

Facets: The Art of Jean Seymour Exhibition Guide

This Exhibition Guide was developed to help you enjoy your upcoming trip to the exhibition of artwork by Mississippi Artist Jean Seymour showing from November 5 to December 31, a free field trip with a workshop component for fourth-grade students, sponsored by The Greenville Arts Council.

4th

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To schedule a tour for your class, call the Greenville Arts Council offices at 662-332-2246

Introduction

This Teacher’s Guide was designed to help you and your students not only prepare for your upcoming field trip to see *Facets: The Art of Jean Seymour*, but to extend this arts experience throughout your curriculum. We have taken special care to point out connections to specific competencies with the lessons outlined in this packet.

I Want This One!

Language Arts Connections:

Students will develop and use persuasive arguments.

“That Isn’t Art, I Could Make That”

Language Arts Connection:

Students will use descriptive language and create their own abstract art to express emotion.

Be An Art Critic

Language Arts Connection:

Students will use their knowledge of parts of speech in describing art.

Artist’s Statement

Jean Seymour’s artistic leanings were revealed at a very young age as she spent her free time dreaming and drawing. But it took a long time in her adult life before she focused on painting. She has studied under such masters as Daniel Green, Irwin Greenberg, Alan Flattmann, Joseph Lorusso, Sally Strand and Mario Robinson.

Challenged by a blank canvas, she follows her natural tendencies to experiment, beginning with no preconceived image. Randomly and intuitively she layers, patterns and blends color, adding hand painted papers along the way, all the while remaining open to the dialogue of the painting. Although the majority of her work consists of mixed water media, she works in all mediums maintaining an interest in drawing and painting the figure.

She is a signature member of the Pastel Society of America, International Society of Acrylic Painters and the Mississippi Watercolor Society.

We hope this guide will help you in integrating this experience into the valuable work you do everyday in the classroom. Thanks for taking the time to look through it.

I Want This One!

While visiting the gallery or by creating a “gallery” in your classroom by displaying several different types of artwork, have the students pretend that they are the principal of the school and a local donor has agreed to purchase a piece of art for the entryway. They are in charge of picking it out! Ask them to write three *persuasive* reasons why the work they select should be chosen. Allow them to try to talk one another into their choices by creating strong arguments to support their selections. Remind them that being assertive is not the same as being rude but is a good life skill to develop!

Discuss what it means that Jean Seymour has been accepted as a Signature Member in several art societies. For the Pastel Society of America, artists apply for membership by submitting samples of her/his work to be evaluated by a committee. “The Jury of Admissions determines if the applicant meets the standards of professional excellence required for Signature status.” (http://www.pastelsocietyofamerica.org/index_membership.htm) What criteria would you set if you got to decide which art deserved this designation?

Competencies Addressed

Language Arts

3. The student will express, communicate, evaluate, or exchange ideas effectively.

*e. The student will compose simple persuasive text **clearly expressing a main idea with supporting details for a specific purpose and audience.** (DOK 3)*

Visual Arts

10. Know how people respect and value art differently.

a. Recognize that there are different responses to specific works of art.

“That Isn’t Art, I Could Make That”

In a general sense, the word “abstract” means simplified. A stick figure is an abstract drawing of a person. It is based on the human figure but is simplified to show only the most basic representation. Some abstract art is not recognizable as a picture of anything you can identify. When an artist is focused on composition (the arrangement of lines, shapes, colors, etc. to make a pleasing design) and not on making an image of anything recognizable, their art is called non-objective or non-representational.

Some people don’t like abstract art because they don’t think it requires any skill or talent. A good composition does require an artistic sense though. Furthermore, non-representational art can be highly expressive. Many times, these people are shocked to find out that other people interpret a non-representational work of art in the same way as they do.

Show the class two very different examples of non-representational works of art. Try these:

<http://www.centrepompidou.fr/images/oeuvres/XL/4F45090.jpg> and

<http://www.kemperart.org/images/permanent/MitchellJoanlarge.jpg> or any pair of works you can find that have very different types of lines, colors, etc. Do not allow anyone to make

comments aloud. Ask the students to study the works for a while and then write one word to describe each work of art. When everyone is finished, list the words on the board for each work. If a word is repeated multiple times, put tally marks out to the side of the word to show how many times it was selected. Group similar words by underlining them in the same color on the board (there can be more than one group of similar words—just use different colors for each).

Discuss similarities and differences in each list of words and how a picture of lines, shapes, and colors can communicate a feeling. Ask students to compare and contrast the works and to tell what specific things they see make them have the feeling they get from each. You might hear responses like “the jagged lines seem nervous” or “the soft colors seem peaceful together.” Specific aspects *dominant* in each work will likely communicate a similar feeling to many people. Make a list of as many specific ways the artists communicated feelings. It is important to value that some people will interpret artwork differently, however. Our own ideas and experiences have a great deal of influence on how we interpret all art. With abstract art there is even more room for individualized interpretations.

Review the vocabulary related to the elements of art that can be found at http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/elements.html. There are also some specific ways listed that artists use certain elements to convey a particular emotion.

Ask the students to write down a time when they felt a very strong emotion or a time they could imagine feeling a strong emotion that they would be willing to share with the class later. Have them list as many emotions, feelings, and adjectives related to the experience as they can. Ask them to use the list the class generated as well as the Getty web resource listed above and make a list of what specific lines, shapes, and colors should help convey their message. Make sure they don't tell others about the feelings they wrote about.

