Jean E. Zellner

ED 8471
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Professor: S. Rodriguez

Activity Plan

Level: Grade 3

Title: Quilts Tell a Story / Faith Ringgold

Brief History and Background of Artist and Artwork:

The following biography is taken from Faith Ringgold’s website.

"Faith Ringgold began her artistic career more than 35 years ago as a painter. Today, she is best known for her painted story quilts – art that combines painting, quilted fabric and storytelling. She has exhibited in major museums in the USA, Europe, South America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. She is in the permanent collection of many museums including the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Solomon Guggenheim Museum, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The Museum of Modern Art. Her first book, Tar Beach, was a Caldecott Honor Book and winner of the Coretta Scott King Award for Illustration, among other numerous honors. She has written and illustrated eleven children’s books. She has received more than 75 awards, fellowships, citations and honors, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Fellowship for painting, two National Endowment for the Arts Awards and seventeen honorary doctorates, one of which is from her alma mater, The City College of New York."

In addition, Faith was greatly influenced by the fabric she worked on at home with her mother, who was a fashion designer. She modeled her story quilts on the Buddhist Thangkas, lovely pictures painted on fabric and quilted or brocaded, which could then be easily rolled up and transported.

Goal: The students will learn that quilts are not only a cover, but an art form that also tells a story. They exist in many cultures for these purposes.

Objectives:

1. The students will learn about quilts in the Russian culture with the story The Keeping Quilt.
2. The students will experience a storytelling quilt with the story Tar Beach.
3. The students will tell their own story by constructing a storytelling quilt of their own.
4. The students will display their quilt and orally tell their story.
Materials:

- Book, The Keeping Quilt by Patricia Polacco
- Book, Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold
- World Map
- 9x9 squares of white construction paper for each student
- A wallet sized photo of each student (provided by school picture company)
- A variety of fabric paper
- Scissors, glue, pencils, colored pencils, markers, or crayons

Directions:

1. Ask the students if they have quilts in their home. What are they like? How are they used? Are they special in any way?
2. Read the story The Keeping Quilt to the students, and make a list of all the uses for the quilt in the story.
3. Locate Russia on the World Map and show the long journey of this family to the USA. Why would the quilt be so special?
4. Now read the story Tar Beach to the students. How is this quilt the same and different from the Keeping Quilt? What story does the quilt tell? How does it tell that story?
5. Give the students some background information about the author, Faith Ringgold. Why do you think she wanted to tell this story? Why did she do it with a quilt?
6. Have the students tell their own personal story by making a mini quilt.
7. Start with a 9x9 square of white construction paper.
8. Choose some fabric paper for the border and dividing lines on the square.
9. Plan how the square will be organized into sections to display the photo and drawings of family, home, favorites, and interests.
10. Glue the picture, the border, and the dividing lines on the square, then draw and color the pictures.
11. Display the quilts and have each student talk about their quilt.
Bibliography/References:


