



## Faith Ringgold: Our Own Story Quilts

**GRADE: 3**      **TIME: 2 or more sessions**

Developed by Karen Stomberg, FNSBSD Art Specialist

### KIT INCLUDES:

- lesson plan with students' worksheets to copy
- Faith Ringgold Video, Last Story Quilt
- Faith Ringgold Biography Board
- Faith Ringgold story quilt reproductions (5)
- vocabulary board
- student story quilt project examples
- books:  
Tar Beach by Faith Ringgold  
Faith Ringgold by Robyn Montana Turner

### MATERIALS:

- For quilt backing and borders:
- 11 x 13" assorted colors construction paper
  - 2 x 4" colored construction paper, assorted - 6 per student
  - 2 x 4" strips wallpaper
  - scissors, glue
- For memory sentence:
- 8 x 1" white strip
  - black writing pen
- For 5 x 8" memory drawing:
- colored and black crayons
  - project worksheets with instructions and template for memory picture



### LESSON DESCRIPTION:

This lesson is designed for you to teach in two sessions. Students study the work of artist, teacher, author and illustrator Faith Ringgold. They create a story quilt with a well-developed drawing based on a personal memory. Finished work includes a written memory sentence and a colorful pieced border.

### VOCABULARY:

pattern  
outline  
background  
illustration  
border

### ART ELEMENTS:

☐ Line  
☒ Shape/Form  
☒ Color  
☐ Value  
☐ Texture  
☒ Space/Perspective

### ART PRINCIPLES:

☒ Pattern  
☒ Rhythm/movement  
☐ Proportion/Scale  
☒ Balance  
☐ Unity  
☐ Emphasis

### CONTENT CONNECTIONS:

literature  
illustration  
story telling  
social studies  
**THEMES:**  
stories

### OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Students will:

- Explore and recognize the work of Faith Ringgold, artist, teacher, author and illustrator.
- Design and create a paper story quilt based on a personal memory.
- Compose a one or two sentence written memory story.
- Draw a crayon illustration with a well-developed background.
- Construct a pieced border pattern with cut paper.

### PREPARE:

1. Copy project worksheets for class.
2. Cut colored paper and wallpaper.
3. Gather all materials.
4. Make a sample.
5. Familiarize yourself with Faith Ringgold.
6. Check out some of Ringgold's books from the library for your students to read.

## ENGAGE AND EXPLORE:

### Explore Faith Ringgold's work, her writing and art.

For your information there is a short biography of Faith Ringgold attached. The enclosed book *Faith Ringgold* by Robyn Montana Turner is an excellent resource for more detail about the story quilts enclosed in this kit. Faith Ringgold maintains a website with access to an interesting project she developed called Racial Questions. Her website address is: <http://www.faithringgold.com/>

**A. Introduce Faith Ringgold to your students.** Show the video The Last Story Quilt and read her first children's book called *Tar Beach*. The book *Tar Beach* is based on the story quilt below.

**B. Show students the reproductions of story quilts by Faith Ringgold.** Each of these quilts have pictures painted on cloth in the center and incorporate Faith Ringgold's stories about the scenes written on white cloth strips. The painting and words are surrounded by pieces of fabric, and then the whole artwork is quilted.

Ask students to look closely at the structure of the quilts because their own quilt project will be similar.

1. *Tar Beach*, 1988

"Faith's friends and family often relaxed together on the roof of their apartment building. They enjoyed playing on this "tar beach" and on the real beach in nearby New Jersey." Robyn Montana Turner

2. *Dancing at the Louvre*, 1991

This quilt is part of a series of story quilts that Faith Ringgold painted about a character she created named Willia Marie Simone. Willia did many things in the story quilts that Faith would have liked to have done herself. In this quilt, Willia and her friend take her three daughters to the Louvre, a historic museum in Paris. They dance in front of the Mona Lisa, a famous painting by Leonardo da Vinci.

3. *The Sunflowers Quilting Bee at Arles*, 1991

This quilt is another in the French series, which "tells the story of Willia at a meeting of an imaginary group called the National Sunflower Quilters Society of America. African-American women who changed history work here on a quilt of sunflowers. Standing in the sunflower field is Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh, who painted many still life images of sunflowers during his lifetime." Robyn Montana Turner

4. *Church Picnic*, 1988

"Church Picnic tells and shows the story of an African-American gathering in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1909. The event takes place during the time of Willia's childhood, a time when southern African-Americans were hopeful about the future. The banner on the ground lets us know that this is a church picnic in the urban south." Robyn Montana Turner

5. *Matisse's Chapel*, 1991

"Ringgold visited a chapel in France designed by Henri Matisse, a well-known French artist. *Matisse's Chapel* became a story quilt based on an imaginary gathering of Faith's own relatives in the chapel. In the story quilt they are known as Willia's family." Robyn Montana Turner

**CREATE:**

NOTE: This project is designed for you to teach in two sessions.

**1. First Session:**

Show student examples. Ask students how the examples are like Faith Ringgold's artwork.

**A. Give students the *Our Own Quilt Project* worksheet.**

Help them to brainstorm ideas for their story quilt using the prompts below.

*Think of a good or pleasant memory to inspire a story and picture for your quilt project. This might be something you did with your family or friends. Here are some ideas: A memory of,*

- things you did over the weekend, last summer or sometime when you traveled,*
- sometime you went camping or fishing or did something special outdoors in the snow,*
- something you do every day or every week, like eat supper together or go to church or a sports event.*

**B. Have students write one or two sentences on worksheet describing their memory.** This is a draft. Edit and write a final copy on white 1 x 8" strip to include on story quilt.

