

LESSON PLAN

Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center

Curriculum Title: Lowrider Paper Model

Time: 90 minutes _ Ages/Group: 8-13 Lesson Number: One Medium: Paper, markers, coloring pencils

GOALS/OBJECTIVES	To give students an appreciation of Lowrider cars as a cultural artform
How do these goals preserve, create, present or promote cultural arts of Mexican Americans or other Latin@ cultures? Is it socially relevant? Will your lesson address the 5 E's? (Engage, explore, explain, elaborate-extend, evaluate)	<p>This curriculum presents and promotes the Lowrider subculture, which originated in Chicane communities and is still heavily associated with Mexican Americans. It remains a thriving subculture in Austin.</p> <p>This lesson engages students in a variety of exercises and activities, explores students' own personal expression, explains historical and cultural context of lowriding, incorporates and builds upon previous knowledge, and evaluates students' thoughts on the activities.</p>

AGENDA

TIME

<u>Check-In/Opening Ritual:</u> Each student introduces their name and their favorite color(s). Instructor starts.	5 mins
<u>Warm-Up/Introductory Activity:</u> Worksheets (1 per student) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction (Page 1): Students read the introduction. They can do this individually or take turns reading sentences or sections. It may need to be explained that suspension on a car is the system that attaches the wheels to the body of the car that helps the car drive smoothly. • Activity 1 (Page 1): Students label the modifications to the 1963 Chevrolet Impala, using what they have learned from the introduction. • History (Page 2): Students read this section individually or collectively. • Discussion (Page 2): Facilitate a discussion with students using the prompts on the page. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "Where have you seen a lowrider before?" This can include on TV or online. If some students have not seen lowriders before, you can show the first 1 minute 30 seconds of this video from youtube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSj5nB-3Sls. It shows lowriding in Austin. ○ "What did it look like?" Guide the students towards the aesthetics of the car as the next section will move towards this idea ○ "How was the outside painted?" Did the car have any special designs? What color was it? • Paint Jobs (Page 3): Students read individually or collectively, referring to the pictured examples of each element. • Activity 2 (Page 4): Students draw a line between each picture on the left and its description in the middle. They draw another line between each description and the lowrider art that uses it as subject matter. • Brainstorm (Page 4): Students discuss what they would paint on their lowrider. 	20 mins

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note: Page 5 will be completed when students have made their lowrider 	
<p><u>Core Activity:</u> Lowrider model</p> <p><u>Steps/Procedures:</u></p> <p>Paper Models – Students choose a lowrider template. The 1964 Impala is simpler to make (better for students who have difficulty with fine motor skills or have less patience), the 1957 Bel Air is a bit more complex. Each comes in two variations (different types of wheels). To create the model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut out the model. This is first so that if students make an error cutting, they do not lose their drawing/coloring work. Some students may need help with this step. Encourage them to roughly cut around the shape then once they have done that, to cut along the lines. • Names. Ask each student to write their name on the back of their model. • Pre-fold. Pre-fold along the dotted lines to create creases. If you print the templates on cardstock, students may need to place a ruler against the dotted line, then fold over the ruler to create a straight crease. This will make it easier to fold the model later on. <p>2 minute break for water or to move around a bit. If they are particularly restless, this is a good point to collect up the models to continue at another time.</p> <p>Paper Models continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color the model. Encourage students to think about the painting options from Page 3 of the worksheet. Use coloring pencils for murals (it enables more detailed work), and markers for coloring larger sections. Make sure they do not color the tabs. • Fold the model. Fold the paper along all the dotted lines so that it forms the 3d car shape. • Fold the tabs. Fold the tabs and line them up so that it is clear where it will be glued. • Glue the tabs underneath the appropriate section. • Optional: apply “flakes”. Students apply glitter to the model using glitter pens if they are available. <p>Discussion: Students take turns explaining what colors, patterns or designs they used on their lowrider</p> <p>Activity: Hittin’ Switches (Worksheet page 5) Students place a plastic fork underneath their lowrider with the ends of the prongs sticking out the back of the car. By pushing down the prongs, it should lift the front of the car off the ground.</p> <p>Optional activity: Lowrider hopping contest Students compete to see who can hop their lowrider the highest off the ground without it flipping.</p> <p><u>Discussion Questions:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you decorate your lowrider? • What do you like about the colors you chose? 	1 hour

