

## FRANK'S APPRENTICE: A FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FURNITURE LESSON

CREATED BY RAHNI KAY HAVERLAND, ART EDUCATOR AND MOWA TEACHING IN TANDEM PARTNER



Photography by Zak Gruber

### ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Students will explore Frank Lloyd Wright's furniture designs to identify key principles of his architectural and aesthetic style. Drawing inspiration from his work, students will step into the role of his apprentice, tasked with designing and constructing a miniature piece of furniture that reflects his design philosophy.

### OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify Wright's design principles and choices
- Plan and construct a miniature piece of furniture in Wright's style
- Problem-solve during the construction process
- Reflect on the experience and discuss their piece with peers

### MATERIALS LIST

Simple classroom building materials such as:

- Cardboard
- Wire
- Craft sticks
- Fabric scraps
- Glue
- Tape
- Pencils
- Scrap paper

## FRANK'S APPRENTICE: A FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT FURNITURE DESIGN LESSON

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### ACTIVITY STEPS

#### 1. Introduction to Frank Lloyd Wright

Introduce students to the work of Frank Lloyd Wright by sharing examples of his architecture and furniture designs. Facilitate a class discussion on his unique style, focusing on key design elements such as geometric forms, integration with nature, and simplicity of form. Explain that students will be designing and building a miniature chair inspired by Wright's aesthetic. Encourage early idea development through sketching, using modeling clay, or experimenting with building materials like blocks to brainstorm potential designs.

#### 2. Materials and Building Techniques

Introduce the supplies students will have access to. Supply different types of cardboard, toothpicks, popsicle sticks, and fabric scraps. You may even want to consider including natural items like sticks and twigs. Demonstrate safe and effective techniques for cutting, gluing, and attaching pieces. Students may begin construction if they feel ready.

#### 3. Construction

Students will build their miniature chairs. Emphasize that the design process includes experimentation and creative problem-solving. Encourage perseverance by reminding students that challenges are part of the creative journey. Circulate throughout the classroom to provide guidance and support as needed.

#### 4. Final Touches and Reflection

Students should be wrapping up their construction. Have students reflect on the process by writing artist statements. Take pictures to add to their portfolios. Towards the last half of class, have students do a gallery walk to look at what their classmates have created. Students can leave positive comments on sticky notes left next to their chairs for the artists to read when the gallery walk is complete.

### REFLECT AND CONNECT

- What did you learn about design, engineering, or yourself through this process?
- How did you problem-solve when something didn't go as planned during construction?
- What was the most surprising thing you learned about building miniature furniture?
- Which of Wright's design choices are most evident in your design?
- If you made another piece of furniture to turn your piece into a set of furniture, what would you create next and why?