

Middle-East Reflections

(art + social studies; art + math)

This lesson plan is designed to introduce students to Mid-Eastern art and design by examining the emphasis of patterns and taking a look at a contemporary Iranian artist.

Geometric patterns occur in rich profusion throughout Islamic cultures. Some of these patterns represent objects found in nature and others demonstrate the beauty of order and symmetry. More than just ornamentation, these patterns were created to transform the object they adorn into something uncommon, something infinite.

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian is one of Iran's premier artists, with a distinguished career spanning more than five decades. Her distinctive style uses mirror mosaics and Islamic geometric patterns. Many of her pieces contain recycled materials.

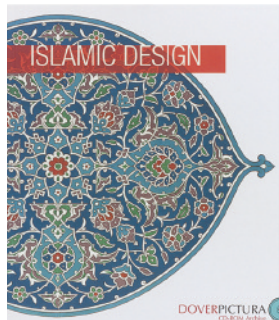
Students will create a mosaic of their own design with metallic, reflective materials arranged on an adhesive film. It's easy and tidy...no glue required!

Grade Levels K-12

Note: instructions and materials based on a class of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

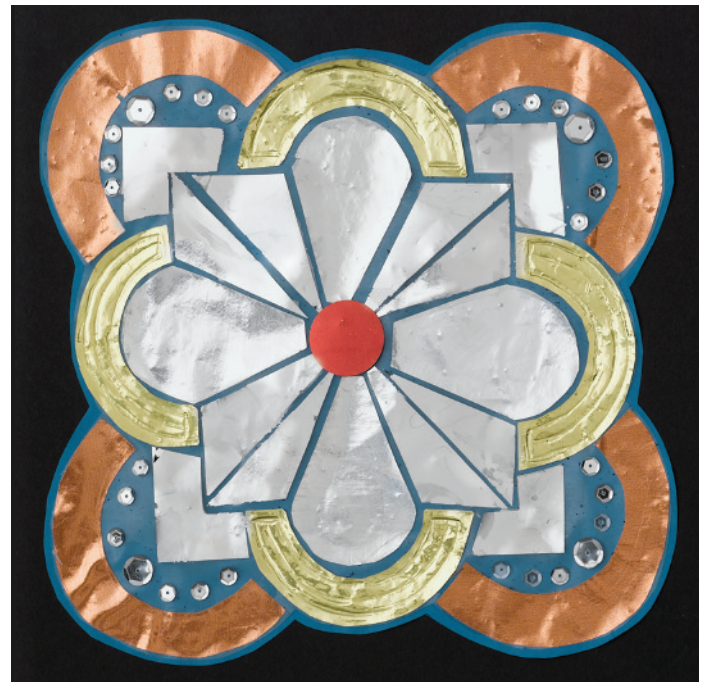
1. As an introduction to this project, view examples of geometric patterns found in various mid-eastern



cultures. Examples: India, Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Morocco. Look for patterns in architecture, textiles, jewelry, books, etc. Recommended resources:

[Dover™ Pictura Electronic Clip Art Books and CD-ROM: Islamic Design \(71310-1004\)](#)

[Agile Rabbit Design Resource Book and Clip Art CD: Islamic Designs \(71314-1023\)](#) and [Islamic Designs from Egypt \(71314-1020\)](#)



Materials

[Grafix® Seal Film](#), pkg of 50, 9" x 12" matte sheets (23220-1023); need one sheet per student

Metallic Paper to share across class, including:

[Hygloss™ Foil Paper](#), asst. pkg of 24, 20" x 26" sheets (11205-1001)

[Metallic Origami Paper](#), asst. pkg of 36, 6" squares (11206-0369)

[Metallized Dura-Lar™](#) (similar to Mylar®), 20" x 27" sheet Gold (55523-4032) or Silver (55523-2412)

[Colorfoil Economy Roll](#), 4-1/2" x 20-ft, Brass (60506-8410) or Copper (60506-8110)

[Recycled metallic materials](#): aluminum foil, gift wrap, food wrappers, etc.

[Westcott® Titanium Scissors](#) (57060-1006); need one per student

Optional Materials:

[Quattro Grid Journal](#), 80-sheet pad, 8-1/2" x 12" (10634-1008); need one sheet per student

[Blick® Construction Paper](#), 9" x 12", 50-sheet pkg, choice of colors including Black (11409-2003); need one sheet per student

[Sequin Mix](#), 1-lb pkg, (60718-1001); share across class

Preparation, continued

2. Cut seal film (cool lamination film) to smaller size if desired.
3. If working with elementary ages, cut the metallic materials into mosaic pieces — squares, triangle, rectangles.

Process

1. Older students prepare a preliminary design on grid paper with a pencil. Cut the grid paper to the same size as the film. Use a ruler to measure and draw lines, a compass to create arches and circles. Make a photocopy of the design to use as a pattern for cutting shapes.
Younger ages could work with a simple pattern that has been predesigned and copied for them or work without any pattern at all, arranging geometric shapes as they will.
2. Cut the pieces of the design inside the pencil lines to make them slightly smaller. This will allow for space in between the pieces of the mosaic that will mimic grout lines. Trace around the shapes on the back side of the metallic paper with a pencil. Cut out the pieces, once again, cutting inside the pencil line. If a shape repeats in the pattern, fold or layer the metallic papers and cut multiples of the same shape.
3. Tape the design face up to the matte side of the seal film. Peel the release paper from the film and set it aside for later. Place the cut-out metallic shapes over the pattern. If shapes were cut slightly smaller than the pattern (as recommended in step 2), there will be small lines between shapes. If an error is made, the adhesive on the film is repositionable.
4. Once all the pieces are in place, lay the release paper back over the mosaic and burnish down permanently with a roller or the back of a spoon.
5. Glue the mosaic to a piece of construction paper or posterboard to display. The seal film will appear transparent, so the color of the background will show through.



Options

- If tooling foil or aluminum foil is used in the mosaic, use a wooden tool to emboss textures and patterns into the foil.
- Elementary ages will find flat sequins easy to incorporate into their designs
- If making this project in multiple class periods, cover the adhesive with release paper for protection in between sessions.

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National Standards

Content Standard #2 Using knowledge of structures and functions

K-4 Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas

5-8 Students select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas

9-12 Students create artworks that use organizational principles and functions to solve specific visual arts problems

Content Standard #4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

K-4 Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art

5-8 Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in various eras and cultures

9-12 Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art

Content Standard #5 Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

K-4 Students understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art

5-8 Students compare multiple purposes for creating works of art

9-12 Students describe meanings of artworks by analyzing how specific works are created and how they relate to historical and cultural contexts

Content Standard #6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

K-4 Students identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

5-8 Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts

9-12 Students compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues, or themes in the humanities or sciences