

Exploring Identity through Yoruba Culture, Masks, and the Diaspora of Contemporary African and African American Artists

Unit Plan for 7th and 8th Grade Sculpture Class

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Lesson Plan Overview and Descriptions

Lesson #/Title	Purpose of Lesson	What Students Accomplish/Make
1-Yoruba Culture Past, Present and Future and the Influence of Diaspora	Students will research, learn from, and explore Yoruba culture. They will look at religion, dance and ceremonial practices, and how masks connect the past, present and future generations in Yoruba culture. Yoruba is a mask-making culture that is part of their identity, students will also connect their identity with the mask they make.	Gain knowledge about Yoruba culture that they will use throughout the unit.
2-Masks and The Performance of Identity	Students will take a more in depth look into masks and why people wear masks. As a group, we will critique a variety of masks and brainstorm why they may be important. After a recap of masks and Yoruba culture, we will talk about cultural history and identity.	Gain more knowledge about masks and how some masks are made. Learn about two contemporary artists influenced by Yoruba culture
3-Creating Symbols to Express Identity	In this lesson students will get the first chance to explore and develop symbols that represent them as a person.	Students will create an Identity "Explosion Book" that contains symbols they design that they identify with.
4-Identity Painting and How to Incorporate Symbols through Graffiti Art	Using the symbols from their book that they created and developed, along with the elements and principles of design, students will make a painting that will "hold" their mask. This lesson will connect with what they learned in	Students will make and complete an identity painting using the symbols they created in the previous lesson. The painting will "hold" the mask.

	lesson one. The importance of storytelling and passing down culture and traditions is important in Yoruba culture.	
5-Identity Mask	Last lesson of the unit that will connect all they have learned. Students will create a mask that will represent who they are as a person and will also connect with their painting. The mask will have to fit and be mounted on the painting as a “holder” of the mask.	Make a mask that will be incorporated into the painting and will be mounted on the painting as well. The mask has to fit and be able to be worn comfortably.

Detailed Unit Plan



Unit Learning Objectives:

By the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- Describe what diaspora means and how it has influenced art in the United States and contemporary artists that have either moved to the United States or are inspired by Yoruba culture.
- Recognize how the Yoruba people use masks and dance to tell a story to explain their belief and cultural story.
- Understand the importance of a mask and how it can be an extension of oneself.
- Understand how the use of symbolism can be used in a narrative and apply it to their own symbols to their artwork to tell a story.
- Assess how diaspora could be applied to their own culture or a culture they are connected to.
- Describe the history of the Yoruba people of Nigeria and how masks are used in their culture.
- Demonstrate understanding of the elements and principles of design to create a well composed 3D mask and background.
- Describe how contemporary artists use imagery and symbols from their culture to create a narrative of their identity.
- Construct a mask and painting that applies knowledge gained through discussion and critiques to develop a better understanding of who they are as a person through exploration
- Be aware of race in mask imagery and how it represents a specific mask making culture and its' traditions

Unit Essential Questions

- How has the the slave trade and diapsora affected the art world?
- How does learning about Yoruba culture help create a personal narrative?
- How does your mask and piece of artwork incorporate what you have learned?
- Why is it important to learn about culture and it's practices?

Instructional Concepts

This unit focuses on the dance and mask making traditions of the Yoruba culture that connects past, present and future. The unit explains the importance of the mask and how the mask maker and wearer are connected. This unit also explores how Yoruba culture has influenced western culture. Through diaspora and the slave trade, students will gain knowledge of how traditions from the Yoruba culture have traveled over time and distance and how the western culture has influenced the Yoruba cutlure throughout generations. Students will also learn that the Yoruba mask making traditions and culture are still being celebrated and spread across the globe.

The goal of a good multicultural curriculum is to effectively encounter other points of view in order to question the centrality or normativeness of one's own (also culturally specific) point of view. (Gude. p. 10)

The unit will show how cultural identity can survive despite unforeseen circumstances and evolve. Through mask making, generations are connected. Students in middle school are constantly exploring and questioning their identity. This unit will give them the opportunity to explore their own identity, answering questions such as: Who am I? How am I connected to my own culture? Do I identify with my culture, how? What symbols represent me? Students need creative opportunities to explore identity.

In this unit students will have the opportunity to watch a video of how masks are made and then see them worn for a ceremony. This will give context to the mask and the importance to understanding why they are used. Students will gain knowledge about the religion and mythology behind rituals and ceremonies. The unit focuses on two different performances that involve the Egúngún or Gèlèdè. Students will have the opportunity to make connections to the belief the Yoruba culture has in gods and ancestors and whether students can make their own connection to their own religion or family rituals. It is important to remember that historically, masks and artwork from other cultures, specifically Black cultures, has been romanticised. It is important that students understand and learn about Yoruba mask making culture and its importance to the Yoruba people and that it continues today. Mask making is sacred in Yoruba culture and not used as a "decoration". Students will learn how mask making in Yoruba culture has been passed down through generations and more recent generations have evolved the mask making traditions into other art forms.

The unit will explore symbols and specific marks on the Yoruba masks. The mask tells a story of the wearer and how he is connected to his gods and ancestors. Students will have the opportunity to develop their own symbols to tell a narrative and apply them to a background that will "hold" their mask that will be intertwined by imagery. This is similar to the performance of the Egúngún using the ancestral mask. When the mask is not being used for a ritual or

performance, it is kept in a safe place in the home. It is a treasured piece and thought of as sacred. According to Bell (2008) "In accordance with tradition, his Egun-gun mask is reverently stored in the attic of his home or resides in the highest place within the highest room in his home." (p. 49)

This unit was developed to also help students understand the power of symbols and how they are still used by more contemporary artists to stay connected to their culture. Students will learn about two contemporary artists that use symbols and masks to tell their story and spread Yoruba culture. With the use of visual culture such as videos and more contemporary artists, students can connect with Yoruba culture. The first artist is Laolu Senbanjo. He is Yoruba and was born and raised in Nigeria. He moved to New York to pursue art and "everything is a canvas". Senbajo's work can be found on *Nike* shoes, *Starbucks* cups and in Beyonce's visual album, *Lemonade*. Senbajo draws masks on human bodies and uses it to tell a story of the person wearing the mask. The second artist is Delita Martin. She was born in the United States but is influenced by how Yoruba culture uses masks to connect generations. She specifically looks at Gèlèdè performances. This is a ritual that honors the power of all women, present, past and future.

Good multicultural curriculum introduces us to the generative themes of other--helping us to see the world through the eyes of others--understanding the meaning of the artworks in terms of the complex aesthetic, social, and historical contexts out of which they emerge (Anderson, 1990) (Gude. p. 9)

Lesson Overview:

[Lesson One: Yoruba Culture Past, Present and Future and the Influence of Diaspora \(2-3 block periods\)](#)

Students will research, learn, and explore Yoruba culture. They will look at religion, dance and ceremonial practices, and how masks connect the past, present and future generations in Yoruba culture. Yoruba is a mask-making culture that is part of their identity, students will also connect their identity with the mask they make. Students will connect the use of Yoruba identity and culture to their own identity and make a mask that represents them as an individual while honoring and being influenced by Yoruba techniques. Students will learn, examine, and focus on the Gèlèdè and Egúngún masquerades. They will gain knowledge about the meaning and importance of these performances. While using essential questions, students will lead the discussion about the various Yoruba masks. Using images of the masks and a video of the making of a mask and performance, students will have a solid foundation of Yoruba culture. After our discussion, students will then talk about *diaspora* and what that means. Students will make a connection and will be shown a map of how the people of Yoruba were dispersed throughout the world through the slave trade. This is a connection students can make with their History class. In History, seventh graders learn about the slave trade and its impacts on African cultures. Students will have the opportunity to give examples of diaspora, connecting it to their own families and personal stories. This lesson will prepare students for the next step of how the masks and art of Yoruba culture has continued and spread in Nigeria and surrounding places of Yoruba people and here in the United States.

Essential Questions:

- How can performance and dance convey Yoruba culture?
- How do masks connect generations in Yoruba culture?
- How is identity expressed in Yoruba culture?
- How has the diaspora changed Yoruba culture?

