

Community Ties

A Curricular Encounter by Christina Timmons

TEXTURES

THE HISTORY AND ART OF BLACK HAIR



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MUSEUM

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Community Ties

Section: Community and Memory

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Grade Level: K-12

Expected Length: 2 class periods

Students will reflect on moments during their lifetime and depict a specific space where they feel at home while away from home. This could be a depiction of an interior space or landscape, as long as it includes the people and/or objects that make the specific space special. Using mixed media of their choice students will recreate a scene with special attention to the connection between the figures involved.

Artworks/Artifacts

Annie Lee, *All That Glitters* (p. 57)

All That Glitters features three women engaged in intense conversation while “getting their hair combed” and studying what seems to be beaded jewelry. This scene is a display of the social wealth that lies within the walls of a beauty shop.

Carmen Lomaz Garza, *Cama para Suenos (Bed for Dreams)*, (1985) (supporting artwork)

This work of art provides two intimate narratives that ultimately collide. As two children chat excitedly about the moon and stars while sitting on a rooftop, their mother is preparing a bed for them. This is all too familiar, and almost ironic, in that the children do not know that their fun will come to an end soon, yet they will experience a comfort that only a home full of love can provide. Like *All That Glitters*, this piece shows the bond between people in a specific place at a specific time, and how the feeling of “home” can be relative to the people you are with.

Carmen Lomaz Garza, *Cakewalk*, (1987) (supporting artwork)

In this piece, the viewer is met with a crowd of people thoroughly enjoying themselves. From food to games to dancing, there is something at this community event for everyone to enjoy. Even the adults are mixed in with the kids, participating in the Cakewalk fundraiser. This piece is a testament to how entire communities come together to support one another, solidifying the entire community as a “home.”

Materials

K-5

Paper for brainstorming activity

9in x 12 in Watercolor paper

Graphite pencils

Watercolor pencils

Paintbrushes

Cup of water

6-12

Paper for brainstorming activity

9in x 12in Watercolor paper

Graphite pencils

Watercolor pencils

Paintbrushes

Cup of Water

Hot glue

Glue sticks

Scissors

Mixed media (beads, paper, fabric, paint, etc.)

Objectives

Critical Inquiry:

Students will analyze the social aspects of Annie Lee's *All That Glitters* and Carmen Lomas Garza's *Cama para Suenos* and *Cakewalk* and reflect on their personal experiences when engaged with others in their community.

National Visual Arts Standard:

Responding: *Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.*

Anchor Standard: *Perceive and analyze work.*

Enduring Understanding: *Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world.*

Art History Inquiry:

Students will determine the ways in which *All That Glitters* by Annie Lee, *Cama para Suenos* and *Cakewalk* by Carmen Lomas Garza display Community Ties and evaluate each work's cultural significance.

National Visual Art Standard:

Responding: *Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.*

Anchor Standard: *Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.*

Enduring Understanding: *People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art.*

Aesthetic Inquiry:

Students will compare and contrast the ways in which *All That Glitters* by Annie Lee, and *Cama para Suenos* and *Cakewalk* by Carmen Lomas Garza represent safe spaces in their various forms.

National Visual Art Standard:

Responding: *Understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning.*

Anchor Standard: *Perceive and analyze work.*

Enduring Understanding: *Individual aesthetic awareness developed through engagement with*

art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments.

Studio Inquiry:

Students use watercolor paper, watercolor pencils, and other media of their choice to recreate a space in their community where they feel at home away from home. Students will draw a dynamic interior or exterior space by giving special attention to proportion, balance, and texture.

National Visual Arts Standard:

Creating: *Creating and developing new artistic ideas and work.*

Anchor Standard: *Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.*

Enduring Understanding: *Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed.*

Key Vocabulary

Community- a group of people in the same place with common interests.

Relationships- bonds built between people.

Safe Space- a place where one feels secure to be themselves.

Home- a setting where one resides or feels at rest.

Blending- mixing two or more colors together to create a smooth color shift.

Layering- placing one color on top of another to create a new color.

Stippling- using small dots to build color and texture.

Scumbling- the intentional use of scribbling to build form, value, and/or texture.

Hatching/Cross-Hatching- using lines to build texture and value.

Proportion- the size of objects in comparison to others.

Balance- an even distribution of weight.

Texture - the way something feels to the touch, either real or implied.

Prepare/Discuss

To begin this lesson, students will first be introduced to a portion of the academic language and prompted to give their own definition for each word (Community, Relationships, Safe Space, and Home). Each student will write one to two sentences and share with the class. The students will then evaluate the artworks by Annie Lee and Carmen Lomas Garza to determine if the pieces reflect any of their vocabulary definitions. The goal of this activity is to challenge students to articulate what their idea of a home away from home is and how their ideas and experiences are relative to those of their peers.

Create

Students will begin by first completing a brainstorming worksheet that will allow them to organize where they feel at home and what imagery could be used to represent it. Students can use words or simple sketches to complete the worksheet as they see fit, working on this activity

for a total of 10 minutes. Next, students will lightly transfer their ideas to an 9in x 12in sheet of watercolor paper with a graphite pencil, and after about 15-20 minutes of perfecting their compositions, students will be encouraged to begin working with the watercolor pencils. Students in grades 6-12 will be given the option to use the watercolor pencils straight away if they feel confident enough to do so. Prior to this step, students will be introduced to how to compose both a landscape and interior space with special attention to the foreground, middle ground, background, horizon line, and other features that distinguish indoor and outdoor spaces. This will be reinforced by taking another look at the lead artworks as they are exemplary of both types of spaces.

When creating their compositions students will be required to include 2-3 people or objects that contribute to making the space a home away from home. When adding color to their pieces, students will be required to use at least 3 watercolor pencil techniques, including blending, stippling, layering, wet pencil on dry paper, dry pencil on wet paper, or using various sized paint brushes to apply color. With each of these requirements, students will have a well-rounded experience of making meaningful art and how various techniques can push their artistic abilities.

Reflect

Students will write a short story describing their chosen safe-space and its significance, and their classmates will use the details to guess which artwork belongs to the artist. This matching activity will enable students to pair verbal descriptions with visual details, along with giving students a stronger understanding and appreciation for what makes their peers feel at home. Each student's short story will be used as an artist statement to be displayed alongside their work throughout the classroom. Displaying this specific work in the classroom will hopefully serve as a reminder to students that they can also feel at home in the art classroom.



Studio Models: by Christina Timmons