



# CRAFT IN AMERICA

REPRESENTING COMMUNITY EDUCATION GUIDE

Name:

## Worksheet 1: Welcome to My Neighborhood

*"If we look at ancient Greece the pieces are telling the stories of gods and incredible parties and heroes. But you don't really see the poor people or the enslaved people. And for me it's so important to tell their stories." —Roberto Lugo*

1. Where is Roberto Lugo from?
2. What does he say about his neighborhood?
3. Why is it called "The Badlands"?
4. What does Roberto Lugo say to let you know he does not agree with that name?
5. How does Roberto Lugo describe himself?
6. How did he get started in art?
7. What is most of Roberto Lugo's art about?
8. In what ways does Roberto Lugo help his community? How is the artist a community builder?



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## Worksheet 1: Welcome to My Neighborhood

Teacher guide with possible answers

1. Where is Roberto Lugo from?  
*He grew up in Kensington, a neighborhood in Philadelphia.*
2. What does he say about his neighborhood?  
*He said, "I come from Kensington in Philadelphia. Another name for Kensington is "The Badlands."*
3. Why is it called "The Badlands"?  
*There has been crime and lots of drug sales and drug use. And there is poverty. He says, "It's where a lot of impoverished people live." Note: "The Badlands" is a slang term for neighborhoods that are considered unsafe to visit or to live in. Originally, it means a geographical description of dry, degraded terrain that may be hard to travel through or to use for farming. It is also the name of a national park in South Dakota that is beautiful because of the mountainous and dry, rocky formations.*
4. What does Roberto Lugo say to let you know he does not agree with that name?  
*He likes his neighborhood. He says, "That's how people look at it from the exterior but from the inside I see that it's a community of resourceful people and there's a lot of creativity that happens in this place." He likes working in his neighborhood.*
5. How does Roberto Lugo describe himself?  
*He says, "I am a potter, poet, an artist." He also talks about being a teacher. He is obviously friendly, and he is encouraging. He invites people to try the pottery wheel, and he says to the little girl, "You're doing so good, Mia!"*
6. How did Roberto Lugo get started in art?  
*He talks about wanting to be like his older cousins. "We all did graffiti together...Years later I took a community college art class and the teacher just happened to be a potter." He immediately liked working with the clay.*
7. What is Roberto Lugo's art about?  
*He tells stories about his neighborhood. He draws connections with other times and other artists, like ancient Greek potters. He pays tribute to others he admires, like singer Nina Simone, and Tariq Trotter from The Roots (depicted on the mural at The Clay Studio.) He says, "My practice became defined when I started to acknowledge where it is that I'm from. It was telling the stories of Kensington, but also paying homage to all the people that paved the way for me to be here."*
8. In what ways does Roberto Lugo help his community? How is he a community builder?  
*He takes his pottery wheel out in the neighborhood to let people try it. He teaches art classes. He also gets positive attention for his community, and he tells the stories of people who live there. (Refer to Roberto Lugo's quote heading this worksheet.) As people learn the stories of others in their community, they have the opportunity to feel empathy and a sense of pride.*