



Faith Ringgold Work Plan Description

To create is to cause something to come into being or existence. **Artists**, working in many styles or genres, practice creativity by coming up with new and unique styles or ways of making things using their intellectual inventiveness, imagination, intuition, and talent. The things these artists create may be unusual or one of a kind. They may also be the result of an unusual technique or an adaptation of a traditional method.

Whatever the result of this creative process, the created thing will probably be beyond expectations. The forms, ideas, or methods may transcend traditional rules or patterns and present a different perspective.

The following lessons will explore the works of three artists who practice creativity in three distinctive ways in the fields of visual and literary arts. The lessons will also provide opportunities for the teachers and learners to practice their own creativity.

MINNESOTA STATE STANDARDS

Language Arts

Reading and Literature Strand

- Understand the meaning of texts using various strategies
- Demonstrate interpretive, inferential, and evaluative comprehension

Writing Strand

- Compose various pieces writing
- Write clearly and coherently for effective communication

Speaking, Listening, and Viewing Strand

- Demonstrate understanding and communicate effectively using active listening and dynamic speaking

Arts - Theater Strand

- Use movement, sound, and language to create and express ideas

Arts - Visual Art Strand

- create visual artwork from various materials

THEMATIC LEARNING GOALS

- examine and learn about the life and work of three African American artists

- understand that everyday occurrences can serve as inspiration for creative expression
- find joy in creating visual and literary art

BASIC ACTIVITIES FOR EACH LESSON

- read, listen to, and view artwork
- participate in discussion using **critical response**
 - * what did you *sense*? Describe in detail
 - * what does it remind you of? Something heard, seen or felt before
 - * feeling? What emotion or mood is communicated?
 - * what questions would you ask the artist about the work?
 - * what do you think this work is about? What observation/experience supports your idea? What evidence does the artist give to support your idea?
- creative time — focusing on your own ideas to create work
- sharing created works with the class or wider community

LESSON PLAN

Faith Ringgold (October 8, 1930 -) was born in Harlem, New York. She is a painter, mixed media sculptor, performance artist, writer, teacher, and lecturer. She received her B.S. and M.A. degrees in visual art from the City College of New York in 1955 and 1959. Ms. Ringgold is Professor Emeritus of Art at the University of California in San Diego and has received 23 Honorary Doctorates. In the 1960's, Faith Ringgold's art was initially inspired by African art, yet it was not until the late 1970's that she traveled to Nigeria and Ghana to see the rich tradition of masks that have continued to be her greatest influence. In the early 1970's Ms. Ringgold created soft sculptures, masks, and began making *tankas*, a Tibetan art form of paintings framed in richly brocaded fabrics. Her paintings were bordered with fabric and then quilted, creating her unique way of painting using the quilting medium.

She made her first **quilt**, *Echoes of Harlem*, in 1980, in collaboration with her mother, Madame Willi Posey. Ms. Ringgold created her first story quilt, *Who's Afraid of Aunt Jemima?* in 1983 as a way of publishing her unedited words. The addition of text to her quilts has developed into a unique medium and style all her own.

Crown Publishers published Faith Ringgold's first book, the award-winning Tar Beach in 1991. It has won over 20 awards including the Caldecott Honor and the Coretta Scott King award for the best-illustrated children's book. An animated version with Natalie Cole doing the voice-over was created by HBO in 2010. The book is a magical story based on the story quilt of the same title from *The Woman on a Bridge Series* which she completed in 1988. It seamlessly braids together autobiography, fiction, fantasy,

history, poetry, and African American traditions into a book that resonates with people of all ages and has withstood the test of time.

Faith Ringgold is a tireless and committed social activist who still uses her artistic expression to communicate her political narrative.

Activity: Create a Quilt Square Frame

Text: TAR BEACH by Faith Ringgold

1. project images of Faith Ringgold created Story Quilts, traditional and contemporary quilts, and quilts from various cultures.
2. class discussion about what is noticed with each image using **critical response questions**.
3. Read-a-loud and share the illustrations in TAR BEACH by Faith Ringgold followed by class discussion of the book using **critical response questions**.
4. collect one 12" X 12" piece of tag board or heavy paper. Collect 20 2" X 2" squares of colored/patterned paper or fabric. Glue the squares around the outside edge of the paper leaving a 10" X 10" empty space in the middle of the paper. This is your quilt square frame.
5. on a 10" X 10" piece of drawing paper, create a scene from your imagination about an event in your life. You may also fill the page with a poem or essay or an abstract design. When complete, paste this drawing in the center of your quilt square frame.
6. share the work with classmates explaining how your creativity is expressed.

RESOURCES, REFERENCES, MATERIALS

Ringgold, Faith, *Tar Beach*, Crown Publishers, Inc. New York 1991

Dancing at the Louvre: Faith Ringgold's French Connection and Other Story Quilts, Dan Cameron and others, editor, New Museum of Contemporary Art, New York University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1998

Faith Ringgold, African American Registry®

MATERIALS FOR QUILT SQUARE FRAME

Tag board/card stock 12" X 12" one per student

colorful paper or fabric squares 2" x 2" twenty per student

drawing paper 10" X 10" one per student

glue sticks