



ART, IDENTITY, CULTURE
TEJANO CULTURE IN EARLY TEXAS AND CONTEMPORARY ART



LESSON ONE

ART AND REPRESENTATION

BEFORE THE LESSON

It is important for students to be able to critically evaluate what they see, particularly as this relates to the representation of culture. Without a critical eye, students may accept stereotypical interpretations and not strive for accurate representations of peoples and cultures.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students identify and discuss how examples of Early Texas Art represent Tejano culture, comparing works for the ways that they construct their subjects. They will consider the social and historical conditions under which the images were made and offer plausible explanations for the paintings' meanings. Finally, they will evaluate what primary sources are necessary to investigate culture appropriately. In doing so, the students identify the tools that they will use in the remaining lessons.

OBJECTIVES

STUDENTS WILL:

- Interpret images for their meaning
- Compare different images for their meanings
- Employ terms introduced in the unit (Tejano, Anglo, culture, identity, representation, stereotype)
- Compose a plausible extension for each image
- Evaluate resources needed for more complete interpretations of the images

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

These three paintings represent different periods of Texas history. Theodore Gentilz's painting was created in the Republic of Texas (1836-1845). Gentilz was a Frenchman who moved to San Antonio in 1843 and painted the city's diverse cultures as he saw them. The image seen here represents a fandango dance. José Arpa made his image in 1929, just before the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression. Tejanos at this time experienced discrimination and schools were segregated. Arpa was a Spaniard who moved to San Antonio in the early twentieth century. Carmen Lomas Garza is a native of Kingsville, Texas. She came of age during the 1960s and 1970s, when Tejanos participated in the Chicano identity movement, a civil rights effort that pursued equality for Mexican-Americans.

ART AND REPRESENTATION

TEKS: § 113.23. (b)(15)(A,B,C,D), (18)(A,B,C,D) and § 117.35. (c)(3)(A,B,C)

LESSON

MATERIALS

Reproductions of works of art:
Theodore Gentilz, Fandango (ca. 1845) available at
<http://www.wittemuseum.org/pdfs/WVL%20HIGHLIGHTS%20eng.pdf>

José Arpa, Picking Cotton (1929) available at
http://www.saalm.org/art/ARPA_PICKING_COTTON.JPG

Carmen Lomas Garza, Making Empanadas (1991) available at
http://www.csupomona.edu/~plin/women2/images/garza_big.jpg

EVALUATION

Can the students create plausible stories based on the paintings and their historical contexts?

Can the students develop a list of cultural attributes based on their readings of the paintings?

Can the students assemble an array of primary resources that would help them to understand the paintings and their subjects?

Can the students explain how and why an artist might choose to represent people and their cultures from different perspectives?

ACTIVITY

Display Theodore Gentilz's painting Fandango (ca. 1845), José Arpa's painting Picking Cotton (1929), and Carmen Lomas Garza's Carmen Lomas Garza, Making Empanadas (1991). Ask students what they know about the people in the paintings based on what they see. How do the students define their cultures (the learned behaviors and practices common to a group, including a family). Then ask for some examples of things they cannot determine from the painting. Ask the questions: Who are these people? Are they real people? Reinforce to the students that the paintings may be based on real people, but that the artist chose to represent them in a particular light. Ask the students why the artists represent them as they did? If they were real, what do you think they would say? How do you think they would describe themselves and would their descriptions be different from the artists'? What can't you determine about these people from the information provided by the painting?

In small groups, students choose one of the paintings and extend the story; several groups may work on the same painting and compare their results. Students construct a plausible biography of the figure(s) in the painting, scenario for the event depicted, and a description of what will happen next. Provide students with background information on the artist and the era represented. As they write their stories, students should keep track of what they observed from the painting (for example, "The men were cowboys" or "The women favored long gowns") and what they had to invent to complete the story (for example, "The family made the empanadas for a Christmas party"). Have the groups share their stories for the paintings. When all of the stories have been presented, brainstorm with the class to determine what information and primary resources would have helped them to write their stories. Although these paintings and the students' stories are examples of fiction, what resources would help the constructed image or story reflect more accurately the people and their culture? Students should arrive at the conclusion that their work would have been aided by access to the people of the time, letters, newspaper accounts, diaries, family photographs, oral histories, and other similar resources. These are the tools that they will employ in later lessons to represent their own families and cultures.