Lesson Two: Masks and The Performance of Identity (1-2 block periods)

Students will take a more in depth look into masks and why people wear masks. As a group, we will critique a variety of masks and brainstorm why they may be important. After a recap of masks and Yoruba culture, we will talk about cultural history and identity. Cultural history and telling a story are an important part of the mask making traditions. How can we create a mask that tells a story? Students will then be introduced to two contemporary artists that are influenced by Yoruba culture. Using videos, images of their work and examples, students will become familiar with their work. Students will be introduced to **Laolu Seganjo** and **Delita Martin**. Sebanjo is Yoruba and was born and raised in Nigeria. He moved to New York city to pursue art bringing his storytelling and Yoruba culture with him. His goal is to spread Yoruba culture through his art. Delita Martin is a female artist born and raised in the United states but is influenced by Yoruba masks and is trying to create an alternative visual narrative of black females. Both artists want to create a visual narrative that highlights contemporary issues and gets the viewer talking about hard topics.

Essential Questions:

- How can we create a mask that tells a story?
- What is similar about masks from our culture (American) and Yoruba culture?
- How have contemporary artists used Yoruba culture in their work to address contemporary issues?

Lesson Three: Creating Symbols to Express Identity (4-5 block periods)

Students will create an "Explosion Book " that has symbols they will develop about their own identity. Using what they learned in the past two or three classes, students will explore who they are and how they can represent themselves visually. As a class, they will go over the elements and principles of design and identify how Laolu Seganjo and Delita Martin used them in their work to tell a story of their identity. Students will look at a powerpoint about "Creating Personal Symbols" and then look at videos of Seganjo and Martin's process. Then, students will begin brainstorming and doodling ideas of symbols that they identify with. After they have created images, they will use them to make a handmade book that will be used in the next few lessons to help with the final mask. The "Explosion Book" will be a collection of symbols that tell a story of identity.

Essential Questions:

- Why do we use symbols?
- What part of your identity do you want others to see?
- How can you use symbols to tell your story?

[Lesson Four: Identity Painting and How to Incorporate Symbols through Graffiti Art \(3-5 block periods\)](#)

Using the symbol book the students created in the past lesson, they will use that to create a background that their final mask will be mounted on. Students will again look at Laolu Seganjo's and other graffiti art to see how symbols can be incorporated using the elements and principles of design. Students will take symbols from their book and draw, then paint them on a canvas board using acrylic paint. Then, students will use pattern, line and repetition to bring the piece together and outline the objects and symbols on the canvas with black paint, similar to Seganjo.

Essential Questions:

- How can I create a well-balanced piece that represents me?
- How can I use symbols in an interesting way?

[Lesson Five: Identity Mask \(2-4 block periods\)](#)

Students will get a paper mask and try to figure out how the mask will fit into their painting. The goal is to bring the symbolism and story they painted on the canvas board and bring it to the mask. They will almost be "camouflaging" the mask into the painting. Students will have the freedom to draw, paint, collage or apply other materials on their mask to incorporate their design. The mask is supposed to represent their identity when worn. The mask does have to be comfortable to wear and the students can manipulate it however they need to. They will use problem-solving skills to figure out how the design will be incorporated and the mask will be mounted on the canvas. The canvas board will play the part as the 'holder' of the mask. When the mask isn't being worn and used, it will have its place on the board. This will connect the students back to what they learned about Yoruba culture. Students learned that every household keeps their mask in a safe place, the highest place in the house. This will emulate that tradition.

Essential Questions:

- How does this mask represent me?
- What do I want the viewer to see?
- How is the mask connected to the painting?

Resources and Materials:

Resources:

- [Mask Rubric](#)
- ["Creating Personal Symbols" PowerPoint](#)
- [We Built This: Laolu Senbanjo Is Sharing The Beauty Of Black Stories And Culture Through Art article and video](#)

- [PBS video of Delita Martin](#)
- *Lemonade* video clips by Beyonce featuring Laolu Sengajo's work
- Map of *Scientists Map Genome of African Diaspora in the Americas*
- [Gelede: A Yoruba masquerade video](#)
- ["Yoruba Culture" PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- ["Mask Identity" PowerPoint Presentation](#)
- Collection of Images of Yoruba masks
- [Various Images of Laolu Senbanjo and Delita Martin's artwork](#)
- Delita Martin's website <https://blackboxpressstudio.com/>
- Laolu Senbanjo's website <https://laolu.nyc/>
- TED talk
https://www.ted.com/talks/laolu_senbanjo_the_sacred_art_of_the_ori?language=en
- Elements and Principles of Design
- [Symbols Planning Sheet](#)
- Elements and Principles of Art Sheet

Materials:

- Chipboard
- Origami paper
- Construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Ribbon
- 16 x 20" canvas board
- Paper masks
- Pencils
- Drawing paper or sketchbooks
- Black and Colored Sharpies
- White glue
- Raffia
- Magazines
- yarn/string

Assessment, Evaluation and Grading:

Throughout the unit students will have the opportunity of the understanding and mastery of the material taught. Through discussion and critiques, students can demonstrate what they have learned. The first two lessons will be group discussions about materials. Using the VTS language, the teacher will know if individuals and the class are understanding materials. Lessons three through five will be evaluated by planning and brainstorming sketches. The teacher will provide feedback through critiques and one-on-one conferences during classes. There will also be a rubric with listed criteria for lessons three through five for students to follow. The final mask will also have a rubric listing criteria. The teacher will also facilitate group critiques for each student to get peer feedback. Final piece of artwork will be graded based on craftsmanship, participation in discussion, the ability to wear the mask and the use of symbols to communicate identity.

IMAGE INDEX

1a.

the dispersion of any people from their original homeland.



World map today

1b. *Click on images for source and link to original picture.*



Gelede Mask examples

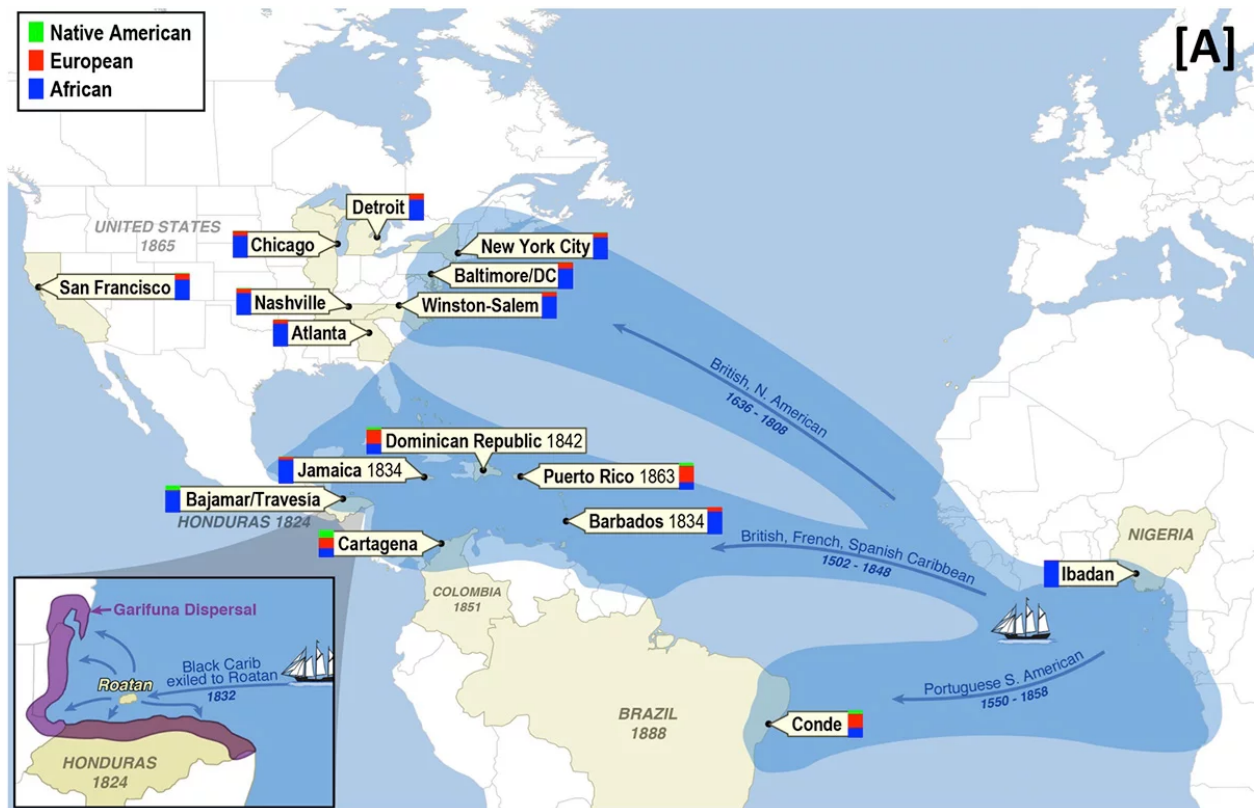
Gelede Mask



Gelede Cap



Gelede Headdress



Kelly, David. "Scientists Map Genome of African Diaspora in the Americas." *Scientists Map Genome of African Diaspora in the Americas*, 11 Oct. 2016

1c.



