

LEARNING TO LOOK TEACHER'S HANDBOOK

19TH CENTURY EUROPEAN

GRADE 1

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LEARNING TO LOOK PAINTINGS FOR 1ST GRADE  
19TH CENTURY EUROPEAN ART

PORTRAITS

- ✓ DON MANUEL -- GOYA
- ✓ ANTOINE LAVOISIER AND HIS WIFE -- DAVID
- ✓ MADAME CHARPENTIER AND HER CHILDREN -- RENOIR

NARRATIVE

- ✓ DEATH OF SOCRATES -- DAVID
- HORSE FAIR -- BONHEUR
- ABDUCTION OF REBECCA -- DE LACROIX

LANDSCAPE

- ✓ SALISBURY CATHEDRAL -- CONSTABLE
- GRAND CANAL OF VENICE -- TURNER
- THE GULF OF MARSEILLES -- CEZANNE

STILL LIFE

- ✓ IRISES -- VAN GOGH
- STILL LIFE -- CEZANNE
- WOMAN WITH CHRYSANTHEMUMS -- DEGAS

SCULPTURE

- ADAM -- RODIN
- ✓ LITTLE FOURTEEN YEAR OLD DANCER -- DEGAS

## Learning to Look -- Review

### ELEMENTS OF ART:

LINE  
SHAPE  
COLOR  
TEXTURE  
LIGHT

### EYE EXERCISES:

Every Learning to Look art class for students through the fifth grade begins with eye exercises which help to refresh the students' eyes and focus them on the task at hand. The exercises mark a beginning to the session and quiet the group in order to prepare them for concentrated looking.

- a. Open your eyes wide like owls
- b. Shut them tightly like mice
- c. Look up to the ceiling, down to the floor, up to the ceiling, down to the floor. Do not move your head!
- d. Moving only your eyes, look to the right, look to the left, to the right, to the left.
- e. Close your eyes and place your fingertips lightly on your eyelids. RELAX. (During this time the teacher reveals the first work of art to be studied)
- f. Open your eyes: you are now ready to look!

*Journal*

## Background 19th Century Art:

The origins of 19th century art actually date back to the time of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, the famous minister of finance under Louis XIV. He was not only important in the political and economic life, he was also powerful in the artistic and cultural life of France. In the 1660's he reorganized and strengthened the French Academy or Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture; and founded the Ecole de Rome. For the next 200 years the Academy assumed almost total control of the art of France, maintaining a monopoly on teaching and exhibition. All art of the 19th century either derived from or reacted against the accepted standards for painting and sculpture as established by the Academy.

The role of the Academy was to foster and train and support promising young artists who were chosen by their talent. Students accepted into the Academy studied casts, geometry, architecture and biblical history, working from live models (only male nudes). Every student strove to win the coveted Prix de Rome, an award that allowed them to study in Rome for four years. After one year home in France they were required to present a reception piece. If accepted, their work was permitted to be shown at Salon in the Louvre. The salons were held on August 25, St. Louis Day. This was the only place the public saw art, therefore the state-supported Academy came to control the artists' financial future as well as public taste. At the Salon of 1783 20,000 copies of the Academy checklist were sold to the attending public.

The Academy not only dominated the art in France, it exerted considerable influence on the art of Europe. Numerous academies similar in structure and approach were established all over Europe and the U.S. By 1790 there were more than 100 institutions. The idea that aesthetic matters could be universally subjected to reason led to the imposition of an extremely narrow set of aesthetic rules. In the Academy there was an agreed system of values -- a hierarchy of subject matter. First and foremost in importance was ancient or sacred history, second was portraiture, third was a copying of ancient works of art and fourth was still life. The Academy stressed that the sole purpose of art was to instruct.

This approach found a means of expression in the Neo-classical style which arose in the second half of the 18th century and continued well into the 19th century. The most important Neo-classical artist was Jacques Louis David who twice won the Prix de Rome and also served two terms as president of the Royal French Academy. The first important challenge to the Academy's power came with the rise of Romanticism in the second quarter of the 19th century. These artists saw themselves as individuals whose creative genius could not be taught or externally controlled. The most significant Romantic painters were initially absorbed into the academic structure, but by the second half of the century almost all artists of quality found themselves without official patronage. There were so many artists rejected by the Academy that Napoleon III in 1863 established the Salon des Refusés for excluded painters.

The second group of dissenters were the Realists who believed that capturing "truth in nature" unencumbered by rules and restrictions was the sole purpose of art. They were inspired by Gustave Courbet, the first 19th century French artist to exhibit independently and at his own expense. At the Worlds Fair of 1855 Courbet had established his own pavillion and hung a sign over the door proclaiming "The Exhibition of Realism". This drew great admiration from a young group of painters, including Claude Monet, who held their first independent exhibition in 1874. Their brightly colored and sketchily painted scenes from everyday life are so familiar today that it is difficult to imagine the hostility which greeted this exhibition. Yet this group who came to be known as the Impressionists struck the final blow against the Academy since they eventually won over the best critics.

While political, economic and industrial revolutions were erupting throughout Europe and the United States the same spirit of revolution had spread into the world of art. Romanticism, Realism and finally Impressionism had led to the downfall of the rigid academic system. Toward the end of the century there were even more "isms", Post-Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism and Pointillism -- each exploring new methods and ideas which led the way to total artistic freedoms of the 20th century.

## FIRST CLASS - PORTRAITS

## I. INTRODUCTION :

For the first class you will need to introduce yourself to the students and explain that this will be a different kind of art class from what they have normally experienced. Instead of using paint and other materials to create their own works of art the students will be looking at paintings and sculpture by other famous artists. Each month you will be bringing new examples of works of art to share with them. All of the artworks will be reproductions (copies) from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Let them know you will be exploring these art works together. You are interested in what they think or feel about the art and you want to hear their ideas. By using a "special" kind of looking you will be able to make new discoveries together. After all - "What you see depends on HOW you look."

Present Tana Hoban's book - LOOK AGAIN !

Continue with a brief discussion of museums:

How many of you have been to a museum ?

What did you do there ? or see ?

A discussion of a variety of museums may follow:  
Natural History, Science, Art, Crafts.

Summarize by explaining that museums are alike in that they all hold collections of interesting, unusual, or beautiful things, and they are all wonderful PLACES FOR LOOKING.

This spring we will be visiting the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York to see the originals of all the works we have studied in class.

How many have visited the Met?

Show examples of the collections from one of the large pictorial books on the Met or the Guide Book.

One important emphasis of our program is to help the students identify the basic Elements of Art: color, line, shape, texture, etc. and to explore the many different ways an artist organizes these elements in his composition to express his ideas and feelings. The term composition can be a difficult one to communicate to children. (A definition of composition in painting is: "the artist's combining the elements of a work of art into a satisfactory visual whole.")

It can be more effective in discussing composition with the students to draw an analogy between a writer and an artist by using a comparison of their tools and the elements they organize to create a composition.

Ask the children to think about the Tools a writer might use to create a story.

Paper, pencils, pens, typewriter, his mind for ideas?

What does a writer put on paper?

Letters, words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs -- all organized in such a way as to communicate his ideas.

Now ask the children what tools an artist might use to create a picture?

Paints, canvas, charcoal, brushes, pencils, palette knife, easel, etc..

Have some of these tools available for illustration.

Instead of using words and phrases what does an artist organize to communicate his ideas?

Color, line, shape, texture, space, light, etc..

At this point you may guide the students into a discussion of some of the properties or characteristics of each of these elements by introducing the "Elements of Art Book". Be sure to review the Elements Section in the Handbook and select two or three main points relating to each element to emphasize with the students.

Unfortunately, there just isn't enough time in one class to cover each element in depth but we will have another opportunity in Still-life class to re-introduce the "Elements of Art Book" and to explore more ideas.

## II. EYE EXERCISES (See activities sheet)

Before we begin, let's get those eyes refreshed and ready for looking!

III. PORTRAITS - review Portrait Dialogue Ideas.

A. Don Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuñiga

Artist - Francisco Goya - Spanish (1746-1828)

Year painted - 1788 - medium - oil on canvas

Props: Texture bag containing red velvet, lace, pink satin, fur and feathers.

Activity - Texture bag.

Background Information (for the teacher)

Francisco Goya was the most significant Spanish painter of the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He was the Deputy Director of the Royal Academy of Art in Madrid (1785) and by 1799 he was Principal Painter to the King of Spain, a post he retained until 1824 when he settled in voluntary exile in Bordeaux. Goya's style of painting was strongly influenced by three of his predecessors who also served as official painters to the Spanish Court -- Velasquez (1599-1660), Tiepolo (1696-1770), and Mengs (1728-1779). Goya's decorative works developed under the influence of Tiepolo's Spanish frescoes, while his portraits were influenced by Mengs, Velasquez and surprisingly by English 18th century portraits. (He was known to have owned engravings of the latter.)

A serious illness of 1792 left him deaf and even more introspective. The official portrait painter began producing works that he said, "were to make observations for which commissioned works generally give no room, and in which fantasy and invention have no limit." This may refer to a series of etchings by Goya that were, "savagely satirical attacks on manners and customs and on abuses in the Church." The atrocities of war between Spain and France also had a great impact on Goya and he recorded these savageries in a series called THE DISASTERS OF WAR (1810-1813).

His portraits of Charles IV and his family were less than sympathetic and have been said to make the Spanish Royalty appear brutish, moronic and arrogant. Goya painted relatively few children's portraits, but was far kinder in these portrayals (possibly because he had 19 children of his own.) A fine example is the Metropolitan Museum's portrait of Don Manuel, the three year old son of the Conde de Altamira (1788). In this portrait Goya contrasts the innocence of youth with the perils of life - pointing out the frail boundaries separating a child's world from forces of evil.

An intense study of Velasquez led Goya's later style toward a kind of Impressionism. Goya's work greatly influenced 19th Century French painting, especially Manet.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS: (for Classroom Presentation)

Identify this poster as a reproduction of a painting by Francisco Goya from the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (It is helpful to have an artist's easel available for displaying the posters and for the first class a stretched artist's canvas to show the students the surface on which an artist paints.) Then begin very simply by drawing the children into the discovery process with questions:

What is this a picture of ?

(This phrasing generally leads students to the subject of the painting although the usual response is, "a girl.")

Why do you think this is a girl ?

Hair - longer and curled.  
Satin slippers with bows.  
Red lips "make-up."  
Lace ruffles on collar and cuffs.  
Red velvet suit.

What would you think if I said this was a boy ?

His name was Don Manuel Osorio Manrique De Zuñiga.

Do you see any boys dressed this way today ?

Don Manuel lived over 200 years ago in the country of Spain.  
(At this time in our country George Washington was President)

How old do you think he was when this picture was painted ?

Guesses vary - actually he was between 3 and 4.

What is Don Manuel holding in his right hand ?

A string - attached to a bird's leg - (another custom not common to today)  
This bird, a magpie, was a favorite pet of children since the Middle Ages - or long ago.

What is in the bird's mouth ?

Sort of a joke by Goya - The bird appears to have retrieved a calling card with the name of the sitter, name of the artist, and date.

What else did the artist include ?

Cats.

How many ? Ask the children to look closely.

(3)

What are the cats looking at ?

The magpie.

What might they try to do ?

Eat the bird !!

Does Don Manuel know he is in danger or what could happen ?

No.

How would he feel ?

For older children - ask if they know what a symbol is ?

Answers vary from "musical instruments (Cymbals) to  
"Something which represents something else."

In Christianity a bird is the symbol of the human soul. In Goya's painting the soul (or magpie) was in danger. The artist is illustrating the fragile boundaries which separate the child's world from the perils of life. Goya often interjected a menacing or threatening element into his work.

What else is included in the painting ?

Caged birds - are they safe ?

The lettering of Don Manuel's full name across the bottom of the painting.

Do you think Don Manuel was wealthy or poor ?

Usually the response is, "wealthy" because of his elegant clothes and so many pets. However, one child said, "He must be poor since he is standing in a dungeon."

Actually Don Manuel was the son of a Spanish Count.

Invite the younger children to expand on his personality.

Would they like him ?

