

Painted Story Quilts

ART TECHNIQUE

Painting & Collage

AGE GROUP

Appropriate for students 6–14 years of age

CONCEPT

Inspired by the story quilts of Faith Ringgold, students will create their own narrative work with painted papers and collage.

SESSIONS

2 x 90 minute sessions

MATERIALS

 (for a class of 25 students)

- 6 sheets of 8.5 x 11" copy paper per student
- 4 sheets of newspaper per student
- 1 sheet of 11x 17" paper per student
- 1 x 500ml bottle of Chroma 2 Washable Tempera in the following colors: warm and cool yellow, warm and cool blue, warm and cool red, green, turquoise, orange, black, purple, white
- 1 liter of Chromacryl Binder Medium per class
- 1 #12 (1 inch) flat hog hair paint brush per student
- 1 #3 hog hair paint brush per student
- 1 pair of classroom scissors per student
- 1 pencil per student
- 1 black marker per student
- several classroom erasers to share
- soft plastic table cloths to cover the tables
- 1 x 20 liter bucket to wash the equipment in.

RECYCLABLE MATERIALS

A list of recyclable materials should be sent home with each student and include the following:

- 10 small format newspapers
- 1 x old shirt per student to be used as a protective paint shirt
- 12 clean plastic, take away food containers with lids for each group, to contain paint.
- 4 clean plastic milk bottles to make scratching combs
- 5 small pieces of corrugated cardboard per group
- 2 old sheets to cut up into rags
- 1 box of cotton buds for the groups to share
- 5 plastic forks per group
- 5 paddle pop sticks per group

Chroma 2 Intense & Opaque Heavy Bodied Washable Tempera is available through most school suppliers.



Faith Ringgold is an American painter, sculptor, performance artist and writer, best known for her painted story quilts. Her work is often based on African-American history and the experience of women. Born in 1930, Ringgold's story quilts use techniques of this traditional African-American craft, but takes them further by painting on the fabric and incorporating narrative text.

In this lesson, students will create their own story quilt by painting a shared paper bank of decorated paper, designing a pattern template and assembling the elements as a collage. Additionally, students will write descriptive sentences or a short story on their central theme and use this text as part of their quilt.

NATIONAL CORE ART STANDARDS

Creating Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

Responding Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Connecting Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



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OBJECTIVE

This project gives students experience with painting and decorating, cutting, gluing and creating a collaged story quilt filled with personal meaning.

VISUAL REFERENCES

Your school library may have books by Faith Ringgold, such as *Tar Beach* and *Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky*, as part of their collection. Visit www.faithringgold.com to curate more works for inspiration.

FIRST SESSION

Motivation

Begin by introducing Faith Ringgold to the students. Show a picture of the artist, read one of her books and briefly talk about her life and her artwork. Note her use of pattern, particularly in borders which she accented with more paint. Point out how her figures are composed of large, colorful shapes. Discuss the idea of illustration with older students and how the artist combined her narrative in the border of *Woman on a Bridge: Tar Beach*. Watch the video on Ms. Ringgold's process on her website.

The last segment on the motivation stage is to discuss with the students what they would like to create. It is important to encourage them to tell their own stories. Perhaps they want to make a painting about a favorite day in the park, or playing with a pet or friend, or kicking a soccer ball. For younger students, simplify the narrative to focus on one thing as the main image: their favorite food, an animal, a symbol.

Painting The Paper Bank

The first part of the project involves creating "The Paper Bank". Students will paint and decorate paper and when dried, will be shared with all students. Once all the required materials and equipment are ready, the next task is to create the table/work space required to paint and decorate the paper. To achieve this, arrange the desks in groups of 4 or 5 room set up covered

with small sheets of newspaper or soft plastic tablecloths. Set up the tables with the paint in egg containers, the paint brushes, (a big #12 brush to apply paint all over and a small #3 brush to paint small patterns, per student). Supply rags, water containers, paper and tools to scratch and make marks with.

Every student should paint 4 pieces of copy paper in different colors. The paper should be placed on a piece of newspaper for easy handling.

The first step is to paint a color all over using the big paint brushes, then while the paint is still wet, scratch textures using the tools made of caps, cardboard, plastic forks or even erasers. The scratching of textures is very effective and works well. Once the textures have been scratched, students can add more patterns/colors using the small paint brush, sticks, cotton buds, etc.

After the first piece is painted and decorated it should be moved to dry. Provide a new piece of paper until the students complete all four pieces. When the paper has dried separate the painted paper from the newspaper, insert a flat hand between the two pieces of paper and gently separate them.

When working with very young children, it will be fine for them to paint less sheets and to paint different colors on the same paper. This is OK as long as they can scratch some textures on the wet paint using combs and other tools.



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SECOND SESSION

Design The Center Panel

Have the painted papers ready, cut up in half and sorted in four or five bunches, according to the number of groups. Distribute the papers in such way that every group gets a variety of the different colors to use in their project.

