

# PARENT GUIDE

## Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center

Curriculum Title: Lowrider Paper Model

Time: 90 minutes

Ages/Group: 5-7

Medium: Paper, markers/coloring pencils/crayons

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?	This curriculum presents and promotes the Lowrider subculture, which originated in Chicana communities and is still heavily associated with Mexican Americans. It remains a thriving subculture in Austin.

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Worksheet (below) printed on plain paper in color. Alternatively you may like to just use the digital copy.
- 1964 Impala Template (below) printed on plain white paper or cardstock
- Coloring pencils and/or markers and/or crayons
- Glue stick
- Glitter pen (optional)
- One plastic disposable fork

### AGENDA

### TIME

<p><u>Introductory Activity:</u> <b>Worksheets</b> (1 per student)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read through and fill out the worksheet with your child.</li><li>• If your child has never not seen a lowrider in a video or in real life before, you can show the first 1 minute 30 seconds of this video from youtube: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSj5nB-3SlS">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSj5nB-3SlS</a>. It shows lowriding in Austin.</li></ul> <p>You might also like to ask your child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ “What did the lowrider look like?”</li><li>○ “How was the outside painted?” “Did the car have any special designs?” “What color was it?”</li></ul> <p><b>Activity 2</b> (Page 4): To make this matching exercise more fun, you can time your child to see how fast they match all four pictures.</p>	30 mins
<p><u>Core Activity:</u> Lowrider model</p> <p><u>Steps/Procedures:</u></p> <p><b>Paper Models –</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are two variations of the template in the file <i>ESB MACC Lowrider Lesson Paper Model Templates 5-7 years.pdf</i> that you can print out.</li><li>• The steps are shown in pictures on the worksheet and in the video. Your child may need help with the cutting and folding stages.</li></ul>	1 hour

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- **Optional step:** After the model has been completely glued, use glitter pens to go over the colored sections to give the effect of “flakes” (metal flaked paint used on some lowriders). Works best over markers.

#### Discussion Questions:

- How did you decorate your lowrider?
- What do you like about the colors you chose?

#### **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. Instructions on worksheet and in video.

#### **Optional activity: Lowrider hopping contest**

Compete with your child to see who can hop the lowrider the highest off the ground without it flipping.

#### Extra Vocabulary:

**Suspension:** The system on a car that attaches the wheels to the body of the car that helps the car drive smoothly.

#### References

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

#### Supplemental Materials

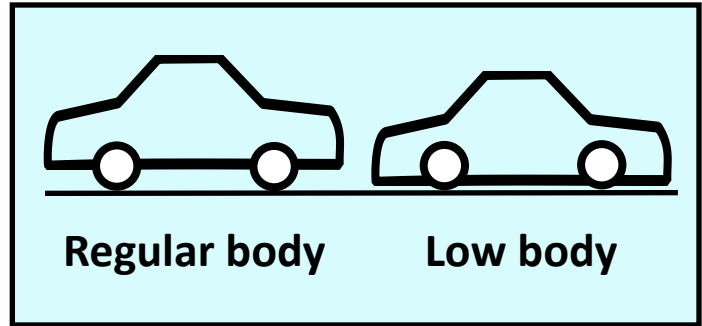
# LOWRIDERS

## 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;**
- **Small wheels;**
- **Hydraulic or Airbag suspension** that can make the body of the car go up or down. They can even make the car drive on three wheels!
- Other modifications (changes) to make the car look good, like **wheel skirts** (covers for the back wheels), or fancy bumpers.



**Activity: What are the differences between these cars?**



**Regular**

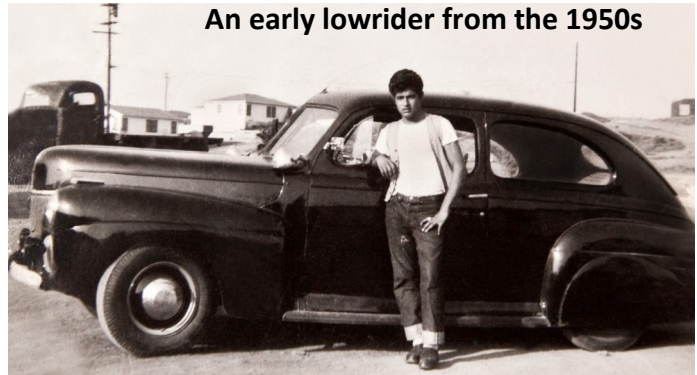


**Lowrider**

# LOWRIDERS

## History

The first **Lowriders** were created by **Chicanxs**. That is a name that some Mexican-Americans like to call themselves and their culture.



