

Lesson Plans
Tape 3/Episode A
Integrating the Art
Disciplines

Art Teacher: Sandy Walker-Craig
Anza Elementary School, Torrance, California
Grade 1
1 class session
Looking to the Sky for Color

Context of the Video Lesson

A classroom teacher conducts a session on art with her first-grade students. Prior to this lesson, which focuses on the work of Vincent van Gogh, the children have learned to mix colors using the primary hues and black and white tempera paints. The teacher often relates art learning with other subjects such as reading and science. A prior lesson resulting in students' self-portraits served as a means for getting acquainted at the beginning of the school term. In response to the crowded conditions in her classroom, the teacher has developed a system for art-making activities in which students work together in pairs, with one painting as the other assists with materials and cleanup.

Focus

Artists such as Vincent van Gogh express the beauty of the sky with paints. Painted skies can express many moods.

Objectives

Students will:

1. observe the sky outdoors and discuss the colors;
2. view and discuss many skies painted by Vincent van Gogh; and
3. paint a sky of their own that expresses a mood or feeling, using the primary hues and black and white tempera paints.

Resources

Color reproductions of paintings by Vincent van Gogh featuring skies.
Easel for display and demonstration.
Children's books about color for reference.
Books about van Gogh and his paintings.

Materials

Newsprint and drawing paper (9 x 12 in.).
Tempera paints in red, yellow, blue, black, and white.
Paint palettes (8-pan size) and tongue depressors.
Paint brushes, water containers, and paper or cloth towels.
Paint shirts.

Vocabulary

background
contrast
foreground
horizon
middle ground
primary hues

Preparation

Mount display of van Gogh sky paintings.
Prepare painting demonstration, including sky painting.
Job chart for painting activity.
Parent or student volunteers should have paint pans filled and ready for painting activity.

Procedure

1. Take students outdoors to observe colors in the sky, asking them to name and describe colors and tell how colors might be mixed for a painting.
2. Introduce van Gogh as “Artist of the Month” and discuss his life and work (at first-grade level).
3. View several van Gogh landscapes with students, encouraging discussion of his uses of color, brush strokes, and mood in the skies. Emphasize color mixing.
4. Discuss feeling qualities in the skies, assisting students in interpreting moods.
5. Explain painting assignment: students will paint a sky of their choice, using what they know about mixing colors and trying to express a mood or feeling.
6. Demonstrate painting techniques for first graders: mixing colors, cleaning and wiping brush, and blending colors on the paper.
7. Refer students to the job chart and assist them in working as partners to make their paintings. “Buddy helpers” will get to paint during the next session, as partners exchange roles. When done, students will clean their hands and place their pictures in the drying area (butcher paper on work table or floor). Buddies take care of cleanup, replacing brushes, palettes, water cans, and paint shirts.
8. When all students have had their turn at painting, have a sharing session where each artist has an opportunity to show and tell about his or her painting.

Assessment

Did students participate in observing and commenting on colors in the sky during the trip outdoors?

Can students recognize paintings by van Gogh viewed in class? Can they discuss painting technique, color, and mood in his work?

Note how each student understood the assignment by viewing their paintings. Did each student:

- a) make a painting of a sky?
- b) demonstrate ability to mix colors with some control?
- c) apply painting techniques at first-grade level?

Lesson Plans (cont.)

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Background for Teachers

Question students in small groups to assess what they know and remember about the life of van Gogh and about particular works studied in class, such as *Starry Night*.

Study materials on the life and work of Vincent van Gogh as preparation for discussions with students. Note relationships with other subjects in the first-grade curriculum that can be correlated or integrated with this art lesson. Collect books and materials on the topic of color in art, van Gogh, and landscape paintings or photographs that feature skies.

Extensions

Students may dictate a "Sky Story" to parents or their "Fourth-Grade Big Buddies" to be attached to their paintings.

Students may read their stories and share their paintings with kindergartners.

Students will add their paintings to their art portfolios to be presented as gifts to their parents at the end of the school year.

You might carry this lesson further by having students paint a complete landscape with foreground, middle ground, and background, including another expressive sky. They might practice painting objects such as trees, houses, fields, mountains, and so forth.

You might continue the landscape theme and gradually add more art materials to the students' repertoire, such as crayons, watercolor pens (nontoxic), and torn paper in addition to tempera.

After studying the science unit on planets and constellations, study van Gogh's works again. Ask children to paint skies again with this new knowledge.

Selected References

Bernard, Bruce, ed., *Vincent by Himself*. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1985.

Jenkins, Jessica, *Thinking About Colors*. New York: Dutton Children's Books, 1992.

Simon, Hilda, and Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard, *The Magic of Color*. August, 1981.

Walsh, Ellen Stoll, *Mouse Paint*. Boston: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989.

