

REYNOLDA

EXPLORE REYNOLDA (AGE 4+)

Still Life and Making Meaning



Audrey Flack, *Bounty*, 1978.
Oil and acrylic paint on canvas.
Reynolda House Museum of
American Art, Gift of Betsy
Main Babcock, 1980.2.2. ©
Audrey Flack / Louis K. Meisel
Library

REYNOLDA

WHAT YOU NEED

- Audrey Flack's *Bounty* on this card or on your computer screen. To get a closer look and learn more about the artwork, visit reynoldahouse.org/collections/object/bounty.
- objects in your home
- a conversation partner

WORDS TO KNOW

still life: an artwork showing an arrangement of objects, often with fruit and flowers

symbol: a thing that represents or stands for something else (for example, a shining light bulb can represent a bright idea)

DISCOVERY ACTIVITY

Start by looking together at Audrey Flack's painting *Bounty* and discuss the following questions:

- What objects do you see in the painting?
- What do you notice about the objects or the painting itself? (Consider the colors, the textures, the borders of the painting, the placement of the objects etc.)
- Does anything surprise you?
- Is there anything in the painting that might relate to the passage of time? For example, if we came back to this scene in a few hours or a few days, what might be different?

REYNOLDA

- Choose an object in the painting and consider what it might symbolize or represent. If this is a more complex idea, talk about some familiar symbols. What can a heart represent? When you think about your favorite holiday, what images (or **symbols**) come to mind? If you receive a gold star for something you did, what does that mean?
- Talk about some of the objects in the painting and what the artist might have meant by putting them together. Adults and families with older kids can more fully explore what the artist might have thought by looking up the term “vanitas painting” and reading about the artwork in Reynolda’s [online database](#).

SYMBOLS AND STILL LIFE ACTIVITIES

Portraits: To continue thinking about how objects can represent or symbolize an idea, create a type of self-portrait by arranging objects that tell something about you. Then, make a family portrait by creating an arrangement of objects, with one representing each person in your family.

Still Life: Audrey Flack gathered various objects and put them together into a careful arrangement. Collect different items in your house and set them together as a **still life**. What meaning can you create with the objects you choose?