

7th Grade: SEPTEMBER

Chalk Cliffs on Rügen

Casper David Friedrich

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Funded by the John and Frances Beck Foundation, Chicago, Illinois

Edited by Constance Kammrath, M.A.

About the Artist

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Casper David Friedrich

Casper David Friedrich was born in Griefswald, Germany, just north of Berlin, on September 5, 1774. He was the sixth of ten children born to Adolf Gottlieb Friedrich, a soap and candle maker, and Sophie Dorothea Bechly from Neubrandenburg. Friedrich and his siblings were raised under the strict Protestant faith, a foundation that influenced Friedrich throughout his life.

Casper David Friedrich's childhood was traumatic. His mother died when he was just seven years old. His sister, Elizabeth, died of smallpox one year later. However, his most traumatic experience came at thirteen years old when he fell through a thin layer of ice on a frozen lake. His brother, Johann Christoffer, tried to save him and in doing so, Johann drowned. Five years after his brother passed away his second sister, Maria, died from typhus. The surviving Friedrich children were cared for by the housekeeper, Mother Heide, who developed a loving relationship with the children in contrast with the ridged and tense relationship they had with their father who was known as an upright moralist. For Friedrich, his personal experiences with a strict father and with death at such an early age gave him an intense sense of guilt, personal loss and loneliness which he carried into adulthood.

The small town of Griefswald had scarcely changed in two hundred years and was void of the intellectual and artistic stimulus Friedrich sought until he met Johann Gottfried Quistorp, a former architect turned Professor of Drawing at the University of Heidelberg. Quistorp instructed Friedrich in drawing for a number of years and raised his interest in landscape painting, a new form away from the traditional portraiture.

Friedrich shifted his studies in 1794 to the liberal Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen known for drawing from nature rather than copying works of the masters. At this time, Friedrich was introduced to Gotthard Ludwig Kosegarten, a poet and theologian who claimed God revealed Himself equally in Scripture and in nature and that an experience in nature was an experience with God. Therefore, the role of the artist was to mediate between God and man, and in a landscape painting, this relationship had to be felt, not simply represented. Drama and emotion had to merge on the canvas. This philosophy complimented a desire growing across Europe to become more spiritual and to reject

materialism, hence the German Romantic movement began.

While at the Royal Academy, Friedrich made little artistic progress. He blamed this on his schooling but others said he was simply a late bloomer. In 1798 Friedrich decided he was ready to move away from his academic teaching to find his own independent voice as a painter.

After a short visit in Greifswald to see family and friends, Friedrich moved on to Dresden, Germany, which was considered the hub for the newly formed German Romantic movement. Friedrich fell in love with the buildings, the art, and the surrounding beautiful nature. Soon he began an intensive study capturing scenes of nature in sketchbooks but, revealing a less than ideal drawing ability. He gradually pulled away from his former teachers' styles to develop his own, unique style, all the while improving his drawing ability.

Portraiture was his first effort in Dresden and Friedrich made improvements, largely due to the influence of one of the most famous portrait painters, Anton Graff. Friedrich preferred to draw with pencil or chalk and occasionally used a brown ink called sepia. He moved on to draw other objects, such as boats and eventually landscapes, adding his sepia washes. His work improved with greater detail and finally, in 1807, Friedrich gained enough confidence to pick up a paintbrush for his first oil painting. Friedrich's advancing skills became apparent in his allegorical landscapes; objects in his art symbolized concepts such as a snake signifying evil or a sun signifying the presence of God.

Friedrich decided to focus his paintings on landscapes. His formula included an outdoor environment that held vast, open spaces with a sun or moon illuminating the clouds or seascape. Usually he added an isolated figure placed before ancient ruins. It was also common for Friedrich to use a landscape allegory to reference a religious concept. Sometimes he even placed a cross in his landscape. While wealthy patrons enjoyed Friedrich's work, it did receive some negative criticism. Noted critic F.W.B. van Ramdohr did not appreciate Friedrich's placement of religious symbolism in his landscapes. The debates on this issue in social settings among the wealthy and intelligent only increased Friedrich's notoriety and reputation. Friedrich was intentional about adding a theme of faith and hope to his work, most likely a theme which helped him through his difficult childhood years. Light penetrating the darkness, temples ruins of the past making way for the future, contemplation of nature, the insignificance of the human amidst expansive space are some of the messages included in his landscapes.

Friedrich's reputation grew especially when he won recognition

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PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

- Repetition: Imagery repeating pattern
- Variety: Contrast/variation
- Rhythm: Issues of eye movement
- Balance: Even visual weight
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- Proportion: Compare size relationships

COMPOSITION

- Symmetrical: Mirrored imagery
- Asymmetrical: Random placement
- Radial: Mirror image from center point
- Repetition: Repeating pattern, motif

ARTISTIC STYLES

- Realism: Realistic representation
- Abstraction: Personal interpretation
- Non-Objective: No recognizable depiction

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Children's literature that relate to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- *Casper Friedrich* by Werner Hofmann and Mary Whittall
- *Casper David Friedrich and the Subject of Landscape: Second Edition* by Kate DiCamillo
- *German Romantic Painting: Second Edition* by Joseph Leo Koerner

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Jensen, Jens Christian. *Casper David Friedrich: Life and Work*. Barron's Woodbury, NY/London. 1981
- Russo, Raffaella, Casper David Friedrich, Caroline Hunt, Louise Candlish, Anna Krüger. *Friedrich*. Dorling Kindersley. 1999
- Schmied, Weiland. *Casper David Friedrich*. H.N. Abrams. 1995
- Wolf, Norbert. *Casper David Friedrich: 1774-1840: The Painter of Stillness*. Taschen. 2003

at the Weimar competition. He worked especially hard during his time in Dresden and advanced his skill level to the point that he sold his own works of paintings, drawings and engravings. He supplemented his income by giving art lessons to children and guiding tours throughout Saxony. Friedrich's name eventually became well-known throughout Saxony as the most important German Romantic painter. He gained membership in the Berlin Academy in 1810.

In 1818, Friedrich married Carolina Bommer, daughter of a dyer from Dresden. Three children were born to the couple. After the marriage, color tones became brighter, symmetry was less rigid and the first female figure appeared on the canvas.

Friedrich suffered a stroke in 1835, leaving some paralysis in his limbs and causing his career to come to a gradual end. By 1838, he lost any capacity to work, leaving him supported by the charity of his friends. He eventually died in 1840 at the age of sixty-six.

About the Art

Chalk Cliffs on Rügen was painted in oil on canvas by Casper David Friedrich in 1818 and is 35.6 by 27.9 inches. It is in the collection of the Museum Oskar Reinhart am Stadgarten in Zurich, Switzerland.

Friedrich and his new wife honeymooned on the island of Rügen in 1818. This painting depicts the view of the Baltic Sea from the famous lookout points from the chalk cliffs. The composition of the painting is a compilation of various areas of on the island.

Directed Observation

Show students an image of *Chalk Cliffs on Rügen* and tell them it was painted in oil by Casper David Friedrich in 1818. Invite students to quietly study the work. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following are suggested questions to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. Friedrich was a very disciplined artist who worked with imagery placed in the foreground, mid-ground and background. Identify those items placed in the foreground, those placed in the mid-ground and what makes up the background of the painting. How does this approach create depth?
2. How is the scene framed?
3. Symbolism was also a theme in Friedrich's painting. The figure in the middle is Friedrich with his hat on the ground as

a symbol of humility. He is dressed in blue, the color of faith. He gazes into the opening before him and seeks footing for fear of slipping off into death. The other figure is Friedrich's brother, dressed in green, symbolic of hope. The female figure, dressed in red symbolic of love, is Friedrich's wife. She sits beside a bare, dried bush which has leaves only near her face. Faith, hope and love are the three Christian virtues. Respond to this use of symbolism.

4. Friedrich believed God was present in all of nature and desired to paint in such a way as to portray God's presence.
5. This particular painting used the element of space—the illusion of depth. How does he achieve this and how does it enrich the scene?
6. If you were to make a symbolic drawing or painting, what message would it have and how would you symbolize it?

Things to Do

1. Friedrich sketched and created sepia paintings of his subject matter. The sepia paint allowed him to plan for the depth of light and dark tones. Identify a landscape near you and make a sketch which has a heightened sensitivity to light and dark tones.
2. Use your imagination or draw from nature (or a cityscape) a scene which has a distinctive foreground, mid-ground and background. Consider the same scene in different seasons.
3. Using a 3 x 5 inch index card, vertically or horizontally, create a drawing or painting which features the element of space—the illusion of depth. This could be an landscape or cityscape, an interior space with a window that offers a view of a distant lake and hills. It could be an outdoor scene which features pasture close and continuing far into the distance. Key techniques for creating depth: items in the distance are smaller, lighter in color and "behind" items in the foreground which are bolder in color and larger. When completed, exhibit the "miniature" collection. See whose work "traveled" the farthest distance.
4. Choose a movie you enjoyed and identify a particular scene or two in the movie and re-design the set. Sketch out new possibilities for the set and improve upon the element of depth.
5. Imagine a special outdoor setting that you'd love to visit. Draw it in a very appealing manner to entice others to visit. Appeal to their senses and emotions by including aspects that makes it special.



7th Grade: October

Paris Street; Rainy Day

Gustave Caillebotte

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Gustave Caillebotte

Gustave Caillebotte born August 19, 1874, in Paris, France, was the first of three sons of Martial Caillebotte and Céleste Dauffresne. His father's inherited wealth came from a large business that manufactured bedding for the military. The sizable income provided his family a wealthy lifestyle. Martial also served as a judge of the Commercial Tribunal and invested in real estate, including a vacation home to the south of Paris in the small town of Yerres. The beautiful gardens, pavilions, greenhouses and general countryside with sights of the nearby river were a welcome relief from the busyness of Paris. Young Caillebotte loved to draw and found this place filled with inspirational images including the local floral and fauna. In addition to drawing and painting, he and his family engaged in everyday recreational activities.

Art was an important activity for Caillebotte but law was his chosen profession. During his law schooling, he was called up for military duty in the Franco-Prussian war but his father was able to buy insurance to delay the process. Caillebotte continued with his schooling, earning a law degree and license to practice in 1870, the same year he was again drafted in the Franco-Prussian War. As a result of the war and subsequent establishment of a new French government, Caillebotte was emotionally scarred. He abandoned his law career and turned to painting, entering the studio of French Salon master Léon Bonnet. Under Bonnet's tutelage, Caillebotte was exposed to a realist approach with a very light hand and looser brush strokes. Caillebotte's skills improved and gave him high hopes of acceptance into the Ecole des Beaux-Arts (School of Fine Arts). While he was accepted, he was ranked in the mid-range of students attending and because of that, Caillebotte did not attend classes regularly.

Bonnet was a friend of painters Degas, Monet, Renoir, Pissaro, Cézanne and others who would come to be known as the Impressionists. The post war political climate was accepting of innovative artists but the work of the Impressionists was ill-received as lacking substance and execution. An Impressionist exhibition in 1874 attracted Caillebotte to attend as a viewer. It is at this point he realized his potential.