An early lowrider from the 1950s



Lowriders Cruising

Photo by Aurelio José Barrera

They made changes to their cars to make them more special. One of their favorite past-times was **cruising**. Cruising is when you drive around for fun, especially when you do it with other friends in your car club.

Today, all kinds of people drive lowriders, but Chicanx people and culture is still a very important part of the lowriding community.

## Discussion:

Have you ever seen a lowrider before?

What did it look like?

How was it painted?



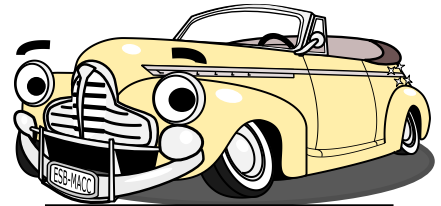
Austin Lowriders at the ESB-MACC during MexAmerican

MEXAMERICAN  
COMMUNITY, CULTURE & COMICS | AUSTIN, TEXAS



# LOWRIDERS

## Paint jobs



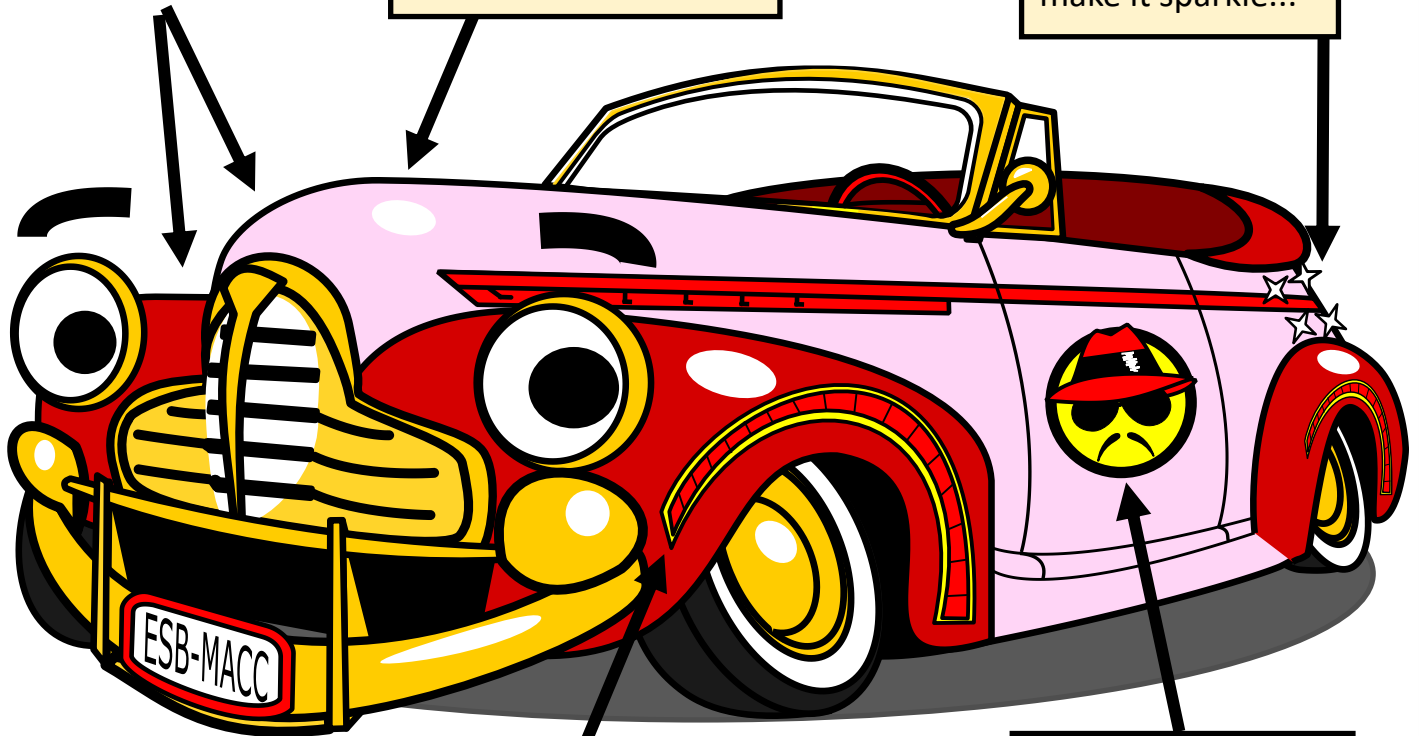
...in one color...

