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LESSON PLANS, GRADES K–12

EXPERIENCE AND LEARNING WITH THE KRESS COLLECTION

These lesson plans are a supplement to the Kress Teaching Packet. In the teaching packet, which is our primary instructional handbook, you will find images, information and looking guides for each of the 12 works of art in the Kress Collection at the Georgia Museum of Art, as well as an overview of Renaissance history. Educators are strongly encouraged to visit the museum with their students to experience our Kress Collection firsthand. The teaching packet and lesson plans offer a well-rounded understanding of Renaissance art; however, no reproduction can fully convey the beauty of an individual’s interaction with these works of art in the galleries. To organize a field trip, please contact the museum’s education department at 706.542.8863.

WHAT’S THE SUBJECT?

There are many interesting subjects to explore within Renaissance art. The works from the museum’s Kress Collection offer a variety of styles and themes for the viewer to observe. Several of these subjects—iconography, mothers with children and narrative art—form the basis of these lesson plans.

HOW’S THAT MADE?

Renaissance artists used a variety of innovative materials and artistic processes for their work. These lesson plans focus on the materials of oil paint and egg tempera, as well as the compositional design of multi-panel altarpieces and linear perspective.

All studio art activities in this teaching packet have been designed for grades K–12 in accordance with the Georgia Performance Standards for Fine Arts, with specific activities for each grade level. They are presented in the following order:

1. Summary
2. Objectives
3. Materials
4. Preparation
5. Introduction
6. Class Discussion
7. Activity
8. Follow-up Discussion
9. Standards

Please feel free to adapt these resources to suit your needs.
WHAT’S THE SUBJECT? Iconography

Because of the central role of Christianity in European culture at the time, religious art was an important part of Renaissance art. Many of the works in the Georgia Museum of Art’s Kress Collection are religious icons. Broadly, an icon is an image that represents a holy person, including saints, Jesus, Mary (the mother of Jesus) and scenes from Jesus’ life.

Icons played a significant role in the Byzantine Empire and are still associated with the region. Byzantine theologians, or people who studied religion, believed that icons served as intercessors to God; a worshipper could communicate to the figure represented in the icon through contemplation and prayer or ask that figure to pass on prayers to God.

Most commonly, icons are painted on wood panels; however, icons were made in all sizes and with a variety of materials, depending on their intended use. Small, personal icons were made as necklaces and figurines for individuals who traveled or for those who could not afford larger works of art. Larger icons were commissioned for churches and chapels. Regardless of size or medium, these icons were created for the same purpose.

In the 12th century, when Byzantine art came to Sicily, a new style of Italo-Byzantine art was born; it continued to inform Italian artists throughout the Renaissance and was characterized by careful attention to anatomy, gold embellishments and delicate shading to show volume.

Saints, or holy people in various Christian churches, including the Catholic church, are some of the most common subjects for icons. Saints are people who led very holy, virtuous or moral lives and who are believed to have performed miracles, such as curing incurable diseases, after their death. Saints are meant to serve as examples of humans who lived their lives based on the morals and belief system outlined by Christianity.

Some examples of paintings of saints in the Georgia Museum of Art’s Kress Collection are “St. Clare” (ca. 1340), “St. Anthony Abbott and St. Thomas Aquinas” (1363), “St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine of Alexandria” (1363), “St. Paul and St. Augustine” (1363) and the unidentified “Two Saints” (1460s). All of the works included in this packet—with the exception of the portrait of Giulio Romano—could be considered icons.

Although all of these paintings depict religious icons, the term’s definition today is broader and includes many famous or important people. Each icon has an interesting life story that people can relate to. Biographical information and associated symbols for each saint represented in the icons of the Georgia Museum of Art’s Kress Collection appear on the following page.
1. St. Clare (b. 1194–d. 1253)

- Co-founder of the Order of the Poor Ladies, or “Poor Clares.”
- First woman to write monastic rule.
- Portrayed wearing her simple nun’s habit: a black veil, brown cloak and gray dress tied at the waist by a cord.
- Has a halo, or a golden circle surrounding her head, signifying holiness.
- Holds a lamp that represents a description of her by Thomas of Celano, in which he called her “a most shining light for womankind.”
- A popular image for female worshippers.

2. St. Anthony Abbot (251–356)

- Lived in Egypt; often called St. Anthony of the Desert.
- Considered one of the first monks in Catholicism.
- Patron saint of protection against infectious diseases.
- Often represented with a pig, as many diseases during his lifetime were thought to have originated from pigs.

3. St. Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225–1274)

- Born into a wealthy family near Naples, Italy.
- Studied in Paris with St. Albert the Great.
- Considered to be a teacher and holds a book representing his writings, which formed the basis of the Catholic church’s doctrine.
- Often depicted wearing the clothes of the Dominican order: white tunic, cloth worn over the shoulders, black mantle and hood.
- The star on his chest represents the divine inspiration he received.

4. St. John the Baptist (d. 30)

- Jesus’ cousin.
- Often depicted wearing animal skins, representative of his time spent in the wilderness.
- Holds a scroll that says, in Latin, “Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,” which is taken from a Bible verse that mentions him.
- Often portrayed with a lamb because of this passage.
5. St. Catherine of Alexandria (d. 305)

- Born into a royal family, symbolized by the crown she wears.
- Converted to Christianity at the age of 18 and converted many people throughout her life; was known for debating with pagans.
- Holds a wheel, representing the way the emperor tried to kill her.
- Very popular saint during the Middle Ages; many churches and chapels were built in honor of her.
- Considered to be very wise; patron saint of lawyers and libraries.

6. St. Paul (ca. 3–65)

- Grew up condemning Christians as bad people and worked to arrest them throughout his early life.
- Was knocked off of his horse on his way to Syria and struck by blinding light; this made him reconsider his life, convert to Christianity and change his name from “Saul” to “Paul.”
- Holds a sword, a symbol of his martyrdom, and a book, which are his attributes.

7. St. Augustine (354–430)

- The son of a pagan father and St. Monica.
- Although raised a Christian, St. Augustine spent much of his younger life not considering himself a Christian and not following the Church.
- Eventually converted and worked at a monastery in North Africa.
- Founded many religious communities.
- Is often depicted wearing traditional vestments of the Church.
- Holds a staff that shows his high rank within the Church.
- Holds a book that is larger than St. Paul’s, representing all the theological works he wrote.
STUDIO ART ACTIVITY: Contemporary Icons

SUBJECT LESSON PLAN: ICONOGRAPHY

➤ OBJECTIVES

• To learn about the development of religious icons during the Renaissance.
• To learn about the criteria for who could be portrayed as an icon during both the Renaissance and in contemporary society.
• To understand the process of portraying an icon and his or her attributes through creating a new icon.

➤ MATERIALS

• Colored pencils, markers, crayons or paint
• Drawing paper or cardstock
• Magazine images or other collage materials
• Photograph of a family member, friend or other personal icon

PREPARATION

• Prepare images of the following for the presentation:
  • Master of the Loeser Madonna, “St. Clare,” ca. 1340
  • Giusto de’ Menabuoi, “St. Anthony Abbott and St. Thomas Aquinas,” 1363
  • Giusto de’ Menabuoi, “St. John the Baptist and St. Catherine of Alexandria,” 1363
  • Giusto de’ Menabuoi, “St. Paul and St. Augustine,” 1363
  • Fra Diamante, “Two Saints,” 1460s
• Find additional images of religious icons for comparison.
• Ask students to bring in an image of someone who they admire—this could be a family member, friend or other personal icon.

INTRODUCTION

During the Renaissance, many wealthy people commissioned religious art. When you commission a work of art, you pay an artist to create something specifically for you. Often, artists selected subjects or styles that interested the person commissioning the work of art. One of the most popular commissions was a religious icon. Popular subjects for icons included Mary, Jesus and the saints.
At the time, people considered the holy figures depicted in icons to be connecting points between themselves and God. Instead of asking God directly for something, worshippers prayed to the holy person represented in an icon and requested that person deliver those prayers to God. The subject of an icon, therefore, often reflected something about the person who commissioned the work. A female patron might specifically ask for a female saint or an image of Mary, as both of those figures would be relatable to the patron. A person who was constantly getting sick might ask for an icon of a saint who was well known for curing disease.

Nowadays, the idea of an icon has expanded to include people who have a large impact in popular culture, in their field of work or even in their community. For example, Miles Davis is an icon in jazz music.

CLASS DISCUSSION

- Look at the religious images. Use the “About this Work” information and “Questions for Looking” in the Kress Teaching Packet to help guide the discussion.
- Now that you have learned about several of these saints’ lives, do you think that the artists represented them well? Why or why not?
- Why do you think this style was popular at the time for religious paintings?
- Why do you think this style eventually changed and became more naturalistic?
- Make a list of questions that you have for the artists. It can be about the artist’s process, why he chose certain styles or symbols, etc.
- If people commissioned paintings that portrayed icons in today’s society, whom do you think they would choose?

ACTIVITY

Introduce the activity and engage students in class discussion.

Look at examples of other Renaissance icons. Discuss the style of these works and the characteristics of religious icons. Pay special attention to the way that the figure is portrayed and the other stylistic decisions of the work.

Ask students to think about this idea of an icon in contemporary society. Have they ever heard of “pop icons” or “iconic images”? There is a relationship between the way we use the word “icon” today and the religious icons of the Renaissance. Explain how everyone can have different personal icons. Contemporary icons can be people whom others admire and are inspired by, either due to a specific attribute or talent of the person—for example, being good at soccer—or due to his or her entire personality.
**OPTION 1: GRADES K–5**

Students are assigned a historical figure. They are responsible for researching this person and figuring out why he or she might be considered an icon. Students are responsible for coming up with a list of this icon’s attributes and symbols that could be associated with him or her. Students must either draw or bring in an image of this person and incorporate that person’s likeness into an iconic image. Students must include at least two attributes or symbols within the image.

**OPTION 2: GRADES 6–12**

Students choose an icon of their own, a person they admire in some way—a parent, a teacher, an author, a professional athlete. They must bring in a picture of that person. Students are responsible for coming up with a list of this icon’s attributes or symbols that could be associated with him or her. They then draw or paint a portrait of this icon with at least two attributes or symbols within the image. Final works of art are presented to the class and classmates asked to interpret them, possibly using the symbols and attributes in the work to identify the subjects. Each student should be given an opportunity to talk about the importance of his or her icon.

**FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION**

- Now that we have made our own icons, let’s look again at the images of religious icons and try to answer the questions we had for the artists based on our own experiences.
- Can you give examples of portrayals of icons in contemporary society? Think about what you see on TV, in advertisements, online, etc.
- How are the icons of a society related to its values? Explain.

**STANDARDS**

**KINDERGARTEN:**
VAKPR.1 (a.) Creates artworks based on personal experience and selected themes.

**GRADES 1 & 2:**
VA1MC.3 (b., c.) / VA2MC.3 (a., d.) Selects and uses subject matter, symbols and ideas to communicate meaning.

**GRADES 3 & 4:**
VA3PR.3 (a.) / VA4PR.1 (c.) Creates artworks based on personal experience and selected themes.
GRADE 5:
VA5CU.1 (b.) Investigates and discovers personal relationship to community, culture and the world through creating and studying art.

GRADES 6–8:
VA6CU.1(b.) / VA7CU.1 (d., e.) / VA8CU.1 (c., e.) Discovers how the creative process relates to art history.

GRADES 9–12:
VAHSVACU.1 (a., h.) Articulates ideas and universal themes from diverse cultures of the past and present.
VAHSVAPR.5 (d.) Creates artwork reflecting a range of concepts, ideas and subject matter.
WHAT’S THE SUBJECT? Mothers and Children

Throughout art history, one of the most popular subjects for artists has been the motif of mother and child, no doubt due to its universality.

Due to the large role of Christianity in European society during this time, many images of mothers and children were depicted as the Virgin Mary and Jesus. The 13th century saw a significant increase in the number of commissioned images of Mary, most of which show her with her infant son. It was a common belief at this time among Catholics that Mary was the closest intermediary to God; prayers to her were thought to be particularly effective. In addition, the image of Mary cradling baby Jesus resonated with everyone, either in the form of motherly love or familial devotion. These two factors contributed to the presence of Mary holding the baby Jesus in many devotional works of art.

