



## *A Colorado Patchwork*

**M.F. Robinson**

**Title:** Patchwork Poetry

### **Overview:**

Students will learn about, examine and discuss Folk Art and folk art paintings, including *A Colorado Patchwork* by artist M.F. Robinson. Using prepositional phrases, they will write poems inspired by the painting and their life experiences in Colorado.

### **Subjects:**

Language Arts, Visual Arts, Social Studies

### **Age Group:**

Middle School

### **Standards:**

#### **21st Century Learning Skills:**

- Critical Thinking and Reasoning
- Information Literacy
- Self-Direction
- Invention

#### **Colorado Academic Standards:**

##### **Visual Arts**

- Observe and Learn to Comprehend
- Invent and Discover to Create
- Relate and Connect to Transfer

##### **Language Arts**

- Oral Expression and Listening
- Writing and Composition

### **Social Studies**

#### Geography

- Regions have different issues and perspectives

### **Additional Standards:**

- National Geographic Standard 6
  - *How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions*
- National Geographic Standard 10
  - *The characteristics, distribution, and complexity of Earth's cultural mosaics*

### **Essential Question(s):**

- *What inspires me?*
- *How do people express themselves through art?*
- *Is there a mood or a feeling about the piece?*
- *Is it quiet, noisy, happy, sad, frightened or calm?*
- *Can you associate any smells or sounds with the work?*
- *Where would you like to be in the picture?*

### **Rationale:**

Students will explore how folk artists use art to communicate thoughts, feelings and experiences of community and memory.

### **Objectives:**

*Students will be able to:*

- understand and discuss essential elements of Folk Art
- participate in a class discussion about *A Colorado Patchwork* by artist M.F. Robinson and other folk art paintings
- describe the nouns and prepositional phrases they see in the artworks
- write prepositional poems based on *A Colorado Patchwork*
- share their poems with the class

### **Materials:**

- Images of *A Colorado Patchwork* by artist M.F. Robinson (overhead projector, internet or color copies)
- Images of *A Country Wedding* by Grandma Moses (overhead projector, internet or color copies)
  - <http://www.artexpertswebsite.com/pages/artists/moses.php>
    - scroll down the web page to find *A Country Wedding*
- Additional paintings, as desired, of M.F. Robinson
  - <http://www.thegalleryatroundtop.com/Robinson.html>
- Paper or journals
- Pens and pencils
- Patchwork Poetry Worksheet
- *The Art and the Artist* information on *A Colorado Patchwork* (found at the end of this lesson plan)

- One color copy of *A Colorado Patchwork* for every 3–5 students, or the ability to project the image onto a wall or screen

## Duration:

50 minutes

Additional time for Extension (see below), as desired

## Vocabulary:

- *Parts of Speech:* nouns, prepositions, prepositional phrases
- *Folk Art:* Folk Art is art which does not come out of the fine art tradition. Folk artists are typically from rural or pre-industrial societies, and are more closely related to craftsmen than they are to fine artists. Folk Art is characterized by a naive style, in which traditional rules of proportion and perspective are not brought into play. Folk Art paintings are marked by such attributes as highly decorative design, bold bright colors, flattened perspective, and strong forms in simple arrangements with direct meaning.
  - Folk art is often created in order to record information, tell stories, impart memories, or convey ideas about an individual, family, or community.
  - Many folk art objects are made collaboratively or as a cultural expression of a community.

## Lesson:

### 1. Show and discuss *A Colorado Patchwork* by artist M.F. Robinson and *A Country Wedding* by Grandma Moses.

- Hand out color copies of the two paintings and/or display on overhead projector or internet.
- Ask students to share their initial observations. Suggest leading topics such as color, theme, mood, setting, etc. How do the students feel when they look at the pieces? Can they relate to the themes and action? What is going on in the pieces?

### 2. Lead students in a discussion on Folk Art.

- Folk art does not come out of the fine art tradition.
- Folk art paintings are generally created by self-taught artists interested in community, story-telling and preserving memories.
- Art work is characterized by bold, bright colors, showy designs, and flattened perspective.
- Provide an opportunity for students to add additional comments about the two paintings now. Have their initial impressions changed or evolved? What fresh thoughts do they have about the works? What senses do you associate with the two works?
- Acquaint the students with the artist Grandma Moses (see Additional Resources below).

