

## Beaded Image Lesson Plan

Lesson plan prepared by Chenise Hache for the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia.

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### Suggested Grade/Age Levels

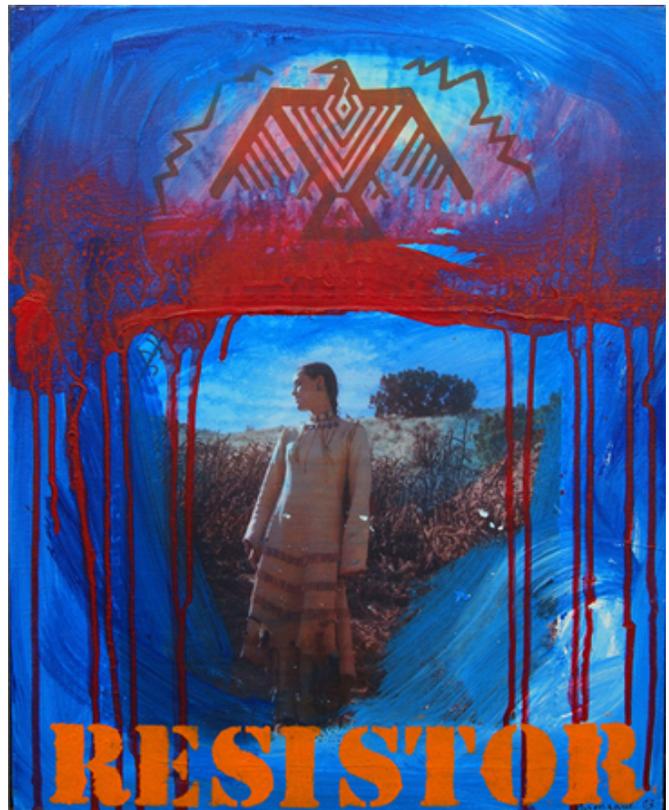
8+

### Introduction

Indigenous Peoples use special clothing and jewelry called regalia to represent important images of their identity, community, and relationships to each other and the natural world, as exemplified in the mixed media image *Resistor* by Anong Migwans Beam.

Inspired by traditional and contemporary beadwork, today we will use beads as a medium for personal storytelling with our own unique imagery, inspired by our personal histories.

We'll design simple images that represent personal stories and imagery significant to our own identity, families, or culture.



Anong Migwans Beam  
Resistor, 2003  
Mixed media on canvas, 50.5 x 40.2 cm. Gift of Dr. John  
Krawczyk, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, 2008.

## Set Up

Table and Chairs

## Materials

- Pen or marker that will show up on felt
- Craft felt
- Pony beads
- Thread
- Needles
- Scissors
- Glue (optional)

## Process

1. Think about the principles of simple, effective, symbolic design work. They can use shapes, colors, and imagery to represent various parts of their story. Consider the limitations of your medium: for example, you won't be able to convey small detail work with large pony beads, so think about your design like "pixels" may be helpful.
2. Create a draft of your design which can be transferred onto felt.
3. **Some tips on threading a needle:** try dampening the end of the thread or cutting it on a sharp angle if you're having trouble seeing through the hole. Both ends can be tied together in a knot, or just the back end of the thread. Knotting both of the ends together prevents the thread from slipping out of the needle, but it makes it harder to undo the work if a mistake is made.
4. Poke the needle through the back of the design, until the right placement is found on the felt. Then, the needle is pulled up through. Continue to pull the needle up until the knot of the thread gets to the back of the felt.
5. Gather the beads needed for the first row of your design and hold them down with your fingers. Hold the beads still, as the needle and thread go through each bead. Poke the needle down at the end of the line and pull until it is snug, not tight.
6. Poke your needle up between each bead to create a stitch over the row of beads to keep them flat. This is called tacking down. You can do every bead or every other bead, depending on their design. Use your fingers to help adjust the beads into the right place.

7. Repeat steps 4-6 until designs are complete.
8. When the designs are complete, or if you run out of thread, you can tie a knot off in the back by removing the needle with enough of a thread tail to tie with fingers, or by using the needle to create a small anchoring stitch in the felt.
9. When completed, you may cut the felt around the image to their preference, being careful not to snip any of the threads holding the beads down. You may choose to leave some of the felt showing or cut around their beadwork completely, depending on your preference.
10. You can sew or glue on a backing to hide stitch work, which could be more felt or stiffened paper or cardboard. You can include a boarder on your image, or not.

**Note:** Elders and knowledge keepers advise to only bead with a happy heart and good intentions. If you get frustrated or upset with the work, take a break and return to it when you're ready.