

Latin American Woodcarving

GRADE LEVEL: High School

SUBJECT: Visual Arts, Social Studies, Math

MEDIA: Sculpture

FEATURED ARTWORK:



Trunk, Late 18th - Early 19th Century, Ecuador, Wood, iron, San Antonio Museum of Art, Gift of Peter P. Cecere, 2006.1.303

OBJECTIVE:

Students will be introduced to the art of woodcarving, inspired by folk art of Latin America and Spain.

DISCUSSION:

Utilitarian objects carved from wood by folk artists often transcend their functional purpose and become beautiful works of art. The use of adornment transforms a commonplace object, such as this trunk from Ecuador, into an aesthetically intriguing example of wood carving.

From the sixteenth to the end of the nineteenth century, large wooden trunks with locks were typically used in place of closets in homes for storing clothing, blankets, documents or valuables. This trunk, from the San Antonio Museum of Art's collection, has an iron lock which was added at a later date. Each side is carved with intricate floral designs and fan motifs.

MATERIALS:

- Wood carving tool sets

- 3 x 3" squares of bass wood
- 3 x 3" squares of paper for designs
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Optional: Long strips of wood attached to the table with duct tape, 5" from the outer edge, to use as secure holds for safety and stability. If using larger pieces of wood (> 6" square), this may not be necessary.

PROCESS:

1. Introduce the art of woodcarving and discuss wooden folk art from Latin America and Spain with the students.
2. Review the three basic types of carving tools (gouge, v-tools and chisels) and demonstrate how to use each.
3. Review the safety procedures with the class:
 - Always push the blade away from your body while carving.
 - Keep both hands on your tool, with one hand in contact with the table.
 - Cut horizontally across the wood, carving out a shallow amount each time.
4. If using secure holds, demonstrate how to position the wood square between the secure hold and the edge of the table. The secure hold will help to keep the wood from slipping forward while it is being carved.
5. Teach the 'high-angle' and 'low-angle' tool grips, and review basic carving skills for each.
6. Using a pencil, students will draw a simple design on their paper and then transfer their design to the square of wood. Alternatively, they may sketch their design directly onto the wood.
7. Allow students to carve their design into the wood. Monitor them closely during this process, reviewing correct procedures as necessary.
8. Finished wood carvings can be painted or stained to seal the wood.

TEKS:

§117.52. Art, Level I

(c) Knowledge and skills. (1) Perception. The student develops and organizes ideas from the environment .The student is expected to: (A) illustrate ideas for artworks from direct observation, experiences, and imagination; and (B) compare and contrast the use of art elements (color, texture, form, line, space, value) and art principles (emphasis, pattern, rhythm, balance, proportion, unity) in personal artworks and those of others, using vocabulary accurately. (2) Creative expression/performance. The student expresses ideas through original artworks, using a variety of media with appropriate skill. The student is expected to: (A) create visual solutions by elaborating on direct observation, experiences, and imagination; (B) create designs for practical applications; and (C) demonstrate effective use of art media and tools in design, drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture. (3) Historical/cultural heritage. The student demonstrates an understanding of art history and culture as records of human achievement. The student is expected to: (A) compare and contrast historical and contemporary styles, identifying general themes and trends; (B) describe general characteristics in artworks from a variety of cultures.

§111.22. Mathematics

(3) Patterns, relationships, and algebraic thinking. The student solves problems involving direct proportional relationships. (A) use ratios to describe proportional situations (B) represent ratios and percents with concrete models, (C) use ratios to make predictions in proportional situations. (6) Geometry and spatial reasoning (11) Underlying processes and mathematical tools. The student applies Grade 6 mathematics to

solve problems connected to everyday experiences, investigations in other disciplines.

§113.B. Social Studies

(15) Culture. (A) define culture and the common traits that unify a culture region; (E) analyze the similarities and differences among various world societies.

Lessons are written by area educators and the San Antonio Museum of Art Education department. If you are interested in sharing your lesson ideas featuring works of art from the museum's collections with the San Antonio Museum of Art Education department, please email education@samuseum.org.