Obatala priest



Right: Egungun masquerade garment



Left: costumed figure for Egungun masquerade



Yorubaland map



Yoruba divination board

2a.

Images by Laolu Senganjo, click on the image for more information and to see a larger image. All images can be found on his website <https://laolu.nyc/> . Permission is granted to use all of his images or any images on his website for educational purposes.



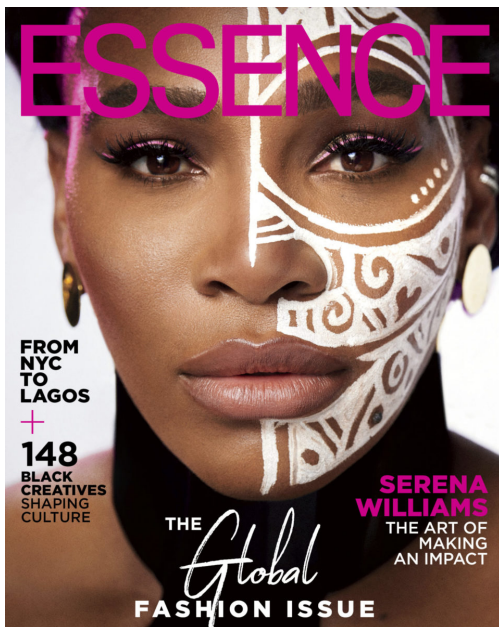
XiV

Artwork Name:

"BLACK PANTHER"

Artwork Description:

The leader with ideas appears in the forefront and rules the world. His eyes closed in active imagination and innovative thinking, his mouth is open for expression and sharing knowledge. The lightbulb symbolizes his idea, framed inside a tuning fork that sets the tone for his community which surrounds him.



Serena

Artwork Name:

"SERENA"

Artwork Description:

For the September Issue of Essence Magazine, Serena Williams embraced Láoúlú's art to tell her story. The crown and heart symbols allude to her greatness on the tennis court and her demonstration of both passion and compassion. Waves on her face figuratively relate to her as the Oshun orisha and represent her power to make waves. Her ripples are felt throughout the culture and the world. The spiral represents perpetuity.



X

Artwork Name:

"GELEDE"

Artwork Description:

Gelede is the ultimate Yoruba spectacle, featuring imagery of metaphorical significance. The real eyes look very realistic, as they are the real window to the inside. The Yoruba patterns used here allow Láolú's art to make visible what a person's essence might look like if one were able to wear it on the outside like a Gelede mask. The eyes are "ojú inú" or, "inside eyes" that symbolize insight, as in using your mind's eye or intuition to gain understanding.

2b.

Images of Delita Martin's work. Can be found on her website <https://blackboxpresstudio.com/> and any/all images can be used for educational purposes. Permission has been granted by Delita Martin.





3. Image examples of student work of the final project. All 7th grade students.





Lesson Plan One

Lesson Title: Yoruba Culture Past, Present and Future and the Influence of Diaspora

Lesson Description:

Students will research and explore Yoruba culture. They will look at religion, dance and ceremonial practices, and how masks connect the past, present and future generations in Yoruba culture. Students will examine and focus on the Gèlèdè and Egúngún masquerades. They will gain knowledge about the meaning and importance of these performances. While using essential questions, students will lead the discussion about the various Yoruba masks. Using images of the masks and a video of the making of a mask and performance, students will have a solid foundation of Yoruba culture. After our discussion, students will then talk about *diaspora* and what that means. Students will make a connection and will be shown a map of how the people of Yoruba were dispersed throughout the world through the slave trade. This is a connection students can make with their History class. In History, seventh graders learn about the slave trade and its impacts on African cultures. This lesson will prepare students for the next step of how the masks and art of Yoruba culture has continued and spread in Nigeria and surrounding places of Yoruba people and here in the United States.

Essential Questions:

How do performance and dance convey Yoruba culture?

How do masks connect generations in Yoruba culture?

How is identity portrayed in Yoruba culture?

How has the diaspora changed Yoruba culture?

Is there a connection between slavery in the United States and the diaspora of Yoruba culture?

Goals:

- Learn about Yoruba culture and why masks are used in ceremonies
- Understand what diaspora is and how it changed Yoruba culture.
- Understand the importance of dance and masks in rituals performances.
- Understand how Yoruba culture was dispersed around the world and how it is continuing to evolve.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Gain understanding of diaspora and how it changed Yoruba culture
- Know the difference between dance and ritual masquerades in Yoruba culture
- Connect slave trade with Yoruba culture, the world and the United States
- Understand why religion, dance and ceremonial practices, and how masks connect the past, present and future generations in Yoruba culture

Resources and Materials:

- Kelly, David. "Scientists Map Genome of African Diaspora in the Americas." *Scientists Map Genome of African Diaspora in the Americas*, 11 Oct. 2016, news.cuanschutz.edu/news-stories/scientists-map-genome-african-diaspora-americas.
- ["Yoruba Culture" slide show](#)
- [Various Images of Yoruba masks \(see "1b." of "Image Index"\)](#)
- Gelede: A Yoruba masquerade. Harper, P. and Speed, F. (Directors). (1970). [Video/DVD] Royal Anthropological Institute. Retrieved from <https://video-alexanderstreet-com.ezproxy.bu.edu/watch/gelede-a-yoruba-masquerade>
- D. (2016). In FALOLÁ T. & AKINYEMÍ A. (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Yoruba* (pp. 80-109). Bloomington; Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. Retrieved February 20, 2020, from www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1ch791n.9
- World Map or globe that all students can see (see "1a" of "Image Index")
- Drawing paper or sketchbook
- Pencils
- Glue sticks
- Assorted magazines

Action Plan:

Day 1/Block 1:

Have the "Gelede: A Yoruba masquerade" cued up and ready to go with a world map should be up on the screen.

1. When all students are seated and settled, let them know that they will be watching a video of a ceremony from Yoruba culture in Nigeria. Remember to make a point that this is just one tribe and not all tribes celebrate the same way. It is a way to celebrate a tradition and express themselves through dance and performance. Ask: What is one way that you express yourself in or out of school? With your family? (5-10 minutes)
2. Introduce the video but do not give too much away, they will be discussing what they see and making observations. "You will be watching a video of how a Gelede mask is made and the ceremonial dance that goes along with it of Yoruba culture. While you are watching, try to answer these questions: What type of ceremony are they celebrating or honoring? Why do you think they hold these ceremonies? Why do you think the mask is important? What do you notice about the mask and how it is made? Do you think that all Yoruba culture celebrates it this way? (5 minutes)
3. Pass out a piece of paper and pencil. Encourage them to doodle or write down notes as the video plays. Consider having them write down the questions so they have them in front of them. Play the video. (25 minutes)
4. After the video is played, ask them what did you think? Use the questions written in #2 and use them to spark conversation. Make sure to highlight the different roles that men

and women have. Also, see if they notice how dyes are made and how the mask is made. (10 minutes or to the end of class)

5. Before students leave they must answer a question as their "exit ticket". What was one thing they learned about Yoruba culture?

Day 2/Block 2:

If you did not finish the video from last class, continue to finish the video and then have the discussion described in #2 and #4 of Day 1.

For Day 2, have images of different Yoruba masks up as the first slide of the "Yoruba Culture" slide show. Images can be separate or part of the slide show. The slide show will have the first half (slides 1-9) about Yoruba culture, masks and masquerades. The second half is about diaspora. That should be saved for Day 3.

1. What do you remember from last class? What did we discuss? Have a recap of yesterday, highlight, the masquerade, who was involved and what the video highlighted. (10-15 minutes).
2. Bring students attention to the projector. What do you see (what colors, lines, symbols, patterns, etc.)? Let students raise their hands and make observations. (5-10 minutes)
3. Begin ["Yoruba Culture" slideshow](#). Go through each slide. The slideshow gives the history of Yoruba culture, what the Gẹ̀lẹ̀dẹ and Egúngún masquerades mean, and what the marks/colors on the mask means. You will also explain the importance of the connection the mask wearer has to past generations and to the present. There will be prompts for each slide and questions to ask the students to keep them engaged. (20-30 minutes). Stop at slide 9. Slide 10 starts the lesson on diaspora.
4. When the slideshow is over ask students: Can you think of a mask that is similar in your culture? Is there a connection between masks that you see in your daily life? (2-5 minutes)

Day 3/Block 3:

Have the ["Yoruba Culture" slide show](#) ready and up. Have slide #10 up with the word "Diaspora". Have students sit down and get settled.