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<p><u>Vocabulary (simpler explanations on worksheet):</u></p> <p>Candy paint: Vibrantly colored paint often used for painting lowrider cars, eg. candy green, candy red. Created through a process of applying a base coat, mid coat, and clear top coat to give a very shiny finish.</p> <p>Chicanx/Xicanx: Name used by many Americans of Mexican heritage to describe themselves, their identity and their culture. Also includes Chicano, Chicana, Xicano, Xicana.</p> <p>Cruising: Driving around for fun, often on a strip of road that others also cruise on.</p> <p>Flakes: Metal flakes in the paint that makes it reflect light like glitter.</p> <p>Hittin' switches: Flipping switches in a lowrider that raises or lowers the body of the car. There are typically four switches: front, back, left, right. Flipping the switches in different combinations and with specific timing can be used to make the car hop, dance or bounce.</p> <p>Lowrider: A car, usually a classic car from the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s, that has a lowered body. They often have custom paint jobs, smaller wheels and hydraulic or airbag suspension that allow the driver to raise or lower the body of the car.</p> <p>Mexican-American: An American of Mexican heritage and their culture.</p> <p>Mural: An artwork that is painted on a wall or other large surface.</p> <p>Paint job: The way a car is painted for decoration.</p> <p>Pattern: Part of an image that repeats over and over.</p> <p>Two-tone: Using two different shades of color, especially one light, one dark.</p> <p>Wheel skirt: Sheet of metal matching the rest of the car that covers the wheel.</p>	
<p><u>Check-Out/Closing Ritual</u></p> <p>Rose and Thorn: Each student answers the question: what was one thing you enjoyed about that activity (rose) and one thing that was challenging (thorn)? They each say "my rose was..." and "my thorn was..." giving their answer.</p>	5 mins

PLANNING

REFLECTION

<u>Special Supplies Needed/Things to Prepare Ahead of Time</u>	<u>Challenges/Successes/Notes for Coordinator</u>
<p><i>No need to list supplies you bring every day (pencils, crayons, scissors, paper, etc.)</i></p> <p>For instructor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheet (copy for instructor) printed on plain paper in color • Templates printed on plain white paper or card stock in grayscale. There should be at least one copy of each template for each child. <p>For each child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheet printed in color or grayscale • Lead pencil • Eraser • Pencil sharpener • Set of coloring pencils • Set of markers • Glue stick 	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glitter pen (optional)• One plastic disposable fork | |
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References

Chappell, B. (2012). Lowrider space: aesthetics and politics of Mexican American custom cars. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

Supplemental Materials

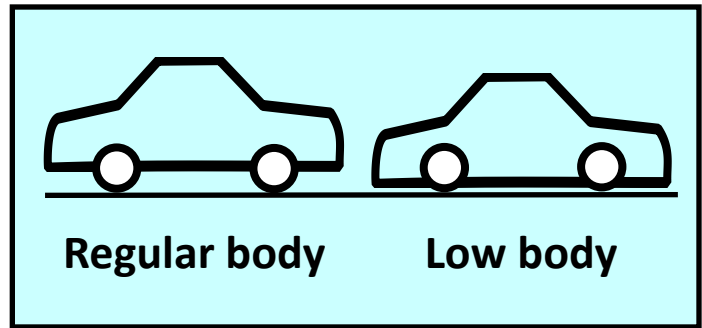
LOWRIDERS

Introduction

Lowriders are cars that have their **body lowered** so that they sit close to the ground. They are usually old, classic cars.

They can have:

- **Colorful paint;**
- **Smaller wheels;**
- **Hydraulic or Airbag suspension** that lets the driver raise or lower the sides of the car. They can even make it drive on three wheels!
- Other modifications (changes) to make the car look good, like **wheel skirts** (covers for the back wheels), or decorative (fancy) bumpers.



Activity: What are the differences between these cars?



Regular

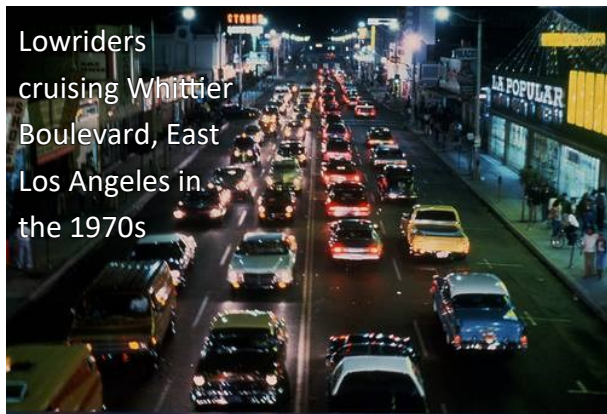


Lowrider

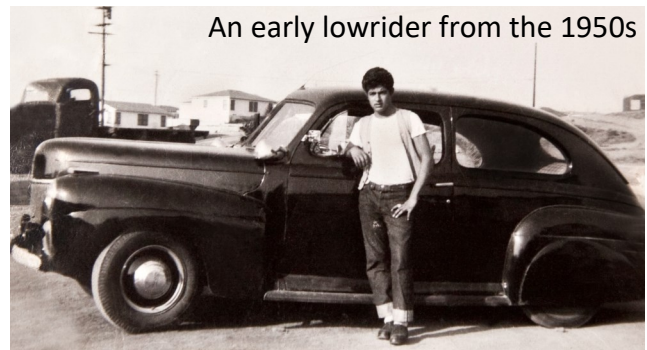
LOWRIDERS

History

The first **Lowriders** were created by **Chicanxs** that formed car clubs in Southern California in the 1940s and spread to other **Mexican-American** communities in Texas and the Southwest.



