

Quilt Unit Plan

An Honors Creative Project

by

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Origin and Background of the Unit

In July of 1990, I was a cast member of the musical Quilters by Molly Newman and Barbara Damashek. The musical tells the story of the women who settled the western United States during the 1800's. Quilts were not only a necessity of life, but their construction was also a form of entertainment, socialization, and distraction.

What I found most enjoyable about performing in this show were the people who approached me following each performance to share their own quilt stories. These experiences brought to my attention the history of quilts in my own family. I looked around my parents' home, saw the many quilts they own, and began to learn about the history of these beautiful articles.

The musical whetted my interest in quilts, and learning about my own quilt ancestry further piqued my curiosity. I decided that I would like to begin teaching myself how to make quilts. Since then, I have constantly been working on one quilt or another. I have successfully completed three quilts, while I have one quilt top that is ready to be quilted, and numerous patches of various sizes, colors, and patterns waiting to be used in future projects.

Quilt Unit Project

I enjoyed making the quilt for my project. In fact, the piecing and quilting were the easiest part of the project. Designing the unit plan to include the class project of constructing a quilt was the most challenging part.

The quilt itself was made of forty-eight squares -- twenty-four were pieced and twenty-four were solid material squares (also called shadow blocks). It was the size that an actual class's quilt would be. It was also filled with authentic errors. I chose a simple pattern, the Windmill, to allow for the ability levels of students. Also, a simple pattern goes together faster than a more intricate pattern.

I believe this unit plan would be useful with students of all abilities. Often, students who excel at traditional, written work find the tables turned when they attempt hands-on activities. On the other hand, lower-ability students are often more capable of working with their hands because the tasks do not require reading and other, more academic, skills.

I gave the finished quilt to my parents as a thank you for raising me and putting me through college, both were challenging tasks.

Unit Introduction

Grade Level: 6 - 8

The Canada Geese Quilt by Natalie Kinsey-Warnock

Time Span: 2.5 class periods

This book will be the unit introduction.

Day One:

The teacher will introduce the story by explaining to the students the unit that they are beginning. After a brief explanation, students will be assigned to read the first three chapters of The Canada Geese Quilt.

Day Two:

The class will discuss the events of the story in the first three chapters. They will then continue to read the remaining three chapters aloud either by alternate members of the class or by the teacher. What is not read during this class period will be assigned as homework for the following class period.

Day Three:

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 1.

Students will take a brief, oral quiz and grade them in class. The class will then copy from the board or overhead the quilt unit vocabulary list (see following page).

Quiz Questions (1 point each):

1. What sorts of things did the little girl like to do?
2. How did the grandmother spend her time?
3. What is the father's job?
4. What is the mother's big surprise?
5. What does the grandmother want to make for the mother's surprise?
6. Who does she (the grandmother) ask to help her with a design?
7. What terrible event happens to the grandmother?

8. How does the granddaughter help her?

Quilting Vocabulary

Time Span: 1.5 class periods

Day One:

Each student will be assigned his/her own word to look up using dictionaries, encyclopedias, and quilting books provided by the teacher.

Day Two:

The teacher will distribute a photocopy of the vocabulary worksheet (see page following vocabulary list) to each student. An overhead sheet of the same drawing will be put up to be filled in as a class. Each student will be required to respond in order to fill in the blanks with the vocabulary words. The students will, at the same time, share their definitions with the class. A vocabulary quiz (worth 25 points) will follow in three class periods. The vocabulary list and worksheet will be due with a packet of completed work upon the class's completion of the unit.