Lowriders can be painted in different ways...

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

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

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



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

...and with **murals**.

Murals can be of anything, but often show the owner's **Mexican, Chicana/ Mexican-American, or Aztec** (indigenous/native people from Mexico) culture.

### Vocabulary

**Candy Paint:**

Paint that is specially made to make the car look very shiny.

**Flakes:**

A kind of glitter that's mixed with the paint to make it sparkly.

**Mural:**

An artwork that is painted on a wall or other big surface.

**Paint job:**

The way a car is painted to make it look good.

**Pattern:**

Part of a picture that repeats over and over.

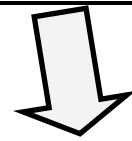
**Two-tone:**

Using two different colors, especially one light, one dark.

# LOWRIDERS

Cultural imagery

## Activity: Match the cultural images to the lowrider art



### Aztec Sun Stone

Giant stone calendar created by the Aztec people over 500 years ago.



### La Virgen de Guadalupe

Saint Mary, mother of Jesus, who people say appeared in Mexico.



### Emiliano Zapata

Leader that fought for poor country people in Mexico.



### Lowrider Culture

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



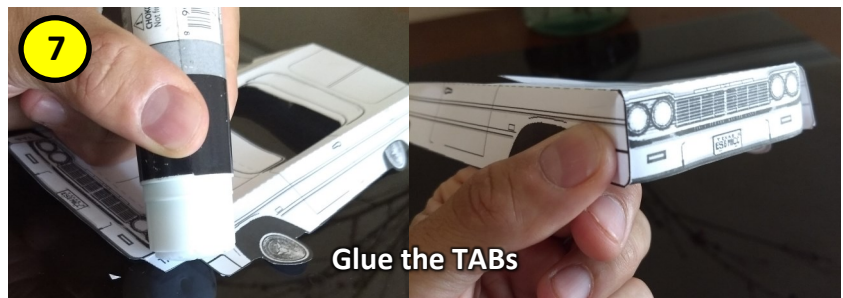
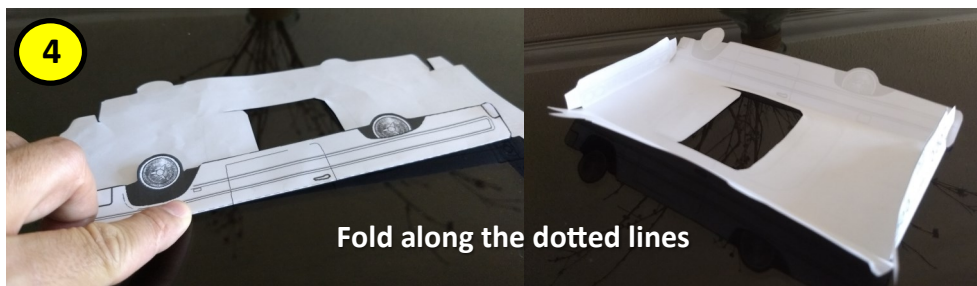
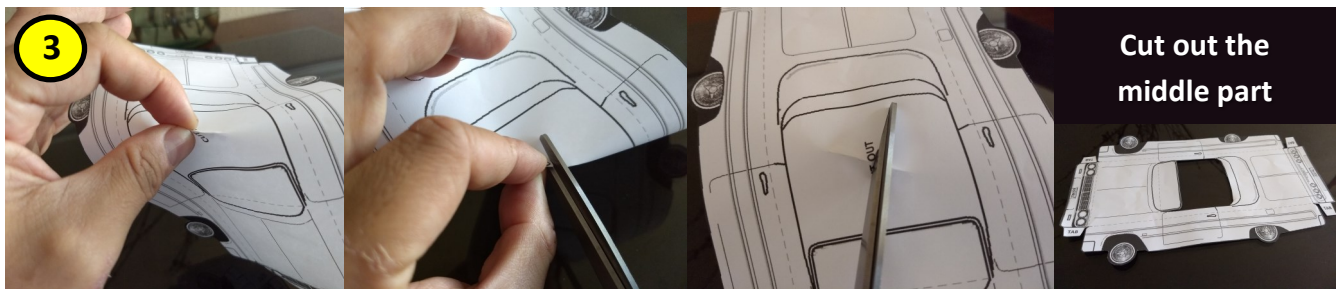
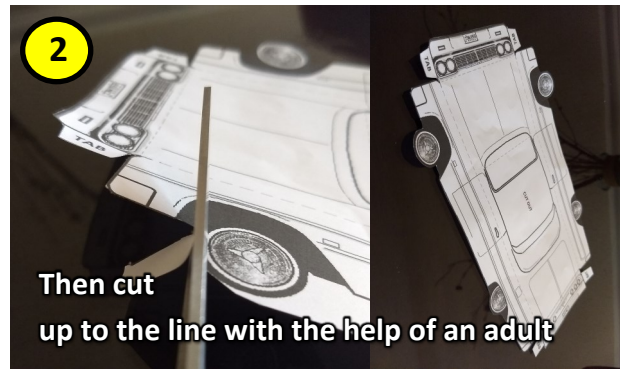
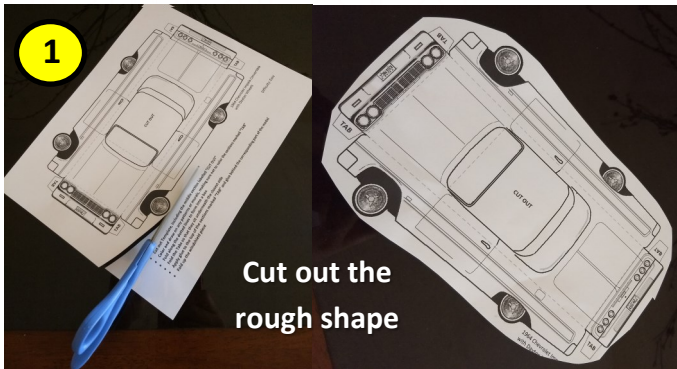
Brainstorm: How would you paint *your* lowrider?





