

Meeting The Hathaway Family: Teaching Tips

1. One of the most influential African American sculptors of the 20th century grew up in Davis Bottom. Have students read - or read to them - the short biography of Isaac Scott Hathaway on page 1 in the document “Meet the Artist: Isaac Scott Hathaway,” downloaded from the website of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Society, Little Rock, Arkansas and provided here.

You also can access a biography of Hathaway and his family here:

<http://anthropology.as.uky.edu/hathaway-family-and-isaac-scott-hathaway>

2. Meet the Artist: Isaac Scott Hathaway - Related Activities

This lesson plan (pages 2-5 in the document “Meet the Artist: Isaac Scott Hathaway,” downloaded from the website of the Mosaic Templars Cultural Society, Little Rock, Arkansas and provided here) reviews the nationally recognized art of African American sculptor, ceramicist, and illustrator Isaac Scott Hathaway. Hathaway created sculptures of notable African Americans from Arkansas (suitable for grades K-12).

3. Listen to this audio biography, produced by Auburn University, College of Liberal Arts, Auburn, Alabama. It includes a recreation of a 1939 Federal Writers’ Project interview with Hathaway.

https://w.soundcloud.com/player/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fapi.soundcloud.com%2Ftracks%2F68329799&show_artwork=true%22%3E%3C/iframe

You could listen to the entire audio or just the segment from 4:50-6:52 minutes. In this segment, Hathaway describes how he was inspired to create art honoring great African Americans when he visited a museum at the age of nine and discovered there were no sculptures of African Americans. This part of the interview also includes Hathaway’s description of how he found inspiration for his bust of Fredrick Douglas when he saw a lion at the Washington, D.C. Zoo.

Ask students what they know about Fredrick Douglas so far. (They know he is someone Isaac Hathaway thought worthy of honoring and that in some way he reminded Hathaway of a lion.) What questions do they have about Fredrick Douglas? How might they find answers to their questions? Challenge them to find answers to share with their classmates and provide time for that to occur.

4. Show students the bust of Fredrick Douglas by Isaac Scott Hathaway.

<http://isaacscotthathaway.wordpress.com/photos/#jp-carousel-24>

Provide time for students to respond to the image through visual thinking strategies. If they do not mention it, ask what about Fredrick Douglas reminds them of a lion. Remind them that Hathaway said the lion “stood up as if to say, “Take note!”” Ask them what “take note” means. How does the bust of Douglas convey the sense of a man who is saying, “Take note!”?

Ask students to identify people they admire, either contemporary or historical figures or someone they know personally.

Give them time to complete the “I Admire...” form (see page 4 below), and then divide the class into small groups to share their ideas and brainstorm how they would like to represent in an art form the person they admire.

If possible, provide time for them to create a work of art. Encourage them to experiment, reminding them that artists do a lot of experimenting before they find something that works. If their experiment does not work, it is not a failure. It is a learning experience. You can assess this project by asking students to complete an exit slip answering the question, “What did you learn from your experiment in art?”

5. Using the ideas generated from the “I Admire...” activity, have students write a biographical poem. Read them the example about Lucretia Mott (page 4 below) and then model the process of writing a biographical poem by working together as a class to write a poem about Isaac Hathaway, Fredrick Douglas, or some other historical figure.

Biographical poems allow students to draw a quick sketch of a person using salient points from their research, combining fact and interpretation/opinion. The author writes about a person, presenting the information in an ordered way.

This is the order in which information is provided in a biographical poem, and below is an example:

First name
Descriptive adjectives
Daughter/son of. . .
Lover of. . .
Who fears. . .
Who would like
Resident of. . .
Last name

Lucretia
Friendly, Persuasive, Dedicated, Strong
Daughter of Nantucket and the Sea
Lover of Freedom, Justice, and Peace
Who fears ignorance, brutality, and apathy,
Who would like to see slavery ended, women voting, everyone educated
Resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Mott

6. Isaac Scott Hathaway designed the first two U.S. coins to feature African Americans. Discuss commemorative coins and the reason we have them. You also could discuss commemorative stamps.

Project images of the coins Hathaway designed. Allow time for students to respond to the images and the words on both the front and the back.

Commemorative Coin: Booker T. Washington

Front <http://isaacscotthathaway.wordpress.com/photos/#jp-carousel-41>

Back <http://isaacscotthathaway.wordpress.com/photos/#jp-carousel-40>

Commemorative Coin: Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver

Front <http://isaacscotthathaway.wordpress.com/photos/#jp-carousel-39>

Back <http://isaacscotthathaway.wordpress.com/photos/#jp-carousel-141>

Ask students what they know about Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver. What questions do they have about these men? How might they find answers to their questions? Challenge them to find answers to share with their classmates and provide time for that to occur.

7. Discuss what kind of information is included on the obverse and reverse sides of coins. Obverse is the side commonly called “heads,” while the reverse side is commonly called “tails.” Invite students to design a coin about someone they admire. They can use the information from their “I Admire...” form (see page 4 below).

A good reproducible template for designing a coin can be found at http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/TM/WS_lp298-03.shtml

Once students have designed their coin, they can create a raised design in a sheet of aluminum foil to make the design look more like a real coin. For each student, you will need:

- a square of heavy duty aluminum foil slightly larger than the design;
- a piece of paper towel folded in half; and
- a pencil.

Place the aluminum foil on top of the paper towel and place the design on top of the foil. Trace the design with a pencil, pushing down firmly enough to make an indentation in the foil. When the foil is turned over, the design will appear as a raised relief. Work from the center of the design outward rather than from the outside circumference in. If desired, you can cut out the circular shape of the coin.

Ask students to write an artist statement about their coin design describing who the coin honors and why they wanted to honor that person.

I ADMIRE

Name _____ Date _____

I admire _____.

Three reasons I admire this person are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

The animal this person reminds me of is _____

Three reasons this person reminds me of this animal are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Draw a sketch of the person or the animal below or on the other side of this page.