**Dahomey Applique Story Art**

Supplies:

* Material for background (Canvas board, Cardboard, Cardstock in black or white)
* Felt squares of various colors
* Glue
* Scissors
* Animal patterns (Tortoise, Leopard, Tree, Rope) **\*To save time patterns can be cut out prior to the program.**

Activity: Students will listen to a Benin folktale and develop applique’ art to represent the story. **Applique’** is the process of placing small pieces of fabric shapes onto a larger fabric to create patterns and pictures. The Fon people of ancient Benin, created wonderful applique’ story banners to represent the names and accomplishments of kings and warriors. Today, the applique’ technique is used in textile art to create clothing, household items such as pillows, and other decorative art.

**TORTOISE AND LEOPARD** *(Agbede, Kukuruku Tribe)*

One day the tortoise went to his garden and met the leopard; and the tortoise said he wanted to play; so the leopard told him to get a rope and then the tortoise tied him to a tree so that he could not get loose.

The tortoise went home and told his wife not to go to the garden; but the wife went to get wood and saw the leopard and shouted. And the leopard asked her to release him; but she said, “You will kill me,” but he said he would not. So she released him and then he tried to kill her, and she said it was not right. So the leopard fears the tortoise now and runs away.

Applique Process:

1. Place the paper patterns on top of your felt paper. Cut the patterns out of the felt.
2. Place felt shapes on the cardboard rectangle wherever you would like.
3. Use a pencil or marker to trace shape.
4. Remove shapes from board.
5. Turn shapes on wrong side.
6. Place a small amount of glue on the edge of the shape. Spread the glue out so there are no clumps.
7. Place shape in area where you pre-marked the cardboard.
8. Press down to secure. LEAVE THE APPLIQUE’ ON A FLAT SURFACE UNTIL IT IS DRY. (You may need to allow it to dry overnight.)
9. Continue # 6-8 until all shapes are on the canvas.
10. You may cut shapes and designs to decorate your tree and animals. (EX: squares for the tortoise shell, spots for the leopard, eyes, nose, mouth, and leaves for the trees.)