

MICHIGAN QUILTS

Note to teachers: This supplement includes a discussion guide, lessons and Michigan Content Standards to use with the “Michigan Time Traveler” page published in the *Lansing State Journal* on November 17, 2004. You may reproduce the pages in this supplement to use with students.

MASTERY (*SOC 1.2 Comprehending the Past; SOC 1.3 Analyzing and Interpreting the Past*)

- Why did people in earlier times make quilts? (Warmth, commemoration of special events)
- What is a quilting bee? (A get-together where everyone worked together to quilt the quilt top to the back.) Why were they important? (Made the work go faster. Social function where news and gossip were exchanged.) Are there things you do today that could be done in a “bee”?
- What can serve as inspirations for quilt patterns? (Nature, occupations, politics, the Bible, household items)
- Who made the oldest quilt in the Michigan Historical Museum’s collection? (Olivia Rich Hall) How far did it travel? (From New York to Michigan) Why might she have decided to bring it with her on her journey to Michigan? (Sentimental reasons/memories; to keep warm) Do you have things in your house that have sentimental value because of who made them, where they come from or memories you associate with them?
- Why do you think that women don’t make quilts like they used to? (Can now be purchased more affordably than making them; lack of time to put into piecing and sewing a quilt) What function do quilts have today? (Decoration, warmth, commemoration)

ACTIVITY ONE: PATTERNS OF THE PAST (*SOC 1.2 Comprehending the Past; SOC 1.3 Analyze and Interpret the Past*)

Discuss: Today quilts provide information for researchers. They show the importance and influence of world or national events. Fabrics tell the story of where the fabric was made, when the fabric might have reached America and when the quilts were made. Patterns often reflected the social, political and religious thinking of a time period. Some express a sense of humor and flight of the imagination. Many traditional quilt patterns have come from these quilts.

Copy and pass out copies of the worksheet on page three. Ask students to try to match the letter of the quilt patterns with their names. Ask students to think about the names of the quilts and which ones are most likely to be patterns created before 1900? Which ones came after 1900?

“Quilt Stories”Answers: A. Goose Tracks; B. Sailboat; C. Bow Tie; D. Pine Tree; E. Electric Fan; F. Flower Basket; G. Maple Leaf; H. Aircraft; I. Geese in Flight; J: Sunflower ; K. Windmill; L: Nine Patch”.

ACTIVITY TWO: DESIGN A QUILT SQUARE (*Arts 2 Creating Visual Arts*)

Materials:

- 6"x 6" piece of paper or felt
- 2"x 2" squares of colored paper, wrapping paper, wallpaper or felt
(Cut on diagonal to form triangles.)
- Scissors
- Glue sticks

Have students glue squares and triangles onto the 6" x 6" paper to make basic nine patch quilt squares. First use the squares and triangles to form patterns like samples I and L on page three. Then have students make new patterns and ask them to name the patterns they create.

ACTIVITY THREE: PATRIOTIC QUILTS (*SOC 1.2 Comprehending the Past; SOC 1.3 Analyzing and Interpreting the Past; ELA 6 Voice; ARTS 3 Analyzing in Context Visual Arts.*)

Stars, stripes and eagles were among the national symbols used in American patriotic quilts during the 19th century. Look at some examples of patriotic quilts found at the National Museum of American History at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/quilts/> What patterns and objects do you see in these quilts? What do the objects stand for? Do some of the patterns repeat? Is there a pattern on the border?

Have students create pictures/quilt squares of national symbols—eagle, flag, stars, etc. Collect the pictures and, as a class, create a patriotic quilt. Decide what the center symbol should be and how the other symbols will be organized. Will some of your symbols repeat? Glue them onto a large sheet of paper or felt, or attach them to a bulletin board. Add a border around the edge of the quilt. Invite other classrooms in to view your patriotic quilt. Have students take turns presenting the stories of your patriotic quilt.

ACTIVITY FOUR: QUILTERS IN THE CLASSROOM (*SOC 1.3 Analyze & Interpret the Past; ELA 5 Literature; ELA 6 Voice*)

Contact local quilter's guild or senior center to locate quilters who would be willing to come into your classroom to talk about the history and basics of quilting. Ask them to bring a variety of examples of quilts and quilt patterns. Perhaps they will be willing to teach your students some simple quilting techniques. Work with your students to prepare a list of questions to ask the quilters. You may want to include the following: How is a quilt made? What are the different techniques? What are the different styles of quilts? How are patterns chosen? How is fabric chosen? How and when did they learn to quilt? What is it like to make a quilt? How do they feel when they give one away? What do their quilts mean to them?

FURTHER EXPLORATIONS:

Books:

Atkins, Jeannine. *A Name on the Quilt; A Story of Remembrance*. Illustrated by Tad Hills. Atheneum, 1999.

