



LESSON OVERVIEW

Alma Woodsey Thomas (1891 – 1978) is best known for her colorful abstract paintings. Students will learn about the artist and her work. They will create an abstract painting inspired by a personal experience.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

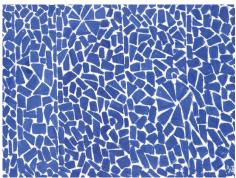
- Explore the abstract art of Alma Thomas.
- Understand how Alma Thomas conveyed mood in her art.
- Understand how Alma Thomas used the natural world and current events to inspire her.
- Create abstract art in the style of Alma Thomas.

SUPPLIES

- Paint
- Brushes
- Palette Paper or plates
- Water cups
- Images of the natural world and phenomena
- Canvas board or large cardstock

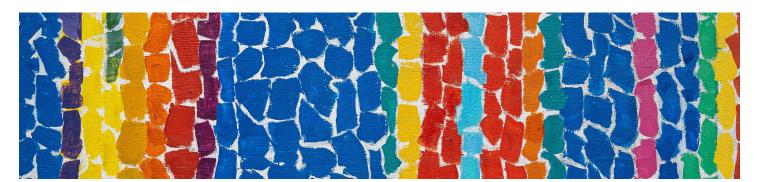
ALMA WOODSEY THOMAS







Alma Woodsey Thomas (September 22, 1891 – February 24, 1978) was an African-American artist and teacher. While growing up in Columbus Georgia, Thomas made small pieces of artwork such as puppets, sculptures, and plates, from clay from the river behind her home. Despite a growing interest in the arts, Thomas was not allowed to go into art museums as a child. In 1907, her family left for Washington, D.C., to move away from the strong racial segregation in the South. There, Thomas attended Armstrong Technical High School, where she took her first art classes. She said "When I entered the art room, it was like entering heaven. . ". As a career she chose teaching, it allowed her to support herself while pursuing her own painting. Thomas is best known for the colorful, abstract paintings that she created after her retirement from a 35-year career teaching art at a High School. Her paintings show her love of nature and music with abstract colorful marks. Learn more



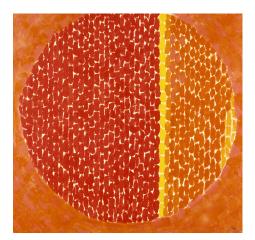


LESSON PLAN

- 1. Explain to students that Alma Thomas was inspired by the natural world, space, and current events. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, the United States was deeply engaged in space exploration. When the first astronauts traveled to the moon, Thomas wanted to capture that event with brushstrokes. Abstract artists are more interested in how things feel than showing how they look exactly. Looking at her art:
 - What do you notice about the shapes, colors, and lines?
 - How did Alma Thomas capture in her artwork the places and events that inspired her?
 - Step back and look at the painting from far away. What do you see?
 - Step forward and take a look at the painting close up. What do you see now?
 - Imagine you could step inside the painting. What would it feel like?
- 2. Students will work from their imagination to represent a place or a moment from nature. This can be a historic event or place or a personal one.
- 3. To prepare for the painting, first practice making marks with the brush, and noticing what shapes you can make with different brushes. Look at warm and cool colors and talk about what mood they show, then sketch out an idea.
- 4. Before starting on the final piece, remind students to think about how they feel when thinking about their chosen place or object instead of trying to show what it looks like.
- 6. When finished, share the artworks with each other and the stories behind each piece.

Grade Differentiation: Younger classes can all work on the same subject or idea. Older grades can write a story to go along with their abstract piece and practice more complex color mixing.

EVA +: Collaborate on a large abstract artwork that represents something local to Park City. Explore other artists that use marks and patterns in their artwork.











KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS:

Based on National Core Arts Standards visual Arts Requirements (Kindergarden).

VA:Cn10.1.Ka

Create art that tells a story about a life experience.

VA:Re8.1.Ka

Interpret art by identifying subject matter and describing relevant details.

VA:Cr3.1.Ka

Explain the process of making art while creating.



ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Click on links to learn more.

- https://www.phillipscollection.org/sites/default/files/2021-11/AT2exploration-guide.pdf
- https://www.nga.gov/learn/teachers/lessons-activities/pre-k/alma-thomas.html
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsDeh7pA69k
- https://www.phillipscollection.org/lesson-plan/abstract-art-alma-thomas

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