

BEYOND WALLS

CLASSROOM TO THE STREETS



EXPLORING IDENTITY THROUGH SYMBOLISM

UNIT GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

ABOUT THIS UNIT GUIDE

THIS DOCUMENT IS MEANT TO ACT AS A UNIT GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND INSTRUCTORS. THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS IN DEPTH BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIT TOPICS, QUESTIONS AND POINTERS TO HELP GUIDE CLASS DISCUSSIONS, LINKS TO VIDEOS AND POWERPOINTS TO SHOW IN CLASS, AND LESSON WORKSHEETS, AMONG OTHER THINGS.

THIS UNIT GUIDE CONTAINS INDIVIDUAL LESSON PLANS THAT CAN BE TAUGHT EITHER IN THE CONTEXT OF, OR INDEPENDENTLY FROM, THE UNIT GUIDE.

YOU CAN FIND ALL RELATED DOCUMENTS TO THIS UNIT, THE INDIVIDUAL LESSON PLANS, AND THE VIRTUAL STUDENT WORKSHEETS ON THE [BEYOND WALLS](#) WEBPAGE.

AUTHORED BY DANIELLE BELL, EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT MANAGER



MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS

VISUAL ARTS

CREATING

- GENERATE AND CONCEPTUALIZE ARTISTIC IDEAS AND WORK. (5-6.V.Cr.01)
- ORGANIZE AND DEVELOP ARTISTIC IDEAS AND WORK. (5-6.V.Cr.02)
- REFINE AND COMPLETE ARTISTIC WORK. (5-6.V.Cr.03.A-B)

PRESENTING

- SELECT, ANALYZE AND INTERPRET ARTISTIC WORK FOR PRESENTATION. (5-6.V.P.04)
- DEVELOP AND REFINE ARTISTIC TECHNIQUES AND WORK FOR PRESENTATION. (5-6.V.P.05)
- CONVEY MEANING THROUGH THE PRESENTATION OF ARTISTIC WORK. (5-6.V.P.06)

RESPONDING

- PERCEIVE AND ANALYZE ARTISTIC WORK. (5-6.V.R.07)
- INTERPRET INTENT AND MEANING IN ARTISTIC WORK. (5-6.V.R.08)
- APPLY CRITERIA TO EVALUATE ARTISTIC WORK. EVALUATE A PIECE OF ARTWORK BASED ON A PREDETERMINED LIST OF CRITERIA. (5-6.V.R.09)

CONNECTING

- SYNTHESIZE AND RELATE KNOWLEDGE AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCES TO MAKE ART. DESCRIBE AND DEMONSTRATE PERSONAL ARTISTIC STYLE AND PREFERENCES. (5-6.V.Co.10)
- RELATE ARTISTIC IDEAS AND WORKS TO SOCIETAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS TO DEEPEN UNDERSTANDING. (5-6.M.Co.11)

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF WRITING

- PRODUCE CLEAR AND COHERENT WRITING IN WHICH THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANIZATION, AND STYLE ARE APPROPRIATE TO TASK, PURPOSE, AND AUDIENCE. (W.6.4)

COMPREHENSION AND COLLABORATION

- ENGAGE EFFECTIVELY IN A RANGE OF COLLABORATIVE DISCUSSIONS (ONE-ON-ONE, IN GROUPS, AND TEACHER-LED) WITH DIVERSE PARTNERS ON GRADE 6 TOPICS, TEXTS, AND ISSUES, BUILDING ON OTHERS' IDEAS AND EXPRESSING THEIR OWN CLEARLY. (SL.6.1)
- INTERPRET INFORMATION PRESENTED IN DIVERSE MEDIA AND FORMATS (E.G., VISUALLY, QUANTITATIVELY, ORALLY) AND EXPLAIN HOW IT CONTRIBUTES TO A TOPIC, TEXT, OR ISSUE UNDER STUDY. (SL.6.2)

KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE

- USE KNOWLEDGE OF LANGUAGE AND ITS CONVENTIONS WHEN WRITING, SPEAKING, READING, OR LISTENING. (L.6.3)

*EXTENSIONS FOR **ELA** CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS ARE LISTED BELOW*



LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. DEFINE SYMBOLS AND SYMBOLISM
2. IDENTIFY SYMBOLS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES
3. DISCUSS THE MULTIPLE FACETS THAT MAKE UP ONE'S IDENTITY
4. EXPRESS THEIR IDENTITY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE THROUGH ART.