Caillebotte's father died unexpectedly on Christmas Day in 1874, leaving the family fortune to his sons. Caillebotte immediately

became the steward of a substantial fortune which supported his desires to be an artist. An 1875 rejection from the annual Salon exhibition solidified Caillebotte's relationship with the Impressionists as they all shared rejection from the Salon. One year later he participated in the second group Impressionist exhibition with eight paintings, five of which are very famous today.

Within a year, Caillebotte's twenty six year-old brother, Rene died, leaving Caillebotte in fear of a premature death himself. This fear prompted him to execute a will which provided generous support for the next Impressionist exhibition and he bequeathed to France a large number of Impressionist works he had previously purchased and collected from his friends. Caillebotte was not interested in buying work from his friends as a charitable act for them. Rather, he had such a great eye to evaluate the work as quality art and confidently knew it would maintain its value. His only request was that these works of art would be exhibited in Paris museums and eventually in the world-renowned Louvre Museum. Many museums originally rejected the idea because they shared a dislike for the Impressionist work. From today's perspective, the gifts of art were a generous gesture which had a lasting impact on the collections in art museums today, especially the Louvre in Paris.

The subsequent years were driven with a high energy to produce work, probably driven by his fear of an early death. The 1877 Impressionist Exhibition was a success in the quality and cohesiveness of work exhibited. In his usual generous manner, Caillebotte financially and physically supported the exhibition, publicized the event, hung the artwork and purchased some of his peers' work. Caillebotte also submitted his own paintings to this exhibition, which were well received by critics.

Being associated with a specific artistic movement may require conformity to shared perspectives. However, Caillebotte maintained his own identity and uniqueness serving his own vision and subject matter. Differing from the Impressionistic approach, Caillebotte chose to paint on large canvases, was committed to painting modern, urban life in Paris, painted in a tighter format with smoother brushstrokes and often used darker grey tones. He delighted in the perspective of streets and buildings and the people who walked among them.

His mother, Céleste Caillebotte, died in 1878 leaving Caillebotte to mourn again and deal with the family estate including selling many homes. Three years later, Caillebotte purchased a home in Petit-Gennevilliers on the banks of the Seine River and took up boating. With the fear of death constantly on his mind, he turned his attention from painting to gardening and yachting.

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ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

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- *Caillebotte and His Garden at Yerres* by Pierre Wittmer
- *Gustave Caillebotte: Parisian Impressionist with a Passion for Water* by Gustave Caillebotte
- *Gustave Caillebotte: The Unknown Impressionist* by Anne Distel

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

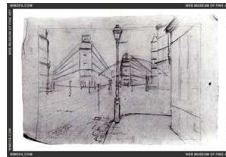
- Broude, Norma (editor). *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionistic Paris*. Rutgers University Press. 2002
- Vamedoe, Kirk, *Gustave Caillebotte*. Yale University Press. 2000.

Caillebotte died in 1894 at the age of forty-five. Some accounts say the cause of death was a stroke and others suggest pulmonary congestion. Caillebotte's funeral was held in the church of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette where his half-brother, Alfred, was the vicar. The size of the crowd left some standing outside the church. He was buried in Paris at Père Lachaise Cemetery. Caillebotte never married, though he had a long relationship with Charlotte Berthier. His will dictated a generous monthly payment for the remainder of her life.

Renoir, executor of Caillebotte's will, informed the French government of the bequest of sixty works to the Louvre in Paris and the museum in Luxemburg. The works were accepted but would not be exhibited because the Impressionists' works were considered undesirable. Renoir found this unacceptable and, after many attempts including extensive press coverage, an agreement was eventually secured. The majority of those works were exhibited, marking the first time Impressionist paintings were presented to the public in French museums.

About the Art

Paris Street; Rainy Day was painted oil on canvas by Gustave Caillebotte in 1877 and is 83.5 x 109 inches. It was hung in the Art Institute of Chicago and was considered a modern history painting when rendered. Caillebotte completed considerable preparatory work, first sketching, then modifying the sketches while experimenting with the composition before the painting was started assuring the design was well-planned and the architectural perspective was correct. Finally, the work was painted with the utmost precision. This approach differed a bit from the Impressionist approach that approached painting more casually with looser composition and brushstrokes.



Directed Observation

Show students an image of *Paris Street: Rainy Day* and tell them it was painted in oil by Gustave Caillebotte in 1877. Invite students to quietly study the work. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following questions are provided to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. Caillebotte painted this Paris scene after the Franco-Prussian war ended and a new, restored Paris was forming. The new ruler sought to prepare Paris for the future and in doing so, he eliminated many of the

narrow Paris streets and built expansive roads in the heart of the city. They are appreciated today but, when they were first built, Parisians, who were used to the crowded and intimate streets where people socialized, felt these new expansive roads made people feel apart from one another, empty and void of social interaction. Describe the many ways Caillebotte conveys emptiness or loneliness in *Paris Street: Rainy Day*. (Grey colors, lack of conversation, lack of greenery/nature, hard surfaces, isolation under umbrella, the rigid vertical lamp post, and large area of cobblestone.)

2. Discuss how the left side is balanced by the right side. How is this done?
3. Discuss how one paints surfaces to look wet. Compare and contrast the two wet surfaces: cobblestone and sidewalk.
4. If you were to convey "emptiness" or loneliness in art, how would you do it?
5. Look at additional paintings of Caillebotte and discuss his theme of transitioning into a modern world.
6. Discuss Caillebotte as a patron of the Impressionists and how his actions impacted the works of art we see in museums today. Consider the world of art if he had not been such a generous patron. Everyone has opportunities to be a patron of the arts. How so?

Things to Do

1. People react to changes in different ways. Think of a time you had to deal with change and share how you initially felt about the change. Consider two- or three-dimensional art forms and create a work of art that conveys the emotional reaction you had to the change in your life. Like Caillebotte, create a large scale work so the emotional content is "in your face" and the viewer feels physically present in the work. Create sketches of your ideas. Once the image is determined, sketch variations of the imagery to work out the best composition and features. If rendering a two-dimensional work, use poster board or bulletin board paper.
2. Many of Caillebotte's works, such as *View of Rooftops* (1878), *Boulevard Haussman, Snow* (1879/81), or *Young Man at His Window* (1875), share a "bird's eye view" from a balcony with the city below. Find a similar type of location near you—from a hilltop, building or parking garage and draw or paint the scene below.





7th Grade: NOVEMBER

Still Life with Lobster

Anne Vallayer-Coster

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Anne Vallayer-Coster

Anne Vallayer was born, the second of four daughters, on December 21, 1744, in Paris, France, near the Seine River. Her mother was a painter of miniatures and her father, Joseph Vallayer, was a goldsmith at the local Gobelins Manufactory Company known for the production of the finest tapestries made in Europe. About a century before, Gobelins had been taken over by the French Crown, adding painters, metal-workers, furniture-makers, among others, who produced objects for royal palaces and royal gifts. The young Vallayer was privileged to grow up in an artistic household and to live in the Gobelins complex where community members were equally skilled in their crafts.

When Vallayer was ten, her father moved the family to another section of Paris where he bought, sold and traded jewelry. The Royal family granted Joseph the privilege of producing military metals on their behalf. Unfortunately, he soon passed away but his wife, who assisted her husband in his business, was granted permission by the Royals to continue the business with the Vallayer daughters.

Anne Vallayer showed interest in art early on and studied informally with Madeleine Basseporte, a botanical specialist who also instructed the daughters of King Louis XV. Basseporte received regular payment from the royal treasury to paint plants, birds and other small animals found near the royal châteaux. Later, Joseph Vernat, a well known landscape and marine painter, gave lessons to the young Vallayer. Under the tutelage of both Basseporte and Vernat, Vallayer grew as an artist. Her completed still life paintings produced prior to 1770 exhibited a great sensitivity to perspective, shown by books and boxes placed on angles as well as depth perception in placement of objects in the foreground, mid-ground and background. In addition, she captured amazing details in embroidered tablecloths and drapes, captured the reflective quality of silver, glass and other smooth surfaces, and distinguished the various surfaces of textured items in still life arrangements. Domestic items such as bottles, candlesticks, jugs, bowls, food items such as fruits, vegetables and even dead animals (seafood, rabbits) and musical instruments were common objects in her still lifes. She usually began her process with preliminary sketches followed by paintings using gouache, a watercolor. This allowed her to see how the composition worked visually on paper

and to closely examine the objects in the still life for their reflective and textural qualities. The final version of the still life was executed oil on canvas.

The Age of Enlightenment was well underway in 18th century France. This cultural period was marked by an enormous effort to advance intellectual knowledge of the world and challenge the established order of religion and politics. The Age of Enlightenment had some influence as Vallayer's still lifes included artifacts from the sea and land, as well as scientific instruments.

With the encouragement of teachers and other established artists, Vallayer, at the age of twenty-six, applied for provisional membership in the Royal Academy with her presentation of several still life paintings. She was accepted unanimously into provisional and full membership, a dual membership usual for women artists of the time. However, Vallayer was the only woman accepted into full membership during the French Revolution without the status of being a wife or daughter of an academicien or any endorsement from the royal family. As a female member of the Royal Academy, Vallayer was not permitted to participate in any drawing courses at the academy, since these involved nude drawings which was considered indecent for her. While it may not seem problematic it prevented Vallayer from any future advancement. The inability to become an advanced figure drawer/painter prevented her from participating in the most popular genre of work: historical paintings. She focused on a "lower" genre including portraiture, landscapes, and still lifes. Without proper training, Vallayer could not advance to become a professor of art at the Academy. What Academy membership did provide for Vallayer was access to the biennial Salon where she exhibited her art. It was in these exhibits that artists were able to connect with buyers. Prior to academy membership, no artist, male or female, was permitted to exhibit work unless associated with a discredited guild, the same scenario as the Impressionists decades later.

Vallayer was a woman who worked in a man's world, requiring a great deal of courage, talent and hard work. She received constant praise for the exceptional level of work she produced but she was also known for her beauty, modesty and personable disposition. Some have said she was a beautiful woman who painted skillfully as a man. As a female painter, limited to the inferior genre of still lifes, she rose to the occasion and painted within her genre with exceptional ability. She eventually moved into the genre of portraiture which received mixed reviews from critics. In the end, her reputation as a still life painter was based solely on her artistic skills made evident by the quality of her clientele including many noteworthy collectors of the time such as financiers, aristocrats and the Royal family. Queen Marie-Antoinette, wife of

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ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Children's literature that relate to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are: STILL LIFE

- *Looking at the Overlooked: Four Essays on Still Life Painting* by Norman Bryson
- *Lessons on Shading* by W. E. Sparks
- *Light, Shade and Shadow* by E. L. Koller

MINIATURE PORTRAITS

- *Love and Loss: American Portrait and Mourning Miniatures* by Robin Jaffe Frank
- *English Portrait Miniature* by Graham Reynolds
- *The Portrait Miniature in England* by Katherine Coombs

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Kahng, Eik, and Michel and Colin Bailey *Anne Vallayer-Coster: Painter to the Court of Marie Antoinette*. Da Capo Press. 2002

King Louis XVI, commissioned a number of miniature portraits. Vallayer was eventually appointed as the painter to the court of the Queen. With the Queen's endorsement, Vallayer was granted living and studio space at the Louvre Museum in Paris and financial support for the development of art for the Museum. She was the only woman to receive such support.

