

Sacred Images - Watercolor Pictographs

Summary

Students will learn to sketch and paint simple geometric shapes that represent plants, animals, water, the earth and mankind. The students will learn that rock art often contains human interpretation of their natural environment and immediate surroundings.

Time Frame

3 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Small Groups

Life Skills

Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

- *A Field Guide to Rock Art Symbols of the Greater Southwest*
by Alex Patterson, 1992.
- Watercolor paper cut into 4"X6" rectangular sheets
- Iron Oxide (rust) and Black water color liquid paint
- Medium nylon #4 brushes
- Large nylon #8 brushes
- Water containers
- Paint palette.
- pencil
- scratch paper

Background for Teachers

Teachers will read about and understand the four major styles of rock art seen in *Sacred Images: A Vision of Native American Rock Art*. Teachers will demonstrate the process of sketching and painting for a small group. Provide several examples, prior to starting the lesson. Review Alex Patterson's book for background information which will help prepare you for this lesson. Students can brainstorm all ideas in pairs such as the different plants, animals and earth forms that are in their environment. Utilizing the ideas, each pair will sketch symbols using geometric shapes to represent their ideas. Keep it simple.

Student Prior Knowledge

The students will learn to sketch and paint utilizing water color paints. Develop their background knowledge in watercolor painting techniques, background wash, sketching symbol on their wash with pencil, prior to painting symbol on paper. Natural colors used to paint with are resources available to the artist in their own environment. Students will need to sketch their own symbol on paper prior to sketching it on the watercolor paper.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will sketch and paint simple geometric shapes that represent plants, animals, water, the earth or mankind. Students will make a connection to their natural environment. Students will

understand that simple geometric shapes used to create their symbols were utilized in rock art.

Instructional Procedures

Ask students what they know about symbols? What is a symbol and what do they represent? Students will be given a tour of the exhibit and asked to describe and/or draw (when then get back to class) what symbols they saw.

First, the student will sketch a few geometric shapes depicting a symbol of a plant, animal or water on a piece of scratch paper. Keep it simple. The teacher will check whether the size of the symbol is large enough to visualize on the size of watercolor paper, which will be provided next. Next, the student will wet the watercolor paper lightly with water then proceed to paint (wash) the entire background with iron oxide (rust) paint. Let the watercolor paper dry completely. The student will repeat this process, dependent upon the number of symbols.

The student will transfer the sketch onto the sheet of watercolor paper with a pencil, pressing lightly. Then the student will paint the sketch with black watercolor paint. Allow paint to dry.

The student will glue the sheet of watercolor paper to a larger sheet of black construction paper, that will be a frame. Student will display their symbol and interpret the meaning.

Assessment Plan

A public art display of student work out on the main foyer during school family night. The student may write a short description to interpret their rock art symbol - petroglyph

Bibliography

Patterson, Alex A Field Guide to Rock Art Symbols: Of the Greater Southwest 1992.

Authors

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