

Mondays with MoMA

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Step 1 Look closely

Questions

1. Read the words that make up this artwork? What do you notice?
2. How is each repeated phrase the same? How are they different?

Step 2 Learn more

The artist John Baldessari was interested in questioning the role of the artist in creating an artwork. This print is based on an installation (a form of art which involves the creation of an enveloping experience in a particular environment). Baldessari gave very few instructions to a group of art students thousands of miles away, and he was not present to supervise. He said, "I proposed that the students voluntarily write 'I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art' on the walls of the gallery, like punishment. To my surprise they covered the walls." The same students later also created this print.

John Baldessari created [conceptual art](#), which he described as, "what I thought art should be, not what somebody else would think art would be?" He often created assignments for his students that made them question art and its meaning; this artwork is an example of one of these assignments.

Step 3 Delve deeper

Questions

1. Do you think that an artist should get credit for a work of art they did not make themselves? Why or why not?
2. How does repetition affect the meaning of the statement?

Step 4 Repeating a phrase

Materials: pencil or pen and large sheet of paper

1. Think of a sentence or phrase (5-8 words) that represents something that you believe.
2. Take a sheet of paper, as big as you can find, and copy the phrase until you fill the paper.
3. Optional - swap phrases with a friend and copy their phrase to fill a sheet of paper and have them copy your phrase.
4. Reflect - how did repeating one phrase over and over change its meaning? How did it feel different to copy someone else's phrase rather than your own?



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Image: John Baldessari. *I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art*. 1971. Lithograph. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax. Nova Scotia College of Art and Design Lithography Workshop, Halifax. John B. Turner Fund. © 2020 John Baldessari.