

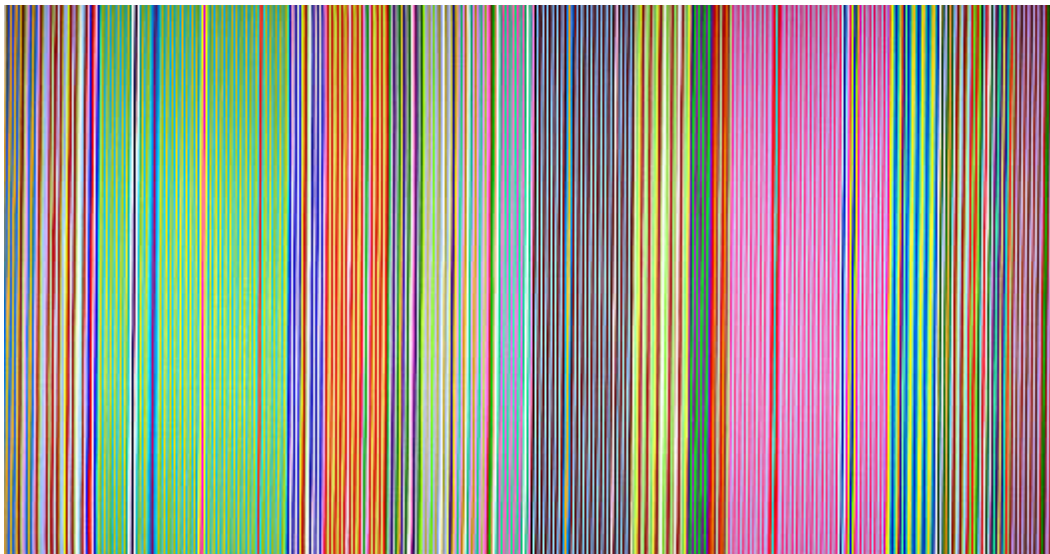


# *Artful Connections*

## **Teacher Guide:**

# **To See Is To Think**

Grades 1+



**Videoconference programs at the  
Smithsonian American Art Museum are supported  
by the Smithsonian Women's Committee.**



## Tips for a Successful Videoconference

### *Before the Videoconference*

- ❑ Check with your technology coordinator to ensure your school has compatible videoconferencing equipment (H.323 protocol).
- ❑ **At least four weeks prior** to your preferred dates, schedule your videoconference with the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC): <http://www.cilc.org>. Search the list of content providers for Smithsonian American Art Museum to view a list of our programs. All requests made on CILC will be routed to the museum and our staff will contact you to set up a test call.

*Please note:* We recommend you book early due to high demand for limited time slots.

- ❑ **At least one week prior** to your program date:
  - Staff will contact you with the assigned videoconference presenter's name and e-mail. Contact the presenter to discuss your plans for integrating this topic with your curriculum. Your videoconference presenter may suggest ways to customize the content of the videoconference to your needs.
  - Complete a successful test call at the scheduled time with the American Art Museum staff. This is a good time to practice turning the equipment on and off and locating the volume and other functions of your videoconference equipment.
  - Identify a space where all your students will be able to sit comfortably within your camera's view, see a projected PowerPoint, and hear the videoconference presenter.
  - Review videoconference rules and expectations with your students. Students should speak loudly and clearly to the presenter, one at a time. It's helpful to have students raise their hands and for you to call on them before they speak.
  - Review the pre-visit material (available to download at <http://americanart.si.edu/education/video>). Encourage your students to write down questions for the videoconference presenter elicited by the pre-visit activities. Questions about the content, artwork, museum, and (within reason) the presenter are welcome!

### *During the Videoconference*

- ❑ Make sure students are comfortably seated within view of the camera and can readily see the videoconference screen and projected PowerPoint presentation.
- ❑ Classroom-appropriate behavior is essential to a successful videoconference program. Students should listen to the presenter as well as each other and should behave respectfully.
- ❑ Encourage your students to ask and answer questions and give their opinions and ideas. Remind students to speak loudly and clearly for the presenter.
- ❑ Encourage your students to exercise the observation and interpretation skills you introduced with the pre-visit materials.



- ❑ Help the videoconference presenter maintain classroom management. Call on students to prompt them to ask and answer questions. Consider rephrasing or restating a question if you know your students have something to say but are shy or may not understand the question. If the presenter cannot hear students, repeat their answers for the presenter.

