

Fabulous Float-Making

Self-Expression & Celebrating Community

Educator Guide by Teaching Artist Adriana Chavez



www.neonmuseum.org

Grades

4-5

Time Frame

2-3 hours

Vocabulary

- Parade float
- Design
- 3-dimensional
- Sculpture
- Community
- Flamingo
- Wildlife
- Habitat

Materials

- Shoebox w/ lid
- Scissors
- Glue & tape
- Hot glue gun (w/ adult supervision)
- Recyclables, found, & craft materials*

*Materials idea list found in lesson plan

Lesson Objective

Students will be introduced to Raul Rodriguez, designer of the Flamingo Hotel sign in 1976. They will learn about his background as a Rose Parade float designer. Students will also learn fun facts about flamingo birds and the Flamingo Wildlife Habitat. Inspired by the Flamingo Hotel sign and Raul Rodriguez, students will construct a mini-float on top of shoe boxes. Students will be challenged to create “show-stopper” designs that celebrate our community and ourselves, using accessible materials found at home.

What’s Included?

In this lesson plan you will find the lesson procedure, NVACS standards for Visual Arts (grades 4-5), lesson extensions, and other helpful resources.

About Teaching Artist Adriana Chavez

Adriana Chavez is an actor-creator, interdisciplinary performer, director, educator and image maker. She has performed theatre and interdisciplinary works in Japan, New York City, San Francisco, Lenox, MA and Las Vegas. Her visual art has been exhibited at the Barrick Museum of Art, the Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery, Mesa Gallery, and the Charleston Heights Arts Center.



For more lesson plans and educator resources please visit www.neonmuseum.org.

Introduction

1. Talk with students about floats. Ask questions like:
 - What is a float?
 - Where do you see them?
 - Have you been to a parade before?
 - What do you see and hear at a parade?
 - What makes them so exciting?

Parade Examples: Tournament of Roses, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, NYC Puerto Rican parade, Pride, Beatty Days, etc.

2. Introduce students to Raul Rodriguez.
 - Fun fact: He worked for Disney and created top award-winning floats for the Tournament of Roses.
 - Ask students, "What catches your eye when you look at his floats?"
3. Talk about the Flamingo Hotel. Ask students:
 - Have you ever been there?
 - What makes the sign eye-catching?
 - What might be the connections in choosing a float designer to design a hotel sign?
4. Discuss the inspiration of Raul's sign, flamingos.
 - Show photos or videos of flamingos online and share a few fun facts about flamingos (found in resources section).
 - Discuss the Flamingo Wildlife Habitat and ask students if they have been before.

Building Fabulous Floats

1. Gather materials and give students shoe boxes.
2. Students should brainstorm themes for their floats. Some ideas are:
 - Aquatic, flamingos, jungle, floral, party time, superheroes, celebrities, pop culture
3. Wrap or paint shoe boxes. Wrapping the box with paper and tape may be faster.
4. Attach the lid with staples, glue, tape, or hot glue (with supervision). Orientation will change the design and shape of the float.
 - Horizontally along the long side of the base
 - Vertically along the short side of base to provide a higher backdrop
 - Floating up above like a canopy. You can use straws, skewers, wooden dowels, or toilet paper rolls to mount it.
5. Have students decorate their floats. Make sure they consider the following:
 - How will you WOW your audience?
 - Is there a story you want to tell with your float?
 - What do you want your audience to feel when they see your float?
 - Who would ride on the top of your float?

Clean-up & Parade

1. Make sure to leave ample time for clean-up.
2. Students can share their parade floats with the class, or if time allows your class can have a mini parade around the room while you play music.

Lesson Extensions

1. Prior to making their 3-D float, have students create a sketch on paper of what they want their design to look like.
2. Students can write an artist statement about their parade float explaining their theme and design choices.
3. School-wide parade: Expand your mini-parade to the school grounds. Communication with the administrative staff before the facilitation of the class is needed. This way a good amount of spectators can be notified of the event and be present to witness the mini parade. Other classes could participate in float-making to make the event even bigger!

Artists to Look At

- Raul Rodriguez, designer of the 1976 Flamingo sign (in Neon Museum collection)
<https://www.neonmuseum.org/the-collection/blog/the-flamingo-finds-its-feathers>

Materials List (Ideas)

- Tissue paper
- Construction paper
- Beads
- Feathers
- Glitter
- Stickers
- Popsicle Sticks
- Pipe Cleaners
- Toys
- Straws
- Egg cartons
- Toilet paper rolls
- Magazines
- Photos
- Flowers
- Fabric
- Balloons
- Play-doh
- Dolls
- Scrapbook paper
- Ribbon
- String or twine (to pull the float)
- Cardboard
- Old decorations
- Felt

NV Academic Content Standards: 4th Grade

Visual Arts:

- **VA:Cr2.4.1** Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches.
- **VA:Re.7.4.2** Analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages.
- **VA:Cn10.4.1** Create works of art that reflect community cultural traditions.

NV Academic Content Standards: 5th Grade

Visual Arts:

- **VA:Cr2.5.1** Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.
- **Va:Cr2.5.3** Identify, describe, and visually document places and/or objects of personal significance.
- **Va:Re7.5.2** Identify and analyze cultural associations suggested by visual imagery.
- **Va:Re8.5.1** Interpret art by analyzing characteristics of form and structure, contextual information, subject matter, visual elements, and use of media to identify ideas and mood conveyed.

Resources

- 5 Fun Facts about Flamingos:
<https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/the-feed/5-fun-facts-about-flamingos>
- The Flamingo Wildlife Habitat, Flamingo Hotel Las Vegas
https://www.caesars.com/flamingo-las-vegas/things-to-do/wildlife-habitat?utm_campaign=GMB&utm_source=google&utm_medium=local&utm_term=Wildlife%20Habitat&utm_content=attractions
- UNLV Neon Survey (2002):
http://gaming.unlv.edu/v_museum/neon_survey/
- Vintage Las Vegas: <http://vintagelasvegas.com/>
- Online Nevada Encyclopedia:
<http://www.onlinenevada.org/>
- Neon Museum Online Guide:
<https://www.neonmuseum.org/education/resources/educator-resources/online-guide>