Why or Why not ?

What kind of life did he have ?

Could they picture him climbing trees or making mud pies ?

What mood did Goya create in this painting ?

How does it make us feel ?

Note: Don Manuel's expression. Innocent? Wistful?

The dramatic contrasts of light and shadow.

The starkness of the setting.

When I first asked what this was a picture of, most of you referred to the person Don Manuel, and you were right - he is the SUBJECT. All of the other objects in the painting relate to him. Let's see how the artist tells us that Don Manuel is most important.

SIZE - What object is the largest ? fills the most space?

Don Manuel.

LOCATION- Where is Don Manuel placed in the FIELD of the painting ?

Front and Center.

COLOR - Where are the brightest colors ?

On Don Manuel.

What other colors are used ?

Which come forward and which retreat ?

LIGHT - Where does most of the light fall ?  
 Contrast with what is in shadow .

There is a special word for this kind of picture, a picture where the person is the subject or most important part. Does anyone know this art term ?

PORTRAIT

Have you ever had your portrait painted ?

Has your portrait been made with a camera ?

Why was it important and popular for people in Don Manuel's day to have their portraits painted ?

No Cameras - Painting was the only way of recording the image of a person.

In 1781 Francisco Goya was COMMISSIONED to do a portrait of Don Manuel's father the Conde de Altimira. Not long after, Goya was appointed official painter to the Spanish King. The Conde also asked Goya to paint portraits of other members of his family - his wife, his daughter, another son and Don Manuel in 1788.

You have discovered so much about this painting by LOOKING carefully. Now let's use another one of your senses - the sense of touch.

What would different objects in this painting feel like if they were real ?

TEXTURE BAG ACTIVITY:

The surface feel of an object is called its TEXTURE.

Ask the students to feel each texture and give one word to describe it - (older children may not use "soft or hard").

Ask them to notice the nap of the velvet and the sheen of the satin. Ask them to look through the lace - etc..

Now ask if they can find these textures recreated in paint.

\* \* \*

Congratulations ! You have all just analyzed a work of art!  
 A portrait of Don Manuel by Francisco Goya.

If you were going to have your portrait done, what objects would you include to say something about you ?

What kind of setting would you have?

What would you wear ?

What colors would you use?

A good after class activity would be to have the students create their own self-portraits, Keeping in mind the questions above.

If time permits in this class a comparison/contrast between DON MANUEL OSRIO MANRIQUE de ZUÑIGA and MAJAS ON A BALCONY helps the students to see how an individual artist's style can change and develop. If this is not possible in class, a comparison can be effectively done during the museum tour.

B. Majas on a Balcony

Artist - Francisco Goya - Spanish (1746-1828)

Year painted - 1810-1814 - medium - oil on Canvas

Props: Palette and palette knife

Activity: Compare/contrast.

*skip*

Background Information:

This painting is one of a group of genre subjects masterfully painted by Goya during Spain's Wars of Independence -- 1808-1814. Goya presents a mysteriously attractive scene of two young women who are protected or threatened by two young men standing behind them. The young women are Majas; the young men are Majos. Both are dashing members of the Spanish working class, recognized by their striking attire and flamboyant behavior. They so captured the imagination of the Spanish people that some of Goya's more affluent patrons chose to pose in this fashion.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS:

What seems most important or to be the focus of the painting?  
The two Women.

How does Goya emphasize them?

Their position in the field of the painting.  
(Front and Center)

The clarity with which they were painted.  
(They are much more detailed than the background.)

The bright light shining on them.

The strong contrast of color between them.  
(Black vs. white with flecks of gold)

Did you notice the two women were in the same costume only opposite colors ?

Where are they located ?  
On a balcony

What are they doing?  
They are both seated. One is looking at us, the viewer, while the other is looking down at whatever is below them.

Who do you suppose are the two figures in the background ?

What are they doing ?  
Protecting ?  
Threatening?

Explain that these people are known as Majas and Majos -- give a brief definition. (See the Background Information)

Where are we in relation to the sitters ?

What is our point of view ?  
We are looking from the same level as the Majas -- straight on.

COMPARE / CONTRAST :

Don Manuel Osorio Manrique de Zuñiga vs. Majas on a Balcony.

Which painting appears more carefully drawn or has the cleanest lines ?  
Don Manuel.

Which painting looks more finished/has more detail ?  
Don Manuel.

In which painting can you see the brush strokes or thickness of the paint ?  
Majas on a Balcony.

How do you think that paint was applied ?  
Show a palette knife and explain how paint can be spread like butter.

Ask the students how they think the paint for DON MANUEL'S lace collar was applied ?  
With a very thin brush.

Can they guess which work was painted first ?

## SECOND CLASS - STYLES OF PORTRAITURE

### I. REVIEW OF LAST CLASS

What was the subject matter of our last class?

A boy and his pets. Other answers might be "Don Manuel" or a portrait.

What does subject matter mean?

A good answer is, "what the artist chooses to paint." Tell the students that the subject matter of our last class and this class make the paintings we are looking at qualify as portraits.

Who remembers the definition of a portrait?

A painting in which a person is the most important thing. For the older child, a more sophisticated definition of a portrait is, "An artistic representation of a person as rendered in painting, sculpture or photography."

### II. EYE EXERCISES

Before we look, let's get those eyes ready.

(See Activity #1 on page 31 for a description of the eye exercises.)

### III. PORTRAITS

#### A. Antoine Laurent Lavoisier and His Wife

Artist - Jacques Louis David - French - (1748-1825)

Year Painted - 1788

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - chemistry beaker, poster of painting, tape recorder, tapes of Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, and something contemporary (e.g., Michael Jackson, Boy George, etc.)

Activity - playing music of the period

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

Jacques Louis David was the most important French artist of the late eighteenth century. His influence at its height extended beyond that of painting to politics, moral philosophy, aesthetics, and furniture and fashion design. Born in Paris in 1748 to a family of artisans and shopkeepers, David first studied art with the aging Boucher and from 1768 on with Joseph Vien. After failing four times, David finally won the Prix de Rome which enabled him to study in Italy. His residence there for five years (1775-1780) proved to be a watershed in his art. David was impressed by what he perceived as the high moral quality and calm stoicism of ancient Roman art. He aspired to create in his own art a sense of civic virtue in contrast to the decadence and political corruption of the last years of the French Old Régime. He was inspired by ancient sculpture and frequently chose as his subject matter scenes from antiquity. David was largely responsible for the revival of interest in classical art in France. In style as well as in subject matter, David's art marks a decisive break with the past. Unlike the artificiality and delicacy of most eighteenth century painting, David's work exhibits powerfully sculpted figures, clearly defined lines, a cool, somber palette, and a highly rational and orderly sense of composition. He is known as the chief exponent of the Neo-classical style in France. He achieved his first major success in the Salon on 1784 with his painting, The Oath of the Horatii. Actively involved in the French Revolution, he voted for the death of the king and was instrumental in seeing to the abolition of the French Royal Academy which had dominated the arts under the Old Régime. He became "first painter" to Napoleon, whom he heroicized in famous paintings such as Napoleon at St. Bernard. Today art historians value above all his portraits, such as The Death of Marat and the one we are studying, for their revelation of character. The artist and his contemporaries, however, placed a higher merit on his historical paintings. With the Restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1815, David went to live in exile in Brussels. The paintings of his last years, lacking contact with the events of the time, are for the most part overly theoretical and lacking in vitality.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for classroom presentation)

Reveal reproduction of David's painting to the students and identify it by name, artist and date.

Do you think this couple is alive today? Why not?

Hair styles (man's wig)

Clothing (especially the man's lace jabot and cuffs, stockinged leg, and buckle shoe)

Feather pen

Old beakers

Style of chair on left

Neoclassical architecture in background (for older children)

Ask the students frequently what else do you notice in order to encourage their responses. Have them look over every inch of the poster.

Who do you think this couple was? What clues has David given us to their identity?

Some students might be able to guess "a scientist."

What do you think is on the table?

Show them a modern chemistry beaker and ask them if they know what it is.

After the students have exhausted their comments, tell them that the man's name was Antoine Laurent Lavoisier, that he was a famous French scientist who lived at the time of George Washington. He is often called the father of modern chemistry.

Older students might be interested to know that he believed in the importance of doing experiments to test his scientific theories. The instruments on the table relate to some of his famous experiments with oxygen and gunpowder. He also held several important government posts. He was guillotined during the most radical phase of the French Revolution (the Reign of Terror) in 1794.

What is Lavoisier doing?

Writing with a quill pen.

He was also a celebrated author of books on chemistry.

Art historians believe that the papers on the table are sheets of his Elementary Treatise on Chemistry which was published one year after this painting was completed.

Who is standing next to him?

His wife, Marie Anne Pierrette Paulze.

Can you find any clues as to her identity? What haven't we talked about in this painting?

Some students do actually identify her portfolio in the chair at left and guess correctly that she was an artist. She illustrated her husband's books on chemistry and is said to have been a pupil of David's.

What type of painting is this?

A double portrait

How does the artist show that the people are the most important thing in this painting?

They are the biggest.

They are in the center.

They are in the foreground.

The light shines on them.

David uses the objects and the setting to tell more about the sitters' characters.

What does the pose of the couple tell about their relationship?

They were helpmates.

They felt close to each other.

The husband looks up to the wife, who looks out at the viewer, yet she leans on him (for support?). This suggests that they helped each other.

What do you notice about the style of this painting? What type lines are there?

Mostly straight lines.

Are they hard or easy to see?

Easy

The lines in most of David's paintings are very clear. Ask several students to come up one at a time and point out various lines. Have them follow them.

Can anyone find a diagonal line? (Define diagonal for younger children.)

The diagonal of Lavoisier's leg

The stream of light on the fold of the tablecloth

His wife's right arm

The pen in his hand

The edge of the art portfolio

The beaker on the floor

These strong diagonals are crossed by one that is made by the couple's heads and the slant of his wife's body.

Can anyone see the overall, basic shape of this composition?

Follow the line from the wife's skirt up to her head, down Lavoisier's head, arm and leg and then across the floor.

What shape have we traced?  
A triangle.

Can a triangle roll?

No. A triangle sits firmly on one of its sides.  
This triangular composition gives the painting a sense of strength and stability.

What are the three most important colors in this painting?

Pearly grey of Mme. Lavoisier's dress.  
The black (not really a color but used here as such) of her husband's outfit.

The rich red of the tablecloth.

(There may be some disagreement among the students over naming only three colors as most important. This is fine as it encourages discussion. Make the children point out where they see the colors that they name.)

What color is the background?

Mostly shades of grey or brown for the floor.

Why is this?

Somber colors do not distract the viewer's attention from the main couple.

What texture has David rendered especially well in paint?

(For younger children, ask "What in this painting looks exactly as it would feel?")

The velvet tablecloth

The glass beakers

The lace

The satin of the sash

The hair

The feather pens

From where is the light shining?

Upper left corner

What does it shine on?

The couple's faces

Wife's arm

The edge of the tablecloth

The glass beaker on the floor

There is also a second light source behind the table on the right which lightens the other side of their faces and brightens the center of the canvas.

This portrait is very large in size. David liked to paint heroes. Here he shows us people dedicated to their life's work and suggests by the size of his canvas and the wealth of details about their professions that their efforts are heroic too.

Now we will compare this painting to another which was painted almost one hundred years later.

B. Madame Charpentier and Her Children

Artist - Pierre Auguste Renoir - French - (1841-1919)

Year Painted - 1878

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - poster and students' postcards of painting, tape recorder, tapes of Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, and something contemporary (e.g., Michael Jackson or Boy George etc.), magnifying glass

Activity - magnification; playing music of the period

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

Pierre Auguste Renoir was born in Limoges, France in 1841. The son of a tailor, he began work at age thirteen in a porcelain factory decorating china. His later painting style shows the influence of his early years as a porcelain painter. In 1862 he went to study in Paris at Gleyre's studio where he became friends with Monet, Sisley and Bazille. The four of them formed the core of a group of painters who became known as the Impressionists. Impressionism did not have a fixed set of artistic principles and its membership varied over time. In general, the Impressionists reacted against the academic art of their time with its emphasis on literary subject matter and overwrought or sentimentalized emotions. The Impressionists instead sought to observe nature closely and to rely on visual sensations. They painted their canvases for the most part out-of-doors instead of in the studio and tried to preserve the freshness of a sketch in the finished work. They chose subjects from modern life and painted them in a free style with bright colors and a varied, broken brushwork. The effects of light and color were more important to them than form and content. Rejected by the official Salon, the Impressionists held their own exhibit in 1874. Among the Impressionists, Renoir was known for his great gusto and joy in painting. He once said, "If it didn't amuse me, believe me, I wouldn't paint!" His canvases all display a sensuous appreciation of color and texture. Madame Charpentier and Her Children was an important milestone in Renoir's career. He chose to exhibit it at the official Salon instead of with the Fourth Impressionist Exhibition. The painting was highly praised and garnered considerable patronage for the artist. By contrast, the critics disparaged most of the Impressionists' works. After a trip to Italy in 1882, Renoir grew more and more dissatisfied with the Impressionists' preoccupation with recording the effects of natural light at the expense of traditional form and subject matter. His later works are remarkable for their greater solidity and monumental power. Arthritis crippled Renoir for the last sixteen years of his life. He continued to paint, however, by strapping the brushes to his wrists.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for classroom presentation)

We are now going to compare David's painting with a work by Pierre Auguste Renoir entitled Madame Charpentier and Her Children. It was painted in France in 1878.

Do you know what it means to compare two things?

Try to get the students to answer this themselves.  
It means how they are alike.

What does it mean to contrast two things?

How they differ.

What do these two portraits (Lavoisier and Charpentier) have in common?

The students will undoubtedly come up with some wonderful ideas of their own. Some of the points the teacher should try to get them to discover are as follows:  
they are both portraits, i.e., the people are the primary focus of the painting;  
they are both domestic, family scenes;  
they both are painted inside homes;  
they both use their surroundings to tell something about the sitters' characters;  
they were both painted in Paris by French painters;  
they both used oil paints on canvas.

To help the children arrive at these answers, ask general questions such as:

where are we?

are these families?

where did the artists come from (don't discourage guessing so long as it doesn't get out of hand)?

and what type of painting are these?

Then ask the students how many ways they can think of that the two paintings differ. Another way of asking this is, how has one hundred years made a difference?

The students should notice the change in costumes, the difference in brushstrokes (David's canvas has a smooth finish with no trace of the brushstrokes whereas Renoir's are visible as broken patches of color).

Ask the students which painting has clear outlines (David) and which has blurry edges (Renoir).

Which is brighter in color tones?

Renoir's despite his use of black.

To highlight how culture changes over time, play three selections of music for the students. One from David's time (i.e., Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik of 1781), one from Renoir's time (i.e., Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake of 1876) and one from today (e.g., Boy George's Karma Chameleon.)

Have the students guess which piece of music was created about the same time as the two different paintings and

which was composed today. (This always amuses them.

Can they think of any ways in which the music of Mozart is closer in feeling to the David than the Renoir?

This is a hard question. See if you can help them hear the stricter adherence to traditional form in the Mozart, its greater simplicity and clarity when compared to the lush romanticism of Tchaikovsky's melodies.

What does Renoir tell us about this family from the painting? That they were rich, well dressed, in elegant surroundings. The mother wears a dress by the famous Parisian couture house of Worth. She is wearing gold jewelry and holds something gold in her hand. Have the children use a magnifying glass to examine her jewelry in greater detail.

What is in the background on the left?  
Peacocks.

Why?

They are part of the wallpaper and reveal the Japanese influence on interior design and art that was all the rage among well-to-do Parisians of the 1870s.

What is at the right of the canvas?

In the slide the painting has been cropped off. Show the students a copy of the painting from the Guide to the Metropolitan Museum of Art. This shows that on the right is a chair and table laden with objects that form their own still life composition within the painting.

Are the people happy?

Most students say yes but it is not as easy to read the sitters' characters here as in the David.

Where are they all looking?

The children are looking at each other while the mother gazes into the distance but doesn't really make eye contact with the viewer. It appears to be a private moment in their home life although they are obviously dressed up and posing for a portrait.

Older students may be interested in some information on who the sitters were.

The husband, Georges Charpentier, was an important publisher with many contacts among the artistic and literary figures of the time. On Friday nights he and his wife held a salon (open house) to which many famous writers and artists (among them Renoir) came. Monsieur Charpentier commissioned (define for the children - "paid to paint") Renoir to paint a portrait of his wife and two children. The writer, Proust, remembered seeing the painting hanging in their house.

Who do you think the children are?

No, they are not twins, nor even two girls. Rather the

child on the couch is actually a boy, Paul, age 3. His sister, Georgette, age six, is on the dog. Many children note the woe-begone expression of the dog's eyes. Explain to the students that it was not uncommon for little boys of one hundred years ago to wear dresses until a certain age.

Ask the children what colors they see and where do they find them repeated?

White of children's clothes, dog's fur, mother's lace front, flowers on table;  
black of mother's dress repeated in dog's coat and collar; (explain to the older children that while black and white are not technically colors, Renoir used them that way in this painting. He is quoted as saying "Black is the Queen of colors and makes a painting come out right.") Many shades of yellow are found in the rug, wallpaper, couch and chair;  
strong reds are present in the background and in the flowers both on the couch pattern and in the bouquet on the table.

Ask the children if they can see the edge of the couch clearly?  
No.

Why?

The colors blur the outlines in most of Renoir's paintings.

Older children can be told that Renoir belonged to a group of painters known as the Impressionists who were concerned foremost with the effect of light upon a subject, especially natural light. Renoir had his own special interests however. This painting shows his love of vibrant colors and his increasing concern for small details.

Can you find any vertical lines in this painting?  
The red panels in the background and the table legs.

Any diagonals?  
The pattern in the carpet.

How are the three figures and the chair arranged?  
Can anyone see that they form a diagonal from the lower left to the upper right?

Is there anything else you notice about this painting?

How does this painting make you feel?  
Happy? Relaxed? Warm?

Renoir loved to paint women and children, joyous scenes which showed the pleasures of living. He once said: "According to my idea, a picture ought to be a lovable thing, joyous and pretty, yes, pretty. There are enough boring things in life without painting still more." (Quotation is for older children). He enjoyed painting so much that during the last years of his life when his hands were crippled with arthritis, he tied the brushes to them in order to continue painting. In their own ways,

-----  
David and Renoir were both totally dedicated to their art.

(In general, it is a good idea to write new words on the black board or on a large sheet of paper for those students who can read.)

THIRD CLASS - NARRATIVE

I. INTRODUCTION:

A narrative picture refers to the choice of a moment in the story so that the spectator will know (or can guess) what has happened and what is about to happen. In this class we discuss two paintings which clearly reflect a pause in the continuing action. They are both narrative works but both of very different styles.

The Death of Socrates by Jacques Louis David exemplifies the Neo-Classical tradition so popular at the end of the 18th century with its love of rules and academies. The Abduction of Rebecca by Eugène Delacroix marks a strong reaction to those classical standards. The Romantic movement, displaying expression of passion and love of the exotic was led by Delacroix who continued the struggle well into the second quarter of the 19th century.

Rosa Bonheur was beginning her career just as the feud between the two schools of Romanticism and Classicism was subsiding. Although her work The Horse Fair is an animal painting and does not actually fit the category of narrative, it does provide an interesting comparison/contrast with the first two works and illustrates a third school of artistic thought which was emerging mid 19th century. This new style allowed the artist much more artistic freedom. Instead of an exaggeration of rules, truth in nature became of primary importance.

II. EYE EXERCISE. (See Activities Section)

Before we begin, let's get those eyes refreshed and ready for looking!

III NARRATIVE:

A. THE DEATH OF SOCRATES

Artist - Jacques Louis David - French (1748-1825)

Year painted - 1786-1787 - medium - oil on canvas

Props: Sheets, kylix style cup, rectangular table and two chairs

Activity - Posing.

Background Information:(for the teacher)

David's painting of the DEATH OF SOCRATES depicts the aging Greek philosopher on his prison bed in the last moments before death. Socrates had been imprisoned by the government of Athens for his bitter attacks on their society and institutions. He was accused of denying their gods and corrupting the minds of the youth of Athens with his teachings. Rather than renounce his beliefs, Socrates

David portrays him gesturing toward the heavens as he calmly reaches for the poison hemlock. Yet, he is too preoccupied with his discourses on the immorality of the human soul to actually take the cup. His disciples surrounding him display a melodramatic gamut of emotions. Plato is seated at the foot of Socrates' bed with his head bowed in grief. Crito, listening intently, lays his hand on Socrates' knee, and Apollodorus, who was described as the most upset, is standing with both arms raised. Members of his family, including his shrewish wife Xanthippe, are seen leaving in the distance. (Socrates was reported to have said that living with her was the supreme exercise in self-discipline.)

Falling on the eve of the French Revolution, this tribute to Socrates' stringent social criticism and self-sacrifice held strong political overtones against the Old Regime. As mentioned in earlier class notes, David played an active roll in the Revolution. Four years after this work was completed the Committee of Public Instruction ordered an engraving of it because of its value as Propaganda against Robespierre and his Reign of Terror.

*is was actually not meant*  
 Not only was this work regarded as a political symbol for Republican virtue, it also exemplified a style of painting that became the modern-manner practically overnight. David attempted to revive the classic forms of antiquity. (This historic subject was inspired by Plato's dialogue the PHAEDO.) He modelled his figures on antique coins, pottery, and sculpture, and the figure of Socrates on an ancient portrait bust of the philosopher. This sculpturesque tableau is set frieze-like before the prison masonry and a very Roman arch. Using a clear sense of perspective, he creates a space or stage in which these figures could move. He greatly admired the 17th century French artist, Poussin, and worked to achieve the same porcelain-like finish on the surface of his canvas.

The revival of classic subject matter; the precise drawing or linear quality; the porcelain like finish and antiquarian detail; are all qualities which characterize this work as the hallmark of Neo-classical painting.

*this painting has set the style of 19<sup>th</sup> century art  
 led leads into the 19<sup>th</sup> century art. From this  
 on most 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings are either done  
 copying to this one and react against it.  
 poison poisonous hemlock was used for execution  
 This happened 400 years before Christ.  
 David changed some of the facts (who are present or  
 not present) to make 12 followers to make a moral  
 judgment*

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom Presentation)

Introduce this work by telling the students they have already seen a painting by the same artist in an earlier class.

Can anyone guess which artist ?

Goya ? David ? Renoir ?

Which figure in this painting seems most important ?

Younger ones may "point" but encourage older students to respond with verbal descriptions as often as possible.

The central figure with his arm pointed toward heaven.

How does David emphasize his importance ?

He is almost in the center

He occupies the most space

He is the only figure we see full-face

He is in full light.

Where are these people ? Look closely for clues -

Shackles and chains

Bars on the windows

Stone walls and floor.

Judging from the clothing when did these people live ?

(Students may relate to Biblical times)

Actually 400 years before Christ.

What other clues has the artist included ?

Scroll on the floor - used in ancient times.

Lyre on the bed (a favorite musical instrument of the ancient Greeks)

What does the central figure seem to be doing ?

A good answer could be:

(Lecturing, preaching or teaching - but let them use their imaginations)

Who do you think the people are who are gathered around him?

Students? Followers? Disciples? Family?

Identify Plato seated at the foot of the bed and Xanthippe his wife leaving in the distance.

How many people are there in addition to the central figure?

Twelve plus Socrates.

Why are they reacting this way?

Notice their expressions.

What is being offered in the cup?

Poison.

Does anyone know of a familiar tree or plant today that is poisonous?

*Poinsettia, Juniper berries*

- This poison was made from hemlock and was used in Socrates' time as an effective mode of execution.

