

SHARON KERRY-HARLAN, *LOCKS, I AM SELF-PORTRAIT QUILT AND POEMS*

CREATED BY SHERRYE SMITH, ART EDUCATOR AND MOWA TEACHING IN TANDEM PARTNER



Sharon Kerry-Harlan, *Locks*, 2011 (detail)

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Students will examine *Locks* by Sharon Kerry-Harlan and review poems based on the I Am From Project. Students will create one literary self-portrait and one visual mixed media self-portrait quilt inspired by Sharon Kerry-Harlan's *Locks*.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Evaluate and discuss how images and text within Sharon Kerry-Harlan's *Locks* collectively identifies the theme of importance in the artwork
- Identify significant words, vocabulary, and terminology in poetry. Studying the *I Am From* poems by George Ella Lyons is recommended
- Identify and list personally significant images, words, places, events, and articles or artifacts that represent their identities
- Develop personally significant content into a poem
- Incorporate personally significant text and images into an original mixed media self-portrait quilt

MATERIALS LIST

- Image of *Locks* by Sharon Kerry-Harlan's *Locks*
- Examples of identity-based poems, such as the *Where I Am From* or *I Am From* poems (see QR code)
- Dye-discharged materials and supplies, as appropriate for your classroom
- Variety of stamps and stencils
- Screen printing supplies
- Fabric, canvas, or paper



I Am From Project



Learn more about
Sharon Kerry-Harlan's
Locks

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ACTIVITY STEPS

1. Inform students they will create a self-portrait that features one literary artwork and one visual artwork. The literary artwork will inform the contents of the visual art. Use the Suggested Questions to have students begin a list of their favorite things that may express who they are such as favorite foods, games, toys, etc.
2. Share with students that poetry is a literary art where words are used to convey meaning. Review identity-based poetry such as samples from the *I Am From* series (see QR code on page 1 for reference). Using the online template provided, create your own *I Am From* poem inserting the words from the list onto the appropriate blank on the template. Alternatively, students could continue a list of words that describe who they are and where they are from.
3. Next, students will observe Sharon Kerry-Harlan's *Locks*. Ask students to share the words and images that they see in the artwork. Harlan used words and images to convey meaning. Ask students what they believe is the message or meaning in Kerry Harlan's work.
4. Students will determine what words and imagery they would like to include in their art piece. They will choose words from their poems and determine imagery that will convey meaning. Students will need to determine the sizes for the imagery and words. They may sketch or manipulate the images to show how they will be placed on the quilt.
5. Students can make their own dye discharged fabric/paper or select fabric/paper that has already gone through the dye-discharge process.
6. Students can now add imagery with screen printing or other printmaking processes to the quilt, embellishing if desired.

REFLECT AND CONNECT

Students may display literary and visual artworks side-by-side for a gallery walk. Students may walk through the gallery to view each of the works. Consider the following prompts to aid in a whole-group discussion or independent student journaling.

- In what way did *Locks* impact your creative design and/or development process?
- In what way did reading and writing poetry impact your creative writing process?
- Where do you think the strongest connection between the two artworks is shown in your final compositions?
- How did *Locks* impact your creative process?
- Consider making time for students to ask each other questions or share complements about their artworks and poems.



Sharon Kerry-Harlan, Locks, 2011