



Magical Murals: *Celebrating the Natural World and World Cultures*

Using symbols, patterns, and designs from cultures around the world, students collaborate in designing and painting an art mural. The experience builds their trust and sense of community with each other, while increasing their appreciation of the natural world and world cultures.

A residency typically includes the following components:

- **Meeting with teachers:** Susan meets with teachers to identify curriculum needs; plan scheduling, themes, and mural size; and address students' special needs.
- **PowerPoint presentation:** Several weeks before the mural project begins, Susan presents to the students and staff a PowerPoint depicting images from 50 murals painted by students in the U.S., Central, and South America. Students then brainstorm images relating to their mural theme.
- **Collaboration and inspiration:** Inspired by books, artwork, and additional images that represent the theme of the mural, students collaborate on the mural's overall design. Choosing symbols and patterns that relate to the culture represented, they work together to paint the mural.
- **Art principles and elements:** Students learn about art principles (balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, pattern, rhythm, and unity) and art elements (line, color, shape, value, form, texture, and space). They apply specific art techniques, including sponging, and learn to create contrast with cool and warm colors, light and dark colors, and complementary colors.
- **Students learn:** Through the creation and celebration of such a detailed depiction, students learn a great deal about the animals, plants and culture represented.
- **Music and poetry:** While painting, students listen to world music related to their mural theme. They may also choose to compose short pieces of poetry, to be included within images, or around borders of the mural.
- **Evaluations and PowerPoint:** Evaluations are presented to teachers, staff, volunteers, and students to complete. Students, volunteers, and teachers are invited to create a PowerPoint presentation on the project.
- **Celebration:** School staff, volunteers, and students and their families are invited to a school celebration honoring the young artists. Students speak about their experiences and celebrate their creativity by viewing a PowerPoint presentation on their project.

For more information about a school visit: Contact Susan at (518) 275-5664 or sus.shanley@gmail.com.