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HVL LESSON TITLE:

THE ART OF SWEETHEARTS

DEVELOPED BY: ERIN COGGINS

THE ART OF SWEETHEARTS

GUIDING QUESTION:

How did jewelry and other keepsake items play a role between soldiers and those at home?

OVERVIEW:

During WWII, sweetheart jewelry served as a tangible symbol of love, patriotism, and the separation caused by the war. These pieces, often exchanged between soldiers and their loved ones, helped bridge the emotional distance created by wartime deployments. Women wore them to show support for their men in service and to keep them close to their hearts.



SUBJECT(S):
Art



WWII VETERAN(S):
Sherwin Callander



DURATION:
60 minutes

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“When the navy recruiter said there would be a girl in every port, I said
“Sign me up!”

WWII Veteran Sherwin Callander

OVERVIEW:

During WWII, sweetheart jewelry served as a tangible symbol of love, patriotism, and the separation caused by the war. These pieces, often exchanged between soldiers and their loved ones, helped bridge the emotional distance created by wartime deployments. Women wore them to show support for their men in service and to keep them close to their hearts.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT:

Approximately 16 million Americans served in the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II. These 16 million men left behind their mothers, sisters, wives, and girlfriends.

Besides writing letters home, many of these servicemen wanted to leave something behind to keep their presence alive on the home front. These sweetheart pieces were mass-produced and sold through different channels, including military camps and retail stores. However, considering the popularity of sweetheart jewelry, other items and the context of the war, it's inferred that many thousands of these pins were produced

OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to

- Understand items related to the WWII home front.
- Utilize artistic skills and art and design principles to create artwork.

STANDARDS:

AL: Develop: 2 Art Education

Collaboratively apply a personal aesthetic in designing, testing, and refining original artistic ideas, prototypes, and production strategies for media arts productions, considering artistic intentions, constraints of resources, and presentation context.

AL: Integrate: 4 Art Education

Analyze the intent, meanings, and influence of a variety of media arts productions, based on personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts.

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MATERIALS & DOCUMENTS

[Memoirs of WWII-Sherwin Callander video](#)

Video Questions (Doc A)

Photo of Sweetheart Jewelry (Doc B)

Photo of Sweetheart Pillow Case (Doc C)

Art of Sweetheart Activity (Doc D)

Rubric (Doc E)

PROCEDURES

ACTIVITY 01

- Show the [Memoirs of WWII-Sherwin Callander Video](#).
- Instruct students to complete the video questions (Doc A) as they watch the video. Discuss the questions following the video.
- Ask students the following: Men like Mr. Callander wanted to leave their presence behind as they fought overseas. What types of mementos do you think G.I.s left their mothers, sisters, wives and girlfriends as a daily reminder of their love and devotion?

ACTIVITY 02

- Inform students of the following: Sweetheart jewelry first became popular during World War I, as a means of connection between wives, mothers and sweethearts back home and the men fighting overseas. It was one of many things that soldiers either made or purchased, along with pillowcase covers, handkerchiefs, compacts, and the like. It was **fashionable**: rationing of material resulted in clothing with little embellishment. Pinning a brooch on a lapel or wearing a locket gave the wearer a little bit of glitz. It was **patriotic**: many of the pieces were produced in the shape of patriotic symbols; the flag and the

American eagle were most often depicted.

The slogan “Remember Pearl Harbor” found its way onto many pins, often accented with a pearl. It reflected a **sense of service**: many women proudly wore the pin version of a “man-in-service” flag, the blue star in the center, on a white background, with a red border, to indicate a son or husband in service.

- Show the photo of the Sweetheart Jewelry (Doc B). Discuss the artistic elements of the jewelry as well as the 3 elements of sweetheart jewelry: fashionable, patriotic, and sense of service.
- Show the photo of the Sweetheart Pillow Case (Doc C). Again, discuss the artistic elements of the work and the 3 elements of sweetheart items.

ACTIVITY 03

- Distribute the Art of the Sweetheart Activity (Doc D). Read the directions aloud with the class.
- Students will have the remainder of the class period to create their own sweetheart item. **NOTE:** The creation can simply be a drawing or the teacher can provide the materials to create an actual item (jewelry, handkerchiefs, pillowcase covers, etc.)

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VIDEO QUESTIONS

DOC A



1. What convinced Mr. Callander to enlist in the Navy?
2. Where did Mr. Callander first see action?
3. How does he describe what he saw in Pearl Harbor?
4. Mr. Callander wanted a change of scenery. What did he do next? Where does this change take him?
5. What does Mr. Callander say was the worst battle he was in?
6. Who did Mr. Callander lose in the war?

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PHOTO OF SWEETHEART JEWELRY

DOC B



Inscription on back of pin:

Keep my love deep in my heart.
It's the safest thing to do....
No one dares invade it there.
For you're steal-proof thru and thru!

This little pin says "taken."
It fills me with great joy.
To know you are my little girl.
And I'm your great big boy!



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PHOTO OF SWEETHEART ITEMS



THE ART OF SWEETHEARTS

ART OF SWEETHEARTS ACTIVITY



Imagine you are a jeweler/creator during WWII and your customer has asked you to create a Sweetheart item for a loved one (girlfriend, mother, sister, grandmother).

Before you start:

Research examples of actual WWII sweetheart jewelry and other items.

You can create one of the following:

- Jewelry-bracelet, pendant for a necklace, brooch/pin
- Handkerchief
- Pillow Case

Details:

- Your creation must take in account the 3 characteristics of “Sweetheart” items: fashionable, patriotic, and a sense of service.
- Your creation must include a visual element. Incorporate symbols and motifs that were popular during WWII, such as the Americana flag, eagles, hearts, stars, or the Victory “V”, etc.
- Your creation must include a verbal element. Consider adding a personal touch like initials, dates, or a small message.

Design Plan:

A design plan should accompany your Sweetheart creation. This plan should detail what materials should be used (make sure to utilize those that were commonly used during that era, such as sterling silver, wood, or acrylic). Colors should be described. Artistic elements/aesthetics should be listed.

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RUBRIC



POINTS	1(D)	2 (C)	3 (B)	4 (A)
Elements of Design	Student did the minimum or the artwork was never completed.	Student did the assignment in a satisfactory matter but lack of planning is exhibited.	The artwork shows that the student applied the principles discussed in class adequately.	The artwork shows the student applied the principles discussed in class in a unique way.
Creativity	The piece shows no evidence of creativity or unique thought.	The work lacked sincere originality.	The work demonstrates originality.	The work shows a unique originality.
Effort	The student did not finish the work in a satisfactory manner.	The student finished the work, but it lacks details.	The student completed the work in an above average manner.	The student gave the effort beyond the requirements of the assignment.
Written Portion	The student had too many grammatical errors in the written assignment as well as lack of details.	The student had some grammatical errors in the written assignment. Details could have been better.	The student followed all grammatical rules and gave good details.	The student followed all grammatical rules and went above and beyond on the details.
Era Directions	The student did not adhere to the era specific requirements.	The student somewhat adhered to the era specific requirements.	The student adhered to the era specific requirements.	The student went beyond to ensure that era specific requirements were met.

Teacher Comments: