

The Milagro Cross

Symbolism in Images

9-12

Objective

Students will create their own Milagros that express what is important to them and what communicates their best wishes and hopes for themselves or others.

Discussion

Discuss what symbolism is and how people use symbols to communicate meanings. For example, a wedding ring represents marriage, a flag represents a country, and a logo represents a company. Ask students to think about the way they use symbols in daily life and to share these observations.

Discuss the use of Milagros as devotional art and the symbolism related to them. See resource page – The Milagro Cross

Divide students into groups to discuss what symbols they might use to represent themselves, their families, their pets, their schools, their hobbies, sports, or other things that are important to them. What images could you use to represent the intangibles like love, hope, faith, etc. Have each group make a list to share with the whole class.

Procedure

Ask students to create a Milagro for themselves or for someone else. Once they are completed, have students explain the meaning of their design.

1. Measure the size of the aluminum soda can you will be using.
2. Sketch a Milagro design that will fit on the dimensions of the aluminum can. It should reflect something meaningful to you.
3. Carefully cut off the top and bottom of the can with the knife and then scissors. Be very careful! Cut aluminum is very sharp!
4. Flatten the aluminum by rubbing the back side on the edge of a table to flatten it.
5. Place the aluminum on cardboard.
6. Trace your design onto the metal with the back of an artist's brush or a tool with a ball type end.
7. You can see the design embossed in the metal.
8. On the top side of the metal, emboss the lines with the ball tool or the back of the brush.
9. For texture in the design, you can rub the printed side with a circular motion.
10. Use the hammer and nail to gently punch designs around your shape.
11. When you are finished embossing and punching, cut out the shape with scissors leaving a small edge.
12. Press little ridges into the small edge to add texture.
13. Paint your design if desired with glass markers or colored sharpies.
14. Keep your Milagro in a special place or give it as a gift of good wishes to someone else.

Materials Needed:

- Aluminum drink can
- Cardboard
- Craft knife
- Scissors
- An artist's paint brush or tool with a ball point
- Hammer
- Blunt nail
- Pencil & Paper
- Colored Sharpie markers or glass markers

Please see <https://mypoppet.com.au/makes/recycled-craft-mexican-tin-heart-folk-art/> for an example and for process photos.