

Look to your Dreams

Modern artists at the beginning of the twentieth century followed three main currents: Expression (expressing their feelings), Abstraction (exploring the formal structure of art) and Fantasy (depicting imagination and the subconscious). Surrealist artist like Salvador Dali explored fantasy by trying to paint from his dreams. Your students will delight at the surprising subjects, impossible fantasies and unexpected images of Dali's art. Surrealist art can inspire your students to express their imaginations in new and creative ways!

Objectives: Students will:

- Explore the life and surrealist art of Salvador Dali.
- Identify and discuss imaginative, impossible or unexpected elements in surrealist artwork.
- Create an imaginative, surreal multi-media collage based on a personal dream or fantasy.

Curriculum:

- Visual Arts and Art History.

Classroom Materials:

- Laurentien® markers, coloured pencils, oil pastels, scissors, drawing paper, magazines, construction paper, fabric, wallpaper samples, glue, etc..

Procedure:

Ask your students to brainstorm where artists get their ideas. Focus the discussion on "imagination" or "dreams" and introduce examples of surrealist art by Salvador Dali. A good, age-appropriate introduction for students is Mike Venezia's book *Salvador Dali. Where did Dali get his ideas?*

Explore Dali's images with your students (you could also include artwork by René Magritte or Joan Miró). Explain that "sur" means beyond or farther than — so "surreal" means to go beyond real. Have them identify parts of the paintings that are surreal, unusual, surprising or impossible. Discuss how Dali's realistic painting style makes these things seem even more startling. Why would surrealist artists want to show things that are surreal or unexpected?

Ask your students to share or write about a dream or fantasy they've had. Ask them to remember how they felt during the dream. What kind of images did they "see" in their dream? Did their dream feel real? Did they dream things that weren't possible in real life? Have them imagine how their dream would look in a picture.

Have students create a multi-media collage about their dream or fantasy. Encourage them to use several media to create a surreal piece of art that tells about their dream and how they felt. Ask them to think about which materials best show their feelings/ideas. Have them include surprising, impossible elements to create a mood, describe an idea or tell a story. Encourage them to be creative and out of this world.

Resources:

Web Site: www.kultur-online.com/greatest

Books for Students:

Venezia, Mike. *Salvador Dali*. Chicago: Children's Press, 1993

Books for Teachers:

Golf, Robert. *The Essential Salvador Dali*. New York:

Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers, 1998.

Gomez de Liano, Ignacio. *Dali*. New York: Rizzoli, 1982

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Grades 3-4
Visual Arts and Art History

Salvador Dali was born in Spain in 1904 and became one of the most famous painters of the twentieth century. Dali's paintings are filled with strange objects from his dreams and imaginations.



Salvador Dali

Salvador Dali loved attention. He wore a long curling mustache that he said let him receive messages from outer space. Once he gave a ball where everyone had to come dressed as their favourite dream. Another time, Dali arrived in a limousine filled with cauliflower.