

The 1st Digital Library of the Caribbean (dLOC)
Lesson Plan Competition

2nd Place

“Carifesta Murals”

by

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Title and Overview

Carifesta Murals

Carifesta Murals lesson plan is mostly about becoming aware of the traditional festival of Caribbean Art called Carifesta. In addition to that, the students will learn about murals, warm and cool colors, and other art elements and principals of design involved in the richly designed mural that Caribbean artists painted during Carifesta VIII in Suriname on 2000. The image that I (the teacher) will use is found in an article called "Visual artists tell their tale at CARIFESTA VIII." This mural is so rich of colors, patterns, and symbolism that carry the unique Caribbean art. I will show the students where in the Caribbean map Suriname is located as well as other countries in the Caribbean that participate in this great event. The main lesson to learn is how Caribbean artists came together in one mural to tell their individual story as part of a massive size painting that connect all of them together in order to emphasize togetherness. The students will look at this mural and analyze its artistic qualities like possible symbolic meanings, art elements, principles of designs, etc. Then each student will sketch a picture that may come to their imagination by looking at the mural. Finally, every student will come together and join his/ her picture in a big Mural that the class will draw and paint together. Finally, they will write about their experience in comparison with the Caribbean artists.

Lesson Goals and Objectives – 10 points

The students will:

Analyze the Carifesta Mural in terms of possible meanings and artistic qualities

Draw sketches from observation of the mural

Draw and Color (Paint) a Mural.

Identify facts about Caribbean countries.

Write an essay about their learning experience in relation to the Carifesta mural.

(CBC)

-Analyzes and interprets possible meanings for works of art based on formal qualities observed and visual clues perceived. (VA.B.1.2.3) (VA.B.1.2.4) (VA.D.1.1.1)

-Uses thumbnail sketch process. (VA.A.1.2.3)

- Identifies moods expressed in works of art through the use of warm, cool, and/or neutral colors. (VA.B.1.2.4) (VA.D.1.1.1)

- Appreciates how works of art reflect the time, place and culture in which they were produced (Caribbean) (VA.C.1.2.2)

- Creates posters, signs, or charts considering spacing, visual communication, craftsmanship, etc. (VA.A.1.2.1) (VA.A.1.2.3) (VA.B. 1.2.4) (VA.A. 1.2.4)

- Works cooperatively in classroom setting. (VA.A.1.2.1)

Historical Background

Carifesta is a festival of Caribbean Art held within the countries in the Caribbean. Among the countries that are invited to participate are Antigua, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, French Guiana, Guadeloupe, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Mexico, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Panama, Peru, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Trinidad & Tobago, Surinam, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Venezuela.

First held in Guyana in 1972, this most prestigious from all Caribbean Festivals celebrates the Caribbean culture not only from the member countries of CARICOM (Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana and Trinidad & Tobago, the Bahamas, and Suriname), the wider Caribbean and the Caribbean Diaspora around the world as well.

Carifesta involves all art forms like visual arts, performing arts, music, culinary arts, and literary arts. This festival has become a Mecca for all artist, folklorists, film makers, exponents of the Arts, musicians, and connoisseurs of great culinary, cultural and artistic treats. The festival has been held in Guyana (1972, & 2008), Jamaica (1976), Cuba (1979), Barbados (1981), Trinidad Tobago (1992, 1995 & 2006), St. Kitts and Nevis (2000) and Suriname (2003).

At the heart of the purpose of Carifesta is the unification of all the countries within the Caribbean which are so close to each other geographically yet, so isolated from each other at the same time. The arts were viewed then as an important factor to bring about this unity. The theme of Carifesta VIII in Suriname was indeed the togetherness of many cultures and the spirit of the Caribbean. Hence, the mural studied in this lesson represented such.

