

## LESSON PLAN:

# Patterns of a Place

by Katie Seastrand

After a group discussion around a *Siapo* (Samoan tapa cloth), the class will think about places that are important to them before creating a patterned artwork.

**Objectives:**

Student will...

- closely observe an image of *Siapo (tapa cloth)* from the Utah Museum of Fine Arts
- discuss tapa cloths and the design inspired by nature
- think about places they love and/or consider home and what natural things can be found there
- create a shape designed to represent something they love about their important place
- use their shape on a piece of newspaper to create a pattern

**Grade level:**

K-4

**Duration:**

45 minutes (without the optional activities)

**Materials:**

- Image of *Siapo (Tapa Cloth)*, UMFA2006.3.4 – found on the UMFA Website – Art – Collections
- Pencil
- Paper
- Optional crayons
- Optional leaves (found during nature walk)

**Materials cont:**

- Felt - cut into 3-inch squares
- Markers
- Scissors
- Newspaper
  - Single sheets cut in half and/or double page sheets cut into 4ths, roughly 11.75"x11"
  - Alternative: brown butcher/craft paper

**Vocabulary/Key Terms:**

- Tapa cloth: Cloth made from the bark of the paper mulberry tree, used in the Pacific Islands (Oxford Languages).
- *Siapo*: Samoan word for a fine cloth made from the bark of the Paper Mulberry tree (<https://www.abc.net.au/ra/pacific/people/tapa.htm>). One of the oldest Samoan cultural art forms, it is not only a decorative art but a symbol of Samoan culture.
- Pattern: a repeated decorative design (Oxford Languages).

## Activity

**Part 1 | Classroom Discussion**

- What makes this place we live unique?
- How could we have reminders of these things around us? What are some decorations you could have in your home or even in this classroom to remind us of how special where we live is?
- As a class, look at *Siapo (Tapa Cloth)*, UMFA2006.3.4,
- This artwork is a *Siapo* or tapa cloth. Have any of you seen a tapa cloth before? If so, tell us about it. What is a tapa cloth and what is your experience with them?
  - Based on class experience, you can fill in info from the artwork background in the additional resources section.
- What are the different types of shapes you see? These are all inspired by shapes in nature in Samoa. Show students Samoa on a map and photographs of what it looks like. We're going to create artworks inspired by nature and our own time and place. What are shapes that can represent nature where we live?

### **Part 1 | Classroom Discussion cont.**

- In this project, we'll be creating a pattern with a shape that represents something we love about a place we call home. We'll be designing our pattern artwork on a piece of newspaper, something that is also connected with the time and place we live in.

Optional: Nature Walk and Leaf Rubbing

- Take students outside to gain inspiration from nature! Students can look for leaves that have fallen. Ask on the walk:
  - What colors do you see?
  - What shapes do you see? Are they geometric or organic?
- To do a leaf rubbing:
  - Set the leaf on their desk with the stem bumps facing up.
  - Place a paper on top and rub the long side of a crayon across, especially over the top of where the leaf is.
- Or use this Walking guide to gather observations:

[https://umfa.utah.edu/sites/default/files/2019-03/UMFA\\_SpencerFinchWalkingGuide.pdf](https://umfa.utah.edu/sites/default/files/2019-03/UMFA_SpencerFinchWalkingGuide.pdf)

### **Part 2 | Art Making**

- Students should think about something they love about the place they call home (this could be the city/area they currently live in or somewhere else).
  - If students did the nature walk, they should instead use their observations and leaf rubbing as inspiration.
- On a blank piece of paper, draw some shapes to represent what they love, encouraging natural elements.
- After selecting just one shape, draw it in marker on a 3-inch square of felt.
- Carefully cut out your shape.
- On your newspaper, place your felt shape and draw its outline with a thin marker. Move around the felt to draw more and more outlines until you fill-up the paper.
- Grab 3 markers, each in a color you might see in this place you love.
- Begin coloring in your shapes with the different colors to make a pattern.

Optional Writing Extension:

- Students can write a statement about their place and symbol, answering the below questions:

### **Part 2 | Art Making cont.**

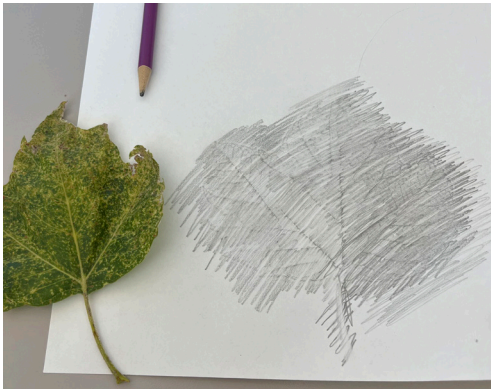
1. What place inspired my artwork?
2. What was the inspiration for my shape?
3. Where would you see the three colors I chose in this place?
4. Why do I love this place?
5. Who do I want to share this space with?
6. What can I do to help protect this place for others?

