



MUSEUM
WITHOUT WALLS™ AUDIO
A program of the Association for Public Art

LESSON PLAN

Sleeping Woman



Sleeping Woman (1991)
Stephen Berg and Tom Chimes

TOPIC: An introduction to text as an artistic medium, using *Sleeping Woman* by Tom Chimes and Stephen Berg. (75 minutes)

Audio slideshow on TeacherTube: <http://bit.ly/SleepingWomanTeacherTube>

Downloadable audio program: <http://bit.ly/MWW-AUDIO-programs>

I. LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Goals:

- A. To acquaint students with the public artwork *Sleeping Woman*.
- B. To introduce text as an artistic medium and encourage students to consider how text can describe and alter physical space.
- C. To introduce the concepts of site and site-specific artworks.

2. Objectives:

- A. Students will understand that text can be used as an artistic medium.
- B. Students will understand that text works in conjunction to its placement (site).
- C. Students will make their own short poems inspired by *Sleeping Woman*.
- D. Students will collaboratively arrange their short poems to form a longer text work and will install it outside as a group.

II. AN INTRODUCTION SLEEPING WOMAN (10 mins)

Have you ever gone to the museum and read a title or description of an artwork next to it? Or maybe you've seen a sculpture with a name or saying engraved on it. The visual arts often go hand in hand with text, but how the two come together can vary.

Some artworks actually use text as the whole medium! *Sleeping Woman*, an artwork in Fairmount Park along the bank of the Schuylkill River, is an example of an artwork that uses text as a medium.

(Show MWW #34 *Sleeping Woman*: <http://bit.ly/SleepingWomanTeacherTube>) (4 mins)

Sleeping Woman was created for that specific site, along the Schuylkill River bank. Do you think it would change the meaning of the piece if it was placed somewhere else? Do you think it would have the same meaning or message if it was placed along a highway? On the sidewalk? Along an ocean? In the woods?

We call artworks that were made for a specific place “site-specific”. The site where the artwork is placed can affect or change the entire meaning of the piece.

III. INDIVIDUAL POEMS (25 mins)

Today we’re going to make a collaborative text work, inspired by Tom Chimes and Stephen Berg’s *Sleeping Woman*.

Choose one evocative word to begin with (for example, the word “river”). Invite students to collectively brainstorm other words relating to that word. Present students with additional envelopes filled with words written on index cards that relate to the original word. Words that relate to “river” might include: sink, float, dark, etc.

Using a marker on a full-size piece of paper, ask each student to write a short poem or word grouping using at least one of the words offered by the class and at least one word from the index cards. Encourage students to use words that describe size, color, shape, and distance.

IV. COLLABORATIVE POEM (30 mins)

This portion of the lesson can be done as a whole class or in groups. Go around the room and have each student read their short poem. Then put all of the poems in the middle of the table or on the floor. Together, the students should determine how to arrange the individual poems into a larger poem. Tape the poems together to keep it in order while you move to your installation site.

Find an outdoor location where you can write the poems in chalk. Students should choose a site to “install” their chalk poem and then take turns being the “reader” and the writer, working to write out the entire poem in chalk.

After the poem is complete, chose a student to read it!

VI. CLEAN UP AND REFLECTION (5 mins)

Bring the class inside. Discuss as a class how their poem is similar and different from *Sleeping Woman*.

Did they work collaboratively like Tom Chimes and Stephen Berg?

Did they utilize a variety of different texts to form one whole?

Will their poem last forever or will it wear away with time?

VI. VIDEOS/ IPOD

With any extra time students can use iPods, personal audio devices or computers to listen to the audio program for *LOVE*, another text-inspired artwork. (Downloadable *LOVE* audio program here: <http://bit.ly/MWW-AUDIO-programs>)

VII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The Association for Public Art: <http://www.associationforpublicart.org>

How to request hi-res/additional images:
<http://associationforpublicart.org/image-requests>





MUSEUM
WITHOUT WALLS™
AUDIO

