A Collage of Experiences and Identity

Jaune Quick-to-See Smith is a Native American artist and an enrolled Salish member of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Nation in Montana.

Look closely at Smith’s Famous Names, a work in MAG’s collection. She combines European elements like art historical images, and decorative details with old photographs of Native American peoples and stenciled text of translated names, all layered onto the outline of a woman’s traditional dress. Notice the patches and drips of paint. Through this “portrait,” Smith tells us of the complex history and the experiences of her people, often treated as unwanted outsiders in their own lands.

This and other works by contemporary Indigenous American artists bring authentic indigenous voices to the American story.

Want to learn more about the images and the names found throughout the canvas? Read the essay by artist G. Peter Jemison (Seneca, Heron Clan) in Seeing America.
Make a Collage to Voice Your Story
Who are you? What is your story? Where do you and your family fit into the American community?

Using Famous Names for creative ideas, design a collage that tells your story.

What images and materials will you use?
(e.g. fabric, photographs, patterned paper, newsprint, magazine clippings, paints, charcoal)
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What colors will you choose?
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What words will your collage have? What is their meaning or significance?
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Compare and Contrast
Inspire your family members and friends to create their own collages—how are they different or similar?