The three images from the Georgia Museum of Art’s Kress Collection that show Mary with the baby Jesus are quite different from one another. When arranged chronologically, Simone dei Crocefissi’s “Madonna and Child with Saints” (1370–80), Ambrogio Borgognone’s “Madonna and Child” (1490s), and Marco Basaiti’s “Madonna and Child” (ca. 1510–12) highlight the differences among the medieval, early and High Renaissance styles. Paolo Schiavo’s “Crucifixion” (1430–40), which examines a relationship between a grieving mother and a dying child, makes for another interesting comparison.

All of these images were completed using the same materials and serve as individual components within the larger context of several altarpieces. When the image is the centerpiece, such as in Simone’s triptych, all of the images surrounding Mary and Jesus support the mother-child narrative. Most of the time, these images are omens of events that will happen later in the child’s life. In Basaiti’s and Borgognone’s depictions, the panel itself is part of the surrounding narrative of a larger, often unidentified, work. In these cases, most scholars agree that Mary and Jesus act as intercessors for the women and children who worshipped in front of that particular altar. The inclusion of Mary and Jesus, therefore, allows the larger narrative to be interpreted in a way that is understandable for a particular viewer.
STUDIO ART ACTIVITY: Designing Women (and Their Children)

SUBJECT LESSON PLAN: ICONOGRAPHY

➤ OBJECTIVES

• To learn about the different ways in which Renaissance artists portrayed the mother and child subject within the context of Mary and Jesus.
• To learn about and make connections with how the subject has developed throughout art history.
• To understand the different processes Renaissance artists used in rendering Mary and the baby Jesus: iconic, observational and a hybrid of the two.

➤ MATERIALS

• Colored pencils, markers, crayons or paint
• Drawing paper or cardstock

PREPARATION

• Prepare images of the following for the presentation:
  • Simone dei Crocefissi, “Madonna and Child with Saints,” 1370–80
  • Ambrogio Borgognone, “Madonna and Child,” 1490s
  • Marco Basaiti, “Madonna and Child,” ca. 1510–12
  • Paolo Schiavo, “Crucifixion,” 1430–40 (for grades 6–12)
• Find additional images of mothers and children throughout art history. Suggested images include:
  • Henry Moore, “Reclining Mother and Child,” 1960–61
  • Mary Cassatt, “Under the Horse Chestnut Tree,” 1896–97
  • Dorothea Lange, “Migrant Mother and Children,” 1936
  • Romare Bearden, “Mother and Child,” 1971
  • Bartolome Esteban Murillo, “Virgin and Child,” 1670–72
• Prepare three tables, each labeled with their respective names and outfitted with the appropriate materials.
  • Icon table: paper, pencils
  • Observation table: paper, pencils and a live model or mirrors
  • Mix table: paper, pencils, source materials (images of mothers and children)

INTRODUCTION

Looking at these images of Mary with her infant son, you can easily see how significantly artistic styles changed throughout the Renaissance. The first image, Simone dei Crocefissi’s “Madonna and Child with Saints” (1370–80), shows an almost iconic image of Mary and
Jesus. The painting does not make them look like real people; instead, they are flat and stylized, or based on the idea of a person rather than an actual person. On the other end of the spectrum is Marco Basaiti’s “Madonna and Child” (1510–12). This image of Mary and her baby is much more lifelike; it is obvious that Basaiti studied anatomy and painted from life. Jesus’ body is much rounder and three-dimensional, which more closely resembles a real baby. Ambrogio Borgognone’s “Madonna and Child” (1490s) is between the two. The golden background and halos suggest the iconic feel of an early Renaissance work of art, but Borgognone models the faces in a very naturalistic way.

CLASS DISCUSSION

• As a class, look at the three images of Mary with Jesus. Use the “About this Work” information and “Questions for Looking” from the Kress Teaching Packet to help guide the discussion.
• Arrange the three works of art from what you think is the oldest to the newest. Why did you put them in that order?
• Compare and contrast the three images.
• View at least three additional images of mothers and children throughout art history. How has this subject developed over time?
• What are the similarities between these images from different periods of time? What are the differences?
• Why do you think that this subject has remained so popular for artists?

ACTIVITY

Introduce the activity and engage students in class discussion.

Set up three stations within the room: one labeled “icon,” one labeled “observation” and one labeled “mix.” Each table should have a variety of drawing materials. Students can either be broken up into three groups and rotate, or they can move around at their own pace to each station.

**Icon table:** Students should draw a mother and child in an iconic way. The model for this table is Crocefissi’s “Madonna and Child with Saints” (1370–80). Instead of using reference materials, they should idealize the two figures and make the image in a way that people would admire.

**Observation table:** Students should draw a mother and child from life. The model for this table is Marco Basaiti’s “Madonna and Child” (1510–12). The teacher can sit in a chair holding a baby doll, or a student can volunteer. If a live model is not available, set up a full-sized mirror so that students can draw themselves. Students should make this drawing as realistic as possible, emphasizing characteristics of the person who is modeling.
**Mix table**: Students should draw a mother and child in a way that is partly idealized and partly from observation. The model for this table is Ambrogio Borgognone’s “Madonna and Child” (1490s). There can be images of mothers and children at this table for students to gain inspiration from, but the students’ drawings should not copy them.

**FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION**

When students are finished with all of their drawings, hang them up together according to the three categories.

Overall, what are the similarities between the works of art in each group?

- Which method of drawing—iconic, observational or a mix of the two—do you find the most interesting? Which seems to capture the idea of a mother and child the best?
- Do you think that artists use specific drawing processes—for example, observation—to make works of art with a certain mood? Why or why not?
- Were there any drawing materials that worked particularly well for a certain artistic process? If so, what were they?

**STANDARDS**

**KINDERGARTEN & GRADE 1:**
VAKCU.2 (a.) / VA1CU.2 (a.) Views and discusses selected artworks.
VAKPR.2 (b.) / VA1PR.2 (a.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes of two-dimensional works of art (e.g., drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media) using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.