LESSON ONE

RUBRIC

	DESCRIPTION	ANALYSIS	INTERPRETATION	EVALUATION
4	Makes a complete and detailed description of the subject matter and/or elements seen in a work.	Accurately describes several dominant elements or principles used by the artist and accurately relates how they are used by the artist to reinforce the theme, meaning, mood, or feeling of the artwork. .	Forms a somewhat reasonable hypothesis about the symbolic or metaphorical meaning and is able to support this with evidence from the work.	Uses multiple criteria to judge the artwork, such as composition, expression, creativity, design, communication of ideas.
3	Makes a detailed description of most of the subject matter and/or elements seen in a work	Accurately describes a couple of dominant elements and principles used by the artist and accurately relates how these are used by the artist to reinforce the theme, meaning, mood, or feeling of the artwork.	Student identifies the literal meaning of the work.	Uses 1-2 criteria to judge the artwork.
2	Makes a detailed description of some of the subject matter and/or elements seen in a work.	Describes some dominant elements and principles used by the artist, but has difficulty describing how these relate to the meaning or feeling of the artwork.	Student can relate how the work makes him/her feel personally.	Tries to use aesthetic criteria to judge artwork, but does not apply the criteria accurately.
1	Descriptions are not detailed or complete.	Has trouble picking out the dominant elements.	Student finds it difficult to interpret the meaning of the work.	Evaluates work as good or bad based on personal taste.

LESSON TWO

TEXT AND IMAGE: HOW DO ARTISTS DEFINE THEMSELVES?

BEFORE THE LESSON

Before proceeding to define their own families and cultures, students will become more familiar with how an array of Tejano and other Hispanic artists have used texts and images to tell stories about themselves and represent their cultures. This lesson answers the essential question: how do artists define themselves? Students employ art historical practices to answer the question. The research that they do will assist them in defining their own culture in the final lesson.

OVERVIEW

This lesson puts the students in charge of their learning as they assemble the knowledge, information, and skills required to construct representations of identity. In this lesson, students work in groups to assemble an exhibition of artworks by Tejano and other Hispanic artists. Acting as art historians, the students study the lives and works of the artists and select objects to share with others that answer the essential question: how do artists define themselves? This activity reveals the interconnectedness of art and social studies, as artists address historical events, community, politics, and social movements in their art. It also sets the stage for the final activity, providing students with different sources of inspiration for their own representations of culture.

OBJECTIVES

STUDENTS WILL:

Conduct research on selected Hispanic artists from Texas and the US Southwest.

Evaluate images and select appropriate works for exhibition based on the essential question.

Explain the meaning of the images and justify the images they selected.

Employ terms introduced in the unit (Tejano, Hispanic, culture, identity, representation, stereotype)

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Hispanic artists in the United States Southwest have directly address themes of identity construction and representation of culture since the 1960s, although earlier art of course also reflected culture. The Chicano Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and beyond aimed to bring attention to the needs and histories of Americans of Hispanic descent. The activists wanted Mexican-Americans to be proud of their roots and to embrace their unique identity. They also sought recognition by the broader American society for the valuable contributions Mexican-Americans and other Hispanic populations have made to this country. In particular, artists within the movement drew attention to stereotypes and discrimination in art and society. They also pursued an art that reflected their interests rather than those of Anglo artists. Tejano artists who participated in this broad civil rights movement and/or continue to create works of art today are the following: Amelia Mesa-Bains, Santa Barraza, Carmen Lomas Garza, Celia Alvarez Muñoz, Patssi Valdez, Gaspar Enriquez, Cesar Martinez, Judith Baca, Enrique Chagoya, Rupert Garcia, Yolanda Garcia, Ester Hernandez, Delilah Montoya, and Luis Jimenez.