1. When all students are settled and seated, ask them "what does diaspora mean?" Give them a few minutes to think and then begin discussion. (5-10 minutes)
2. Start the slide show and there will be prompts for each slide to keep students engaged. Questions and activities will be written for each slide in the comment area. (20-30 minutes)
3. After the slide show has been shown. Ask students, where does their culture come from? Where is your ancestry from? What special ceremonies do they practice or participate in, if any? Have students take out their sketchbook/journal and begin answering this question using words or visuals. They can draw and write to describe their "family tree". Also, give them the option to look through magazines to add to their visual if they want. This will be done at the end of class. (10-20 minutes) Walk around and give feedback.

Closure:

- Students will have a question, "exit ticket" or quick project to do at the end of each class. See the "Action Plan" for each class

- The last class of the lesson discussing diaspora should end with them thinking about their culture and identifying it as best as they can. This will prepare them for the next lesson.

Adaptations:

This lesson is discussion based. Students will have the opportunity to work with other students and independently. Being in a group discussing tends to be easier for others if they have difficulty speaking in front of class. With many visuals, videos and bullet points written out, it gives many opportunities for students with many different disabilities to be reached. It depends on the make-up of the group. Change wording and read things aloud according to the students.

Assessment/Evaluation:

Assessment and Evaluation should depend on participation in discussions throughout the lesson.

Lesson Plan Two

Lesson Title: Masks and The Importance of Identity (1-2 block periods)

Lesson Description:

Students will take a more in depth look into masks and why people wear masks. As a group, we will critique a variety of masks and brainstorm why they may be important. After a recap of masks and Yoruba culture, we will talk about cultural history and identity. Cultural history and telling a story are an important part of the mask making traditions. How can we create a mask that tells a story? Students will then be introduced to two contemporary artists that are influenced by Yoruba culture. Using videos, images of their work and examples, students will become familiar with their work. Students will be introduced to Laolu Seganjo and Delita Martin. Sebanjo is Yoruba and was born and raised in Nigeria. He moved to New York city to pursue art bringing his storytelling and Yoruba culture with him. His goal is to spread Yoruba culture through his art. Delita Martin is a female artist born and raised in the United states but is influenced by Yoruba masks and is trying to create an alternative visual narrative of black females. Both artists want to create a visual narrative that highlights contemporary issues and gets the viewer talking about hard topics.

Essential Questions:

How can someone's culture be shown through art?

How can art be used to tell a story?

How can we create a mask that tells a story?

Goals:

- Learn more about masks and how they can tell a story in Yoruba culture and in other cultures
- Understand why masks are used in Yoruba culture
- Learn about two different artists and how their connection to Yoruba culture has influenced their art
- Understand the importance of identity and storytelling through art

Objectives:

Students will:

- Gain more knowledge about Yoruba masks and the connection to storytelling
- Learn about artist Laolu Sebanjo and Delita Martin and their artwork
- Understand how art can be used to tell a story and tackle contemporary issues

- Understand how Yoruba culture or any culture can evolved over time, over many generations

Resources and Materials:

- [Images of masks found in "Image Index" under "1.b"](#)
- [Images of Laoula Senjabo's work \(look in "Image Index" under 2a.\)](#)
- Laoula Senjabo's website <https://laolu.nyc/>
- Tuakli, Foluké. "Artist Laolu Senbanjo Explores Pan-African Pride in the Age of 'Black Panther'." *NBCNews.com*, NBCUniversal News Group, 2 Mar. 2018, www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/artist-laolu-sen Visual Artist Laolu Senbanjo Speaks on His identity and Not Blending In
- Laolu Senbanjo speaking about his work https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSw3fXbm_-8
- "PBS." *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 29 June 2018, www.pbs.org/video/arts-insight-606-jynel7/.
- DuBose, B. (2019, February 28). Laolu NYC Is Sharing The Beauty Of Black Stories And Culture Through Art. Retrieved from https://www.huffpost.com/entry/laolu-senbanjo-laolunyc-afromysterics_n_5c76bb7ae4b062b30eba340f?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLnNvbS8&guc e_referrer_sig=AQAAABlkRJIKE74e7wiW6ZdMEHT2-X96gfB9zpA3qtFBdxgnia6DTIJwyoOOE MKKXOoRYbtlsv7cJcoW93DXuIMC1l1Y6jdOgdjSproOCbSkZp
- Delita Martin's website Black Box Press Studio. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://blackboxpressstudio.com/>
- [Images of Delia Martin's work \(see image index 2b.\)](#)
- Sketchbook
- pencil

Action Plan:

Day 1/Block 1:

Images of Yoruba masks should be up on the screen and ready for students to see as they come in. The Yoruba masks will be the first couple slides of the "Mask Identity Slideshow"

Disclosure: Laolu Senbanjo draws and paints on bodies as well as other materials. Be aware that he sometimes draws/paints on naked bodies and that is an art form and not at all in a sexual way. Just like naked bodies in paintings or naked sculptures seen in museums, it is an art form. Students will definitely come across them in searching his work. This could be a great discussion in itself to have with students.

1. Have the slide up of the different Yoruba masks. As students: how do you think these masks are made? Do you remember how they are made and what they are for? Have students "turn and talk" first with their neighbor or group at the table. (5-10 minutes)
2. Have a class discussion about the masks and what they remember from the last couple of classes. Refer to the masks and recap with the students how the masks help connect with their ancestors. Consider the following questions: How was the dye made? What type of materials were used for the masks? Why is the mask important? Who wears it? Who makes it? How is the mask connected to the Yoruba religion? (5-10 minutes)
3. Move to the slides that show different masks. Follow the prompts on the slide show and discuss how different masks mean different things. Why do we wear masks? Do masks

hide things? Do some masks change how we see others? Do masks change how we feel? There are prompts in the note section. (10-20 minutes)

4. Transition students to learning about contemporary artists by introducing Laolu Senbanjo and then Delita Martin. Show a variety of images of his work. Delita Martin is a female artist born and raised in the United States but is influenced by Yoruba masks and is trying to create an alternative visual narrative of black females. Both artists want to create a visual narrative that highlights contemporary issues and gets the viewer talking about hard topics. There will be slides for the artists. There will also be a video for each artist, save the video for the next day if there isn't enough time. (10-20 minutes)
5. After showing students his work ask them, what do you think? What do you see? How are "masks" used by each artist? Have them think about it and write their thoughts in their sketchbook. (5 minutes)
6. If there is time, have them share their thoughts with the class.

Cleanup:

Have students put away sketchbooks and pencils. Before they can leave they must complete the exit ticket. Chairs should be pushed in.

Closure:

Before students can leave, spend a minute or so to get their "exit ticket". Students have to answer the following question: What did you notice about either artists' work? *There is no wrong or right answer, you just want to get the students to "see" and understand what they are looking at. Students need to be able to verbalize.

Day2/Block2:

Have a slide show up from the day before with the work of Laolu Senbanjo up.

1. Have students come in, get their sketchbook and pencil and have a seat. Quickly recap what students saw yesterday and the importance of masks. Ask them if they enjoy the work from both Senbanjo and Martin. (2-5 minutes)
2. Transition them into using art to tell a narrative. What are ways that you can use your art to tell a story about yourself? What elements do you see in either Martin or Senbanjo's work that might tell a story? This can be a point where students are raising their hand and brainstorming. Get them to notice part of the artwork. (5-10 minutes)
3. After the discussion let the students know that they will see two short videos of the both artists talking about their work and what they are trying to show in their work. During the videos, encourage students to draw and take notes during the videos. (10-12 minutes)
4. Watch when the videos are finished, ask the students to volunteer what they thought of the videos. Let students raise their hand and speak about what they thought. Some questions to think about when they are discussing to keep conversation going are: What shape and/or symbol did Delita Martin highlight in the video? Why is that particular shape important? How is it related to African cultures? (think of the moon, the hoop earrings, the circle and the view of black females in society). What story is she trying to tell? What story does Laolu Senbanjo want to tell? What symbols or elements of art does he use? How did his culture influence his work? What issues are important to him that are portrayed in his work? (how African culture is seen, dealing with contemporary issues like poverty). (10-20 minutes)

5. With the rest of time in class, put images back up of the work and have students doodle in response to Martin and Senbanjo's work. Try to use similar elements of either work. What does their work inspire you to draw? Free draw time. (5-10 minutes)

Cleanup:

Have students put away sketchbooks and pencils. Before they can leave they must complete the exit ticket. Chairs should be pushed in.

Closure:

Before they leave, let students know that they will be exploring symbols next class and connect it to identity. When you go home, think about if there are any symbols in your life that mean something to you? Is it related to your family, religion, a moment you remember, etc.?