Lowriders
cruising Whittier
Boulevard, East
Los Angeles in
the 1970s



An early lowrider from the 1950s

While other groups changed their cars to make them faster, lowriders were made to drive “*bajito e despacito*” (low and slow) to show the beauty and style of the car when **cruising**.

Today, all kinds of people drive lowriders, but they are still strongly associated with Chicanx people and culture.

Discussion:

Have you ever seen a lowrider before?

Where and when?

What did it look like?

How was it painted?



Austin Lowriders at the ESB-
MACC during MexAmerican

Vocabulary

Chicanx/Xicanx:	Name used by many Americans of Mexican heritage to describe themselves, their identity and their culture. Also includes Chicano, Chicana, Xicano, Xicana.
Cruising:	Driving around for fun, often on a strip of road that others also cruise on.
Mexican-American:	An American of Mexican heritage and their culture.

LOWRIDERS

Paint jobs

Lowriders can be painted in different ways...



...in **one color**...

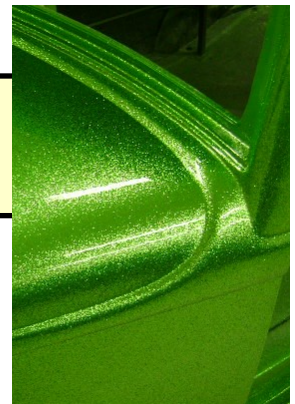


...in a **two-tone** that matches the curves of the car...



...with **candy** or **pearl** paint to make it super shiny...

...with **flakes** to make it sparkle...



...with **patterns**...



...and with **murals**.



Murals can be of anything, but often express the owner's **Mexican, Chicano/ Mexican-American, or Aztec/Mexica** (indigenous/native people of Mexico) heritage.

Vocabulary

Candy Paint, Pearl Paint:	Paint that is applied in a special process to make it very shiny.
Flakes:	Metal flakes in the paint that makes it look glittery.
Mural:	An artwork that is painted on a wall or other large surface.
Paint job:	The way a car is painted for decoration.
Pattern:	Part of an image that repeats over and over.
Two-tone:	Using two different shades of color, especially one light, one dark.

LOWRIDERS

Cultural imagery

Activity: Match the cultural images on the left to their description in the middle and to the lowrider art on the right



Emiliano Zapata

Leader in the Mexican Revolution that fought for the rights of poor rural (country) people.



Lowrider Culture

The way of life of people who turn their cars into lowriders and are part of the lowriding community.



La Virgen de Guadalupe

Saint Mary, mother of Jesus, who is said to have appeared in Mexico, and became an important symbol for Mexican people.



Aztec Sun Stone

Giant stone calendar created by indigenous (native) Aztec people over 500 years ago.

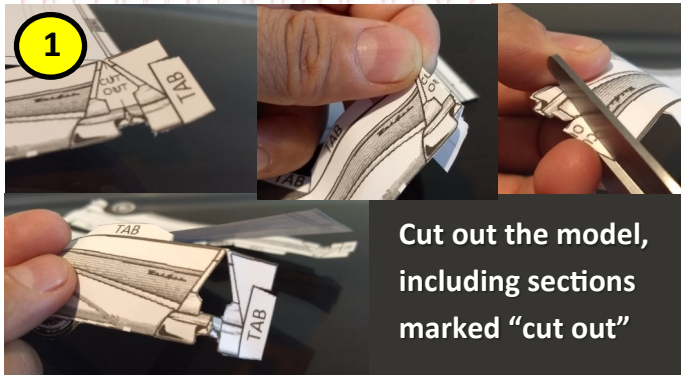


Brainstorm: How would you paint *your* lowrider?

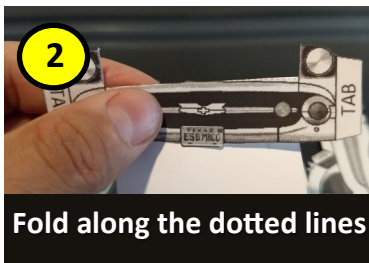
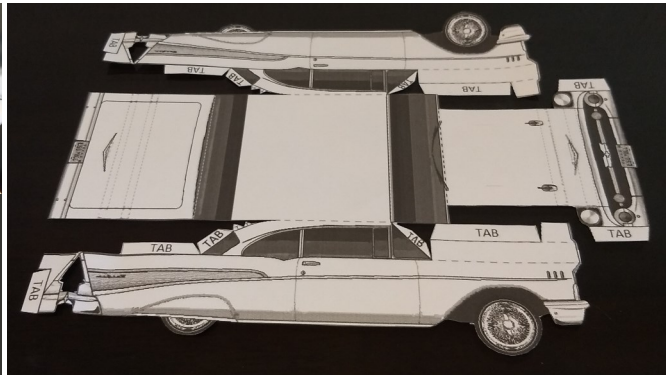