### ***After the Videoconference***

- ❑ Incorporate the appropriate videoconference post-lesson into your classroom curriculum (available to download at <http://AmericanArt.si.edu/Education/Video>).
- ❑ Contact the videoconference presenter with any follow-up questions from your students.
- ❑ Contact American Art staff ([AmericanArtEducation@si.edu](mailto:AmericanArtEducation@si.edu)) with your comments and suggestions. Evaluation and program improvement are a priority and we welcome your comments.
- ❑ Follow the appropriate link to CILC below and complete a brief survey about your videoconference experience.
  - House Divided: Civil War <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=1Fk0rEZFFL>
  - African American Artists <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=fOVqSy2n49>
  - America's Signs & Symbols <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=9k7jQ1nSxf>
  - Contemporary Craft: Clay Works <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=3vEt13HB65>
  - Found Object Artwork <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=XfbC2Q56t1>
  - Latino Art & Culture <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=A7FFyT5N1m>
  - Lure of the West <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=YOiGw681mZ>
  - Native Americans <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=a9Q6PJU1v>
  - Reshaping American Life: 1930s <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=4ShsQ6a9ly>
  - To See Is To Think: Visual Literacy <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=EGBFzF5ghd>
  - Recognizing Women Artists <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=im51l84p8R>
  - Young America <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=Q0jE6f4rUh>



## **To See Is To Think (Grades 1 +)**

### ***Overview***

It is important to learn the language of art and consider the many choices artists make when creating their work. Students will learn a basic visual vocabulary and form interpretations based on visual evidence. After an introduction to visual literacy through a pre-visit activity, participation in the videoconference, and a post-visit lesson to cement concepts, your students will be better able to:

- Recognize and use the elements of art and principles of design
- Use visual vocabulary to articulate observations and interpretations of artworks
- Reflect upon, assess, and compare artworks

### ***National Standards***

#### **Visual Arts**

K-12.1 Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes;

K-12.2 Using knowledge of structures and functions;

K-12.5 Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others;

K-12.6 Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.



## Vocabulary

### Visual Arts

abstract – (adj.) artwork that contains the simplified shapes in order to emphasize form over subject matter<sup>1</sup>

avant-garde – (adj.) used to describe particularly innovative artworks or performances that push the boundaries of ‘normal’

complementary colors – (pl.n.) pairs of colors that are opposite one another on the color wheel. When mixed properly, they will create a neutral. For example, blue and orange, green and red, yellow and purple.

composition – (n.) the arrangement of elements such as shape, line, value, and form within an artwork

decorative – (adj.) having no specific use beyond enjoyment

elements of art – (n.) a group of components that make up artworks, including color, line, shape, texture, and form

folk art – (n.) artwork that is usually created by anonymous or untrained artists

genre scene – (n.) artwork that depicts scenes from everyday life, not necessarily in a realistic style

Impressionism – (n.) a painting style started in 1860s France that emphasizes the effects of light on objects sometimes produced by using dabs of color<sup>2</sup>

interpret – (v.) to derive meaning from observed features or traits

landscape – (n.) a picture representing natural scenery

museum – (n.) an organization traditionally concerned with acquiring, conserving, studying, and exhibiting objects

observe – (v.) to note the visible features or traits of an artwork

Pop art – (n.) an artistic style from 1960s America that uses images from popular culture as subject matter

portrait – (n.) a pictorial representation of a person, usually showing the face

process – (n.) a combination of methods and techniques used to create an artwork

realism – (n.) artwork that depicts detail that is true to life

subject – (n.) the principal idea conveyed by a work of art

symbol – (n.) something that stands for something else due to a relationship, association, or accidental resemblance<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ragans, Rosalind. *ArtTalk*. IL: Glencoe/McGraw-Hill. 1988. [Glossary, adapted]

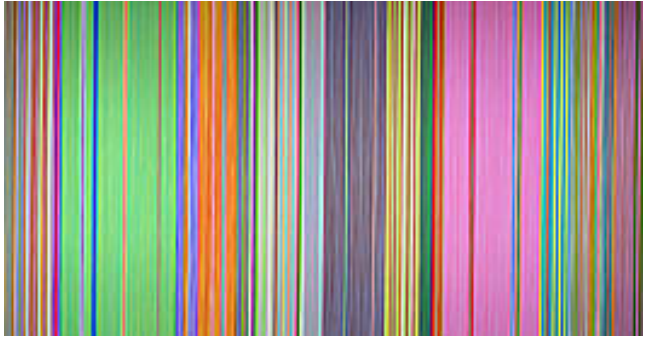


<sup>2</sup> Ragans.

<sup>3</sup> *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. 11<sup>th</sup> ed. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc. 2004. [adapted]






**Topic Related Artworks**

A representative sample of the artworks in our collection that support the videoconference topic appears below. These are suggested for use during pre-videoconference activities. Images used during your videoconference may vary.

<p>TITLE: <b>Raspberry Icicle</b>          DATE: 1967          ARTIST: Gene Davis          MEDIUM: acrylic on canvas          DIMENSIONS: 116 x 219 7/8 in. (294.6 x 558.4 cm)          CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum          Museum purchase          ACC. NUMBER: 1971.77          WEB LINK: <a href="http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=6322">http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=6322</a></p>	
<p>TITLE: <b>Miss Liberty Celebration</b>          DATE: 1987          ARTIST: Malcah Zeldis          MEDIUM: oil on corrugated cardboard          DIMENSIONS: 54 1/2 x 36 1/2 in. (138.4 x 92.7 cm)          CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum          Gift of Herbert Waide Hemphill, Jr.          ACC. NUMBER: 1988.74.14          WEB LINK: <a href="http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=15517">http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=15517</a></p>	
<p>TITLE: <b>Rainbow over the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone</b>          DATE: 1900          ARTIST: <b>Thomas Moran</b>          MEDIUM: oil on canvas          DIMENSIONS: 30 1/8 x 37 in. (76.5 x 94.0 cm.)          CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum          Bequest of Marion H. Conley          ACC. NUMBER: 1988.49.1          WEB LINK: <a href="http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=17862">http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=17862</a></p>	



<p>TITLE: <b>The South Ledges, Appledore</b>  DATE: 1913  ARTIST: <b>Childe Hassam</b>  MEDIUM: oil on canvas  DIMENSIONS: 34 1/4 x 36 1/8 in. (87.0 x 91.6 cm.)  CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum  Gift of John Gellatly  ACC. NUMBER: 1929.6.62  WEB LINK: <a href="http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=10086">http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=10086</a></p>	
<p>TITLE: <b>Manhattan</b>  DATE: 1932  ARTIST: <b>Georgia O'Keeffe</b>  MEDIUM: oil on canvas  DIMENSIONS: 84 3/8 x 48 1/4 in. (214.3 x 122.4 cm.)  CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum  Gift of the Georgia O'Keeffe Foundation  ACC. NUMBER: 1995.3.1  WEB LINK: <a href="http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=34289">http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=34289</a></p>	
<p>TITLE: <b>People in the Sun</b>  DATE: 1960  ARTIST: <b>Edward Hopper</b>  MEDIUM: oil on canvas  DIMENSIONS: 40 3/8 x 60 3/8 in. (102.6 x 153.4 cm.)  CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum  Gift of S.C. Johnson &amp; Son, Inc.  ACC. NUMBER: 1969.47.61  WEB LINK: <a href="http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=10762">http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=10762</a></p>	



## ***Additional Resources***

### **Meet Me at Midnight**

<http://midnight.si.edu>

After a field trip to the Smithsonian American Art Museum, you are magically taken to the galleries at night. Artworks are mixed up—all because of the troublesome **Root Monster!** To get back home, you have to solve mysteries—and help your new friends find their artworks. Through interactive games, visitors learn about visual art and experience the fun of museum-going. There is a teacher and parent guide so grown-ups can help students get the most from this mystery tour.

### **See For Yourself**

[http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/see\\_for\\_yourself.pdf](http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/see_for_yourself.pdf)

This young children's guide to the *Free within Ourselves* exhibition gives pointers for looking at and interpreting artwork.

### **Learning to Look**

[http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/learning\\_to\\_look.pdf](http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/learning_to_look.pdf)

This basic visual literacy activity takes students through ways to look at selected images so they can begin to use vocabulary and concepts to discuss and understand images and artworks.

### **Gene Davis: My Sketchbook**

[http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/gene\\_davis.pdf](http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/gene_davis.pdf)

This lesson plan asks students: How can the life and work of Gene Davis help us to understand modern art?

### **Interview: Grace Hartigan**

<http://americanart.si.edu/luce/media.cfm?key=372&type=Archive&subkey=794>

Grace Hartigan discusses her process and her search to find an identity as an Abstract Expressionist.

### **Interview: Sam Gilliam**

<http://americanart.si.edu/luce/media.cfm?key=372&type=Archive&subkey=455>

Sam Gilliam discusses his process of turning painting into sculpture.

### **Interview: Will Barnett**

<http://americanart.si.edu/luce/media.cfm?key=372&type=Archive&subkey=440>

Painter Will Barnett discusses composition and his use of color in both abstract works such as *Big Grey* and figurative works such as *The Blue Thread*.

### **Interview: Frank Romero**

<http://americanart.si.edu/luce/media.cfm?key=372&type=Archive&subkey=481>

Painter Frank Romero discusses his use of color and selection of subject matter as a reflection of his Latino heritage.



***Bottlecaps to Brushes*** by Lynn-Steven Engelke and Lynn Putney (Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art: 1995).

A cartoon giraffe based on a sculpture at the Smithsonian American Art Museum gives a tour of some of the museum's exhibits and offers activities showing how to create various types of art using everyday materials.

***How Artists See America*** by Colleen Carroll (Abbeville Press: 2002).

Appropriate for grades 3 to 6. Readers will see how Childe Hassam's festive images of a New York street send a clear message of patriotism; how Romare Bearden captured the colorful sights and sounds of a jazz band in New Orleans; how Grant Wood's portrait of a man and woman expresses the no-nonsense, hard-working character of midwesterners; and how Georgia O'Keeffe used bones and other objects she collected to portray the openness and beauty of the Southwest.



## Learning to Look: Pre-Visit Lesson

### Grades 1 – 4

#### Overview

After completing these activities, students will have strengthened their visual vocabulary by making observations of and expressing their interpretations of artwork.

#### Discussion

Define “observation” with students. Observations are statements of fact relating to what students see, not what they think might be happening.

Define “interpretation” with students. Interpretations are statements that ascribe meaning to the artwork based on observations.

Present students with one artwork that relates to your scheduled videoconference topic. (A selection of artworks related to each tour is included in the “Tour Information” document available to download at <http://AmericanArt.si.edu/Education/Video>). Have students begin by sharing only their observations. When students offer interpretations, or ideas about what they think is happening in the artwork, ask: “What do you see that makes you say that?”

#### Questions that prompt observations:

- *Who or what do you see in this artwork?*
- *What is the largest thing you see in this picture?*
- *What is the smallest thing you see in this picture?*
- *What colors do you see in the artwork?*
- *Is the scene outside? Inside?*
- *If there are people, are their clothes similar to or different from what you are wearing? How?*
- *Is the scenery similar to or different from where you are? How?*
- *What can you tell me about the colors in this artwork? What color do you see the most?*

Next, invite students to share their interpretations about what is happening in the artwork if they haven’t already done so. It is acceptable for students to have different interpretations of the same object. Make sure students support their interpretations with direct observations about the artwork. You may notice that some observation-focused questions lead directly to interpretation-focused questions. All interpretations should be founded on answers to observation questions.

**Questions that prompt interpretations:**

- *What is going on in this picture?*
- *Where do you think this scene is taking place?*
- *What season is it? What time of day is it?*
- *When was this artwork made?*
- *What do the scenery and the clothing or objects tell us about when this artwork was made?*
- *Does this scene look like it could be taking place today? Why or why not?*
- *Indicate a figure in the artwork:*
  - *Who is this person?*
  - *Is s/he similar to or different from you? In what ways?*
  - *What is s/he doing?*
  - *What do you think s/he does for a living?*
  - *How does s/he feel?*
  - *Where do you think s/he is?*
  - *What do you think it sounds like where s/he is?*
  - *What do you think it smells like where s/he is?*
  - *What kind of weather is this person experiencing?*
- *How do you think the artist feels about this person or thing in the painting?*
- *How does this artwork make you feel?*
- *How do you think this artist made this artwork?*
- *What types of materials do you think the artist used? Paint? Clay? Wood?*
- *How long do you think it took to make?*
- *What kind of mood or feelings do the colors give the artwork?*
- *Do you like the colors that are in the artwork? If you were the artist, would you have used different colors?*
- *Why do you think this artist made this artwork?*
- *What do you think the artist is trying to say?*

**Activity**

Either working in groups or independently, have students select a person or object in the artwork and complete the included worksheet, "Give this artwork a voice!" Have students refer back to their observations to support their interpretations of the person or object they chose. To take this activity further, have students create their own artwork based on the worksheet writing prompts "I wish..." or "Tomorrow, I am going to..."

Questions to ask students:

- Who or what did you choose to write about and why did you choose them?
- What in the artwork helped you make decisions about what the subject is thinking or feeling?
- Did you use the title or date of the artwork to inform your decisions? If so, how did they influence what you wrote? If not, do they contradict or reinforce your interpretation?



If your students want to know more about the artwork or learn about other interpretations from scholars, art historians or curators, visit <http://AmericanArt.si.edu>, <http://AmericanArt.si.edu/Luce/>, and your school library to research more about the artwork. If you have specific questions about an artwork, you can ask Joan of Art at <http://AmericanArt.si.edu/Research/Tools/Ask>.



# Give this artwork a voice!

*Choose an artwork and pretend you are one of the people or things in it. How would you finish these phrases?*

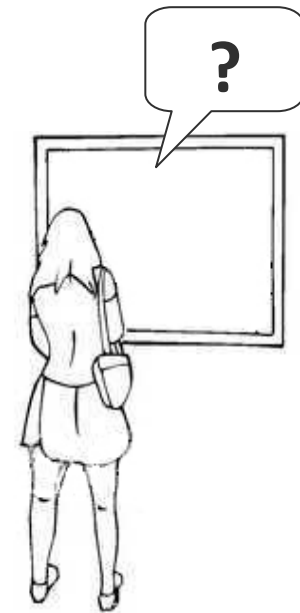
Here I am...

Boy, am I...

I wish...

I think I might...

Tomorrow I'm going to...





## Learning to Look: Pre-Visit Lesson

Grades 5 – 12

### Overview

After completing these activities, students will have strengthened their visual vocabulary by making observations of and expressing their interpretations of artwork.

### Discussion

Define “observation” with students. Observations are statements of fact relating to what students see, not what they think might be happening.

Define “interpretation” with students. Interpretations are statements that ascribe meaning to the artwork based on observations.

Present students with one artwork that relates to your scheduled videoconference topic. (A selection of artworks related to each tour is included in the “Tour Information” document available to download at <http://AmericanArt.si.edu/Education/Video>). Have students begin by sharing only their observations. When students offer interpretations, or ideas about what they think is happening in the artwork, ask: “What do you see that makes you say that?”

### Questions that prompt observations:

- *Who or what do you see in this artwork?*
- *What is the largest thing you see in this picture?*
- *What is the smallest thing you see in this picture?*
- *What colors do you see in the artwork?*
- *Is the scene outside? Inside?*
- *If there are people, are their clothes similar to or different from what you are wearing? How?*
- *Is the scenery similar to or different from where you are? How?*
- *What can you tell me about the colors in this artwork? What color do you see the most?*

Next, invite students to share their interpretations about what is happening in the artwork if they haven’t already done so. It is acceptable for students to have different interpretations of the same object. Make sure students support their interpretations with direct observations about the artwork. You may notice that some observation-focused questions lead directly to interpretation-focused questions. All interpretations should be founded on answers to observation questions.

**Questions that prompt interpretations:**

- *What is going on in this picture?*
- *Where do you think this scene is taking place?*
- *What season is it? What time of day is it?*
- *When was this artwork made?*
- *What do the scenery and the clothing or objects tell us about when this artwork was made?*
- *Does this scene look like it could be taking place today? Why or why not?*
- *Indicate a figure in the artwork:*
  - *Who is this person?*
  - *Is s/he similar to or different from you? In what ways?*
  - *What is s/he doing?*
  - *What do you think s/he does for a living?*
  - *How does s/he feel?*
  - *Where do you think s/he is?*
  - *What do you think it sounds like where s/he is?*
  - *What do you think it smells like where s/he is?*
  - *What kind of weather is this person experiencing?*
- *How do you think the artist feels about this person or thing in the painting?*
- *How does this artwork make you feel?*
- *How do you think this artist made this artwork?*
- *What types of materials do you think the artist used? Paint? Clay? Wood?*
- *How long do you think it took to make?*
- *What kind of mood or feelings do the colors give the artwork?*
- *Do you like the colors that are in the artwork? If you were the artist, would you have used different colors?*
- *Why do you think this artist made this artwork?*
- *What do you think the artist is trying to say?*

**Activity**

Have students select a different artwork and complete the included Observation/Interpretation worksheet. To take the activity further, have students refer to it as they write about the work of art. Students can choose words or phrases that they think best describe the artwork and use them as material in a poem, story or podcast.

Questions to ask students:

- *Why did you choose that artwork?*
- *Who did you choose to write about and why did you choose them?*
- *What in the artwork helped you make decisions about what the subject is thinking or feeling?*
- *Did you use the title or date of the artwork to inform your decisions? If so, how did they influence what you wrote? If not, do they contradict or reinforce your interpretation?*



Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Artwork Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Observation	Interpretation
<i>Definition: What you see?</i> <i>Example: Dark grey sky, no rain, dry ground</i>	<i>Definition: What you think based on what you see?</i> <i>Example: A storm is approaching</i>
<p>What is the main idea of the artwork?</p>	



Imagine yourself inside this work of art.

What do you hear?	What do you smell?
What do you taste?	What do you feel?

Imagine that the artwork is one part of a larger story.

What happened right before this moment?
What will happen next?



## Post-Visit Lesson: To See Is To Think: Visual Literacy

### Grades 1 – 5

#### Overview

After completing this lesson, students will have increased their visual literacy; they will be better able to decode visual codes used in artworks.

#### Background

The artist's studio depicted here is a studio apartment, furnished with bed, nightstand, and alarm clock. A scene such as this was familiar to Hayden, who did odd jobs and custodial work while pursuing his artistic career. He maintained, however, that it pays homage to a friend and fellow painter, Cloyde Boykin, who was never recognized “because no one called him a painter; they called him a janitor.”

#### Discussion

Share Palmer Hayden’s *The Janitor Who Paints* with students. Have students spend a full minute looking at the artwork quietly. Initiate conversation by having students close their eyes and answer: What colors do you remember seeing in this painting? Use this as a springboard for close observation.

Explain that by describing the artwork, students are telling others what they see. Working as a class, record the answers to *one or more* of the following questions on the board under the header “Describe.”

- What do you see in the artwork?
- How many people do you see?
- What are they wearing?
- How are they positioned?
- What geometric shapes do you see?

Explain that they are going to analyze the painting by breaking it down into smaller parts. Have the students discuss the decisions the artist made when he painted the artwork, recording the answers to *one or more* of the following questions on the board under the header “Analyze.”

- Where is the lightest part of the painting? Where is the darkest part?
- How would this painting make you feel if the colors were brighter?
- Which shape is repeated most often in this painting?
- What lines do you notice? If you follow the lines with your eyes, where do they go?
- Who or what is each person looking at in this painting?

Have them begin to tell the story of the artwork, answering the question “what’s going on in this artwork?” Make sure students ground their interpretation on their observations and analysis of the artwork. Record the answers on the board under the header “Interpret.”



**Activity**

Have the class choose one person in this painting to interpret further.

- What is s/he doing? What do you see that makes you say that?
- What is s/he thinking? What do you see that makes you say that?

Have students continue focusing on the person they selected. Have students write a story that answers the questions below. Have students illustrate their short paragraph.

- What do you think this person will do next?
- How do they feel about what's going to happen?



Palmer Hayden *The Janitor Who Paints* ca. 1930 1967.57.28



## Post-Visit Lesson: To See Is To Think: Visual Literacy

### Grades 6 – 8

#### Overview

After completing this lesson, students will have increased their visual literacy; they will be better able to decode visual codes used in artworks.

#### Background

This painting captures an everyday, yet deeply poetic moment among New Mexico's Pueblo Indians. Walter Ufer was a German émigré who brought to America an intense sympathy for ordinary people, a value instilled in him by his socialist family. He did not romanticize his sitters because he understood that the Indian "resents being regarded as a curiosity—as a dingleberry on a tree."

In *Callers* two men on horseback pay their respects to a woman who lives, like millions of Americans, behind a picket fence. Their costumes show that these people have held on to aspects of their tribal culture.

The larger and heavier of two mounted men leans forward to speak with a young woman, who stands hesitantly at the gate. Ufer leaves the visit's purpose ambiguous, while using his exceptional skills to fill the canvas with vibrant light and powerful forms. By integrating details like the white picket fence and Anglo-style houses just glimpsed in the distance, Ufer shows a full appreciation of the complexities of Indian cultures in the Southwest, where Anglo and native ways continued side by side.