Lesson Plan Three

Lesson Title: Identity and How to Create Symbols

Relationship to the Unit:

In this lesson students will get the first chance to explore and develop symbols that represent them as a person. Identity is in the title of the unit and one of the main reasons for doing the unit. This lesson is number three of five lessons in the unit. It will be the first opportunity for students to “create”. Students will explore, plan and begin developing after two lessons of introduction and history. This is the beginning of developing a visual language and narrative. Students will also continue to look at the work of Laolu Sebanjo and Delita Martin. They will look at their work and watch videos that show their process of creating a narrative. Both artists were introduced in lesson two and have a deep connection to Yoruba culture.

Essential Questions:

What symbols represent my identity?

How can I show my culture using a visual symbol?

What person, places, things do I identify with?

How can I tell a narrative about myself through symbols?

Objectives and Goals:

Students Will:

- Explore symbols and how they are made in order to create their own symbols
- Use a variety of papers and drawing materials to create a book
- Create an “Explosion Book” that contains a variety of symbols that tell a narrative about the students’ identity
- Become familiar with both Laolu Senbanjo and Delita Martin’s work
- Create a visual language with their book
- Have the ability to describe and discuss their symbols

Resources and Materials:

- [“Creating Personal Symbols” PowerPoint](#)
- [Symbol Planning Sheet \(found at the end of lesson three\)](#)
- Directions on how to make an Explosion book. See directions in “Action Plan (Work Day) Day/Block 4
- [How to Make an Explosion book demonstration link](#)
- Pencils

- 6x6" origami paper (each student gets two)
- 4 ½ x 4 ½" chipboard (each student gets two)
- Glue sticks
- 24" piece of ribbon for each student
- 8x8" piece of black construction paper (each student needs 3 pieces of the same color)
- 12x 18" drawing paper (each student needs 1)
- Masking tape
- Sharpies (black, colored and metallic)
- Acrylic paint
- Brushes
- Water cups
- Paper towels
- Tissue paper
- Watercolors
- Smocks
- Template

Action Plan--Day/Block 1-2:

Before students arrive, have images of the work by Delita Martin and Laolu Sebganjo on the screen. Students should be coming into the room quietly and having a seat. Have students just observe for a few minutes while everyone settles. Have "Creating Personal Symbols" Powerpoint ready.

1. Say to the class: "Before we discuss the works you see up on the board, we will first watch a quick powerpoint on symbols". Run the ["Creating Personal Symbols"](#) powerpoint. (10-15 minutes)
2. After the powerpoint runs through, begin your discussion about symbolism. Ask what is a symbol? Do you wear anything that has a symbol on it? What do you like about that symbol and what does it represent to you? (10 minutes)
3. After a few minutes of discussion as a class, pass out a piece of paper and have students brainstorm and draw symbols that they might connect with in their home or have on their clothing (5-10 minutes)
4. Get students' attention and put up images of Delita Mart and Laolu Senbajo on the screen. Say to the students: "Do you remember the different symbols we saw in Delita Martin and Laolu Senbanjo's work? Name a few by raising your hand." Have them brainstorm and guide them by asking how they might be original and not cliché. (5 minutes)
5. After the discussion, pull out the explosion book example. Then, an example of the "Explosion Book" will be shown. Explain to students that they will be exploring identity and how symbols can be used to tell a story. (5 minutes)
6. Pass out the "Symbol Planning Sheet". Drawing materials will be accessible to all students to get on their own. Students will work through the sheet as you walk around giving feedback and answering questions. (10-20 minutes)
7. If there is still time left and students finish the planning sheet, have them draw in their sketchbook.

Closure/Clean-up:

When there is 5-10 minutes left in class, have students begin cleaning up. They need to put materials away and their symbol sheet away in their folder or class folder.

Action Plan (Work Period)--Day 2/Block 2

When students come in, they should just have a seat. They will begin their "Symbol Explosion Book".

Have all materials for the explosion book on the supply table ready for distribution and easy access.

1. When all students are settled, have them take a look at their symbol sheet and work on it for a few minutes. This will give time for those students that didn't finish, finish up. Other students can draw. (5 minutes)
2. Introduce the "Symbols Explosion Book" again. Show them how it opens and closes. Today they will begin making the inside contents. (2-5 minutes)

DEMONSTRATION STEPS (5-10 minutes):

3. Gather students around you and show them a demonstration of adding the first two layers of the abstract painting that will go inside (you should have your 12x18" drawing paper, tissue paper, glue stick, palette of paint, brushes, smock, water cup, paper towels and an example of an abstract painting they are gonna make). First, students must choose a color family like warm/cool, analogous, primary, secondary, etc. Ask them what they all mean. Walk them through the following steps. Pick a few pieces of tissue paper that match your color family, once you have your colors, you will rip pieces off and place them on your paper. You want to make sure they are balanced and the pieces should be a mix of small and large. Once they are placed and you like where they belong, glue them down with a glue stick.
4. Make sure when you are all finished with the glue stick and tissue paper, put everything away and get your paint palette, smock, brushes, water cup and paper towels. When you are set-up, you will now add different types of lines and shapes with the paint. Remember to keep your color scheme in mind and overall composition. You do not want everything to be spread out and balanced. You also don't want it to be too busy.
5. When you are finished, put your piece on the drying rack and clean your brushes and wash out your cup. Make sure your space is dry too.
6. Ask, "are there any questions?" Answer any questions and send them to get started. Their name should be on the back and have directions written on the board so they can reference what to do next.

END OF DEMONSTRATION--INDEPENDENT WORK (rest of class time 30-40 minutes)

7. Students will go get their materials for the first layer of tissue paper. As they work, walk around and check on progress.
8. As students begin to finish up, make sure they are cleaning up properly. When they are all cleaned up, they may "free draw" until dismissal. Make sure to leave enough time for clean-up.

Clean-up (10 minutes):

All students should be taking care of their own work and materials. Depending on your classroom set-up and management, you might need a few students to be brush cleaners and have someone at each table checking to make sure all is clean. Students can be dismissed when all is cleaned and everything is put away.

Action Plan (Work Period) Day/Block 3:

Have images of Laolu and Delita's work on the board. Have materials ready for the final step of the abstract painting.

1. Have students come in and have a seat. Introduce what they will be doing today. Today, you will be doing two things, you will be making the front and back cover of your "Symbol Explosion Book" and then incorporating your symbols into your abstract painting. We will look at Delita Martin and Laolu Senbanjo's work for inspiration. I will

quickly demonstrate, directions will be written on the board and then you can get started. (2-5 minutes)

2. First, talk to the students about how Laolu and Delita incorporate their symbols into their work. Specifically, Laolu because he has objects and symbols throughout his work with lines, shape and color seamlessly connecting them in. Ask students about what elements and principles of design do the artists use? How important is line in Senjabo's work? How can shape and color help bring everything together? What about repetition, pattern, texture, etc.? Guide the students' discussion. (5-10 minutes).
3. After the discussion, gather students around to watch the demonstration of adding symbols into their abstract painting. Get your painting from the pile and your symbol sheet. The symbols that represent you will be added into the painting. Find spaces and interesting spots to put them. Make sure to draw them in pencil first lightly. When you have finished adding your symbols and like how they look, add color with sharpies or colored pencils then outline them in black sharpie. The final step is to add outlines throughout the whole painting with sharpie. Think about how you can incorporate your symbols with the rest of the painting. Questions? (5-10 minutes)
4. Send students to begin working on their last layer of the abstract painting. Walk around as they work and give feedback. (20-30 minutes, till the end of class)
5. Allow time for clean-up.

Clean-up (5 minutes):

Have students put their artwork in a pile to go in the class file. Their personal symbols sheet should go in their individual folder. All drawing materials back to the right place.

Action Plan (Work Period) Day/Block 4:

Have materials ready and labeled for making the cover on the supply table. They will need ribbon, tape, chipboard, origami paper, black paper, scissors, glue stick and their project. Putting this all together can be difficult, there will be a link to a video on how to do this. You can show the students or you just watch yourself and make sure to lead them all through the directions together. You decide.