Before starting this session, remind the students how Faith Ringgold created her quilts with a painted center background and embellished borders. Show pictures of her story quilts and point out main elements: the flat, simple shapes for figures, the decorative borders that she accented and addition of text.

Begin by painting one sheet of copy paper a solid color for the center background of the story quilt. Let dry off to the side. Next, give each student another sheet of copy paper and a pencil. They should draw the main elements of their story using flat, simple shapes. If there will be overlapping elements, adjust accordingly. Once they have finished their drawing, use a black marker to outline the shapes. These will be their patterns for the center part of their quilt

Cut out the outlined shapes, and trace them onto the painted papers. Encourage the students to choose painted papers that will work well with their chosen background, by considering value (how light or dark a color is). Cut the traced shapes. Assemble the center panel using the cut painted paper shapes, paying attention to overlapping elements.

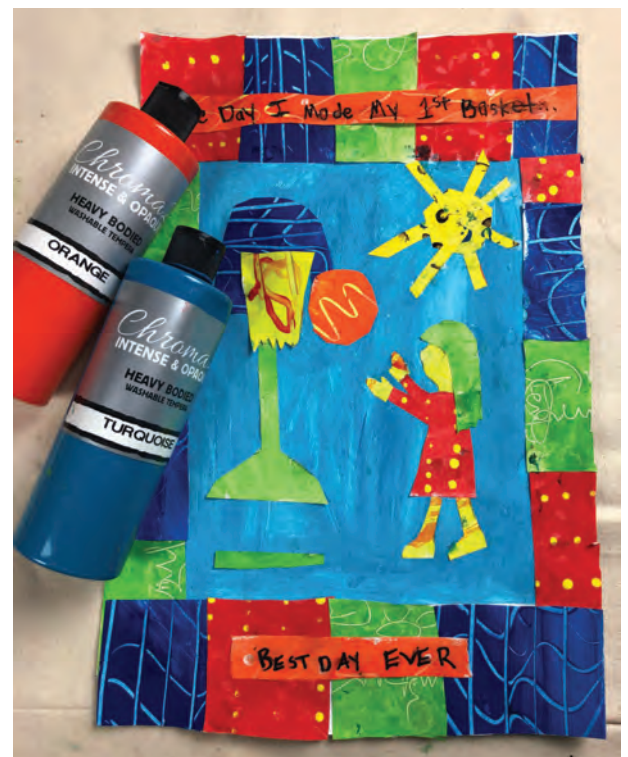
Assemble the Story Quilt

On the tables: set up the tables with one sheet of 11 x 17" white paper, a pair of scissors, one short handled cheap brush and a piece of rag per student for cleaning. Centrally place 2 or 3 containers of glue and the paper bank for the students to share.

Cut squares and rectangles from the paper bank and glue as a border. Repeat some of the painted papers squares to establish a sense of rhythm. Embellish some of the painted paper squares on the border to establish unity within the border as well. Next, glue the solid painted background paper in the center.

Finally, on strips of painted paper, write about the meaning behind the quilt. Older students can write a short story; younger students can write a descriptive sentence or two. Glue these strips on top of the border.

Display the story quilts on a board and discuss as a group. What stories do you think they tell? Do you need the text to "read" the painting? Does the text explain or add another layer of meaning and interpretation?





CHROMA

CHROMA PAINTS AT A GLANCE

The below chart can help you determine which paints will suit the classroom purposes best. While most of Chroma's Educational lines could be used at any grade level for a variety of projects, particular Chroma brands will meet students' growing skills and provide richer, more sophisticated painting experiences.

Product	Color Range	Acrylic	Tempera	Heavy Body Consistency	Medium Body Consistency	Lightfast	Washable	Indoor/Outdoor	Best for Elementary	Best for Middle School	Best for High School	Canvas	Paper	Canvas Board	Wood	Murals/Sets	General Crafts	Paper Maché	Printing
A>2 Lightfast Heavy Body Acrylic	40	x		x		x					x	x	x	x	x				
Chromacryl Students' Acrylics	31	x			x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Chromacryl Acrylic Essentials	20	x			x				x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Molten Metals Metallic Acrylics	10	x			x				x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
Chroma Mural Paint	19	x			x	x		x			x					x			x
Chroma Mural Paint Markers	25	x			x	x		x			x					x			x
Fusion I.A Series Mediums	n/a							x			x					x			
Chroma 2 Intense & Opaque Heavy Bodied Washable Tempera	14		x	x			x		x	x	x		x				x	x	x
Chromatemp Artists' Tempera	32		x	x					x	x			x				x	x	
Chroma Glitter Paint	12		x		x		x		x				x				x	x	
Chroma Black Drawing Ink	n/a										x		x	x	x				

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