The Objectives of Carifesta are:

1. Reaffirm the importance of the arts as a unifying force in building a wholesome society
2. Deepen awareness and knowledge among peoples of the Caribbean Region of the cultural aspirations of their neighbours by exposing them to each other's culture through creative activity
3. Develop the content of our regional culture as well as its aesthetic forms
4. Foster maximum people participation in the culture and in the arts of the region
5. Inspire organisation of on-going activities such as local festivals, thus constantly improving standards

Target Audience – 10 points

5th Graders

Required Materials – 10 points

Newsprint 9x12, White paper roll 12'x3' Pencils, erasers, crayons, oil pastels, acrylic paints & tempera paints, paint brushes, water containers, computer, screen projector,

Teaching Activities : This lesson unit is divided in 3 sessions/ 1 hour each.

1st SESSION

Motivation:5mnts

Display Carifesta mural over the screen projector. Ask students to identify what they see (art elements & principles of design). Read the theme of the mural “Many Cultures: The Essence of Togetherness of; The Spirit of the Caribbean” Then ask how the mural relates to the theme.

Teach Lesson:5mnts

Explain: “This mural is about Carifesta- a festival of arts that is celebrated in the Caribbean from time to time. The purpose of this event is to bring Caribbean countries through the arts.”

Ask: “Do you know any country in the Caribbean?”

Display a map of the Caribbean and show the students the countries that participate in Carifesta.

Review Vocabulary on the Board: 5mnts.

- 1- Carifesta- Art Festival about the people of the Caribbean.
- 2- Mural- Large painting on a wall.
- 3- Culture- The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.
- 4- Warm Colors- red, orange, yellow.
- 5- Cool colors- blue, purple, and green.
- 6- Symbolic- something that represents something else.

Art Activity: 30mnts

The students will look at the mural displayed on the screen, and after analyzing it, they will sketch a picture in which they will combine any of the images in the mural with images from their own imagination. So, they will not copy exactly what they see, but they will imitate the style of the mural as they draw images from their own imagination that represents the cultures being together.

Home Learning.

The students will search “Caribbean Countries” in the website and write at least one geographical fact about them.

2nd SESSION:

The students will put their sketches together in making a mural on a large paper. 50 mnts.

3rd SESSION:

Write an essay about “what did I learn about Carifesta?” 30mnts.

Grading Assessments – 10 points

Address at least one strategy for assessing the student's learning that results from this lesson.

Participation

Observation of process

go around the room as the students work on their sketches and ask them how are they using the colors, lines, shapes to represent their concept of culture's unity.

Sketch Completed

Originality- the student show their own concept

Neatness- proper use of materials

Essay Writing

Measured Impact of Lesson Plan– 10 points

Include a one page report that addresses your (or another teacher's) experience implementing the lesson in the classroom.

My observations about implementing this lesson are as followed. I was surprised to see how some students made connections, I realized the lack of awareness about the existence of most Caribbean countries, and I enjoyed to see the students' involvement. First, I was surprised to see how many students made connections. When we were analyzing the Carifesta mural on the screen, and we were talking about its art elements in connection of the purpose of the festival some students identified how the artists used the art elements and principles of designs to express certain things. For instance, one student mentioned how the repetition of certain colors throughout the mural made him think about unity not only as the design principal, but as the cultural unity that the artists tried to achieve.

Secondly, I realized the lack of knowledge that most people have about most countries in the Caribbean. When I asked the students what countries do they know from the Caribbean, their answers were Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and Haiti. However, non of them knew about Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, the British Virgin Islands, and many other countries that make part of the Caribbean. So, I showed them a map of the Caribbean, and pointed these countries to them.

Finally, I enjoyed seeing the students involved while they sketched their pictures. They were really into it. And I was very impressed to see how their imagination produced so many creative designs that were influenced from the Carifesta mural. One girl, for instance, drew a picture of a bird because the design made her think of a tropical bird of the Caribbean. Another girl, drew a picture of a church because that was her concept of unity and family. And so on, the students responded quiet quickly to the Carifesta Mural.

I am still in the middle of sessions 2 and three, but the students can't wait to see the fruit of their imagination. And more important, I am so glad to use the arts to help my students become rich in knowledge about their neighbor countries of the Caribbean. Finally, the Caribbean library in the web opened my mind to a whole new world of possibilities that I will most certainly Apply in my lessons. So, thank you so much because this is a learning experience for me as well. Weather I win a prize or not, I already gained something special.

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