**GRADES 2 & 3:**
VA2MC.1 / VA3MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.

**GRADES 4–7:**
VA4PR.2 (a.) / VA5PR.2 (a.) / VA6PR.1 (b., e.) / VA7PR.1 (a., d.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes.

**GRADE 8:**
VA8PR.1 (a., b.) Engages in art-making process with care and craftsmanship.

**GRADES 9–12:**
VAHSVAPR.1 (b.) Uses formal qualities of art (elements and principles) to create unified composition and communicative meaning.
WHAT’S THE SUBJECT? Images as Stories

Since the beginnings of the church, religious art has served a distinct purpose: to inform all viewers—worshippers and non-believers alike—about the biblical stories and lives of holy people as a way of explaining the church’s doctrine and beliefs.

The church found itself in a defensive position during the Renaissance. People were moving away from religion as a source of all answers and truths and were turning more and more toward science. They were also admiring acts of individuality and human accomplishments. This movement toward humanism took power away from the church, which had to find a way to work within this newfound interest to maintain its influence.

Narrative works of art were one answer. Narrative art uses images to tell a story. The church had used narrative art for many years because it appealed to worshippers who were illiterate. Narrative art could explain and reiterate the stories of the Bible and the doctrine of the church for those who could not read. During the Renaissance, the church commissioned narrative art that would encourage worshippers to consider biblical stories within a human context. Instead of looking at flat icons, narratives could provide relatable stories of humans engaging in the trials and triumphs of real life. Viewers could also make connections with the figures through an artist’s use of symbols or motifs. For example, including the attributes of certain saints let viewers easily identify the saints and develop the narrative themselves.

New styles in Renaissance art contributed to the effectiveness and popularity of narratives. Narrative art had previously maintained idealized forms to celebrate and immortalize heroic moments throughout history. These works of art had the ability to impress viewers, but it was difficult to have a personal experience with or relate to them. In Renaissance art, by contrast, artists developed naturalistic approaches to figures and tried to incorporate more lifelike aspects in their works, including facial expressions and anatomically correct poses. This approach to art resonated with viewers and contributed to the general celebration of humanism.
STUDIO ART ACTIVITY GRADES K–12: Getting the Whole Story

SUBJECT LESSON PLAN: IMAGES AS STORIES

➤ OBJECTIVES

• To learn about the different ways in which Renaissance artists used narrative.
• To learn about and make connections with how the use of narrative has developed throughout art history.
• To understand the different processes Renaissance artists used in creating one-panel narrative works.

➤ MATERIALS

• Colored pencils, markers, crayons or paint
• Drawing paper or cardstock

PREPARATION

• Prepare images of the following for the presentation:
  • Simone dei Crocefissi, “Madonna and Child with Saints,” 1370–80
  • Antonio Cicognara, “Christ, Man of Sorrows,” ca. 1500
  • Marco Basaiti, “Madonna and Child,” ca. 1510–12
  • Salvator Rosa, “St. Simon the Apostle,” ca. 1639
  • Paolo Schiavo, “Crucifixion,” 1430–40 (for grades 6–12)
• Find additional images of narrative art throughout art history. Suggested images include:
  • Column of Marcus Aurelius, 180–185 AD
  • Anglo-Saxon artists, Bayeux Tapestry, 1066
  • Giotto, “Life of Christ,” fresco cycle, 1304–6
  • Caravaggio, “Madonna di Loreto,” 1604–6
  • Jacques-Louis David, “Oath of the Horatii,” 1784
  • Philip Evergood, “My Forebears Were Pioneers,” 1939
  • Edward Hopper, “Nighthawks,” 1942

INTRODUCTION

Narrative art tells a story visually. Before written records were developed, most cultures preserved stories of their triumphs through art. Much of the art in the Kress Collection shows one-panel narratives, meaning an entire story is compressed into a single painting—for example, Antonio Cicognara’s “Christ, Man of Sorrows,” Marco Basaiti’s “Madonna and Child,” Salvator Rosa’s “St. Simon the Apostle” and Paolo Schiavo’s “Crucifixion.” In other narrative works of art, the artist developed the story over multiple panels—sometimes throughout entire churches and chapels. One example from the Kress Collection is Simone
dei Crocefissi’s “Madonna and Child with Saints,” where the story is told throughout the panels of an altarpiece.

CLASS DISCUSSION

• Look at the narrative works of art from the Kress Collection with the class. Use the “About This Work” information and “Questions for Looking” in the Kress Teaching Packet to help guide the discussion.
• Which narrative works of art are obviously telling stories?
• Sometimes the narrative is more subtle. Which works of art here would take more time for you to realize that they are telling a story?
• Look at three or more additional images of narrative art throughout history. How has narrative art developed over time?
• What is the difference between narrative art in a single panel and a continuous narrative across multiple panels? Is one more effective at storytelling?

ACTIVITY

Introduce the activity and engage students in class discussion.

OPTION 1

Students create a collaborative narrative work of art. First, they should work together to determine which story they are going to use: a story that has been read in class recently, a true historical story, a personal story or one that they create together. Students should then determine the most important parts of their story or a single important scene that they can use to represent the narrative. Students should work collaboratively on the narrative either by designing one panel each and assembling them together or by working together on a single large piece of paper.

OPTION 2

Students create a narrative work of art individually. First, they should draw a simple four-panel cartoon to serve as their storyboard. The story that they are depicting can be something that they have read recently, a true historical story, a personal story or one that they create. This cartoon should break down a complex story into four essential moments. After they have completed this cartoon, students should then distill the four panels into a single moment using a 2D medium. Talk about how this assignment can be achieved by including symbols, multiple figures, repeating the same figure, adding a landscape or other visual strategies.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

When students are finished with their narratives, give them a chance to look around the room at each other’s work. Discuss some effective techniques used.

• Overall, what are the similarities between the narratives?
• Talk about the process. How did each student decide what to include? Was there anything that they chose not to include? Why?
• Where should each narrative be displayed? At home? In school? In a museum? At a historic site? In a church? Discuss why.
STANDARDS

KINDERGARTEN & GRADE 1:
VAKMC.3 (a., b.) / VA1MC.3 (d.) Selects and uses subject matter, symbols and/or ideas to communicate meaning.

GRADE 2:
VA2AR.2 (a.) Uses a variety of approaches to understand and critique works of art.

GRDES 3–5:
VA3MC.3 (c.) / VA4MC.3 (b.) / VA5MC.3 (b.) Selects and uses subject matter, symbols and ideas to communicate meaning.

GRADE 6
VA6PR.2 Creates artwork reflecting a range of concepts, ideas and subject matter.
  a. Uses selected sources for artworks (e.g., direct observation, personal experience, self-perception, memory, imagination, fantasy, traditional events, pop culture).

GRDES 7–12:
VA7PR.2 (a.) / VA8PR.2 (a.) / VAHSVAPR.5 (e.) Creates artwork reflecting a range of concepts, ideas and subject matter.

GRDES 9–12
VAHSVAMC.3 (c.) Cultivates critical thinking and logical argumentation in aesthetics.
HOW’S THAT MADE? Multi-Panel Altarpieces

The basic components of Renaissance altarpieces are described in the figure below, adapted from the National Gallery, London.

- **Spandrel**: The space between the arch and the moldings. Often decorated with gilded plaster or repeated motifs.
- **Pinnacle**: The highest part of an altarpiece. Often depicts God or Jesus in the center and Old Testament figures on the sides.
- **Roundel**: Circular panel inserted into pilaster. Often depicts religious figures connected to the church.
- **Pilaster**: Vertical columns on either side of the altarpiece. Often depict saints of patrons.
- **Side panel**: Often depicts saints related to the figure in the central panel.
- **Central panel**: Often represents the saint the altar is dedicated to.
- **Predella**: All panels on the bottom of an altarpiece. Often represent scenes from the life of the saints. Always in chronological order.
- **Pilaster base**: On the ends of the predella. Depicts a saint associated with the church or a symbol of the patron.
STUDIO ART ACTIVITY GRADES
K–12: The Secret Lives of Renaissance Altarpieces

STRATEGIES LESSON PLAN: MULTI-PANEL ALTARPIECES

➤ OBJECTIVES
• To learn about the physical components of a Renaissance altarpiece.
• To learn about the function of an altarpiece.
• To learn about how subject matter is chosen to fit that function.
• To understand the process of constructing a multi-image altarpiece.

➤ MATERIALS
• Painting materials (paints, brushes, water)
• Drawing materials (pencils, erasers)
• Drawing paper or cardstock
• Foam board (option 2)
• Exacto knives or scissors (option 2)
• Glue (option 2)
• Gold paint or spray-paint (option 2)

PREPARATION
• Prepare images of the following for the presentation:
  • Simone dei Crocefissi, “Madonna and Child with Saints,” 1370–80
  • Giusto de’ Menabuoi, “St. Paul and St. Augustine,” ca. 1363
  • Fra Diamante, “Two Saints,” 1460s
• Find additional images of altarpieces throughout art history; suggested images include:
  • Jan and Hubert Van Eyck, Ghent Altarpiece, 1432
  • Fra Angelico, Perugia Altarpiece, 1437 or 1438
  • Unidentified artist, Altarpiece with scenes of the Passion, 1535
  • El Greco, “Assumption of the Virgin,” 1577
  • Mark Rothko, “Centre Triptych” for the Rothko Chapel, 1966

INTRODUCTION

Altarpieces have many parts. Pass out a copy of the Renaissance altarpiece diagram to each student. Each of these parts carefully builds a story. “St. Paul and St. Augustine” and “Two Saints” are both examples of images that were part of a larger altarpiece. You can see how these various components come together in Simone dei Crocefissi’s “Madonna and Child with Saints.” This altarpiece is quite small because it was made for personal use rather than
for a church. Some sections of typical altarpieces, like roundels and a predella, are not included in the examples found at the Georgia Museum of Art.

It is interesting to compare Renaissance altarpieces to others. The Ghent Altarpiece from 1432 and the Perugia Altarpiece from 1437 both look quite different from the altarpiece with scenes of the Passion, finished 100 years later. What is even more striking is the comparison of these altarpieces to Mark Rothko’s “Centre Triptych” for the Rothko Chapel.

CLASS DISCUSSION

• Look at the altarpieces with the class. Use the “About This Work” information and “Questions for Looking” from the Kress Teaching Packet to help guide the discussion.
• What do these altarpieces have in common?
• Which parts of the traditional Renaissance altarpiece (depicted in the diagram) do you think are the most important? Why?
• If removed, which parts of the traditional Renaissance altarpiece do you think would not take away from the overall meaning of the altarpiece? Why?
• The Renaissance altarpiece has many different parts. Look at Simone dei Crocefissi’s “Madonna and Child with Saints.” What story do the different parts tell?
• Many altarpieces have survived in individual pieces. Do you think that the altarpiece loses its meaning when you are looking at a single part of it, like “Two Saints” or “St. Paul and St. Augustine”? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY

Introduce the activity and engage students in class discussion.

OPTION 1

The class constructs a collaborative altarpiece. This will involve a multi-step planning process. Students can either be divided into groups to handle each of the tasks or take care of each step together. The first step is figuring out where the altarpiece will go; location is important because the altarpiece traditionally marks a location in a church where Catholics believe a miracle takes place. After the location is determined, students should research a saint and figure out how to portray that saint in the central panel. Then students should design their own altarpiece together. It can follow the Renaissance format or be more modern. Students should also decide what the side panels, pilasters, predella, pilaster bases, roundels and pinnacles will depict. Each student can be assigned a single image, or students can work collaboratively on the largest images. Some students should also be in charge of the construction of the altarpiece. Foam board spray-painted gold might provide an ideal construction material. Students should work together to assemble the final altarpiece and place it in a position of prominence within the classroom.
OPTION 2

Students design their own altarpiece, either using the template included in the packet or not. First, students should research a saint whose story they find particularly interesting. Students should make this saint the subject of their central panel, and then move outwards. All of the stories should relate to the central panel. Encourage students to sketch their design first. They can then paint or draw their altarpiece in its entirety. Afterwards, students can select where they want their altarpiece to go within the classroom. It should be a location that relates to the subject matter or a place of importance.

FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

After the altarpiece is installed, take some time to discuss how the work looks in situ, or in its intended location.

- What is the overall visual effect of the altarpiece?
- As you were planning and designing your altarpiece, did the concept stay the same? Why or why not?
- How does the altarpiece function now that it is in its intended location?
- Would the meaning of this altarpiece be clear if it changed locations?
- What are your thoughts about the process of planning and constructing an altarpiece?

STANDARDS

KINDERGARTEN:
VAKPR.3 (c.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes of three-dimensional works of art using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.

GRADES 1 & 2:
VA1PR.1 (e.) / VA2PR.1 (c.) Creates artworks based on personal experience and selected themes.

GRADES 3–6:
VA3PR.3 (b.) / VA4PR.3 (c.) / VA5PR.3 (c.) / VA6PR.1 (c.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes of three-dimensional works of art using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.

GRADE 7:
VA7MC.3 (c.) Interprets how artists create and communicate meaning in and through their work.
GRADE 8:
VA8CU.1 (a.) Discovers how the creative process relates to art history.

GRADES 9–12:
VAHSVACU.1 (b.) Articulates ideas and universal themes from diverse cultures of the past and present.
VAHSVAPR.4 (a., b.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes in three-dimensional art.
HOW’S THAT MADE? Tempera and Oil Paint

Tempera paint is one of the oldest types of paint in the world. It is made by mixing egg yolk with dry pigment and often either vinegar or water, which prevents the paint from drying too quickly. The resulting paint is not very flexible; artists using this medium need to paint on a flat, unmoving surface, like wood or plaster. If egg tempera paint were used on something like canvas, the paint would flake off easily.

Some of the limitations of tempera paint result from how quickly it becomes unusable. Artists were unable to mix large amounts of paint at one time, but mixing smaller amounts made color matching difficult. Blending and shading on the wood could only be accomplished by layering colors. The depth of color variation in egg tempera, therefore, is minimal.

The process of painting with tempera involves many steps to navigate these material limitations. First, one must apply layers of a white paint-like primer, or gesso, to prepare the surface for painting. Next, the painter makes a charcoal drawing to plan the composition—egg tempera is quite difficult to change if you make a mistake. If gold leaf was desired, as it often was in early Renaissance paintings, the painter applied it next. On top of the gold came underpainting, or laying down base lights and darks. Renaissance artists used green as the base for flesh tones, as it provided a depth of colors through multiple layers. One more coat of tempera finished the work.

Oil paint became popular during the 15th century in northern Europe. Once artists saw the incredible range of colors and styles that oil paint allowed, it quickly replaced tempera paint as the favored medium. Oil paint is made by mixing oil with pigment. The oil dries very slowly, enabling artists not only to blend and layer colors, but also to make changes easily. It could also be created in thicker consistencies than tempera paint.

The Renaissance’s interest in humanism and increasing desire to depict individuals contributed to the popularity of oil paint. Because oil dried more slowly, it allowed the artist to manipulate the paint and create effects that seemed to glow, which added to the realistic qualities of the painted subjects. This amazed Renaissance audiences who had never seen an oil painting—it was magical. Salvator Rosa’s “St. Simon the Apostle” and “Portrait of Giulio Romano” give a good indication of the stylistic freedoms that oil paint allowed artists.

The following resources show the process of creating egg tempera and oil paint:
www.artcons.udel.edu/about/kress/virtual-reconstructions
www.nationalgallery.org.uk/making-green-tempera-versus-oil
HOW’S THAT MADE? Tempera Painting Diagram

8. Tempera panel dissected to show principal layers:
   a. wooden panel; b. gesso, sometimes reinforced with linen;
   c. underdrawing; d. gold leaf; e. underpainting;
   f. final layers of tempera
STUDIO ART ACTIVITY: Paint Wars—Tempera vs. Oil

MATERIALS AND STRATEGIES LESSON PLAN: TEMPERA AND OIL PAINT

➤ OBJECTIVES

• To learn about the process of making and painting with egg tempera.
• To learn about the process of making and painting with oil.
• To gain experience painting with at least one of these types of paint.

➤ MATERIALS

• Small mixing bowls
• Eggs
• Paint brushes
• Dry tempera pigments (substitute: natural powdered dyes, minerals, dirt)
• Linseed oil
• Mineral spirits
• 6 x 6-inch squares of cardstock or canvas
• Gesso
• Pencils and erasers
• Aluminum foil
• Needle or awl

PREPARATION

• Prepare images of the following for the presentation:
  • Master of the Loeser Madonna, “St. Clare,” ca. 1340
  • Giusto de’ Menabuoi, “St. Paul and St. Augustine,” ca. 1363
  • Unknown, “Portrait of Giulio Romano,” after mid-1530s
  • Salvator Rosa, “St. Simon the Apostle,” ca. 1639

• Find additional images of art in both oil and tempera paint; suggested images are listed below.
  • Oil:
    • Jan Van Eyck, “The Marriage of Arnolfini,” 1434
    • Sandro Botticelli, “The Birth of Venus,” 1486
    • Leonardo da Vinci, “Mona Lisa,” 1504
    • Elizabeth Jane Gardner, “La Confidence,” ca. 1880
    • Kehinde Wiley, “Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps,” 2005
INTRODUCTION

Give a copy of the tempera painting diagram to each student. Look closely at how a tempera painting is created. Refer to the information in this lesson’s introduction to explain the process of creating egg tempera.

CLASS DISCUSSION

- Look at the works of art painted in tempera and in oil from the Kress Collection with the class. Use the “About This Work” information and “Questions for Looking” from the Kress Teaching Packet to help guide the discussion.
- What are some immediate differences you notice between the tempera and the oil paintings?
- How does each painting’s style influence the way in which you view the art?
- Compare the Master of the Loeser Madonna’s “St. Clare” with “Portrait of Giulio Romano.” How are these two portraits different?
- What themes seem to be addressed more easily in oil paint than in tempera?

ACTIVITY

Introduce the activity and engage students in class discussion. Divide students into two groups. One group will work with oil paint, and the other will work with tempera.

