

LESSON PLAN:

Map of Us

by Aubrey Ellis & Danielle Forward



Learn about quilts and recycling. Gather recycled materials to make a friendship quilt. Each person will make their own square and everyone will put them together at the end. A fun way to learn more about each other.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Create and sign their own quilt block using recycled materials or materials that have significance to them. Together, students will arrange their quilt blocks into a quilt-like grid to display.
- Explore their sense of self, values, and interests when creating a quilt block that reflects their personality.
- Understand the beauty of diversity in their classroom through joining their quilt blocks.
- Learn resourcefulness and that art can be made from non-traditional and repurposed materials.
- Gain a deeper understanding of how their personality is a necessary element in their community when looking at their friendship quilt.

Grade level:

2nd–6th grades

Duration:

1 hour

Materials:

Provided by teacher

- 1 square piece of thicker material for the quilt square base (ex. cardstock, poster board, cardboard, chipboard) for each student
- Used paper and plastic the class has used throughout the year
- Glue
- Scissors
- Drawing utensils
- Glue gun to be used by an adult if necessary.

Provided by student

- Materials to repurpose that represent aspects of their personality (Ex. favorite candy wrapper, map of their hometown, postcard from a favorite destination, scrap of their favorite worn out t-shirt).

Ask these questions to help think of materials: Where did the recycled materials come from? What's the story behind them? Where do they go? What can we do with them?

Examples:

- Let's look through our recycling bin (or at an item before we throw it away). What's inside? An old chocolate milk jug. I love that milk! Reeds chocolate milk is my favorite kind.
- Oh look at this newspaper or magazine. Does anything remind me about something in my life? Is there a funny comic I like that I want to include?
- Look at this cereal box from my favorite cereal! It was so yummy to eat.
- This paper is my favorite color! Here's an old drawing of mine. It would be cool to put this in my quilt!
- I have a bunch of cards from family and friends that would be cool to use in my quilt too! This envelope from a card my grandma gave me. She wrote my name on it so nicely.
- This shirt is too small for me now but I'd like to cut it up and add it!

Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- Repurpose – Adapt for use in a different purpose.
- Quilt – A warm bed covering made of padding enclosed between layers of fabric and kept in place by lines of stitching, typically applied in a decorative design.
- Quilt Block – A block is one square of the quilt design. The Block is the foundation of a quilt's design.

- Geometric Shapes – Geometrical shapes are the figures which represent the forms of different objects. Some figures are two-dimensional, whereas some are three-dimensional shapes
- Symmetry – The quality of being made up of exactly similar parts facing each other or around an axis.

Activity

Prep (week leading up to the activity):

- Teacher: Collect materials the week before the activity. Store paper, plastic, cardboard, etc to be recycled for students to repurpose in their quilt block collage.
- Students: Give students a week advance to gather one to three 2-dimensional items that represent themselves or represent significance in their lives and can be glued to their quilt block.

Prep (on activity day):

- Teacher: lay out supplies for students to use, give each student 1 square sheet of cardstock that will be the base of their quilt block collage.
- Optional: arrange desks in a circular formation, like in a traditional quilting bee, to help students feel like quilters sewing an authentic friendship quilt.

Step 1 | Inform (10 minutes):

- Ask students what they know about quilts and the quilting process. Building off their answers, formally define quilts and quilt blocks, and show examples of different quilts from the internet and the *Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts*.
- Then narrow the focus by showing students *Friendship Album Quilt* from *Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts* and give students background about friendship quilts that will be relevant to the lesson (Ex. they are made from scrap fabric, made by multiple friends, they often were made up of fabrics with personal significance). Point out the geometric shapes and symmetry used in the quilt blocks to students. Ask students if they noticed the writing on the quilt and tell them that quilters would sign the quilt blocks they made.

Step 2 | Create (30 minutes):

- Have each student start with a square of cardstock as the foundation that they will build their design upon.
- Invite students to create their own friendship quilt block repurposing the materials they brought and the recycled materials provided by you. Encourage them to explore using geometric shapes and symmetry as represented in the quilts shown.

- Ask students how they can represent themselves through the quilt square they make. What makes you, you? How can you represent this in your quilt block?
- Inspired by traditional friendship quilts, and *Friendship Album Quilt*, have students sign their quilt block. They can take as much liberty with their signature as they choose.

Step 3 | Arrange (10 minutes):

- After making their personal quilt square, have students determine how to display their work. Tell students to arrange all of their quilt blocks together to create a friendship quilt. If desks were arranged in a circle, this can be done in the center of the circle on the floor.
- Display your Friendship quilt in the hallway for students and teachers to admire.

