



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART

ATLANTA

Picture the Dream

The Story of the Civil Rights Movement
through Children's Books

Grades 6-8 Visual Arts TEACHER RESOURCE

Written by Ondrian Reid,
Fulton County Schools

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Pacing: Eight to ten, 45-50-minute class sessions

GRADE: 6-8

LESSON ACTIVITY TITLE: Exploring Metaphor through Collaged Self-Portraits

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- How did Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s ideas direct the civil rights movement in America?
- What visual techniques and strategies did artist Bryan Collier use to illustrate the characteristics and story of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.?

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wanted equality for all people.

PICTURE THE DREAM REFERENCE BOOKS: *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* written by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Bryan Collier; *I, Too, Am America* written by Langston Hughes, illustrated by Bryan Collier

VISUAL ART GSE TO ADDRESS IN ACTIVITY:

VA7.CR.1: Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art.

VA7.CR.2: Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.

VA7.CR.3: Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and/or technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.

VA7.CR.4: Incorporate formal and informal components to create works of art.

VA7.PR.1: Plan, prepare, and present completed works of art.

VA7.RE.1: Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.

VA7.RE.2: Critique personal works of art and the artwork of others, individually and collaboratively, using a variety of approaches.

VA7.RE.3: Engage in the process of art criticism to make meaning and increase visual literacy.

VA7.CN.1: Develop personal artistic voice through connecting uses of art within a variety of cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts.

VA7.CN.2: Develop life skills through the study and production of art.

VA7.CN.3: Utilize a variety of resources to understand how artistic learning extends beyond the walls of the classroom.

MAJOR CONCEPTS AND VOCABULARY:

Major Concepts:

- Martin Luther King Jr. was a leader of the civil rights movement. His work led to major changes for the lives of Black Americans.
- King wanted equal rights for all people regardless of who they are.
- Bryan Collier uses collage, watercolor, and metaphor to design his illustrations.

Vocabulary:

- self-portrait
- contour line
- collage
- metaphor
- craftsmanship

DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING (OPPORTUNITIES FOR SCAFFOLDING AND EXTENSION):

Scaffolds:

- Students may trace the contours from printed photos.
- Students may apply watercolor directly onto printed photos.
- Students may use stencils to trace stars.
- Students may use crafting papers, magazines, and/or construction paper for collaging.

Extensions:

- Students may create self-portraits drawn from direct observation.
- Students may use two separate portraits to aid their narrative.
- Students may render values onto portraits.
- Students may draw or collage narratives in the background.
- Students may research and draw inspiration from additional artists such as Jacob Lawrence, Faith Ringgold, and Benny Andrews.

MATERIALS:

STUDENT SUPPLIES:

- Mirror
- Pencil
- 9" x 12" white paper (two for portraits)
- Permanent thin ink pen
- Tracing paper
- Watercolor pans, brushes
- Large paper (bulletin board, newspaper)
- Tempera paints, brushes
- Final collage surface paper
- Scissors, glue, glue brush
- Stencils, rulers

TEACHER SUPPLIES:

- *Picture the Dream* PPT resource (available at High.org), if needed
- *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.* written by Doreen Rappaport, illustrated by Bryan Collier
- *I, Too, Am America* written by Langston Hughes, illustrated by Bryan Collier
- Examples for each step of art-making process
 - Self-portrait drawings
 - Painted flags
 - Collaged windows
 - Final product



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OPENING

HOOK/INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY:

Carousel brainstorm:

- In small groups, give students three to five minutes to create a list of what they know about the civil rights movement on a single sheet of paper. Each student should use a different color marker, and each group should share their list with the class.

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WORK PERIOD

STUDENT AND TEACHER PROCEDURES:

- Facilitate discussion on the civil rights movement, check for class understanding, and introduce Dr. King's ideas and the book *Martin's Big Words*.
- Read *Martin's Big Words* out loud, or have students take turns reading each page.
 - Link to reading, if needed: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rc39Ka8ut6k>
 - Students should brainstorm a list for three minutes to answer, "What were the 'big words' of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?"
 - Read the Enduring Understanding above to the class and invite discussion.
- Introduce Bryan Collier's art using examples from the exhibition *Picture the Dream* (included in PPT resource).
 - Can you find examples of symbolism or metaphor in Collier's artwork?
 - One example is Collier's use of windows as metaphor. See Illustrator's Note.
- Students should create a list or drawing to answer the question, "What do civil rights look like to me?" OR "How can I incorporate symbolism or metaphor in my artwork?"
- Demonstrate to the students how to create a contour line self-portrait using direct observation.
- Students should practice drawing facial features and using proportions to create one final drawing; trace the drawing to create a second version; outline both with permanent ink; and complete both with watercolor washes.
- Demonstrate for the students procedures and possibilities for painting a large American flag with tempera.
- Students should create large paintings of the American flag and may consider creating additional painted papers based on personal choices, such as family heritage flags or windows.
- Demonstrate for the students cutting and tearing techniques for adding details to collage.
- Students can create mini collages using magazine papers to practice cutting and tearing. Provide problem-solving support with techniques as the students work.
- Review the work of Bryan Collier, connecting how techniques from mini collage can apply to larger self-portraits. Demonstrate how to manipulate painted flags, papers, and portraits to develop a final product.
- Students should continue to design and create their collaged self-portraits by doing the following:
 - Tear the American flag paintings to activate negative space and develop movement. As an extension, they may also consider creating a narrative scene or stained-glass windows in the negative space.
 - Cut out both portraits. Paste one down; tear the other, and collage some parts onto the first portrait.
 - Use drawing media or more collage to build interest for their final composition.

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CLOSING

- Review the Enduring Understanding above, *Martin's Big Words*, and the work of Bryan Collier. Ask students to revisit their brainstorming lists.
- Students should write an artist statement that describes their work and the meanings they have attached to their final product.
- As an extension, have students read and analyze *I, Too, Am America*. Compare and contrast the illustrations and the text between the two books.
 - Link to reading, if needed: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZDbBGKpUw8>
 - Students may create a list, essay, or drawing to answer the question, "What does it mean to be an American?"



Ondrian Reid graduated from the University of Georgia with a BFA in Art Education and earned a MA in Art Education from the University of Florida. She began teaching with Fulton County Schools in 2004 and currently works at Haynes Bridge Middle School. She is a Fine Arts Support Team member working to support middle school art teachers in her county and a Visual Arts Learning Architect. She has a special love for middle school-aged children and enjoys watching her students grow as people and artists during this transitional time in their lives. She aims for her students to be able to connect with their art making on a personal level and gain an understanding that the arts are for all people. As an artist, she works mainly with pen and ink, which competes with her passion for quilting.

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Bryan Collier (American, born 1967), "Remember, if I am stopped, this movement will not be stopped, because God is with this movement." *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 2001, written by Doreen Rappaport, watercolor and cut-paper collage, collection of the artist, XL.2019.31.10.

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Bryan Collier (American, born 1967), "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., cared about all Americans. He cared about people all over the world." *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*, 2001, written by Doreen Rappaport, watercolor and cut-paper collage, CDF Haley Farm, XL.2019.69.1.

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Bryan Collier (American, born 1967), "... the darker brother." *I, Too, Am America*, 2012, written by Langston Hughes, collage on paper, collection of the artist, XL.2019.31.1.