



## Interactive Exercise: Be the Artist

Artworks can offer an opportunity to consider creativity in places and times that may be different from our own. Spending time to look carefully at the form, imagery, texture, and patterns of a work of art can help students consider and become curious about the materials and techniques, artistic conventions, and cultural contexts of unfamiliar objects. Use this interactive exercise to guide students as they examine an Ancient American work of art, document the ideas it presents to them, and consider how their thoughts connect with what we know about the artist's own ideas and intentions.

<b>Grade Level:</b>	Grades 3-5, Grades 6-8, Grades 9-12
<b>Collection:</b>	Pre-Columbian Art
<b>Culture/Region:</b>	America
<b>Subject Area:</b>	Communication, Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking, Visual Arts
<b>Activity Type:</b>	Distance Learning, Engagement Activity

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## TAKE A CLOSER LOOK: BE THE ARTIST

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One of the easiest ways to *begin* interpreting a work of art is to imagine you are the artist. Use the interactive book below to examine a very special work of art, imagine how it might have been made, and compare your ideas to what we know!

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### Other objects to try

You can try the Be the Artist approach with any work of art. Here are a few more VMFA objects you might want to examine this way. As the artist of the work, HOW did you make it? Consider:

1. The form, textures, and colors used.
2. The imagery and patterns you can see.
3. The materials and tools the artist might have needed.
4. The decisions the artist made. Was there a plan?
5. What was the artist thinking about: Who might have been the audience for this work? Does it seem to have a purpose (political, spiritual, or practical)? What makes you think so?

Now imagine you could visit with this artist for an interview and the chance to share your ideas about the artwork with the artist. What questions would you ask? What insights would you share?

**The Four Seasons, section of floor mosai...**

Unknown (Artist)



**Tomb Relief**

Unknown (Artist)



**Hunter's Shirt**

Unknown (Artist)



**Platter**

Maria Martinez, Native American, 1887 - 1980 (Artist)



**Standard ('Alam)**

Unknown (Artist)



**Three Folk Musicians**

Romare Bearden, American, 1911 - 1988 (Artist)



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2. The imagery and patterns you can see.
3. The materials and tools the artist might have needed.
4. The decisions the artist made. Was there a plan?
5. What was the artist thinking about: Who might have been the audience for this work? Does it seem to have a purpose (political, spiritual, or practical)? What makes you think so?

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