- **Oil paint:** Students should put small amounts of dry pigment, minerals or dirt into multiple mixing bowls. Add small amounts of linseed oil (or another type of oil) and mix until a paste is created. Students can experiment with using more or less oil to get different paint consistencies.
- **Tempera paint:** Students should put small amounts of dry pigment, minerals or dirt into multiple mixing bowls. In separate bowls, crack open eggs and separate the yolks from the whites. The membrane around the yolk should be removed as well. Pinch the yolk gently with two fingers. Lift it over the bowl and pierce it with a sharp point, allowing pure yolk to drain out of the membrane. Combine small amounts of egg yolk with the pigments. Students can experiment with using more or less yolk to get different paint consistencies.
Each group should receive at least 24 6 x 6-inch panels of either wood or gessoed canvas and work to form a single, cohesive image across the individual panels using their designated medium. This project should involve group planning, preparatory sketches and a careful following of the group's assigned painting process.

Example of the finished work using 12 panels: Portrait of Abraham Lincoln.
From peabodyart.blogspot.com.
FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION

After the panels are completed and arranged in their correct order, discuss the final painting.

• What was the planning process like for the painting? Was anything unexpected or challenging?
• Describe the painting process. What was it like to use tempera or oil?
• What frustrations, if any, did you encounter while working with either medium?
• How was working collaboratively with your classmates?
• What is the overall visual effect of the painting?
• Look closely at the individual panels. How do they look as independent works of art?

STANDARDS

KINDERGARTEN, GRADES 1–6:
VAKPR.2 (e.) / VA1PR.2 (c.) / VA2PR.2 (c.) / VA3PR.2 (f.) / VA4PR.2 (e.) / VA5PR.2 (e.) / VA6PR.1 (a.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes of two-dimensional works of art (e.g., drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media) using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.

GRADE 7:
VA7MC. 2 (b., d.) Identifies and works to solve problems through creative thinking, planning, and/or experimenting with art methods and materials.

GRADE 8:
VA8MC.2 (b., c.) Identifies and works to solve problems through authentic engagement (thinking, planning and experimenting) with art methods and materials, exploring the nature of creativity.

GRADES 9-12:
VAHSVAMC.2 (d.) Finds and solves problems through open-ended inquiry, the consideration of multiple options, weighing consequences and assessing results.
VAHSVAPR.3 (i.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes in color/painting.
HOW’S THAT MADE? Linear Perspective

As part of the new emphasis on the earthly realm, Renaissance artists sought to develop techniques that would accurately show depth in drawing and painting. The challenge of how to create a realistic version of our three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional surface confused people for many years. Early attempts were unsuccessful, and the resulting works of art seemed flat. Finally, in the early 1400s, Filippo Brunelleschi of Florence, Italy, solved the riddle by using mirrors and a viewing hole to visualize how to paint the Florentine Baptistery realistically. Brunelleschi called his method linear perspective, the use of diagonal lines to create the perception of shapes receding toward a vanishing point, giving the illusion of distance within the picture plane. This technique became a common practice for artists across Europe and is still used today. Linear perspective is a difficult theory to understand, but looking at art can help us see how artists went from the flat background common in medieval works of art to a more three-dimensional background.

It is easy to understand perspective in terms of real life because we live in a three-dimensional world. The challenge comes when we try to draw or paint a three-dimensional scene in a two-dimensional picture. Atmospheric perspective and linear perspective provide a way to show distance on a flat surface to mimic three dimensions.

Does an object look the same size up close as it does far away? No. The closer we are, the larger it looks. We know that objects do not actually change size, but our eyes see them as getting smaller the farther they are from us. The horizon, where the land meets the sky, shows us where an object is on the ground.

Lines are very important for drawing objects that seem to recede into the horizon. There are three types of lines you should be familiar with to use linear perspective. Horizontal lines run across the horizon (left to right and right to left). Vertical lines match latitudinal measurements (up to down and down to up). Orthogonal lines are diagonals that run in all directions. Another important term is parallel, when lines run next to each other but never touch. When lines meet, they intersect (like roads at an intersection). Usually, the focal point or vanishing point in a painting is where most, if not all, lines intersect.

Does an object look just as clear up close as it does when it is far away? When we see an object up close, each detail is very clear. The farther it is from us, the fewer details we see. Colors also fade with greater distance. Atmospheric perspective attempts to capture these changes.
STUDIO ART ACTIVITY: 2-D Art from a 3-D World

SUBJECT LESSON PLAN: LINEAR PERSPECTIVE

➤ OBJECTIVES
• To understand the history of Renaissance art techniques.
• To learn how artistic developments dating from the Renaissance are still used to create art.
• To understand linear perspective.
• To use linear perspective to show depth in a picture plane.

➤ MATERIALS
• Pencil with eraser
• Drawing paper
• Ruler
• Drawing boards
• Colored pencils, markers, crayons or paint

PREPARATION

• Prepare images of the following for the presentation:
  • Ambrogio Borgognone, “Madonna and Child,” 1490s
  • Antonio Cicognara, “Christ, Man of Sorrows,” ca. 1500
  • Marco Basaiti, “Madonna and Child,” ca. 1510–12
  • Linear Perspective Diagrams: Steps 1–4
• Find images of art from the Georgia Museum of Art’s permanent collection that show linear perspective; suggested images are listed below:
  • John Linton Chapman, “Via Appia,” 1867
  • Anna Richards Brewster, “Arlington Row, Bibury, England from the West,” 1925
  • Clarence Holbrook Carter, “Good Crop,” 1942

INTRODUCTION

In this lesson, students will learn about the development of linear perspective during the Renaissance and how to apply this technique in drawing. Through an art history lesson and a studio art activity, we will investigate linear perspective as it appears in the Kress and permanent collections at the Georgia Museum of Art.
CLASS DISCUSSION

- Discuss how you think the artists created the backgrounds in each painting. Use the “About This Work” information and “Questions for Looking” from the Kress Teaching Packet to help guide the discussion.
- How are the backgrounds of “Christ, Man of Sorrows” and Basaiti’s “Madonna and Child” different from each other?
- Identify important elements of perspective: vanishing point, horizontal lines, vertical lines, orthogonal lines and atmospheric perspective. (Review horizontal, vertical and orthogonal lines using Harold Olejarz’s online resource: www.olejarz.com/arted/perspective/index.html.)
- Discuss how the horizon line and other lines might not be as obvious in different works of art. Where is the artist directing your attention?
- Where and how does the artist use atmospheric perspective?
- Compare the Renaissance paintings to the works of art from later time periods.