VOCABULARY

1. SYMBOL
2. SYMBOLISM

MATERIALS

PAPER
COLORED PENCILS, MARKERS, OR CRAYONS



LESSON PLAN PROCEDURES

INTRODUCTION

TO START THIS LESSON, GAUGE THE CLASSROOM ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF **PUERTO RICO**. SEE IF ANY STUDENTS HAVE HEARD ABOUT, BEEN TO, ARE FROM, OR KNOW ANYONE FROM THE ISLAND.

FOR THIS LESSON, STUDENTS WILL LEARN ABOUT THE POWER OF ART TO EXPRESS ONESELF AND CULTURE. STUDENTS WILL LEARN THIS BY EXAMINING THE PUBLIC ART IN **PUERTO RICO**, SPECIFICALLY THE ART OF **PUERTO RICAN ARTIST, DAVID ZAYAS**. STUDENTS WILL THEN APPLY THIS SAME LENS TO THEMSELVES, REFLECTING ON THE THINGS THAT MAKE UP THEIR OWN IDENTITY AND CREATING A WORK OF ART THAT ILLUSTRATES THESE THINGS USING SYMBOLISM.

BRIEF HISTORY OF PUERTO RICO



"SAN JUAN PUERTO RICO" BY DAMEETCH IS MARKED WITH CC BY 2.0.

PUERTO RICO IS A SMALL COUNTRY (ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF THE STATE OF **CONNECTICUT**) MADE UP OF SEVEN ISLANDS LOCATED BETWEEN THE **ATLANTIC OCEAN** AND THE **CARIBBEAN SEA**. THE ISLAND IS WORLD-RENOUNDED FOR ITS PRISTINE BEACHES, LUSH TROPICAL FORESTS, AND STUNNING **16TH CENTURY SPANISH COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE**. WHILE THESE FEATURES ARE WELL DOCUMENTED IN TOURISM MAGAZINES AND ADVERTISING, LESS ATTENTION IS DIRECTED TOWARDS THE DEPTH AND SCOPE OF THE ISLAND'S VIBRANT ARTS AND CULTURE SCENE. NURTURED BY **500 YEARS** OF MULTICULTURALISM, THE ARTS ARE INGRAINED IN **PUERTO RICO'S DNA**. ART DEFINES THEIR **PUERTO RICAN IDENTITY**, OR THEIR **PUERTORRIQUEÑIDAD** (PUERTO RICAN-NESS).

PUERTO RICAN ART IS THE RESULT OF A UNIQUE BLEND OF THE ISLAND'S TROPICAL SURROUNDINGS, IT'S HISTORY, EVENTS, AND BIPOC CULTURES. FOR EXAMPLE, CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS LANDED ON THE ISLAND IN 1493 AND IT REMAINED COLONIZED BY THE SPANISH UNTIL 1898. HOWEVER, LONG BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF COLUMBUS, PUERTO RICO AND OTHER CARIBBEAN ISLANDS WERE INHABITED BY THE INDIGENOUS TAINO PEOPLE. UPON COLONIZATION, THE TAINO PEOPLE, AS WELL AS IMPORTED AFRICANS, WORKED AS SLAVES ON SUGAR CANE PLANATIONS. THROUGH THIS COLONIZATION, A MINGLING OF PEOPLE AND CLASSES OCCURRED WHICH, OVERTIME, RESULTED IN THE RICH, BLENDED PUERTO RICAN CULTURE WE SEE TODAY.

WHILE THERE IS NO SINGULAR DEFINITION OF PUERTO RICAN IDENTITY, IF YOU ASK THE LOCALS, THEY WILL AGREE THAT THE MOST MEANINGFUL DESCRIPTIONS RELY ON WHAT THEY CALL **NUESTRO ARTE Y CULTURA (OUR ARTS AND CULTURE).**



"PUERTO RICO (Mix PHOTOS)" BY R9 STUDIOS FL (THANKS TO ALL THE FANS!!!) IS MARKED WITH CC BY 2.0.

