

LESSON PLAN:

Quilting Together Art and Environmental Education

In this lesson, students will use crosscutting concepts and close-looking skills to draw connections between quilts and the outdoors while working on a final class quilt project.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Use close-looking skills with an artwork
- Be able to write a well-constructed paragraph about their quilt and the activity
- Create a nature journal for notes and sketches
- Relate their own observations into a classroom story and project

Grade level:

K-2nd

Duration:

2 hours

Materials:

- [Image of Hmong Story Quilt by Bao Lee, UMFA 1991.024.001](#)
- Book: The All Together Quilt by Lizzy Rockwell
- Cardstock (One for each student)
- Printer Paper (A couple for each student)
- Scissors
- Rubber Bands (One for each student)
- Colored Pencils
- Pencils

Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- Quilt – A type of blanket made with layers of fabric and with thread stitched on it in patterns and designs.
- Close-Looking – Spending time thoughtfully and carefully looking at an artwork.
- Nature Journal – A booklet or notebook to take outside and draw or write in response to the nature you see.
- Handmade – Made by hand, not by machine. Typically, this process is more thoughtful, aware, and of a higher more careful quality.

Activity**Prep (20 Minutes):**

Collect the book or prepare the read-along, pull up the artwork image, prepare the nature journals (this can be made ahead of time for students or depending on student skill levels done as an activity where they create their own).

Artwork and Book Discussion (1–1.5 hours):

Carefully look at the *Hmong Story Quilt* together before beginning a class discussion about the details.

Think about the choices that the artist made and storytelling elements.

Some possible questions to ask are:

- How can you tell where these people are? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What plants do you see?
- What animals do you see?
- Why do you think the artist chose to show and add these?
- How were the people traveling?
- With your body show me the movement of this quilt.
- What do you think the story of this quilt is?

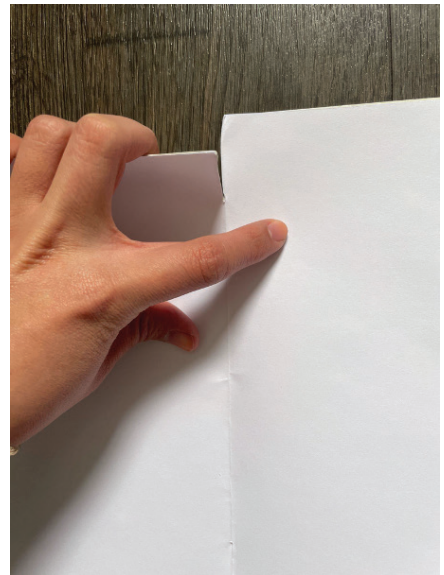
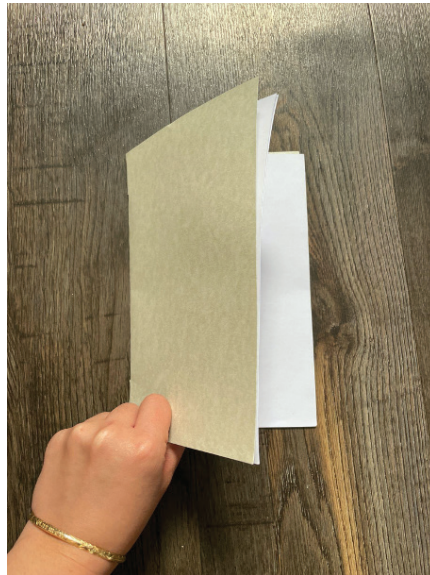
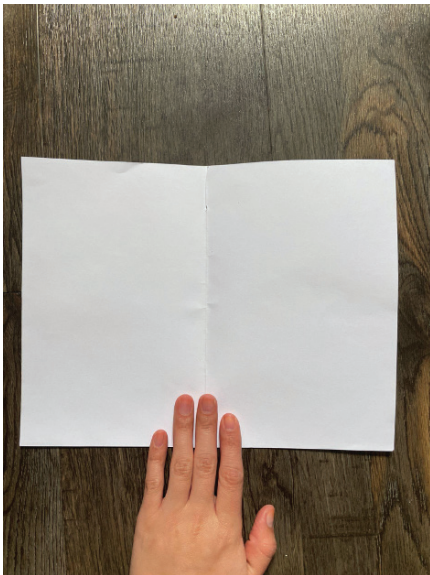
Read the All Together Quilt or play the video linked below.

