Title
Ramón Esono Ebalé, Equatorial Guinean Artist and Human Rights Activist

Concept/Main Idea of Lesson
The purpose of this lesson is to familiarize students with the work and life of Equatorial Guinean artist Ramón Esono Ebalé as well as provide an overview of the history and government of Equatorial Guinea.

Intended Grade Levels
Grades 9-12

Infusion/Subject Areas
Visual Arts
Social Studies

Curriculum Standards
Visual Art:
VA.5.C.3.3: Critique works of art to understand the content and make connections with other content areas.
VA.5.H.1.1: Examine historical and cultural influences that inspire artists and their work.
VA.68.C.3.1: Incorporate accurate art vocabulary during the analysis process to describe the structural elements of art and organizational principles of design.
VA.912.H.3.1: Synthesize knowledge and skills learned from non-art content areas to support the processes of creation, interpretation, and analysis.
Social Studies:
S.912.H.1.2: Describe how historical events, social context, and culture impact forms, techniques, and purposes of works in the arts, including the relationship between a government and its citizens.
SS.912.H.1.5: Examine artistic response to social issues and new ideas in various cultures.
SS.912.H.2.1: Identify specific characteristics of works within various art forms (architecture, dance, film, literature, music, theatre, and visual arts).
SS.912.H.2.3: Apply various types of critical analysis (contextual, formal, and intuitive criticism) to works in the arts, including the types and use of symbolism within art forms and their philosophical implications.
SS.912.H.2.4: Examine the effects that works in the arts have on groups, individuals,

and cultures.
SS.912.H.2.5: Describe how historical, social, cultural, and physical settings influence an audience's aesthetic response.

Common Core:
LACC.1112.L.3.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
LACC.1112.L.3.6: Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level.

National Council for the Social Studies Curriculum Themes

Culture: Human beings create, learn, and adapt culture. Cultures are dynamic systems of beliefs, values, and traditions that exhibit both commonalities and differences. Understanding culture helps us understand ourselves and others.

Time, Continuity, & Change: Human beings seek to understand their historic roots and to locate themselves in time. Knowing what things were like in the past and how things change and develop helps us answer important questions about our current condition.

People, Places, & Environment: Today's students are aware of the world beyond their personal locations. As students study this content, they create their spatial views and geographic perspectives. Social, cultural, economic, and civic demands require such knowledge to make informed and critical decisions about relationships between people and their environment.

Power, Authority, & Governance: Understanding the development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions is essential for the emergence of civic competence.

Global Connections: The realities of global interdependence require understanding of the increasingly important and diverse global connections among societies. Persisting and emerging global issues require solutions.

Civic Ideals and Practices: All people have a stake in examining civic ideals and practices across time and in diverse societies, as well as in determining how to close the gap between present practices and the ideals on which our democratic republic is based. An understanding of civic ideals and the practice of citizenship is critical to full participation in society.

Instructional Objectives
The student will:
- have a basic understanding of the history and government of contemporary Equatorial Guinea;
- describe the artistic training of Equatorial Guinean artist Ramón Esono Ebalé;

- define graphic novels and comic art;
- identify selected works by Equatorial Guinean artist Ramón Esono Ebalé.

Teacher Background Information on Ramón Esono Ebaléi

Ramón Esono Ebalé is a self-taught graphic novelist and comic artist living and working in Equatorial Guinea, a small country in West Africa. Born in 1977 in Equatorial Guinea, Ebalé uses the pen-name "Ramón y Queso," a play on the phrase "Jamón y Queso" (Ham and Cheese in Spanish).

Ebalé's work takes a satiric look at socio-political issues within Equatorial Guinea within the context of the larger world. Through his graphic novels and comics, Esono Ebalé critiques government corruption, human rights violations, and efforts to opress freedom of expression. Some of Esono Ebalé's key works include the graphic novels *Mi Avatar* (2010) and *Bozales* (2011). Esono Ebalé is currently working on *La Pesadilla de Obi* (*Obi's Nightmare*) (2013), a graphic novel that is a critique of the dictatorship in Equatorial Guinea. In this work, President Teodoro "Obi" Obiang becomes an average citizen of his country and tries to cope with the challenges of his constituents.

In addition to his work as an artist, Esono Ebalé has taught drawing in Equatorial Guinea, works as a comic artist for UNICEF, and contributes to an online African comics journal (*Para-Jakal*). Esono Ebalé currently resides in exile in Paraguay where he teaches art at a Cultural Center at the Spanish Embassy of Paraguay. Esono Ebalé is currently living in exile in Paraguay. He and his wife (who is from Spain and formerly worked for the Spanish Embassy in Equatorial Guinea) were pressured to leave Equatorial Guniea due to their involvement with political dissidents.

Learning Activities Sequence

Set Induction/Hook: Obtain a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (a "plain language version" is available at:
http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/humanrights/resources/plain.asp and
http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-16-30.html) and distribute to students. Tell students that the United Nations document was created after WWII to help ensure that people everywhere received basic human rights.

Direct students' attention to points 18, 19, 20, and 21. Ask for volunteers to read each aloud, pausing to clarify terms as needed. Ask: *What do these four rights have in common?* After discussing the freedom of thought, speech, and expression inherent in those rights, ask: *Why would these ideas and rights be especially important for artists?* Say: *Today we will be discussing Equatorial Guinea, a country in Africa with a poor record of human rights violations and an artist who calls attention to those injustices.*

Teacher Explanation and Presentation: Using the PowerPoint presentation provided (*Ramón Esono Ebalé & Equatorial Guinea*), share images of Esono Ebalé's life, work, and his homeland of Equatorial Guinea. Teacher Background Notes and discussion questions are provided in the "Notes View;" review those before you share the presentation with students.

[Note: The purpose of this presentation is just to acquaint students with Esono Ebalé's work. In the next lesson, more detailed information about individual artwork will be presented.]

Closure: Ask students to consider the last slide in the presentation about EG Justice. Ask: *What other social justice or human rights organizations work to assist people in unjust situations around the world?* (Answers may include: Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, Physicians for Human Rights, etc.)

Evaluation

Ask students questions throughout the presentation (see suggested questions imbedded in the Notes View). Encourage them to take notes to help them better understand the material in the next lesson.

Materials and Resources

PowerPoint presentation: *Ramón Esono Ebalé & Equatorial Guinea*
Computer, projector, and screen

Optional Extension Activities

Have students select a human rights organization and allow them to conduct independent research on it, reporting back to the class what they learned.

References

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