AT THIS POINT, ASK STUDENTS TO CONSIDER THEIR OWN IDENTITY. WHAT IDEAS, THINGS, CULTURES, ETC. DO THEY IDENTIFY WITH? ON A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER, HAVE STUDENTS WRITE DOWN THREE TO FIVE THINGS THAT MAKE UP THEIR IDENTITY. AFTERWARDS, HAVE THE CLASS STAND UP AND MOVE AROUND THE ROOM, STOPPING AT EVERY DESK AND READING WHAT THEIR CLASSMATES HAVE WRITTEN. STUDENTS WILL MAKE A TALLY MARK NEXT TO EACH ITEM THEY ALSO IDENTIFY WITH. IN THIS EXERCISE, STUDENTS WILL LEARN WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON WITH THEIR CLASSMATES, CREATING A SENSE OF COMMUNITY. TELL STUDENTS TO KEEP THEIR LIST AS THEY WILL USE IT IN A LATER ACTIVITY.

SAN JUAN AND SANTURCE



"PUERTO RICO (SAN JUAN)" BY R9 STUDIOS FL (THANKS TO ALL THE FANS!!!) IS MARKED WITH CC BY 2.0.

WHILE ART PERMEATES ALL CORNERS OF PUERTO RICO, THE LARGEST CONCENTRATION OF BOTH ART AND WORLD-RENOWNED ARTISTS CAN BE FOUND IN THE CAPITAL, SAN JUAN. SAN JUAN HAS EMERGED AS THE EPICENTER OF ART IN THE CARIBBEAN, SPECIFICALLY THE SANTURCE DISTRICT. THIS ARTSY DISTRICT IS THE RESULT OF A COMMUNITY OF ARTISTS COMING TOGETHER YEAR AFTER YEAR TO "FIX-UP" A FORGOTTEN NEIGHBORHOOD. OVER TIME, THE COMMUNITY OF ARTISTS GREW INTO A MOVEMENT MOTIVATED BY THE IDEA THAT ART CAN CHANGE AND HEAL BUILDINGS AS WELL AS PEOPLE.

AT THIS POINT, SHOW STUDENTS THE BELOW VIDEO WHICH DISCUSSES THE PREVALENCE OF PUBLIC ART/STREET ART IN PUERTO RICO. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE TEACHER TO NOTE AT THIS POINT THAT THE TERMS “PUBLIC ART” AND “STREET ART” CAN BE USED INTERCHANGEABLY. WHILE WATCHING THE VIDEO, STUDENTS SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ART THEY SEE.

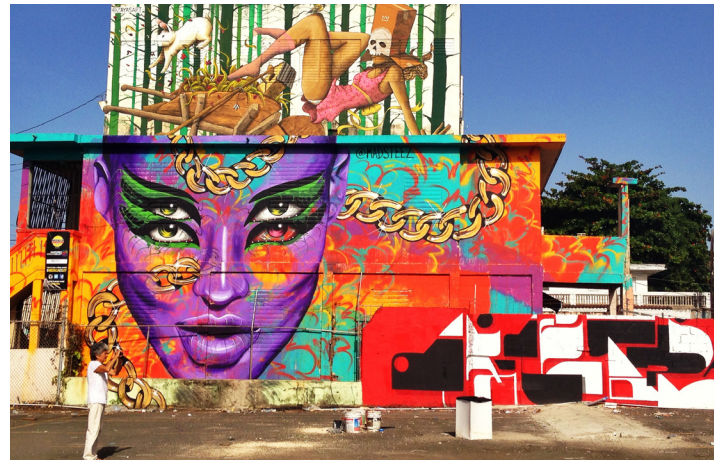
[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/gPCd1eHxUg](https://youtu.be/gPCd1eHxUg)

AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO, DISCUSS AS A CLASS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. WHAT DIFFERENT TYPES OF ART DID YOU NOTICE IN THE VIDEO?
2. WAS THERE ONE ARTWORK IN PARTICULAR YOU SAW THAT YOU LIKED OR THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU THE MOST?
3. IN THE VIDEO, THE SCULPTOR TALKS ABOUT THERE BEING A LOT OF “PUBLIC ART” IN PUERTO RICO. WHAT DO YOU THINK “PUBLIC ART” MEANS?
4. WHAT DID THE ARTIST SAY THEIR MOSAIC IS ABOUT?

