

## Lesson Summary: African Textile Art

### 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

| Objectives   | Materials & Preparation   |
|--|---|
| <p>Students will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss facts about West Africa.</li> <li>2. Identify characteristics of West African Art.</li> <li>3. Compare and contrast West African Batiks.</li> <li>4. Discuss and define patterns.</li> <li>5. Create a batik.</li> </ol>   | <p>Lesson Packet<br/>           Letter to parents (email to teacher or make copies for teacher)<br/>           Photos of Africa<br/>           Art Reproductions (<u>Women at Work</u>, <u>Sun Cloth</u>, <u>African Dance</u>, <u>Indigo Cloth</u>)<br/>           Muslin fabric pieces</p>  |
| <p><b>Motivation</b></p>   | <p>Plastic folders</p>  |
| <p><u>Activity #1 (5-7 min): Introduce West Africa</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show map of Africa—           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What continent is this?</li> <li>○ What do you know about it? (People, places, things, customs?)</li> <li>○ What types of art are from here?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Show various photos of West Africa and West African art and explain to students that we are focusing on the Western area of Africa</li> <li>• See various talking points in notes.</li> </ul>   | <p>Masking tape<br/>           Paper towels<br/>           Plastic plates<br/>           Wipes<br/>           Tip bottles,<br/>           Stamps, paint brushes<br/>           Batik E-Z<br/>           Adult Smocks<br/>           Plastic gloves<br/>           Containers of dye<br/>           Power strip</p>  |
| <p><u>Activity #2 (5-7 min): Look at works of art</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at Compare:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Describe what you see in this work of art.</li> <li>○ How are these works of art the same? How are they different?</li> <li>○ Discuss and identify types of patterns</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Activity #3 (30-40 min): Create Batiks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at pictures of African artists creating Batiks.</li> <li>• Create a batik.</li> </ul>  | <p>**Hairdryers (volunteers bring)<br/>           ** Sticks, Glue gun or staple gun (volunteers bring)</p> <p><b>Vocabulary</b></p> <p><u>Batik</u> is a resist and dyeing technique used on fabrics to produce one-of-a-kind designs and works of art.<br/> <u>Resist</u> a substance (such as paste, starch, or wax) or technique (such as tying or stitching) used to prevent dye from penetrating certain areas of a fabric, in order to create a design in contrasting colors; 2 types: adire eleso-tied and stitched designs (tie-dye) and adire eleko- starch paste or wax applied to fabric with stamp, stencil or brush.<br/> <u>Pattern/Rhythm/Repetition</u> a characteristic (or set of) that repeat; these can be geometric, organic, symmetrical or asymmetrical.</p> |
| <p><b>Procedure/Production</b></p>   | <p><b>Extended Classroom Activities</b></p>   |
| <p>Before session begins or while one volunteer is leading discussion with class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up tables with paper plates w/batik EZ and paper plates w/wipes, pencils, stamps, squeeze bottles</li> <li>• Tape muslin (fabric) to folders</li> </ul> <p>Give instructions to students <b>while they are still seated</b> in discussion group—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a few minutes you will draw or stamp your pattern or image of value on your fabric and create your own batik.</li> <li>• Put your name on your fabric block as soon as you return to your seat.</li> <li>• When you are finished stamping or painting your pattern, move to the drying area.</li> <li>• When you are finished drying your fabric, return to your seat and help clean up. An adult will call your table and help you remove your fabric block and put it in the dye.</li> </ul> | <p><u>Read</u>: books about Africa</p> <p><u>Compare/Contrast</u>: Look at photos from Africa. Ask students to compare and contrast what they see in the photo with what they would see in Larchmont, NY?</p> <p><u>Identify</u>: Look at batiks created by students. Share about the image of value you chose to depict or identify patterns, geometric and organic, in works of art and explain what makes patterns geometric/organic.</p> <p><b>Resources</b></p> <p>Wikipedia Encyclopedia<br/> <u>The Art of Batik</u>, by The Batik Guild<br/>           Museum for African Art<br/>           Metropolitan Museum of Art<br/>           “Educating in a Multicultural World,” a speech by Ernest Boyer</p>   |

