



Dolls Like Della

OVERVIEW

Create your own dolls inspired by Della Wells using our Build-a-Doll activity game.

STANDARDS

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why is it important to tell stories through art?

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students Will:

- Build skills by following sequence
- Create and tell a story
- Write complete sentences
- Listen and use art materials correctly

STANDARDS

Art Education Visual Arts

1st

AE17.VA.1.2 Explore and experiment with a range of art materials.

AE17.VA.1.3 Develop skills by following a sequence of steps to create works of art on subjects that are real or imaginary.

English Language Arts

1st

ELA 21.1.R1 Utilize active listening skills during discussion and conversation in pairs, small groups, or whole-class

settings, following agreed-upon rules for participation.

ELA 21.1.3 Expand background knowledge and build vocabulary through discussion, reading, and writing.

ELA21.1.34 With prompting and support, write a narrative that recounts two or more appropriately sequenced events using transitions, incorporating relevant details, and providing a sense of closure.

ELA21.1.4 Present information orally using complete sentences and appropriate volume.

ART DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- Do you play with dolls or action figures?
- What stories have you created with your toys?
- What do you think the story of (show dolls) these dolls could be?

ABOUT DELLA WELLS

Della Wells (b.1951, Milwaukee, WI) is a Milwaukee-based, self-taught artist who began making art at age forty-two. As a child, she invented stories and characters based on her mother's recollections of growing up in North Carolina during the 1920s through the 1940s.

She started making dolls about 17 years ago. In describing why, Wells explains that she has always explored fantasy, fables and fairy tales in her work. She talks about the messages dolls carry to young girls about who they are and who they can become. And she tells her own story about a difficult upbringing (her mother was a schizophrenic who wasn't diagnosed until Wells was 19).

Most of Wells' works are staged in an invented place she calls Mamboland. It is a place where Black women rule, where they hold the strength to counter the forces of oppression and cultural erasure. It is where truths are told and a more hopeful future is shaped.



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ART INSTRUCTION

MATERIALS

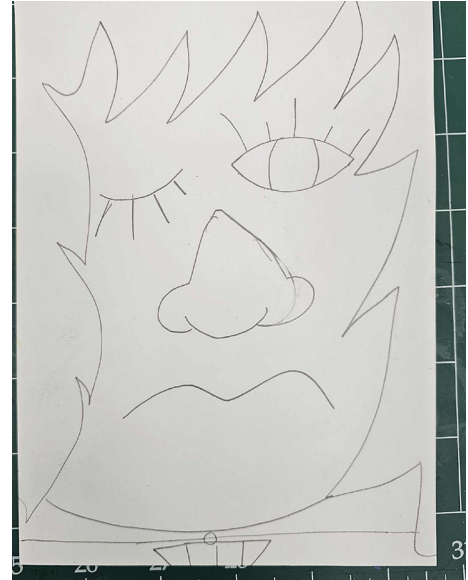
6x9 paper, crayons, pencils

INSTRUCTIONS

1

With the Build-A-Doll activity sheet, start building a doll with the hair first then continue to build features in the sequence order on the sheet.

1



2

Once finished, have students color their dolls.

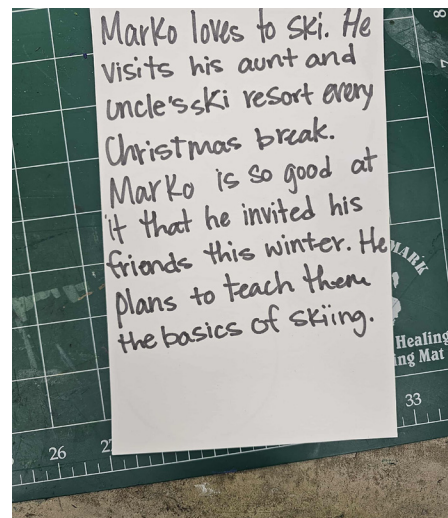
3

Have students write a paragraph about their doll on the back of their paper. Include the name of the doll, what does it like to do, and other questions you'd like to include!

2

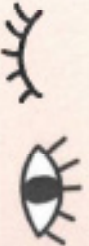


3



BUILD - A - DOLL

Start first with the hair of your doll. You can use any shape shown to build your doll. Once finished, color your doll!

HAIR	EYES	NOSE	MOUTH	EXTRAS 1	EXTRAS 2
Draw some hair!					
					
	Draw eyes!				
		Draw a nose!			

TERMS

FOUND OBJECTS - natural or man made items that artists use for a work of art. Usually, the objects are not intended for artistic purposes.

OIL PASTELS - made from mineral oil, wax, and powdered pigment. Softer version of a crayon.

READ ALOUD RESOURCES

[1] <https://www.portraitsocietygallery.com/dellawells>

[2] <https://www.artsy.net/artist/della-wells>

[3] <https://www.jsonline.com/story/entertainment/arts/art-city/2016/12/13/della-wells-handcrafted-dolls-complex-real-life/95326572/>