

4th Grade LWSD Art Docent Project: Community Butterfly Collaborative Artwork Project

Objective: To create a large watercolor rendering of a butterfly composed as a mosaic, using a grid to help improve accuracy of drawing.

Artistic Influence: German naturalist and illustrator Maria Sibylla Merian



Materials:

- **Stiff watercolor paper cut precisely to 8-inch squares.**
- **Watercolor pencils** (simple Crayola brand work fine)
- **Regular graphite pencils**
- **Ultra Fine Sharpies in black**
- **Paper towels**
- **Water cups**



Instructions and notes:

1. This lesson was designed as a two-part project. You may complete it in two, separate 1-hour-long sessions on two different days or in one 1½ to 2-hour session.
2. This lesson requires some preparation ahead of the lesson. The prep can be done at home or at school:
 - All of the butterfly grid images (pages 3-5 of this document) must be printed and cut before the lesson.
 - A volunteer must cut stiff watercolor paper into 30 squares that are exactly 8 inches by 8 inches each. It is important to cut all the squares the same for the mosaic to fit together properly in the end.
 - A volunteer must lightly draw a grid on each of the 30 squares using a ruler and pencil, exactly as pictured above. This job can be divided up among a group of volunteers once the paper is cut. It is important that the pencil marks be drawn lightly for ease of erasure later. Note that your grid lines should be drawn to divide one square into 16 equal-sized smaller squares.
3. Volunteers may need to confirm with teachers that they have a display space to fit 40 inches by 56 inches.
4. When the students are drawing, encourage them to take their time. Have them make sure that the lines and shapes that they draw fit into the same grid square as in the original picture. Some students may need more help understanding this than what is written on slide 13 (Step 3).
5. You may need to wait a day before assembling the mosaic to make sure that all of the paint has dried.
6. Please complete the brief [LWSD Art Docent Program Feedback Survey](#) for this lesson.
7. Thank you for supporting our elementary students' visual arts education.

LWSD Art Docent Project: Butterfly Watercolor Mosaic

The goal of this 4th grade lesson was to use a grid to help improve accuracy in drawing while working as a group to create a larger-than-life painting of a butterfly.



Plate LX from Metamorphosis insectorum Surinamensium, 1705, Maria Sibylla Merian

WA State Visual Arts Standard

Collaboratively set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.
(CA: Cr1.2.4)

In this art lesson taught by volunteer art docents, students learned about the German naturalist and scientific illustrator, Maria Sibylla Merian who lived 1647-1717. Considered a leading entomologist of her time, she was also a talented artist who traveled the world to study botany, insects and other animals.

Students learned how to draw on a grid to make an accurate enlargement of a small, square segment of a butterfly. Accuracy was an important aspect of this project, because all of the squares drawn and painted by students needed to fit together to create one large butterfly mosaic.