Vocabulary:

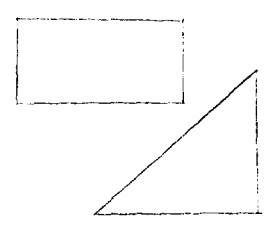
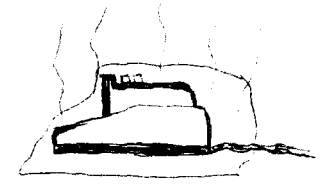
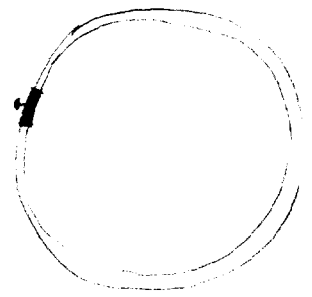
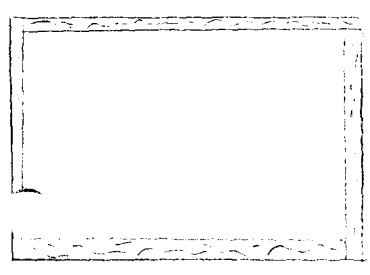
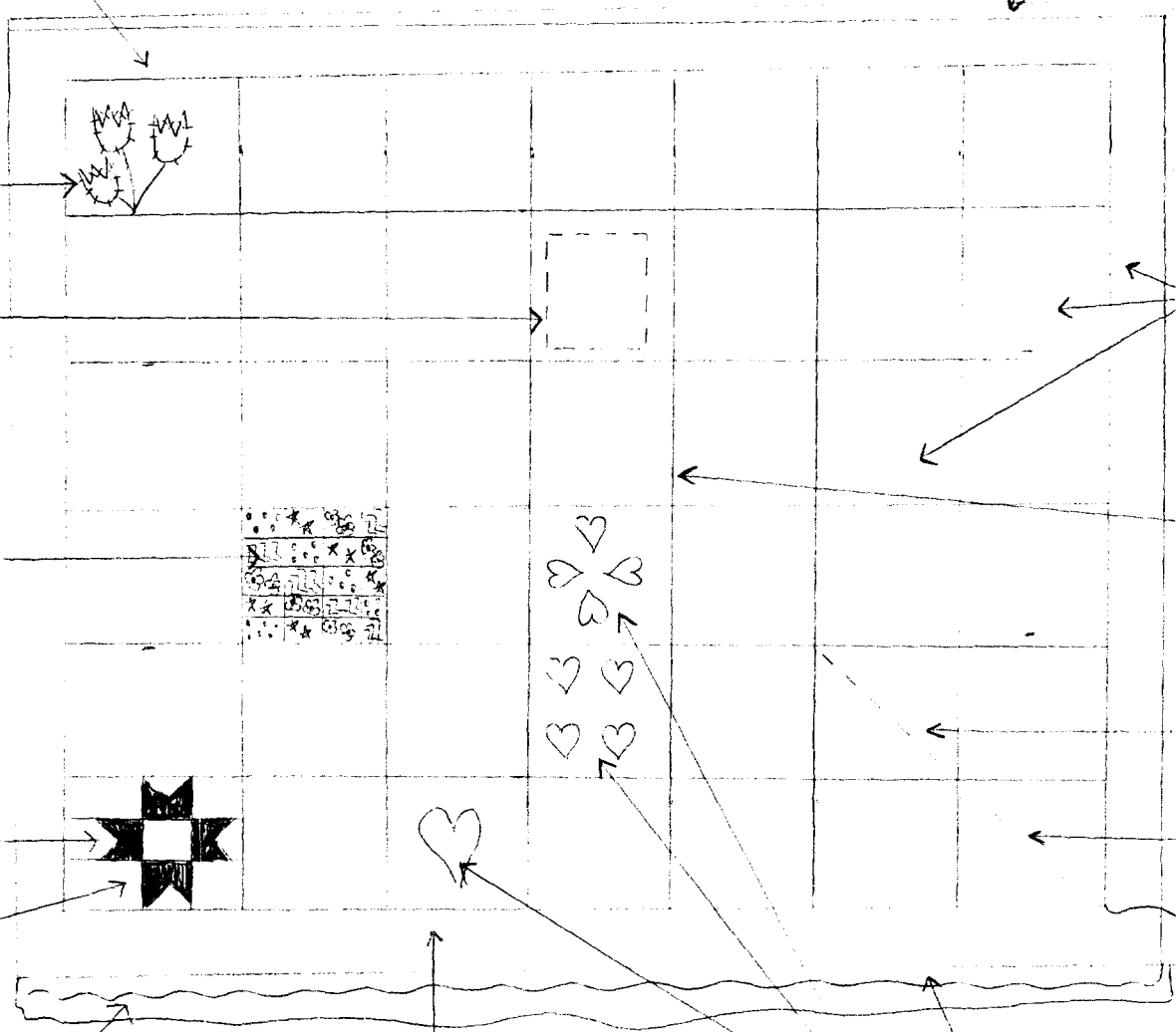
1. applique - a design made by cutting shapes of one or more fabrics and applying them to the surface of another (McClun, 21)
2. backing - the fabric which forms the bottom layer of the quilt (McClun, 21)
3. basting stitches - temporary stitches used to hold fabric in place (McClun, 20)
4. batting - the filling that goes between the quilt top and the backing; provides thickness and warmth (McClun, 21)
5. binding - a narrow strip of fabric used to enclose the raw edges of the quilt top, batting, and backing (McClun, 21)
6. border - fabric surrounding the central section of the quilt top (McClun, 21)
7. calico - any of several kinds of cotton cloth, usually printed (Guralnik, 201)
8. fabric - material (Ryan, 644)
9. frame - four strips of wood are held together with