ACCORDING TO THE MOSAIC ARTIST IN THE VIDEO, “THE ART IN PUERTO RICO IS IT’S BIGGEST EXPORT.” FROM THIS QUOTE, IT IS CLEAR THAT ART PLAYS A PROMINENT ROLE IN PUERTO RICAN LIFE. WE CAN ALSO SEE FROM THE MOSAIC ARTIST, AS WELL AS THE VIDEO AS A WHOLE, THAT REPRESENTATION OF PUERTO RICAN IDENTITY IS IMPORTANT AS WELL AND IS REPRESENTED THROUGH AN ELABORATE SYSTEM OF SYMBOLS.

THIS IMAGE WAS ORIGINALLY POSTED TO FLICKR BY JUAN CRISTOBAL ZULUETA AT [HTTPS://FLICKR.COM/PHOTOS/28312366@N08/14962697132](https://flickr.com/photos/28312366@N08/14962697132) (ARCHIVE). IT WAS REVIEWED ON 7 JULY 2019 BY FLICKREVIEWR 2 AND WAS CONFIRMED TO BE LICENSED UNDER THE TERMS OF THE CC-BY-2.0.



DAVID ZAYAS AND SYMBOLISM



DAVID ZAYAS IS A PUERTO RICAN ARTIST THAT HAS CREATED MURALS IN SPAIN, BRAZIL, MEXICO, PARAGUAY, AND THE USA. YOU CAN FIND MANY OF ZAYAS’ MURALS IN THE SANTRUCE NEIGHBORHOOD. IN HIS ART, ZAYAS HEAVILY INCORPORATES SYMBOLISM AS A TOOL TO TELL STORIES ABOUT THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND THE JOURNEY FROM LIFE TO DEATH.

SYMBOLISM IS THE IDEA THAT THINGS REPRESENT OTHER THINGS WHEN PRESENTED IN CERTAIN CONTEXTS. USUALLY, MEANING IS GIVEN TO THESE THINGS BY THE VIEWER WHO BRINGS WITH THEM PRECONCEIVED NOTIONS ABOUT THE WORLD FILTERED THROUGH THEIR EXPERIENCE AND CULTURE.

© 2022 BEYOND WALLS, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

AT THIS POINT, HAVE STUDENTS THINK OF THE COLOR YELLOW. ASK THEM WHAT EMOTION OR FEELING THEY ASSOCIATE WITH YELLOW. HAPPINESS? SADNESS? ANGER? TELL THEM THAT BY ASSIGNING AN EMOTION OR FEELING TO A COLOR, THEY HAVE MADE THAT COLOR INTO A SYMBOL. NEXT, SHOW STUDENTS AN ASSORTMENT OF SYMBOLS (EX: STOP SIGN, SKULL, AMERICAN FLAG, TREE, ETC.) AND ASK THEM WHAT THEY THINK OF WHEN THEY SEE EACH.

NEXT, SHOW STUDENTS THE IMAGE OF ZAYAS' MURAL IN LOWELL, MA CALLED "OTRO RUMBO", WHICH TRANSLATES TO "ANOTHER COURSE". HAVE STUDENTS FILL OUT THE LESSON FORM (LOCATED BELOW AND ON THE BEYOND WALLS WEBPAGE) AS THEY EXAMINE THE MURAL.

HAVE STUDENTS ANSWER THE FIRST TWO QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON FORM, THEN SHOW STUDENTS THE FOLLOWING VIDEO OF DAVID ZAYAS SPEAKING ABOUT HIS MURAL:

[HTTPS://VIMEO.COM/667399393](https://vimeo.com/667399393)

HAVE THE STUDENTS ANSWER THE LAST TWO QUESTIONS ON THE LESSON FORM IN GROUPS.

