

Recycled Paper Album Quilts

with Brenda Jones



The Big Idea

Students will learn how to use everyday materials found around the house to make a fun paper quilt that tells a story.



You'll Need

- Light cardboard packaging (cereal boxes and other food packaging, packaging for other items like toys, etc.)
- Junk mail
- Scissors / Glue
- Paper, printer or construction for background and sketches
- Sandpaper
- Pencil
- Phone or computer for some research
- A piece of newspaper (optional)
- Step-By-Step video tutorial:
www.think360arts.org

The Plan

Step 1 - Watch part one of the video. Stop and answer this question: What is a quilt block?

Step 2 - Watch part two of the video. Pause and do the following:

- Look at the work, Album Quilt created by American artist Elizabeth Hopkins by searching the Denver Art Museum's online collection. (www.denverartmuseum.org)
- Think about why this artist made her blocks. What stories do they tell? How do the blocks use symbols? What complementary colors did Elizabeth use? Make seven sketches of something you did daily this past week. Maybe you played a video game, did homework, or ate pizza. Draw a symbol or icon for each of those days.
- Make your sketches to fit into a 6" x 6" square. You now have seven sketches. Make two more sketches that say something about you: maybe of your house or a dream of something you would like to do later this year. Once completed, you will have a total of nine symbol sketches. Cut nine pieces of 6" x 6" background paper for your blocks. These can be colored paper or white. You can use construction paper or printer paper.



The Plan cont.

Step 3 - Watch part three of the video. Pause and do the following:

- Get your packaging boxes and choose, as close as possible, a complementary color to the background papers. Complimentary colors are opposite to each other on a color wheel. You can do a Google search of complementary colors to find color wheels that show this.
- Lightly sand the packaging so that the image is softer.
- Cut the symbol sketches out of the complementary color sanded packaging. The video example was green background paper and reddish packaging. If you are using white background papers, you won't have a complementary color, but maybe limit your colors for your symbols to a set of two complementary colors.
- Glue your cut images onto the background papers.

Step 4 - Watch part four of the video. Pause and do the following:

- Use a large piece of paper and arrange the individual blocks on top. The example uses newspaper, but you can use any large piece of paper.
- Glue your blocks to the background paper. If you don't have one, lay the blocks on the table or floor in an arrangement that you like. Don't glue them down, just consider them.

Step 5 - Watch part five of the video and answer these questions: What complementary colors did you use? How is your work like an early American album quilt? How is it different?

Step 6 - Share your quilt with someone else, tell them the stories!

Teaching Artist Tip:

- This is a good project to do with someone else. Get other people to work with you on the album quilt-- have your family work with you! Assign members different days of the week to complete and then put them all together as one quilt. Many times album quilts in the 1800s had individual blocks made by different people.
- Instead of packaging, you could use origami paper or hand painted or printed paper. You could even print your own paper. What other kinds of papers or cardboard can you think of using? You can vary the sizes and ideas.

Going Further

- Try making your blocks more complicated. Add some background.
- Consider adding more blocks or different sizes. Since your packaging is sanded, you can paint parts of it for detail.
- Look up how quilts are made of fabric. If you have scrap fabric, make one block by sewing it together.