Step 4 | Observe and Discuss (10 minutes):

- Give students the chance to admire their work! Ask them to notice what they can learn about their peers from their quilt blocks and if there are any similarities in squares within the quilt they made. (Ex. Are there similar colors, shapes, materials throughout the quilt? What differences do you see?) Did anyone use a material with significance or one that represents a memory they would like to share with the class?
- Have a discussion about the quilt making process and allow students to share what they learned about themselves and about others in the class.
- Conclude the discussion by pointing out how each personality in the class is different and special as represented by their quilt block collages, and explain that each is needed to create our quilt/community.

Example of quilt blocks:



Methods for Assessment:

- Did students follow directions to repurpose materials?
- Did they sign their quilt block?
- Did they create a quilt using the individual art pieces they made?
- Did they participate in discussion at the conclusion of activity?

Additional Resources

State Core Standards:

- **Standard 1.V.CO.2:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding that people from different times and places have made art for a variety of reasons
- **Standard 2.V.CR.4:** Repurpose objects to make something new.
- **Standard 3.V.CR.5:** Elaborate visual information by adding details in an artwork to enhance meaning

- **Standard 3.V.P3:** Identify and explain how and where different cultures record and illustrate stories and history of life through art
- **Standard 6.V.P2:** Individually or collaboratively develop a visual plan for displaying works of art, analyzing exhibit space, the needs of the viewer, and the layout of the exhibit
- **Standard 6.V.CO.1:** Generate a collection of ideas reflecting current interest and concerns that could be investigated in art-making
- **Standard 2.3.2:** Construct an explanation showing how the properties of materials influence their intended use and function. Examples could include using wood as a building material because it is lightweight and strong or the use of concrete, steel, or cotton due to their unique properties. (PS1.A)
- **Standard 5.3.4:** Evaluate design solutions whose primary function is to conserve Earth's environments and resources. Define the problem, identify criteria and constraints, analyze available data on proposed solutions, and determine an optimal solution. Emphasize how humans can balance everyday needs (agriculture, industry, and energy) while conserving Earth's environments and resources. (ESS3.A, ESS3.C, ETS1.A, ETS1.B, ETS1.C)

Sources:

- <https://journalofantiques.com/features/friendship-quilts-gift-remembrance/>
- <https://folkartmuseum.org/exhibitions/signature-styles/>
- <https://www.ablockaway.com/all-about-friendship-quilts.htm#:~:text=For%20those%20who%20haven't,detailed%20work%20of%20the%20quilt.>
- http://www.womenfolk.com/quilting_history/friendship.htm
- <https://www.asg.org/quilting-backing-blocks-batting/>
- <https://byjus.com/maths/geometric-shapes/#definition>
- <http://collection.folkartmuseum.org/objects/6748/friendship-album-quilt?ctx=c447f987-71c0-46ce-9ad8-eaae04405225&idx=3>
- <http://collection.folkartmuseum.org/objects/2436/charm-quilt?ctx=40b22697-47b3-49ad-9991-5485fb4b85c3&idx=0>
- Webster's Dictionary

Artwork Spotlight:



Artist unidentified, *Friendship Album Quilt*, probably Pennsylvania, early twentieth century, cotton. Collection American Folk Art Museum, New York. Gift of Karen and Werner Gundersheimer, 2018.2.17