LOWRIDERS

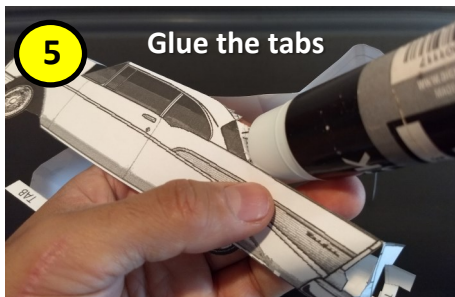
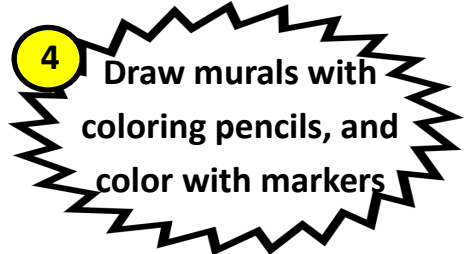
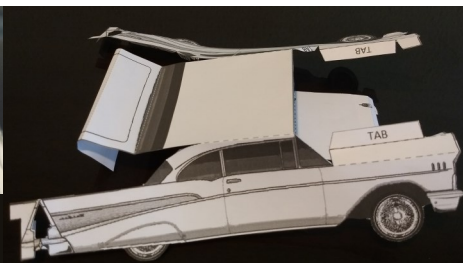
Paper Model



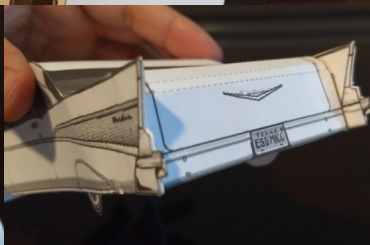
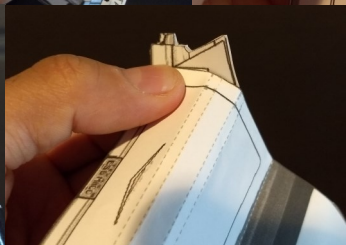
Cut out the model, including sections marked "cut out"



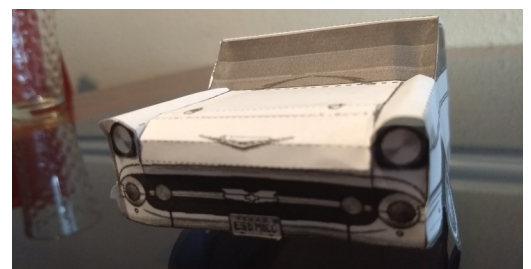
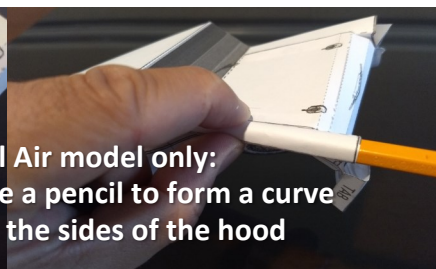
Fold along the dotted lines



Glue the tabs



Bel Air model only:
Use a pencil to form a curve
on the sides of the hood



Optional: add
"flakes" with a
glitter pen



Now you
have your
lowrider!

LOWRIDERS

Hittin' Switches

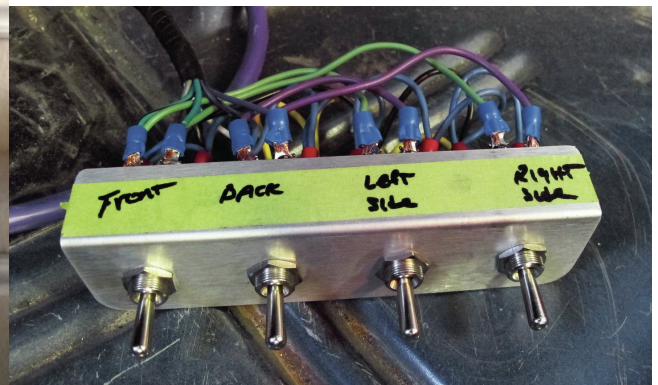
Lowriders with hydraulics have switches the driver can use to raise or lower the car in different ways. This is called **“hittin’ switches”** and can make the car dance or bounce. They even have contests to see who can make their car hop the highest!



Activity:

- 1 Place your lowrider on top of a fork (your “switch”).
- 2 Push the end of the fork prongs to make the front hop off the ground like a real lowrider.

How high can you make it hop without flipping over?