## Lesson Summary: African Textile Art Kindergarten-2nd Grade

| Objectives   | Materials & Preparation   |
|--|---|
| Students will: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Discuss facts about West Africa.</li> <li>7. Identify characteristics of West African Art.</li> <li>8. Compare and contrast West African Batiks.</li> <li>9. Discuss and define patterns.</li> <li>10. Create a batik.</li> </ol>   | Lesson Packet (lesson plan, biographical info)<br>Letter to parents (email to teacher or make copies for teacher)<br>Photos of Africa<br>Art Reproductions ( <u>Women at Work</u> , <u>Sun Cloth</u> , <u>African Dance</u> , <u>Indigo Cloth</u> )<br>Muslin fabric pieces<br>Plastic folders<br>Masking tape<br>Paper towels<br>Plastic plates<br>Wipes<br>Stamps, paint brushes<br>Batik E-Z<br>Adult Smocks<br>plastic gloves<br>Containers of dye<br>Power strip<br>**Hairdryers (volunteers bring)<br>** Sticks, Glue gun or staple gun (volunteers bring)  |
| Motivation   | <b>Vocabulary</b><br><u>Batik</u> is a resist and dyeing technique used on fabrics to produce one-of-a-kind designs and works of art.<br><u>Resist</u> a substance (such as paste, starch, or wax) or technique (such as tying or stitching) used to prevent dye from penetrating certain areas of a fabric, in order to create a design in contrasting colors; 2 types: adire eleso-tied and stitched designs (tie-dye) and adire eleko- starch paste or wax applied to fabric with stamp, stencil or brush.<br><u>Pattern/Rhythm/Repetition</u> a characteristic (or set of) that repeat; these can be geometric, organic, symmetrical or asymmetrical. |
| <b>Activity #1 (5-7 min): Introduce West Africa</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show map of Africa—               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What continent is this?</li> <li>○ What do you know about it?</li> <li>○ (People, places, things, customs?)</li> <li>○ What types of art come from here?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Show various photos of West Africa and West African art and explain to students that we are focusing on the Western area of Africa</li> <li>• See various talking points in notes.</li> </ul>  |   |
| <b>Activity #2 (5-7 min): Look at works of art</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at Compare:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Describe what you see in this work of art.</li> <li>○ How are these works of art the same? How are they different?</li> <li>○ Discuss and identify types of patterns.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>   |   |
| <b>Activity #3 (30-40 min): Create Batiks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at pictures of African artists creating Batiks.</li> <li>• Create a batik.</li> </ul>  | <b>Extended Classroom Activities</b>  |
| Procedure/Production   | <b>Read:</b> books about Africa   |
| Before session begins or while one volunteer is leading discussion with class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set up tables with brushes, water cups, paper plates w/batik EZ and paper plates w/wipes</li> <li>• tape muslin to folders</li> </ul> Give instructions to students <b>while they are still seated</b> in discussion group— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a few minutes you will use stamps to design a pattern and create your own batik.</li> <li>• Put your name on your fabric block and move to the stamping table. Use the stamps to make a pattern on your fabric block .</li> <li>• When you are finished stamping your pattern, move to the drying table.</li> <li>• When you are finished drying, move to the table dying table to pick your color. An adult will help you remove your fabric and put it in the dye</li> <li>• Dismiss students in groups to move through stations.</li> </ul> As children are waiting to move through stations or after they finish, do one of the extended classroom activities. | <b>Compare/Contrast:</b> Look at photos from Africa. Ask students to compare and contrast what they see in the photo with what they would see in Larchmont, NY?<br><br><b>Identify:</b> Look at batiks created by students. Identify patterns, geometric and organic, in works of art and explain what makes patterns geometric/organic.  |
|  | Resources   |
|  | Wikipedia Encyclopedia<br><u>The Art of Batik</u> , by The Batik Guild<br>Museum for African Art<br>Metropolitan Museum of Art<br>Various Art Education Websites  |

# West Africa/African Textile Art: Details

## Slide #1: Continent of Africa

- West Africa is the westernmost region of the African continent and includes 16 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo)
- Despite the wide variety of cultures, there are general similarities in their art.
  - The art of the various geographical regions were largely dictated by the natural resources (wood, dirt/clay, plants/banana leaves/cassava, cotton) within their territories
  - The art was often created to be functional as well as aesthetically pleasing to the eye
  - Art images imitated every-day life-people, homes, animals, faith, celebrations, work

## Slide #2: African Animals

- Clockwise from left--Wart hog, hippo, elephant, lion/lioness, giraffe, baboon

## Slide #3: Street scene; Kara, Togo

- Very typical, women w/babies and loads on their heads, traditional dress (Dutch was print fabric), most Africans walk, lucky few have bikes, fewer have motorcycles.