DEMONSTRATION STEPS (do this as a class or show them first and have them do it 20-30 minutes):

1. As students come in, have them gather around where you usually do demonstrations. Directions will be written on the board, you will have your materials ready and an example.
2. Describe to students what they will be doing today. You will be making the front and back cover of your "Symbols Explosion Book" and then get started on adding the inside content. On the supply table you will find all materials you will need with labels. You will need two pieces of chipboard (4 ½ x 4 ½"), 3 pieces of black construction paper (8 x 8"), a piece of ribbon, a piece of masking tape, a glue stick and 2 pieces of origami paper (6 x 6").
3. When you have all your materials you will cover the two pieces of chipboard with your origami paper, this will be your front and back cover. You will glue the chipboard and then place it on the origami paper, making sure there is an even amount of paper outlining the chipboard. Cover the edges with glue and wrap the chipboard like a present (demonstration step).
4. Get your three pieces of black paper and fold the paper three times, making a crease each time. Go corner to corner (diagonally), then corner to corner in the opposite direction (diagonally), then fold horizontally and then vertically. Fold it up so it is in a diamond or square shape. Do the same with the last two pieces.

5. Then, lay out all the black pieces of paper. Two pieces of paper should be facing open away from you, one should be facing open towards you. Slide the corners of all three pieces of paper inside one another and glue the smaller squares where they line up. Fold it all together and see if it works. It should fold within itself nicely.
6. Once the black pieces of paper are glued together, put it aside and get your ribbon and tape. Take one side of your book, find the middle of the ribbon and tape it on the inside of the chipboard (the part not covered by the origami paper). Take one side of the black paper (it should be folded up), put glue on it and line it up over the ribbon, so the cover and black paper are lined up. Add glue to the other side of the black paper and press it to the other cover. Tie the ribbon around the whole book and press it in between books or heavy things so it gets pressed. You have a book!

END DEMONSTRATION

7. Give students time to finish up and walk around to see how it is going. When they are finished, put their name on it and give it to you to be pressed.
8. This part will probably take the whole class and maybe some of the next class as well.

Clean-up:

Have students give you their book with their name on it when it is finished to be pressed. Have them put away all other materials. Make sure the name is on each book. Press their books in between two heavy books or weights.

Action Plan (Work Period) Day/Block 5:

This will be the very last step in the Explosion book. Students will be cutting up their abstract drawing and putting it in their book. For today students will need a 4x4" piece of chipboard (used for tracing so they can share), pencil, scissors, their book, glue stick, template, metallic sharpies and their painting.

1. When students come in, have them come around to see a quick demonstration. Explain what they will be doing. Students will be taking their abstract painting with symbols and cutting it up to put in their book. They can choose what parts of their painting go in the book. Demonstrate the following steps and also have the directions written on the board and then let them work. (demonstration 5-10 minutes)
2. Let students get materials and begin working after demonstration. Work period (20-30 minutes)
3. Get your book, your painting, a 4x4" chipboard (you can share), pencil, template, glue stick and scissors.
4. When you have all your materials, get your painting and trace the square 10 times with a pencil. You want to of course trace around your symbols and also interesting parts of your painting. Choose wisely and take your time.
5. When you have all 10 squares traced, cut them out. Get a template with 16 spaces. Arrange them on the template so you will know how it will look. The template mirrors what the inside looks like. As you can see there are 12 triangles, those pieces that you put there then have to be cut in half to make two triangles. So, you should have 4 squares (diamonds) and 12 triangles.
6. When you are happy with your arrangement on the template, get your book and open it up, lay it out so it resembles the template. Begin gluing your pieces of paper into the spots in your book. Use a glue stick. When you are finished, leave your book open to dry for a bit.
7. Clean up your space. Either recycle your pieces or put them in the scrap bin. Put all other materials away. If there is extra time, "free draw" in your sketchbook.

8. If everyone finishes quickly and with enough time, do a critique. Invite students to present their book and explain their symbols. Give other students time to ask questions and make constructive criticism.

Guidelines for students' presenting work:

What do your symbols represent?

Why did you choose the colors you did?

Which symbol are you most proud of?

Do you feel as though your book represents you? Why/Why not?

Questions to ask presenter:

What was your thought process?

What made you choose that symbol?

How does _____symbol represent?

What do you think you did well?

What could you have done better?

If you do not get through all students for the critique, begin the next class with a critique first. The critique is a good way of evaluating what they have learned.

Adaptations:

The student body I work with doesn't have any physical disabilities. Some students have diagnoses such as Dysgraphia, ADD or ADHD. Most students need extra time to complete activities.

- The instructor will have all papers and chipboard pre-cut and laid out on the supply table with labels so students know which pieces of paper they need.
- Directions will be written on the board, explained orally and with a visual demonstration.
- Each step will have a corresponding slide with directions.
- There will be an extra work period built into the lesson for students to finish up. If students finish early, there will be projects for them to do.

Assessment:

Did Students:

- Explore symbols and how they are made in order to create their own symbols
- Use a variety of papers and drawing materials to create a book
- Create an "Explosion Book" that contains a variety of symbols that tell a narrative about the students' identity
- Become familiar with both Laolu Senbanjo and Delita Martin's work
- Create a visual language with their book
- Have the ability to describe and discuss their symbols

Evaluation:

- Completion of the "Creating Personal Symbols" sheet will be used to evaluate exploration of symbols.
- Observation and in-process review of the book will help in evaluating if students used a variety of papers.
- Participation in discussion will be used to evaluate familiarity of the contemporary artists Sebanjo and Martin.
- Finished product, discussion and self-critique will be used in evaluating visual language of each students' symbol book

- Evaluation of each students' ability to describe and discuss their symbols during group critiques and presentation of the book

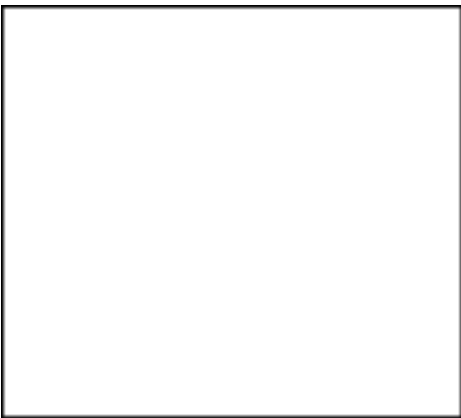
Symbol Planning Sheet

Name: _____

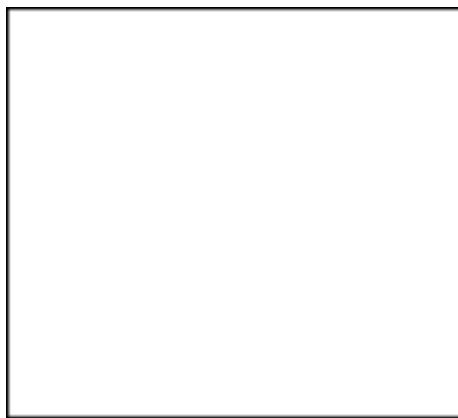
Grade/Class/Section: _____

Below you will look at each word/description and think of a symbol that would be used to represent **you** and that work/description. It needs to be **unique to you** as a person. Take your time and have fun. For example: "Happiness" I would draw a symbol of my family embracing each other but simplified.

Happiness



Family



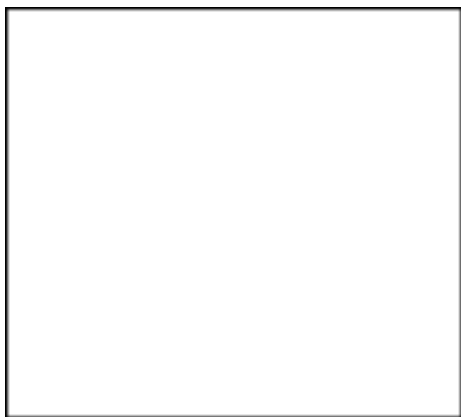
Love



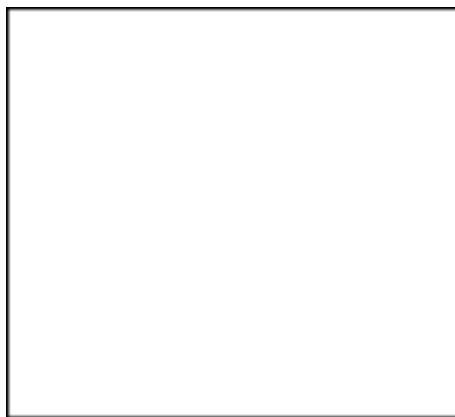
Favorite Place



My Style



Peaceful



A Memory



Your Choice



Favorite Animal



Me (if you were a symbol)





Lesson Plan Four

Lesson Title: Identity Painting and How to Incorporate Symbols (3-5 block periods)

Relationship to the Unit:

This lesson is four of five in the unit plan. Using the symbols from their book that they created and developed, along with the elements and principles of design, students will make a painting that will “hold” their mask. This lesson will connect with what they learned in lesson one. The importance of storytelling and passing down culture and traditions is important in Yoruba culture. Through performances, they connect with ancestors and the mask is used. When the mask is not in use it is kept in an important part of the wearer’s home. This lesson will make a place for the mask to be when it is not being worn. It also connects with the unit because students will be painting their visual language like the artists they learned about in lessons one and two.