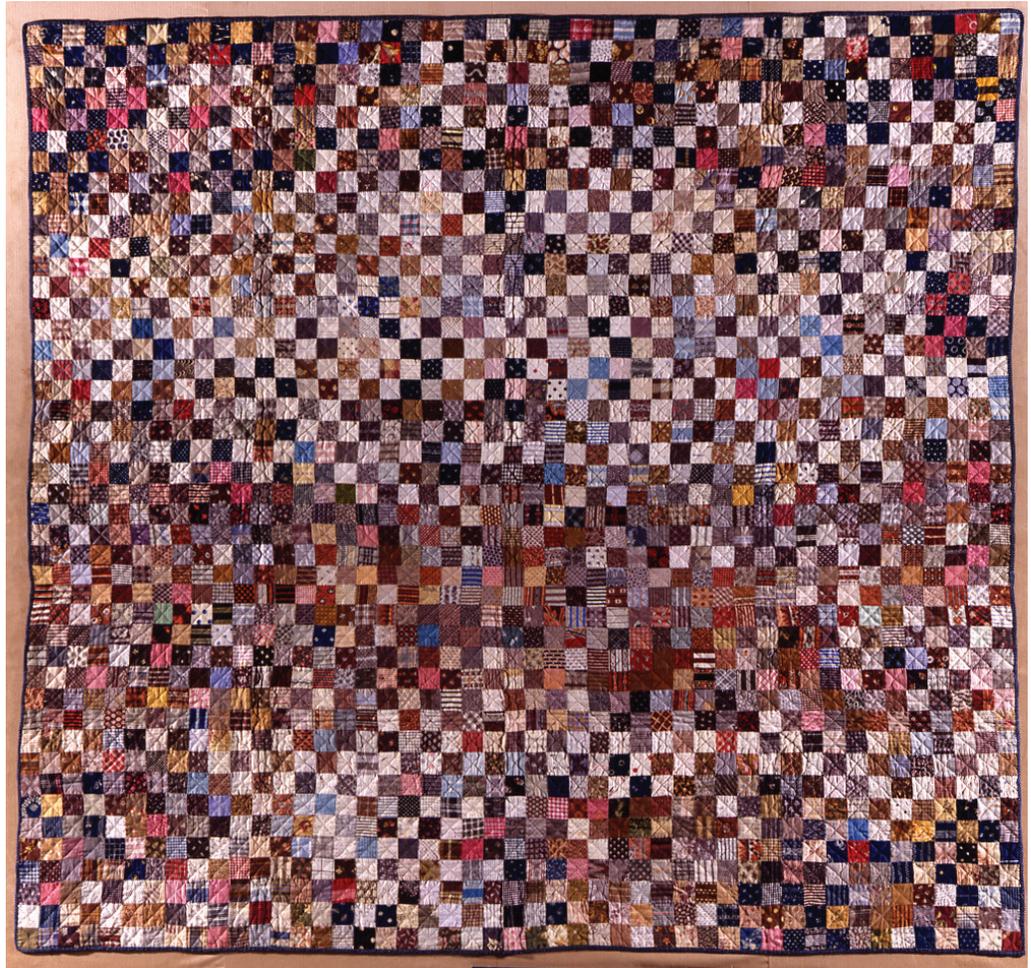
Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts was organized by the American Folk Art Museum, New York and is toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC

- *Friendship Album Quilt* was created in the early 20th century by a group of unknown individuals in the United States. As its name implies, friendship quilts make tangible the friendships and unity between the quilters who made them and the love for the recipient of the quilt.

Traditionally, this style of quilt is composed of smaller, unique quilt blocks made by different quilters in the community, which were then sewn together to create a whole quilt. Often, these quilt blocks were signed by the individuals who made them. These signatures were written with ink or embroidered onto the different quilt blocks to credit their creators or the individual who contributed the fabric used in the quilt. Women even signed the names of their husbands and children onto the friendship quilts, in addition to their own. Friendship quilts were traditionally made to commemorate special events or were made as gifts for friends and family members.

Quilters used leftover fabric scraps when making friendship quilts which they repurposed by cutting and piecing together. The fabric scraps used in friendship quilts would often contain a special significance to the quilter making them.

In the joining of different fabrics, colors, and shapes, the individuality of the community members that made "Friendship Album Quilt" is represented. Each square is beautiful and unique, reflecting the individuals who created them. The quilt is composed of these blocks, symbolizing the diversity and dynamic relationships in the community. When looking at a friendship quilt, the blocks can be admired for their beauty alone or for the whole they make up together. Friendship quilts like this one are beautiful, not just for their design, but because they display the bonds between the women who made them and the memories within the quilt.



Artist unidentified, *Charm Quilt*, United States 1880–1920, cotton. Collection American Folk Art Museum, New York. Gift of Freyda Rothstein, 1998.8.5

Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts was organized by the American Folk Art Museum, New York and is toured by International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC

- “Charm Quilt” is made out of over 200 scrap materials. No piece is the same. This piece shows how different little pieces can come together and make a whole beautiful quilt. “Charm quilt” is an example of how beautiful artwork can be made by repurposing discarded materials.

Contributer Bios:

Aubrey Ellis is currently earning a BFA in Art Teaching at the University of Utah. She plans to make the arts a more integral part of education and work as an elementary art teacher. Aubrey is a practicing artist and is passionate about the positive effects of arts integration in schools. She believes the connections students make to themselves, the environment, and their community through the arts is the key to building a better future.

Danielle Forward is also studying Art Teaching at the University of Utah. She wants the importance of art to be spread to everyone. Art is such a meaningful thing that everyone should have chances to create it. She loves how art can help students better express themselves and understand the world/people around them.

This Lesson Plan was created for the March 16, 2022 UMFA Evening For Educators: Stitching Together Subjects with the Arts. The evening and activities were inspired by the special exhibition *Handstitched Worlds: The Cartography of Quilts*, on view from February 19 to May 15, 2022.



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