Within a year of her move to the Louvre, Vallayer met and married Jean-Pierre-Silvestre Coster, a wealthy lawyer, member of the parliament and heir of a banking dynasty. The marriage contract, signed in Versailles by Queen Marie-Antoinette, raised Vallayer to the high ranks of the bourgeoisie; noble aristocrats almost indistinguishable from royalty. Being a prominent artist, member of the Academy, and aristocrat gave Vallayer the ability to apply her status when working with patrons, a rarity for a female during this time.

In 1775, Vallayer-Coster exhibited several paintings with flowers and fruit along with her familiar traditional still lifes. As usual, she began with drawings or quick painted studies of particular flowers executed with a very light hand and later transferred the composition onto canvas with oil paints. Critics agreed that her floral paintings were equally admirable to her earlier work. One such painting, *Vase of Flowers and Fruits* (1783) was among her personal favorites and one she refused to sell despite many offers, as she considered it one of her finest works. Over one-hundred twenty floral still lifes were painted by Vallayer-Coster. Some of her floral works were mass-produced as etchings with the primary purpose of patterns for such crafts as embroidery, tapestries, fan decorations, and similar embellishments created by women for women.

Following the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror in 1793, Vallayer-Coster faded from the spotlight. Her last noted painting, *Still Life with Lobster* (1781), is known as the best in her career and one she gave to King Louis XVIII. She died in 1818 at the age of seventy-four.

About the Art

Still Life with Lobster was painted by Anne Vallayer-Coster, oil on canvas in 1817 when the artist was seventy-three. The size and location of the painting is unclear but most findings lead to believe it is 10 7/8 by 12 3/4 inches and part of the collection of Staatliche Museum of Berlin, Germany.

Directed Observation

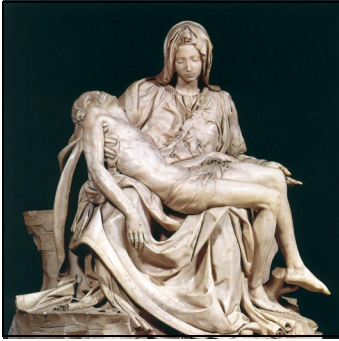
1. If one were to examine *Still Life with*

Lobster up close, it would appear to be slightly out of focus. When it was painted, art was not hung at eye level and flat on the wall but rather high on a wall on a loose wire so the top of the work fell forward off the wall. Looking upward at the work and at a distance, the image comes into focus. Discuss how the artist may have accomplished this.

2. The items in the still life are placed on a horizontal edge representing the table top. One technique used by artists to break the strong edge is to place a few items with some parts hanging over the edge, softening the composition. Imagine the same painting with the lobster and knife sitting on the table top.
3. Vallayer-Coster's ability to capture the surface textures of still life items is astounding. Carefully view each item in *Still Life with Lobster* and discuss how she accomplished the implied textures.
4. Eye movement is important in a well-executed still life. Identify horizontal and diagonal lines in *Still Life with Lobster* and discuss which lines better encourage eye movement. Why?
5. Including scientific or biological items in a still life supported the Age of Enlightenment. Research this historical period. If you were to gather items which represented intellectual knowledge, what would you include?

Things to Do

1. Gather a few simple items to use in a still life. Arrange them on a horizontal plane with one or two items extending over the plane's edge or place items in a simple bowl with one item placed next to the bowl. Spotlight the arrangement using a lamp and darken the room if possible. Keeping the drawing simple and using an Ebony pencil, capture the imagery in terms of shapes, lines, textures and value. The lighting will enhance the shift from white to dark areas so make sure to capture that by applying appropriate pressure with the Ebony pencil. The full range of value will run from white to black. As this is done, the imagery will pull forward (with light tones) and push back (with dark tones). This will create an implied dimensional rendering. Using just mid-tones (range of grays) will result in a flat look.
2. Drawing skills will improve through practice, just as any other skill. After a collection of drawing have been completed, choose the best one to display using a crisp white mat to set off the range of tones.



7th Grade: DECEMBER

The Pietà

Michelangelo Buonarroti

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 Funded by the John and Frances Beck Foundation, Chicago, Illinois
 Edited by Constance Kammrath, M.A.

About the Artist

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Michelangelo Buonarroti

The second of five sons, Michelangelo Buonarroti was born on March 6, 1475, in the Tuscan village of Caprese, Italy, to Ludovico di Leonardo Buonarrotto Simoni who was the mayor for the town of Caprese and Francesca di Neri del Miniato di Siena. Unfortunately, his mother fell off a horse when she was three-months pregnant with Michelangelo, leaving her in poor health. Her weakened condition continued well after Michelangelo was born. The family decided to place the care of newborn Michelangelo in the hands of a caregiver whose husband was a stone cutter. During these years the boy developed an awareness of the beautiful marble as he played among the large stone boulders. Michelangelo eventually returned to the home of his parents only to witness his mother's deteriorating health and subsequent death. When Michelangelo was ten, his father remarried and moved the family to Florence.

As Michelangelo grew, he showed interest and talent in the arts, however, his father disapproved, as an artist was considered part of the common working class. He hoped young Michelangelo would someday become a businessman and hold an honorable place in society.

Michelangelo surprised his father when he announced, at age thirteen, that he had accepted an apprenticeship with the most famous Florence painter of the time, Domenico Ghirlandaio. One year later the uncrowned monarch of the Florentine Republic, Lorenzo de' Medici, requested that Ghirlandaio send his two best students to the Garden of San Marco, a sculpture school in the Medici gardens. De' Medici, a generous patron of the arts, granted Michelangelo access to the ancient Roman sculpture in the gardens. Michelangelo was soon invited into De' Medici household, dining daily with the royal family and cared for by the head sculptor of the De' Medici art collection. He was also exposed to worthy citizens, patrons, poets and members of the newly formed secular humanist community. Artistically, Michelangelo spent much of this time period focused on the study of human anatomy, executing two extraordinary high relief works (stone rendering of raised areas on a flat surface backing) by age sixteen; *Madonna of the Stairs* (1491) and *Battle of the Centaurs* (~1492) and began to build his reputation as a fine yet somewhat arrogant artist.

De' Medici died in 1492, leaving a enormous void since he had been a great patron of artists, poets and scholars during the Italian Renaissance. The transition of power from Medici was intense and eventually led to political and religious leadership by a Dominican friar named Girolamo Savonarola, who was determined to secure the purity of Florence by confiscating and burning art and books contrary to his faith.

Michelangelo fled to Bologna, then settled in Rome where he was commissioned to chisel and carve a funeral monument in the design of a Pietà (py ā-tā') for the French cardinal Jean de Billheres. Pietà, Italian for "pity," is an image of the Virgin Mary holding the crucified Jesus in her lap. The sculpture was completed around 1498 by the twenty-three year old Michelangelo and those who saw it first hand immediately deemed it worthy of greatness. News of its design and skillful execution spread rapidly throughout Italy. The *Pietà* currently sits in St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City.

In 1502, the government in Florence again became a Republic after years of political turmoil, prompting Michelangelo to return home. Around the same time, the equally talented and older Leonardo da Vinci returned from Milan. The two artists were equally matched in terms of talent but contrasted in other areas, and as a result, formed a very antagonistic relationship witnessed by many for years to come. Also on the scene was the youthful painter, Raphael.

Michelangelo accepted a commission for a sculpture of the Biblical hero, *David*, for the Florence Cathedral. The fourteen foot marble sculpture, completed in 1504, captured David as a athletic man with great focus and determination, indicated in his facial expression. With stone in hand, ready for battle and glaring eyes focused toward Rome, the *David* sculpture served as a symbol for the Florentine Republic. The completed sculpture was placed before the Palazzo Vecchi, the town hall of Florence, and required forty men five days to roll it through the streets on fourteen greased beams. Citizens were astonished at Michelangelo's skill and ability to merge beauty with power. He said that the figure was "trapped" inside the stone. He just set it free by eliminating everything that wasn't the figure. The original statue of *David* was moved to the Accademia Gallery, Florence, in 1873 for protection. A replica of *David* was placed in Palazzo Vecchi in 1910.

Michelangelo was equally talented in both painting and sculpture. Soon after sculpting *David*, he earned a commission to paint a

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- Space: Illusion of depth

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

- Repetition: Imagery repeating pattern
- Variety: Contrast/variation
- Rhythm: Issues of eye movement
- Balance: Even visual weight
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- Proportion: Compare size relationships

COMPOSITION

- Symmetrical: Mirrored imagery
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- Radial: Mirror image from center point
- Repetition: Repeating pattern, motif

ARTISTIC STYLES

- Realism: Realistic representation
- Abstraction: Personal interpretation
- Non-Objective: No recognizable depiction

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Children's literature that relate to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- *First Impressions: Michelangelo* by Richard McLanathan
- Michelangelo by Diane Stanley
- Michelangelo: Master of the Italian Renaissance by Gabriella Di Cagno and Simone Boni

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bull, George. *Michelangelo, A Biography*. St. Martin's Press, NY 1995
- McDonald, Jesse. Michelangelo. Smithmark Publishers, Inc. NY. 1994
- Michelangelo: Artist and Man. DVD. Hearst/ABC/NBC/Art & Entertainment Networks. 1994.

mural of the Battle of Cascina. Michelangelo created a large number of drawings exploring many layout options for the mural before starting the painting process. However, he was summoned to Rome by Pope Julius II to create the papal tomb. While Michelangelo was in the middle of the papal tomb commission, Pope Julius II redirected Michelangelo's work, asking him to paint the barrel-vault ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. This chapel, with nine-foot walls and high set windows, served the Vatican as a fortress. It also served as the sacred meeting place of the Conclave for papal elections.

Michelangelo accepted the Sistine Chapel assignment reluctantly for he did not consider himself a painter and he knew the work would be difficult. Painting a faux architectural structure on the ceiling allowed him to organize the ceiling's vast square footage and provided separate panels for the series of narrative paintings which included scenes from both the New and Old Testament. The ceiling was completed in 1512, four years from the start and is considered one of the greatest and most famous assemblage of paintings in the world.

Michelangelo eventually completed the tomb for Julius II as well as other significant sculptures, paintings, and architectural works. The second half of his life was as prolific as the first half. Michelangelo died on February 18, 1564, at the age of eighty-eight. His peers considered him a divine genius, as he had set a new standard of skill. Whether in sculpture or in painting, he captured the male figure in action using an extraordinary understanding of anatomy. Also extraordinary was his ability to bring life and expression to his figures. Driven by his faith, he offered a theme of devotion and suffering in his work, a redemptive quality he hoped to project to viewers. His final significant work was the redesigning of the new St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, the burial site of its namesake, Saint Peter. This endeavor served as the final testament of Michelangelo's faith.

About the Art

The *Pietà* was sculpted in Carrara marble by Michelangelo Buonarroti between 1497-1500. It measures 86 x 78 inches and was composed in a pyramidal shape. The three-dimensional image of Mary the mother of Jesus holds the lifeless body of her crucified son in her lap. Mary is disproportionately larger than the Christ figure, an accommodation Michelangelo made for a woman to hold a man's body in her lap. Mary is captured in her innocent youth rather than at her age at the crucifixion.