## Slide #4: Produce Stand; Kara, Togo

- What looks familiar?

## Slide #5: African Games; Kara, Togo

- Common games are football (soccer), balls made of banana leaves, this game of pushing a tire (it is much more difficult than it looks in this picture)

## Slide #6: Family Compound; Kara, Togo

- Rural Africans in this area live in family compounds that is a circle of mud huts with walls connecting them.
- The mud is a mixture of dirt, clay and pebbles that they fire or bake dry in the sun. Roofs are tin (status symbol, usually the man's hut) or grass.

## Slide #7: African Art

### Togo Facts:

- Togo covers an area of approximately 22,000 sq mi with a population of approximately 6.7 million.
- The official language is French, but there are many other languages spoken in Togo (Ewe and Gen--two major languages in the south, and Kabiye and Kotokoli or Tem--two major languages in the north.) as there are 40 different ethnic groups.
- The largest religious group in Togo is those with indigenous beliefs, but there are significant Christian and Muslim minorities.
- Most of the population (65%) lives in rural villages dedicated to agriculture or pastures.
- The climate is generally tropical savanna with average temperatures ranging from 81°F to 86 °F. The seasons are "rain" and "dry", two of each in a year.
- Education in Togo is compulsory for six years. Approximately 82% enroll.
- The Government is a fragile democracy.
- Main diet is rice, porridge or yams eaten with spicy, tomato sauces and possibly a piece of chicken or fish.

- Approximately one half of the population lives below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 a day.

### **Human Commonalities:**

1. All of us experience life cycles.
2. All of us develop symbols.
3. All of us respond to the Aesthetic.
4. All of us have the capacity to recall the past and anticipate the future.
5. All of us develop some forms of social bonding.
6. All of us are connected to the ecology of the planet.
7. All of us produce and consume.
8. All of us seek meaning and purpose.

### **Slide #8: Women Working**

- What do you see? Discuss colors, lines, patterns, images.
- Focus on the patterns. Do they repeat the same design over and over again? Alternate between two designs? How often do they repeat the design?

### **Slide #9: Sun Cloth**

- West African batiks are decorated with images of everyday life. They show scenes from animal life, African landscapes and African culture—faith, motherhood, family, people working, people celebrating.

### **Slide #10: African Dance**

### **Slide #11: Indigo Cloth**

### **Slide #12: Sample of patterned batik cloth**

### **Slide #13: Artist at Kodoni, Togo, West Africa**

- Kondoni is a batik fabric “factory” where they create batik fabric by hand and make and sell products made of batik fabric.
- Batik is a multi-layered process.
- The artist begins by applying resist to the areas he/she wants to remain white, then dyeing the lightest color first, and then adding resist to the areas he wants to remain that color and dyeing the entire piece the next lightest color, and continues until the design is finished.

### **Slide #14: Kodoni Wax Room, Togo, West Africa**

- Kodoni is also a business whose employees have some type of physical disability.

### **Slide #15: Painting wax over previously dyed fabric**

### **Slide #16: Applying wax with stencil and brush**

### **Slide #17: Tying fabric for dyeing**

- Are you able to identify this man’s physical disability?
- This method of dyeing is like tie-dye. This will be the first layer of dye and then a wax design will be applied.

### **Slide #18: Dyeing Room**

### **Slide #19: Detail**

- Left: Woman washing wax and excess dye from fabric with boiling water; Below: vats of dye

### **Slide #20: Loom**

**Slide #21: Seamstress**



Dear Parents:

Today, art appreciation volunteers came into your child's classroom to teach the students about African Textile Art. The students looked specifically at West Africa and batiks. West Africa is the westernmost region of the African continent and includes 16 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo).

During the presentation, the students discussed many aspects of rural West African life and how it compares to their life here (what do people wear? Eat? What is their work? What do they make? Where do they live?). They also identified characteristics of West African art (functions, media, images) and compared/contrasted West African Batiks. After the presentation, the students created their own batiks using the resist and dye method.

African art is exhibited in several nearby museums and galleries, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Contemporary African Art Gallery in Manhattan, and the Museum of African Art, which is set to re-open in its new 5<sup>th</sup> Ave location in the spring of 2012. Visiting one of these museums or galleries is a great opportunity to further explore this culture and art with your child.

Sincerely,

The Art Appreciation Committee

