

Neighborhood Myth Comic Strip

Content Area(s): Photography and Literature

Project Description:

Inspired by the graphic biography *Photographic: The Life of Graciela Iturbide* by Isabel Quintero and Zeke Peña, participants will share their personal neighborhood stories through pictures and words.

Graciela Iturbide was born in Mexico in 1942 and began a photography career in the 1970s. Her work addresses issues related to cross-cultural experiences and explores vestiges of the past that pulse in the present and the space between the real and the imagined. Her images are in constant dialogue with her surroundings and are inspired by her personal experiences.

Participants will think of a memorable story or experience that took place in their neighborhood. They will create a comic strip using a series of photographs or drawings to illustrate the memory. The narrative should be told in the form of a myth, using magical language to exaggerate, heighten and mystify the story. The comic strip can begin with “Once in my neighborhood...”

Essential Question

How do artists use images to recall memories or tell stories? Explore this question with students using examples of Graciela Iturbide’s photographs. Then, transition into conversation about personal neighborhood stories using the following questions.

1. How can art be used as a tool for telling stories and myths?
2. Why is it important to pass down stories and myths?
3. How did Iturbide use photography to share her stories and experiences?
4. What exactly makes up a neighborhood?
5. How are you connected to your neighborhood?
6. What are some of the current issues your neighborhood is facing?

Classroom Activity

Iturbide’s journey is the central focus of the graphic biography *Photographic: The Life of Graciela Iturbide*. Born in Mexico, Graciela Iturbide began her journey in the male-dominated photography scene of the 1970s and blazed her own path to become one of the most accomplished photographers in the world. Her photographs are informed by her surroundings; they capture the places, people, and stories that have intertwined with her own myth.

What is your story?

How have your experiences and surroundings shaped you into the person you are today? How do images contribute to, or inspire, our stories? Share a small part of your personal story by thinking of a memory or experience that took place in a neighborhood important to you. Create a comic strip using photographs or drawings that capture the memory. The story should be told in the form of a myth, using poetic language to exaggerate, heighten, and mystify the narrative. The comic strip can begin with, "Once in my neighborhood..."

Students can use the comic book templates provided or they can design their own and are not limited to the number of panels they use.

Classroom Extension

- In small groups, have students share memories of growing up in their neighborhood. Memories can be happy or challenging. Groups will be given 10 minutes to share memories in as much detail as possible to their partners.
- After the group exercise, students can write down adjectives and descriptive words they used to describe their memory. The descriptive words can be used in their story.
- Students will need to choose images that best represent the story. The teacher can offer students a selection of images to choose from or students can find/take pictures as homework.
- For Photography classes this activity can be used as the prompt for a photo assignment.

California State Content Standards for Visual & Performing Arts

Creative Expression: Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art

Grade 6

Standard 2.5 - Select specific media and processes to express moods, feelings, themes, or ideas.

Grade 7

Standard 2.5 - Interpret reality and fantasy in original two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art.

Standard 2.6 - Create an original work of art, using film, photography, computer graphics, or video.

Grade 8

Standard 2.5 - Select a medium to use to communicate a theme in a series of works of art.

Grades 9–12

Standard 2.5 - Use innovative visual metaphors in creating works of art.

Standard 2.6 - Present a universal concept in a multimedia work of art that demonstrates knowledge of technology skills.

California Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

College & Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration

Grades 6–12

Standard 3 - 3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.







