

Red, White and Blue Jean 3D Collage

Utilizing discarded denim, this project is a salute to Jasper Johns' "Flag"

(art + history)

When Jasper Johns painted "Flag" in 1954, speculations as to "Why?" were plentiful. When he followed that painting with an all-white flag, layered flags, and a reverse-color flag, his viewers searched for meaning. Since the flag is an emblem of the United States of America, the paintings raised feelings of both patriotism and ire at the sight of a national symbol being altered. Political and social hypotheses were made about what Jasper Johns' flags represented, but Johns would only elusively say that he dreamed that he painted a flag — so he painted it.

The American flag is "something the mind already knows," Johns has said. Is it the colors, the stars, the geometric arrangement — at what point does the viewer stop thinking of a flag and think instead of a painting?

Something else that is iconic to American culture is a pair of blue jeans. Patented in San Francisco 140 years ago, riveted five-pocket denim trousers are recognized throughout the world as the true American fashion staple.

Combine the two icons to create a sculptural piece of fabric art, painted red and white with a blue jean ground. There's a wide variety of blue hues in denim, and a surprising amount of texture, too.

GRADES 5-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Gather clean, discarded denim. Look for a range of blues from deep indigo to faded blue to white.
2. Mix a 50/50 solution of white glue and water. Store in an airtight container before distributing to students.

Process

1. Cut denim clothing into pieces. Aim for a variety: wide, flat pieces from jean legs, frayed edges, torn strips, pockets, zippers, and seams.



For a K-4 version of this lesson plan, [click here!](#)

Materials (required)

Aleene's Tacky Glue, 16 oz (23884-1016); share two across class

Blick Economy Canvas Panels, package of 24, 12" x 16" (07015-1006); need one per student

Caran d'Ache Neocolor II Artists' Crayons, Scarlet Red (20042-3081), White (20042-1001), Ultramarine (20042-5231); need one each color per student

Tonic Studios Plus Scissors, 2-1/2" cut (57079-1008); need one per student

Foam Brush, 1" (05114-1001); need one per student
Denim

Optional Materials

Blunt Tapestry Needle #13, 12-pack (65104-1009)

Creativity Embroidery Floss, set of 24 (63100-1009)

Craft Button Assortment, 1 lb (61495-1001)

Glass Bead Assortment, 1 lb (61518-)

Richeson Rubbing Plates, 7" x 7" (62108-)

Speedball Speedy-Cut Carving Blocks, 2-3/4" x 4-1/2" (40419-1002)

Blick Studio Acrylic Colors (01637-)

Jacquard Cotton Inkjet Fabric Kit, 8-1/2" x 11", package of 10 sheets (64929-1000)

Blickrylic Polymer Gloss Medium (00711-1028)





Process, continued

2. While denim is dry, any of the following techniques may be used to prepare the fabric for sculpting:
 - Fold, gather, and stitch pieces using a blunt needle and embroidery floss.
 - Attach extra buttons and seed beads by sewing them onto the fabric.
 - Stamp designs onto the fabric with permanent ink stamps or block printing ink.
 - Transfer images onto the fabric using iron-on sheets
 - Place rubbing plates beneath fabric and add textures and designs using crayons or oil pastels.
 - Paint pieces of denim prior to sculpting using a permanent medium such as acrylic paint or ink.
3. Dip the denim pieces one by one into the glue solution or brush it on. Arrange on heavy chipboard or panel. Extra glue may be required to attach pieces together, especially at seams or when joining pieces. Squeeze undiluted glue from the bottle in these areas. Denim may be folded, bunched, twisted, rolled, woven — use any means of manipulating it to create form and dimension.
4. The glue will need to dry overnight. Red and white designs may be added with watersoluble artists' crayons while the denim is still wet with glue, or after it has dried. Once it has set, the denim sculpture will be very rigid.
5. Check for loose pieces and apply undiluted glue as needed.
6. As an option, brush a coat of gloss medium over the finished sculpture to seal the color, provide extra support, and add an overall sheen.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Responding

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Step 1: Gather and cut denim. Before sculpting, it may be stitched, stamped, painted, or printed.



Step 2: Dip denim pieces in a 50/50 glue and water solution and arrange them on a panel.



Step 3: Draw and design with watersoluble artists' crayons in red and white.

Patriotic Denim Collage

Create a piece of red, white and blue jean fabric art!

(art + history)

An icon of American culture, blue jeans were patented in San Francisco 140 years ago. These riveted five-pocket denim trousers are recognized throughout the world as the true American fashion staple.

There's a wide variety of blue hues in denim, and a surprising amount of texture, too. Zippers, pockets, seams, labels - deconstruct a pair of blue jeans, rearrange the pieces, and it will create a low-relief, sculptural work of art.

Add red and white stripes and white stars with paint, stitching, or added embellishments to combine the blue-jean icon with hints of the American Flag in a patriotic-themed denim collage.

GRADES K-5 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Gather clean, discarded denim. Look for a range of blues from deep indigo to faded blue to white.
2. Mix a 50/50 solution of white glue and water. Store in an airtight container before distributing to students.

Process

1. Cut denim clothing into pieces. Aim for a variety: wide, flat pieces from jean legs, frayed edges, torn strips, pockets, zippers, and seams.
2. Dip the denim pieces one by one into the glue solution or brush it on. Arrange on heavy chipboard or panel. Extra glue may be required to attach pieces together, especially at seams or when joining pieces. Squeeze undiluted glue from the bottle in these areas. Denim may be folded, bunched, twisted, rolled, woven — use any means of manipulating it to create form and dimension.
4. The glue will need to dry overnight. Red and white designs may be added with paint. While the denim is still wet with glue, or after it has dried. Once it has set, the denim sculpture will be very rigid.
5. Check for loose pieces and apply undiluted glue as needed.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Responding

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Materials (required)

Aleene's Tacky Glue, 16 oz (23884-1016); share two across class

Blick Economy Canvas Panels, package of 24, 12" x 16" (07015-1006); need one per student

Blick Premium Tempera, Pints, Red (00011-3006), White (00011-1006) and Blue (00011-5006)

Foam Brush, 1" (05114-1001); need one per student

Denim

Optional Materials

Craft Button Assortment, 1 lb (61495-1001)

