

Keeping Us in Stitches Activity: Whole Cloth Quilt Design

Purpose: to help students understand how decorative motifs used on one type of object are adapted to other types of objects by craftsmen and artists (influence and spread of art elements).

Objective: Students will demonstrate understanding of this principle by

- 1) identifying decorative elements that two types of objects have in common, which they discover while looking through the online quilt collection and furniture collection in *At Home in the Heartland*.

- 2) designing a whole cloth quilting design using motifs from the *A Matter of Style: Nineteenth-Century Illinois Furniture*.



Grade Level: 5 - 8

Time Required: one period to search and sketch; one period to transfer and finish. (Alternatively, one 90-minute period with whole class search on large screen projection of computer.)

Illinois State Museum Web sites used: Keeping Us in Stitches: Illinois Quilts and Quilters, Whole cloth quilts http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/ks_whole.html# and A Matter of Style: 19th C. Furniture <http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/ms.html>

Also see *At Home in the Heartland* (the furniture in the 1800-1850 and the 1850-1890) <http://www.museum.state.il.us/exhibits/athome/index.html>

Materials:

Sketch paper and pencil (to record and sketch some motifs of Classical Revival and/or Aesthetic style furniture and decorative motifs on the Crazy Quilt, appliqué bedcover, and Crazy Quilts, noting dates.

Scratch paper to try out drawings of motifs as whole quilt top. Symmetry is the usual form. 9-inch by 12-inch tracing paper on which to draw a design (so the white paper doesn't have erasure marks).

Same size white heavy drawing paper or construction paper for quilt top.

Sharp pencil, eraser

Motivation: Discuss the elements of design that appear on the Degge's crib quilt. Point out the urn of flowers, pineapples, grape clusters, and fern leaves. Because we know this quilt was made about 1850, we can compare its motifs with other objects made in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. In the *A Matter of Style: Nineteenth-Century Illinois Furniture*, you can see an example of Classical Revival furniture in the piano. Point out in the details the fruit, leaves, urns, and other motifs. In the *Keeping Us in Stitches: Illinois Quilts and Quiltmakers*, you can see an applique quilt from 1848 that uses Classical Revival motifs. Look for others in your resource books and online furniture and quilt web sites. From a selection of a dozen motifs select 3 or 4 to create a new design or pattern.

Procedure: Students will

- choose a set of motifs from a nineteenth-century style (from the Web site or research).
- adapt the motifs to a line drawing (representing a stitched quilting line)
- sketch their full design.
- transfer their design onto 12" x 18" tracing paper (now is the time to erase)
- place the tracing paper over their white paper, graphite side down. (Secure with removable tape).
- carefully trace over the lines in a dotted line (1/8" long alternating with a 1/8" space) causing the graphite to come off onto the white paper.
- lift off the tracing paper off.
- touch up the traced lines, trying for the smoothest lines possible. (Resting drawing hand on cover paper will prevent smudging.)

Publication and Closure: Hang students' work in a gallery format.

Students will make labels with Title of work, date, style, Artist's Name, short text explaining their idea.

Assessment: the finished design and the source design should have common features.

Illinois State Board of Education Goals and Standards addressed:

Visual Art: Goal 25.A.3e: Middle School: Analyze how the elements and principles can be organized to convey meaning through a variety of media and technology.

Goal 27.B.4a: Early High: Analyze and classify the distinguishing characteristics of historical and contemporary art works by style, period, and culture.