# LOWRIDERS

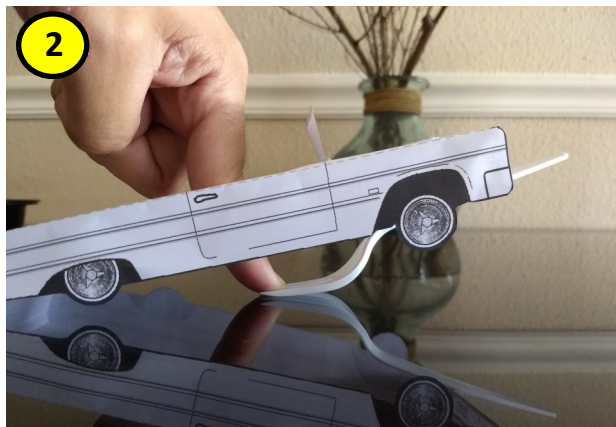
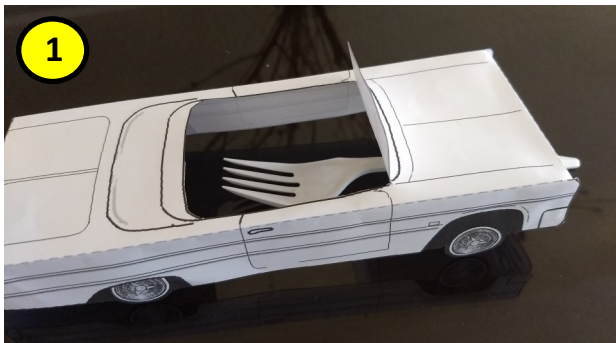
## Paper Model



# LOWRIDERS

## Hittin' Switches

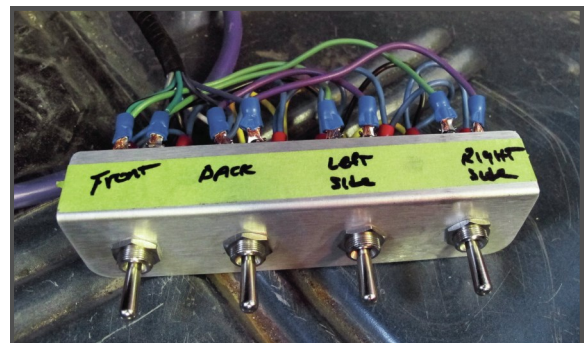
Some lowriders have special switches that can make the car dance or bounce. They even have contests to see who can make their car hop the highest!



