

# LESSON PLAN



## MIXED MEDIA STORYTELLING

### DESCRIPTION

This mixed media collage lesson will take inspiration from the bold use of color, collage and paper marbling techniques used by picture book author and illustrator Ezra Jack Keats

### STUDENT AGE/GRADE LEVEL

Grades 6-12

### OBJECTIVE

Upon completing the lesson, students will be able to identify different art making materials in artworks, explain how color, shape and line can impact the overall composition and cohesiveness of an artwork, and create their own mixed media collage.

### RELATED EXHIBITION/TOUR/ARTIST

The Snowy Day and the Art of Ezra Jack Keats



Ezra Jack Keats, *After breakfast he put on his snowsuit and ran outside.* 1962

# LESSON PLAN

## MIXED MEDIA STORYTELLING



**Ezra Jack Keats, *They were getting close to home when Ziggy finally dropped the rope.* 1981**

Final illustration for *Regards to the Man in the Moon*, Paint, collage, and marbled paper on board

NOTES: Ezra Jack Keats is acknowledged as one of the first picture book author/illustrators to feature realistic, multi-cultural characters and environments. This began with the inclusion of a young African-American boy as the hero of his book, *The Snowy Day* in 1962. This decision opened the door for other authors and illustrators to include more diversity in picture books and continues to inspire and influence authors to this day.

- 11x17 inch watercolor paper
- Assorted colored pencils
- Assorted liquid watercolors
- Found images to cut and use for collage
- Shaving cream (for marbling)
- Squeegee (for removing shaving cream from the image)
- Glue (for adhering images for collage)

# LESSON PLAN

## MIXED MEDIA STORYTELLING



### PROCEDURE

**DISCUSSION:** Present students with Keats' images from *The Snowy Day* and *Regards to the Man in the Moon* (either through reproductions or in the gallery at the museum) and lead a discussion about what the students observe. Use [Visual Thinking Strategies](#) technique if desired. Allow students enough time to look at and process the images before beginning discussion. Explain to students that although the paintings were eventually used to illustrate a book, they begin as artworks just like the other paintings, photographs, prints and sculptures that can be found in art museums. Use the [Whole Book Approach](#) method to reinforce this idea.

As you discuss each piece, take note of the shapes and colors used. Ask students to identify the various materials used in creating the piece. Discuss the use of color and how the page is filled with paint and collage elements to create a cohesive work. Ask the students to guess how the artist applied the paint to achieve the finished product. Encourage the students to speculate on what is happening in each painting and create their own stories and explanations. Discuss the narrative taking place in the images by noting the characters, setting, and action. Point out that the characters in the books are children just like them, who go on everyday adventures in their homes, their neighborhoods and their dreams. End the discussion by asking students to think about an imaginary adventure they'd like to go on. Have the students write down their thoughts and descriptions of their imaginary (or realistic) worlds before moving onto the studio.

**STUDIO:** Explain to the students that they are going to take their descriptions of imaginary places and illustrate them as if they were creating an image for their own picture book. Begin by creating a marbled paper background on the 11x17 paper, using the shaving cream marbling technique. Squeeze out a large amount of shaving cream onto a tray and use a flat edged tool to level out the shaving cream. Place several dots of liquid watercolors on the surface of the shaving cream. Then, using a stick (or back of a paintbrush) drag the watercolor around to create a colorful, marbled pattern. At this point, place the paper on top of the shaving cream and lightly apply pressure. Finish by using a squeegee (or flat edged tool) to remove the shaving cream, which will leave behind the swirls of liquid watercolor paint. Have each student attempt the technique

# LESSON PLAN



## MIXED MEDIA STORYTELLING

several times to achieve the desired results. Ask them to consider their stories and what kind of world they're creating as they choose their paint. Next, have students use magazines and other collage materials to cut out and place on top of their marbled paper. Students can even draw their own images and cut them out to place on the marbled paper. Remind students to think about how the colors, shapes and images they're using impact the story of their work. Once the collage and marbling is complete students can go back into their works with colored pencil to enhance the collaged pieces, provide emphasis to parts of the marbled page and to add new objects to the piece. Upon completion, the works could be hung up so students could discuss each piece, noting the materials, technique and narrative elements of each work.

### EXAMPLE



**Education Dept, *Invasion! Look out above you!* . 2013**

Liquid watercolor marbling, colored pencil and collage elements on watercolor paper.

The scene depicts a extraterrestrial invasion witnessed by two fishermen.



# LESSON PLAN

## MIXED MEDIA STORYTELLING



### STANDARDS

#### OHIO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION VISUAL ARTS STANDARDS

	Perceiving/Knowing	Producing/Performing	Responding/Reflecting
Grade 6	1PE	2PR	2RE
Grade 7	5PE	6PR	7RE
Grade 8	1PE	2PR	6RE
HS Beginning	1PE	1PR	3RE
HS Intermediate	4PE	4PR	1RE
HS Accelerated	4PE	3PR	3RE
HS Advanced	1PE	6PR	4RE

Building on the idea of picture books as art objects, supplement this lesson with another project based around an every-day object such as clothing, product or advertising. This would help to further emphasize that artwork is not only designed to hang in a museum or gallery but is common in all aspects of life.

Visual Thinking Strategies: <http://vtshome.org>

Whole Book Approach:

<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6716593.html#Whole%20Book%20Approach%20Guide>

Paper Marbling Example: <http://www.wikihow.com/Paint-Marbled-Paper-Using-Shaving-Cream>

Ezra Jack Keats: <http://www.ezra-jack-keats.org/>

[http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/degrum/public\\_html/keats/howto.html](http://www.lib.usm.edu/legacy/degrum/public_html/keats/howto.html)