

Golden Pictures

Lesson Plan
Grades K-5



Summary

Paintings of religious figures with shiny gold backgrounds were very popular in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Examples of these types of pictures are *Madonna and Child* by Giotto di Bondone (ca. 1320-30), *Saint Romuald* by Lorenzo Monaco (ca. 1420), and *Saint Francis Receiving the Stigmata* by Carlo Crivelli (ca. 1488-89). To create these beautiful paintings, artists used special materials to attach sheets of gold to the surface and make fancy designs. Use similar materials to decorate your own golden portraits in the style of the Italian Gothic painters.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognized paintings made in the Italian Gothic style
- Learn the basic process of gilding and punch work
- Use texture and color to decorate and emphasize portraits

Outline of Lesson

- Discussion
- Craft activity
- Presentations

Discussion Questions

- Describe the picture that you are going to decorate. Who is in the picture? What makes this person or pet special to you?
- What three things do you want people who see your picture to know about the person or pet in your picture?

Activity

- Help students glue a sheet of gold foil onto a piece of cardboard to serve as a background for their special portrait.
- Then, assist students with cutting out and gluing their portrait subject onto their “gilded” cardboard.
- Allow students to decorate their portraits further with stamps to simulate traditional punch work, puff paint to make special things stand out, and stencils to make areas of their pictures appear to be textured.
- Invite students to share their work with the class, explaining how they shared special characteristics in their portrait.

Materials

Photographs of students, students’ family, friends, or pets

Cardboard

Gold, copper, and silver-colored foil

Glue

Scissors

Stamps

Non-toxic paint in several colors

Sponges

Puff paint

Key Terms

Gilding – A thin layer of gold or other metal used for decoration

Gold leaf – Thin sheets of gold used for gilding

Punch – A metal tool with a raised, blunt design on one end that is hammered into a gilded surface to make shallow imprints and designs

Pastiglia – A raised and sculpted under layer that is gilded to make certain features stand out from a painting

Internet Resources:

["Gilding" on the Kress Reconstruction Website](#)

Activity

- Help students glue a sheet of gold foil onto a piece of cardboard to serve as a background for their special portrait.
- Then, assist students with cutting out and gluing their portrait subject onto their “gilded” cardboard.
- Allow students to decorate their portraits further with stamps to simulate traditional punch work, puff paint to make special things stand out, and stencils to make areas of their pictures appear to be textured.
- Invite students to share their work with the class, explaining how they shared special characteristics in their portrait.

Materials

Photographs of students, students’ family, friends, or pets

Cardboard

Gold, copper, and silver-colored foil

Glue

Scissors

Stamps

Non-toxic paint in several colors

Sponges

Puff paint

Key Terms

Gilding – A thin layer of gold or other metal used for decoration

Gold leaf – Thin sheets of gold used for gilding

Punch – A metal tool with a raised, blunt design on one end that is hammered into a gilded surface to make shallow imprints and designs

Pastiglia – A raised and sculpted under layer that is gilded to make certain features stand out from a painting