

Journey to Freedom: Quilts and Codes

Lesson 3

Subject: History and Art

Grade: 4th

Topic: Underground Railroad

Lesson Length: 2 days

Objectives:

1. Students will look at a map of Underground Railroad routes and explain how mountains and rivers might have added to the escaping slaves' difficulties.
2. Students listen to a story about the Underground Railroad and describe the difficulties the escaping slaves encountered.
3. Students design quilt squares that show codes the slaves would have needed to successfully escape north to freedom without being caught.

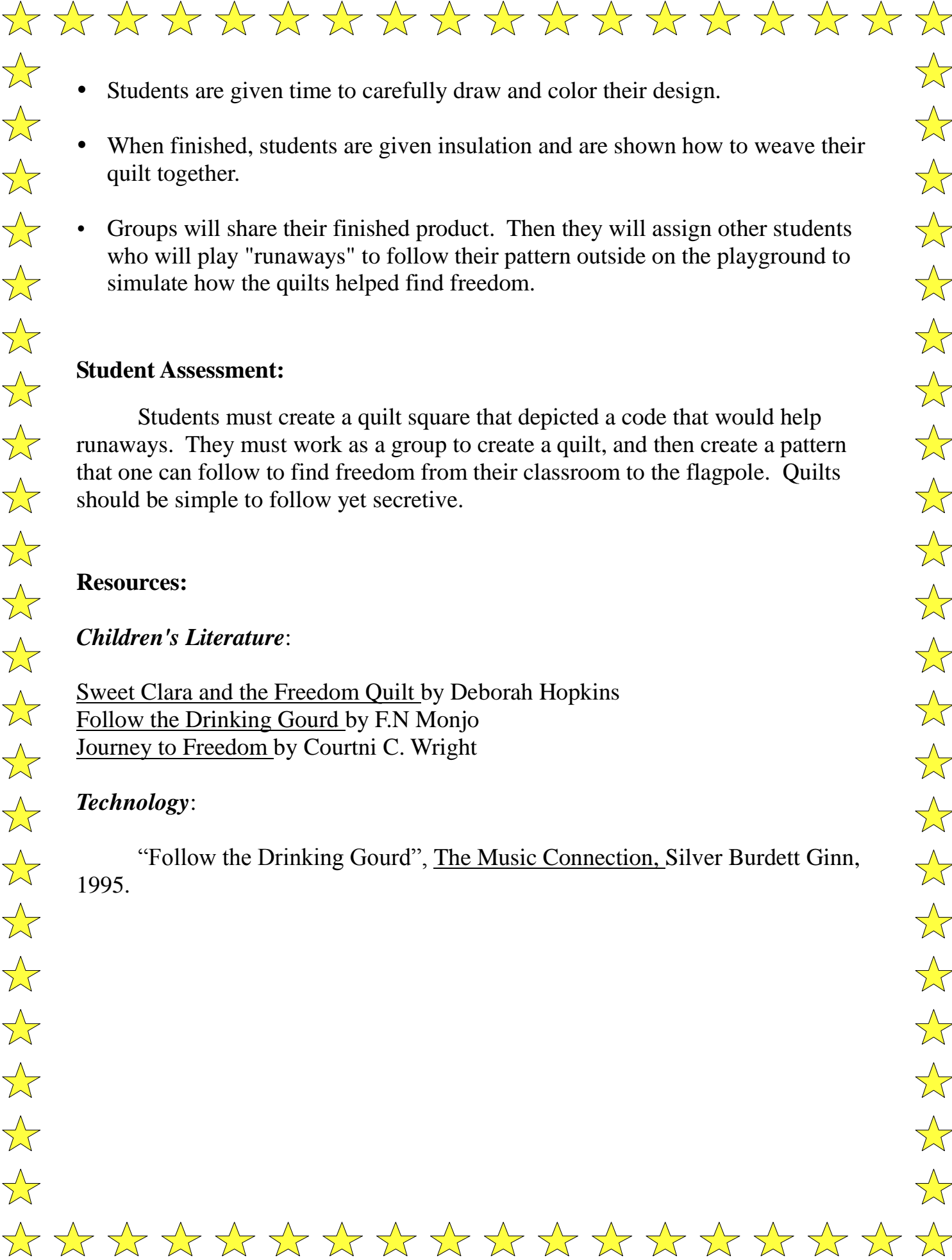
Materials/Technology:

- Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkins
- Follow the Drinking Gourd by F.N Monjo
- Journey to Freedom by Courtni C. Wright
- Maps of Underground Railroad routes
- Page sized entry slips with different designs and code words written on them.
- Packets with various quilt designs and codes for students to use as a source.
- Quilting Material (insulation with silver lining from Home Depot)

- 
- Squares for drawing design
 - Pencils

Procedures:

- Begin lesson by reviewing Journey to Freedom and discuss the importance of the conductors on the Underground Railroad.
- Follow discussion with a discussion on the hardships that runaways might have faced traveling north. Use Follow the Drinking Gourd and Journey to Freedom to help students get ideas.
- Write ideas into a web on butcher paper and explain how both factors depended on each other.
- Read Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt discussing any ideas that were previously reviewed that come up again. These can be added to the web on the butcher paper.
- After reading the book, hand out entry slips to small groups with designs and words written on them. Students will brainstorm and try to predict what they think their slip means.
- Students will tell the rest of the class what they think each means.
- When each group finishes, teacher explains what each design or code means. When all groups have finished, teacher passes out packet with the information for the students to use.
- Each student is then given a design square. They will design a quilt square that will get them out of their classroom and to the flagpole without being caught by the principal. As a group, the students come up with their own quilt that will direct "runaways" to freedom. In the background play "Follow the Drinking Gourd" music.

- 
- Students are given time to carefully draw and color their design.
 - When finished, students are given insulation and are shown how to weave their quilt together.
 - Groups will share their finished product. Then they will assign other students who will play "runaways" to follow their pattern outside on the playground to simulate how the quilts helped find freedom.

Student Assessment:

Students must create a quilt square that depicted a code that would help runaways. They must work as a group to create a quilt, and then create a pattern that one can follow to find freedom from their classroom to the flagpole. Quilts should be simple to follow yet secretive.

Resources:

Children's Literature:

Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt by Deborah Hopkins

Follow the Drinking Gourd by F.N Monjo

Journey to Freedom by Courtni C. Wright

Technology:

“Follow the Drinking Gourd”, The Music Connection, Silver Burdett Ginn, 1995.