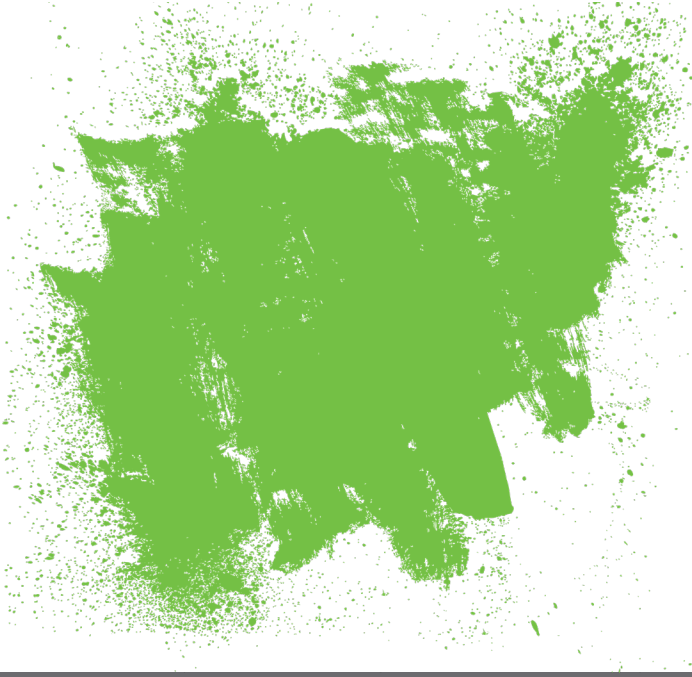
AFTER THE STUDENTS HAVE COMPLETED THE FORM, DISCUSS EVERYONES RESPONSES AS A CLASS.

EXTENSION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS W.6.2

HAVE STUDENTS WRITE A NARRATIVE ESSAY ABOUT A TIME IN THEIR LIFE WHEN THEY WERE FACED WITH AN OBSTACLE THAT THEY HAD TO 'FIGHT' TO OVERCOME. FOR THIS ESSAY, STUDENTS WILL COME UP WITH A SINGLE SYMBOL THAT REPRESENTS EVERY ITEM ON THE LIST THEY CREATED EARLIER. STUDENTS MUST WRITE ABOUT THEIR OBSTACLE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE OBJECT/THING THEY CHOSE AS THEIR SYMBOL FOR THEIR IDENTITY. TO HELP, REMIND STUDENTS OF ZAYAS' MURAL AND HOW THE ROOSTER REPRESENTS THE FIGHTING SPIRIT OF THE GIRL.

ART ACTIVITY

THROUGH THE ART OF DAVID ZAYAS, THE VIEWER LEARNS NOT ONLY ABOUT PUERTO RICAN CULTURE, BUT THE DIFFERENT ASPECTS THAT MAKE UP THE IDENTITY OF THE ARTIST, INCLUDING WHAT THINGS ARE IMPORTANT TO HIM. FROM THIS, WE SEE THAT ART CAN BE USED AS A TOOL TO LEARN ABOUT CULTURES AND PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF OURSELVES, AND TO EXPRESS OURSELVES TO THE WORLD.



FOR THIS ACTIVITY, STUDENTS WILL USE THE LIST THEY CREATED EARLIER IN THIS LESSON ABOUT THE FACETS OF THEIR IDENTITY. STUDENTS WILL CREATE A WORK OF ART THAT ILLUSTRATES WHO THEY ARE USING BOTH THE MURAL BY DAVID ZAYAS AND THEIR LIST AS AN AID.

FOR THIS ARTWORK, STUDENTS MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

1. INCLUDE A PORTRAIT OF THEMSELVES IN THEIR COMPOSITION
2. INCORPORATE THREE TO FIVE SYMBOLS IN THEIR COMPOSITION
3. THE SYMBOLS MUST REPRESENT EITHER INDIVIDUAL ITEMS OR THE GENERAL THEME OF THEIR LIST

ONCE THE ARTWORK IS COMPLETE, STUDENTS MUST WRITE A ONE PAGE ESSAY DESCRIBING THEIR ARTWORK AND THE SYMBOLS THEY INCLUDED. STUDENTS MUST ALSO PRESENT THEIR WORK OF ART TO THE CLASS AND TALK ABOUT ITS MEANING, INCLUDING THE MEANING OF THE SYMBOLS.



DIFFERENTIATION



THIS LESSON PLAN ACCOMMODATES EACH OF THE FOUR LEARNING STYLES: VISUAL, AUDITORY, READING AND WRITING, AND KINESTHETIC.

