

Mini Art Lesson:

Black Block by El Anatsui

In this Mini Art Lesson, we'll explore how found objects can be used to make sculptural works, inspired by contemporary artist El Anatsui's *Black Block* (2010)! Kids ages 2-6 will play with materials from the recycling bin to build a sculpture of their home. And kids ages 7 and up will use aluminum foil and markers to create a textile-like sculpture.

●FOR TEACHERS, CAREGIVERS, AND PARENTS

Access a [free teaching guide](#) for El Anatsui's work, featuring questions for viewing and other great activities and resources.



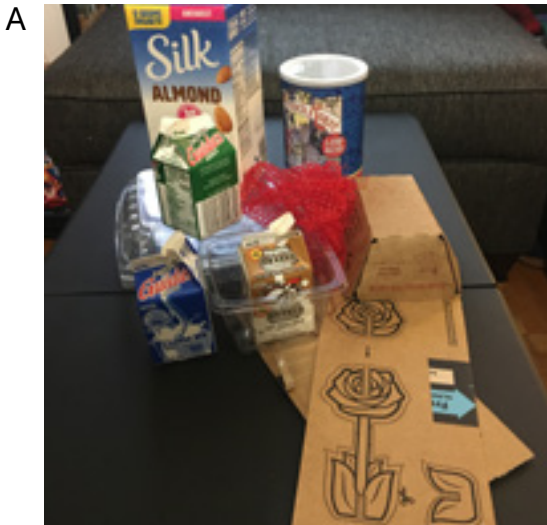
**FOR AGES 2-6:
LET'S PLAY**

El Anatsui uses found objects, metal, and wood in his beautiful life-sized sculptures. We're going to use materials from our recycling bins and other simple found objects to sculpt our version of home.

Step 1: Gather 10 to 15 found objects and recycled materials. Our friends Susan and Sydney picked containers and old cardboard boxes! (A)

Step 2: Think about your home, neighborhood, or dream house, and map out what structures you'll need to build with your found materials. (B)

Step 3: Use your blueprint to construct a sculpture of your home. (C)



FOR AGES 2-6:
LET'S PLAY (cont.)

Step 4: Now, put some final touches on your sculpture! You can use tissue paper, crayons and markers, stickers, or any other art supplies you'd like. (D)

Thank you to Susan and Sydney for their work on this superhero house!



FOR AGES 7+:
LET'S CREATE

El Anatsui skillfully transforms simple materials into elegant, abstract artworks. His technique of binding aluminum pieces together with wire results in textile-like effect. Take a look at this detail of *Black Block!* (A)

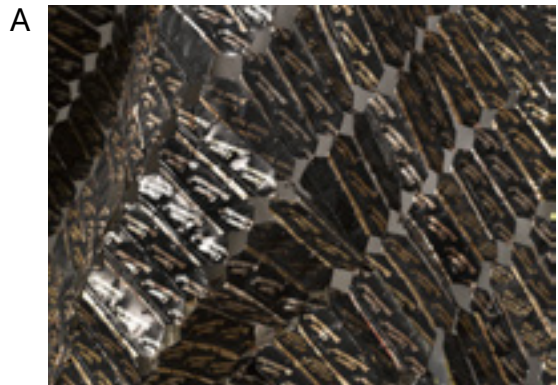
Let's explore how we can use similar materials to create sculptures that express our own artistic visions.

To get started, you will need:

- Aluminum foil
- Stapler
- Scissors
- Permanent markers

Step 1: Start by folding pieces of foil into rectangular shapes. (B)

Step 2: Decide what kinds of shapes you'd like to include. You can even make 3D shapes! (C)



FOR AGES 7+:
LET'S CREATE (cont.)

Step 3: Staple the shapes together, leaving a small gap in between. This gap will allow your sculpture to drape, fold, and bend. (D)

Step 4: Add some color or words to your artwork!
Anatsui uses colorful bottle caps in his work, which often have logos, for added meaning. What meaning do you want to give to your work? (E)

Step 5: There's no specific way to hang Anatsui's work, so museums are allowed to decide how they will be displayed. Try hanging your sculpture a different way each day! (F)

D



E



F



From top: El Anatsui (Ghanaian, born 1944). *Black Block*, 2010. Aluminum and copper wire. Brooklyn Museum; Bequest of William K. Jacobs, Jr., by exchange, 2013.7a–b. © El Anatsui. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum) Ages 2–6: (Photos: Family of Sydney and Susan, Brooklyn Museum) Ages 7+: (Photos: Noé Gaytán, Brooklyn Museum)