TEXT AND IMAGE HOW DO ARTISTS DEFINE THEMSELVES?

TEKS: §113.23. (b)(15)(A,B,C,D), (18)(A,B,C,D) and §117.35. (c)(3)(A,B,C)

LESSON

MATERIALS

Computer with Internet access
Color printer
Construction paper
Glue
Bulletin board for displaying selected works
(Alternate activity): Video recorder, microphone

EVALUATION

Did the students assemble a group of images that represent the artists' culture?

Did the students identify and summarize the necessary information?

Did the students relate the works to the social and historical context in which they were produced?

Did the students identify the resources the artists used to create their works of art?

ACTIVITY

Students, working alone or in groups, use Internet resources and online image databases to find works of art by Tejano and other Hispanic artists (listed in the Historical Information section) that demonstrate how the artists have represented their identity and culture. They should address the representation of culture in images and words. Students should be prompted to find works that include familiar icons of Hispanic identity, such as the Virgin of Guadalupe, as well as those that are more subtle, less familiar, or more individual. Students should look for information about the resources the artists employed to create their works of art. For example, was the artist working from memory? Did he/she interview family members? Did he/she look at other works of art or read about historical events and characters? Finally, using the dates of the works of art, the students should also relate the work to the social and historical context. Once they have found the artists, the images, and some background information on the meanings of the work of art, the students write a brief summary of the image, including information about the artist and how the image represents culture. The images and summaries are mounted on construction paper. The individual students or groups then teach the other students in the class about the artists and the works. From all of the assembled works of art, the class identifies themes and patterns that emerged within the presentations, and chooses works to be exhibited on a bulletin board.

Alternately, students may create a website, with links to the images, their own text, and/or video or audio clips of their summaries of the artists and their work.

LESSON TWO

RUBRIC

	CHARACTERISTICS	RECOGNITION	CULTURE	INFLUENCES
4	Student identifies multiple significant characteristics that distinguish this artist's work or school/period from others and uses these to recognize other works by this artist.	Student identifies multiple significant characteristics that distinguish this artist's work or this school/period from others.	Student identifies 1 or 2 significant characteristics that distinguish this artist's work or this school/period from others.	Student cannot identify characteristics that distinguish this artist's work or period/school.
3	Student can accurately name 4 works by this artist and describe them in some detail.	Student can accurately name 2 works by this artist.	Student can either accurately name or describe at least 2 works by this artist.	Student is not able to name or describe this artist's works.
2	Student is able to give several detailed examples of how the time period(s) in which an artist lived influenced his/her work.	Student is able to give a couple of examples of how the time period(s) in which an artist lived influenced his/her work.	Student is able to give one example of how the time period(s) in which an artist lived influenced his/her work.	Student has difficulty describing how the time periods in which artists lived influenced their work.
1	Student is able to name at least 2 artists who influenced the artist being studied. He can also point out areas in this artist's paintings where one can see these influences.	Student is able to name at least 2 artists who influenced the artist being studied.	Student is able to name at least 1 artist who influenced the artist being studied.	Student does not know which other painters influenced the one being studied.

LESSON THREE

WHO ARE WE? DEFINING OUR OWN CULTURE

BEFORE THE LESSON

Lesson Three is an extended, culminating activity that requires the students to represent their own cultures in written and visual form. This interdisciplinary lesson uses maps, oral history, primary sources, and creative writing to create a multimedia self-definition.

OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students create a book to represent the family's culture. To complete the assignment, students conduct research using both oral history and archival research methods. They likewise use cultural geography and history to locate their family's culture within the relevant social and historical context. As they assemble the research information and place this in the book, students will gain an appreciation of how the individual "artist's" culture is both part of broader cultures (i.e., Hispanic, African American, Anglo, Asian American) as well as unique (i.e., the Smith family, the Lopez family, etc.). The creation of the book requires students to think about how they represent their own culture visually and textually. Finally, the assignment allows students to define their own cultures and represent themselves, which helps to avoid stereotypes and the perpetuation of cultural misunderstandings.