*when do they see people in this type of clothing - Bible - this 400 years before birth of Chr.*

Briefly tell the students that this painting was based on an event out of history, the death of Socrates, which is also the title of the painting. Socrates was an ancient Greek philosopher/teacher who was imprisoned and sentenced to death for his teachings against the government of Athens. Rather than deny or change his beliefs he chose to die by poison. (This usually sparks some interesting, sometimes unrelated, discussions.) Give + He a date -

- How is Socrates taking his sentence?  
Calmly, while he continues to teach.
- Socrates was supposed to have been old at this time. *\**  
How does his body look?  
Is it weak and wrinkled?  
How has David presented him?  
Heroic.
- Do the figures look natural and life-like or more like statues?  
Mention that David modelled his figures from the study of antique coins, pottery and sculpture.

With older students you might give more information on the revival of classical subject matter and even the political import of this work for the Revolution (see the Background Information)

Explain that artists often take liberties or change the events of history. (Children love to recount historic inaccuracies). In this case, Plato was not in fact in attendance at Socrates' death, and Xanthippe, Socrates' wife, had left earlier. According to Plato's account in the PHAEDO there were actually fifteen people. David reduced this number in his version to thirteen.

- Do you know of other people in history who died for their beliefs?  
Can you think of another famous teacher who had twelve disciples?  
Usually the children are reminded of the Christ to which David is actually making a symbolic reference.

*\** Let's look at some ways in which David organized his canvas: the elem.

- what color stand-out  
In how many places do you see red?

Note: David uses the color to balance his composition, and to move our eyes in and out of the painting.

- what shapes - broad Δ -  
How many rectangles can you find?

Cover the poster with acetate and let each child take a turn tracing. (see list of activities for details) - bars, candle, bed, use the roof as holding blocks to create a stage.

In order to illustrate the theatrical "staging" within the painting have the children pose the scene, draping them with sheets and using any other available props, ie, cup, chains, scroll.

## B. THE ABDUCTION OF REBECCA:

Artist - Eugène Delacroix - French (1798-1863)

Year painted - 1847 - medium - oil on canvas

Props: Slides

Activity: Posing

### Background Information:

Beginning with the second quarter of the 19th century, Eugène Delacroix championed a style of painting which challenged the accepted Neo-classical traditions. In fact, he and Ingres became arch rivals. Where Ingres admired the clear linear elegance of a Raphael, Delacroix preferred the Baroque turbulence of a Rubens.

"His first salon exhibit was well received, (Dante and Virgil Crossing the Styx, 1822) but subsequent ones were bitterly attacked for his use of brilliant colors, contemporary and exotic literary subjects, and free handling." An example of this new style and subject matter is the Abduction of Rebecca based on the novel Ivanhoe, a medieval tale as told by Sir Walter Scott. The painting seethes with color and action. It is this color, light and motion that Delacroix employed to portray emotions at their highest pitch.

From the mid - 1830's Delacroix was in official favor, receiving commissions for large scale decorations in which Ingres was unsuccessful. "But the works he was happiest with were small, freely handled, colorful subjects -- battles, hunts, animals in combat, and portraits of intimate friends such as Chopin (1838 Louvre). His diary, kept from 1822-1824 and again from 1847-1863, is a precious source for his life and work and as a commentary on the social, intellectual and artistic world of Paris.

Delacroix was considered the most eminent romantic painter of the 19th century. He was hailed by Beaudelaire as the inventor of color -- the first colorist par excellence! Later generations, the Fauves, the Expressionists, and especially van Gogh realized this evocative power of his color. All of the Impressionists studied his work. In fact, the Metropolitan has a painting by Manet of the same subject -- The Abduction of Rebecca. (when conducting tours through the museum, this painting can be compared and discussed.)

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS: (for Classroom Presentations)

What is happening in this painting?

Ask the students to describe the action of the painting.

Note: The Knight in pursuit  
The Castle burning.

What can they discover from the costumes and setting, about when the action took place?

With older children the term "Medieval" or "Middle Ages" could be used.

Explain that the painting was inspired by Sir Walter Scott's romantic novel Ivanhoe. This scene depicts Rebecca being carried away by two Saracen slaves who are under orders of the Christian knight, Bois Guilbert. Meanwhile, the castle from which she was taken burns in the distance.

How would this scene change in the next few seconds if we moved it forward ?

(Likely it to a frozen moment in the action/like a film clip which has been halted momentarily and could move forward at any minute.)

Let's look at some ways in which Delacroix created this sense of movement.

Close your eyes for a few seconds. When you open them, what is the first thing you see or look at ?

Usually the response is Rebecca's breast or the horse blanket.

Why ?

The bright red color and light attract our attention.

Now follow the red around the canvas.

Notice how Delacroix moves our eyes in a circular motion by using color and light.

Which shape contains a feeling of movement ?

A Circle ?

A Rectangle ?

A Square ?

Let's try to recreate this action by posing the painting - (Select students to represent the Slaves, Rebecca, Rider in pursuit, the castle, even the flames.)

## COMPARE/CONTRAST:

Next - have the children compare and contrast the painting by Delacroix to the David they have just seen.

Which poses are easier to hold?

The David.

Which has more straight lines?

The David.

Which painting has more movement?

The Delacroix

Which has the brightest colors?

The Delacroix? Although not clear.

Which has the clearest, cleanest lines?

The David.

The Delacroix almost appears out of focus, like a blurred photograph. His interest was obviously not in careful drawing but rather color and movement.

The unifying swirl of movement in the Delacroix provides a dramatic contrast to the "frozen statues" of the David.

## C. THE HORSE FAIR:

Artist - Rosa Bonheur - French, 1822-1899

Year Painted - 1853/1855

Medium - Oil on canvas

Activity - Compare/Contrast

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION: (for the teacher)

Rosa Bonheur began her career as the twenty-five years of struggle between the Neo-Classical and Romantic schools was slowly reaching an end. A new school, tired of the exaggeration of theory in art, was allowing the artist to express himself with absolute freedom. The study of truth in nature became primary. This freedom had a great influence on the expansion of animal and landscape paintings, giving rise to painters like Gericault, Corot, Theodore Rousseau, Diaz, Troyan, Millet and Rosa Bonheur.

Rosa Bonheur became, with Landseer the most famous animal painter of the 19th century. The huge Horse Fair exhibited at the salon of 1853, when the artist was 30, established her reputation. The painting was originally titled Le Marche aux Chevaux de Paris or the Horse Market of Paris. The horse market was held on the Boulevard de L'Hopital, near the Asylum of Salpetriere and this picture shows with accuracy the trees of the Boulevard and the cupola crowning the chapel of the hospital. Rosa Bonheur presents a merry-go-round swirl of speeding horses. Highlighted in the center of the canvas are a half dozen horses barely under the control of three or four grooms who are driving them along the track. There are few onlookers, no suggestion of a crowd, and the gaits of these horses suggest that they are being moved to new quarters rather than about to start a race. The rapid movement of the horses is captured in bold brushstrokes and a delicate dappled light pervades the canvas. Every horse in the composition was studied separately and several times over. The picture was analyzed in groups of animals and finally as a whole. The painting is bold in size as well as bold in concept. It measures sixteen and one half feet across by seven feet nine inches high and is said to be the largest canvas ever produced by an animal painter.

The artist spent a year and a half making innumerable sketches and studies from actual scenes at the horse market of Paris. The Prefect of Police had granted her special permission to wear men's clothing so as not to attract undue attention at these events.

Rosa Bonheur was born in Bordeaux in 1822. She was the oldest of four children all of whom were artists. Her father, Raymond, himself a landscape painter, was his daughter's constant and only teacher. She had been denied admittance to the Ecoles des Beaux Arts where the study of male nudes was the accepted practice. This was deemed a highly unsuitable education for a young lady. As a consequence Rosa Bonheur turned to the study of animals at the zoo, stables and horse market. She understood the underlying anatomy of every animal she ever painted.

When the Horse Fair was exhibited at the Salon of 1853 it was a tremendous success. It was awarded all the honors of the Salon and the artist was declared exempt from future examination by the jury of admissions. The painting was signed and dated 1853 but the date is followed by the numeral five, apparently because Rosa Bonheur had retouched it in 1855. A comparison made with an engraving of the painting done in 1853 indicates that the areas she repainted were the ground, trees, and sky--the same passages which had been criticized at the salon for their summary execution. The artist had offered the painting to her native city of Bordeaux in 1855 but when they declined to buy it for 12,000 francs she sold it to the London dealer Gambart for 40,000 francs. Corneluis Vanderbilt who had purchased the Horse Fair for \$55,000 from Samuel Avery, a client of the London dealer Gambart, gave the painting in 1887 to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Rosa Bonheur achieved a fame and wealth in her lifetime rarely attained by any artist and especially a woman. She received the Legion of Honor when the Empress Eugenie suprised her with a visit to her studio in Paris. It took twelve years to become official because no woman had ever been named to the Legion of Honor. In 1865 Emperor Maximillian and Empress Carlotta sent her the Cross of San Carlos. In 1867 the Anthwerp Academy of Fine Arts made her a member. Alphonso XII of Spain gave her the brevet of Commander in the Order of Isabella the Catholic. The King of Belgium presented her with the Cross of Leopold in 1884, and Queen Victoria asked for The Horse Fair to be taken to Buckingham Palace for her inspection.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS: (for classroom presentations)

At first glance of The Horse Fair ask the students which of the paintings just discussed seems closer in style to this work?

Usually the response is the Abduction of Rebecca due to:

Use of Color.

Circular Motion.

Horses rearing.

Ask them to look at the type of brush strokes. The Delacroix and the Bonheur both contain areas which are more loosely painted and with less detail.

What is the subject?

Horses (with the men leading them).

What area of the painting seems most important?

The five or six horses in the center of the painting.

How does the artist attract our attention to these horses?

He "spotlights" them with light.

He places them in the center.

He uses light dappled gray horses and blue shirted grooms to create contrast with the darker surroundings.

He makes them appear closer to the viewer.

How does he make them appear closer?

They are larger.

They are more clearly painted.

They are more detailed.

In what direction are they moving?

Circular.

Does the circle create a sense of movement or rest?

Movement.

How else does the artist convey movement?

The positions of the horses.

Are they positions that are easy to maintain?

No.

What kind of lines do you see in this work? More curved or straight?

More curved.

Do you see any lines that are leading your eyes into the distance? Such as two lines that appear to converge or move closer together?

Note: the line of trees in relation to the line of the Boulevard.

Which do you think is more important - the horses or men?  
The horses.

If the horses are the subject, it can't be a portrait. What would you call this style of painting?  
Animal Painting.

This painting is said to be the largest animal painting ever done. Compare its size to the classroom wall.

Are the horses painted realistically?  
Yes.

In fact, the artist, Rosa Bonheur painted this scene so realistically that we can identify the location.

This is the horse market at the Boulevard de l'Hôpital, a wide tree lined boulevard in Paris.

The cupola (or dome in the distance) indicates the hospital.

This was the market where horses were bought and sold.

Do you see any women at the market?  
No.

Tell the story of how Rosa Bonheur, the artist of the painting, went twice a week for a year and a half to make sketches, dressed as a man so as not to attract attention.

Explain that she had not been allowed to attend art classes at the French Academy because the art students studied from male nude models and that was considered unacceptable for young girls. As a result, Rosa Bonheur turned to the study of animals at the zoo, stables and horse market. This is a story which the children love to recount during their tour at the Museum. It has a Cinderella-like ending because as a result of the success of this work Rosa Bonheur's reputation was established. She achieved enormous wealth and fame in her lifetime, receiving many international awards and honors rarely achieved by a woman.

FOURTH CLASS - LANDSCAPE

I. REVIEW OF LAST CLASS

What types of painting have we looked at so far?  
Portrait and Narrative painting.

Today we are going to look at a new type of painting.  
Let's warm up our eyes.

II. EYE EXERCISES

(See Activity #1 on page 31 for a description of the eye exercises.)