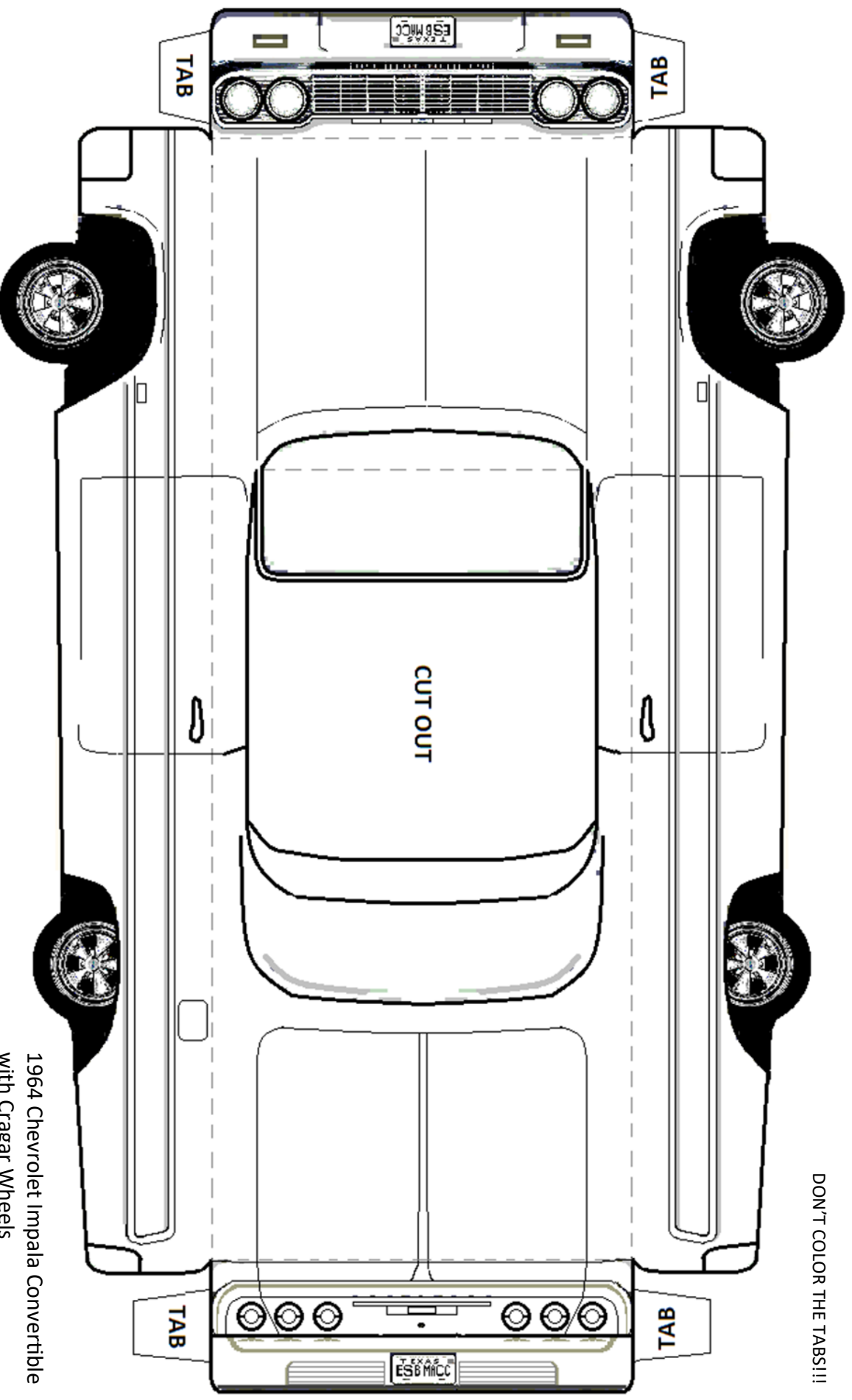


References:

Chappell, B. (2012). Lowrider space: aesthetics and politics of Mexican American custom cars. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