#### Discussion

Have students spend a full minute looking at Walter Ufer's *Callers* quietly. Working as a class, have students gather basic information about the artwork by making *observations* (objective facts about the artwork from what they can see). Record the answers to *one or more* of the following questions on the board under the header "Describe."

- What colors do you see?
- What geometric shapes or forms do you see?
- How many people do you see? What else do you see in the artwork?

Have students build on their observations about the artwork by looking more deeply into the choices the artist made – the visual characteristics of the artwork, the organizational principles the artist employed, and the students' own responses to these choices. As they analyze the painting, students will consider the parts to better understand the whole. Record the answers to *one or more* of the following questions under the header "Analyze."

- Where are the lightest color values? Where are the darkest?
  - How would the composition differ if the colors were different (more or less intense)?



- What if the image were black and white?
- Close your eyes. When you open them and look at the work, what is the first thing you notice?
  - Why is your attention drawn there?
  - Are there other centers of interest?
  - How has the artist created the centers of interest?
- From what direction is the light coming?
  - Is it harsh or soft?
- How has the artist used space in this artwork?
  - Which shapes or forms dominate this artwork?
  - How are shapes or forms arranged?
  - Is the visual weight on one side of the artwork about the same as the other?
  - How about from top to bottom? Diagonally?
- Has the artist created a sense of depth? If so, how?
- What has the artist left out of the picture?
- How do all of the artist's choices come together?
- How does this artwork make you feel?

Have students begin to tell the story of the artwork, developing a sense of what the artwork means by synthesizing the results of their description and analysis of the artwork. Encourage them to make informed guesses and honor all interpretations as equally valid, as long as they are founded in the first two steps. Record the answers to *one or more* of the following questions under the header "Interpret."

- What's happening in this artwork?
- Who do you think the people in the artwork are? What does it look like they are doing?
- What do you think the artist was trying to express through the image? What do you see that makes you say that?

Have students independently answer the question "Does this artwork inspire your curiosity, imagination, or creativity? Why or why not?" to write a personal critique of the artwork, built on steps one through three.

### Activity

Using the worksheet below, have students reflect on *Callers* to write a four-line poem that **describes** the work, draws on their **analysis** of the work, **interprets** and finally **critiques** it. Each of the four steps should occupy its own line, in whatever order the student prefers. Encourage students to voice their own opinions of the artwork, backing each opinion up with a description, analysis, and interpretation. Have students share their poems and encourage students to reflect on one another's opinions.



Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Poem inspired by *Callers* by Walter Ufer

Your poem should be comprised of four lines, including a descriptive phrase, an analytical statement, an interpretive phrase, and an evaluative statement.

#### DRAFT

Line one, a **descriptive** phrase: \_\_\_\_\_

Line two, your **analysis**: \_\_\_\_\_

Line three, an **interpretive** phrase: \_\_\_\_\_

Line four, your **critique**: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FINAL

After revising your draft poem, copy each line in the space below, in whatever order you choose. Think about the re-ordering as an opportunity to further craft the form and message of the poem.

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Walter Ufer *Callers* ca. 1926 1984.66



## Post-Visit Lesson: To See Is To Think: Visual Literacy

### Grades 9 – 12

#### Overview

After completing this lesson, students will have increased their visual literacy; they will be better able to decode visual codes used in artworks.

#### Background

Paul Cadmus lived and worked in Italy in the early 1950s. *Bar Italia* satirizes the crowds of tourists in Europe during the post-War years, when only Americans had the money to visit the continent devastated by the Second World War. A crowd of people fills an imaginary square Cadmus cobbled together using elements from several different Italian cities. The sidewalk café offers a range of characters, including argumentative Italians, pudgy clerics, hustlers, widowed crones, and a group of what the artist called "rather outrageous" gay men.

Cadmus painted himself into the image; he takes in the boisterous scene from just beyond a young Italian perched on the wall<sup>4</sup>. In the background a large marble arcade, currently under repair by a stonemason at the top right, recalls Italy's decrepit architectural treasures. But he included a final indignity: just to the right of the painting's center, graffiti on the wall spell out "Go away, Americans."