### 3. Introduce the artist M.F. Robinson.

- Read the Artist Statement:
  - “My paintings represent a certain time when family was very important and quilts were important,” she explains. “Mothers would use old dresses to make those quilts. In my paintings, the families are working together in harmony. That’s what it was all about, families sticking together. They had to work together in order to survive.
  - “I was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and raised by my grandmother. As a child, my job was to match colors and patterns for my grandmother and her friends as they would piece together a quilt and tell stories. The stories were great, but I truly loved working with different colors and patterns.
  - “Painting the “Colorado Patchwork” gave me that same great feeling. The clock tower and state building are still my favorites because they remind me of the past. Like my grandmother’s quilts, the combination of the old and the new inspires my work. I am a

self-taught painter and I try to incorporate a quilt in each of my paintings as a tribute to my grandmother.”

- Show additional images of artwork by M.F. Robinson, as desired, to further acquaint the students with her style (see Additional Resources below).
- Ask the students to identify characteristics of folk art in Robinson’s painting (s).
- Can relate to any Colorado themes or landmarks in *A Colorado Patchwork*?
- Can they find the quilt in *A Colorado Patchwork*?

**4. Brainstorm nouns and adjectives.**

- Pass out paper and pencils to students.
- Based on what they see, think or feel from looking at *A Colorado Patchwork* and *A Country Wedding*, ask students to quickly write down as many nouns and adjectives as possible.
- Have students share some of these.

**5. Exercise: Prepositional phrases.**

- Review definitions of prepositions and prepositional phrases. Remind the students that prepositional phrases must contain nouns.
- Have students complete Patchwork Poetry Worksheet, using prepositional phrases to describe aspects of the paintings *A Colorado Patchwork* and *A Country Wedding*.

**6. Writing prepositional poems.**

- Explain that they will use prepositional phrases to write poems based on the two paintings. They will write one poem for each painting.
- Share these examples, or use examples of your own:

*A Country Wedding*

Under a clear blue sky,  
With loved ones all around,  
I married my best friend.

*A Colorado Patchwork*

Beyond our town,  
Bustling with sights and sound,  
The mountains rise majestic.

**7. Ask students to share their poems with the class.**

**Extension:**

- Ask students to create their own version of *A Colorado Patchwork*.
  - Create a colorful folk art drawing of their favorite Colorado place, event or memory.
  - Write a prepositional poem to go along with their drawing.
- Create a bulletin board, group mural or presentation with student drawings and poetry.

**Additional Resources:**

*Additional images of the paintings of M.F. Robinson:*

<http://www.thegalleryatroundtop.com/Robinson.html>

*America’s most renowned folk artist was Grandma Moses. For information and images:*

<http://www.artexpertswebsite.com/pages/artists/moses.php>

National Geographic Education Standards:

[http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/standards/national-geography-standards/?ar\\_a=1](http://education.nationalgeographic.com/education/standards/national-geography-standards/?ar_a=1)

## The Art and the Artist



A  
*Patchwork*

*Colorado*

*M.F. Robinson*  
Oil on canvas, 1996  
24" x 30"

### Artist Statement

"My paintings represent a certain time when family was very important and quilts were important," she explains. "Mothers would use old dresses to make those quilts. In my paintings, the families are working together in harmony. That's what it was all about, families sticking together. They had to work together in order to survive.

"I was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee, and raised by my grandmother. As a child, my job was to match colors and patterns for my grandmother and her friends as they would piece together a quilt and tell stories. The stories were great, but I truly loved working with different colors and patterns.

“Painting the “Colorado Patchwork” gave me that same great feeling. The clock tower and state building are still my favorites because they remind me of the past. Like my grandmother’s quilts, the combination of the old and the new inspires my work. I am a self-taught painter and I try to incorporate a quilt in each of my paintings as a tribute to my grandmother.”

# Patchwork Poetry Worksheet

## Patchwork Poetry

Use prepositional phrases to describe aspects of the paintings *A Colorado Patchwork* and *A Country Wedding*.

Under the \_\_\_\_\_

Into the \_\_\_\_\_

Behind the \_\_\_\_\_

On the \_\_\_\_\_

Above the \_\_\_\_\_

Beside the \_\_\_\_\_

Between the \_\_\_\_\_

From the \_\_\_\_\_

In the \_\_\_\_\_

With the \_\_\_\_\_

Underneath the \_\_\_\_\_

Through the \_\_\_\_\_