

LESSON PLAN: Narrative in American Indian Art

By Katy Flatley, May 2010

Learn about stories in American Indian art and create a scratch art drawing.

Objectives

Discussion: What stories or fables do we all typically learn in preschool or early elementary school? What elements do stories have? How might an artist tell a story in their artwork? (comic strip features, multiple canvases, sheets of paper /flip book)



Introductory activity: Have the students look at some comic strips and graphic novels. How can we tell each image is part of the same story? Are there characters, settings, actions, or all 3? Sketch a comic strip on a long piece of paper folded into 3rds or 4ths. *What happens first? What happens next? Last?*

On an instructor-led tour, students will explore and discuss several works of art by American Indian artists on campus. Narrative artwork includes pottery, photography, ledger drawing, etc.

Students will create original works of art, first by drawing a setting, characters and actions on newsprint paper, then on the clear scratch film. Students will use the drawing paper to create fields of color and layer the scratch film on top, finishing the project with a cardstock mat. First, students have to think of the characters, setting and action. They can draw from their own life:

- What did you do this morning before class?
- What did you do on your last birthday? Who was with you?
- What did you do on your favorite vacation? What places did you go?
- What are you going to do on spring break? What things or animals were there?

OR: draw pictures showing one of your favorite stories from a book, or a movie.

- What characters might you show?
- What places might you show?

Vocabulary

story= a narration of the events in the life of a person, animal, or thing

characters= a person or animal in a drama or story, a part or role in a play or film

settings= the time, place, and circumstances in which a story takes place

Materials needed

Tasunka a Lakota horse picture book, Images: Wendy Red Star's diorama, portrait, other jingle dresses, Grand Theft Auto video game cover

newsprint paper

clear scratch film sheets x 2 per student

drawing paper, variety of colored construction paper

cardstock mats (pre-cut, show students how it will overlap their drawing a little on all 4 edges)

tape, double stick tape, or glue dots

Tour artwork images



Wendy Red Star (American Indian, Crow, b. 1981)
Four Season Series, Indian Summer, printed 2006
Archival pigment print on Museo silver rag mounted on Dibond
Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2014.09



Linda Haukaas (American Indian, Sicango Lakota, b. 1957)

Commodification of Indian Art, 2009

Graphite on paper bag

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2009.53



Ida Sahmie (American Indian, Navajo/Hopi, b. 1960)

Tall jar, 1998

Clay

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2006.34



Diego Romero (American Indian, Cochiti Pueblo, b. 1964)

Large bowl depicting Cochiti feast dance gold rim with water and corn design, 2011

Native clay, native clay slips and commercial gold

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2011.52



Jason Garcia (American Indian, Santa Clara Pueblo, b. 1973)

Pair of painted tiles from the Grand Theft Auto Series, 2007

Mineral and carbon paint on clay

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2007.78



Al Bahe (American Indian, Navajo, b. 1959)

Hoostoi: Evening Light, c. 2008

Acrylic on canvas

Collection Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, 2008.31