Cline-Ransome, Lesa. *Quilt Counting*. Illustrated by James E. Ransome. 2002.

Hines, Anna Grossnickle. *Pieces: A Year in Poems and Quilts*. Greenwillow Books, 2001.

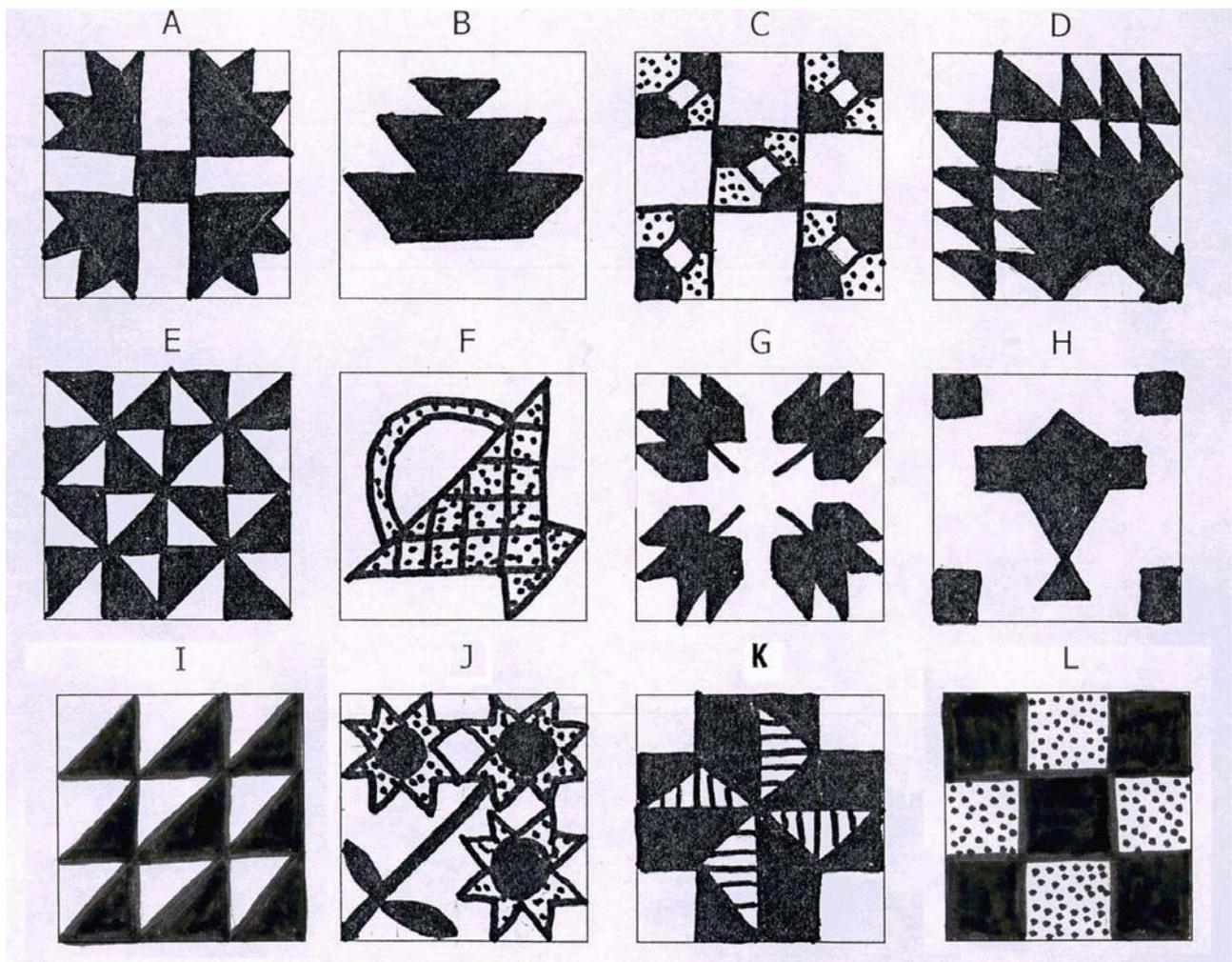
On The Web:

The National Museum of American History: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/quilts/>

Quilting With Children: <http://www.thecraftstudio.com/qwc/index.htm>

PBS America Quilts Website: <http://www.pbs.org/americaquilts/>

PATTERNS OF THE PAST



_____ **Electric Fan**

_____ **Aircraft**

_____ **Sailboat**

_____ **Flower Basket**

_____ **Windmill**

_____ **Pine Tree**

_____ **Maple Leaf**

_____ **Bow Tie**

_____ **Goose Tracks**

_____ **Geese in Flight**

_____ **Sunflower**

_____ **Nine Patch**

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