### Activity:

- 1 Place your lowrider on top of a fork (your "switch").
- 2 Push the end of the fork prongs to make the front lift off the ground like a real lowrider does when it hops.

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.



### Page 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/](https://www.pngkit.com/view/u2w7a9e6i1r5e6w7_lowrider-freetoedit-lowrider-transparent/)

### Page 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](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>

### Page 4:

Aztec Sun Stone, photograph by Juan Carlos Fonseca Mata  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aztec\\_sun\\_stone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aztec_sun_stone)

La Virgen de Guadalupe, Public Domain  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Virgen\\_de\\_guadalupe1.jpg](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>

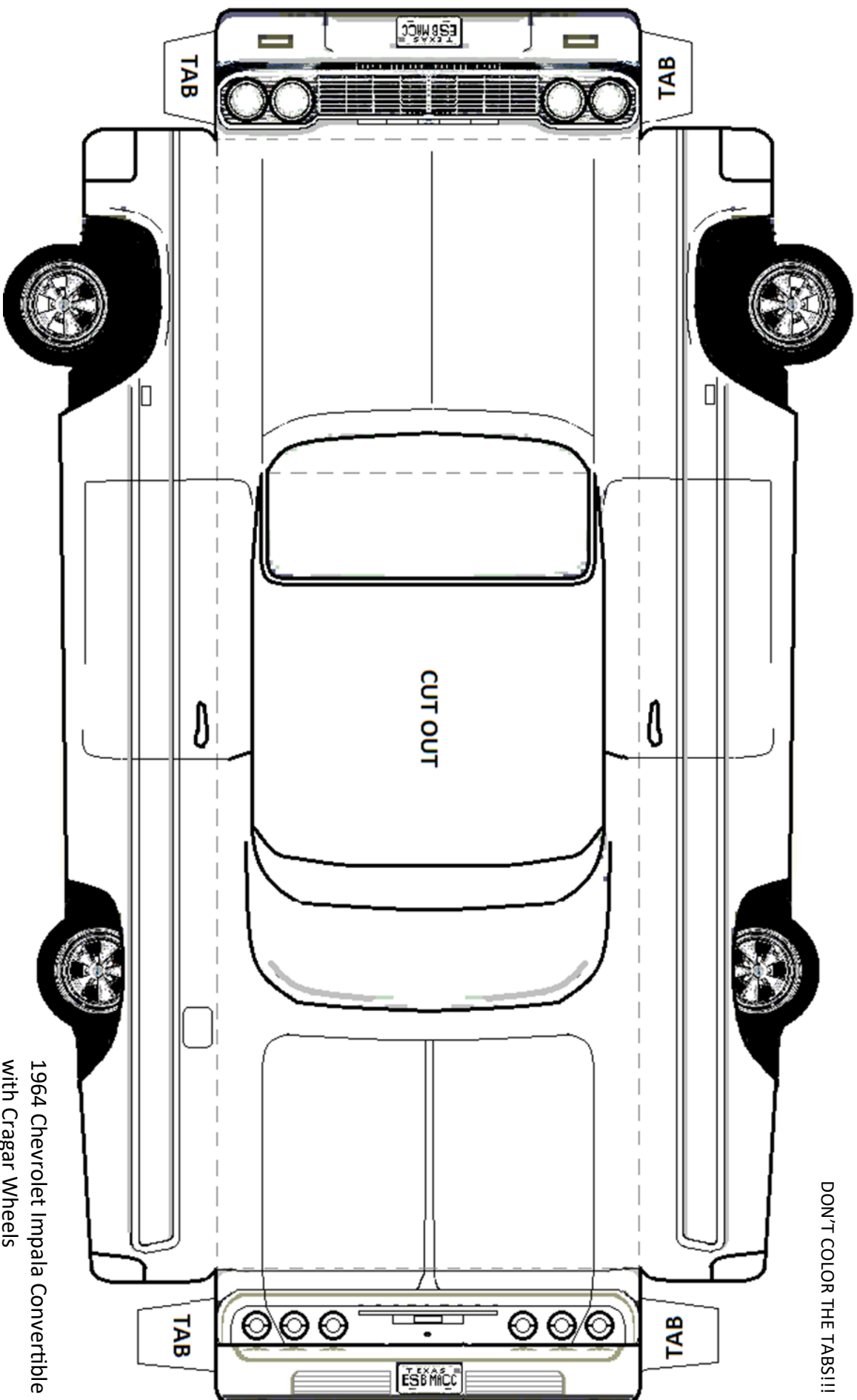
### Page 6:

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"

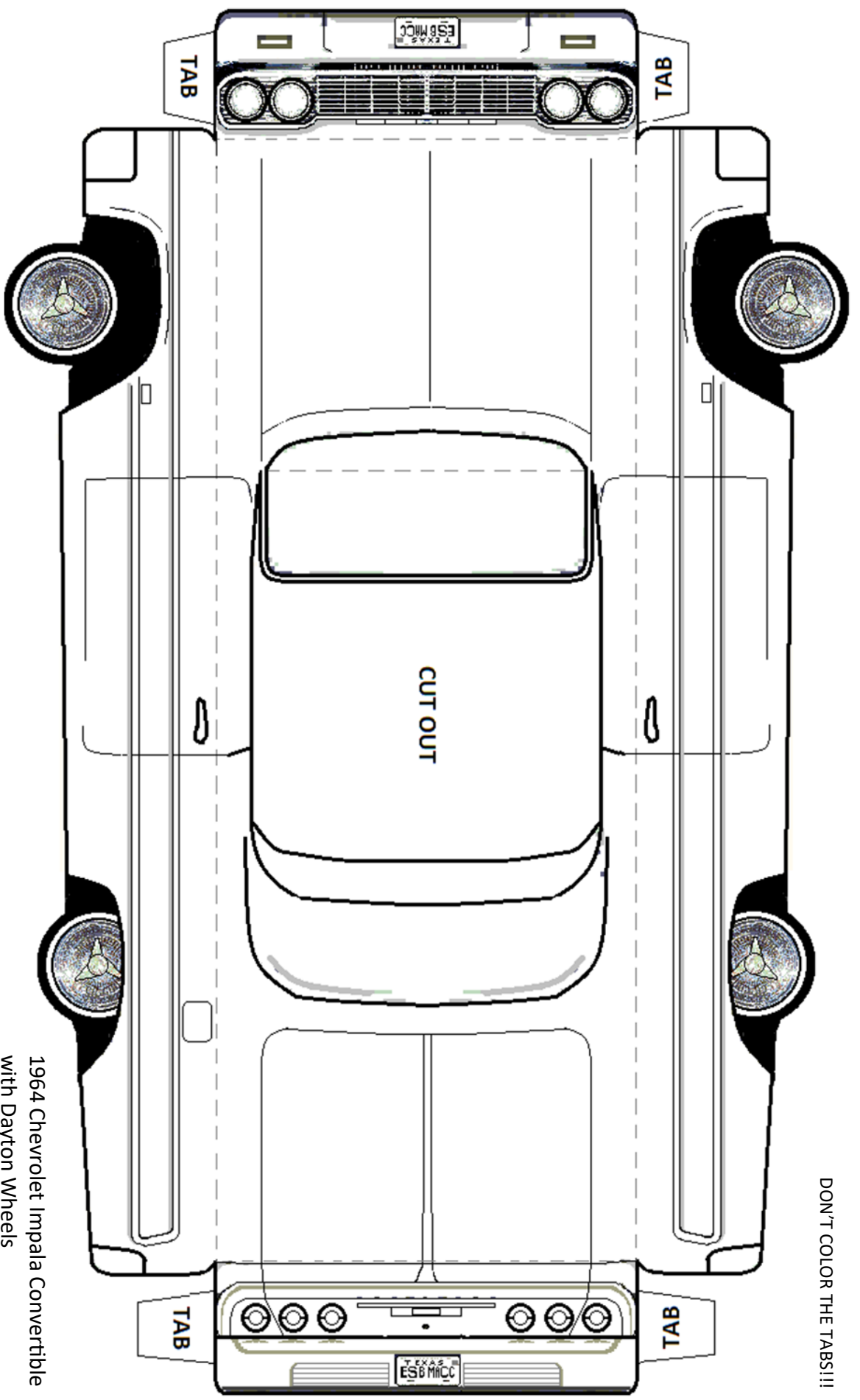
Re-fold dotted lines, then fold the Tabs so that they sit underneath the closest side

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!!!