ACTIVITY

Make a work of art using linear perspective. Linear perspective is a method for depicting a three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional surface. Follow these steps to create depth on a two-dimensional picture plane like a Renaissance master. See the worksheet in the appendix for a visual representation of each step.

OPTION 1: GRADES K–5

The following step-by-step guide is easily adapted for grade level. Younger students may find it less challenging to draw with their mind’s eye than to draw from life. The worksheet can be used to create a linear perspective drawing alongside verbal instruction. Encourage students to develop their drawings creatively after they achieve their initial perspective drawing.

OPTION 2: GRADES 6–12

For older students, this activity can be adapted to be made more challenging and authentic to the artistic techniques of Renaissance artists. Advanced options include drawing a linear perspective study from life (such as an outdoor scene, a museum gallery space or a school hallway). Students should pay attention to measurements to achieve realistic perspective. These measurements can be as simple as using the “sight method” by holding a pencil up to a distant object and marking the length with your finger. Rulers, triangles and T-squares may also be useful.

Step 1: Draw the vanishing point
Draw a small dot in the center of your picture plane. This is the vanishing point, to which all of the lines in your picture will lead. The vanishing point earns its name: all of the lines in your picture will seem to disappear into the distance at this point. The vanishing point
may also be referred to as the **focal point** because the lines usually lead the viewer’s eyes to the most important part of the picture.

**Step 2: Draw the horizon line**
Use a ruler to draw a **horizon line** going through your vanishing point from one side of your paper to the other side. All horizon lines mimic the earth’s horizon, so make sure that the line is level. Be careful not to draw this line too close to the bottom or top of your picture plane. Horizon lines do not always have to be in the middle but make sure to leave enough room to draw a nearly equal amount of sky and ground.

**Step 3: Draw a rectangle**
Below the horizon line, to the left of the vanishing point, draw a rectangle 2 inches high by 3 inches wide. How many horizontal and vertical lines did you use to draw this rectangle?

**Step 4: Draw orthogonal lines**
Draw a straight line from each corner of the rectangle to the vanishing point. Use your ruler to make them as accurate as possible. These lines will guide the scale of the figures and objects in your drawing as they get smaller in the distance.

**Step 5: Add a horizontal line (top of box) and a vertical line (right side of box)**
To make the rectangle into a three-dimensional form, add a horizontal line behind the top horizontal line of your original rectangle, within the orthogonal lines. Add a right side to your box by adding a vertical line behind the right side of your triangle between the orthogonal lines.

**Step 6: Clean up the box**
To clean up your box, erase the areas where you would not be able to see through the form if it were solid. Make sure not to erase a line that changes the form, but if you erase the wrong one, it can easily be drawn back in.

**Step 7: Add more shapes with horizontal, vertical and orthogonal lines**
Add more shapes. Connect the corners to the vanishing point with orthogonal lines and then add sides to make the shapes into three-dimensional forms. You have now organized your picture plane. This composition will help you know where to place figures and how large or small they should be in relation to the horizon and implied lines. Remember, objects should be larger the closer they are to you.

**Step 8: Clean up and bring your drawing to life**
Continue to add to your drawing, with attention to how the lines, figures and objects relate to each other on the picture plane. Change or alter the horizon line however you wish. Perhaps there are trees, buildings or mountains on the horizon. Remember to use atmospheric perspective, too, to give the illusion that your drawing shows depth. Details should be clearest and colors boldest the closer they are to you. In the distance, details and colors should be less visible. Include a person, object or symbol as the focal point.
where you want the viewer to look. Once you have finished using orthogonal lines to create accurate scale, you can erase the unwanted lines. Colored pencils, crayons, markers or paint can be used to develop each picture.

**FOLLOW-UP DISCUSSION**

Display all the drawings together and engage the class in an informal critique.

- What are the major subjects of the drawings?
- Identify the major characteristics of linear perspective in a classmate’s drawing. Use terms like vanishing point, horizon and implied lines.
- What are the similarities between all of the works? The differences?
- What are some other three-dimensional objects that would be difficult to draw?
- What was the focus of your painting? How did you indicate this to the viewer?

**STANDARDS**

**KINDERGARTEN:**
VAKPR.2 (a., c.) Understands and applies media, techniques and processes of two-dimensional works of art (e.g., drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed media) using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.

**GRADES 1–4:**
VA1CU.2 (b., c.) / VA2CU.2 (a., e.) / VA3CU.2 (a., e.) / VA4CU.2 (a., b.) Views and discusses selected artworks.

**GRADE 5:**
VA5CU.1 (a., b.) Investigates and discovers personal relationship to community, culture and the world through creating and studying art.

**GRADES 6–8:**
VA6CU.1 (a., b., d.) / VA7CU.1 (a., c., d., e.) / VA8CU.1 (a., c., d., e.) Discovers how the creative process relates to art history.

**GRADES 9–12:**
VAHSDRCU.1 (a., b., c.) Articulates ideas and universal themes from diverse cultures of the past and present.
VAHSDRCU.2 (a., b. c.) Demonstrates an understanding of how art history impacts the creative process of art making.
WORKSHEETS
8. Tempera panel dissected to show principal layers:
   a. wooden panel; b. gesso, sometimes reinforced with linen;
   c. underdrawing; d. gold leaf; e. underpainting;
   f. final layers of tempera
Step 1: Draw the vanishing point

Step 2: Draw the horizon line

Step 3: Draw a rectangle

Step 4: Draw orthogonal lines

Step 5: Add a horizontal line (top of box) & a vertical line (right side of box)

Step 6: Clean up the box

Step 7: Add more shapes with horizontal, vertical, & orthogonal lines

Step 8: Clean up & bring your drawing to life!