



Dream Something Big

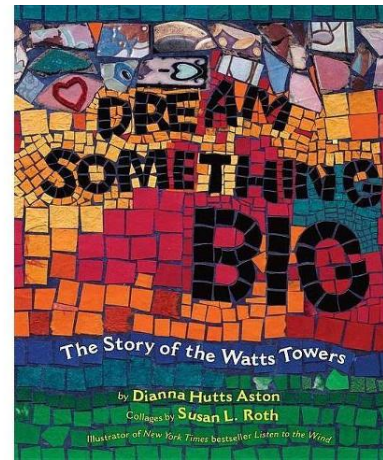
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Grades 3-5

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Discussion Questions

Before Reading

- What do you see on the cover? What materials do you think are used to create a mosaic, which is what this type of artwork is called?
- Have you heard of or visited the Watts Towers before? What do you know about them?
- Have you ever dreamed of doing something big before? What have you dreamed of accomplishing?

During Reading

- Have you ever thought something was beautiful that others did not? What did you think of? Have you created something new out of something old?
- Simon Rodia made artwork of things he remembered from Italy, the country he was born in. What about your neighborhood or city would you want to make artwork of, if you no longer lived there?
- Why do you think Simon Rodia gave his artwork to a friend?

After Reading

- What makes Simon's artwork special? Is there public art in your neighborhood? What is special about that art?
- The Watts Towers are a National Landmark, which means they are recognized as an important part of the city of Watts. They are protected from being torn down or changed, and are taken care of so that people can visit and enjoy them. Is there a place in your neighborhood that you would like to make a National Landmark?



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Suggested Vocabulary Words

Kaleidoscope: an instrument containing pieces of glass, plastics, and mirrors that change patterns when turned

Tavern: a place where drinks and food are sold

Flitting: to pass quickly from one place to another

Mortar: a mixture of cement, water, and sand

Deed: a written contract

National Historic Landmark: a building or site that is recognized for its history

Activity Ideas

Dream Big Collage

Materials

Construction paper

Recyclable materials (bottles, cans, cartons, boxes, newspaper)

Scissors

Glue

Have students create a mosaic image using recyclable materials and construction paper.

- Instruct students to brainstorm the image they would like to create for their mosaic. Encourage them to think about what inspires them from their city or a city they have visited. Provide examples of mosaics from the Watts Towers or from other sources. While mosaic pieces can be any shape and size, it works best if the shapes are relatively the same size for each color group; i.e. all blue shapes are the same size.
- Next, tell students to place their mosaic pieces in the desired image before gluing. That way, they can move pieces around before sticking pieces together.

3-D Watts Towers (examples available at the end of the book)

Materials

Pipe cleaners (approx. 10-12 per student)

Foam or cardboard base

Scissors

Beads

Construction paper

Teach students about engineering with pipe cleaners.

- Create/cut triangular bases ahead of time. Next, instruct students to build their towers.
- Print out a few pictures of the Watts Towers to give students an idea of the design. Provide beads or other supplies for them to decorate their towers with.
- Allow them to create their own version of the Watts Towers. Read the author's note at the end of the book for more information on Simon Rodia and his unique artwork. If possible, take a field trip!