III. LANDSCAPE

A. Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds

Artist - John Constable - British - (1776-1837)

Year Painted - ca. 1820s

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - Poster and student postcards of painting

Activity - posing

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

John Constable was the premier painter of the English countryside. Born in East Anglia in 1776, he grew up on his father's farm. Many of his canvases depict the scenery of his youth. Constable wrote of the affinity he felt between his art and his childhood experiences in nature: "I...paint my own places best; painting with me is but another name for feeling, and I associate 'my careless boyhood' with all that lies on the banks of the Stour. These scenes made me a painter, and I am grateful, that is, I had often thought of pictures of them before I had ever touched a pencil." Despite early indications of his artistic talent, Constable did not receive formal training until he went to London to study at the Royal Academy at the age of twenty-three. His desire was to be "a natural painter" and his paintings are extraordinary for their ability to capture a scene in all its freshness and rural beauty. Constable is considered among the Romantic landscape painters because he found in nature an expression of his deepest feelings. Yet, the landscape he felt most in harmony with was not the wild, exotic or primitive scenery of much Romantic painting but rather commonplace scenes of rural life in which man's presence is felt. He knew and admired the Romantic poet, Wordsworth, whose verse also celebrated the restorative power of remembering childhood. Although admitted somewhat belatedly into the Royal Academy in 1829, Constable's works were more appreciated by his contemporaries in France than in England. His sparkling patches of color and loose, energetic brushstrokes influenced Delacroix and the Barbizon School of French landscape painters. Constable sketched from nature and his studies of clouds in particular are remarkable for their keenness of observation and freedom of execution. Constable prepared his finished works in the studio, however, and often painted more than one final oil sketch. The painting which we are examining is believed to be a full-scale sketch for a painting of Salisbury Cathedral which now hangs in the Frick Museum in New York City and is dated 1826. Constable used the full-scale study as a stepping stone between the spontaneity and expressiveness of the sketch and the dignity and monumental size of the finished work.

foreground of landscape as usually: Foreground

- ① larger in size
- ② at the bottom
- ③ more detailed

middle ground :

back ground : smaller, less in detail  
very clear the viewer can lead to back-ground

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom presentation)

Show the students the Constable painting. Can anyone guess what is the most important thing in this painting?

The land  
The scenery

What is a painting called when the land is the most important thing?

A landscape  
A landscape painting is a view of the land.

What do you think a view of the city would be called?

A cityscape

A view of the sea or water?

A seascape

We are going to look at two landscape paintings by English artists who both lived at approximately the same time (i.e., the early nineteenth century). The first is by John Constable and is entitled Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds. It was painted sometime in the 1820s.

Are the people the most important thing in this painting?

No

Why not?

They are small.  
We cannot see their faces.

What is the most important thing here?  
The scenery, especially the church.

If I hadn't told you, do you think you might have been able to guess the name of this painting?

Yes. The smaller children might call it simply a picture of a church.

Where do you think we are?

The English countryside

Has anyone ever been to England?

Where are we, the viewer, standing as we look at this painting?  
Constable has us on the same level with it.

Where would we enter this canvas if we could?

From the path on the left which leads to the bottom edge of the picture. It feels as if we could walk right into the scene, as if we were a part of it.

Where are we standing in relation to the cathedral? (Tell the smaller children that a cathedral is a large church.)

We are at a distance from it, in a meadow.

The title of the painting tells us that we are looking at the church from the home of the bishop who is responsible for the cathedral.

Does anyone know what the part closest to us in a painting is called?

The foreground

What part is farthest away?

The background

What do you notice about things in the foreground as compared to those in the background? (Let the children really think about this while they are looking at Constable's painting.)

Things in the foreground are larger.

They are clearer

More detailed

Placed at the bottom of the canvas

If the children have trouble understanding how the cows in this painting are larger in scale than the cathedral, take your thumb and measure a cow. Then take that same measurement and hold it against the church. Would a cow in real life be as large as the two tracery windows? Thus Constable has made the cows larger in scale than they would normally be because they are in the foreground.

How does the artist create an impression of distance?

Things in the background are smaller.

Less detailed

Often blurred with the haze of atmosphere

In this painting, Constable uses the path at left to carry our eyes to the cathedral in the distance.

Help the students to recognize the foreground, middle ground and background in any landscape, even the view from their classroom window.

Do you think this painting was painted today?

No

Why not?

No cars

Cows near cathedral

Style of clothing

Lady's parasol (Ask the younger children if they know what it was used for.)

Have the students look carefully at all the details. Constable liked to paint observable facts, things he could see around him. Tell the children that the cathedral still looks like this today although not its surroundings. It was Constable's favorite cathedral. He grew up near here and knew it well. Constable liked to paint familiar scenes, the landscape of his childhood years.

Do you see the couple on the left? Who do you think they are? The Bishop of Salisbury, John Fisher, and his wife. *daughter*  
 There is an interesting story about how this painting was commissioned. The Bishop was a friend of Constable's and asked him to paint a landscape of his church as a wedding present for his ~~wife~~ *daughter* in 1823. Tell the older students that the painting of Salisbury Cathedral which hangs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art is a full-scale sketch for the finished painting which is also in New York City in the Frick Museum. Constable made sketches from nature but then returned to work on the final version in his studio. He made large size oil sketches for the final painting as an intermediary step between the rapid and spontaneous sketch and the dignified and monumental finished canvas.

What is the weather in this picture?

Sunny with clouds

Constable was very interested in the weather, in the sky, light and atmosphere. He made many sketches of clouds from nature. The sky revealed feelings for him. The Bishop told Constable he didn't want storm clouds in a wedding picture.

How do you feel on a stormy day?

(Most young children don't seem to associate a rainy day with feelings of sadness.)

What season is it?

Difficult to be precise in this painting. Obviously not winter. Let the children tell why they think it is one season or the other. Have them look at the trees, leaves, flowers, clothing, ground.

What time of day is it?

Again it is difficult to be absolutely accurate here.

Sometime around midday.

The light is strong and the shadows are not too long.

These questions of weather, season and time of day are valuable to ask of any landscape painting.

What do you see first in this picture?

The cathedral

How does Constable direct our gaze there?

It is in the center of the painting.

It is of a light color.

It is large.

It is framed by two trees.

The diagonal of the path leads our eyes back to it.

What type of lines do you find in this painting?

Lots of verticals

Point them out: the trees, the many spires of the cathedral, especially its central steeple.

Where do they carry our eyes?

Up to the sky

Heavenward

They even seem to extend beyond the picture frame.

We do not see the whole tree.

What is the mood of this painting? What does it make you feel?

Calm, peaceful, tranquil

Out for a pleasant stroll

The harmony of nature

Good vocabulary words for older students are "bucolic" and "pastoral." Both mean having to do with rural life.

Constable said that "Painting is but another name for feeling." When he painted, he felt that he was able to recreate his childhood vision of nature as pure and harmonious.

In order to help the students appreciate some of the ideas introduced in this class, it is useful to have them pose Constable's painting. Older boys may perhaps balk at this. Use your discretion. Ask students to be the cows in the foreground. Have someone lay on the floor as the pond. Ask two or more to be trees and have them hold their arms in the air in order to frame the child who is the cathedral. Have that child also raise his arms to form a spire. Ask a couple to be the bishop and his wife. Have him pointing with a walking stick. Another child should be the woman with the parasol. Have the children arrange themselves as best they can so that they can clearly see what is in the foreground and what is in the background and how the composition is balanced on either side of center (i.e., two trees on left, spire and tree on right). Say one, two, three, pose and let any remaining children compare your recreation with the poster.

B. The Grand Canal, Venice

Artist - J.M.W. Turner - British - (1775-1851)

Year Painted - 1835

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - poster and student postcards of painting  
paper and pencils

Activity - sketching

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

Along with Constable, J.M.W. Turner was the leading British landscape painter of the nineteenth century. The two knew each other although they were not good friends. Constable once called Turner's paintings "airy visions, painted with tinted steam." Unlike Constable, Turner's early works, mostly watercolors, met with considerable success at the Royal Academy where he had begun his art studies at the age of fourteen. By 1802 he was already a full member of the Academy. Turner's mature paintings, however, evolved along increasingly radical lines. The subject matter of the landscape became less and less important to him. Landscape painting for him was neither an imitation of nature nor a depiction of reality, but rather an opportunity to recreate the effects of light and color on a flat surface. In many of his paintings solid forms seem to disappear into an atmospheric mist. He sought out scenes of turbulence such as storms at sea or blizzards in order to render their chaotic energy. Sunrises, sunsets, storms, water scenes, fires, and smokey locations all provided Turner with natural settings in which atmospheric conditions obscure form and content. In technique as well as in style, Turner shocked his contemporaries. He applied his pigments liberally, often with the use of a palette knife. He made little attempt to smooth over or hide the traces of paint according to academic custom. British critics lambasted his more abstract works. Turner did have several loyal and influential champions, among them the writer John Ruskin, who recognized the great originality and brilliance of his art.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom presentation)

We are now going to look at a painting by an artist who lived at almost the same time as Constable but who painted in a very different style. His name was J.M.W. (Joseph Mallord William) Turner. The painting we are going to study is entitled The Grand Canal, Venice and was painted in 1835.

Does anyone know where Venice is?  
In Italy

Can you tell just by looking at this picture what is unusual about Venice?

It is a city of canals.  
Waterways instead of streets

Why do you think Turner loved to visit Venice and came here often?

Reflection of light on water  
Style of buildings  
Atmospheric conditions

What time of year is it?

Most likely summer

Is the sun out?

Yes

How can you tell?

Things are illuminated.  
Boats have shadows.  
Despite clouds in the background, Turner's painting suggests a powerful source of light.

Does the light fall evenly all over the canvas?

Yes

What color reflections does it create when it shines on the buildings at left and right?

Golden

Try to guide the students in making these discoveries for themselves by having them say what they see. Ask additional questions to help them reach the best response.

Does anyone know what the small, black boats are called?

Gondolas

Do you know what they are used for?

Public transportation  
Like taxis, only on water  
There are virtually no cars in Venice.

Can anyone look very carefully and tell me what they see on the big boat in the middle?

It looks like materials on deck.

Small boats are pulling up to the larger one.

The boat is a floating store which sells clothes and materials.

The boats are on the main waterway of Venice, the Grand Canal. (Remind the students that that is the name of the painting.) The building on the right is a church (the St. Maria della Salute) while on the left in the distance one can see the tower (campanile) of the Doge's Palace. These buildings still exist in Venice today. Turner painted many scenes of Venice, celebrating its beauty.

What is Turner's style? Is it crisp and clear like David's?

No

What is more important to Turner, color and light or line and shape?

Color and light

*Effects of light on the scene*

Can we see the outlines clearly in a painting by Turner?

No

Why not?

Because the shimmering light, especially where it is reflected on the water, blurs the details.

Can we see the objects in the distance well?

No

Why not?

Because they are too far away

They seem to disappear in the haze of atmosphere.

Does anyone recall a day when the air was so hazy that it was hard to see things clearly?

Do objects around us look differently according to the type of light that is shining on them? Give examples

Objects are darker and less distinct in the night, in shadow.

Extremely bright light can distort images.

What artistic techniques has Turner used to give the painting a sense of depth? Another way to ask this is, How does Turner create a feeling of distance? For smaller children, ask them to identify first what is closest to them (the foreground) and what is farthest away (the background).

Turner uses the device of two diagonals which appear to come together in the far distance.

Can anyone find these two diagonals?

They form the left and right edges of the canal.  
Have two students come up and trace these lines  
with their fingers.

Tell them to try this trick in school or at home  
with a pencil and a piece of paper: Draw two lines.  
Have them far away from each other and at the bottom  
of the paper. Gradually have them come closer to-  
gether above the center of the page. They appear  
to form a road that disappears in the distance where  
it meets the sky (the horizon).

How else does Turner create the illusion of depth?

The objects in the background are smaller.

They are less distinct, less easy to see.

Explain to smaller children that a canvas is only  
two-dimensional, i.e., it has height and width but  
no depth. The artist can only paint on a flat sur-  
face and must create the feeling of depth by using  
a number of artistic devices.

Why do you think that art critics of Turner's time did not  
like his paintings?

They were too abstract.

You couldn't see the subject matter.

They appeared to be all color and light.

Constable called them "airy visions, painted with  
colored steam." (Explain what this means to younger  
children.) Today, however, Turner's paintings are  
greatly appreciated. One just sold recently for more  
than nine million dollars!