- Pg 1:** 1963 Chevrolet Impala Z11, Mecum Auctions
<https://www.mecum.com/lots/DA0912-140138/>
Lowrider Freetoedit - Lowrider Transparent, artist unknown
https://www.pngkit.com/view/u2w7a9e6i1r5e6w7_lowrider-freetoedit-lowrider-transparent/
- Pg 2:** 1950s lowrider from "Everything Comes from the Streets" documentary
<https://remezcla.com/lists/culture/bajito-y-suavecito-a-look-back-at-lowrider-history/>
Lowriders Cruising by Aurelio Jose Barrera in The Eastsider
https://www.theeastsiderla.com/eastsider_on_the_go/arts_and_culture/lowriders-return-to-whittier-boulevard-for-a-saturday-night-of-cruising/article_bcc62538-822d-5b63-a37a-e055e8fa7ac9.html
Austin lowriders at the ESB-MACC during MexAmeriCon
<http://www.mexamericon.com/gallery.html>
- Pg 3:** Black Buick Regal, Lowrider.com
<https://www.lowrider.com/features/1984-buick-regal-its-all-relative/>
Two tone Chevy 1500, photograph by Patrick Rall
<https://chevroletforum.com/articles/lowrider-1988-chevy-1500-flawless-show-truck/>
Candy paint, photograph uploaded by user, "Winning Agent"
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/millionairecarclub/8686678798>
Metal flake paint, uploaded by user erikj62ss
<https://erikj62ss.tumblr.com/post/30995497946/speedemon666-old-school-flake-015-lime-green>
Gypsy rose side panel, photograph by the Historic Vehicle Association
<https://www.historicvehicle.org/low-slow-gypsy-rose/>
Lincoln Town Car panel patterns, lowrider.com
<https://www.lowrider.com/rides/cars/2000-lincoln-town-car-turning-the-turtle-into-a-favorite/attachment/2000-lincoln-town-car-driver-side-rear-quarter-panel-patterns/>
Chavez, Zoot Suits, Pancho Villa paint job, photograph by Chris Nelson
<https://chrisnelson.ca/photos/2005/04/0504/DSCF1977>
- Pg 4:** Aztec Sun Stone, photograph by Juan Carlos Fonseca Mata
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aztec_sun_stone
La Virgen de Guadalupe, Public Domain
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Virgen_de_guadalupe1.jpg
Emiliano Zapata, Granger Historical Picture Archive/Alamy Stock Photo/Alamy Stock Photo
Lowrider Culture—"Fiestas Patrias Parade, South Park, Seattle, 2015 - 358 - lowriders", photograph by Joe Mabel
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fiestas_Patrias_Parade,_South_Park,_Seattle,_2015_-_358_-_lowriders_\(21403531350\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Fiestas_Patrias_Parade,_South_Park,_Seattle,_2015_-_358_-_lowriders_(21403531350).jpg)
Lowrider painted with images of lowriders, photograph by Dani Matias
<https://www.kut.org/post/austin-car-clubs-give-community-lift>
Aztec-themed trunk mural, Lowrider.com
<https://www.lowrider.com/rides/cars/1953-chevy-210-high-school-sweetheart/>
La Virgen de Guadalupe hood mural, photo by Theresa Cisneros
<https://www.ocregister.com/2011/09/19/car-show-highlights-fiestas-patrias-weekend/>
Emiliano Zapata visor mural, photograph by Sal Rojas
<http://photopost.brownpride.com/showphoto.php?photo=28623&title=zapata-lowrider-mural&cat=502>
- Pg 6:** Lowrider hopping, photograph by Nathanael Turner
<https://www.businessinsider.com/nathanael-turners-photos-of-the-los-angeles-lowrider-convention-photos-2014-4>
Lowrider switch panel, lowrider.com
<https://www.lowrider.com/how-to-tech/chassis-suspension/1110-lrmp-black-magic-hydraulics-set-up/>
- All other images by Futa 'Ofamo'oni

DON'T COLOR THE TABS!!!



1964 Chevrolet Impala Convertible
with Cragar Wheels

Instructions:

Cut out Template, including the middle section labelled "CUT OUT"

Fold along the dotted lines to form into a box

Color and draw on any patterns or murals, making sure not to color the sections marked "TAB"

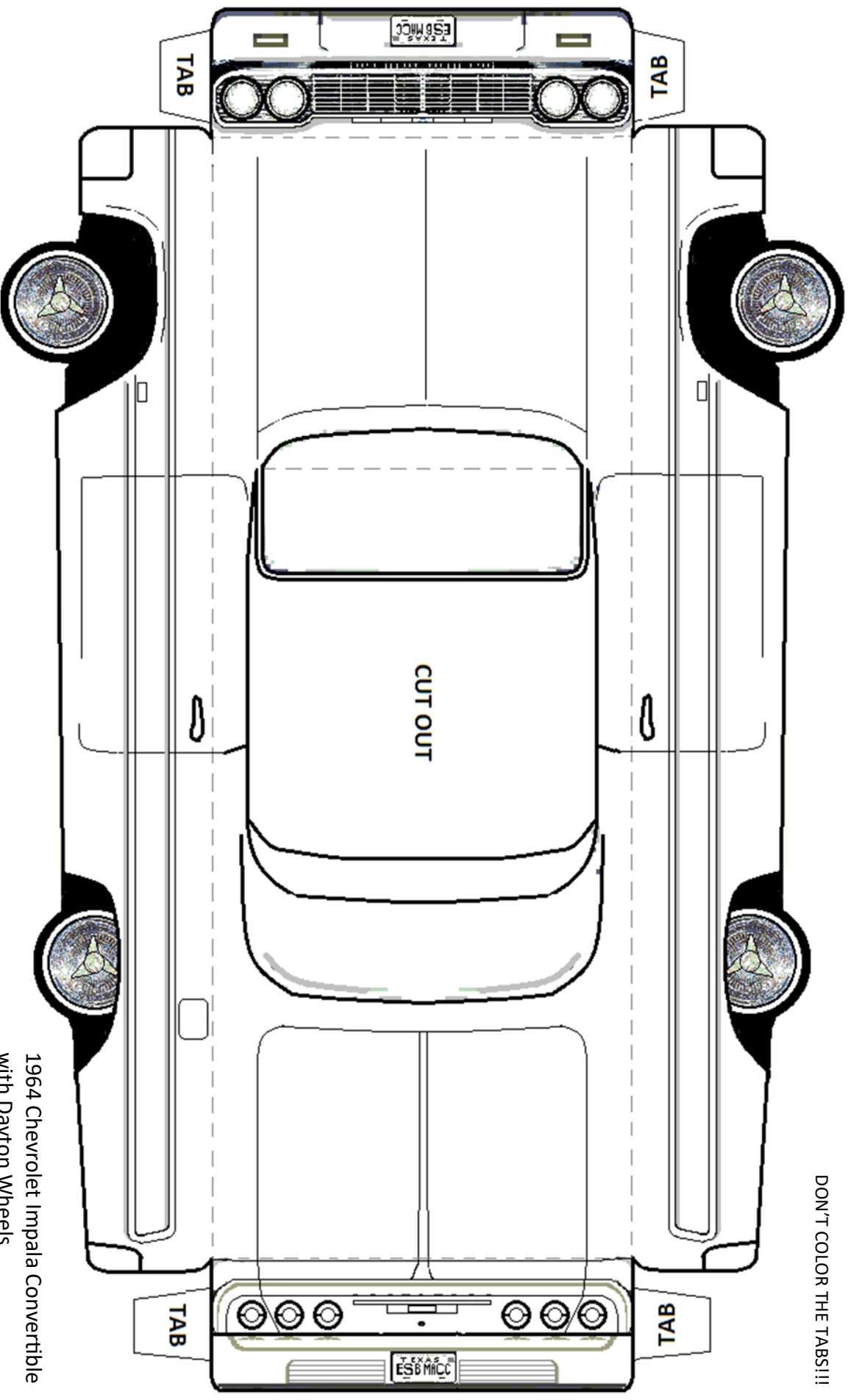
Re-fold dotted lines, then fold the Tabs so that they sit underneath the closest side

