

3rd-5th Grade Writing Activity: Artist Statement

Artists often write statements about their work to share more about their ideas. Introduce the following writing prompts and invite students to choose 2-3 to respond to. These statements will be submitted to the Tapestry of New York online gallery along with their artwork. Note: Artist statements cannot exceed 1000 characters.

- Who did you choose to make a portrait of?
- Why did you choose this person?
- What is unique and special about this person?
 - Is it someone from history who fought to make sure more people were included in the United States?
 - Is it someone from today who tries to make sure that the United States is for everyone?
 - Is it someone who makes you feel like you belong to your community or country?
- How did you show what makes this person unique and important to you?
 - What details (pose, facial expression, clothes, objects) did you include to show us who this person is?
- What choices did you make that express the personality of the person in your portrait?
- How did you communicate who the person in your portrait is and what is important about them?

Optional Sentence Stems:

In my artwork, I chose to honor _____.

I think he/she/they should be honored in the Tapestry of NY because _____.

He/she/they made sure more people are included in my community/the United States by _____.

The details I included to show their personality are _____ and _____.

Note: The Tapestry of NY project invites students to express through artwork what the words “We the People” mean to them. The meaning of those words has been contested throughout the history of the United States. For 250 years, some Americans, through politics, social movements, and everyday choices, have fought for an idea of “We the People” that is ever more inclusive. Others throughout our history have fought for a version of “We the People” in which individual rights and political power are reserved for a smaller number of Americans.

We hope that your students will engage authentically with the question “What does ‘We the People’ mean to me?” and we expect they will express a variety of perspectives through their artwork. We encourage you, the teacher, to guide your students in creating artwork and writing artist statements that are respectful of all people who live in the United States and avoid denigrating any individuals or groups, regardless of how expansive or exclusive their definition of “We the People” may be. We also ask that you help ensure that your students’ submissions to the Tapestry of New York website follow the guidelines and requirements provided on the site. This will help ensure all submissions can be displayed on our platform.