Nature Journals and Quilt Squares Activity Intro:

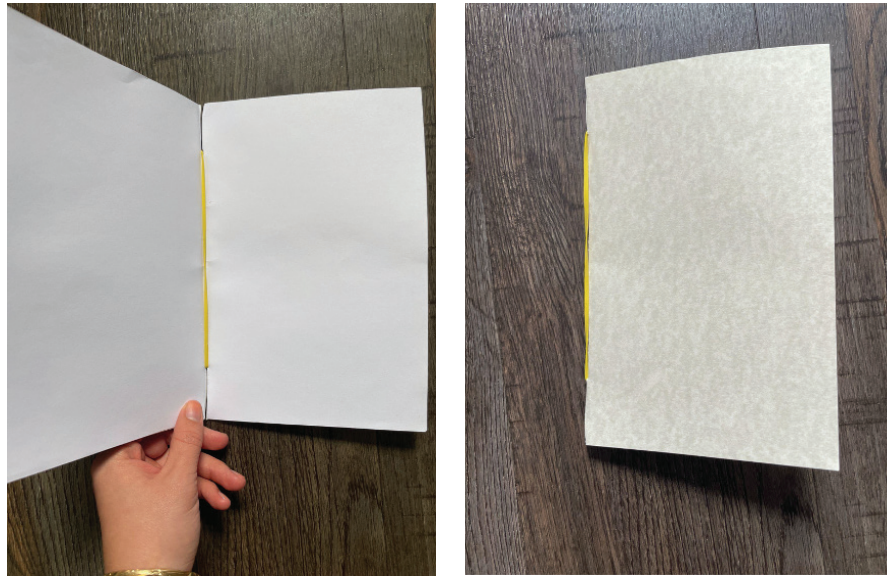
- Explain to students how they will each be creating their own quilt square design inspired by the outdoors. The theme for each square will be the students' favorite spots in nature. Much like how Bao Lee shared their story and experiences using nature in the *Hmong Story Quilt*, the students will use it as their inspiration!
- Introduce the idea of Nature Journals to students and how they can be used to record their observations and thoughts while outside. This can be recorded through drawings or written notes.

Make a Nature Journal:

Collect 2 sheets of printer paper and cardstock.



Fold the paper, “Hamburger” style, next cut a one-inch slit on each of the paper like so.



Place a rubber band into this folded crease, and you’ve made a nature journal!

Outside Time:

- Collect materials and take students outside to draw their quilt squares.
 - This can take place over one large period of time or be split up into smaller chunks.
- After students have drawn their quilt squares, have them write a paragraph or sentence explaining their quilt. This could include why they chose the place they did, why they included specific visual elements, and explaining what symbols they created.
- Collect the nature journal as a source of evaluation of understanding.

Further Engagement:

- Options for further engagement can include only doing the writing assessment in the nature journal and having students do the quilt activity on larger pieces to better display
- Have students go outside to make observations and basic sketches to inspire their quilt squares. This can be done in the schoolyard, at their own homes, on their way to school, or even on a class walk outside.

Methods for Assessment:

- Writing a full paragraph on the quilt square they drew and being able to fully describe it.
- Creating Nature Journals that can be turned in and evaluated.
- Evaluating the discussion for engagement and understanding.

Additional Resources

Utah State Art Standards:

- **Strand: Create:** Students will generate artistic work by conceptualizing, organizing, and completing their artistic ideas. They will refine original work through persistence, reflection, and evaluation
- **Strand: Respond:** Students will understand, evaluate, and articulate how works of art convey meaning for the observer as well as the creator
- **Strand: Connect:** Students will relate artistic skills, ideas, and work with personal meaning and external context

Other Resources:

[Video of the book being read](#) by the Rockland Public Library

Artwork Spotlight:



Bao Lee, *Hmong Story Quilt*, circa 1985, embroidered cotton. Purchased with funds from Friends of the Art Museum, UMFA1991.024.001.

- At the end of the Vietnam War, known as the American War in Vietnam and Southeast Asia (1973), many Hmong people, who had helped US armed forces, fled Vietnam and Laos to Thailand in hopes of gaining passage to the United States. This quilt tells the story of that journey.
- Hmong women learned to quilt during their time in refugee camps. This skill helped to raise money for their travel to the U.S.
- This quilt uses careful and beautiful embroidery for all of its imagery. The border does piece different fabric pieces together though.

Contributer Bios:

Carmen Bachofen has been working with the Utah Society for Environmental Education since August 2021 after graduating from Colorado State University with a degree in Ecosystem Science and Sustainability. She's originally from Colorado but loves Utah and all it has to offer.

Katie Seastrand has been working at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts since September 2019 after completing a M.A.T. program at George Washington University in Museum Education. She grew up in Utah and has early memories of visiting the UMFA as a child. Working now with amazing Utah educators and bringing art and the museum to students is a dream come true.



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