

Lesson: The Lucayans & Columbus' arrival



Lavar Munroe. *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea* (2011), Digital rendering. 34 x 25 (5), 34 x 10 (1). Images courtesy of The Dawn Davies Collection

**Adaptable to all age groups*

Overview:

This lesson invites students to revisit the narrative of the Lucayans and Christopher Columbus through visual depictions in artists' work. Through group discussion and individual projects students will explore storytelling in visual art and become familiar with conceptual and physical contrast: fiction and fact, dark and light, reality and perception.

Objectives:

Students will:

- Recognise contrast as a principle of design.
- Identify visual storytelling techniques in artists' work eg. symbolism, repetition etc.
- Understand the impact perception can have on accounts of historical events.
- Create an individual work that communicates their perception of the Lucayan/Columbus story.
- Reflect on the work they have created.

Content:

- **Contrast** - refers to the arrangement of opposite elements (light vs. dark colors, rough vs. smooth textures, large vs. small shapes, etc.) in a piece so as to create visual interest, excitement and drama.
- **Lucayans** - the original inhabitants of the Bahamas archipelago before the arrival of Europeans. They were a branch of the Taínos who inhabited most of the Caribbean islands.
- **Christopher Columbus** - an Italian coloniser who sailed across the Atlantic Ocean in 1492, hoping to find a route to India (in order to trade for spices). He made a total of four trips to the Caribbean and South America during the years 1492-1504.
- **Symbolism** - the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities
- **Storytelling** - is the social and cultural activity of sharing stories, often with improvisation, theatrics, or embellishment.

Life sized drawing

Age group: 5-7 years

Discussion:

Students discuss what they have learned about the Lucayans and pinpoint those things that made their culture unique. Students are asked to imagine that they are a Lucayan child, think about how they would look, what they would wear and what their life would be like. Students identify light and dark colours and use them to create contrast in their work.

Activity:

Students draw a quick sketch of a Lucayan child engaging in an activity they would typically do on an ordinary day. Students then stand in front of a large sheet of paper and pose in a way that is similar to the sketch they made of themselves. Using a projector to cast silhouettes, instructors guide other students in tracing the outlines. Students use their first sketch as a guide to add details to the large drawing. They are encouraged to use colour to create contrast in their work.

Materials:

- Paper cut to life size
- Crayons
- Markers
- Coloured paper scraps
- Yarn
- Glue

**Remember to be flexible with your students and allow them to use different materials based on their needs. Encourage them to use materials in unconventional ways.*

Lucayan Canoe

Age group: 8-11 years

Discussion:

Students discuss what they have learned about the Lucayans and the items they made and used on a daily basis. They are asked to imagine the designs that the Lucayans used to decorate their canoes. Students identify light and dark colours and use them to create contrast in their work.

Activity:

Students are divided into groups of three. They work together to design, build and decorate a life-sized canoe. Projects begin with a collaborative sketch and a selection of colours for the decorations.

Materials:

- Cardboard
- Tape
- White paint
- Acrylic paint in various colours
- Paintbrushes
- Pencil
- Markers

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Story Colour Collage

Age group: 12-14 years and 15-18 years

Discussion:

Students discuss the arrival of Columbus to the Bahamas and his subsequent interactions with the Lucayans. Students view the work of Lavar Munroe, which depicts his interpretation of Columbus' arrival and how it relates to modern day Bahamian society. They analyse the images used and the events and opinions communicated.

Activity:

Students sketch their individual depictions of Columbus' arrival to The Bahamas and interactions with the Lucayans. They are encouraged to incorporate symbols in their work. Students use the sketch as a guide to create a collage.

Materials:

- Coloured paper
- Bristol board (or cardboard)

- Glue
- Paintbrushes
- Scissors
- X-acto knife
- Pastels (or crayons)

**Remember to be flexible with your students and allow them to use different materials based on their needs. Encourage them to use materials in unconventional ways.*



Digital adaptation: Allow students to create digital collages using Pixlr E. Lavar Munroe himself has used digital collaging in his artwork. You can see this in his piece *The Migrant* (2008).

Links to other resources:

- [Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Lavar Munroe deconstructs "The Arrival"](#)
 - [Lavar Munroe's website](#)
 - [Pixlr E - FREE Online Graphic Editing Software](#)
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