#### Discussion

Introduce Paul Cadmus's *Bar Italia* to the students. Take a quick poll: Who likes this artwork? Why or why not?

Share the dimensions (37.5 x 45.25 in.) of the artwork with your students and ask them why this information might be useful when looking at the image.

##### 1. Description – What do you see?

Distribute the Description, Analysis, Interpretation worksheet. Ask students to gather basic information about the artwork by making *observations*, recording objective facts about the artwork using only what they can see. Select one or more of the questions from the list below. Have students spend some time looking carefully at the artwork and answering that set of questions in the "Describe" section of the worksheet.

- What colors do you see, if any? What is the dominant color?
- What geometric shapes or forms do you see?
- How many people do you see? What else do you see in the artwork?
- What medium or material was used to make this artwork?

<sup>4</sup> Kirstein, Lincoln. *Paul Cadmus* (New York: Pomegranate Communications), 1992.



## 2. Visual Analysis – What choices has the artist made?

Have students build on their observations about the artwork by looking more deeply into the choices the artist made – the visual characteristics of the artwork, the organizational principles the artist employed, and the students' own responses to these choices. Select questions from the following list and have students spend time looking carefully at the artwork and recording their answers in the “Analyze” section of the worksheet.

- Where are the lightest color values? Where are the darkest?
  - How would the composition differ if the colors were different/more or less intense?
  - What if the image were black and white?
- Is there strong visual contrast (lights and darks, varying textures, etc.)?
- Where do you see visual texture? How might this have been created?
- Close your eyes. When you open them and look at the work, what is the first thing you notice?
  - Why is your attention drawn there?
  - Are there other centers of interest?
  - How are the centers of interest created?
- From what direction is the light coming?
  - Is it harsh or soft?
  - Does the light seem to be natural or artificial?
- What parts of the image are clearly in focus? Are some parts out of focus?
- Where do you see directional lines?
- How has the artist used rhythm, movement, balance, proportion, etc.?
- How has the artist used space in this artwork?
  - Which shapes or forms dominate this artwork?
  - How are shapes or forms arranged?
  - Is the visual weight on one side of the artwork about the same as the other?
  - How about from top to bottom? Diagonally?
- Has the artist created a sense of depth? If so, how?
- How would the picture change if you moved the frame to the right or left, or up or down? What has the artist left out of the picture?
- What is your response to all of these artistic choices?
- What symbols can you find, if any?

## 3. Interpretation – What do the artist's choices mean?

Have students begin to tell the story of the artwork, developing a sense of what the artwork means by synthesizing the results of their description and analysis of the artwork. Encourage them to make educated guesses and honor all interpretations as equally valid, as long as they are founded in the first two steps.

Select questions from the following list and have students look carefully at the artwork and record their answers in the “Interpret” section of the worksheet.

- What's happening in this artwork? Who or what is the subject of this artwork?
- How do you think the artist feels about the subject of this artwork? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Who do you think the people in the artwork are? What does it look like they are doing?



- What might the symbols you found mean?
- Based on this artwork, how do you think the artist feels about American tourists in general? What do you see that makes you say that?

4. Personal Judgment – What do you think of the artwork?

Have students create a personal judgment about the artwork, built on steps one through three. Encourage them to voice their own opinions of the artwork, backing each opinion up with a description, analysis, and interpretation.

**Activity**

Have students imagine that they have walked into the scene, just as Paul Cadmus has depicted it. Have students write a postcard home that tells the recipient what the student thinks of this destination. What is your opinion of the café's location? What are the people like? If you knew a friend would soon be travelling to this (imaginary) part of Italy, would you recommend that they visit?

On the reverse of the postcard, have students draw a visual representation of their reaction to this scene utilizing Cadmus' exaggerated facial expressions as inspiration.

Take a second quick poll: Who likes this painting? Discuss why students like and/or dislike the artwork. If anyone has changed their mind from the start of the lesson, discuss why that might be the case.





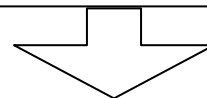
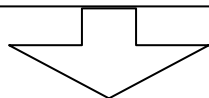
**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Record your answers to the questions associated with each category listed below, Description, Visual Analysis and Interpretation. Refer to your answers for Description and Visual Analysis to formulate your answers to the Interpretation section.

**Description – What do you see?**

**Visual Analysis – What choices has the artist made?**



**Interpretation – What do the artist's choices mean?**