The *Pietà*, his first religious commission, was considered a masterpiece and earned initial fame. A masterpiece is considered a timeless work of art known for extreme skill. Michelangelo was angered soon after its completion when he heard someone attribute the sculpture to another artist. That night, under cover, Michelangelo chiseled MICHEL ANGELUS BONAROTUS FLORENTI FACI-BAT (Michelangelo Buonarroti, Florentine, made this) on the strap that ran across Mary's chest. However, Michelangelo regretted making this inscription and never again signed his work.

The *Pietà* was first placed in the chapel of Santa Petronilla in old St. Peter's about 1535, then moved to the Chapella della Febbre, and in 1626 was taken to its present position in the first chapel of St. Peter's. An individual with a hammer vandalized it in 1972 and now it sits behind a strong glass panel.

Directed Observation

Show students an image of *Pietà* and tell them it was chiseled from marble by Michelangelo between 1497 and 1500. Invite students to quietly study the work. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following are suggested questions to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. What can all people (religious or not) appreciate from viewing the *Pietà*?
2. Discuss the level of artistic skill evident in the *Pietà*. Be specific.
3. Why did Michelangelo render Mary as a young woman rather than the age she would have been at Jesus' death?
4. Discuss the contrasting points of the exposed skin of Jesus versus the heavy draping of Mary. How does this make the work engaging? How did he design and then chisel draped cloth?
5. Michelangelo studied human anatomy. Discuss how this understanding set his art apart from that of other artists.

Things to Do

1. Study body proportions by drawing a standing human figure. Notice how the limbs are straight and bend only at the joints. Shift to drawing a seated figure. As confidence builds and knowledge of the human form develops, shift to modeling the human figure out of air-hardening clay. Start by making three minute renderings of the figure, followed by ten minute ones, then twenty minute ones. After doing three quick renderings, create a figure in an hour (or two, half hour sections). Add details in the face and clothing to make the figure come alive.



7th Grade: JANUARY

Winter Landscape with Skaters

Hendrick Avercamp

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About the Artist

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Hendrick Avercamp

Hendrick Avercamp, named after his paternal grandfather, was the first child born to Barent Avercamp and Beatrix Peters in Amsterdam, Netherlands. His actual birthdate is unknown but records indicate he was baptized on January 27, 1585.

Avercamp's family moved to the small town of Kampen soon after his first birthday, where his father served as apothecary for ten years. Beatrix gave birth to another six children in Kampen, two of whom died. It was at this time that Avercamp's inability to speak became apparent and he eventually became known as the "Mute of Kampen." Some believe he was also deaf. Despite this limitation, his sight and ability to observe became his strength. The Avercamp family was well-educated and wealthy so one can assume the young Avercamp had every opportunity to learn to lip-read, read text and write.

The family moved back to Amsterdam but soon returned to Kampen upon the urging of the town council as many citizens were suffering with the plague. Not only was Avercamp's father the apothecary, he soon assumed the role of town doctor, yet in 1602, became a victim of the plague epidemic. The untimely death of Avercamp's father did not place a financial strain on the Avercamp family; nonetheless, his mother felt a strong need to carry on the work of her husband. She received permission from the town council to assume the work of her husband and trained her growing sons in the apothecary practice.

It is thought Avercamp's early connection to art began with lessons by the town painter who served also as a surveyor and may have dabbled in landscape painting. Another clue reveals that at a 1607 estate sale of Flemish landscape painter Gillis van Coninxloo in Amsterdam, a single buyer purchased many of the paintings. Records show the buyer was identified as the twenty-two year old "Mute of Kampen. At the time, Avercamp was living in the house of Danish portrait painter Pieter Isacqs while receiving instruction in painting. Oddly enough, Avercamp's style of painting has no resemblance to that of his assumed teacher but rather was more in the style of Gillis van Coninxloo and Flemish painter David Vinckboons, especially in the genre of winter landscapes, giving indication that Avercamp probably

studied under these two masters rather than Isacqs. Avercamp was young and impressionable and, like his mentors, wanted to devote his life to landscape painting.

Avercamp was thought to have left Amsterdam and returned to Kampen around 1613 and stayed there for the remainder of his life, proven by four documents: an inscription on the back of a drawing, a bill of sales for two horses, a petition made by Avercamp's mother to receive extra financial support for him following her death, and Avercamp's funeral record. It is believed he lived in his mother's house until the time of his death on May 15, 1634, at the approximate age of forty-nine.

Avercamp's subject matter was scenes of life on the ice. During his life span, he experienced countless severe winters known as the Little Ice Age in the Netherlands, which impacted everyday life. Frozen waterways prevented delivery of supplies. Growing seasons were shortened so less produce was grown and what little produce was grown was depleted far before winter's end. Deep freezes, with temperatures at -15F for two months, challenged everyone; many froze to death.

It was after one of the most severe winters (1607-1608) that Avercamp painted the ice scene, *Winter Landscape with Skaters* (1608), of people outside enjoying winter activities including ice games and merriment. It appears that everyone spilled outdoors to enjoy the fun. Perhaps it was a few days break from the extreme cold.

Avercamp signed his art but he rarely dated his paintings or his drawings, thus presenting a challenge when trying to put his work in chronological order. Experts look carefully at clothing trends captured in the painting as clues for time periods. Shifting trends in landscape painting styles also left clues. For example, in his early work, Avercamp broke the horizon line by placing a castle or other large building in the middle of the horizon, such as in *Winter Landscape with Skaters* (c. 1608). Later, he shifted the placement of a building off to the side, eliminating the bare trees and lowered the horizon line to reveal a large, uninterrupted horizon. He established a greater sense of visual depth such as in *Winter Landscape on the River IJssel Near Kampen* (c. 1615). Notice ice colf was a recreational sport, "colf" meaning club or stick.



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ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Literature that relates to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- *Gallery Ghost: Find the Ghost who Paints the Most!* by Anna Nilsen
- *Seventeenth-Century Dutch and Flemish Paintings* by Ivan Gaskell

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Hephaestus Books. *Dutch Golden Age Painters, including: Ambrosius Bosschaert, Aelbert Cuyp, Hendrick Avercamp, Jan Van Goyen, Johannes Vermeer, Frans Hals, Paulus Flinck, Carel Fabritius, Pieter De Hooch*. Hephaestus Books. 2011
- Roelofs, Pieter, *Hendrick Avercamp: Master of the Ice Scene*. RIJKS Museum. Amsterdam. 2009
- Van Suchtelen, Ariane. *Holland Frozen in Time. The Dutch Winter Landscape in the Golden Age*. Waanders Uitgevers. 2001

Avercamp's art was known for the subject matter which captured the harshness of life during the Little Ice Age as well as providing a glimpse of the social scene, among both the peasant and the wealthy class. Amsterdam's international trade encouraged a wide variety of clothing and merchants who eventually supported minor clothing industries in Kampen. Whether the aristocracy was from Amsterdam or visiting their leased farms in Kampen, they were captured in fashion-detail in Avercamp's drawings and painting. The ice scenes were socially inclusive of all groups, from rich to poor. However, in the midst of the harsh winters, was Avercamp's impression of life on the ice reality or fiction?

About the Art

Winter Landscape with Skaters was executed, oil on panel in 1608 by the Dutch painter Hendrick Avercamp. It is one of the rare paintings that Avercamp actually dated upon its completion. The painting measures 34.4 x 52 inches and is in the collection of Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands. It features a bird's eye view of a village whose residents, of all ages, are enjoying winter activities. One can imagine listening to the sounds and noises of the activities. In its likeness to the contemporary "Where is Waldo" scene, the eyes spin around to take in the action. No one focal point, no object or person or action steals the scene and demands our attention. Avercamp's style is consistent with the work of an earlier Flemish painter, Pieter Bruegel the Elder, who was among the first to paint winter scenes, as early as 1565. As does Bruegel, Avercamp gives a panoramic view of the village. The high horizon gives the artist ample space to create the activity within the town. They both included in their scenes a bird trap made with a discarded wood door.

Directed Observation

Show students an image of *Winter Landscape with Skaters*. Tell them it was painted, oil on panel, in 1608, by the artist Hendrick Avercamp. Offer students biographical information about Avercamp. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following are suggested questions to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. Take time to closely examine *Winter Landscape with Skaters*. Identify and share the activities of the people.
2. Based on this painting, what can you determine about the lives of these people?
3. How could they have survived during the harsh winter?
4. Compare their lives to your life. Could

you survive a 16th or 17th century winter? Research the living conditions of that time period in the Netherlands.

5. Compositionally, Avercamp's paintings are packed with images to view. Discuss how this is engaging for the viewer.
6. Avercamp's style shifted throughout his career. Research other artists to see how their artistic work also shifted. Why do you think this happens? Is it a good thing? How does your artwork change over the years?
7. Given the harsh winters and Avercamp's positive and happy scenes, did he express reality? Research Norman Rockwell and compare his images of everyday life in America to Avercamp's work.
8. Avercamp had physical challenges and was able to find his strength in observation. What are your artistic challenges? How can you turn them into your artistic strengths?

Things to Do

1. Biographical information on individuals who lived long ago in the 16th century is hard to come by. Researchers must rely on bits and pieces of information to reconstruct someone's life. Research the jobs of curators and biographers.
2. Compare and contrast the winter scenes of Avercamp and Pieter Bruegel the Elder. Which do you prefer?
3. Since Avercamp rarely dated his work, it was difficult to trace it chronologically. Prepare images of scenes in various decades and see if others can put them in order based on fashion trends.
4. Create quick sketches of a class of students playing on the playground and capture their various activities. Once back in the classroom, further develop your drawings. Create small paintings from the drawings or collaborate with others to create a larger scene.
5. Create several landscape drawings and pay attention to the horizon line, placing some high on the page and others low. Also examine "breaking" the horizon line with a building or tree.
6. Examine how Avercamp captured the reflective quality of ice. Try creating a scene on ice with your choice of materials. Make sure the ice reflects the images.
7. Avercamp was inspired by life on the ice. Image yourself as a visual artist. What type of work will you create? What will it look like? What will your inspiration be? Where will you live and work? Write an imaginary biography of your life as an artist. Be sure to include images of your art. If you can dream it, it might happen!



7th Grade: FEBRUARY

Cup and Saucer

Henri Fantin-Latour

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 Edited by Constance Kammrath, M.A.

About the Artist

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Henri Fantin-Latour

The Fantin genealogy indicates the family was of Italian decent from the village of San Fantino. One ancestor added the name Latour at the end of the seventeenth century to recognize their estate, Latour. Henri Fantin-Latour was born on January 14, 1836, in Grenoble, France, to Jean-Theodore and Hélène de Naidenoff, who was the adopted daughter of a Russian countess. Fantin was first born with two younger sisters to follow. His father, Jean-Theodore, was a painter who studied at the School of Art in Grenoble and copied paintings at the Louvre. His specialty was religious painting for churches and convents, and portraiture. Fantin signed his paintings with “Fantin” to distinguish his work from his father’s.

The Fantin family moved to Paris in 1841 hoping to find better opportunities for commissions for Jean-Theodore. At the age of five, Fantin began his formal schooling taught by his god-father who came to live with the Fantin family. Lessons in Latin and math quickly gave way to drawing lessons as per Fantin’s request. He exhibited a genuine talent for drawing, noted even when he was younger. His father noticed Fantin’s preoccupation with drawing and his desire to learn more and by the age of ten, his father began giving his son his first formal art lessons. Copying the works of other artists was a typical learning approach so Fantin began with copying available engravings and lithographs, especially those of his favorite, Girodet, a French painter of the Romantic movement.