THIS LESSON PLAN ENGAGES VISUAL LEARNERS BY HAVING THEM ENGAGE WITH AND ANALYZE ART EXAMPLES AND BY WATCHING LESSON-RELATED VIDEOS.

THIS LESSON PLAN ENGAGES AUDITORY LEARNERS BY HAVING THEM LISTEN TO THE LESSON LECTURE AND BY WATCHING LESSON-RELATED VIDEOS.

THIS LESSON PLAN ENGAGES READING AND WRITING LEARNERS BY HAVING THEM FILL OUT THE LESSON FORM THAT ACCOMPANIES THIS LESSON AND BY WRITING A SHORT STORY IN THE EXTENSION ACTIVITY.

THIS LESSON PLAN ENGAGES KINESTHETIC LEARNERS BY PROVIDING A TACTILE EXPERIENCE IN WHICH STUDENTS GET TO CREATE THEIR OWN WORK OF ART AND/OR WRITE A SHORT STORY IN THE EXTENSION ACTIVITY.

ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT IS CONDUCTED REGULARLY THROUGHOUT THIS LESSON THROUGH GROUP DISCUSSIONS.

FOR ALTERNATIVES, THE LINK BELOW WILL TAKE YOU TO A DOCUMENT WITH A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ASSESSMENT OPTIONS. THOUGH THEY ARE GEARED MORE TOWARDS VISUAL ARTS, THEY CAN BE ALTERED OR USED FOR OTHER CURRICULUMS, SUCH AS ELA AND SCIENCE/ TECHNOLOGY.

[HTTPS://UPLOADS.THEARTOFEDUCATION.EDU/2016/03/ULTIMATE-ASSESSMENT-GUIDE.PDF](https://uploads.theartofeducation.edu/2016/03/ultimate-assessment-guide.pdf)

EXIT SLIPS ARE ALSO A GREAT STRATEGY FOR ASSESSMENT AT THE END OF A LESSON. FOR THESE SLIPS, HAVE STUDENTS RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. WRITE ONE THING YOU LEARNED TODAY
2. WRITE ONE QUESTION YOU HAVE ABOUT TODAY'S LESSON
3. DID YOU ENJOY THE LESSON ACTIVITIES?

REFERENCES

[HTTPS://WWW.DISCOVERPUERTORICO.COM/ARTICLE/
STREET-ART-TOUR-SANTURCE](https://www.discoverpuertorico.com/article/street-art-tour-santurce)

[HTTPS://ARTSANDCULTURE.GOOGLE.COM/
STORY/PUERTO-RICO-THE-SUM-OF-ITS-ARTS/
ZGVxCWN880Y5YW?HL=EN](https://artsandculture.google.com/story/puerto-rico-the-sum-of-its-arts/ZGVxCWN880Y5YW?hl=en)

[HTTPS://WWW.BBC.COM/TRAVEL/ARTICLE/20140616-
WHERE-COLONIAL-MEETS-CONTROVERSIAL](https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20140616-where-colonial-meets-controversial)

CONTACT Us

THIS LESSON PLAN WAS CREATED AS A TOOL TO HELP TEACHERS INOCROPRATE STREET ART INTO THEIR CURRICULUM. IF THERE IS ANYTHING YOU LIKED OR WISH TO SEE ADDED, EMAIL US AT ADMIN@BEYOND-WALLS.ORG

VISIT Us AT



@BEYONDWALLSLYNN



@BEYONDWALLSLYNN

OR AT OUR WEBSITE BEYONDWALLS.ORG



LESSON FORM

NAME:

DATE:

1. WHAT IS THE FIRST THING YOU NOTICE ABOUT THIS MURAL? WHY?
2. LOOK CLOSELY AT THE DAVID ZAYAS MURAL. LIST THREE TO FIVE THINGS IN THE MURAL THAT YOU THINK MIGHT BE SYMBOLS.
3. WHAT DOES THE ROOSTER SYMBOLIZE IN ZAYAS' WORK?
4. YOU'VE IDENTIFIED THINGS THAT ZAYAS INCLUDED IN HIS MURAL. BASED ON THE OVERALL MESSAGE OF THE MURAL, WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY COULD SYMBOLIZE?