If time allows, have the children look out the window and  
sketch what they see simply in terms of horizontal and  
vertical lines. Another exercise is to have them divide  
their paper in three horizontal sections and attempt to  
draw the foreground, middle ground, and background of what  
they see out the window. Help them to make the things in  
the foreground larger and more detailed while those in  
the background are smaller and less distinct. These  
activities may also be done as part of the children's  
studio art time.

C. The Gulf of Marseilles seen from L'Estaque

Artist - Paul Cézanne - French - (1839-1906)

Year Painted - ca. 1883-85

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - 9"x12" reproductions of the painting for each member of the class; 9"x12" sheet of clear acetate paper for each student; indelible magic markers

Activity - tracing with acetate paper

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

See Section on Cézanne (page 90 ) in class on Still Life

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom presentation)

Constable and Turner were, in their own ways, most interested in the effects of light and color in a painting. In the remaining minutes of this class, we are going to look at an artist who was more concerned in his art with line and shape than with other elements of art. That artist is Paul Cézanne. He lived in France approximately one hundred years ago. He was most concerned with the underlying structure of what he was painting. Therefore, his art gives the impression of permanence, of something solid and lasting. How did he do this? We will find out by doing a fun activity together.

Ask the students to go sit at desks. Hand them a copy of The Gulf of Marseilles..., a piece of acetate and a magic marker. Ask them not to do anything yet.

This painting is called The Gulf of Marseilles seen from L'Estaque. It was painted between 1883 and 1885.

Does anyone know where Marseilles is?

A town in southern France on the Mediterranean Sea.

What is a gulf?

A bay of water surrounded by land on two sides.

Where are we, the viewer?

On a hill

In the town of L'Estaque, looking down and across the Gulf of Marseilles to the mountain range beyond.

Cézanne painted approximately this same view more than a dozen times in the 1880s. What do you think appealed to him about it?

The different levels

The broad expanse of water

The way looking down on things made them appear simplified

Do you think Cézanne copied what he saw exactly?

No

What has he done?

His forms and shapes are clearer than in nature.

Cézanne himself said, "I do not want to reproduce nature but to recreate it."

In order for us to see better the underlying shapes which form Cézanne's composition, ask the students to place the acetate paper over their reproduction and trace carefully all the triangles, circles, squares and rectangles. Do not have them copy the entire outline. Rather, have them trace over only the geometric shapes.

For younger children, it helps to have them first look out the window and find something in the shape of a triangle, etc. Also helpful is Tana Hoban's book, Circles, Triangles, Squares which contains photographs of geometric shapes as found in a child's daily environment.

Ask the students to lift off the acetate and see what they find.

What shapes has Cézanne used most often?

Triangles, rectangles and squares

Where are most of the rectangles and squares?

On the bottom of the canvas

Where are most of the triangles?

On the top half of the canvas - *stability*

These shapes all sit firmly on their bases and give the impression of stability, of lack of motion. This feeling of permanence is a key element in Cézanne's art.

## FIFTH CLASS - STILL LIFE

## I. REVIEW OF ELEMENTS OF ART

How many of you can name the "Elements of Art" which go into making any art work?

Color, Light, Line, Shape, Texture, Space and Movement

We have been studying them all along but now is an especially good time to review them with the aid of something we call the "Elements of Art" Chartbook. Show large chartbook. We can illustrate four of the "Elements of Art" quite easily. It is harder to demonstrate "light," "space," and "movement" on paper.

Turn to the first page of the chartbook. What element of art is this?

Color

Can you identify the primary colors?

Red, yellow and blue

The secondary colors?

Green, orange and purple

Do you know what happens when an artist blends colors? Ask the students to give examples.

Blue and yellow equals green

Red and white equals pink etc.

Younger children understand this concept better when they can visualize it with the use of a color paddle. There are also any number of books on color for elementary age children which you might consider showing.

Ask the children what are quiet tones? loud tones? hot colors? cool colors?

See section of this handbook on "Elements of Art" for further information.

Turn to the next page in the chartbook. What element of art are these examples of?

Texture

Have each child come up and touch one of the textures and describe it in words. To make it harder for the older ones, do not let

them use the words "soft" or "hard."

Turn to the next page in the chartbook. What do we have here?  
Shapes

Can you name them all?

Tell them that lines come together to form shapes.

Ask the older children where they think one finds more irregular shapes, in nature or man-made?

In nature

Turn to the next page in the chartbook. What element of art is this?

Line

Do lines have direction?

Yes

What kinds of lines do we have here?

Let the children identify them one by one. Help the younger children with unfamiliar terms such as horizontal, vertical and diagonal.

What type lines make you feel motion?

Curvy lines

What type suggests stability?

Straight lines, especially horizontal ones.

We are going to look at a new type of art today called "still life." It will be easy for us to study how the artist has used all the elements of art in a still life painting because this category of art does not tell about people or events. But first let's refresh our eyes by doing our eye exercises.

## II. EYE EXERCISES

These can be done before the discussion of the "Elements of Art" if the teacher so chooses. (See Activity #1 on page 31 for a description of them.)

*Texture of Paint on Canvas is the thing of this painting*

*Texture: ① Visual  
② S. Media  
③ Textile*

III. STILL LIFE

*This painting is not a coloring party one of the reasons is the leaves very spiky and the dark tints of them*

A. Irises

Artist - Vincent Van Gogh - Dutch - (1853-1890)

Year Painted - 1890

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - Elements of Art Chartbook; vase or pitcher (as close as possible to the one in van Gogh's painting); 15 to 20 blue silk or real irises (one for each child in the class if possible); poster and student postcards of painting; color paddle (to demonstrate blending of colors).

Activity - recreate a still life

*putting complementary colors*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

*together tend to cancel each other out*

Vincent van Gogh was born in the Netherlands in 1853, the son of a country parson. At age sixteen he went to work in an art gallery. Employed first in its branches at The Hague and Brussels, he then worked in London and Paris. In 1876 he was dismissed from the gallery for his antagonistic behavior. At about the same time he became obsessed with a sense of religious vocation. He failed, however, to gain entrance to a theological college. In 1878, after brief training, he went out as a lay preacher to mining families in Belgium. Despite his zeal and dedication, he was recalled. Despondent and without funds for most of 1880, van Gogh gradually came to the realization that art was his true vocation. He believed that through painting he could express his humanitarian concerns and gain salvation. He wrote, "To try to understand the real significance of what great artists, the serious masters, tell us in their masterpieces, that leads to God." Largely self-taught, van Gogh's first canvases (1880-85) are dark green and brown in coloration and depict mostly peasants and miners. They reveal the influence of the Dutch masters such as Rembrandt as well as the French painter Millet. Moving to Paris in 1886 to join his younger brother, Theo, van Gogh's palette lightened at the urging of the Impressionist painter Pissarro. Van Gogh's canvases of 1887 reflect as well his attempt to adopt the pointillist technique of Seurat whom he had also met. Seeking to set up "the studio of the future," van Gogh left Paris in February, 1888 to live in the south of France at Arles. During his fifteen months there, van Gogh reached a peak of creativity. Working with great assurance and speed, he produced over two hundred paintings during his stay. They reflect his wide swing of emotions from elation over the possibility of founding an artists' colony with the painter Gauguin, to despair when after a quarrel with the latter, van Gogh suffered his first

Still life  
composition  
1921

attack of insanity. This was the famous instance when he cut off part of his ear and gave it to a prostitute. Van Gogh was hospitalized first at Arles and then voluntarily confined himself to the asylum at St. Remy in 1889. Between his periods of dementia, van Gogh continued to paint. The canvases finished during the last three months of his life fluctuate between a sense of relative calm, such as the Irises studied here, and feelings of impending doom (e.g., Wheat Field with Crows). In July 1890 he fatally shot himself. Van Gogh sold only one painting during his lifetime. He is sometimes cited as an example of the mad genius who goes unappreciated by his contemporaries, but surely this stereotype tells us little about the tremendous emotional power and universal appeal of his works. Among the many poignant and revealing letters he sent to Theo, van Gogh once wrote, "I paint as a means to make life bearable... Really we can speak only through our paintings."

#### DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom presentation)

This painting is by a Dutch artist, Vincent van Gogh, and was created not quite a hundred years ago.

Can you guess what it is called simply by looking at it?

Do you know what type flowers these are?

Iris

That is the name of the painting.

What type of painting is it?

A still life

Can anyone try to make a definition of a still life? For younger children ask, "What is a still life?"

An arrangement of inanimate (i.e., non-living, non-moving) objects. The objects may once have been alive but they are not now.

What kinds of things can be used in a still life?

Flowers, fruits, vegetables, books, letters, musical instruments, dead game, china, glassware, almost anything that is fairly small and doesn't move.

To help the students answer this question, ask them what van Gogh used and show them other examples of still lifes from books or magazines you have at home.

What must an artist do first before he or she can paint a still life?

Does he go outdoors in search of a scene the way a landscape painter might?

No

Does he hire a model?

No

The artist must first select his objects and arrange them in the fashion he wants.

What does an artist have to consider when arranging the objects for a still life?

How the elements of art will work together

How the colors, textures or sizes balance one another

How the light falls on the objects

Whether he discovers a pattern or patterns by placing them together

Are van Gogh's irises growing in nature?

No

They are not in their natural setting.

What are they in?

A pitcher

What do you think it is made out of?

Clay

How many flowers do you think van Gogh used?

Hard to say precisely

Approximately fifteen to twenty

Why do you think he chose irises?

Their irregular shape

Their strong color

Their spikey leaves

Still lives sometimes have symbolic meaning; i.e., they stand for something in the artist's mind. In the Middle Ages, over five hundred years ago, every flower had a specific meaning. For example, roses symbolized love. The iris symbolized the rainbow. Van Gogh loved colors and was very interested in what they made people feel.

Let's pretend that we are artists and are going to arrange a still life the way van Gogh did using this pitcher and these silk flowers. Hand each child a flower and have them come up one by one to add their flower to the arrangement. Remind the children to look at van Gogh's painting and try to duplicate

the way he arranged his flowers. They can bend the stems.

Do you have some flowers flowing over the front of the pitcher?

Are the flowers fairly evenly balanced on the left and the right?

Show the children yourself how by changing the arrangement of the flowers (i.e., mass them all on one side, or place only three or four in the vase), the artist can change the feeling of a painting. The large number of flowers that van Gogh used, as well as the way they extend out to all corners of the canvas create a sense of movement and energy as if they were still growing in nature.

Now let's examine the way van Gogh has used all the elements of art in his still life. First color.

What are the main colors in this painting?

Purplish blue of the irises  
Green of the leaves and base  
White of the pitcher  
Pale pink of the background

What about the background in this painting. Is it plain or fancy?  
Plain

The background was first painted pink but it has faded considerably so that in our reproduction it looks almost white. Van Gogh painted two canvases of the same irises, ours and one against a bright yellow background.

Which painting do you think gives more the feeling of calmness and tranquility, ours against a soft pink background or the other against a strong yellow?

Ours

Why?

Van Gogh was very interested in the way colors interacted with one another and in the viewer's eye. He used very intense colors next to one another (i.e., red/green) for a startling effect. Softer color complementaries created a quieter mood.

Colors were a way for the artist to convey his emotions. This painting was done in the last month of van Gogh's life during which time he alternated between feelings of tranquility and despair. Our Irises with its soft background creates a sense of harmony.

What type lines does van Gogh use?

Can anyone find a strong horizontal line? Can you tell what the pitcher is standing on? Is it a green table? a green floor?

Because van Gogh has painted the horizontal line across the entire canvas it is unclear where in fact the pitcher has been placed.

Can anyone find some curved lines?

Handle and sides of pitcher  
Shapes of flowers  
Some of the leaves

Some straight lines?

Leaves

What has van Gogh done to all his objects to make them easier to see?

He has outlined them in black.  
This is what makes the leaves look so pointed.

Do you think this painting was painted quickly or slowly and why?

Very rapidly and with great energy  
Van Gogh often finished a canvas a day.  
Most of his paintings are made up of many nervous, rhythmic lines. (Show a book of some of van Gogh's other paintings if possible.)