Four years later, Fantin noticed the sign, School of Drawing as he passed by on the street. He entered the building, noticed the drawings on the wall by students, and asked the receptionist if he could be a student. The age of admittance was fifteen, three months short of Fantin’s actual age. The receptionist kindly overlooked the three months and permitted Fantin to be admitted and to begin classes the very next day. In order to place students in appropriate level drawing classes, students had to draw a casted figure. Fantin did so well that he was placed in the highest level class, alongside a student named August Rodin. One of Rodin’s previous teachers had been Lecoq-de-Boisbaudran from another institution who taught students to draw and paint from memory. Starting with a posed model, Lecoq-de-Boisbaudran instructed students on the anatomical form, color, light and shadows and

then dismissed the model. Using their memory, students had to create a drawing or painting. This approach engaged students’ ability to observe, intellectualize and analyze information, and memorize what they saw. This process gave students the skills and application of knowledge they needed when they drew both from memory and imagination. Students were even able to recall people they saw days earlier running or riding a bike and could render a quick sketch with exact body position and posture. Fantin convinced his father to permit him to attend some memory classes with Lecoq-de-Boisbaudran.

Fantin continued to advance his artistic skills and was eventually invited to the compete at the School of Fine Art when he was eighteen; however, he was dismissed after three months when judges felt he was not progressing as they wished. For the next sixteen years, Fantin was responsible for his own learning and spent endless hours in the Louvre Museum studying and copying paintings for patrons. During his time at the Louvre, Fantin became acquainted with other artists including Manet, Whistler, Morisot and many more who often gathered in the evenings at Café Moliere for conversation. The Louvre Museum was “home” to Fantin who was tiring of his copy work and longed to do original work. In 1859, Fantin submitted three original paintings to the Paris Salon; one was a self-portrait and two were of his sisters. All were denied, as were Whistler’s submissions and those of many other young artists.

Fantin chose to live at home with his parents and sisters while pursuing his art career. His sister, Natalie, gradually showed signs of a mental breakdown and was committed to an institution. The anguish of this event took its toll on Fantin, prompting his friend, Whistler, to extend an invitation to join him in London. Once there, Fantin thoroughly enjoyed London and the hospitality of Whistler’s brother-in-law, Dr. Seymour Haden. Visits to the National Gallery where he studied works of Rembrandt, Van Dyck and Valasquez built his confidence and desire to continue painting portraits, florals and still lifes back in France. Fantin never considered himself a great portrait or landscape painter. At the time of the Impressionists, Fantin found displeasure in painting outdoors as the ever changing weather conditions distracted him. He preferred to paint indoors and brought nature into his studio with flowers, branches, fruits and a few domestic objects. He preferred to paint his still lifes in his summer home in Normandy, France, where he picked fresh flowers from the garden and arranged them in a simple vase.

Back in Paris, he submitted three painting to the 1863 Salon which were admitted into the exhibition and caught the attention of an English lawyer, Mr. Edwin Edwards and his wife, who

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- Abstraction: Personal interpretation
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ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Children's literature that relate to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- *Art of Still Life Drawing (Art of Drawing)* by David Sanmiguel and Edgar Frankbonner
- *Drawing Sharp Focus Still Lifes* by Robert Zappalorti
- *Fundamentals of Drawing Still Life* by Barrington Barber
- *Still Life in Watercolor (Step by Step Leisure Arts)* by David Webb
- *Still life Painting Atelier: An Introduction to Oil Painting* by Michael Friel
- *Why do My Ellipses Look Like Doughnuts?: Plus 25 Solutions to Other Still Life Painting Peeves (Volume 2)* by Rachael Shirley

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Gibson, Frank. *The Art of Henri Fantin-Latour: His Life and Work*. Drane's LTD. London.
- Lucie-Smith, Edward. *Henri Fantin-Latour*. Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. 1977.

were visiting Paris. The Edwards became good friends of Fantin and made his work known and appreciated in London. On another visit to London, Fantin enjoyed seeing two of his floral paintings hanging in the Royal Academy.

Back in the days when Fantin worked in the Louvre copying paintings, he had noticed a young woman, Victoria Dubourg, who frequented the museum. He was too shy to introduce himself at that time. Years later, Fantin traveled to Belgium and Holland with his friends, the Edwards, and their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Dubourg, parents of Victoria. Fantin and Victoria eventually were properly introduced and developed a long friendship, eventually marrying in 1876.

Fantin's artistic career continued with regular acceptances into the Paris Salons, national and international exhibitions, and eventually into collections into museums around the world as well as winning awards. On the morning of August 25, 1904, the sixty-five year old Fantin, apparently in good health, suddenly collapsed, became unconscious, and died in the arms of his wife. His modest funeral was at St. Germain des Pres in Paris, with burial at the cemetery of Montparnasse.

About the Art

Cup and Saucer was painted, oil on canvas, by Henri Fantin-Latour in 1864, and is 7 3/8 x 11 3/8 inches. It is the property of the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England. In this particular still life, Fantin omitted his usual flowers and focused on only a cup and saucer with spoon. These simple, ordinary objects are not left over from a meal, as the cup is empty and clean. Rather, they are the subjects to be studied. The composition is tight with extended space around the subject cropped so the isolated focus becomes more powerful. The cup is not circular but has a series of flat planes. Fantin's ability to use value effectively shades each plane, drawing the eyes around the shape in a concentrated effort. The cup and saucer are positioned a bit to the left of the canvas but the placement of the extended spoon brings the entire setting back to the center.

Directed Observation

Show students an image of *Cup and Saucer* and tell them it was painted in oil by Henri Fantin-Latour in 1864, then share biographical information. Invite students to quietly study the work. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following questions are provided to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. Fantin was gifted in drawing and painting in black and white. With a deep understanding of value, he masterfully used the full spectrum of white to black to emphasize texture and shape. Using an image of *Cup and Saucer*, *Self-Portrait* or *Roses* 2, discuss his techniques of using the element of value.

2. Fantin's artistic training began at the early age of five and continued throughout his life. His work was rejected on many occasions yet he persevered.

Discuss the dynamics of training and perseverance as they apply to art. How did the role of his friends (Whistler, Rodin and the Edwards as his agents), play into his success?

3. Discuss the idea of drawing from memory. Practice this concept.
4. Examine *Cup and Saucer* from an distance, then up close. What do you see? This is a simple still life but perfectly rendered. As in all still lifes, you have to be able to consider depth and properly draw or paint one object behind another. Scale and color play a role in this as items in the back should be a bit smaller and more pale in color.
5. Examine *Cup and Saucer* and other still lifes for the angle of sight. From what angle is the painter looking at the objects?
6. Do you think it's harder or easier to paint an isolated item such as a cup/saucer or a subject with many parts? Why? Experiment doing both to truly understand.

Things to Do

Fantin, as a still life artist, knew how to set up an engaging and challenging still life. As the instructor, you have many choices to make in setting up a still life for your students. There are many books, DVDs, even YouTube instructions available. Your objective is to place objects on a plane (flat surface) with sensitivity to exposing the table's edge. Objects may cascade over the edge for interest. Select objects with varying surface textures and transparencies. Also consider reflective material such as glass, silver and copper. Encourage students to capture the objects in the reflection. Avoid highly textured items such as stuffed animals. Begin with simpler still lifes with minimal, hard-surfaced objects and a cropped view such as *Cup and Saucer*. As students build confidence, develop more complicated still lifes. TIP: Still lifes can take a long time to draw and often create space issues in a classroom. Consider several small still lifes glued onto small trays for easy transporting and storage between art classes.





7th Grade: MARCH

The Slave Ship

(Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On)

William Turner

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Funded by the John and Frances Beck Foundation, Chicago, Illinois

Edited by Constance Kammrath, M.A.

About the Artist

The following information is provided to give classroom teachers a comprehensive understanding of the artist and artwork. Use your judgment on what to share with your students based on their level of curiosity, observation/inquiry skills, comprehension and age-appropriateness.

William Turner

William Turner was born Joseph Mallard William Turner in London, England on April 23, 1775, and used his father's name; William. Born to "common people," Turner's life was destined to be one of destitution. His father was a wig maker who later became a barber and his mother, Mary Marshall, was a homemaker who spent much of her adult life on the edge of mental instability. In 1786, Turner's younger sister, Mary Ann, died, pushing his mother over the edge of insanity as the anxiety and grief were too much to bear. She often spent days and nights in alleyways crying with a shrill voice.

Due to the stressful home situation, Turner was sent to live on the west side of London with his uncle, Joseph Mallord William Marshall, who quickly noticed Turner's interest in painting. His uncle eventually sent Turner off to school to develop his artistic skills. Three years later, Turner attended the Royal Academy, receiving instruction in architectural perspective, as well as traditional instruction. It was common for Turner to go on sketching tours throughout England, Scotland and Wales. His travels by stagecoach, horseback or on foot provided opportunity for quick sketching. Capturing the romantic views of the countryside was his goal as this was the image his patrons loved. Sketches later were made into watercolor paintings, some of which earned Turner approval and election into Royal Academy membership at age twenty-seven.

In economic terms, Turner was a wise businessman. He understood all too well that the market was ripe for images of beautiful landscapes and so he focused on this genre, putting tireless effort into what served him with the most financial gain. Commissions by locals and aristocrats came quickly. He was passionate about his ability for self-expression but was even more intent on his art as a business venture. Work produced for reproductions as etchings was gaining popularity in magazines and in the form of collections of reproductions sold as a folio. The world of mass-production furthered his fame as well as his earnings, unusual given his young age. At one point in his career, Turner had nine-hundred original images mass-produced selling thousands of copies. One of his major ventures into printmaking was a collection of seventy prints (etched with mezzotints) called the *Liber Studiorum* (Book of Studies 1807-1819) based on six categories of

landscapes: pastoral, marine, mountainous, historical, architectural and epic pastoral.

Sketching and watercolor were Turner's choice of media, but he gradually shifted to oils around 1796. His growing confidence with oil paints led him to introduce one oil painting among ten watercolor paintings at the Royal Academy exhibition. The oil painting, *Fishermen at Sea* (1796), won the acclaim of critics and formally introduced Turner as a gifted oil painter. His previous success in watercolor consistently used romantic countryside as the subject matter. *Fishermen at Sea* noted Turner's new fascination with the powerful elemental forces of nature; wind, waves, squalls, rain, and fog. This shift in subject matter bolstered Turner's imagination and granted him confidence to compose dramatic stories or historical accounts rather than replicating what he saw first hand in the calm English countryside. This study of the vulnerability of human life amidst the forces of nature was an emerging theme shared by poets as well. He was so interested in the force and drama of nature that, although not confirmed by art historians, he once tied himself to the mast of a ship during a storm to experience the wrath of the storm. Turner is known for the release of brilliant light breaking through layers of clouds in his dramatic oil paintings. This was his visual depiction of God's presence following great danger.