Give them each a small (around 5 x 7") piece of paper and crayons or Cray-Pas if you have them and ask them to create a picture with *no recognizable subject matter*—no pictures of anything someone can name—emphasizing those lines, shapes, and colors. Tell them to cover the entire surface and build up layers of color. When the works are complete, hold a class critique where the students try to interpret the emotion in each work. Let each artist share what they were trying to show once their work has been discussed. They will likely be amazed at how they were able to communicate without pictures or words. If a work did not communicate the intended feeling, ask the class to make suggestions as to how to emphasize other areas and give the student the opportunity to re-work it. Focus on the process more than the product. Emphasize that art-making is a process that involves revising just as the writing process does.

Give the students the chance to respond to a variety of other works of art and see if their interpretations skills have improved as they look at the entire work for clues.

Competencies Addressed

Language Arts

3. The student will express, communicate, evaluate, or exchange ideas effectively.

a. The student will use **and reflect on an** appropriate composing process (e.g., planning, drafting, revising, editing, publishing/ sharing) **to express, communicate, evaluate, or exchange ideas with a focus on texts increasing complexity and length.** [Note: Editing will be tested under competency four.] (DOK 3)

1) Planning

- Plan for composing using a variety of strategies (e.g., **brainstorming, drawing, graphic organizers, peer discussion, reading, viewing**).

2) Drafting

- **Draft with increasing fluency.**

3) Revising

- **Revise selected drafts by adding, elaborating, deleting, and rearranging text based on teacher/peer feedback, writer's checklist, or rubric.**

4) Editing

- Edit/proofread drafts to ensure standard usage, mechanics, spelling, and varied sentence structure.

5) Publishing/Sharing

- Share writing with others formally and informally using a variety of media.

b. The student will compose descriptive texts using specific details and vivid language. (DOK 3)

e. The student will compose simple persuasive text **clearly expressing a main idea with supporting details for a specific purpose and audience.** (DOK 3)

Visual Arts

2. Demonstrate an increasing understanding of the use of the elements and principles of design through media and processes to communicate ideas, actions, and emotions. (elements—color, line, shape and form, texture, value, space; principles—balance, repetition, unity, contrast, proportion, emphasis)

5. Describe how different works of art can be interpreted.

a. Know how to use reading, writing, and speaking skills to communicate interpretation of art.

a. Recognize that there are different responses to specific works of art.

b. Exhibit respect for own work as well as the work of others.

9. Know that there are different answers to the question: "What is art?"

a. Understand that there are individual perceptions of art.

10. Know how people respect and value art differently.

a. Recognize that there are different responses to specific works of art.

b. Exhibit respect for own work as well as the work of others.

12. Begin to understand ways that major concepts and technologies of the visual arts relate to those in the arts and other disciplines.

b. Know that math, language arts, social studies, and science share concepts with the visual arts (e.g., patterns in visual arts and math)

Science

INQUIRY

1. Explain and use skills necessary to conduct scientific inquiry.

a. Form hypotheses and predict outcomes of problems to be investigated. (DOK 3)

b. Use the senses and simple tools to gather qualitative information about objects or events (size, shape, color, texture, sound, position, change). (DOK 1)

Be an Art Critic

Let students carefully observe a piece of art that the class has not studied. Conduct an Initial Inquiry session by asking open-ended questions such as "What is happening here?" and "Why do you think the artist made this?" Explain that these answers are influenced by their own

experiences and they do not all need to agree on the answers. Refrain from giving them your opinions or answering additional questions that arise. Instead ask them to think what some possible answers might be. When they learn more, their ideas may expand and evolve.

Review the definitions of the elements of art that can be found at http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/elements.html. Use the work of art they are observing to identify each element and brainstorm a list of adjectives (and/or other parts of speech you are studying) that describe the art piece. You may want to have each student write an adjective on a post-it note and place it on the board around the artwork or reproduction. Once everyone has participated, read the notes and discuss them as a class.

If you are covering more than one part of speech, you could ask them to write one-word answers (instead of just adjectives) to the questions above and sort them into columns on the board by part of speech as you read each note to the class. For example, when asked “What do you see in this picture?” the students may list nouns. “What is going on in the picture?” will probably elicit verbs. Asking “What can you tell me about this picture?” will probably generate some adjectives. Asking where specific things in the picture are in relation to each other will bring out prepositions. If you ask all of those questions and have each student only post one one-word answer, you will have a selection of various parts of speech that can then be used in the class discussion of a description of the work and sorted by parts of speech.

Follow this discussion with some background information on the artist and the work. Ask the students if any of their opinions of the work change as a result of this new information. This lesson could be extended by allowing each student to write a short newspaper review of the art for your own classroom “Art News.”

Language Arts

4. The student will apply Standard English to communicate.

*a. The student will apply Standard English grammar to **compose or edit.** (DOK 1)*

- 1) Nouns (e.g., singular, plural [including irregular forms], common, proper, singular possessive, plural possessive, **appositives**)
- 2) Verbs (e.g., helping verbs, irregular verbs, **linking verbs**)
- 3) Verb tense (conjugation and purpose for past, present, future, **present perfect**)
- 4) Subject-verb agreement
- 5) Articles and coordinating conjunctions
- 6) Adjectives (e.g., possessive, comparative, superlative)
- 7) Prepositions
- 8) Pronouns (e.g., subject pronouns, singular pronouns, plural pronouns, singular possessive pronouns, plural possessive pronouns, **object pronouns, reflexive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns**)

Visual Arts

2. Demonstrate an increasing understanding of the use of the elements and principles of design through media and processes to communicate ideas, actions, and emotions. (elements—color, line, shape and form, texture, value, space; principles—balance, repetition, unity, contrast, proportion, emphasis)

5. Describe how different works of art can be interpreted.

a. Know how to use reading, writing, and speaking skills to communicate interpretation of art.