

**NAME:** Sarah Bergman  
**LESSON TITLE:** The Family Quilt (The Bergman Quilt)  
**GRADE LEVEL:** 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

**PA. STANDARDS FOR THE ARTS AND HUMANITIES:**

- 9.1.3 E Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through creation of works in the arts.
- 9.2.3 D Analyze a work of art from its historical and cultural perspectives.
- 9.3.3 A Recognize critical processes used in the examination of works in the arts and humanities.
- 9.3.3 F Know how to recognize and identify similar and different characteristics among works in the arts (e.g., Amish and Hawaiian quilts, Navaho weavings and Kente cloth from West Africa).

**OBJECTIVES:**

**KNOWLEDGE:** The students learn that Faith Ringgold is an African-American painter (b. 1930) best known for her “Story Quilts” which are made of fabric and paints.

**SKILL:** The students will learn how to paint images on fabric triangles and piece them together to make their own “family story quilt.”

**ATTITUDE:** The students will learn to appreciate their peers’ cultural diversity and family history. Also, they will learn about similarities between their classmates and the artwork they produce.

**PREPARE AHEAD:** Reproductions of 3-4 Faith Ringgold works of art; demonstration supplies; motivation and closure discussions; website material ([www.faithringgold.com](http://www.faithringgold.com)).

**PRIOR KNOWLEDGE:** Basic vocabulary (quilt, family portrait); prior use of tempera paint; understanding basic quilt patterns (triangle into squares).

**MOTIVATION:**

**QUESTIONS LEADING STUDENTS TO DISCOVERY:** Does anyone have a quilt at home? Is it colorful? Are there pictures on it? Of what? Faith Ringgold is an artist who makes quilts and tells stories of people from her culture. She is an African-American artist from New York. Can anyone point to New York on the map? Think

about your family's heritage/culture. That means are you Italian? Spanish? What makes you special? What makes you the same as someone else in our class? The students will look at examples of Faith Ringgold's quilts.

DEMONSTRATION: I will draw my immediate family members on the construction paper to demonstrate. Then using tempera, I will paint them onto the fabric triangles. After our fabric dries overnight, we are going to glue the pieces in place onto the canvas. I am going to display them separately and tell the students that there will be a special surprise at the end of the lesson. Demonstrate how they can all be put together to make a "class quilt."

VISUAL AIDS: "Camille's Husband's Birthday Quilt" (1988)

"Bitter Nest #2: Harlem Renaissance Party" (1988)

"The Purple Quilt" (1986)

"The Dinner Quilt" (1986)

\*\*None of

these serigraphs are a part of our exhibition, reproductions can be found at

[www.faithringgold.com](http://www.faithringgold.com).

REFERENCE TO ART HISTORY: Faith Ringgold, heritage quilts, cultural diversity.

EXEMPLARS: Show examples of past students' work (last year's 1<sup>st</sup> graders);

Show my demonstration example, and then my finished example.

ACTIVITY:

Given construction paper and pencils, the students will sketch their family members, including their pets if they would like. After sketching, they will choose colored triangles of fabric to paint their family members on. They will work on the paintings for 2-3 class periods. After drying, we will hang up the finished swatches of fabric and have closure discussions. Then I will demonstrate how we will assemble the quilt swatches to complete a large, single quilt combining all of our individual histories.

SUPPLIES:

Triangles of colored fabric, colored tempera paints, brushes, cups of water for each table, pencils, practice paper, non-toxic fabric glue, heavy canvas or foam core board for mounting.

VOCABULARY:

Story quilt, Faith Ringgold, family portrait, heritage, special/unique.

**CLOSURE:** Who is Faith Ringgold? What is her heritage? What was Faith trying to say through her combination of fabric and drawing? Why did she make the story quilts? Look at our quilts we made. Do you see how they are all different? What does that mean? (All students have different family heritages.) How is our message similar to Faith's? Now we are going to take our individual quilt squares and connect them together to create one, large quilt. By combining our "class families" together to create a large quilt we will represent our many differences and similarities. It will show our entire class's history and heritage.

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGY:** The motivation and closure discussions will weigh heavily in my assessment of the students' artwork, because the activity is multicultural in nature and I believe it is important that they grasp the idea behind the art-making. The students can talk about their triangles and how they make up a family story quilt, then a classroom quilt. The interdisciplinary activity will also be a good tool of assessing the students' understanding of the concepts pertaining to the quilts.

**CORRELATED LESSONS:** The students will write letters to Faith Ringgold and tell how they studied her story quilts and then made their own, illustrating the diversity of their families. Photos of each quilt will be taken and attached to the letters which will be sent to the artist.

**INTERDISCIPLINARY DOMAINS:** The students will partner-up with a classmate of a different heritage than their own. They will list the similarities and differences (compare/contrast) between their two heritages. They will focus on the cultural aspects that make their families unique/special.

**REFLECTIONS:** This lesson could be modified for older grades by teaching the students how to actually sew the pieces of fabric together to make their quilts. With the school's permission, our class may be able to display our "class quilt" in the lobby of the school so all who enter will be able to see the extent of what the children are doing in the art program at our school.