

STEP BACK IN TIME: ART MEETS HISTORY

Students will create a commemorative art piece honoring an historic figure by bringing their story to life via Mockups.

Subjects Covered **History, Social Studies, Art**
 National Standards **See the Standards chart.**

MAIN CONCEPTS

Students will study how historic figures have been portrayed in different art forms and how art plays a role in how people are remembered. After researching the life of an historic figure they admire, students will step into the role of artist and create a shoe design that represent the historic hero’s personality, accomplishments and experiences. Students will evaluate their own design solutions and choose their favorite to bring to life on a pair of Mockups shoes. They will share the reasoning behind their shoe design elements in an artist’s statement that they present to their class.

MATERIALS

What you need...	Notes
Mockups	1 pair per student
Shoe template	3 copies per student
Pencils, crayons, paints, markers, scissors, glue and anything that lets you leave your mark	Enough for all to share
Erasers	1 per student
Internet access for resource links	For teacher
Access to library or computers (to research historic figures)	1 computer per student (or share use of a few)

TOTAL TIME: 3 HOURS

A note on timing: This lesson is divided into five sections so that teachers can present one section a day for a full school week. If you prefer, it also may be divided into two longer sessions. (In this case, begin session two at “Elaborate.”)

PROCEDURES

Engage (30 Minutes)

1. As a class, brainstorm examples of iconic and commemorative art. Write them on the board.
2. Watch the “Art Lives” slideshow. Invite the students to answer these questions for each artwork in the slideshow:
 - *What materials were used to make the art?*
 - *Why was this medium used?*
 - *What feelings, ideas and/or overall mood are expressed in the artwork?*
 - *What do you think were the artist’s main motivations for creating this piece?*
 - *If it’s a public art piece, what does its location reflect about the person being remembered?*
3. Explain to students that in this lesson they will have a chance to become an artist who will represent an historic figure. Show them a pair of Mockups and explain that after completing the next steps they will be using a pair of Mockups as a “canvas” where they will celebrate the life of a famous person from history.

Examine (30 minutes)

4. Ask students to choose an historic figure they admire. Offer suggestions from a time period that you’re studying in class.
5. Give the students time to research their subject in the library or computer lab. (Alternatively, this part of the lesson can be given as homework.) Ask students to come up with a list of at least 10 facts (more is better) about their historic figure’s life and how they could represent each fact with a design element. For example, one way Chief Sealth could be represented is by an island because he was born on one, Harriet Tubman could be represented by a broken chain because she helped free slaves.

Explain (30 minutes)

6. Provide each student with three blank shoe templates and art supplies.
7. Have students begin to sketch their designs onto the templates, working to make the shoes tell the story of the person they have chosen. Remind them to experiment with shapes, patterns and colors, as well as different mediums, to convey their messages.
8. Once they have completed two or three designs they are ready for the next step.

Elaborate (60 minutes)

9. Pass out the Mockups; one pair per student.
10. Have students select their favorite design among their template drafts.
11. **Important:** It's much easier to erase pencil than ink or paint, so before students begin drawing or painting, ask them to use a pencil to sketch an outline of their favorite design onto the Mockups. After completing a pencil outline, they can begin rendering their design in crayons, paint or markers.
12. After completing their design. Ask students to write a brief "artist's statement" about their finished artwork, including what inspired them to choose their subject and elaborating on at least three design elements that serve to tell the person's story.

Evaluate (30 minutes)

13. Invite students to present their completed Mockups to the class, and ask them to read aloud their artist's statement.
14. Invite the class to ask each presenter questions about their design choices.
15. In closing, ask students to reflect on what they think their historic figure might say if they had a chance to see their commemorative Mockups.

EXTENSION: Footwear Challenge

Ask students to research what kinds of shoes people from their historical figure's time actually wore. What were they made out of? Who made them? Do the students think these shoes would have been comfortable to wear—why or why not? How many pairs of shoes was it common to own in that time period and why? What are the biggest differences between shoes of that era and today?

ASSESSMENT

Check to see if the student's research yielded at least 10 design elements. Do the elements accurately reflect the person being portrayed? Review their artist's statement to make sure it includes why they were inspired as well as an explanation of at least three design elements. Evaluate public speaking skills, and participation in posing thoughtful questions about their classmates' artwork.