

## **Tips from 2013 Custom Culture Winner: Lakeridge High School Teacher: Shannon McBride**

#1 - We are constantly telling our students not to wait until the last minute - procrastinating - to turn in their art projects. Practice what you preach, start the design process early! The experience for you and your students will be much more fulfilling if you are not in a big rush to finish.

#2 - Involve an entire class in the design process. The more the merrier. We broke up into groups of two and each tackled the themes.

#3 - Designers 'pitch' their ideas. If you want real world experiences for your students, practice real world methods. Think of the possibilities - they can pitch to each other, pitch to other classes, heck they can pitch the ideas to the whole school. Why not! Real world application.

#4 - Let the class decide together which design had the best approach, the most bang, the biggest impact. Individuality was set aside for the greater good. Maybe hold a school wide vote on the designs. Involving the school community can only help later in the process if you are fortunate enough to become one of the top 50 schools.

#5 - The design process was a class project. The actual production of the shoes was executed by students who volunteered from the class and students from other classes that were interested in investing the time and energy required to follow through with the shoes.

#6 - Shoot for the moon. Think out of the box or in this case the shoe. What will make your shoes stand out? Take risks, chances are if you've seen it before, so have the Vans folks.

#7 - Although your shoes are not judged on the photo quality of the pictures taken of the shoes, it's important to take good photos. Invest in good lighting at the least. The pictures you take will be the ones that follow you all the way through the process. Make those shoes shine!

#8 - Follow the rules. I know this sounds dumb to say but it's very important. Do not use copyrighted images. Just like any other form of art the work, the shoe designs must be appropriated enough to be original. Even if one of the pairs of shoes doesn't meet the criteria, all of the shoes will be eliminated.

## **Tips from 2015 Custom Culture Winner: Carlsbad High School Teacher: Kelly Foulk**

#1 - A diverse groups of artist help create the best shoes

#2 - Use the materials you and your students are most comfortable with. We used oil paint because I spend a significant time teaching oil painting and therefore my students are most comfortable with that medium. I also use a quick dry spray to help drying time.

#3 - When working with your students to come up with ideas, try and help them think "outside the box." Have them research your region, and all the theme topics to come up with good original ideas.

#4 - I like everyone to work on all the shoes so the designs end up visually consistent in style- or, that's the goal at least. I pick a team of 20 to be on the art crew and also let others in my classes that want to help a little, do so when we need extra help.

#5 - Each student tends to be better at painting different things, some are better at drawing then painting, some are good at small details, and others good at clean technical lines. Assign shoes based on what you know of the talents of each student and the decided upon ideas and have them all attempt to work a little on each shoe.

#6 - Gesso each shoe with clean thin gesso and draw the designs in detail with chalk pencils.

## **Tips from 2016 Custom Culture Winner: John P Stevens High School Teacher: Alison Paoello**

#1 - Have all individuals that wanted to be involved submit designs with their own individual ideas and then have one group critique to develop the overall theme. Once the kids had the theme finalized individual students jumped at the chance to show their strengths

#2 - Acrylic paint, Sculpey clay, and paper mache really worked for us. Fine details with the paint and a good fine brush was much easier to control for our students

#3 - A diverse group with great teamwork and a motivational team leader was definitely the key to our success!

## **Tips from 2017 Custom Culture Winner: Parker High School Teacher: Dave Fuller**

#1 - Plan well in advance. We would start compiling ideas during the summer months and start posting the ideas on bulletin board in my room. We would post ideas and concepts and fill up the bulletin boards in the Art Room.

#2 - Think Different. Think outside the box. Ask yourself, "Would anyone else have an idea like that." Imagine it, and then figure out how to make it happen.

#3 - You are allowed 20 students so get as many involved as you can. Have teams with captains that are in charge of one of the pair of shoes. They are in charge of getting their team to work. Having 20 students involved also helps when it comes time for the voting process.

#4 - Have fun. Have a pizza party while you work. It is sometimes hard to get kids to come in and work on the shoes after school, at night and weekends so buying pizza for the kids helps.

#5 - Have multiple students work on the same shoe but let the students who can do detail work put the finishing touches on the shoes.

#6 - Use different techniques and materials. We used an airbrush, leather, iridescent glass, metal, a vinyl cutter for stencils, sculpey clay, and added pieces onto the shoes.

#7 - Photograph your shoes on both black and white backgrounds and see which one looks best.

#8 - Use photoshop to make composites of your shoes. Composites let the Vans employees see all sides of the shoes.

#9 - Dream big. Plan as if you will make the Top 50 and have some voting strategies in place when you get the good news.

#10 - You can achieve it. We had only 120 kids in the entire high school.