

Drawing Oaxacan Animal

Grade Level: 1-4

Description/Objective

Students learn about the art of the Oaxacan (pronounced wa-ha-can) woodcarvers of Mexico, whose brightly colored and heavily patterned figures of animals and people have a childlike or whimsical quality to them. Students will choose an animal, possibly a pet and do a drawing of it in the style of the woodcarvers.

Time

45 minutes - 1 Hour

Materials

Book - The Tale of Rabbit and Coyote by Tony John Stan and Tamie de Paola (library)

9" x 11" black construction paper (1 per student)

White or light chalk (1/2 stick per student)

Oil pastels - white and several bright colors (selection for each student)

Optional - book - Oaxacan Woodcarving by Shepard Barbash (library)

Procedure

1. Read to the class the book The Tale of Rabbit and Coyote. The animals in this story are illustrated to look like Oaxacan woodcarvings.
2. Ask students to take note of the illustrations, especially how the illustrator has used broken lines and dots to create a rich pattern and detailed texture.
3. As a group, look for examples of lines and colors creating pattern on people's clothing and around the classroom.
4. Tell the students about the Oaxacan wood carvers of Mexico, specifically how their carvings of animals are painted with bright colors and heavily patterned. If possible, have illustrations from Oaxacan Woodcarving book to show.
5. Ask students to think of an animal, possibly a pet, that they like. Allow time for visualization.
6. On black paper have them use white chalk to lightly draw the silhouette of the animal they have imagined. Encourage them to draw the animal large enough to fill 3/4 of the page. (For some students a sample of your art that shows the steps of this process may be helpful).
7. Ask students to think about what kinds of lines, vertical, horizontal, diagonal, or dotted would show best the texture and pattern of their animal.
8. Using oil pastels, fill in their animal with bright color.
9. Students choose contrasting bright colors to add pattern and texture.
10. Backgrounds can remain black, or be given a pattern and texture.

Subject Matter Integration

GEOPGRAPHY: Show Mexico on map.

SOCIAL STUDIES: This project fits in well to a unit studying the history and culture of Mexico.

LANGUAGE ARTS: As a follow-up activity to drawing the animals, students write a folktale about their animal.

Variations/Extensions

Students sculpt an animal out of modeling clay, let it dry and then paint it in the style of the Oaxacan woodcarvers.