

Plains Pictorial Art: Narrative Style

Create Your Own Narrative Art

(Recommended for Grades 6–12)

Teacher Activity Instructions:

- Have students think about a real story from their lives that they would like to tell in the narrative art tradition.
- Encourage them to apply His Fight's artistic tradition to their artwork using techniques such as drawing an identifying characteristic (a unique hairstyle, specific clothing, etc.), drawing images in profile, using larger figures for the most important scene, and using symbols to show action or motion. These techniques will illustrate students' understanding of the Plains narrative art tradition.
- Have students use colored pencils, crayons, or paint to bring their characters to life.
- Remember, students should not replicate Lakota symbols or stories; instead, have them focus on a story that is important to them today.



Painted muslin by His Fight (Hunkpapa Lakota) depicting a horse raid against the Apsáalooke (Crow), ca. 1880. National Museum of the American Indian. (6/7932)

Materials Needed:

- Paper, colored pencils, crayons, or paint and paintbrushes
- Pencil sharpeners
- Tape
- Example of His Fight's Horse Raiding Story

Extension Ideas:

- Group Activity! Decide on one story the class shares. Have each student draw a scene on a page and have the students tape their scenes together, according to the format that His Fight uses on the painted muslin. Start in the upper right corner for the first scene and tape from right to left on the top and left to right on the bottom.
- Have students share their stories. Can the students “read” each other's stories?
- See if students can guess who drew the story. Like His Fight, do the artists identify themselves somehow in the drawing?
- Have students create narrative artwork and make an audio recording of the story. Images and audio can be combined to create an individual slide show or short film.



Painted muslin by His Fight (Hunkpapa Lakota) depicting a horse raid against the Apsáalooke (Crow), ca. 1880. South Dakota or North Dakota. National Museum of the American Indian. (6/7932)