Designs of My World

Subject: Social Studies, Art
Duration: 1 hour
Location: Classroom / Outdoors
Key Vocabulary: Symbolism, patchwork, Miccosukee
Related Activities: Tell Me A Story
Florida Sunshine State Standards: 4th and 5th grades - SS.A.6.2, 6th grade - SS.A.6.3

Objectives: The students will be able to describe the Miccosukee traditional clothing designs and how they relate to their culture.

Method: Students will create a patchwork with designs that represent their environment and then in writing, describe the various designs.

Materials

- Copies of "Miccosukee Tapestry"
- Paper
- Rulers
- Crayons

Background: The Miccosukee migrated from Georgia and settled into the Everglades to escape deportation to the West. Their traditional lifestyle as they knew it changed; instead of corn, they collected coontie, and large family clans were divided into smaller bands. In the early nineteenth century, the women designed patchwork that symbolized their environment such as alligators and trees. These patchworks became part of their traditional clothing. Men wore long shirts and women wore long skirts and a blouse with an overlay to protect themselves from mosquitoes. Each patchwork design and fabric used varies from dressmaker to dressmaker. For more information about the Miccosukee, see the "Natural History" section or the references in "Resources."

Suggested Procedure

1. Distribute copies of "Miccosukee Tapestry," and discuss how the various designs reflect the tribe's connections with their homeland, the Everglades.
2. Ask the students to brainstorm the kinds of objects that would represent their environment: school, house, pets, and favorite places are a few examples. Distribute paper to students and have them create designs that symbolize some aspect of their environment.
3. On another piece of paper, have the students describe their designs.

Evaluation

Once the students have presented their patchwork of colors, ask them if they have any clothes with symbols on them. Does it say anything about their culture or about our environment?

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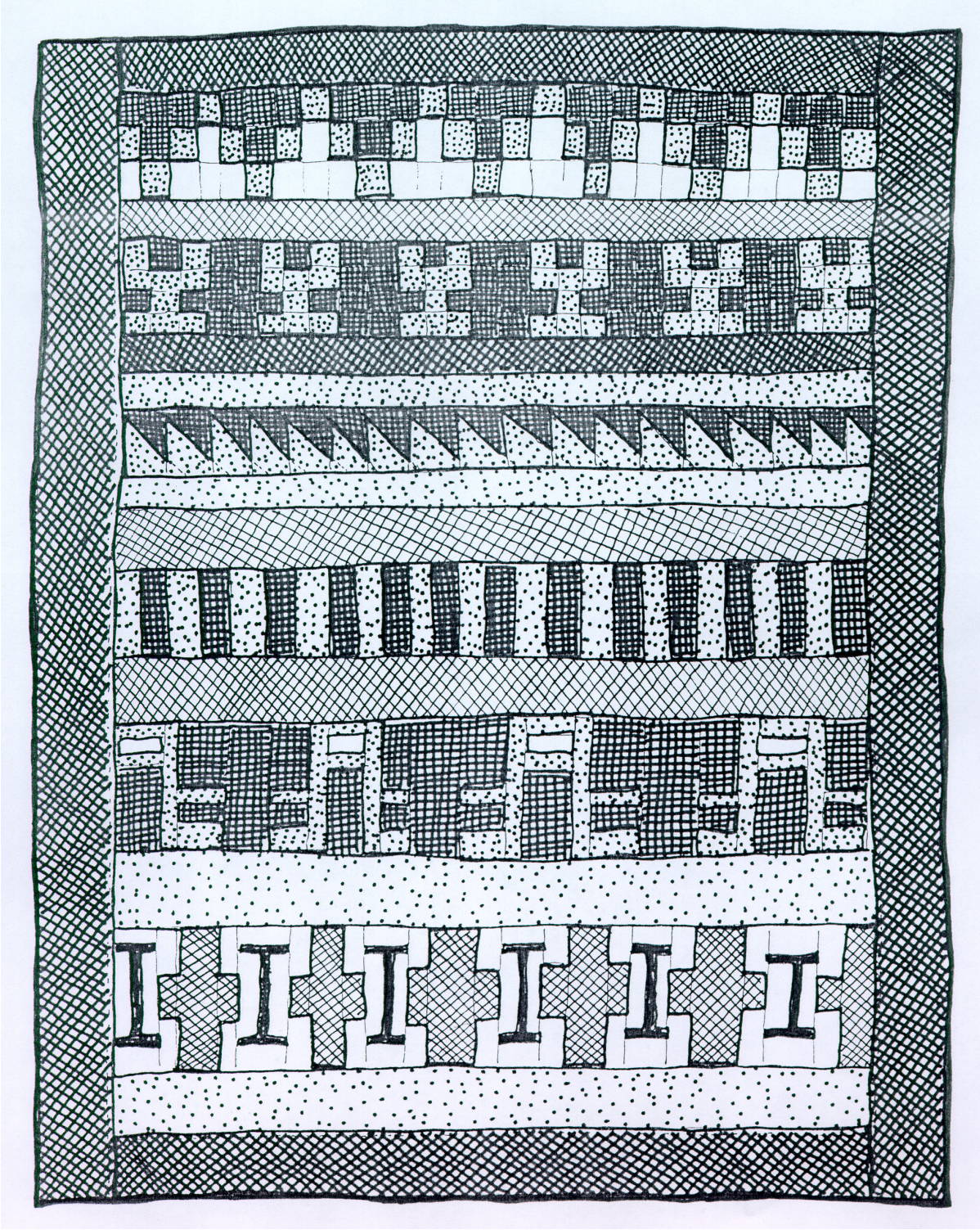
Miccosukee Tapestry