Britain was at war with France at the turn of the century, and suffered many losses to Napoleon, leading to a sense of political defeat. As with political climate, Turner's personal life was in turmoil. His mother's increasing instability and constant prying into his life became the impetus to rent his own home. Within a few years, his mother's mental condition required commitment in an asylum and she died in 1804. During this period, Turner began a long relationship with Sarah Danby, a young widow, and her four small children. The couple, who never married, had two additional daughters. Turner thought marriage and art didn't go together. The relationship and children were kept a secret with the relationship eventually dissolving.

Turner's submission to the 1813 Royal Academy exhibition was *Frosty Morning*, which critics thought was his finest work yet. The painting features an adult and child on a country road on a cold morning. Two other adults are shown digging in the frozen earth, possibly a grave. The natural environment overwhelms the scene and offers a glimpse into the harsh reality of life. In this painting and those to come, Turner's critics had one complaint with his technique. Instead of applying paint smoothly with a brush, he used his fingers to apply the paint. One fingernail was often untrimmed to cut into the paint and spit was used to moistened the canvas. His dirty fingers were his badge of honor and

Discipline-Based Art Education

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Art Aesthetics

Providing opportunities to develop perception and appreciation of visually expressed ideas and experiences.

Art Production

Providing opportunities to develop skills and techniques for creative visual expressions of emotions and ideas.

Art History

Providing opportunities to develop an understanding of the visual arts as a basic component of personal heritage.

Art Criticism

Providing an opportunity to develop an intellectual basis for analyzing and making aesthetic judgments based on an understanding of visual ideas and experiences.

ELEMENTS OF ART

- Line: A continuous mark
- Shape: Area enclosed by a line
- Color: Hue, reflection of light.
- Texture: Surface quality, real or implied
- Form: 3D shape or illusion of 3D
- Value: Graduated areas of light/dark
- Space: Illusion of depth

PRINCIPLES OF DESIGN

- Repetition: Imagery repeating pattern
- Variety: Contrast/variation
- Rhythm: Issues of eye movement
- Balance: Even visual weight
- Emphasis/Economy: Dominance/minimalism
- Proportion: Compare size relationships

COMPOSITION

- Symmetrical: Mirrored imagery
- Asymmetrical: Random placement
- Radial: Mirror image from center point
- Repetition: Repeating pattern, motif

ARTISTIC STYLES

- Realism: Realistic representation
- Abstraction: Personal interpretation
- Non-Objective: No recognizable depiction

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Literature that relates to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- *The Complete Guide to Painting Water* by Bert N. Petri
- *Painting Surf and Sea* by Harry R. Ballinger
- *Start to Learn Seascapes and Landscapes Techniques* by Josep Casals
- *Watercolor: Seascapes* by Frank German

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- Turner, J.M.W. *Joseph Mallard William Turner*. Da Capo Press. 2002

he turned away prospective students if they came to him for instruction without similar hands. One voice of support came from art critic of the time, John Ruskin, who praised Turner for his profound love of nature and her mysteries.

In the early 1830's, Turner began an eighteen year relationship with a Mrs. Sophia Caroline Booth, a widow with small children. Never married, Turner spent much time at her home in Chelsea and took on the assumed name of Admiral Booth.

Around 1840, when Turner realized his time was running out due to poor health, he summoned a surge of energy to produce a large quantity of works, many exhibited at the Academy in subsequent years. Among the paintings was *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On* (1840) based on an incident of England's colonial slave trade. It is one of his most powerful historical images.

By December of 1845, Turner's health had failed and a physician was summoned to Sophia's home where Turner was staying. He died, due to natural causes, on December 19th. His body was taken to his Queen Anne Street home where it was placed in his gallery for viewing. His final resting place is in the crypt at St. Paul's Cathedral and at his request, his body was placed by the side of two respected artists: Sir Joshua Reynolds and Sir Thomas Lawrence.

About the Art

The Slave Ship, originally titled *Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying, Typhoon Coming On*, was painted in 1840, oil on canvas, and is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts. This painting, inspired by reading Thomas Clarkson's [The History of Abolition and the Slave Trade](#), portrays the realities of the British slave trade. Many slaves became ill on the trip and the insurance policy dictated the "cargo" would not cover illness, only loss. The captain ordered the sick and near-death men, women and children to jump or be thrown into the raging and shark infested sea, handcuffed with legs tied together in order to claim compensation.

Directed Observation

Show students an image of *The Slave Ship* by William Turner. Tell them it was painted, oil on canvas, in 1840. Offer students biographical information about Turner. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following questions are provided to help stu-

dents use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. Obviously, this is an emotional piece. Share how/why you react to such imagery. Discuss the purpose of this painting. Do you respect Turner for "telling the story" through this imagery? Do artists, in general, have a responsibility to reflect who we are as a society?
2. The work is also intellectual, political and social. How so? How important is it to have a multi-layered appeal?
3. In terms of execution, discuss Turner's painting style. How do his chaotic brushstrokes and smears support the emotional quality of the imagery? When is it acceptable for an artist to paint in a non-traditional manner? How would the message of this painting change if it were painted clearly and precisely?
4. Discuss how the sea and sky support the emotional quality of this work. He also was a master at using the elements of art to support the message. How so?
5. When viewing art, how do you determine when the artist really is committed and invested in the work? What are you committed to that could motivate you to render a great work of art?

Things to Do

1. View many of Turner's works, especially his earlier paintings, to gain an appreciation for his shifts of subject matter.
2. Turner had a strong reputation as a romantic landscape painter but was willing to shift his attention from the beautiful English countryside to the realities of human behavior, quite a risk. Step out of your comfort zone and create a work of art very different from your norm, such as trying a new media, increasing the scale, shifting from 2D to 3D or figure drawing.
3. Select a topic about which you are passionate. Increase your intellectual understanding about the subject through research, conversations and debate. Understand the historical context of your subject. Consider your execution options (media, size, 2D, 3D, realism, abstraction) and create a passionate work of art with your head (intellect), hand (skill) and heart (emotion).
4. Creating art is like writing a story. Every good story has characters, setting, plot, conflict, climax and a resolution. Develop these parts in writing with your partner. Then, create a work of art with your partner. Share the responsibility of conveying these components visually in a work of art. Give a title to your completed work and display it.



7th Grade: APRIL

Peace and Plenty

George Inness

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Funded by the John and Frances Beck Foundation, Chicago, Illinois
Edited by Constance Kammrath, M.A.

About the Artist

The following information is provided to give classroom teachers a comprehensive understanding of the artist and artwork. Use your judgment on what to share with your students based on their level of curiosity, observation/inquiry skills, comprehension and age-appropriateness.

George Inness

George Inness was born on May 1, 1825, the fifth of thirteen children, on a farm near Newburg, New York, to parents of Scottish descent. The Inness family moved around in the first few years of his life, finally settling in the small country town of Newark, New Jersey, in 1830. His health was considered fragile and research indicates it was due to epilepsy. His early education was at the local academy until it became clear that he was making little academic progress. Like many a young boy he enjoyed shenanigans, such as using a self-built battery to literally shock a few of his friends as well as the family cat. There was also the hand-made snake strategically placed in the kitchen cabinet to frighten the maids. While a rather intelligent boy and deep thinker, he preferred to use his brain to daydream and imagine things.

Religion was a major topic in the Inness childhood home often resulting in passionate conversations, especially when extended Methodist, Baptist, and Universalist family members were present. As a result, Inness absorbed a broad and deep religious base, a fervent desire for introspection, and a search for truth and enlightenment that stayed with him throughout his adult life and played a major role in his career.

One day, Inness noticed a man standing in the middle of a field painting the landscape onto a canvas. Stirred at the thought of capturing images from nature on a canvas, he knew immediately his career path had been revealed. The young and naïve Inness had some misconceptions about landscape painting as his first thought was that he'd have to get an enormous paper or canvas to actually capture an entire landscape!

Being a painter in early America was not regarded as a "real job" with a steady income, prompting his older brothers to ridicule Inness for his lack of ambition. After many attempts to teach him a real trade, at the point of exasperation his father conceded to his son's wishes and placed young Inness in the studio of a man named Barker hoping to make him as good of a painter as possible. Any slacker behavior in the family was prohibited, even for an painter. It wasn't long before Inness surpassed Baker's ability and was sent on to the studio of Regis Gignoux, a French artist who taught Inness color theory and composition. Inness was a very teachable student and learned much but he longed to de-

velop his own style rather than follow the style of his teachers. More than anything, Inness wanted to capture the grandeur and spirituality of nature, including the emotion that he felt when viewing nature. The paintings of Thomas Cole and Asher Brown Durand greatly inspired Inness due to their intimate renderings of nature. Both these artists were part of the Hudson River School which included realism and ideal portrayal of nature. In particular, Inness tried to combine the best of Cole and Durand's style but added an emotional quality of the spiritual. In other words, Inness sought to represent both the external image, what he saw, as well as the emotional image, what he felt.

The teenage Inness married Delia Miller, who died within two months of their wedding. The grieving Inness turned his attention to opening his first studio in New York. His new style violated the prescribed painting techniques of the times so business was basically non-existent and only survived with the generous financial support of his brothers. One day, a successful New York auctioneer, Ogden Haggerty, publically deemed Inness' work genius and encouraged the public to reconsidering Inness' ability.

Seventeen year old Elizabeth Hart grabbed the attention of widower Inness one day in church, resulting in his immediate realization that she would be his future wife. The couple married in 1850 and were sent to Italy for two years, thanks to the generosity of Ogden Haggerty, with the intention Inness would fine tune his skills. Two years later they traveled to Paris, again with Haggerty footing the bill. Studying the works of the masters had an extreme impact on Inness. It was not a matter of simply reflecting styles of the masters, rather, it was an awakening, pulling from within his spirit to create art and opening his mind to new ideas. In 1853, Inness abilities earned him an associate membership in the Academy.

Upon their return to America, the family settled in Brooklyn, New York, where Inness worked with New York dealers. Once again, it was a financial struggle, especially now that the family had grown to include children Elizabeth, Rosa, George Jr., Louise, Helen, and a sixth child who died in infancy. In 1859, Inness relocated the family to the Medfield suburb of Boston, Massachusetts, to ease the financial burden and where he could paint without the traditional constraints of the New York art community. These were the good years, full of artistic achievements despite the crude studio in the barn. It was in this studio Inness painted some of his famous works, including a landscape called *Peace and Plenty*. Painting was always preceded by weeks outdoors observing natural compositions and details including trees, clouds, light, and vegetation. Sketching was his way of recording his observations. When he had the inspiration, he moved into the

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- Radial: Mirror image from center point
- Repetition: Repeating pattern, motif

ARTISTIC STYLES

- Realism: Realistic representation
- Abstraction: Personal interpretation
- Non-Objective: No recognizable depiction

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Literature that relate to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

LANDSCAPES/ATMOSPHERE/LIGHT

- *Land and Light Workshop—Painting Mood and Atmosphere in Oils* by Carol Lewis
- *Painting Landscapes with Atmosphere* by Ray Balkwill
- *Painting Landscapes and Atmosphere* by Jose M. Parramon
- *Light, Shade and Shadow* by E. L. Koller

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- McCausland, Elizabeth. *James George Inness, An American Landscape Painter*. American Artists Group, INC. NY 1946
- Inness, George, Jr. *Life, Art, and Letters of George Inness*. Kennedy Galleries, Inc. Da Capo Press, New York. 1969.

studio and composed an image using both a compilation of the sketches he made in nature and his imagination.

