James Castle, an Idaho Artist (1899-1977): Interpreting Visual Symbols

Idaho Content Anchor Standards
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6
Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7
Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2
Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARD 1: History
Goal 1.1: Build an understanding of the cultural and social development of the United States.

Idaho Visual Arts Content Anchor Standards
VA:Cr2.1 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, media, and art-making approaches.

VA:Re7.1: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
Enduring Understanding: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments.

VA:Re8.1: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
Enduring Understanding: People gain insights into meanings of artworks by engaging in the process of art criticism.

VA:Cn10.1: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
Enduring Understanding: Through art-making, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

VA:Cn11.1: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.
Enduring Understanding: People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interaction with and analysis of art.

Learning Objectives
- Students will compare and contrast works of art by James Castle.
- Students will discuss possible messages and meanings communicated through James Castle’s artwork.
- Students will experience, through open-ended discussion and responses, the fact that visual symbols can communicate ideas and that those ideas can be interpreted in multiple ways depending on individual life experiences.
- Students will connect with the artwork in a meaningful, individualized, and engaging way, allowing them to construct their own knowledge and experience in art.
- Students will experience a hands-on art project that reinforces the concepts and techniques discussed/viewed, resulting in a tangible, personally meaningful understanding of the artwork.