OBJECTIVES

STUDENTS WILL:

- Create a visually engaging and informative book
- Summarize family history, traditions, and lore
- Evaluate materials to include in the representation of their family culture
- Map their families' movement over time
- Compare they work to others' to determine similarities and differences
- Appreciate the diversity of cultures within their class

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Many artists have used books and journals to represent their ideas. These objects usually combine text and image to tell their stories. Some artists, such as Tejana painter Carmen Lomas Garza, collaborate with authors to create illustrated books in the familiar format (hard cover, pages with image above and text below). Lomas Garza paints an image that tells the story and her co-author writes the words. The format is simple and direct to keep the narrative clear. Other artists, such as Chicano artist Enrique Chagoya, use different formats. Chagoya's *Codex Espangliensis*, created in collaboration with artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña is a screenfold book created like Pre-Columbian Mexican manuscripts. Chagoya appropriates images from other sources and combines them with his own drawings to illustrate his ideas. The text and the image intermingle on the page, and the fonts change and appear at different angles to affect the viewer's experience. The Mexican artist Frida Kahlo kept a diary that merged text and image for a visually compelling self-representation.

WHO ARE WE? DEFINING OUR OWN CULTURE?

TEKS: § 117.35. (c)(3)(A,B,C)

LESSON

MATERIALS

Small journal book (For handmade book: strips of tag board and two pieces of cardstock)

Maps (world, country, or state depending upon the individual student's history)

Glue

Colored pens or pencils

Access to photocopier or scanner and printer

Access to library with newspaper archives, back issues of local and national magazines, and other primary resources.

EVALUATION

Did the students assemble a group of images that represent their culture and justify their inclusion?

Did the students compose textual and visual arguments that presented their family cultures?

Did the students relate their family culture to the geographic, social, and historical context?

Did the students identify appropriate resources to create their books?

ACTIVITY

The book can either be a handmade screenfold or other created book, or the transformation of a purchased journal book. The screenfold format has 6 interior pages plus the front and back covers. Instructions for this type of book are found at <http://www.sdmart.org/pix/accordionbook.pdf>. Other formats for books are found at <http://www.sdmart.org/education-plans.html#book>.

Begin with a class discussion on what should appear in the books. Although the students should agree on what the books will include, the book should include a family history and traditions derived from interviews, family images (scanned or photocopied), and a map tracing the family's migration over the years/decades/centuries (folded and glued into the book). Some suggestions include: a family tree, family rituals (annual celebrations, religion, festivals, etc.), a migration narrative to accompany the map, favorite family recipe(s), a "day in the life" story of the family, a visual and verbal collage of world or local events from the day/year the student was born or another significant date in the family's history, poem about the family and an important event or conflict, an image and description of a significant object in the home and its history (a quilt, a favorite rocking chair, a wedding dress, etc.). Students may also want to consider the type of book and its corresponding writing style: scrapbook with different types of writing, diary with personal and first-person narration, or documentary with the student or someone else acting as narrator. Finally, be sure that the discussion addresses textual information and visual information. What images will tell these stories? How will the image relate to the text physically and thematically?

Once the class determines the content (or a list of content possibilities, if each student can choose what to include), students should assemble the material by interviewing family members, consulting public or school library resources, and gathering photographs. Writing drafts and peer editing sessions may be in-class activities. Once the textual content is ready, students should consider the visual presentation. What should the book look like? What colors, fonts, and images (hand-drawn, photocopied, etc.) will enrich your representation of culture? How will the visual and verbal material combine to make a compelling and visually-rich argument? Students should discuss fonts, colors, and layout, experimenting with scrap material or extra print outs and engaging in peer critiques of the visual presentation. This is not a collage activity; texts and images should not be cut from magazines or printed from the internet since these do not come from the students' family cultures.

Students should present their completed books to each other and discuss commonalities and differences. Exhibit the books in the classroom and consider holding an exhibition opening for parents, with each bringing a favorite family treat to eat.

