



ART – Year 6 Summer 1 Romare Bearden – Ancient Maya through Collage

Vocabulary

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
Paper	Texture	Collage
Colour	Symbol	Civilisation
Cut	Contrast	Ritual
Stick	Pattern	Identity
Mask	Layer	Glyph
Shape	Tactile	Artefact
Picture	Mood	Heritage
People	Composition	Abstract
Story	Expression	Culture
Animal	Bold	Representation



Useful Resources

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vt4hrjcGbDk&ab_c_hannel=FineArtsMuseumsOfSanFrancisco

Our Artist

Romare Bearden – Storytelling Through Collage

Romare Bearden was an African-American artist known for using collage to tell powerful stories about culture, identity, and history. He layered photos, paper, fabrics, and paint to create bold and expressive artwork that often reflected music, community life, and heritage. Bearden believed art should tell a story. In this project, we are using his style to retell stories from the Ancient Maya civilisation, combining visual and tactile materials to reflect mood and meaning. Like Bearden, we will use symbolism and colour to help our artwork communicate ideas.



Cultural Focus

Who were the Maya?

An ancient civilisation from Central America with rich traditions in art, religion, and storytelling.

Why collage?

Like Maya glyphs and murals, Bearden's art tells cultural stories. We'll do the same—using collage to celebrate Maya myths, gods, and daily life.

Key ideas

Art tells stories and represents identity. Our work will link ancient Maya culture with modern collage techniques.

Collage Techniques

Layering:

Bearden used overlapping papers, textures, and images to create depth. We will layer materials to reflect the complexity of Maya stories and rituals.

Texture:

We will use rough and smooth materials (e.g. tissue, foil, hessian) to make our collage tactile—just like Bearden's textured storytelling style.

Cutting and Composing:

Bearden's work looks like puzzles pieced together. We will practise careful cutting and arrange shapes to create bold, symbolic compositions.

Symbolism and Colour:

Bearden used bold colours and symbols to reflect culture and identity. We'll explore Maya symbols (like jaguars, sun, maize, temples) and use colour to show meaning and mood.

Mixed Media:

We'll include a range of materials like coloured paper, fabric, string, and card to enhance our collages—just as Bearden combined different media.

Key Questions

How can we use collage to tell a story, like Romare Bearden did?

What textures and materials can we combine to reflect the Mayans culture and beliefs?

How do colours and symbols help us show mood, meaning, and identity in our artwork?

What techniques did Romare Bearden use to make his collages bold and expressive?

How can we show mastery and control when layering and arranging materials?

In what ways did the Ancient Maya use art to communicate their ideas and beliefs?

How can we use artistic language to talk about the atmosphere and message of our work?

Painting Techniques

1. **Colour Palette**
 - Hokusai used a **limited palette** of mainly blue, white, and a touch of grey to create a calm yet dramatic atmosphere.
 - He used **Prussian blue**, a new pigment at the time, to give the waves their striking colour.
2. **Gradients (Blending Tones)**
 - Hokusai blended light and dark tones of blue in the waves to show depth.
 - The sky transitions from a lighter blue at the horizon to a darker shade at the top, creating a gradient that suggests distance and weather.
3. **Contrast**
 - The deep blue waves sharply contrast with the white foam, making the waves look more powerful.
 - Mount Fuji is painted in softer, muted tones, helping it stand out against the waves.
4. **Layering**
 - The print shows layers of waves, boats, and Mount Fuji. Each layer builds on the previous one to add depth and movement.
 - The layering of darker waves on lighter tones creates a sense of shadow and highlights.
5. **Focus on Texture**
 - The foam of the waves is carefully detailed to look rough and dynamic, while the sky and Mount Fuji are smoother and more serene.