

LESSON PLAN

Lesson Title: Paper Mola

SC Visual Arts Standards:

K-4: K-1.1 , 2.2, 5.2; 1-1.1, 2.1, 2.3, 5.2; 2-1.3, 2.2, 5.2; 3-1.3, 2.2, 5.2; 4-1.3, 2.2, 5.2

Grade Level: Adaptable 1-4

Length of Lesson: Three to Five 45-minute class periods

Instructional Objectives:

Students will create a paper Mola in the style of the Kuna Indians of Panama using local plants and animals as inspiration.

Vocabulary:

Kuna	Applique
Panama	Reverse Applique
Shape	Geometric
Color	Craft

Materials:

9 x 12 Construction Paper, Assorted Colors (4 per student)
Pencil
Paper for Sketching
Glue Sticks or School Glue
Scraps of Assorted Construction Paper

Florence County Museum Connections:

Mola Blouse, Kuna Indians, Panama, Early 20th Century
Life:Style, Interactive Education Gallery

Questioning:

- Traditional Mola made by the Kuna Indians use symbols of native animals (such as lizards, iguanas, parrots, and fish), local vegetation (such as palm trees, coconut crops, and sea grasses). What plants and animals from your everyday life could you use as inspiration to create a mola?
- Kuna Indians begin teaching their children at a young age to make mola using applique techniques. We will be making our Mola using paper and glue. How do you think this process is different from the traditional Kuna methods? Do you think it would be easier or more difficult to use the traditional methods?

Instructional Procedures:

1. Introduce students to the traditional art of the Kuna Indians of Panama: Mola.
 - Show images of mola, including the Mola Blouse in the FCM's collection.
 - Identify Panama on a map of the world. Discuss how everyday life in Panama is different from life in the United States.
 - Explain the basic process of applique so that students have an understanding of how Mola are created.
2. Students will begin by choosing four colors of construction paper, one sheet of each color. Have students decide which of the four colors will be the background. This sheet should be set aside and will not be cut.
3. Students will choose a plant or animal that is native to the Pee Dee Region to be the subject of their Mola. Have each student create an outline sketch of this plant or animal to fill a half a sheet of colored construction paper. Carefully cut along the outline.
4. Students then place the cutout on a second color of paper. Trace outside of the cutout leaving a thin border (approximately ¼ inch). Students carefully cut out the drawing on the second color of construction paper.
5. Repeat step four with the second cutout and the third sheet of construction paper.
6. Students will then begin gluing all cutouts. With all three colored cutouts, layer the paper with the largest on bottom and the smallest on top. Carefully glue the stack together, making sure to leave a border of the color below around each cutout. Once the plant or animal is fully assembled, glue to the background paper.
7. From the Scraps of paper left, Students should cut out details for eyes and mouths or plant details. Students may also add geometric shape patterns around the plant or animal using the same layering technique described in steps two through six.

Closure and Critique:

1. How is the subject of your Mola similar to the subjects chosen by Kuna Indians for their Mola?
2. How are the Mola techniques passed down through the Kuna Indians? Why is this important to the survival of the craft?
3. How do you think working with fabric, needle and thread is different from using paper and glue? Do you think it would be easier or more difficult to create a Mola using the traditional applique technique?



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PEE DEE CONNECTIONS

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ABOUT THIS POSTER

The Kuna are an indigenous people of northeastern Panama and its islands. This garment, called a *mola* is a traditional blouse worn by Kuna women. As Panama became a popular vacation spot in the mid 20th century, many Kuna women began making and selling these colorful mola panels to tourists as souvenirs.

Each mola is made using a technique known as *reverse appliqué*. This process involves cutting shapes from the interior of the panel and sewing a second piece of fabric onto the panel from the back. When the finished panel is seen from the front, all fabric layers are visible.

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Tuesday - Saturday: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Sunday: 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm



Mola
Hand-printed woven cotton fabrics
Kuna people
Kuna-Yala, Panama
Early 20th century
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