clamps; each corner forms a perfect right angle; set the frame on sawhorses or 4 straight-back chairs when quilting (Ryan, 645)

10. hoop - any of the rings of whalebone, steel, etc. forming the framework of a hoop (Guralnik, 675)
11. motif - a repeated figure in a design (Guralnik, 929)
12. muslin - any of various strong, often sheer cotton cloths of plain weave (Guralnik, 939)
13. patchwork - pieces of fabric are sewn together to form a geometric design, usually in block form (Ryan, 643)
14. piecing - pieces of cut cloth sewn together to produce a pattern, usually in the form of a block (McClun, 24)
15. press - to iron (Guralnik, 1125)
16. quilting - several layers of material are held together with stitches in an all-over design, the procedure is called quilting (Ryan, 645)
17. quilt top - the top layer of the quilt; it can be pieced, appliqued, or a combination of the two (McClun, 24)
18. running stitch - a short, even stitch used for hand piecing (McClun, 20)
19. seam - the stitched junction of two pieces of fabric, right sides together (McClun, 24)
20. seam allowance - the distance between the cut edge of the fabrics and the stitching line (McClun, 24)
21. selvage - the finished edges of a woven fabric on the lengthwise threads (McClun, 24)
22. set/setting - the arrangement in which individual blocks are sewn together (McClun, 24)
23. template - an individual model of a part of a pattern block made from template plastic (McClun, 24)
24. thimble - a small cap of metal, plastic, etc. worn as a protection on the finger that pushes the needle in sewing (Guralnik, 1478)
25. thread - a light, fine, string-like length of material . . . used in sewing (Guralnik, 1481)

Interdisciplinary Application: Home Economics - fabrics

Vocabulary Worksheet



Reaction Journal

Following the completion of the vocabulary worksheet, the teacher will introduce the Reaction Journal. The journal will be written in class as the teacher allows time. Students will be given ten minutes (approximately) to record their reaction to the various activities. They will be encouraged to be honest in their reactions.

The students will also be encouraged to write outside of class if they like. They will be given eight mandatory entry-writing times by the teacher.

The journal will be included in the packet that is due at the unit's completion. A minimum entry will be half a page. Each entry is worth five points (credit/no credit). Five points extra credit will be given for every three entries beyond the required eight.

The journals will also be used by the teacher as a self- and unit-evaluation.

Interviews

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 2.

Students will be required to locate and interview an adult who has had an experience with quilts. Experience, in this case, might mean a person who makes quilts, whose mother or other relative(s) makes quilts, or who has encountered the construction of quilts sometime in his/her life. The adult may be a relative (mother, uncle, grandmother, cousin, etc.) or not (teacher, minister, friend, etc.).

