Sew Me a Story: African and African American “Quilt Lore”
Kelly Graham
Blankenburg Elementary School

Abstract:

*Sew Me a Story: African and African American “Quilt Lore”* is a cross curricular course of study that guides students through varied topics including African history, American history, geometric patterning, visual design, and storytelling. By studying examples of African and African American made quilts, students will develop a deeper understanding of the human experience. In this unit, quilts will be used as the impetus for storytelling and discussion. Students will gain an understanding of how an object such as a quilt can be used to retrieve knowledge and make meaning. Students will then create their own stories and designs, first thinking about what it is that they want to pass on. What stories do they want to tell? As a culminating project for the unit, each child will contribute to the making of a class “quilt” to be displayed in school and passed on to the next generation of students, historians, and quiltmakers. This unit was designed for elementary students in regular education classrooms. However, the strategies used in the lessons could easily be adapted or made more complex for working with older children or smaller groups of students.