

Narrative Scrolls

Based on Patuas from India

Aurelia Gomez

Objectives

1. Students will learn about the process of making narrative scrolls in the patua style and how they are used over time to convey important events and transmit cultural values.
2. Students will explore the imagery used in patua paintings.
3. Students will use their own imagery to create patua painting.

Materials

9 x 16" (23 x 41 cm) heavy drawing or lightweight watercolor paper, pencils, erasers, indelible markers, watercolors, watercolor brushes, water, water containers, newspaper to cover tables

Motivation

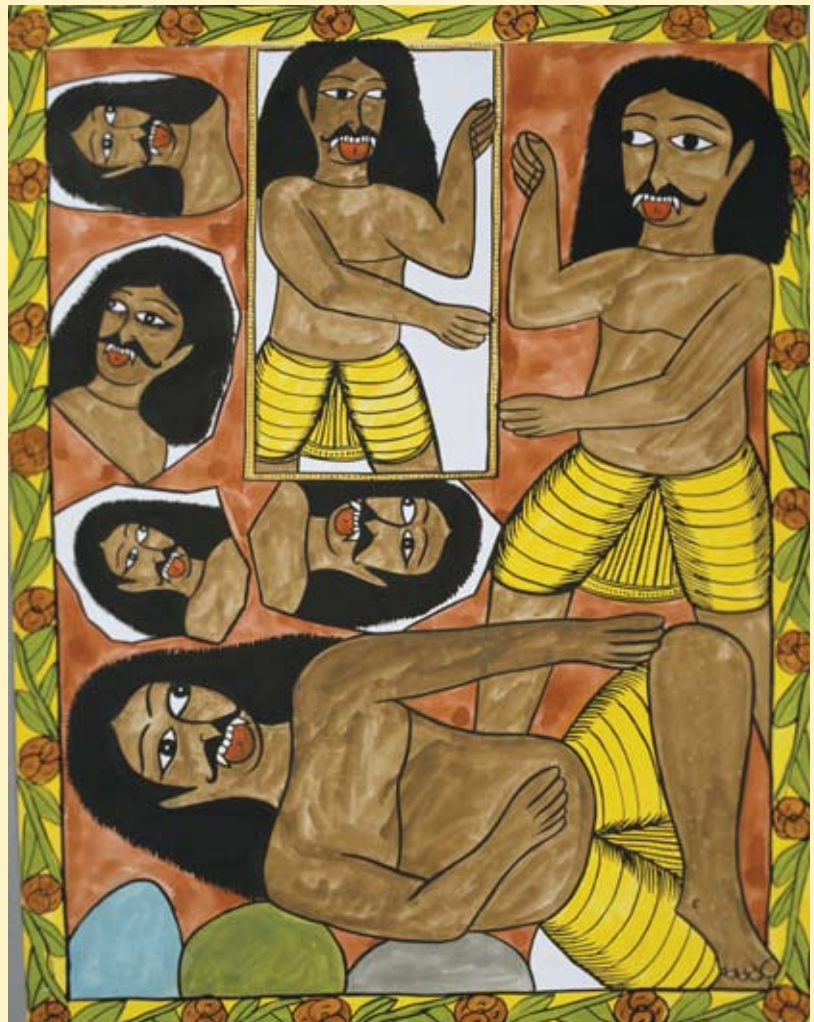
1. Engage students in a discussion about the way that they hear stories and get information. Where do they hear stories? How do they get information? How do they find out what is going on? Who are the really good storytellers? Who are the really good singers? What kinds of stories are important? Are they political, historical, or religious? What stories do they think are really important to tell?
2. Introduce students to the patua storytelling tradition, using as many visual resources as possible.
3. Explain that the scroll painting tradition from West Bengal, India is usually passed down within a family and/or community. You can discuss the way that women have always been involved in the work, but are now being actively recognized for their participation and achievements. Are they aware that this is true for other contemporary artists and art forms?

4. Look at the ways that the scroll imagery is organized. Have students look at the motifs used for the borders and the way that the characters are depicted.
5. Encourage them to come up with their own ideas for a scroll. They can think of topics that are autobiographical, political, or related to current events, myths or religious stories, or aspects of popular culture. Remind the students that their story can have a moral or a particular message. Students may want to work together on a scroll

to create a series of images that make a story.

Procedure

1. Have students draw their ideas for one frame of the scroll in pencil. Encourage them to use the entire space and to include the setting and a border.
2. When their drawing is complete ask them to make outlines with the indelible markers.
3. Students use watercolors to fill in the forms with color. Set aside to dry.



- Repeat the steps to add to the scroll story.
- If students have made sequences of images to place together, they can glue them onto recycled sheets or curtains cut to the width of the paper and as long as the scroll.


Evaluation

- Display students' work and have them talk about or sing their stories.
- Group students' work according to theme. Have students talk about why they chose the subject matter that they did.
- Have students work in small groups to make individual panels to connect in sequence to make up a scroll.

Curriculum Connections

- Have students research the history of scrolls and scroll paintings from different cultures. They can

make a presentation to the class regarding the way that scrolls have been used over time to record historical, religious and fictional events.

- Use the relationship between patua art, codices (stories painted on amate paper ztec people), and comic books to engage students in an exploration of the way that comic artists, ancient peoples, scroll painters, and graphic novelists use images to tell stories. 

Children's Books

Chitrakar, Karuna and Maura Hurley Basu. *To the Local Bazaar*. Calcutta, India: Mustard Seed Books, 2002.

Adult Books

A Village of Painters: Narrative Scrolls from West Bengal. Santa Fe, NM: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2006.

Korom, Frank J. *South Asian Folk-*

lore, A Handbook. Westport, CT: Glenwood Press, 2006.

Prabhas, Sen. *Living Traditions of India, Crafts of West Bengal*. Middletown, NJ: Grantha Corporation, 1994.

Rossi, Barbara. *From the Ocean of Painting, India's Popular Painting 1589 to the Present*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1998.

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NATIONAL STANDARD

Students understand that there are various purposes for creating works of art.

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