**Methods for Assessment:**

- Respectful student participation in discussions.
- Student artwork: Is the connection to their chosen shape and feature of their favorite place apparent? Did they thoughtfully lay out their pattern (including the shape and colors)? Does the pattern take up the whole page?

**Additional Resources**

**Activity Images:**



## Additional Resources cont.



### Online Resources:

- <http://www.siapo.com/bark-cloth.html>
- <https://around.uoregon.edu/content/samoan-researchers-visit-uo-see-its-collection-tapa-cloth>
- <https://kapakulture.com/2013/07/12/dyes-designs-in-samoan-siapo/#:~:text=There%20are%20symbols%20used,%2C%20and%20lastly%2C%20logologo%20>
- <http://www.siapo.com/design-elements.html>

### State Core Links

- Kindergarten:
  1. Social Studies Standard 1 – Students will recognize and describe how individuals and families are both similar and different.
  2. Social Studies Standard 2 - Students will recognize their roles and responsibilities of being a good citizen.

## Additional Resources cont.

3. Speaking and Listening Standard 1 – Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups.
  4. Speaking and Listening Standard 4 – Describe familiar people, places, things, and events and, with prompting and support, provide additional detail.
  5. Speaking and Listening Standard 6 – Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.
- 1st Grade:
    1. Writing Standard 8 – With guidance and support from adults, recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
    2. Speaking and Listening Standard 1 – Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 1 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
    3. Speaking and Listening Standard 4 – Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.
  - 2nd Grade:
    1. Social Studies Standard 1 – Students will recognize and describe how people within their community, state, and nation are both similar and different.
    2. Social Studies Standard 2 – Students will recognize and practice civic responsibility in the community, state, and nation.
    3. Writing Standard 8 – Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.
    4. Speaking and Listening Standard 1 - Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.
    5. Speaking and Listening Standard 2 - Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.
    6. Speaking and Listening Standard 4 - Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.
  - 3rd Grade:
    1. Social Studies Standard 2: Students will understand cultural factors that shape a community.
    2. Social Studies Standard 3: Students will understand the principles of civic responsibility in classroom, community, and country.
    3. Writing Standard 2 – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

## Additional Resources cont.

4. Writing Standard 4 - With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.
  5. Writing Standard 8 - Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.
  6. Speaking and Listening Standard 1 - Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- 4th Grade:
    1. Social Studies Standard 2: Students will understand how Utah's history has been shaped by many diverse people, events, and ideas.
    2. Speaking and Listening Standard 1 - Participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations, using age-appropriate vocabulary, on topics, texts, and issues.



**Artwork Spotlight:**

Oceania, Samoa, (1st half of the 20th century), *Siapo (tapa cloth)*, dye, paper mulberry bark, resin. Gift of Richard E. Brown in memory of Ellis O. and Sarah N. Brown, UMFA2006.3.4

- Tapa cloths are a special type of artwork made from *u'a*, a cloth made from the bark of the mulberry tree, and central to cultures across Polynesia. This is done through a complicated process of harvesting, stripping, separating, scraping, and beating.
- *Siapo* is the name for Samoan tapa cloths and can be used for clothing, decoration, bed covers, tapestries, etc.
- The patterns and shapes we see are inspired by nature and the Samoan environment. Often these clothes are also made by more than one person and the artmaking traditions are passed down through families.
- Contact Annie Burbidge Ream ([annie.burbidge.ream@umfa.utah.edu](mailto:annie.burbidge.ream@umfa.utah.edu)) to check-out a tapa cloth from the UMFA's Education Collection to use in the classroom.



**Contributer Bio:**

Katie Seastrand has worked at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts since September 2019. She studied Art History and Museum Education and is very passionate about arts education and integration. Katie grew up in Utah with many educator family members and loves to support educators in any way possible. In her spare time she loves to knit, bake, and read!

This Lesson Plan was created for the October 25, 2023 UMFA Evening For Educators: Symbols of Family. The evening was inspired by the special exhibition *Tatau: Marks of Polynesia*, on view from August 12, 2023 to December 30, 2023.

Heading image | Oceania, Samoa, (1st half of the 20th century), detail of *Siapo (tapa cloth)*, dye, paper mulberry bark, resin. Gift of Richard E. Brown in memory of Ellis O. and Sarah N. Brown, UMFA2006.3.4



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