

DESIGN YOUR OWN NEIGHBORHOOD MURAL

An activity to do after reading *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy

Description

Murals are ways that artists in Chicago—and all over the world—communicate messages, express themselves and encourage community connections. Hone your artistic skills and spark your imagination by proposing a mural for your own community, inspired by lessons learned from Mira in *Maybe Something Beautiful* by F. Isabel Campoy.

Audience

Children ages 6+
with adult supervision

Time

30 minutes

Materials

- Paper
- Pencil
- Colored pencils, markers or paint

Guiding Questions

- 1 What is a mural?
- 2 Why do people paint murals? How can a mural convey meaning or reflect the community that surrounds it?
- 3 What makes the community where you live unique? If you were to design a mural for your neighborhood, what symbols would you use to reflect your neighborhood? Do you live near a train line, for example, or are you surrounded by wheat fields? Are you in the middle of an urban area, or out in a rural landscape?

Instructions

- 1 With a trusted adult, check out some of the murals that are painted all over Chicago by visiting <http://bit.ly/chimurals>. What do you notice about these murals? How do the murals relate to the communities where they're located? What colors do you see? Do you know what the symbols in these pictures mean?
- 2 As Mira shows us in *Maybe Something Beautiful*, murals have the power to bring people together and promote community happiness. Are there any murals near where you live? Using the scavenger hunt activity sheet below, take a walk around your neighborhood and see what you can find.
- 3 Next, design a mural for your own neighborhood. Sketch out a rough draft of what you want your mural to look like.
- 4 Add color. Once you have sketched out your idea, begin adding color and other detail to the mural. What colors did you choose and why? How do you want people to feel when they look at your mural?

- 5 Once you have finished your mural proposal, show it off! Talk about your work with a trusted adult, friend or family member and get their feedback. If you want to incorporate new things people said about your artwork—or add new ideas of your own—don't be afraid to go back and improve on your original design!

Share

We'd love to see your work! Share your creation with the Chicago Architecture Center on Facebook or Instagram, using the hashtag #ChiArchitecture

Extend

Murals are important ways that people use art to connect to their communities, other people and send messages to the public. Using the Chicago Mural Registry online at chicago.gov, participate in our mural scavenger hunt using our scavenger hunt checklist. Pay attention to the symbols on the murals that you observe. What do they mean, and how do those symbols tell you about why and where the mural was painted? Take pictures with the murals you find and tag us on social media @chiarchitecture. Remember to participate safely, accompanied by a trusted adult, observe social distancing rules and wear a mask covering your nose and mouth.

Many more challenges await you online! Visit architecture.org/learn to find additional activities for young people and families.

MURAL SCAVENGER HUNT

Take a walk around your neighborhood and look for art, such as mosaics, murals, sculptures and flags. Can you find these symbols near you?

A flower

Make a quick sketch!

Location:

A flag

Which one?

Location:

A person

What are they doing?

Location:

A city landmark, in Chicago or otherwise

What landmark is it?

Location:

An animal

What kind of animal is it?

Location:

Words

What does the mural say?

Location:

Someone well-known or famous

Who is it?

Location:

Use this space to make a quick sketch of a symbol you found that isn't listed above.

Music

How do you know music is being played in this mural?

Location:

A mural painted with your favorite colors

What's your favorite color?

Location:

Food

What kind of food do you see?

Location:

Why did this symbol stand out to you?