A photograph of a white 1 x 8 inch strip of paper with handwritten text in black ink. The text reads: "My Mom and I ate stroopwafels at the market in Holland, and then looked at clothes. ~.~."

**C. Ask students to use crayons to draw a picture of the memory they wrote about.** NOTE: Students may turn their paper either vertically (tall) or horizontally (wide) to draw. Remind them that their drawing will be cut out and glued to a colored paper background.

Ask: Who was there? How will you draw each person? What was in the background? Have students draw the picture with a pencil first, drawing very lightly. They draw right on the worksheet. Ask them to fill the whole picture with color, paying attention to developing the background. They may outline over their pencil lines with black crayon or black marker to make the details in their crayon-drawing stand out.



## 2. Second Session:

Put the story quilts together and create pieced border.

Students need:



### Materials for quilt backing and borders:

- 11 x 13" assorted colors construction paper
- 2 x 4" colored construction paper, assorted about 6 per student
- 2 x 4" strips wallpaper, or other patterned paper
- scissors, glue
- finished drawing and memory sentences

**A. Glue drawing and sentence strip on background paper.** Students choose an 11 x 13" construction paper background for their quilt. The initial layout and gluing of the drawing and memory sentence strip on the background paper is very important because the pieced border fits around the drawing and sentence strip.

HINT: To help students place their drawings and sentence strips, cut a template-- 9x13" from a piece of construction paper, poster or cardboard. Students can center this template on their background paper and trace it to create a gluing guide for their quilt.

Place drawing and sentence strip in center of background paper and glue carefully and neatly in place. This leaves 2" of background paper all around for the pieced border and an extra ½" of background beyond that as a narrow plain border.

**B. Create pieced border.** Students choose several colors of 2 x 4" strips and wallpaper or other patterned paper.

1. Cut strips into other shapes to fit the border: Strips can be folded then cut in half to create 2 x 2" squares. The squares can then be cut diagonally to create triangles, or in half to create strips. Squares, triangles and strips will all fit in the 2" space directly around the drawing and memory sentence.

2. Place and design border: Have students begin their piecing in the corners if a regular or symmetrical layout is desired. Students should cut and layout entire border before gluing so they can move things around.

3. Glue border pieces to background: Carefully and neatly glue pieces in place, making sure to set them next to the drawing NOT on outer edge of the border paper. A bit of the border paper should show all around outer edge.



**CLOSE:**

**ASSESSMENT:** Group Discussion Prompt: Ask students why they think Faith Ringgold became an artist, illustrator and writer. What inspired her? What steps did she take in her life to become an artist and an art teacher?

Teacher administered assessment tool

DN	OK	UP	Lesson_____ Teacher_____
			Grade_____ Date_____ Number of Students_____
			Using the thumbs up, ok, and down technique, ask your students the following questions and record their answers. (K=knowledge, S=skills, C= creativity, A=attitude, E=engagement)
			1. Can you tell me three things Faith Ringgold is known for?(K)
			2. Can you tell me what a story quilt is? (K)
			3. Did you write a sentence then draw an illustration of a memory with a complete background? (S)
			4. Did you cut and glue pieces of colored paper to create a border? (S)
			5. Did you add your own imaginative touch to your art? (C)
			6. Did you actively listen and follow directions? (A)
			7. Did you do your best during this lesson? (E)

### Teacher self-critique

8. My teaching of this lesson:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
needed improvement							was highly successful		

9. What would I do differently next time?

**ALIGNMENT:**

### Alignment of Standards:

Art: A1, 2,3,7; B2, 4,6; C2a, d, 4; D2, 6.  
Cultural: A, D  
English: A, B, E.  
Geography: E

### Alignment of GLE's:

Reading: R1.8, W1.1, R2.8.  
Math: M5.2.

## CREDITS:

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## Faith Ringgold Biography:



*Dancing at the Louvre, 1991*

Faith Ringgold, began her artistic career more than 35 years ago as a painter. Today, she is best known for her painted story quilts -- art that combines painting, quilted fabric and storytelling. She has exhibited in major museums in the USA, Europe, South America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. She is in the permanent collection of many museums including the Studio Museum in Harlem, the **Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum**, **The Metropolitan Museum of Art**, and **The Museum of Modern Art**. Her first book, *Tar Beach* was a Caldecott Honor Book and winner of the Coretta Scott King Award for Illustration, among numerous other honors. She has written and illustrated eleven children's books. She has received more than 75 awards, fellowships, citations and honors, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Fellowship for painting, two National Endowment for the Arts Awards and seventeen honorary doctorates, one of which is from her alma mater **The City College of New York**.

Faith Ringgold is married to Burdette Ringgold and has two daughters, Michele and Barbara Wallace; and three granddaughters, Faith, Theodora and Martha. She is a professor of art at the **University of California in San Diego, California**.

From the Faith Ringgold website. 2006 <http://www.faithringgold.com/>

## Faith Ringgold: Our Own Story Quilts

We learned about the artist, teacher, author and illustrator Faith Ringgold. The story quilts that Faith Ringgold created from her life; family and imagination inspired our artwork. Ask us about Faith Ringgold.

We thought about memories from our own lives to **illustrate**. First we wrote about our story, and then drew a picture with a **background**. Our story quilt was constructed with a pieced border around the words and picture.

We all have wonderful stories to tell. Remember that even simple things in your life can be important!