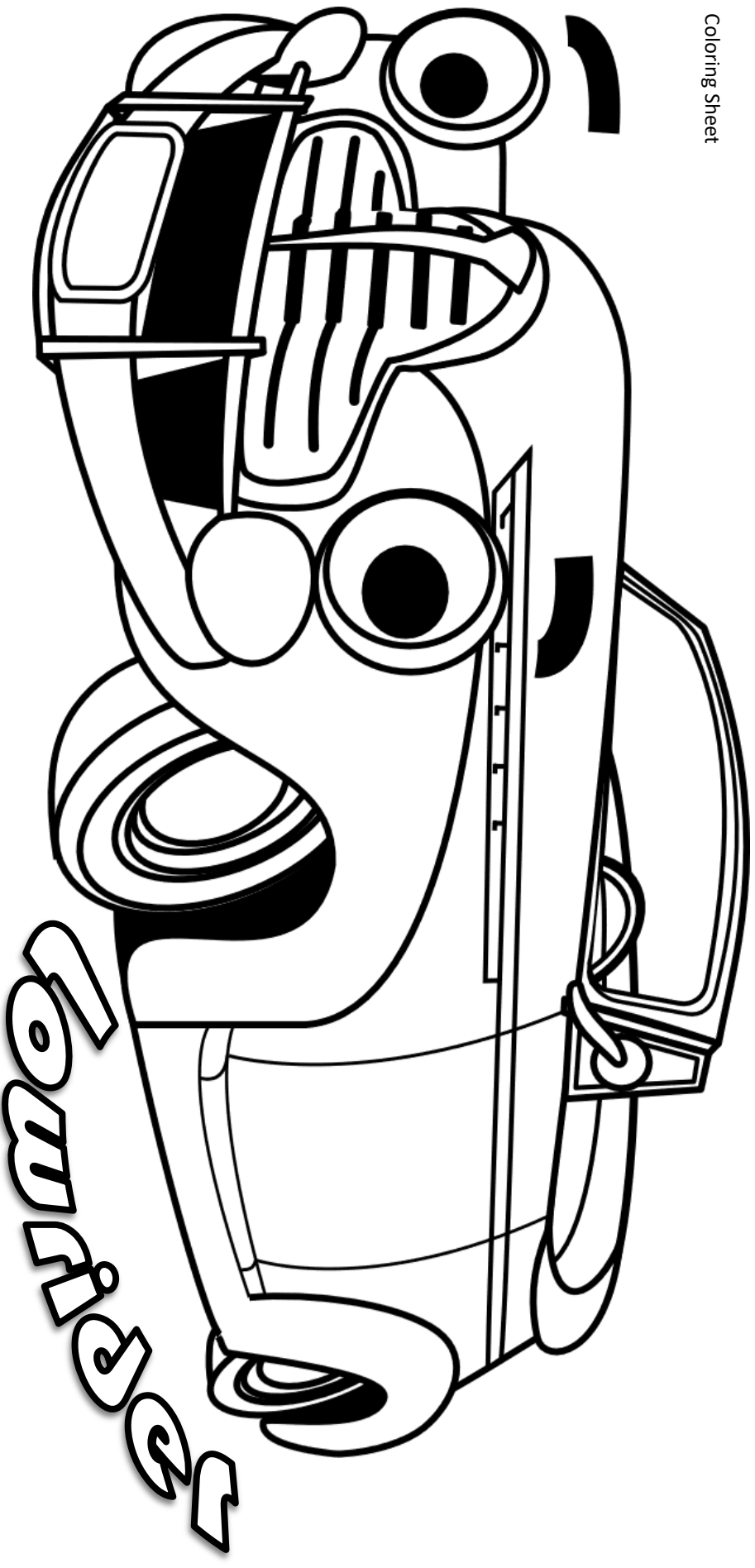
1964 Chevrolet Impala Convertible  
with Dayton Wheels

**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





**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?**