

Park City Education Foundation • Kimball Art Center

Verbal Directions

LESSON OVERVIEW

Marie Watt (born 1967) is an American artist, a member of the Seneca Nation of Indians. Her work draws from history, biography, and Indigenous teachings to explore storytelling and community. Students will use thread and fabric to create a collaborative image or quilt.

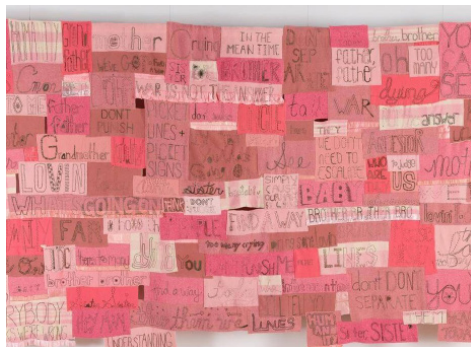
INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Learn about Marie Watt .
- Think about personal stories and symbols that connect to the environment.
- Collaborate to create a textile art piece or quilt using fabric and thread.

SUPPLIES

- Images of Marie Watt's artwork
- Fabric pieces (various colors and patterns)
- Age appropriate sewing needles
- Embroidery thread
- Yarn
- Scissors
- Glue
- Fabric Markers/ paint

MARIE WATT



Marie Watt was born in 1967, in Seattle, Washington. She grew up in a place with trees and mountains, and loves spending time in nature. When she was young she used to draw and make things with her hands, like sculptures and paintings. As she got older, Marie learned more about her Native American heritage. Her family is from the Seneca Nation, which is part of the Haudenosaunee (pronounced "haw-dee-no-SHAW-nee") Confederacy. This heritage is important to her art. Marie Watt studied art in college. She learned many ways to create art, including using blankets. Blankets were special to her because they are important in Native American culture. They represent warmth, comfort, and protection. Marie Watt uses blankets to tell stories and express her ideas. Today, Marie Watt is a famous artist known all around the world. She still creates amazing art that reminds people of the beauty of nature, the importance of culture, and the power of storytelling. [Learn More.](#)



LESSON PLAN

1. Show images of Marie Watt's textile artwork. Discuss with students what they notice in her art:

- What materials do you see in Marie Watt's artwork?
- What ideas do you see in her artwork?
- Why do you think she uses these materials ?
- Where do you see the idea of community?

Have students share a story about a blanket that was important to them!

Provide background information about Marie Watt, including her Native American heritage and point them out in her artwork. Here are some of the themes: ▪ Identity: Identity is about who you are and where you come from. In Marie Watt's art, she likes to show and celebrate where she and other people come from, especially if they are Native American like her. ▪ Memory and History: ▪Marie Watt uses art to tell stories so that we can learn about history and the past. ▪ Community and Connection: ▪Marie Watt loves to work with her friends and family to make art, and this shows how important it is to be together and help each other. ▪ Nature and Sustainability: Nature is our beautiful planet, and we need to take care of it. Marie Watt uses materials in her art that don't harm nature because she wants to protect our planet. ▪ Textiles and Blankets: Marie Watt likes to use blankets in her art to make it feel comfortable and safe. ▪ Storytelling: In Marie Watt's art, she uses pictures and words to tell stories that help us imagine exciting things.

2. For our class quilt: Lets think about something that shows how much we love nature and how we can make our world a better place. Pass out paper for students to write a word or draw a symbol that connects to the environment and community. (What's your favorite thing about nature? What shows our love for nature and how we can help our community and the Earth? Imagine we're all part of a big team - our art will tell a story about how we care for the environment and each other). For younger students, focus on drawing or gluing string on a piece of fabric. Attach their fabric pieces onto a larger communal fabric background. Provide older students with blank fabric squares and sewing materials to 'draw' their chosen symbols or text. Encourage them to consider the theme of their stories in relation to the environment, community, and family. Encourage students to work together to arrange their fabric pieces in a visually pleasing and cohesive manner.

3. Display the collaborative textile art piece in the classroom or a common area. Invite students to present their stories and the symbols they used to the class. Encourage reflection on the collaborative process and the connections they made with their peers' stories and symbols engagement.





KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS:
Based on National Core Arts Standards visual Arts Requirements (4th Grade).

[VA:Cr1.2.4a](#)

Collaboratively set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.

[VA:Re8.1.4a](#)

Interpret art by referring to contextual information and analyzing relevant subject matter, characteristics of form, and use of media.

[VA:Cn10.1.4a](#)

Create works of art that reflect community cultural traditions.



ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Click on links to learn more.

- <https://mariewattstudio.com/about/biography>
- https://kids.kiddle.co/Marie_Watt
- <http://www.native-languages.org/seneca-legends.htm>
- <https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/eachother-access-guide-marie-watt>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7oQfYXqF4M>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tcOZi5VSBck>
(3min - turtle island/ 6 min blankets)

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