

Tempera Paint: Paper Totem Sculpture

by Kim Fjordbotten

Materials

4-ply Railroad Board 20x26" - one sheet per student
Scissors
Paint brushes
ChromaTemp paint: black, red, blue, green, yellow
Sheets of paper or sketchbook
Pencil or charcoal

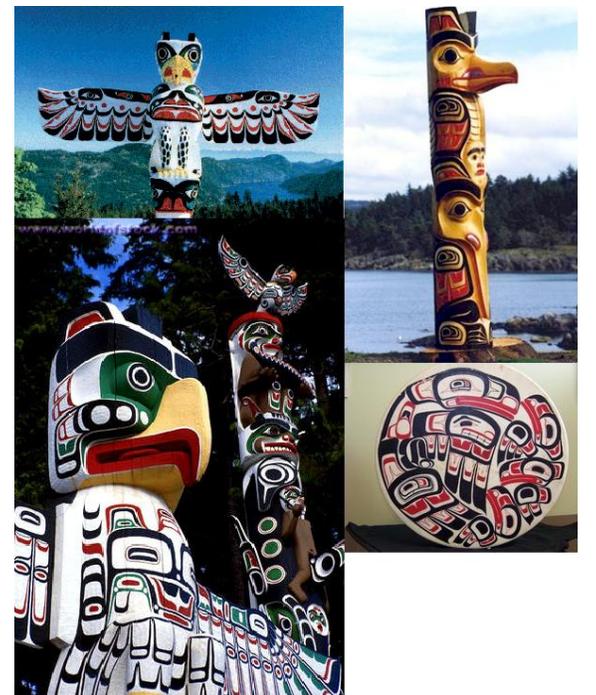
Goal

Students will fold a large sheet to make a 3-sided painting to be assembled into a free-standing sculpture. Individual sculptures may be stacked to create taller totems. The tall totems may be strung together and hung from the ceiling to create an impressive display of pillar-like mobiles. This project incorporates art terminology and a number of art concepts.

Preparation

We recommend students have a sketchbook, notebook or recycled-paper book for collecting ideas, sketching and experimenting.

1. Ask students to research visuals on *Haida Totems*.
2. Discuss the imagery and *symbolism* of power animals in First Nation cultures.
3. Have students collect images of fish, birds, wolf and bears to paste into their sketchbooks and to make drawings based on the images. They should fill at least two pages.
4. Talk about the rounded geometric shapes, fluid designs and bright colours of Haida art.
5. Next, ask students to pick one or two animals to depict. Have them fill two sketchbook pages with animal outlines filled with *geometric forms* and *repeating patterns*.
6. Have students pick one animal to simplify into a stylized motif. They should create a couple versions of this motif and colour them with markers. Now students have good reference material and experience to continue to the next step.

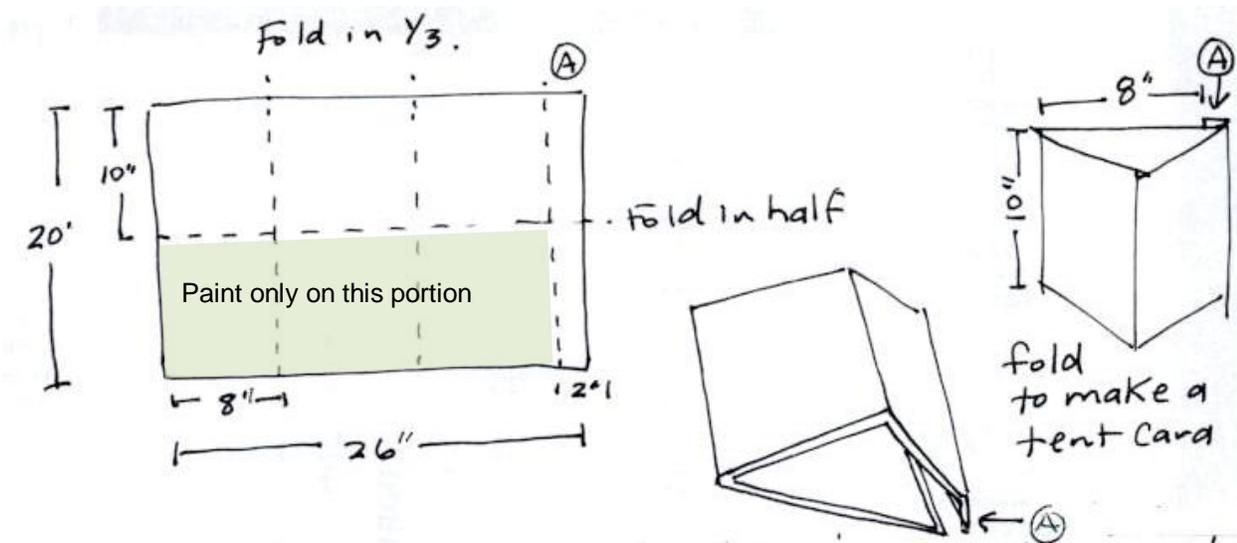


Tempera Paint: Paper Totem Sculpture

by Kim Fjordbotten

Procedure

1. Below is a diagram for folding large sheets of paper to create a free-standing triangle. **Note: it is best to pre-fold but do the drawing and painting first. Then leave the paint to dry before assembling.**
2. Fold paper in half lengthwise then in thirds to create six boxes approximately 8" wide and 10" high. The folded form adds strength to the sculpture, helping it stand upright.
3. (A) The 2" edge becomes a tab for gluing the ends together to make a free standing triangular form.



4. Students pre-fold the paper and study it to imagine how their animal design may best fit. Then unfold the paper to lay it flat again. Fold paper in half lengthwise. Paint only on the portion noted in the above diagram.
5. Use a pencil to lightly sketch the animal design onto the three of the three sides. Designs can be one animal seen from three sides or three different animals. Encourage students to use simple shapes, symmetry, and flowing organic lines. These are important visual elements in Haida art.
6. Paint the designs using tempera paint in clear primary colours. Let dry.



Tempera Paint: Paper Totem Sculpture

by Kim Fjordbotten



More inspiration

Here are ideas to create depth in your sculpture.

- Cut out mouths and beaks or make pop-out features – bears' noses, birds' wings or owls' ears.
- Cuts should be clean and not affect the structural integrity nor prevent the sculpture from standing upright.
- Score and fold to create a curved forehead. Scoring and folding paper can add strength and rigidity.
- Attach additional pieces to create features.

Tape the flap to create a free-standing triangular form.

Stack the forms as seen in the photo.

OR

Create hanging vertical mobiles by attaching 3 - 5 individual totems in a vertical formation using string and tape.