The student must pre-submit his/her questions to the teacher (minimum of six questions worth 2 points each) and must turn in a one-and-a-half page report of the interview. The report should include at least two direct quotations and is due with the packet upon the unit's completion.

The teacher will suggest people who are known to have had an experience with quilts. The students, however, will first be encouraged to check at home and other places because the number of people who know about quilts can be surprising.

Interdisciplinary Application: History
Speech Communication

Guest Speaker

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 3.

Time Span: 1 class period

The teacher will invite a guest speaker to share his/her involvement with quilts. The speaker will be asked to visit after the students have begun the quilt's construction so that they might ask questions derived from their personal experiences.

Interdisciplinary Applications: History
Home Economics - fabrics

Choosing Quilt Pattern(s)

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 4.

Time Span: 1 class period

The teacher will pre-select a simple pattern and provide numerous types of material for the students to mix and match to suit each individual's taste.

Students will spend one class period selecting, tracing, and cutting material. They will receive instruction on safe pinning, sewing, and cutting. They will receive plastic bags in which they will collect their equipment at the end of the periods and store their projects until the following class period.

Interdisciplinary Application: Home Economics - fabrics
Math (Geometry)

Piecing Quilt Squares

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 5.

Time Span: approximately 5 class periods

Students will assemble their cut-out pieces to form the individual quilt squares. Those who finish early in the week will be encouraged to complete another square if they wish, to help others who are having difficulties, and/or to write in their journals or work on their interview reports.

Throughout this phase, students will be observed by the teacher to determine how they use their class time. This will be the major factor in determining their class participation grade. Each student will be given five points per day for participation. Disruptive behavior, misuse of class time, etc. will cause the points to be reduced.

Interdisciplinary Application: Home Economics - fabrics
Math (Geometry)

Quilting Squares

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 6.

Time Span: approximately 5 class periods

Students will use a hoop (if sewing by hand) or a sewing machine to quilt the top, batting, and backing together.

Again, students are encouraged to use their time constructively and are evaluated as to whether or not they do so.

Interdisciplinary Application: Home Economics - fabrics
Math (Geometry)

Setting Quilt Squares

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 7.

Time Span: approximately 3 class period

Students will arrange their quilt squares to suit themselves (arguments to be settled by the teacher). The teacher will then assist the students in assembling the squares as the students wanted.

The finished quilt will be displayed in the classroom until it is possibly raffled off to raise money for the class, a charity, etc.

Interdisciplinary Application: Home Economics - fabrics

Quilt Exhibit

REACTION JOURNAL ENTRY 8.

Time Span: 1 class period

The teacher will try to locate an exhibit of quilts at a location in or near the school's town. The students will travel to the quilt exhibit to learn more about the variety of the coverlets.

If no current quilt display is located by the teacher, he/she will arrange for community donations for a display in the school.

In either case, each student will choose one quilt, sketch it on a sheet of paper, and attach a minimum of a one-page description of why the student liked, disliked, was interested in, etc. this quilt. Students will also be given specific observation questions to answer while on the trip.

This assignment will be turned in at the completion of the unit and will count as a Reaction Journal entry.

Student Observations:

1. How many appliqued quilts did you see? Give the title of one.
2. Give the title of the oldest quilt you saw.
3. What pattern did you see most often? Sketch it.
4. Were the majority of the quilts sewn by hand or by machine? How many hand-sewn quilts did you see? Give the title of one.

Interdisciplinary Application: History
Home Economics - fabrics

Evaluation

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Possible</u>
<u>The Canada Geese Quilt Quiz</u>	8
Vocabulary Quiz	25
Vocabulary List	✓
Vocabulary Worksheet (credit/no credit)	5
Reaction Journal (credit/no credit)	5/entry
Interview Questions	12
Interview Report	30
Class Participation	5/day
Total (approximately)	<hr/> 200

Works Cited

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