What shapes does van Gogh use?

Most of them are irregular as in nature  
He divides his background into two unequal rectangles.

Where has he placed the pitcher?

In the center  
It and the mass of flowers together form a triangular shape (upside down) in the center of the composition.

Does van Gogh try to copy the texture of the various objects in this painting realistically, i.e., as they are in real life?

No

What overall texture is more important to him?

The paint

If the students cannot see this, ask the question in another way: can you see the brushstrokes in van Gogh's canvas?

Yes

It will be even easier for us to see this in the museum. Here look at the pitcher where the brushstrokes are very clear. Van Gogh didn't try to hide the texture of the paint itself. He didn't create a smooth surface like David. Instead he applied his paint very thick, often using a palette knife or the stick end of his brush. This too gives all of van Gogh's paintings a special quality. One can feel the artist at work, his own emotions coming through. Van Gogh is considered one of the founders of Expressionist painting in which art becomes above all a means of expressing the artist's feelings.

1902-1904  
Simplified nature  
through perspective

16th century The Dutch artist  
begins to be interested in still life

- B. Still Life arrangement of objects that are not alive
- Artist - Paul Cézanne - French - (1839-1906)
- Year Painted - ca. 1877 Paul Cézanne said he always wanted to recreate nature not reproduce nature
- Medium - oil on canvas
- Props - slide of painting; white cloth; eight red apples; white cup; green vase
- Activity - recreate a still life

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

nothing like a point of view at all

Along with van Gogh, Gauguin and others, Paul Cézanne is regarded as a post-Impressionist painter. His art, although influenced by the Impressionists, abandoned their concern with the transitory effects of natural light in order to seek out a deeper structure and form. Born in Aix-en-Provence in 1839, Cézanne rejected first a career in law and then in banking. His family's wealth--his father owned a bank in Aix--freed Cézanne to follow his artistic vision without concern for the saleability of his works. His paintings were never accepted by the official Salon and it was not until he held his first one-man show in Paris in 1895 that he began to receive any attention. His paintings are hailed today as forerunners of twentieth century art, especially in its Cubist and Expressionist manifestations. To his contemporaries, however, his work appeared awkward and somewhat distorted. This was because Cézanne's use in his art of a new means to represent space. Cézanne was fascinated by the problems inherent in attempting to render three-dimensional objects on a flat surface. Instead of using traditional perspective with its vanishing point, Cézanne employed shifting points of view in the same painting and used overlapping planes of color to create the illusion of depth. He is often quoted as saying, "I do not want to reproduce nature but to recreate it." By this he meant that he sought in nature something solid and enduring. He recognized also that the process of transferring a natural image to the painted canvas entailed its own laws which were different from natural laws. "Art is a harmony parallel to nature." Thus in his work he reduced nature to its simplified, geometric forms in order to lend it stability, weight and a sense of underlying structural unity. Cézanne painted portraits, landscapes and still lifes. The latter form was particularly congenial to him for several reasons. Cézanne could study the still life for a long time without having it change or move. He frequently used the same objects over and over again. Above all, a still life was the perfect vehicle for studying form and shape apart from the emotional connotations presented by landscape or the human figure.

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom presentation)

What type of painting is this? Show the students Cézanne's Still Life of circa 1877.

A still life

This painting is by Paul Cézanne, a French artist who lived about one hundred years ago.

It is called simply Still Life.

Cézanne loved to paint still lifes.

What do you think he liked about this particular type of art?

He could choose and arrange any objects he wanted to study.

He could set up the still life and work on it for a long time without having it move or change. We know that Cézanne sometimes took such a long time on his still lifes that the original apples that he used had to be replaced by wax replicas!

What shapes do you find here?

Circles of apples, vase and cup

Diamond shaped pattern of wallpaper

Can the students find a very large diamond shape made up of the V shape of the white cloth and the wallpaper?

Imagine that the wallpaper design continued off the canvas to a point.

Cézanne often used the same objects over and over again in his still lifes. He made twelve paintings with this same wallpaper in the background. He also reused the same cup and white cloth and did many still lifes with apples.

Do you think Cézanne tried to paint objects exactly as they are in nature?

No

Cézanne was not interested in the scientific study of objects.

What do you think appealed to him about apples, for example?

Their shape, their roundness

He deliberately emphasized the roundness of the apples by outlining them in black.

Some students might say "their color," which was clearly an attraction as well.

Cézanne said that he did "...not want to reproduce nature but to recreate it."

How many of you remember the landscape we traced over with acetate paper?

It was by Cézanne.

Do you remember what we were looking for when we were tracing?  
Shapes

Cézanne wanted to simplify nature to its basic shapes in order to reveal its underlying structure and permanence. He arranged his objects and painted them in order to concentrate on their form, shape, color and composition; i.e., in order to deal with them as art not as objects of everyday life. He once said that he wanted to astonish Paris with an apple.

Let's see if we can recreate Cézanne's still life. Allow each child to arrange one item (i.e., cloth, vase, cup, eight apples). Allow the remaining students to make adjustments to the finished work in order that it more closely approximates the original. For example, is the cloth smoothed flat or draped in folds as Cézanne has it? Is the cup exactly in the center? If possible, place your table next to a blackboard in order to draw the wallpaper pattern. Have one child trace the diamond shape formed by the cloth and the wallpaper pattern together.

Does our still life look like Cézanne's?

There are many possible responses to this question. Allow the children time to make observations. Then direct them to the question of how they differ spatially.

Does the table in Cézanne's painting seem to recede (go back) into space as much as ours?

No.

Which seems flatter, our still life or Cézanne's?

Cézanne's

Cézanne was fascinated by the artist's problem of having to create the illusion of depth, of three-dimensional space on the flat surface of the canvas. (Explain the difference between two- and three-dimensional space. Have the children give examples of each from around the classroom.) Most of Cézanne's paintings have very shallow space. They continue to remind us that this is after all only a painting on a flat piece of canvas.

How does Cézanne make the cloth appear to be in front of the wallpaper?

He uses planes of color (i.e., the white of the cloth and the dark of the background) to create a sense of three-dimensional space.

Where is the viewer standing in Cézanne's Still Life? Are we above, at eye level or below the apples?

This is a difficult question because it seems from looking at different objects in the painting that we are in all

three places. For example, it appears as if we are looking at eye level with the apples except that if that were true we shouldn't see as much of the inside of the cup. Check this against your own still life.

Cézanne deliberately used several different viewpoints in the same painting as a new way to give the painting a sense of depth. Cézanne is a hard painter to understand but an enormously important one for much of the art that developed in our century.

### C. Woman with Chrysanthemums

Artist - Edgar Degas - French - (1834-1917)

Year Painted - 1858 & 1865

Medium - oil on canvas

Props - slide and projector; student postcards of painting

Activity - sketching

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION (for the teacher)

Hilaire Germain Edgar Degas was born in Paris in 1834. His father was a banker and Degas first studied law before giving it up to pursue art studies at the École des Beaux-Arts. His teacher there had been a student of Ingres and Degas was much influenced by Ingres's linear style. Exhibiting first within the official Salon, Degas later showed his works with the Impressionists. Although like the Impressionists in his use of contemporary subject matter and his sense of immediacy of expression, he was in many other ways very different from them. A tremendously talented draftsman, he admired fine drawing and line remained an essential element in all of his paintings. While sketching from nature, he finished his paintings in the studio unlike many of his contemporaries. Degas preferred to paint the human body, above all else. His favorite subjects were ballet dancers, café and theater figures, and woman at their toilette. He often captured them in startling, unusual poses. Degas's interest in contorted positions, cutoff views and off-center arrangements reflects the influence on his art of Japanese prints and photography, two art forms new to Europe in Degas's time. A keen observer of human nature in his portraits, Degas also excelled at rendering bodies in motion. His racehorses as well as his ballet dancers were painted with great accuracy of movement. By the end of the 1870s, perhaps because of failing eyesight, Degas abandoned oil paint in favor of pastels. His later canvases are highly colored although they retain a strong sense of draughtsmanship as their base. Degas also produced a significant body of sculpture. (See class on Sculpture.)

DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS (for Classroom presentation)

The last painting we are going to look at today is interesting in that it combines two types of art. Can you guess which two? (Show slide of Woman with Chrysanthemums.)

Portrait and still life

This painting is by a French artist named Edgar Degas who was also working about one hundred years ago. It is called Woman with Chrysanthemums and has a fascinating story behind it.

Can anyone see any dates on this painting?

It was signed and dated twice, 1858 and 1865.

(This may not be totally clear on the reproduction. Remember to point them out to the students during their museum visit.)

Why might Degas have put two dates on it?

Because he changed it.

Degas began the painting first as a simple still life in 1858. He did very few still lifes. He was more intrigued by the human form, especially those in motion such as dancers, and by horses (also in motion). Seven years after he painted the floral scene he added the female figure. We know this not only because of the two sets of dates but also because art historians have taken x-ray pictures of the painting which reveal flowers beneath where the woman's arm, shoulder and bodice are. The right side of the table also appears to have been changed.

What does Degas tell us about this woman?

Where is she?

Way to the side of the painting.

What do the flowers seem to do to her?

To overwhelm her

To push her out of the picture

For older students, tell them that this cutting off of the figure at the edge of the canvas and the sense of imbalance that it creates show the influence on Degas of Japanese prints which were just becoming known in Europe at the time.

Where is the woman looking?

Away from us

What is her expression?

Shy, withdrawn, sad, anxious, lost in thought

What about her hand?

We only see one.

It is held up to her mouth in a type of nervous or perhaps merely thoughtful gesture.

Is she aware of the viewer?

No

Would you say this is a typical portrait? Think of some of the other portraits we have looked at.

No

It appears as if we are seeing her in a private, unguarded moment, when no one else is looking.

She appears deep in her own thoughts.

We do not know who the model was for this portrait. It was not a commissioned work (i.e., no one paid Degas to paint it). Degas was a master at revealing a person's character, their psychology. Here he uses the profusion of flowers to comment on the woman's recessive personality. (Simplify this for younger children.)

If any time remains, suggest to the students that they might like to sketch their own still lifes either in the classroom, studio artroom or at home. A fun one for the classroom is to arrange a still life of objects taken from one's desk.

*Handwritten notes:*  
 You can use wood etc. metal marble and tools cutting and building up

## SIXTH CLASS - SCULPTURE

### I. Introduction:

Because sculpture and painting are very different art forms we begin this class by LOOKING at a variety of sculptures of different materials and discussing their special properties.

Ask the students if they know the term for this kind of artwork?

The response is usually "statue".

Introduce the term SCULPTURE and ask in what ways sculpture differs from the paintings we have been studying ?

Usual responses:

Sculpture is not flat.

Sculpture has depth.

Sculpture has 3 dimensions.

Can you walk around a painting and see artwork from all sides ?  
 (Rodin once said that a sculpture is a painting with 1,000 facets.)

What is one thing that a painting has which a sculpture does not need?

A frame.

What else is different ?

Sculptures are made of different materials.

The tools used to make them are different.

Display pieces of stone, or wood, metal, and clay sculpture, plus a constructed work (i.e. tinker toys or legos) to illustrate the three primary processes:

Cut away -- the carving or chiselling process used with wood and stone sculptures.

Build - up -- the process used with clay and wax sculptures.

Construct -- the assembly of parts often used with metal or plastic sculptures.

Have tools available for each and demonstrate how they are used.

Now point out the ways in which sculpture and painting are alike.

Does sculpture have texture ?

Let students touch sculptures of different materials to feel natural grain as well as textured surfaces applied by the artist.

Does sculpture have shape ?

Suggest that the students walk around the sculpture viewing it from different angles.

Does sculpture have light ?

Point out reflections of light on metal, glass and polished marble.

Does sculpture have color ?

Yes - color inherent in the materials and sometimes applied colors.

All of the same elements used by an artist in painting are also found in sculpture.

#### CLAY ACTIVITY:

Clay is a wonderful tool to communicate the difficult concepts of relief sculpture and positive/negative space.

#### RELIEF SCULPTURE:

Give each student a clay board and a small handful of clay to flatten like a pancake.