Painting was a very physical activity with vigorous hand motions rendering surface textures. Everything was placed in his paintings for a purpose, nothing was arbitrary. Inness brought a great sensitivity in the imagery. The large canvas space dedicated to the sky, the far reaching distances and the width of his landscapes all reflected the grandeur of nature. In addition, Inness captured with atmospheric conditions with great detail, such as approaching thunder clouds, the humid heat of a summer day, or the quiet of an afternoon.

Inness experienced great success nationally and internationally in the late 1800's. He continued to paint, taking on students including his son, George Inness Jr. He also ventured into poetry and continued his travels.

Inness' health began to deteriorate in 1894 and with his doctor's approval, he and his wife set sail for one last trip abroad to the Scottish town of Bridge-of-Allen. The couple planned to take a drive one evening and, while Elizabeth was preparing for the drive, Inness went outdoors to observe the early evening sky ablaze in red tones. Inness loved sunsets and found this one extremely beautiful. His fragile body was overwhelmed with the beauty he saw that all strength left him and he fell to the ground acknowledging God's gift of the sunset. He was taken immediately into the house where he died in the arms of his beloved wife on August 3. His body was brought back to America where it laid in state in the National Academy of Design. His funeral service, held in the same location, was on August 23, 1894.

About the Art

Peace and Plenty is known as one of the finest landscape paintings by Inness and completed in 1865, oil on canvas measuring 77 5/8 by 112 3/8 inches. The Civil War had just come to an end and Inness' *Peace and Plenty*, became a post-war American image, often reproduced as a postcard. *Peace and Plenty* was originally given to the builder, Marcus Spring, in partial payment for a house in Eagleswood, New Jersey. Today *Peace and Plenty* hangs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Directed Observation

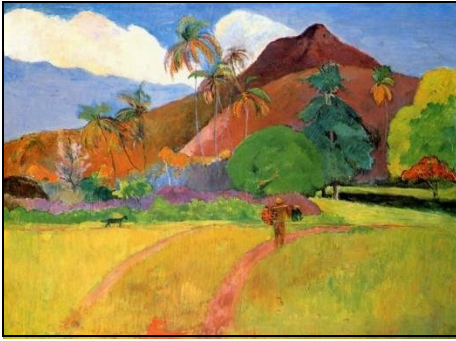
Show students an image of *Peace and Plenty*. Tell them it was painted, oil on canvas, in 1865 by George Inness. Offer students biographical information about Inness. After some time for thinking, encourage students to

share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following questions are provided to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. To fully understand the painting, it must be placed in context of history. Discuss the Civil War and its outcome on many levels: political, economical, environmental, social and religious. How does the imagery in *Peace and Plenty*, painted at the conclusion of the war, relate to the war? What was Inness saying to the viewers and to himself? Is the work and its message applicable to current times? What does this say about art?
2. What does the theme of "harvest" conjure and how does it relate to the Civil War?
3. Describe how Inness' religious beliefs and love of nature play out in this image. (Inness usually included several people in his work to address relationships among both people and nature.)
4. As a religious person, where/how does Inness include the presence of a God?
5. Debate if this is the end of the day or the beginning? Does it matter? How might this (sunrise/sunset) tie to post-Civil War?
6. From a compositional perspective, describe the sense of space (foreground, mid-ground, background). Describe the composition as having a diagonal dividing line. How does this support compositional balance and use emphasis and economy?
7. Discuss the image from an emotional perspective. Discuss how this image involves your senses.

Things to Do

1. Inness painted *Peace and Plenty* in the aftermath of the ugliness of the Civil War. The war, and all it entailed, contrasted with beautiful pastures, and the harvest emphasizes the peace. Design a landscape where a portion of the composition is dedicated to the "point of tension" and the other portion is dedicated to the "resolve" - the peaceful end. You decide the breakdown of the proportion of the two entities. You'll notice your work will be more powerful because of the contrasting components, but make sure to really develop both areas.
2. In your work above, allow light to play a key role as Inness did in *Peace and Plenty*. Use light as a symbol for hope and new beginnings. Consider strategically placing light behind objects with an intermittent shift of slight and full exposure. Consider how light appears on objects based on the source of light and its location. Include some area of darkness as that will contrast with the light.



7th Grade: MAY

Tahitian Landscape

Paul Gauguin

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About the Artist

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Paul Gauguin

Eugène Henri Paul Gauguin was born on June 7, 1848, to Clovis Gauguin and Aline Chazel in Paris, France, during the second French Revolution. His father was a liberal journalist who went into exile during the revolution and his mother of Peruvian decent was the daughter of Flora Tristan, a political speaker and friend of the Peruvian president. When he was three, Gauguin, his younger sister and parents left to visit Peru to escape the political climate; tragedy struck on route with the death of his father. His mother decided to remain in Peru for four years, returning to France when the children were older. At seventeen, Gauguin enlisted in the merchant marines and spent his days making numerous voyages across the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1871, his life changed. His mother died, he left the service of the marines, began a career as a stockbroker in Paris and took up painting as a hobby. Two years later, he met and married Mette Sophia Gad, a young Danish woman and eventually had five children. They lived a comfortable life with his steady income. Gauguin's interest in painting grew; he took art lessons and often spent free time visiting art galleries and painting studios where he could paint without the constraints of academic training.

Gauguin was a very independent thinker when it came to painting. He sided with the Impressionists whose painting style was rebuked by the critics, making it impossible to exhibit in galleries and museums. Gauguin had to hunt down their work at out-of-the-way exhibitions just to get a look at the paintings. On occasion, he purchased from Monet, Renoir, Cézanne, Degas or Pissarro. He even funded some of their exhibitions. Gauguin had the pleasure of meeting Camille Pissarro one day, who subsequently introduced him to Cézanne and Degas. Pissarro, who was known for his willingness to help beginning painters, took Gauguin under his wing, shared advice, even painted side-by-side with him.

It came as a complete surprise to his wife, when in 1883, Gauguin announced that he was giving up his lucrative banking job to devote himself full time to painting. His wife, stunned, quickly developed a plan to keep living costs low when the banking income ceased. They moved to her hometown of Copenhagen, Denmark, where she had the support of relatives and could possibly earn some money teaching French. Within a few months,

Gauguin failed miserably with his first exhibition closing early because it didn't generate interest or sales. His job as an art dealer also failed. His financial condition put stress on his marriage and created ill feelings from the relatives. He felt defeated and in 1885, Gauguin abandoned his wife and children and returned to Paris. He sacrificed family, wealth, security, and peace of mind to be an artist.

Within a year he moved to the small French town of Pont-Aven located in the north-west region of Brittany. Here, he found the cost of living considerable cheaper than Paris. He was also intrigued by the rugged and primitive nature of the landscape, people and the houses. He became so intrigued with the notion of a primitive lifestyle that he traveled on to Panama and Martinique where he created some paintings of the sights. Unfortunately, he contracted a severe case of dysentery and found the climate overbearing so he soon returned to Pont-Aven to recover. It was in Pont-Aven where he met the painter, Emile Bernard. Bernard painted with both Japanese and Cézanne influence which used flatter color surrounded by a bold outline known as cloisonism. This process greatly impacted Gauguin's painting as he gradually transitioned away from his Impressionistic tendencies and simplified his forms on the canvas using brighter, bolder and purer colors. He also chose to maintain a flat plane to his colors, a style he called, Synthetism. Of course, this almost identical approached to painting caused some conflict between Gauguin and Bernard.

The Impressionists were a tight group and worked as a whole to advance their artistic style. Vincent van Gogh invited Gauguin to visit him in Arles with his brother, Theo van Gogh, an art dealer who financed the trip. The stay in Arles lasted for two months and proved to be a very unpleasant experience as the two artists disagreed on almost every point. They had different opinions which they expressed violently, even dangerously. The artists van Gogh admired were Gauguin's least respected artists. Van Gogh was a romantic landscape painter with very loose brushstrokes and Gauguin was a primitive painter who outlined his flat forms. They had the idea of painting a portrait of each other which ended in disaster since neither appreciated how the other painted. They went to the café for dinner soon after the portraits were completed and began an argument which escalated into a terrible fist fight. Then on Christmas Eve, another outburst of rage provoked van Gogh to attack Gauguin with a razor. Having missed, van Gogh took the razor to his own ear. The nervous breakdown warranted hospitalization of van Gogh and Gauguin quickly departed to Paris without seeing van Gogh again.

Gauguin returned to Pont-Aven in 1889 for a period of four

Discipline-Based Art Education

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ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Literature that relates to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- *First Impressions: Paul Gauguin* by Howard Greenfeld
- *Gauguin* by David Spence
- *Paul Gauguin (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists)* by Mike Venezia
- *Paul Gauguin* by Paul Flix
- *Smoking Mirror: An Encounter with Paul Gauguin* by Douglas Rees
- *The Yellow House: Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin Side by Side* by P. Falvey

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- Danielsson, Bengt. *Gauguin in the South Seas*. Doubleday & Co. NY. 1966.
- Druick, Douglas and Peter Kort Zegers. *Van Gogh and Gauguin, The Studio of the South*. Thames and Hutton. NY. 2001.
- Jean Ellsmoor, Editor. *Gauguin, Henri Perruchot*. The World Publishing Co. NY. 1963.

months when he produced a great deal of paintings. While he did build a group of admirers of his work, he never found material benefits. The longing to seek out far away lands was a constant and in 1891 he sold his art collection and sailed to the remote French island of Tahiti hoping to find an easier life, one without the constraints of money. He located himself twenty-five miles from the capital to avoid other Europeans. Now living in the jungle of Tahiti, he dressed like a native and lived with a native woman and went about learning the ways of the native people.

Gauguin was committed to further developing his own style. He softened his outlines and created a clearer distinction between foreground, mid-ground and background with a heightened focus on composition. In 1893, he returned to Paris and opened a show of his new works that resulted in few sales. Unexpectedly, he received a sizable inheritance from an uncle that funded an apartment in Paris. He painted the walls with bright colors and began to dress the same—he was turning his life into his art. He took as a mistress a half-Indian, half-Malayan girl, Annah, to complete the exotic look. One evening, he broke his foot in a brawl and had to be hospitalized. Annah took advantage of the situation and sold or took everything he has in his apartment. Once again, defeated, he returned to Tahiti with ankle pain and open sores on his legs from syphilis contracted during his time in Paris. His inability to work caused depression. His debts accumulated and quarrels with the colonial government were common, prompting him to move to another village. The government sued and sentenced him to three months in prison and a fine of five hundred francs. The thought of the sentence and fine was enough to bring him to his death. On May 8, 1903, Gauguin died a lonely man without family, friends, home, or country. An interest in his painting began shortly after his death. Much of the work was purchased by collectors. When one becomes available, a Gauguin painting can go for nearly forty million dollars in current markets.

About the Art

Tahitian Landscape was painted by Paul Gauguin, oil on canvas, in 1893 and is in the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, Minnesota. It measures 26 3/4 x 36 3/8 inches. As in all of his painting from Tahiti, Gauguin succeeded in his choice of vibrant colors that simplified imagery. He presented Tahiti as he saw, experienced and felt it. Notice the lightening of the dark outlines that were part of his earlier work. Away from the constraints of European critics, his work flourished.

