



ART as a Record of Stories

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Lesson for **Hmong Story Cloths**
Adapted from Grade 5, Studio Exploration for Lessons 5 and 6, *Explorations in Art*, Davis Publications.

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Understand that artists get inspiration from stories about history, current events, or personal or family events.
- Analyze and discuss organization of space and arrangement of colors and shapes in a composition.
- Plan and create a mixed-media artwork that tells a story of a local, state, national, family, or personal event.

Setup

Collect and display pictures of Hmong story cloths and other appliquéd artworks that depict stories.

Engage

Remind students that we share our lives with others. As a result, many artists create artworks that express the stories of people, including their moods, feelings, actions, and events.

Display Hmong story cloths and ask students to point out what they see and what the images might mean. Explain that some illustrate Hmong folktales and historical traditions, and that others relate personal stories of the Hmong people who immigrated to the United States from Southeast Asia after the Vietnam War. Ask students to identify ways that the Hmong artists organized colors, shapes, and space in their works.

Create

Tell students they will create a mixed-media artwork that tells a story of a local, state, national, family, or personal event. Discuss what stories they might tell. Have students plan and organize the main shapes in their composition, adding a border or frame if desired. Have them draw the main subjects with crayon or oil pastel and then fill in some areas with heavy layers of color. Students complete their artworks by painting over the entire drawing with different colors of watercolor paint.

Materials

- 12 x 18" (30 x 46 cm) white or light-colored construction paper, one per student
- crayons or oil pastels
- watercolor paints
- brushes
- containers of water
- paper towels

Assessment

To what extent does each artwork:

- tell a story of a local, state, national, family, or personal event?
- effectively organize and arrange colors, shapes, and space?

Extension

Have students use their stories and artworks to make one-minute digital movies. 🎥

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