Relationship to Life:

Students will continue to explore their identity and figure out how it can be incorporated into a piece of art. They will also learn to understand how symbols can be used in different mediums and be used to connect what they have learned in the past. Students are taking past knowledge and combining it with what they created and using it again to tell a story. They will make a narrative language while incorporating identity, another culture and current contemporary artists influence.

Goals and Objectives:

- Use of symbolism and how it can be used in a narrative
- Use the elements and principles of design to create a well composed painting.
- Use symbols in their artwork to create a narrative about their identity
- Have a better understanding of who they are as a person through exploration

Students will:

- Use symbols they created to make a larger narrative in painting
- Use the elements and principles of design to incorporate symbols throughout the painting to make it more cohesive and balanced
- Use a variety of colors that will represent them as a person
- Understand how to create a well balanced composition using both symbols and elements and principles of art
- Understand how to use acrylic paint and different painting techniques
- Understand how to make a variety colors from a limited palette

Resources and Materials:

- Laolu Senbanjo. <https://laolu.nyc/>
- Elements and Principles of Design
- [Elements of Art Wheel Sheet](#)
- [Symbolism painting rubric \(at the end of this lesson\)](#)
- [Variety of images of Laolu Senbanjo's work](#)
- 16x20" canvas board
- Acrylic paint (crimson, medium red, ultramarine blue, phthalo blue, med yellow, white, black)
- Palette knives
- Paint palettes
- Pencils
- Palette paper
- Water cups
- Paper towels
- Brushes
- Example of project
- Various drawing materials
- Drawing paper
- Smocks
- Black paint pens

Action Plan--Day 1-2:

Have images of Laolu Senbajo's work. Use images that are on canvases and show a lot of symbolism. Use his website (permission has been granted) or images found in the "image index".

1. Have an image of Laolu Senbanjo standing in front of a piece of his work up on the projector screen. Give a few minutes for students to look at it and digest what they see. (2-3 minutes)
2. As students: How does Laolu Senbanjo incorporate symbols and objects into his work? Try to use the elements and principles of design words to help describe. What story can you piece together in each work? Point one out and describe it. Give students a chance to respond and describe. (8-15 minutes)

3. After the discussion, go through the elements and principles of design with them. Have them define it for you and use Senbanjo's work to help show examples. (5-10 minutes)
4. Pass out the "Elements and Principles of Art Sheet". Discuss the sheet quickly and let them fill it out. (20-30 minutes)
5. When finished, have students get their "Symbol Identity Book" from last class.
6. Show an example of what they will be painting on the canvas board. Discuss how the symbols were incorporated into the design. Talk about how line, pattern and color unify the whole piece. Ask for their opinion.
7. Have students retrieve their sketchbook and begin designing their image. Ask them: What will be the central focus of your piece? Is there a symbol you can make the focal point and build around it or are your symbols equally important? What elements of design will you use? Students will go through their book and pick out the symbols that they are most interested in using (it can be all of them). (30 minutes or until the end of class)
8. When students feel ready, they will get a canvas board and begin drawing out their plan on the board in pencil.

Clean-up:

Students will make sure their name is on the back of what they are working on and put it in class cubby if it does not fit in their folder. Most students might not be in the same place, that is okay. Students can not be dismissed until all materials are put away.

Action Plan--Day 2-4:

Give a quick recap of what was accomplished yesterday and explain that will continue to draw their design and begin getting in on their canvas board. Today, you will be doing a demonstration on mixing color as a refresher. They will have a limited palette of just crimson, medium red, yellow, ultramarine, phthalo blue, white and black. Hopefully, students are pretty familiar with mixing paint by this point. Have paint palettes ready on the supply table with brushes and palette knives. Have the color wheel up on the board for reference. Planning, drawing and painting will take more than 1 class period.

1. After everyone is seated and settled, start talking about color. Ask them what the primary colors are, secondary, tertiary? Why is the color wheel setup like it is? What are the complementary colors, analogous, warm, cool, etc? How do you make brown? Have a discussion and take about 10-15 minutes discussing mixing color.
2. Show them how to mix secondary, tertiary, brown, etc. colors. Discuss as you demonstrate, putting small amounts of a darker color into a lighter color. Also show students how to use the palette knife for mixing. (5-10 minutes)
3. Send students to get their canvas board and finish drawing their design on the board.
4. After their design is on the board, students will get a paint palette, water cup, brushes, paper towels, palette knife and smock. They will begin adding color first mixing as they go.
9. After the whole piece has been painted and the piece has been dry, students can add the black outlines to tie it all together. They have the option of using black paint, paint pens or a combination of the two.
10. Students will clean up their area, put away all materials and put their signed piece on the drying rack.

Clean-up:

1. Clean-up instructions will be up on the projector screen for all to see and refer to.
2. Brush cleaners will be assigned each class when there is paint being used. There are two sinks, so two cleaners. They will go to the sink with their brushes and water cups and begin cleaning. Everyone else will FIRST bring their water cup and brushes to the sink.
3. While brushes are being cleaned, the instructor will stand by the drying rack while each student brings their painting to the rack and it will be put there.
4. After taking care of their painting, everyone will put their "Identity Symbol Book" away in their folder along with their planning sheet and elements/principles sheet. All students can put their smocks back on the hooks.
5. Everyone at each table (there are three, each color coded) will work together to make sure all drawing materials and other things used get put back in the right place. When they think their table is ready to go, they will be seated and waiting to get dismissed.

Closure:

Students will have to say one thing about their painting they were most proud of before leaving. The instructor will call on each student and then dismiss them when they have answered.

Adaptations:

The student body I work with doesn't have any physical disabilities. Some students have diagnoses such as Dysgraphia, ADD or ADHD. Most students need extra time to complete activities.

- The instructor will have a powerpoint presentation on the projector with all directions and images for each step.
- Paint palettes will be already made with the appropriate colors for each student
- All materials needed for the lesson will be laid out and clearly labeled so students know what to get, when.
- Students will have an option of drawing on the black outline instead of painting it for those students that have trouble with smaller details
- For students that have trouble speaking in front of the class, have them write their questions/thoughts on post-it notes and give it to the instructor

Assessment:

Did Students:

- Use symbols they created to make a larger narrative in painting
- Use the elements and principles of design to incorporate symbols throughout the painting to make it more cohesive and balanced
- Use a variety of colors that will represent them as a person
- Understand how to create a well balanced composition using both symbols and elements and principles of art
- Understand how to use acrylic paint and different painting techniques
- Understand how to make a variety colors from a limited palette

Evaluation:

- Symbolism Painting rubric will be used to evaluate if all criteria was met such as use of symbols and elements and principles of design
- Depending on the variety of colors that are used in the painting will be used to evaluate understanding of color mixing
- Peer, group and individual critiques will be used to evaluate in the composition is well balanced
- Individual discussions and observations throughout the work periods will be used to evaluate understanding of brush techniques and handling of materials

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Symbolism Painting Rubric

Criteria	Possible Points	Points Earned
Complete "Elements of Art Wheel" sheet	15	
Participation in class discussions and critiques	20	
Used a variety and at least 6 of personal symbols from their "Explosion Book"	25	
Planning sketches in sketchbook	10	
Used elements and principles of design in final painting	10	
Demonstrated understanding of color mixing from a limited palette in final painting	10	
Composed a well balanced piece with black outline to incorporate symbols	10	
Total	100	



Lesson Plan Five

Lesson Title: Identity Mask (2-4 block periods)

Relationship to the Unit:

This lesson is the last lesson in the Unit. This lesson connects all that the students have learned with the creation of an Identity mask. In lesson four, students created a painting that will also act as a “holder” for the mask. This connects back to when students learned about the Egúngún masquerade and how when the mask was not being used in the performance, it was kept in the highest and safest place in the household. The background will incorporate the mask and the mask will incorporate the background. Because Yoruba masks are a connection between ancestors and generations, students will be connecting their identity with who they are and applying it to their mask. What they learned in lessons 1-4 will all come together to be used in the mask and background. They will also get the opportunity to take pictures of themselves wearing the mask, almost like a masquerade and they have to figure out a pose with their body that would represent their personality.