Apply glue to the top of the sections marked "TAB" and glue behind the closest side of the model

Fold up the windshield piece

Difficulty: Easy

DON'T COLOR THE TABS!!!



Instructions:

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Fold along the dotted lines to form into a box

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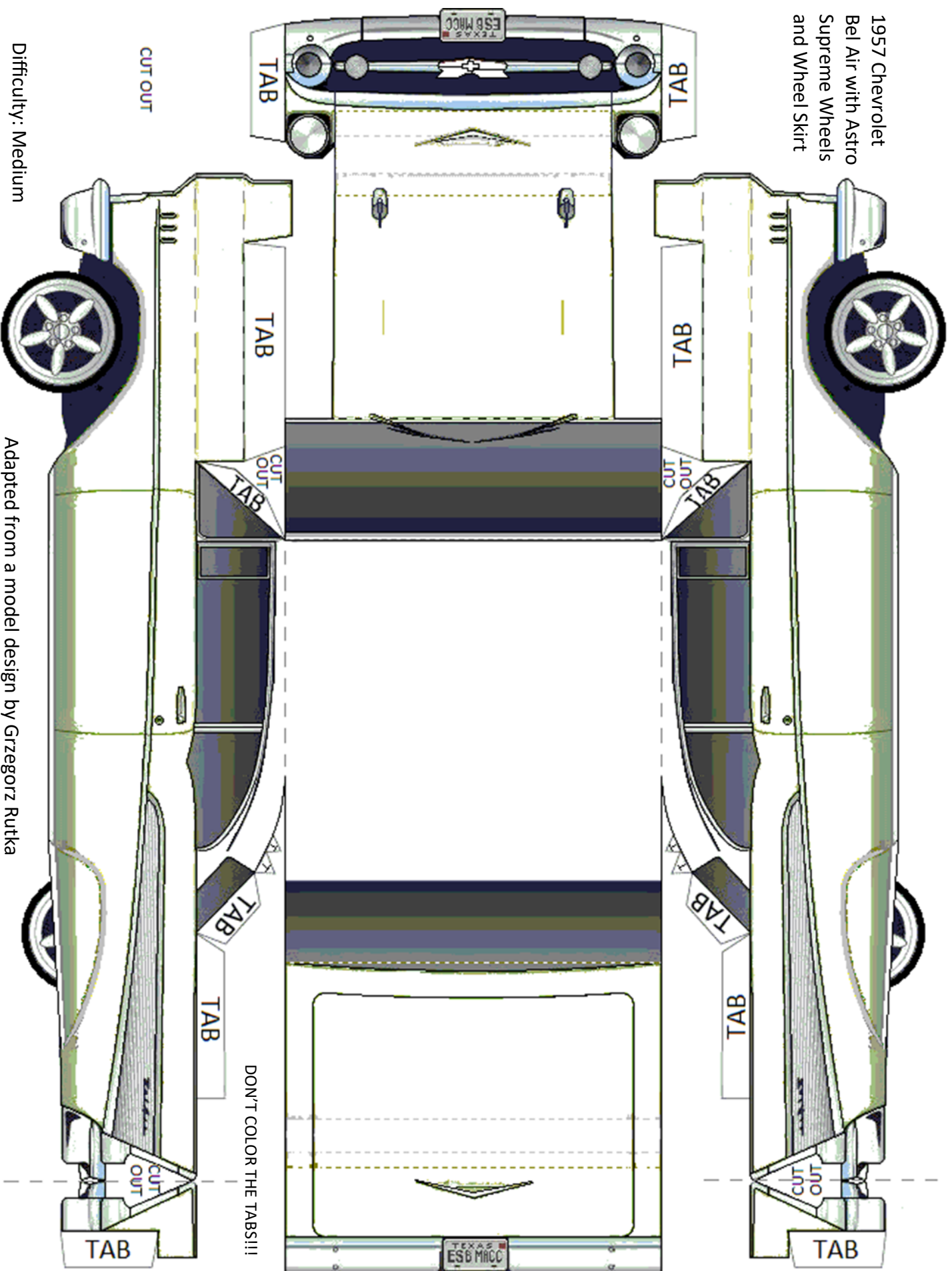
Apply glue to the top of the sections marked "TAB" and glue behind the closest side of the model

