

Drapo Dazzle

Inspired by the Sequined Banners of Haiti

(art + social studies)

A spectacular art form that originated in Haiti is the creation of elaborately decorated flags called “Drapos.” Traditionally designed for Vodou ceremonial use, they incorporate religious icons as well as a lot of flash and shimmer! A full-sized Drapo can contain as many as 20,000 hand-sewn beads and sequins.

As the global market for Drapo has grown, so have the flag-makers’ repertoires — many now produce complex, beaded “art flags” as well.

In this lesson plan, students will make a banner of their own design using a variety of glittery, sparkly, shiny materials and brilliant colors. Use this opportunity to learn about the art and history of Haiti, a unique blend of African, French, Spanish and Native Caribbean cultures. As an option, use this project as a fund-raising opportunity by auctioning off the finished banners and donating the proceeds to a relief organization providing assistance to Haiti.

Grade Levels K-8

Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Select a theme or choose a subject. Haitian art is characterized by symbols, storytelling, brilliant color and reflective surfaces. For inspiration, visit websites that feature contemporary and historical Haitian art.

Process

1. Each student chooses one piece of 9" x 12" felt to use as a background. Use the remaining felt for the main forms within the piece. Glue the forms to the background felt.
2. Embellish the design with a variety of reflective materials. Cover



Materials

Acrylic Felt, 9" x 12" package of 100 assorted (63201-1125); share one across class

Delta® Sobo® Craft Glue, 4-oz (23820-1004); share one between two students

Fiskars® Recycled Scissors, pointed (57098-2005); one per student

Materials for Embellishment:

Blick® Liquid Watercolor, assorted glitter colors (00369-); share 2-3 bottles across class

Creativity Street® Glitter Glue, 8-color set 2-oz bottles (23864-0089); share one set across class

Chenille Kraft® Tinsel Stems, 100-piece package (60923-0009); share one across class

Optional Materials for Embellishment:

Creativity Street® Confetti Writers, 6-color set 15-ml tubes (61759-1006)

Acrylic Gems, 1-lb package (60722-0001)

Creativity Street® Rhinestones, 375-piece package (61762-1001)

Spectra® Sparkling Glitter, assorted colors (61416-)

Darice® Glitter Foamies® 9" x 12" sheets, Gold (61779-4033) or Silver (617999-9333)

Process, continued

large areas with glitter paint, define details with glitter glue or gemstones, and create borders with sequins. Anything that shines, sparkles or glitters can be used to add excitement to the banner.

Allow the glue and paint to dry completely before picking up the piece.

Options

- Mount banners to a piece of colorful Railroad Board (13105-) for support.
- Create tabs or pockets on the back of the banner with scrap felt. Attach by gluing or stitching and insert a 1/4" dowel rod to hang.



National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #3 Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas

K-4 Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art.

5-8 Students use subjects, themes and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks.

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.