Goals and Objectives:

- Understand the importance of the mask and how it can be an extension of oneself.
- How to use the elements and principles of design to create a well composed 3D mask and background
- What visual culture is and how it is used in art and everyday life.
- Construct a mask that tells a narrative about themselves.
- Use different techniques and materials to create a final mask
- Use the knowledge gained through discussion and critiques to improve their mask

- Have a better understanding of who they are as a person through exploration

Students will:

- Create a mask that is visually a part of their identity painting using a variety of materials such as clay, assorted paper, wire, paint, raffia, drawing materials, etc.
- Use the elements and principles of design to draw an interesting design that incorporates or “camouflages” the mask into the identity painting
- Use problem-solving skills to figure out the mask can be mounted on the identity painting but also be able to be taken off and worn
- Make the mask comfortable to wear
- Use symbols and other elements that will represent them as a person
- Use a variety of materials to make a well composed mask
- Use personal symbols they created in lesson 3

Resources and Materials:

- Images of Laolu Senbanjo and Delita Martin’s work
- Images from Bell, D. (2008, Winter). *Mask makers in nigeria: Inspired by Yoruba traditions*. *Td & T*, 44, 41-52.
- Teacher Example of mask or student examples
- [Self-critique sheet](#)
- [Mask Rubric](#)
- Raffia
- Wire
- string/yarn
- White glue
- Hot glue and glue gun
- Paper clay
- Acrylic paint
- Paper masks
- Elastic
- Drawing Paper
- Pencils
- Various drawing materials
- Scissors
- Brushes
- smocks

Action Plan--Day 1:

Have images of Yoruba masks on the projection board. As the students come in, have them get their identity painting, symbol book and sketchbook. Also, have materials out that will be used for mask making.

1. Recap the Yoruba masks and how they were made. Ask students: What materials did they use? How was paint made? What materials can you use? (5-10 minutes)
2. Show images of masks that Delita Martin and Laolu Senganjo have made or incorporated into their work. Ask students: Find a mask and describe how the

mask is used, what is the purpose of the mask you see? Ask students and have a discussion about how the artists used masks. (10-20 minutes)

3. Explain the project and how they will be making a mask that will be both worn and incorporated in with their identity painting. Speak about Egúngún masquerades and how the mask had a "place" in each household for safekeeping. Why do you think they kept the masks in a special place? Is there something that you use for special occasions and then have a specific place to keep it safe? What is it? Where does it go? Discuss as a class. (10-20 minutes)
4. Show students the paper masks that they can use and go over all the materials at their disposal. How might you use these materials? Show students some techniques. Also, give the students an option to build it out of cardboard if they want too (mask making will have to depend on what materials you have). Ask students: What techniques did Yoruba use that you could incorporate into your mask? (10-20 minutes)
5. Have students look at their painting and symbol book for inspiration. Have students brainstorm mask ideas in their sketchbook for the rest of class.

Day 2-4 (Brainstorming, Planning and Building):

Have materials out for mask making so they can see what materials they have available. They will need their identity painting, symbol book and sketchbook for planning.

1. Go over what they did on day one. Remind students that they are making an identity mask that will also be incorporated into their painting. They are brainstorming today. Everything that they learned will be used and incorporated into the mask. Ask students: when you wear the mask, what do you want people to see? How does this mask fit into your painting?
2. Students will plan their mask and when they are ready, they can begin building it. They can use a paper mask or build from scratch, depending on what materials you have.
3. After planning is finished, have students get feedback from you and other students.
4. Build a mask and remind students that the mask has to be worn comfortably and has to be incorporated into the painting. Ask students: Where will the mask sit or be placed in your painting.

Day 4 or 5:

Before students get to work, have them get their masks and put them at their seat or on the bulletin board, if possible. Spend 20 minutes doing quick critiques of everyone's mask.

1. Once students put their masks out and are settled, give them 5 minutes to walk around and look at everyone else's masks. Ask students while they are looking: Think about what you see? What materials did people use? Can you see how certain people are represented in their masks? What techniques do you think they used? (5 minutes)
2. After they walk around and look, have students volunteer to ask each other questions on their mask. Questions could be: How did you do....? What technique did you use? Why did you do ___ that way? (10-15 minutes)
3. After the quick critique, have students sit and discuss how the mask will be mounted on the painting. Ask students: How could you apply the mask to the painting? What materials could you use? Remember, it can't be stuck on the painting, it has to be removable but also hang on there as well. How do you do it? Brainstorm as a group.

4. Have students get back to work and when their mask is finished, begin problem-solving ways it can be hung on the painting.

Day 5 or 6:

When everyone is finished, they will do a self-critique of their mask and then hang it up for all to see.

1. When students come in, they need to get their mask and painting, a pencil and the self-critique sheet. Have students fill out the self critique sheet and then turn it in to you. (5-10 minutes)
2. After the sheet is complete, students will hang up their painting with a mask for viewing. They can have a seat and free draw while they wait for everyone.
3. Once everyone is finished, call up each student to wear the mask and strike a pose that best represents them in the mask. Ask them: How does the mask make you feel when you wear it? How can you show that feeling with your body? (10-15 minutes)
4. After everyone has gotten their picture taken. Have students come up and present their mask/painting. Students can use the following questions to help them speak about their piece: What symbols are important to you? What do they mean? What parts of the mask are you most proud of? What do you want the viewer to know about your mask? How does this mask represent your identity? (30 minutes)

Clean-up:

1. Clean-up instructions will be up on the projector screen for all to see and refer to.
2. Students will make sure their name is on the mask
3. Students will place their mask on a designated shelf to dry and their paintings will go in the class cubby (vertical files), the instructor will be waiting to make sure they are being placed properly.
4. Each table is responsible for making sure everything is put away.
5. There will be brush cleaners assigned and brushes and cups will be brought to them to clean.
6. After all materials are put away, students will sit at their designated table waiting to be dismissed.

Closure:

Before each student leaves the room, they must say one thing they did well or like on their mask.

Adaptations:

The student body I work with doesn't have any physical disabilities. Some students have diagnoses such as Dysgraphia, ADD or ADHD. Most students need extra time to complete activities.

- There will be a variety of materials to choose from so if students have difficulty painting smaller details, they can draw instead with something easier to hold. Students do not have to use specific materials, they can use what they are comfortable using.
- Written directions will be up on the projection screen for all to see so students know what to do. There will also be demonstrations for each step for those students that need both visual and written directions.

- The instructor will continue to move around the room to make sure everyone gets feedback and help when needed.

Assessment:

Did Students:

- Create a mask that is visually a part of their identity painting using a variety of materials such as clay, assorted paper, wire, paint, raffia, drawing materials, etc.
- Use the elements and principles of design to draw an interesting design that incorporates or “camouflages” the mask into the identity painting
- Use problem-solving skills to figure out the mask can be mounted on the identity painting but also be able to be taken off and worn
- Make the mask comfortable to wear
- Use symbols and other elements that will represent them as a person
- Use a variety of materials to make a well composed mask
- Use personal symbols they created in lesson 3
- Use a variety of techniques in their final mask

Evaluation:

- There will be a rubric that will be used for grading purposes. It will be available to students to refer to as they work. The teacher will also go over the rubric in the beginning of the lesson.
- There will be a group critique that will happen in the middle of mask making that students can use to help evaluate their work. The teacher will also use it to evaluate each students’ progress.
- The self-critique sheet that is filled out by each student will be used to evaluate the success of the mask and will be taken into account for grading.
- Discussions and critiques throughout the lesson will be used to help evaluate understanding of the process and techniques used.

References:

Images from Bell, D. (2008, Winter). *Mask makers in nigeria: Inspired by yoruba traditions*. Td & T, 44, 41-52.

Delita Martin’s website <https://blackboxpressstudio.com/>

Laolu Senbanjo’s website <https://laolu.nyc/>

Identity Mask Rubric

Name: _____

Grade: _____

Criteria	Possible Points	Points Earned
Used a variety of materials such as paint, raffia, cardboard, glue, feathers, etc.	15	
Successful incorporation of mask into identity painting using elements and principles of design and use of personal symbols	20	
Completion of personal critique sheet	10	
Mask can be worn comfortably	15	
Mask successfully is mounted on identity painting and can be easily removed	15	
Use of variety of techniques	10	
Overall craftsmanship	15	
Total	100	

Self Critique of Identity Mask

Name: _____

Grade: _____

1. What is the title of your mask?
2. Why did you choose that title? What does it mean to you?
3. What are you most proud of when you look at your mask?
4. Is there anything you would change about your mask? Explain.
5. Do you think your mask represents you as a person? Explain.
6. Did you enjoy making your identity mask? Why or why not?

7. How does your mask make you feel when you put it on?
8. Is there something you learned about yourself through this exploration of identity? Explain.
9. Grading yourself, how do you think you did on this project? Explain.

Unit References:

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