

Bamboo Art

(Grade 3 Print: “Deer, Bat and Pine” by Toyohiko)

Curriculum Connection: Geography, language and science

Art Concept: Expand awareness of line characteristics and continuous pattern networks (EALR grade 3 # 1.1.1, 1.1.2, 1.2)

Grade: 3 and up

Materials:

Real bamboo or pictures of bamboo

White construction paper (9x12 inches)

Colored construction paper (12x18 inches)

Watercolor paint sets with brush

Water bowls

Newspaper

Paper towels

Glue

Procedure:

1. Show students bamboo and explain it grows in many parts of Japan and other Asian countries.
2. Discuss Japanese and Chinese ink brush-painting techniques used during this period. Explain how most of their written language was generally expressed using painted symbols on rice paper instead of written letters on paper from trees, such as we do (Refer to Chinese Calendar and Chinese Horoscope as a

- reference, ahead). Thus, from an early age on, they are able to paint in great detail and very proficiently.
3. Just as we are instructed to hold our pencils in a certain manner to write appropriately, they are instructed to hold their paintbrushes in particular positions to create greater detail and accuracy. Explain that students will need to learn how to hold their paintbrushes in order to create the best looking bamboo.
 3. Begin by having students pick up their brushes with their palm facing away from them, but toward brush, putting all four fingers lightly on “top” of paintbrush handle and their thumb “underneath” handle. Have students check each other on proper hold. Explain that this grip will be used to produce the stalk of the bamboo.
 4. Now have students hold the paintbrush as they would if writing a letter; with handle resting comfortably between thumb base and base of forefinger and with the tip held firmly between tip of thumb and forefinger. This will be how students should hold paintbrush to create leaves of bamboo.
 5. Now make sure each student has newspaper to cover desk, a watercolor paint set, one piece of white construction paper, bowl of water and paper towel to clean brush tip.
 6. Demonstrate again the proper grip for the stalk of the bamboo. Have students practice rolling tip of brush in paint and then placing on bottom of newspaper, then running tip “up” the paper, lifting it off every couple of inches. Should resemble a sequence of dashes from bottom to top of paper. Paint should not be solid line

as tip reaches top of paper, and stalk should appear to “run” off the paper.

7. After practicing several times, students should feel comfortable to now paint bamboo stalks on construction paper. Remind them to fill the paper so that it will appear symmetrical.
8. Next have students roll tips of brushes in one color and then into a second color. Then holding brush in the grip needed for bamboo leaves, place tip of brush in space between stalks, paint 3 very thin branches. Dip paint brush again, then flick tip up to create a sort of upside down exclamation point on end of branch. Students should make about three leaves per branch per side.
9. Normally artists sign their names in the lower right corner of their artwork and it’s written left to right. Asian language is written bottom to top. So have students sign their names bottom to top in black paint.
10. Glue art to large construction paper, trimming edges where needed so that it “frames” the art.