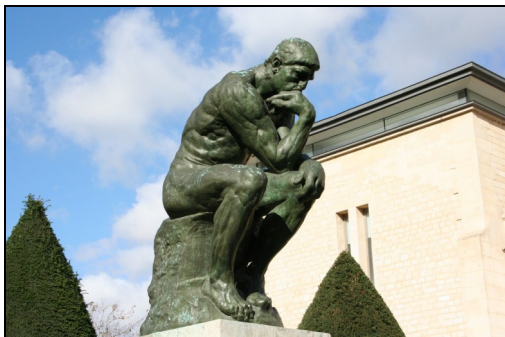
Directed Observation

Show students an image of *Tahitian Landscape* and tell them it was painted, oil on canvas, in 1893 by Paul Gauguin. Offer students biographical information about Gauguin. After some time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following questions are provided to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.

1. This landscape is composed off-centered with upward eye movement to the top of the latter hill. The vibrant clouds on the upper left of the composition counter-balance the imagery. Visually, the top half of the painting is more complex than the lower half. Discuss what about the lower half counter-balances the top (vibrant green).
2. What purpose do the curved pathways serve in terms of the composition?
3. Notice how the colors are repeated in the painting - the blues, greens, and browns.
4. Tahiti is in a hot climate. Does this painting reflect this? How so?
5. Gauguin desired a primitive location. What about this painting addresses a primitive environment?
6. Do you think this is a good painting? Defend your reply. How does Gauguin's style compare to those of van Gogh or other Impressionist painters.
7. Gauguin's style is identified as Post-Impressionism.

Things to Do

1. Look through magazines for images of landscapes or use a landscape from your neighborhood or favorite vacation spot. Sketch the landscape onto sturdy paper or a canvas pad. In order to "free yourself" as Gauguin did, use complementary colors (opposite on the color wheel) to those you see. Or, brighten up your work by mixing your acrylic paints with neon acrylic.
2. Pair with another student and paint each other in your own personal style.
3. You don't have to go to a primitive location to paint primitively. Using simple shapes and painting flat (without shading), execute a composition of an imaginary outdoor location. Use color to communicate the climate.
4. Gauguin was passionate about his art and made many sacrifices. Discuss those sacrifices and share what you'd be willing to give up to follow your passion.
5. Use *Tahitian Landscape* and write a formal review of the work commenting on Gauguin's use of the elements and principles of art.



7th Grade: JUNE

The Thinker

François-Auguste-René Rodin

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Funded by the John and Frances Beck Foundation, Chicago, Illinois
Edited by Constance Kammrath, M.A.

About the Artist

The following information is provided to give classroom teachers a comprehensive understanding of the artist and artwork. Use your judgment on what to share with your students based on their level of curiosity, observation/inquiry skills, comprehension and age-appropriateness.

François-Auguste-René Rodin

François-Auguste-René Rodin was born in Paris, France, on November 12, 1840, to Marie Cheffer and Jean-Baptiste Rodin. His father's income as a clerk (police inspector) for the police department provided for a modest upbringing. Rodin was a shy boy and had difficulty with school work, probably linked to his nearsightedness. Despite his vision problems, Rodin exhibited an interest in drawing and received formal lessons at age ten.

Rodin attended the French government school for craft and design called La École Impériale de Dessin (Petite École). This school was not the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts (School of Fine Arts). Here, he worked hard to learn all he could and eventually proved himself to be a very promising sculptor by age seventeen. Rodin's continued achievements in his schooling, including winning several awards, prompted him to apply to École des Beaux-Arts, only to be rejected three different times. At age seventeen, Rodin left his formal training and began a career as a craftsman, creating both decorative and architectural objects for Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, a vocation he continued for the next twenty years.

In 1862, Rodin took a brief break from his art due to the guilt he felt surrounding the death of his older sister, Maria. Rodin had introduced Maria years earlier to a man who gave her a sexually transmitted disease. The guilt-stricken Rodin took refuge in a Catholic order. Then Father Eymard, founder of the Order of the Holy Sacrament, recognized Rodin's passion for art as well as his unsuitability for the monastic life. Rodin soon returned to his work as a decorator with Carrier-Belleuse, rented a studio and took classes taught by Antoine Louis Barye, known for his extraordinary knowledge of muscular structure of animals. The sculpture developed in his studio was good but never publically exhibited.

A young seamstress, Rose Beuret, began what became a life-long relationship with Rodin. The couple had a son in 1866 but Rodin never legally acknowledged his paternity. The advent of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870 called Rodin into service, which was brief due to his near-sightedness. He had taken a leave from work during the war but upon his return, Carrier-Belleuse asked Rodin to join him in Belgium where he would work on ornamentation

for Brussels's new stock exchange building.

Once in Belgium, Rodin advanced his skills as a master craftsman which led to other jobs and an increased salary, which made it possible to bring Rosa and her son to Brussels. Rodin enjoyed traveling to view sculpture in Europe. Rodin respected the skills of Michelangelo and his ability to display emotion through his sculptures, especially two different emotions in the same work such as violence and constraint. An 1875 trip to Italy to view the works of Michelangelo so inspired Rodin that he created a bronze statue, *The Vanquished* (1876), which he first exhibited in Brussels. Its more naturalistic approach was different from the classical Greek or Roman approach of exaggerated muscular structure. This was such a life-like representation that some believed it to be cast from a live model, a process not acceptable for sculptors and considered cheating. He denied these allegations in Brussels to no avail. Upon returning to Paris with his family, Rodin submitted the sculpture to the 1877 Paris Salon under the new name of *Age of Bronze*. With the false accusations resolved, Rodin won respect from many as well as the patronage of Turquet, the under-secretary of the fine arts, who purchased the statue for the Luxembourg Garden in Paris. It was considered an unusual piece as well because it was executed purely for the sake of expression rather than the typical historical or literary purposes. Other remarkable works produced in 1878 included *St. John the Baptist Preaching* and *Walking Man*, both featuring the subject frozen in motion and emotion. The figure of St. John was executed as if John were an ordinary man rather than a saint, a perspective not appreciated by the common audience nor the church.

In 1880 Rodin was commissioned to create a special entryway for what was to be a museum of decorative arts in Paris. Four years were devoted to this project, resulting in a portal called, *Gates of Hell* based on the Divine Comedy of Dante. The figure was to represent Dante sitting high above the gates creating or surveying the scene below. Unfortunately, the museum was never built and many components made for the portal were repurposed as separate sculptures including Rodin's famous *The Thinker* (1880) and *The Kiss* (1881-82).

In the years when he was struggling with accusations surrounding *The Vanquished*, Rodin sought comfort with nineteen year old Camille Claudel, a talented, young sculptor who eventually became his model, co-worker and mistress. One of Rodin's more famous works mentioned earlier, *The Kiss*, is modeled after Camille as were other works on the subject of love. Despite their affair, Rodin did not leave his twenty year relationship with his first love, Rose Beuret. Eventually, Rodin and Camille separated. A few years later Camille suffered a nervous breakdown resulting

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ELEMENTS OF DESIGN IN PICTURE BOOKS

Children's literature that relate to this lesson due to elements of art or story content are:

- Books on Rodin contain images that include nude figures, often in positions inappropriate for young readers. If interested in books for your classroom, please review the books before placing them in your classroom.

REFERENCE/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Lampert, Catherine. *Rodin: Sculpture and Drawings*. Yale University Press. 1987
- Rilke, Rainer Maria. *August Rodin*. Dover Publication. 2006
- Rodin, August. *Rodin on Art and Artists*. Dover Publications. 2009

in institutional confinement for thirty years until her death.

Many private and state commissions were requested of Rodin such as of French writer *Victor Hugo* (1889), painter *James McNeil Whistler* (1904-06), French political leader *Napoleon*, and Irish playwright *George Bernard Shaw* (1906). It was during this time Rodin's reputation grew and he became more in demand, requiring studio assistants to meet the workload. Some mixed and created plaster casts from Rodin's original clay sculptures while others worked on applying the patina to the completed casted bronze.

In 1908, Rodin moved into the Hotel Biron on the outskirts of Paris. The low rent permitted him to secure larger studio space. The state made a decision four years later to demolish the Hotel Biron but Rodin, not wanting to move, persuaded the state officials to allow him to remain in the building until the time of his death when he would his turn over his entire estate to the French Government to which the state agreed.

Rosa Beuret remained with Rodin and finally became his legal wife in 1917, however, she died three weeks later. Rodin died less than a year later. He was laid to rest next to his wife just south of Paris with *The Thinker* at the base of his tombstone.

The thousands of bronze busts, statues and sculptures were among Rodin's most famous works but he made vast artistic contributions beyond sculptures. He painted in oil and watercolor, drew in chalk and charcoal, and produced some prints. The Musée Rodin in Paris alone holds seven thousand drawing by Rodin.

About the Art

The Thinker was originally titled, *The Poet*, after Dante (Dante's *Inferno*) and was created in plaster by Rodin in 1880, 27.5 inches high. The first large-scale bronze cast sculpture was made in 1902. In 1922, it was placed in front of the Rodin Museum (formerly the Hotel Biron) in Paris, France. The nude figure's posture is known for its intellectual and emotional demeanor and its physicality. More than twenty authentic *The Thinkers* are found in various sizes worldwide, including The university of Louisville, Kentucky, in the United States.

Directed Observation

Show students an image of *The Thinker* and tell them it was sculpted in plaster in 1880 and later cast in bronze by August Rodin. Invite students to quietly study the work. After some

time for thinking, encourage students to share what they see. Welcome all comments. The following questions are provided to help students use art vocabulary to talk about the work.



1. Carefully examine images of *The Thinker* from different angles. Discuss the posture of the male figure and how it supports the concept of thinking or contemplation. How does the resting of the right arm on the left leg, twisting the torso, support the theme? Look at the tightened fists and toes.
2. What emotion does the rough, almost pitted surface give you?
3. Compare and contrast Michelangelo's sculpture of

David to Rodin's *The Thinker*. Compare the material, sculpting process, surface quality. Which do you favor? Which do you consider better? Which one is more emotionally charged?

4. Research how artists create bronze sculpture. There are many DVDs on the market which show the many steps of casting.
5. To understand the difference between sculpting and modeling, prepare two blocks of clay. Sculpting is a subtractive process. From one block, cut away the unnecessary clay (negative space) to reveal a figure. Modeling is an additive process. Form separate body parts from the second block, then attached the parts together (positive space) until it resembles a figure. In this case, you have to be very careful to attach parts of clay together properly for it to "stick" together. Which process do you prefer?

Things to Do

1. What defines a "thinking" position? Make a list of common characteristics to inform a sculpture you make using clay.
2. For a contrast to the stillness of *The Thinker*, create a body in motion from clay. Reference a moving figure from a magazine picture or take a photograph to reference while you work. Discuss how the two sculpting processes are different.
3. Create a mixture of plaster and paper mâché. Make a wire armature of a figure and thickly cover it with the mixture to form a body. Dry. Place a thin layer of only plaster (no paper mâché) to smoothen the surface. Dry. Sand the sculpture smooth. Once free of dust, brush the sculpture with milk. Dry and buff with smooth cloth for a beautiful semi-gloss finish.