LESSON THREE

RUBRIC

	IMAGES	ECONOMY	THEME	INFLUENCES
4	Images create a distinct atmosphere or tone that matches different parts of the story. The images may communicate symbolism and/or metaphors.	The story is told with exactly the right amount of detail throughout. It does not seem too short nor does it seem too long.	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how every item in the book is related to the assigned theme. For most items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The book shows considerable attention to construction. The items are neatly trimmed. All items are carefully and securely attached. There are no stray marks, smudges or glue stains. Nothing is hanging over the edges.
3	Images create an atmosphere or tone that matches some parts of the story. The images may communicate symbolism and/or metaphors.	The story composition is typically good, though it seems to drag somewhat OR need slightly more detail in one or two sections.	The student gives a reasonable explanation of how most items in the book are related to the assigned theme. For many of the items, the relationship is clear without explanation.	The book shows attention to construction. The items are neatly trimmed. All items are carefully and securely attached. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present. Nothing is hanging over the edges.
2	An attempt was made to use images to create an atmosphere/tone but it needed more work. Image choice is logical.	The story seems to need more editing. It is noticeably too long or too short in more than one section.	The student gives a fairly reasonable explanation of how most items in the book are related to the assigned theme.	The book shows some attention to construction. Most items are neatly trimmed. All items are securely attached. A few barely noticeable stray marks, smudges or glue stains are present. Nothing is hanging over the edges.
1	Little or no attempt to use images to create an appropriate atmosphere/tone.	The story needs extensive editing. It is too long or too short to be interesting.	The student's explanations are weak and illustrate difficulty understanding how to relate items to the assigned theme.	The book was put together sloppily. Items appear to be just "slapped on". Pieces may be loose or hanging over the edges. Smudges, stains, rips, uneven edges, and/or stray marks are evident.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Art, Identity, Culture: Tejano Culture in Early Texas and Contemporary Art

BOOKS

Chicano Art: Resistance and Affirmation. Exhibition catalog. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991.

Cockcroft, James D. Latino Visions: Contemporary Chicano, Puerto Rican, and Cuban American Artists. New York: Franklin Watts, 2000.

Grauer, Paula L. and Michael R., Dictionary of Texas Artists: 1800-1945. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M Press, 1999.

Lomas Garza, Carmen. A Piece of My Heart: The Art of Carmen Lomas Garza. New York: New Press, 1994.

Marin, Cheech. Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge. Boston: Bullfinch Press, 2002.

WEBSITES

Art21: Art in the Twenty-first Century for lesson plans joining art and social studies
<http://www.pbs.org/art21/education/socialstudies.html> (Note: These lessons are for students in grades 9-12, and some of the art on the site may be inappropriate for younger students. Choose lessons carefully.)

Carmen Lomas Garza Website <http://www.carmenlomasgarza.com/>

Chicana and Chicano Space: A Thematic, Inquiry-Based Art Education Resource
<http://mati.eas.asu.edu:8421/ChicanArte/index.html>

Chicano Art: A Resource Guide <http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/chicanoArt.html> with a database of digital images: Chicano Art History: A Book of Selected Readings.
<http://cemaweb.library.ucsb.edu/digitalArchives.html>

KQED Arts and Culture on Enrique Chagoya <http://www.kqed.org/arts/people/spark/profile.jsp?id=4375> and lesson plan <http://www.kqed.org/arts/spark/education/lessonplans/209.pdf>

San Diego Museum of Art Lesson Plans for Creating Artistic Books <http://www.sdmart.org/education-plans.html#book> including Accordion book <http://www.sdmart.org/pix/accordionbook.pdf>.

Shark's Ink: Publishers of Contemporary Prints for Enrique Chagoya screenfold books
<http://www.sharksink.com/printview.asp?printid=166&artists=15>,
<http://www.sharksink.com/printview.asp?printid=297&artists=15>,
and <http://www.sharksink.com/printview.asp?printid=216&artists=15>,

Smithsonian Museum Latino Resources
http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/hispanic_resources.html

Smithsonian Museum Latino Collections:
http://latino.si.edu/collections/collections_Latinocollections.htm