

The art of making alebrijes

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW:

ALEBRIJE: a brightly colored make-believe animal made in carved wood or papier maché

FANTASTICAL: not real, imaginary

COPAL TREE: wood from this tree is especially good for carving alebrijes

COCHINILLA: an insect from which a dye that gives many shades of red is made

MACHETE: a large knife used to carve alebrijes



BEFORE you begin watching the video about alebrijes, examine this artifact.

What animal does this look like to you? _____

What features make you think it is that animal? _____

What features don't usually belong to that animal? _____



WHILE you watch the video, look for another alebrije animal shape? What combination of animals do you see in the alebrije in the video?



Watch the Alebrijes video (password: **corn**): <https://vimeo.com/300506866>

AFTER you've watched the video answer this question below:

Why do you think young children enjoy creating and painting these make – believe animals?

Create your own alebrije below. Try to combine two animal forms and features into your alebrije.



Watch this 360-degree video exploring streets and parks in Oaxaca!

Be sure to move your cursor, phone, or tablet around to see everything!

(password: **corn**): <https://vimeo.com/454888492>

Cultural Scavenger Hunt

Armondo Jimenez is an artist who creates special objects called alebrijes. The objects represent fantastical creatures and are beloved by children. Children love to draw, carve and paint their own special animal forms or receive them as gifts. Do you have a favorite object that you made or were given by someone?

Find and identify an object in your home that is special to you because you made it or because it was given to you. Maybe it's a photo, a drawing, a lucky rock, or a stuffed animal.

Name the object: _____

Explore the object. Use your senses of sight, touch, sound, smell or taste to discover how the object can have a similar purpose but look, feel, smell or taste different.

What do you observe? _____

Explain 3 ways the object has a similar purpose but appears to be different.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Don't forget! Before selecting your object, check with an adult to be sure your object is **SAFE** and **APPROPRIATE** to use.

I finished this lesson!

If you want to learn more about alebrijes go to the [Extended Activities](#) page at the end of this unit. There you will find alebrije designs to color, a link to a video that tells you about the artist who created alebrijes, a video that shows you how to create your own alebrije, and a story about a young boy who creates his own alebrijes.