Explain that each student is a SCULPTOR and shall SCULPT or create a face out of the clay.

Have different clay tools available for gouging eyes or creating hair texture such as toothpicks, pencils, etc..

Demonstrate the "building-up" process with small bits of clay to make the nose, cheeks, chin, mouth...

As the students exhibit their wonderful variety of faces ask if these works of art have three-dimensions ?

Yes.

But instead of being a sculpture that we can walk around and view from all angles, there is one surface or side that is flat and unfinished.

This kind of sculpture is called:

RELIEF SCULPTURE

The sculpture we can walk around and see from all angles is:  
SCULPTURE IN THE ROUND

Who can name a common relief sculpture that we carry in our pockets every day?

Coins.

#### POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE SPACE:

Starting with a round ball of clay ask the students what shape you are holding.

Sphere.

One definition of sculpture is:

A shape in space.

Make a hole through the center of the sphere.

Now what shape do we have ?

A doughnut.

Would this be a doughnut shape without the hole in the center ?

No.

Therefore the hole is important to the shape of this sculpture.

This hole or empty space is called NEGATIVE SPACE.

The solid part of the doughnut or filled space is called POSITIVE SPACE.

Standing with your feet slightly apart and your hands on your hips ask the students to pretend you are a piece of sculpture and to identify the positive and negative spaces.

#### SUPPORTING AND POSITIONING SCULPTURE:

Have the students make a snake with their clay and hold it in the air.

Is this a sculpture in the round ?

Yes.

Now ask them to stand the snake on its tail.

As the snakes collapse, it is demonstrated that the proper support and positioning of a sculpture is important.

How can you arrange this snake in an interesting way ?

Usually a wide variety of poses ensue...some using supports, some that are coiled.

Looking at sculpture from a two-dimensional reproduction is less than satisfactory, but we do discuss at least one reproduction of sculpture from the Metropolitan Museum of Art with the students, just to familiarize them with what they will see during the museum tour. Depending on the make up of your class, select the work most appropriate, ie. The Little-Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer is most successful with girls while Adam works well for boys. Be sure to show slides which view the sculpture from different angles.

#### II. EYE EXERCISE. (See Activities Section)

### III. SCULPTURE:

#### A. ADAM

Artist - Auguste Rodin - French, (1840-1917)

Year Sculpted - 1880 or 1881; This Cast Executed 1910

Medium - Bronze

Activity - "Rubberman"

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION: (for the teacher)

Auguste Rodin was the one great force in sculpture of the late 19th century and achieved an enormous fame during his own lifetime. He worked as a stone mason from about 1864 and in 1871 was sent to Brussels to do the decorative figures on the new stock exchange building, on which he eventually worked as a free lance. He broadened his technical ability by studying in museums and in the course of his Italian travels in 1875-1876, he was greatly influenced by Michelangelo. Soon after, Rodin began work on his first free standing bronze figure, Bronze Age (1877). This figure was so lifelike in the anatomy, accuracy of proportion and rendering of movement that Rodin was actually accused of casting the figure from a live model. Though this absurd rumor was later dismissed, Bronze Age received no real recognition until it was shown in London in 1884. This placed Rodin in a position of "anti-academism", similar to the Impressionists and their successors.

Most of the artist's public commissions were unlucky as well. They were either altered, destroyed or vandalized before they could be erected. Even his Gates of Hell, commissioned in 1880 as a door for the Ecole des Arts Decoratifs, was still unfinished at his death. However, the Gates did provide Rodin with an abundance of ideas which he used again and again in large independent statues and groups of bronze and marble. This door was based on Dante's Inferno, poetry which is notoriously satanic in character. Rodin's other literary preoccupation was Baudelaire's Flowers of Evil, which the sculptor illustrated for Paul Gallimare in 1888. These two highly charged literary sources provided inspiration for a great number of his works in the 1880's and account for the increasingly erotic character of his sculpture. As one critic wrote, Rodin's sculpture "was not for the education of young ladies." They were very popular, though, and in great demand. As a result Rodin employed many marble cutters and cast-makers to make replicas, which he often completed himself. He was the creator of a new form in sculpture - the "fragment of a figure work," usually a head and trunk, but sometimes only a pair of hands. He also employed a variation of Michelangelo's unfinished figures, giving some parts a waxy delicate finish while leaving other parts buried in the practically untouched block.

This admiration for Michelangelo is especially evident in the form of the free standing larger than life-size Adam originally intended to flank one side of Rodin's Gates of Hell. Adam, the first man, in a contorted uncomfortable pose, is slowly and with great difficulty being roused to life. Rodin's direct inspiration for this sculpture came from two works by Michelangelo. This also provides the explanation for Adam's strange gestures, for the right arm refers to The Creation of Adam, the Sistine Chapel fresco in the Vatican, while the left is borrowed from the dead Christ of the Pietà in the Cathedral of Florence. As Albert Elsen has observed "the figure is framed by the beginning and end of life, between this, his body shows its tortured existence."

In 1910 the Metropolitan Museum of Art commissioned this work directly from the artist. The museum's collection of Rodin's work is considered the most important in the Western Hemisphere.

GENERAL DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS: (for presentation in class)

What is this sculpture of?

A man.

What do you think about the pose? Is it comfortable? Contorted? Twisted?

Do you have any ideas as to who this man could be? Think about why he is not wearing clothing.

This is a sculpture of Adam the first man being aroused to life slowly and with great difficulty.

This figure was originally intended to be part of The Gates of Hell, a large artwork by Auguste Rodin designed for a building in Paris that was never constructed.

Can you guess what figure was planned to stand opposite Adam?  
Eve.

Rodin's design for The Gates of Hell contained a large number of figures which he used individually and as inspiration for many other statues. By taking just a section of one of his completed sculptures and reproducing this part as a finished work, Rodin became the inventor of a new form of sculpture -- "the fragment as a finished work". These fragments were usually a head and a torso, but sometimes he used a pair of hands. (You may need to define the term torso. Always try to write new words on a blackboard for the students).

There are actually parts of Adam's pose that were borrowed from two artworks by the artist Michelangelo.

The right arm refers to The Creation of Adam from the Sistine Chapel fresco in the Vatican.

The left arm is borrowed from the dead Christ of the Pietà in the Cathedral of Florence.

(Have slides or reproductions of these two works available to show the students.)

What do you notice about the size of the sculpture?

Is it life-size? Larger or smaller than life?

(If this work is being discussed from a reproduction you must tell them it is larger than life.)

Rodin was also fond of enlarging or shrinking his compositions as needed for future reproductions.

Can you picture Adam reduced to a size that would fit on a coffee table?

How would it change your feeling about the work?

What material has Rodin used in this sculpture?  
Metal/Bronze.

What if it were made of white marble?  
How would it change the mood of the work?

What effect does light have on the sculpture?  
(The reflections of light are highly visible in the museum and can also be seen in the slide reproductions to some extent.)  
The light emphasizes the muscular form and shapes within the pose.

Do the reflections of light create an interesting pattern or texture on the surface of the sculpture?  
Yes - (almost impressionistic).

To help the students experience the sense of movement and the difficulty of the pose introduce the game "Rubberman". (see the Activities Section)

B. Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer:

Artist - Edgar Degas, French, 1834-1917

Year Sculpted - (Original in wax, the Louvre 1880-81)  
(Bronze casting - Metropolitan Museum 1922)

Medium - Bronze and Muslin with Satin Ribbon and Wood base.

Props - tutu, satin slippers, satin ribbon.

Activity - Rubberman

Background Information:(for the teacher)

Upon Degas's death in 1917 over 150 pieces of sculpture were found in his studio. These were primarily clay and wax which remained in various stages of deterioration - only a few had earlier been preserved in the form of plaster casts and Degas was known to have been ambivalent about preserving any of them in bronze. Fortunately the sculptor's heirs decided to salvage as many figures as possible and to permit the Parisienne foundry of Adrien Hibrard to cast them in bronze "editions" for sale to collectors.

Aside from the Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer, none of these had ever been exhibited publicly. Many of the figures needed repair before casting. This was a delicate task, especially since it is still impossible from looking at the finished bronze to determine whether a partial figure represents a completed work or whether the present effect is the result of chance damage. This is complicated by the fact that Degas was known to have altered his work compulsively, often damaging or destroying sculptures in the process. Of the seventy-four figures that were salvaged and cast in bronze editions, seventy-two are in the Metropolitan Museum's collection. Degas' sculpture differs greatly from the mainstream of nineteenth century French sculpture. Instead of the monumental groups, or life-sized statues that were characteristic of the period, Degas' work has been termed a "private" medium. His figures are more closely aligned to the sketch or drawings within which he explored the problems that fascinated him. These problems primarily have to do with the representation of motion and specifically the human female and horses in motion.

His sculptural subjects fall into three main categories -- dancers, bathers, and horses. Degas found a source of inspiration in the ballet dancers of the Paris Opera who were trained to achieve and maintain difficult and often unnatural steps of the ballet. This was ideal for Degas' purpose and enabled him to work for extended periods from live models.

He used the same keen observation in the study of horses - most of which were thoroughbreds trained for speed and competition of racing. Numerous visits to the race track at Longchamps were supplemented with photographs taken in rapid succession by Edward Muybridge of horses running in from the farm. Muybridge's motion study photographs published in 1879 revealed for the first time that there is a moment when all four hoofs of a trotting horse leave the ground. Degas' Horse Trotting, the Feet Not Touching the Ground faithfully reflects this discovery.

The chronology of Degas' work is extremely difficult since only a few dates were documented, therefore the works displayed in the Metropolitan Museum are divided into three loose categories which succeed one another. They are horses (1865-1881), dancers (1882-1895) and dancers and bathers (1896-1911).

The Little Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer was the only work ever exhibited during Degas' lifetime. The original work, now in the Louvre, was modeled in wax (1881). Its realism was heightened by the addition of satin ballet shoes, a bodice overlaid with wax, a tutu of muslin, and a horsehair wig tied behind with satin ribbon. This stark realism shocked the public when the sculpture was first exhibited at the Salon of 1881. Critics saw her pose as awkward and her face as a reflection of vice.

#### DIALOGUE SUGGESTIONS: (for Classroom Presentation)

For the purpose of reinforcement ask the students what kind of artwork this is.

Sculpture.

What is this a sculpture of? A Girl.

Help them to notice her pose and her costume if they don't immediately recognize her as a ballerina.

How old would you guess her to be?

Actually 14.

The title of this work is The Fourteen-Year-Old-Dancer by Edgar Degas.

What materials is this piece of sculpture made of?

Metal/Bronze, Muslin/fabric skirt, and satin ribbon.

Explain to the students that the original work was modelled in wax with a horse hair wig, a satin ribbon for her hair, a bodice overlaid with a thin layer of wax, a muslin tutu, and ballet slippers.

At this point show the children an actual ballerina's tutu, slippers, and satin ribbon, and let them feel the textures.

How many different "real textures" did Degas include in his sculpture?

Four (In the original - six)

Not only did he use visual textures but he included real objects with their own tactile textures. (see Element - Texture)

Ask the students how they think these accessories made the original sculpture look?

Almost real, ("too real" for the critics of Edgar Degas' time). This work was sculpted over 100 years ago. Using materials such as these was considered revolutionary. Degas was far ahead of his time and the critics thought this work to be offensive in its exaggerated realism.

What about the pose of the ballerina?

Does it look comfortable?

The critics thought she appeared awkward.

What do you think of the expression on her face?

Does she look attractive?

(This is debatable. In Degas' time her expression was thought to be arrogant and offensive.)

Where do you see negative space in this sculpture?

Between hair and neck, between arms and bodice, between legs.

Introduce the game of "Rubberman". (see Activities Section)

Have one child pose as "ballerina" while the other child acts as "sculptor" and adjusts the position of her partner to mimic the Little-Fourteen-Year-Old Dancer as accurately as possible. Next have the "sculptor" walk around the "ballerina" and view her from all angles, adjusting the figure if necessary and noticing how different the "sculpture" looks from a variety of viewpoints. Partners should then swap roles so that each child has a chance to be both "sculptor" and "ballerina".