

Adopt an Artwork 2025 -2026

Our Roots

Tea Table, "Big" Tom Burton

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5th

Visual Arts

OVERVIEW

Students will create a mixed-media collage in the shape of a tree whose roots represent their personal identity, culture, family, and background. They will draw a tree with a visible root system, then incorporate images (magazine cutouts, photos, drawings, or symbols) that represent who they are and where they come from.

TIME REQUIRED

2-3 class periods (50 minutes each)

STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

- Standard 1 VACn10.1.5a Apply formal and conceptual vocabularies of art and design to view surroundings in new ways through art-making.
- Standard 2 VACn11.1.5a Identify how art is used to inform or change beliefs, values, or behaviors of an individual or society.
- Standard 3 VACr2.1.5a Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.

STUDENT "I CAN STATEMENTS"

- I can use my art vocabulary to discuss art and how it relates to the surroundings.
- I can identify how art is used to inform or change beliefs, values, or behaviors of an individual or society
- I can develop my art-making skills by experimenting and practicing different techniques.

MATERIALS

- Watercolor paper
- Water colors
- Colored pencils
- Oil pastels
- Collage material
- Scissors
- Glue
- Pencils
- Paint brushes
- Watercolor paper tape
- Markers
- Sharpies
- Scrap materials (Newspaper, paper bags, scrapbook paper)

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Day 1:

Lesson 1. Warm up: Students will look at a picture of the Tea Table and explain if they think it's art or not and why?

Lesson 2. Class Discussion (10 min)

- Begin with questions:
 - "What makes you you?"
 - "What are some things that are part of your background or family story?"
 - "What might 'roots' represent in a person's life?"
- Discuss how roots connect us to where we come from —family, culture, community, and experiences.

Lesson 3. Visual Inspiration (5 –10 min)

- Show examples of "identity trees" or artworks using roots as a symbol
 - Faith Ringold "Tar Beach"
 - Klimt "Tree of Life"

- Share with students our Adopt an Artwork from Biggs Museum “Tea Table’ Big Tom Burton
 - Go over history
 - Culture references
 - Connection to home
- Highlight how artists use color, shape, and collage to tell stories about themselves.

Lesson 4. Brainstorming Activity (20 min)

- Students make a list or mind map of things that represent their identity (family, culture, hobbies, favorite foods, places, pets, music, etc.).
- They draw quick sketches or write words around their paper to plan ideas for their tree and root system.

Lesson 5. Sketching (10–15 min)

- Begin light pencil sketches of a tree with visible roots.
- Encourage unique shapes, sizes, and compositions—trees can be realistic or stylized.

Day 2:

Lesson 1. Review (5 min)

- Discuss: “How can we use images to tell a story?”
- Demonstrate layering collage pieces and blending drawn and cut elements. -out

Lesson 2. Art -Making (35 –45 min)

- Students finalize their tree outlines in pencil or marker.
- In the root area, they:
 - Add collage images from magazines, newspapers, or printed photos that connect to their identity.
 - Draw or color additional symbols or patterns in between roots.
- In the branches or trunk, they may include personal goals, dreams, or positive traits (optional).

Lesson 3. Composition Focus (10 min)

- Remind students to balance their images and use overlapping to create Unity.
- Use colored pencils, markers, or crayons to fill in spaces and connect elements visually.

Day 3:

Lesson 1: Final Touches (15 –20 min)

- Add final color, details, and outlines.
- Check craftsmanship and make sure glue is dry and edges are secure.

Lesson 2. Artist Statement (10 –15 min)

- Students complete a short reflection:
 - “My tree represents...”

- "In my roots, I included..."
 - "This shows who I am because..."
- Can be written on a small card to display beside artwork.

Lesson 3. Gallery Walk (15–20 min)

- Display all artworks around the room.
- Students walk around and view each other's pieces.
- Encourage positive feedback and discussion: "What can you learn about someone from their art?"

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

- Formative:
 - Teacher Observation
 - Class Discussion
 - Sketches
 - Student Assessment:
 - My collage includes symbols or images that represent who I am.
 - I used space thoughtfully and kept my work neat.
 - I included details that show effort and creativity.
 - My artist statement explains my choices clearly.
- Summative
 - Final Work
 - Craftsmanship
 - Symbolism
 - Use of more than one material
 - Artist Statement
 - Connect to Tea Table
 - Explain choice of symbols

VOCABULARY

- Collage: Art made by combining different materials.
- Symbolism: Using images or objects to represent ideas or feelings.
- Composition: The arrangement of elements in an artwork.
- Identity: Who a person is, including culture, family, and experiences.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Ringgold, Faith. "Story Time: Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold." *MoMA Magazine*, 17 June 2020, The Museum of Modern Art, www.moma.org/magazine/articles/350.
- Klimt, Gustav. "The Tree of Life, Stoclet Frieze, 1905 by Gustav Klimt." Gustav-Klimt.com, <http://www.gustav-klimt.com/The-Tree-Of-Life.jsp>.
- Seigfried, Alex. "Tea Table." *Collecting250*, 11 Mar. 2025, collecting250.com/tea-table/.