Project 1: Mehndi Hands

Duration: 1 week

What students will learn:

   Students will begin this project by learning about Mehndi. We will look at images of Mehndi designs and watch a video of a Mendhi party. We will look at the books *Mehndi Designs: Traditional Henna Body Art* by Marty Noble (Dover Publications) and *Mehndi: the Art of Henna Body Painting* by Carine Fabius (Three Rivers Press). Students will trace their hands on paper and create Mendhi designs on their traced hands.

What we will need:
-books on Mendhi, images and video of Mehndi, heavy drawing paper, pencils, fine point black sharpies, watercolors, and brushes

What we will do:
1. Read about the art of Mehndi and discuss the significance of this art in Indian culture. Emphasis will be placed on the fact that Mehndi dates back for hundreds of years and is still popular and practiced in modern India today.
2. Students will trace their hands and arms on white drawing paper about five of six times to fill up the paper. Erase all pencil lines created by overlapping that are not necessary. Go over pencil lines with a fine point sharpie.
3. Looking at examples of Mendhi designs, students will fill up their hands with their own designs. Have students fill in some shapes solid black and leave others white. This will create a nice contrast and balance of black and white.
4. After all of the hands and arms have been filled in, students will use the wet-on-wet watercolor technique to fill in the background or negative space. Students can choose three colors that are beside each other on the color wheel. Paint an area of background space with clean water and then drop colors into that area to let the colors blend. Allow watercolor to dry flat before moving.
5. Display these Mendhi designs where everyone can see!

Examine our Work:
1. Did students understand the significance of Mendhi art in India?
2. Did they follow the directions on how to trace their hands, develop their designs and paint the background?
3. Did they use the art materials according to instruction?