

ORGANIC TEXTILE COLLAGE

GRADE: 8-12

TIME: Three 50-minute sessions

Frank Lloyd Wright began using the term “organic” to describe his architecture as early as 1908. This term referred to Wright’s inclusion of the natural world in his architecture. Wright is famously known for the use of geometric shapes and forms in his designs, while also considering the natural environment, local elements, and climate. This lesson will explore the melding of natural shapes and forms with the geometric aesthetic of an architect and will explore the elements of design in order to create a textile collage.

INTEGRATED SUBJECTS: Visual Arts, Science

OBJECTIVES

MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Images of Frank Lloyd Wright buildings such as Fallingwater and Robie House
Internet access for independent student research

12” x 16” pieces of patterned upholstery-type fabric

Smaller squares (approximately 4” x 6”) of various types of fabric to cut for organic shapes

Pellon 805 Wonder-Under Fabric
Interfacing

Iron (3 or 4, if possible)

Portable ironing mat and/or tabletop ironing board (Tip: Set up 3 or 4 stations for ironing)

Scissors for cutting fabric

1. Explore and examine Frank Lloyd Wright’s use of the term “organic architecture” and its connection to sustainable design by looking at samples of his work.
2. Identify the formal elements of design in Frank Lloyd Wright’s work.
3. Engage with the techniques and materials to create a textile collage.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. We use the word “organic” frequently; what do we mean when we use it? How did Frank Lloyd Wright use this word?
2. How does Frank Lloyd Wright take the job of architect beyond the blueprint?
3. Why are the ideas of sustainable design important?

LESSON PROCEDURE

EXPLORE

Session One

- Review the elements and principles of design. More information can be found at <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/design-elements/elements-of-design/> and https://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/formal_analysis.html
- Display images of Frank Lloyd Wright homes and encourage students to focus on whether the buildings are similar to or designed in contrast with the surrounding areas. Challenge students to find areas of contrasting juxtaposition. Ask students to notice how the homes are situated in their environments. Identify the formal elements and principles of design in the homes. Include interiors and furnishings as part of the structural whole. Images can be found at <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/multimedia/>
- Ask students to research the word “organic” as used by Frank Lloyd Wright and how we use this word today. Discuss the various meanings of organic architecture. <https://franklloydwright.org/organic-architecture-and-the-sustaining-ecosystem/>
- Ask students to hypothesize about how older homes were heated and cooled. Introduce sustainable design elements that were used by Frank Lloyd Wright, including passive energy. <https://franklloydwright.org/living-with-nature-passive-energy-techniques/>

Session Two

- Introduce the materials and techniques used to create a textile collage. Demonstrate application of adhesive interfacing using an iron.
 - Differentiation: This project can be done with paper by using a wallpaper sample book and magazine pages. Attach organic shapes with YES paste and bookbinding brush.
 - Differentiation: Use of Tacky Glue and a short, stiff bookbinding brush can be used in place of interfacing and an iron.
- Ask students to plan and draw organic shapes in their sketchbook. Refer to these drawings to create the collage. Incorporate formal design elements in the creation of the textile collage.

ENGAGE

Session Two

- Have students use an iron to adhere interfacing to several of the small pieces of fabric. When fabric cools, students can begin to draw, cut out various organic shapes, and arrange on the upholstery background.
- Ask students to consider placement and get feedback from classmates.
- Review clean-up procedures and remember to unplug the irons!

DESIGN

Sessions Three

- Have students use a cover sheet on top of shapes and begin to iron each shape onto the background fabric with a slow, steady motion. Encourage participants to evaluate their designs as they add each shape.
- Continue to adhere all shapes to the background and let cool.
- Create and cut more shapes as needed. Ask participants to share any scraps or negative shapes they are not using with their classmates.

LESSON PROCEDURE (continued)

CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

Session Three

- Encourage participants to share their design and give feedback to their peers.
- Provide time for students to make alterations and attach any additional shapes to their work.
- Discuss how Frank Lloyd Wright might include these textiles into his home designs. Have students consider:
How would they be displayed? Would they be functional?