



## Art Toy Design: Painting MUNNYWORLD

### Description

This lesson focuses on 2-D customization. Students will learn about the Art Toy movement and the Pop Art genre that informs it, customizing their own art toy figures using Kidrobot's MUNNYWORLD do-it-yourself toys.

### Objectives

Students will:

- Learn how popular and commercial culture, “street art,” and the art shown in galleries and museums influence each other and gain creative energy through the exchange of ideas and visual imagery.
- Be introduced to the Pop Art movement.
- Learn to see the objects and images in their everyday lives as a source of inspiration for their own art.
- Create their own toy character, exploring possibilities for individual self-expression.

### Materials

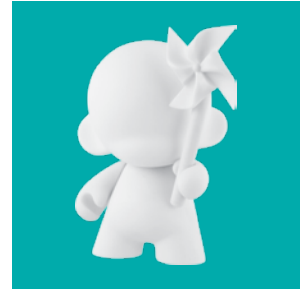
Kidrobot MUNNYWORLD do-it-yourself toys  
Acrylic paints  
Paint markers  
Sharpie markers  
Paper, pencils and markers for preliminary sketches

### Procedure

Introduce students to Pop Art and designer “art toys.”

Background: Pop Art is a movement that became popular in the United States and England in the late 1950s and 1960s and continues to have a strong influence on the art world today. It is based on the idea of using imagery from everyday life and consumer culture as subject matter for art. One of the most famous pop artists was Andy Warhol, whose paintings and prints of movie stars and of consumer goods such as Campbell's Soup cans celebrated pop culture and American consumerism. American artist Roy Lichtenstein focused on imagery from comic books. Claes Oldenburg made gigantic sculptures of household items. All of these artists drew from the popular culture and the world of everyday images and objects to make their art.

Contemporary Pop Art, particularly the work being done by several prominent Japanese artists, carries on this vibrant tradition, commenting on consumer culture and using



images from Japanese “manga” comics and animation or “anime.” Most students will be familiar with the Pokemon and Digimon cartoon and collector fads, which swept through the country in the last decade.

## CLASS 1: Discussion and Sketches

### Discussion

Show students several examples of Pop Art and contemporary Japanese art, for instance:

- Andy Warhol’s “Campbell Soup” prints
- Chinatsu Ban’s “Yellow Elephant” from Central Park installation, 2005
- Roy Lichtenstein’s “Whaam!”



### Questions

- Where did these artists get their inspiration?
- Do these pieces of art look like things you might see in your everyday life?
- Is it okay for artists to “borrow” images that already exist?
- Why do you think the artists focused on these images?

### Demonstration

Show students examples of finished MUNNYWORLD toys, either one that the teacher has done, or images from the gallery at [www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld](http://www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld), or both!

Ask students to imagine a character that they want to create, keeping in mind that it can be as realistic or abstract as they'd like.

At this age, the invitation to create a character is very powerful and exciting, and students usually need little direction to come up with ideas. If students need motivation, the teacher can encourage them to use ideas from pop culture, mythology, book characters, fantasy, or the media. The MUNNYWORLD figures can have a theme (e.g., nature, or outer space), represent powers the students would like to have, or express an emotion.

Have students sketch the basic MUNNYWORLD figure's shape in outline form, front and back. Depending on the age of the class and general skill level, the teacher can also download MUNNYWORLD templates at [www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld/?p=edu](http://www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld/?p=edu).

Using pencils, markers, or colored pencils, students should plan out the design for their MUNNYWORLD figure. Students should keep in mind that, after they begin, their plans might change. This initial sketch is a “blueprint” for their toy rather than an exact depiction of what it will be.

## CLASS 2: Painting MUNNYWORLD

### Set-Up

Have tables covered with paper, as this can get messy!

Have damp paper towels or wipes available to keep hands clean without trips to the sink.

Set out pencils, paint pens, acrylic paints, water, paper towels and paint brushes, including small sizes for detail work.

Students should look at their sketches and, if they want to, lightly pencil the designs onto the MUNNYWORLD figures. They should feel free to change their ideas as they work.

When they are ready, students can paint their toys with acrylic paint, which should be used directly from the tube or bottle and not thinned. Paint pens and Sharpies also work well, although students should be careful about smearing as they handle the toys.

NOTE: The heads of each MUNNYWORLD figure can be removed (and replaced later) to make painting easier.

For more customizing tips, please refer to our MUNNYWORLD Customizing Guide. Go to [www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld/?p=customize](http://www.kidrobot.com/munnyworld/?p=customize).



## CLASS 3: Sharing MUNNYWORLD

Set the toys up in the classroom so that the students can see everyone's work. Have them each talk about their design:

- Who is their character?
- What inspired it?
- Does it have any special powers/characteristics?
- Why did they choose the colors they did?

## Additional Activities:

- Have the students write a brief story featuring their character.
- Ask the students to take the toy with them for a week and photograph it in various places that the student goes: at home, on vacation, the grocery store, the park, the Laundromat, the mall, wherever! Assemble the photos in a journal, and have students tell a funny story about the toy's "travels."
- Have students make accessories for their characters.
- Look at toys from various cultures, like Native American Kachina storyteller dolls, early American rag dolls, or Russian nesting dolls, and compare them to the MUNNYWORLD figures. Discuss: "What do the characters people create say about the people and cultures who make them?"

## Resources

Images of toys are available at [kidrobot.com](http://kidrobot.com).

Teachers may choose to focus on one aspect of pop culture or another. Artists whose work provides rich source material for discussion include:

Andy Warhol  
[www.warholfoundation.org](http://www.warholfoundation.org)  
[www.warhol.org](http://www.warhol.org)

Claes Oldenburg  
[www.oldenburgvanbruggen.com](http://www.oldenburgvanbruggen.com)

Robert Rauschenberg  
[www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/rauschenberg\\_robert.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/rauschenberg_robert.html)  
[www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/rauschenberg\\_r.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/database/rauschenberg_r.html)

Roy Lichtenstein  
[www.lichtensteinfoundation.org](http://www.lichtensteinfoundation.org)

Keith Haring  
[www.haringkids.com](http://www.haringkids.com)  
[www.haring.com](http://www.haring.com)

Takashi Murakami & Contemporary Japanese Art  
[www.jca-online.com/murakami.html](http://www.jca-online.com/murakami.html)

Murakami Exhibit  
[www.moca.com/murakami](http://www.moca.com/murakami)  
[www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/murakami](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/exhibitions/murakami)

Graffiti Artists  
[www.graffiti.org](http://www.graffiti.org)