

## WHAT CAN WE DO?



Art is deeply intertwined with culture, drawing inspiration from customs, rituals, and values passed down through generations. The influence of culture on creativity is profound, shaping the themes, techniques, and symbolism artists employ in their work. Whether through mythology, folklore, or societal norms, culture provides a rich reservoir of inspiration for artists to draw upon.

Art serves as a reflection of cultural identity, offering a window into the beliefs, values, and experiences of a community. From indigenous art that celebrates connection to the land to contemporary works that challenge societal norms, cultural identity infuses art with depth and meaning.

Symbols play a crucial role in conveying messages about cultural identity, allowing societies to express their values, beliefs, and traditions visually. Through various art forms, symbolism has successfully broken-down preconceived notions about particular cultures by challenging stereotypes and offering more profound insights into the complexities of these communities.

Artists play a crucial role in challenging and deconstructing stereotypes associated with their cultures, using their work to offer alternative narratives and perspectives. These artistic interventions are instrumental in fostering a more nuanced understanding of different cultures, breaking down preconceived notions, and promoting broader societal acceptance.

### Lesson

Arts

### Grade

6

### Learning Objectives

- ✓ Identify and describe different ways that cultures express themselves through visual arts;
- ✓ Explore how different artworks can represent cultural stories, values, and traditions;
- ✓ Create an artwork inspired by a cultural style of their choice

### Duration

One Lesson (45 Minutes)

## Required Materials

- ✓ Paper, sketchbooks, or canvas
- ✓ Paints, markers, and crayons
- ✓ Visual aids (images of art from various cultures)
- ✓ Whiteboard, flip chart for group discussion/video projector/interactive board
- ✓ Music (optional, for creating a calming atmosphere)

## Preparation and Implementation

### Prepare Materials:

- ✓ Duplicate visual aids for each group
- ✓ Arrange an art corner with necessary supplies for the activity
- ✓ Prepare reflective prompts and a short video or slideshow showing examples of how art can express culture.

### Space Setup:

- ✓ Arrange tables and chairs for collaborative or individual work.
- ✓ Create a calming environment with soft music or natural sounds playing in the background.

## PROCESS

1

### INTRODUCTION (10 Minutes):

- Start with a warm-up activity: *What Is Culture?*
- ✓ Write the word “**CULTURE**” in the centre of the board. Ask students to call out words they associate with culture (e.g., music, food, clothing, festivals, language, art). Add their responses as branches in a mind map.
  - Facilitate a brief discussion:
  - ✓ What do all cultures have in common?
  - ✓ How do different cultures express themselves through art?
  - ✓ Why do you think it’s important to work together to celebrate different cultures?
  - ✓ What does “community” mean, and how can art bring people together?

2

### MAIN ACTIVITY (30 Minutes)

#### Step 1: Group Planning – *Cultural Symbols Brainstorm* (Group Work – 10 mins)

- ✓ Divide the class into small groups (3–4 students per group). Each group chooses or is assigned a culture (could be their own or another one studied earlier).
- ✓ Ask students to do some research and create a quick sketch or list of symbols, colours, or objects that represent that culture’s values, celebrations, or heritage.

## Step 2: Create – *Cultural Mosaic Mural* (Group Work – 15 mins)

- ✓ Using their research and inspiration, each group designs a **section of a mural** that includes:
  - Cultural symbols or patterns they brainstormed
  - A shared human theme (e.g., celebration, peace, family, nature)
  - Their own teamwork effort: each student contributes part of the design
- ✓ Encourage layering collage materials, mixing drawing and cut-outs

## Step 3: *Title & Unity* (Group Work – 5 mins)

- ✓ Each group gives their mural section a title and writes 1–2 sentences about the meaning of their artwork and how it shows community and cultural connection
- ✓ Groups present their mural pieces to the class, explain the meaning behind their symbols and how they worked together.

## 3 DEBRIEF AND REFLECTION (10 Minutes)

- **Conduct a reflective discussion:**
  - ✓ What was the best part of working as a team?
  - ✓ What was a challenge, and how did you solve it together?
  - ✓ How did your group include cultural ideas or symbols?
  - ✓ How does our mural show unity and respect for different cultures?
- Summarize key points on the board:
  - ✓ Emphasize that what students did was to show how teamwork and creativity can bring cultures together in one beautiful artwork.

## 4 COOL-DOWN AND FINISHING THEIR WORK (5 Minutes)

- **“Silent Artist Circle”**
  - ✓ Students sit in a circle with their group.
  - ✓ Each student shares (in one sentence only):

“I contributed by...” or “I felt proud of...”

## EVALUATION

- Observe students during the activity to assess:
  - Engagement with the process;
  - Creativity and expression in their artwork.
- Facilitate feedback:
  - Encourage students to share one positive observation about a peer’s artwork.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Encourage students to express their ideas, opinions and creativity.

2

Use digital tools if available:

- ✓ Students can create digital artwork or presentations to accompany their creations, if they choose so;

3

Extend the activity:

- ✓ Organize a collaborative exhibition or group project to symbolize unity and survival.

## ANNEX

### Romania – Symbols of Culture & Heritage



#### Symbols & Objects

- ✓ **Traditional costumes (ie blouse, motifs)** – identity, craftsmanship
- ✓ **Wolf (Dacian Draco)** – ancient protector spirit; courage and independence
- ✓ **Mountains & forests** – nature, mystery, national pride
- ✓ **Folk patterns (geometric, floral)** – community, heritage
- ✓ **Churches & wooden monasteries** – faith, tradition



#### Colours & Their Meanings

- ✓ Yellow – prosperity, harvest, sun
- ✓ Red – passion, life, love
- ✓ Blue – freedom, sky, peace

### Bulgaria – Symbols of Culture & Heritage



#### Symbols & Objects

- ✓ **Traditional houses (Revival style)** – hospitality, family
- ✓ **Roses** – Bulgaria is a major rose oil producer; beauty, national pride
- ✓ **Martenitsa (red & white threads)** – health, springtime, renewal
- ✓ **Gadulka (folk instrument)** – music, celebration
- ✓ **Sheep & shepherd symbols** – rural life, care, continuity



#### Colours & Their Meanings

- ✓ White – peace, purity
- ✓ Red – strength, vitality

- ✓ Green – nature, rebirth

### Turkey – Symbols of Culture & Heritage



#### Symbols & Objects

- ✓ **Domes & minarets** – architectural pride, faith
- ✓ **Crescent and star** – historical and spiritual significance
- ✓ **Nazar (evil eye bead)** – protection, warding off negativity
- ✓ **Caravan and rugs** – trade, journey, craftsmanship
- ✓ **Tulip or tea glass** – hospitality, daily life



#### Colours & Their Meanings

- ✓ White – openness, purity
- ✓ Blue – protection, good luck (evil eye)
- ✓ Red – passion, strength, national pride

### Greece – Symbols of Culture & Heritage



#### Symbols & Objects

- ✓ **Anchor or sea motifs** – seafaring history, connection to the islands
- ✓ **Olive branch/tree** – peace, wisdom, longevity
- ✓ **Amphorae & geometric designs** – knowledge, tradition
- ✓ **Owl (symbol of Athena)** – wisdom, logic
- ✓ **Trident, gods & mythological creatures** – heritage, imagination



#### Colours & Their Meanings

- ✓ White – clarity, peace, faith
- ✓ Blue – sea, sky, freedom
- ✓ Gold – light, divinity