

Visual Analysis:

Carrying a Tradition Forward

Interpret (5 minutes)

Return to the artworks from the Moroccan, French and Saudi pavilions. Each artist connects cultural knowledge from the past with the present, but they do in different ways.

First review these approaches:

- **Transmit:** Pass knowledge, skills or techniques between people or generations.
- **Continue:** Keep a tradition active through continued practice.
- **Adapt:** Change an inherited practice or technique for a new context or purpose.
- **Reinterpret:** Use an inherited form, material or idea to communicate something new.
- **Remember:** Use art to carry forward the memory of a place, practice or experience.

How Do the Artists Do It?

Use the images and the reading, identify which approaches you see in each artist's work. More than one may apply.¹

Artist / Pavilion	Transmit	Continue	Adapt	Reinterpret	Remember
Amina Agueznay / Morocco	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Yto Barrada / France	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dana Awartani / Saudi Arabia	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Create

Design a Living Tradition Exhibition

You have seen how contemporary artists transmit, continue, adapt, reinterpret and remember cultural knowledge. Now apply one or more of these approaches yourself.

Imagine you have been invited to design an exhibition about a cultural tradition, craft, artistic practice, building tradition, story or other form of cultural knowledge.

Your goal is not simply to show visitors something from the past. Your exhibition should demonstrate how cultural knowledge can be carried forward and remain meaningful in the present.

Step 1: Choose Your Subject

Choose a tradition, practice, skill, story, place or other form of cultural knowledge from your own community or another culture you have studied.

My Subject _____

Step 2: Choose Your Approach

How will your exhibition carry this knowledge forward check one or more.

- ☐ Transmit: Pass knowledge, skills or techniques to others.
- ☐ Continue: Keep a tradition active through continued practice.
- ☐ Adapt: Change an inherited practice or technique for a new context or purpose.
- ☐ Reinterpret: Use an inherited form, material or idea to communicate something new.
- ☐ Remember: Carry forward the memory of a place, practice or experience.

Step 3: Design Your Exhibition

Create a sketch, poster, digital design, model, storyboard or other visual representation of your exhibition.

Include:

- Exhibition title: Give your exhibition a title that communicates its central idea.
- Visual centerpiece: Design the main artwork, object, installation or experience visitors would encounter.
- Past-to-present connection: Show what comes from the tradition and how it is being carried forward.
- Exhibit label: Write a brief caption explaining what visitors are seeing and why it matters.

Step 4: Explain Your Choices

Write a brief curator's note explaining which approach or approaches you used—transmit, continue, adapt, reinterpret or remember. How do specific choices in your exhibition accomplish that purpose?

Use what you learned from at least one of the artists in the article to explain your thinking.

Share

Display or briefly present your exhibition concept to the class. As you view your other projects, consider what different ways cultural knowledge can be carried forward without remaining unchanged.

Common Core Standard(s) Met:

CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

1 Amina Agueznay / Morocco

Strong responses may identify:

- Transmit: Agueznay's collaboration with artisans allows knowledge and traditional fiber techniques to pass among makers and generations.
- Continue: Weaving and other inherited craft practices remain active because artisans continue to practice and use them.
- Reinterpret: Traditional techniques are brought into a contemporary installation and given a new artistic context.
- Adapt: You may select this if you can explain how inherited techniques or materials are used differently within the contemporary artwork.

Yto Barrada / France

Strong responses may identify:

- Adapt: Barrada experiments with traditional textile practices and natural dyes, using inherited knowledge in new ways.
- Reinterpret: Traditional techniques become part of a contemporary artwork rather than simply reproducing earlier forms.
- Continue: You may identify this when supported by evidence that traditional knowledge remains active through continued use and experimentation.

Dana Awartani / Saudi Arabia

Strong responses may identify:

- Remember: Awartani's use of handmade clay bricks and historic decorative patterns carries forward memories of architectural places, forms and traditions vulnerable to damage or loss.

- Reinterpret: Architectural forms and patterns are recreated within a contemporary art installation, giving them a new setting and meaning.
- Continue: You may make this connection through the continued use of traditional materials, forms or making practices if supported by evidence from the reading.

What to Look For

You should recognize that the categories are different ways cultural knowledge can be carried forward, not mutually exclusive labels. The strongest responses will move beyond identifying a category to explain the connection:

What the artist does → which process it represents → what evidence supports that interpretation.

You don't have to identify every possible category. The goal is to recognize and justify how cultural knowledge moves between past and present before applying one or more of these approaches in your own project.