Lesson Plans
Tape 3/Episode B
Integrating Art History and
Art Criticism

Art Teacher: Evelyn Pender
Kate Sullivan Elementary School, Tallahassee, Florida
Grade 4
3–4 class sessions
Printmaking with a Japanese Influence

Context of the Video Lesson

This unit concentrates on printmaking with a Japanese influence. Students are aware of Japanese art from study in a previous unit. They have practiced an approach to formal analysis that focuses attention on the sensory, formal, technical, and expressive properties of artworks. They have studied earlier paintings by Mary Cassatt, noted how her style changed as a result of coming into contact with Japanese prints, and discussed how this influenced her to work as a printmaker.

This art specialist teaches children in the elementary grades and works closely with their teachers, cooperating with curriculum, schedules, and so forth. She has her own art classroom to which students come for their assigned art period once a week. The classroom teacher does not remain in the art room.

This unit actually requires more than one class period for discussion, analysis of artworks, and background investigation by students. The production activity requires two or three class periods.

Focus

Block-printing has a long tradition in several cultures and serves as an expressive medium for students.

Objectives

Students will:

1. study block prints by Japanese artists, such as Hokusai and Utamaro, and intaglio prints by U.S. artist Mary Cassatt;
2. compare styles, subjects, and themes of Japanese and Cassatt prints; and
3. create a series of prints based on content and criteria derived from the works of Japanese artists and Cassatt.

Resources

Color reproductions of Japanese ukiyo-e wood-block prints, especially those by Kitagawa Utamaro.
Color reproductions of a series of prints by Mary Cassatt.
Books about Japanese printmaking and the work of Cassatt.
World map and history/art history time line.

Materials

Pencils and erasers.
White paper (4 x 6 in. and 6 x 8 in.).
Newspapers for tabletops.
White paper and/or rice paper (6 x 8 in.).
Foam board (4 x 6 in.).
Composition printing blocks (4 x 6 in.).
Water-soluble black printing ink, brayers, and linocut tools.
Mat paper or board.
Sentence strips or chart paper.

Vocabulary

asymmetrical
composition
genre
Impressionism
printmaking
ukiyo-e

Preparation

Collect art reproductions of works by Mary Cassatt and the Japanese print-makers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Display the ten Cassatt prints and series of Japanese ukiyo-e prints for comparison.

Use chalkboard or posters to list criteria for students' prints and printmaking skills.

Prepare for demonstration of printmaking process.

Note: Emphasize safety, especially with use of sharp tools.

Procedure

1. Lead class in a review of Japanese prints with attention to content, style, and historical background.
2. Introduce the series of prints by Mary Cassatt, with brief background on the artist, her time, and her place in art history.
3. Ask students to compare Cassatt's prints with those of the Japanese, with attention to content, theme and style. Note differences in genre, theme, and composition. Discuss similarities and differences in mood and interpretation of meaning.
4. Explain art assignment (refer to poster), with criteria for student prints derived from those of Cassatt and Japanese artists:
 - a) genre, theme, and unusual point of view;
 - b) simplified shapes and use of pattern; and
 - c) asymmetrical composition.
5. Demonstrate the art-making process, including initial sketches, drawings, and transfer to foam board and cutting block for print. Briefly demonstrate transfer of drawing to foam board and to block, inking, and printing so students will see the complete process. Review printmaking skills:
 - a) draw large shapes so they will transfer to a block;
 - b) transfer drawing to foam board (later to block);
 - c) use brayer and ink;
 - d) ink board or block, making an even layer of ink;

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Procedure
(cont.)

- e) place paper on the board or block and rub evenly;
- f) remove print and set to dry;
- g) number and sign prints; and
- h) mat prints for display.

6. Assist students individually as they progress at different rates through the drawing and printmaking activities. Demonstrate again to small groups as needed.

Assessment

Use a checklist to mark each student's completion of each part of the activity: preliminary drawing, finished design, five foam board prints, five block prints, and at least one final matted print for display.

Ask students to complete the self-evaluation form with criteria for the assignment. Ask students to save sketches, prints, and self-assessments in their portfolios and discuss progress with each student at convenient times during the term.

Lead class discussion of completed prints on display, with attention to successful examples of criteria for the activity. Check for student's use of vocabulary, artists' names, and understanding of lesson concepts.

Background for Teachers

Read about the life and work of Mary Cassatt, especially as she was influenced in her painting and printmaking by the Japanese prints. If appropriate, provide materials on Cassatt and Utamaro and their works for classroom teachers. Study fourth-grade curriculum and note points for reinforcement with this lesson.

Extensions

Ask students to write poems about their prints, following what they have learned about Japanese art and poetry in combination. Display poems with prints.

Cooperate with students' classroom teachers to integrate the topics of this lesson with history, geography, social studies, language arts, or other subjects in the fourth-grade curriculum.

Selected References

Kobayashi, Tadashi, *Ukiyo-e*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1982.

Mathews, N., and Shapiro, B., *Mary Cassatt: The Color Prints*. New York: Abrams, in association with Williams College Museum of Art, 1989.

Narazaki, M., *Utamaro*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1968.

Oka, Isoburo, *Hiroshige*. Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1982.