lesson plan important? This exercise is focused on fostering participants' collaboration and creativity. We break the lesson into three stages, each sequentially pushing participants to cooperate, be playful, and invent. These stages are outlined as follows:

- 1) **Demonstrate:** Show group how Exquisite Corpse is played at its most basic level with pen and paper. **GOAL:** participants understand rules of the game. .
- 2) **Play:** Facilitate several rounds of the game. With each round you increase collaboration and familiarity with different people. Further, repetition is important because it helps participants break out of their shells and become more comfortable with pushing creative limits. **GOAL:** participants collaborate and push themselves (and each other) to be inventive.
- 3) **Create:** For more advanced ages, participants can take what they've learned and apply it to more complex projects that take the basic Exquisite Corpse game to the next level. **GOAL:** participants understand how the same logic can be applied across different mediums.

STAGE 1 - DEMONSTRATE

Team up with someone to show the other students how the game works.

Use the top half of a piece of paper and draw the human form from the waist up (Image #1).

Fold the paper in half so that your work is hidden except for two short guide lines that extend to the other side of the folded paper. These lines designate where your waist ends and the other players work should begin (Image #2).

Have the other player draw a human form from the waist down using your guide lines as a place of reference.

Have another participant reveal the creation to the class.

Image #1

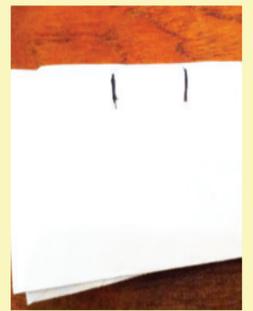


Image #2

TEACHERS' NOTES

Anticipation of an event (the revealing) and the sharing of an experience (the surprise) are a main source of fun in this game. Make a big deal of it! Drumroll please!

STAGE 2 - PLAY

Basic. Break the participants into groups of two and have them play the game. Each participant draws on their piece of paper, folds it and then passes it to the other player. The two participants then complete the other person's drawing. Pick up the finished pieces before the participants see the results. Reveal the works to the class. Identify and praise the participants and each design.

Threesies. This time divide students into new groups of three. Fold the paper in three separate sections for the legs, torso and head. Reveal results and praise.

Big groups. Repeat the game with new groups of four. Fold the paper in four separate sections for the head, torso, legs, & feet. Reveal results and praise.

Let loose. Repeat the game with groups of two. This time introduce a new form into the game. Instead of drawing the human form draw a robot, a tree's roots, an octopus, a lollipop or a helicopter. Surprise and inspire them!

TEACHERS' NOTES

- Breaking down into small groups makes it easier for the students to learn and for you to guide.
- Sharing the initial creation process with only one other person is memorable and bonding.
- This game sometimes produces strange results that make students feel weird. In the revealing stages praise is key.
- The revealing moment is also a great time to guide discussion about the game and the art created. What did each person draw individually? What did they create together as a group?



STAGE 3: CREATE

There are many other ways of playing Exquisite Corpse. Instead of drawing with pencils, participants can collaborate with a number of materials (e.g. paint, collage, crayons, or glitter). In addition, they can also use the same logic to make collaborative videos, performances, sculpture, or written text.

Brainstorm with your class about the possibilities of "Exquisite Corpse". Give additional examples and pique their curiosity. Encourage the class to collaborate and explore.

BONUS: SHARE

Have the participants take home their creations. Encourage them to play the game with their family or friends. Teaching someone else is the best way to learn - and that way the fun continues.

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