

LIVING IN FAMILIES

The folk artist has been commonly identified as that person who has had no formal art training and who creates from an inner passion and drive. Often materials used are those found in the artist's environment-wood, recycled objects, salvaged tin, shells, natural vines and limbs-virtually anything the artist can find to help express his or her ideas. The folk artist makes a personal statement about his or her culture, religion, beliefs, family, or any subject which has deep meaning. The collection at Hickory Museum of Art features a diversity of artists and subject matter. Many of these artists began their works late in life when seeking a way to satisfy the creative urge or deal with inner visions.

GRADE LEVEL: 5

North Carolina Essential Standards: Social Studies

Estimated time: 45 minutes

The students will research family traditions of different countries. The students will compare and contrast types and roles of families based upon analysis of pieces of folk art.

MATERIALS:

- Visuals of *At Home* by Arbon Lane, *Family Reunion* by Arie Taylor
- Research materials for finding information on family life in Canada and Mexico and selected countries of Central America

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Arbon Lane was born in 1933 in Rockingham County, N. C. and quit school in 6th grade to help support his family. He moved to New York City at the age of 23 and worked in a rest home. One day while in the basement of the building, he found cans of paint, a brush, and a window shade. Using these he did his first piece of art-a portrait of a young girl. It was many years later when he painted again and did traditional memory paintings which reflected his childhood. Lane was also a philosopher, poet, musician, and had worked as a brick mason. He often used discarded tin or wall paneling for his work. The piece *At Home* is painted on a discarded tailgate of a truck.

Arie Taylor, born in 1921 in Vale, NC, is known for her paintings of life in Catawba County. As a young child, she showed a talent for art; however, had little time or money to pursue the interest. In the mid-1960's Arie took a community college art class, but did not really do much painting until after the death of her mother in 1986. Arie's mother, Minnie Reinhardt, became well known for her memory paintings of life in Catawba County one hundred years ago. Today Arie continues that tradition of creating a visual history of her life and the rural area where she lived as a child.

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Introduction:

Discuss various types of families; roles of family members; how that role has changed over the years.

Discussion:

- Where do you think the picture takes place?
- What activities are happening in each picture?
- What are some similarities between the two? Differences?
- What feelings do you have when viewing the pictures?
- What time period do you think is depicted?
- What different family roles do you see pictured?

Activity:

- Choose a country (from those listed earlier) to research and find out about typical family traditions and roles of family members in that country.
- Interview a person who is at least 65 years old and find out about his/her role in the family; a tradition that he/she remembers. Write a paragraph about this interview.

POST ACTIVITIES

- Visit the Hickory Museum of Art and find other examples of families depicted in folk art.
- Share research findings and interviews with other class members.

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

- Students are able to discuss roles of family members as depicted in paintings.
- Students successfully researched family traditions/roles of chosen country.
- Students articulated verbally and in writing the interview with an elderly person.