Fold up the windshield piece

Difficulty: Easy

1964 Chevrolet Impala Convertible
with Dayton Wheels

1957 Chevrolet
Bel Air with Astro
Supreme Wheels
and Wheel Skirt

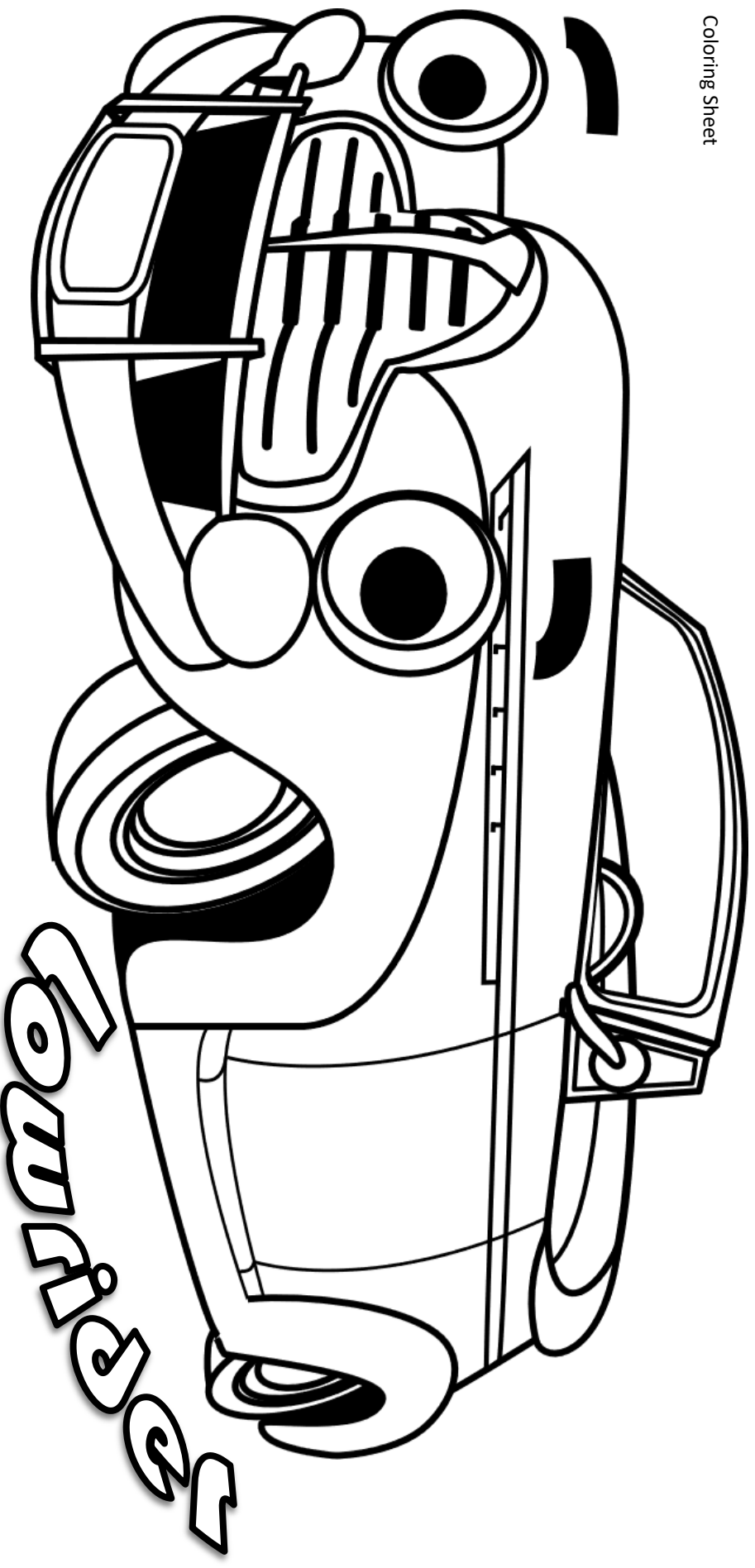


Difficulty: Medium

Adapted from a model design by Grzegorz Rutka

[illegible]

Adapted from a model design by Grzegorz Rutka



Lowriders are cars with **lowered bodies** that may have all kinds of cool modifications, like **fancy wheels**, **custom paint**, and **switches** that can make the car bounce, hop, dance, or drive on three wheels! They were first created by **Chicanxs** in **California** and later **Texas** and the **Southwest**.

What colors, patterns, or pictures will you put on yours?