

Lesson 2: Exploring Themes & Styles at the TCA

Objectives

1. Students are able to identify broad themes addressed in a variety of artworks.
2. Students are able to identify style characteristics in artworks.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

RELATE: Artworlds: PO 101, 201 & 301: Interpret meanings and/or purposes of an artwork using subject matter, symbols and themes.

RELATE: Artworlds: PO 203 & 303: Use contextual information to investigate and interpret meanings and purposes in artworks from the viewpoint of the culture in which it was made.

Preparation

Make copies of “Loteria” cards for each student.

Make arrangements for field trip to the TCA.

Before your visit, talk with assigned TCA docent, if possible. Explain that you will have introduced the three themes and three styles before arriving and each student will bring his or her own set.

After an introduction and quick walk through the exhibition, the docent may decide to divide your students into three groups, depending on the number of adults available. One group can work together to place loteria magnets by designated artworks; another group can play the loteria matching game in the “little kitchen” area; and a third group can think about what they want to write about their own identities in the visitor comment book.

If you are working with younger students you may choose to focus primarily, or even only, on the three themes, which are each illustrated both with United States and Mexican images.

Resources

[Loteria Cards PDF](#)

Activities

Distribute a set of nine “loteria” game pieces before visiting the Tempe Center for the Arts. Read through the three themes (one U.S. and one Mexican for each theme) and three styles.

Themes

- National Identity: Artists explore connections with their U.S. and/or Mexican heritages.
- Labor: Artists comment on issues about workers.
- Family and Community: Artists celebrate connections with others.

Styles

- Traditional: Artists use old world knowledge and techniques like anatomy, perspective and shading to make their artworks look real.

- Folk: Artists inspired by affordable art of the people often use lots of details, bright colors and simplified, even cartoon-like, shapes.
- Graphic: Artists use affordable processes for wide distribution of dramatic, attention-grabbing designs.

Take notes on any new information presented by the docent as well as interesting questions, observations or responses made by your students during their tour. If the circumstances of the visit do not allow all students to use loteria cards to practice recognizing themes and styles, or if your class is unable to visit the center, you can play a version of loteria in your classroom. Display artworks in the “Mixing It Up” Exhibition Preview PowerPoint and ask students to hold up theme and style cards as you show each. Ask students to point out evidence of the theme or style in the artworks.

Assessment Checklist

- _____ Students are able to identify broad themes addressed in a variety of artworks. (Placing loteria icons and playing the loteria game in the “little kitchen.”)
- _____ Students are able to identify style characteristics in artworks. (Placing loteria icons and playing the loteria game in the “little kitchen.”)