

**#9474**

# WHAT IS ART?

CLEARVUE/eav

2000

Grade Levels: K-6

17 minutes

## DESCRIPTION

What is art? How important to art are line, color, and light? What's the difference between arts and crafts? Is it easy to draw a horse? Elementary students explore a museum and paintings to discover answers to these questions.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### Subject Area: Visual Arts

- Standard: Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
  - Benchmark: Understands similarities and differences among the characteristics of artworks from various eras and cultures (e.g., materials; visual, spatial, and temporal structures)
- Standard: Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others
  - Benchmark: Understands that specific artworks can elicit different responses
- Standard: Knows a range of subject matter, symbols, and potential ideas in the visual arts
  - Benchmark: Knows how subject matter, symbols, and ideas are used to communicate meaning

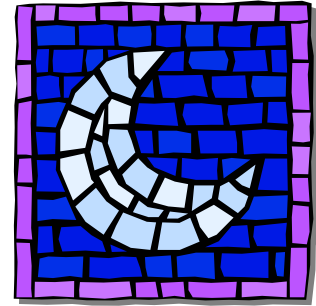
## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To describe how the use of line, light, and color creates a mood in a specific work of art.
2. To understand that there are different responses to any given work of art.
3. To understand that works of visual art are created with a purpose in mind and that these vary among works.
4. To examine a work of art closely for clues to its subject, purpose, and mood.
5. To express subjective responses to art with reference to details of the work.
6. To identify aspects of style in comparing and contrasting works.



## VOCABULARY

- |                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1. appreciate     | 17. light       |
| 2. ceremonial     | 18. line        |
| 3. color          | 19. mood        |
| 4. contour        | 20. muted       |
| 5. craftsperson   | 21. pointillism |
| 6. creativity     | 22. portrait    |
| 7. elaborate      | 23. realistic   |
| 8. etching        | 24. silversmith |
| 9. evolved        | 25. smith       |
| 10. exquisite     | 26. standardize |
| 11. foreground    | 27. stonemason  |
| 12. form          | 28. subject     |
| 13. goldsmith     | 29. value       |
| 14. horizontal    | 30. vertical    |
| 15. impressionist | 31. vibrant     |
| 16. intricate     | 32. visual      |



## BEFORE SHOWING

Ask students if they can think of a picture, photo, or other object (statue, building, car, piece of furniture) that is beautiful or special to them. Have them describe the object to the class and explain why it is special. After a few students have shared their thoughts, ask the class if the things they described should be called *art*. Have they made anything they would call "art"? What makes something "art"?

## AFTER SHOWING

### Discussion Items and Questions

1. What is *art*? What can art tell us about certain times and places in history? What can we learn by comparing art made at about the same time or around the same place?
2. What three elements in a work of art can we examine closely to help figure out what it means?
3. What is *line*? What is line used for? Compare the kind of emotions expressed by a flat line and a jagged one. Have students draw different kinds of lines and discuss with the class the emotions each expresses.
4. Using the images from the video, look closely at how different artists have used line and describe what they see. Examples provided in the program include Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Monet, and Picasso. Draw attention to the differences in style among these artists, from realist to impressionist to abstract.
5. How do artists use color in their work? The program introduces descriptive vocabulary for color: cool, warm, muted, and vibrant. Using the images from the program, have students study examples of each color scheme. Which colors are warm? Which are cool? What is the difference between *muted* and *vibrant* colors? What kind of mood does each color scheme create? Write answers on the board.

6. What can we learn from the use of light in a particular work? Show additional examples of how light is used in art to stimulate discussion. Look in the school or local public library for collections of art reproductions. Artists like Caravaggio, Rembrandt, Vermeer, or Monet would provide especially good examples.
7. What style of painting did Seurat invent? What is *pointillism*? Describe how Seurat used color in his painting *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*. How can you tell what time of day is it in Seurat's painting?
8. Review the field trip to the museum. Which artworks did the students like the best? Why? Did they see anything at the museum that surprised them?
9. What is different about the way craftspeople and artists work?
10. What do museums and art collectors look for when they create their collections? How do they organize these pieces? Does everyone agree about what belongs in a museum?

### Applications and Activities

1. Using the answers from #5 above, select the words listed on the board and call out a mood or feeling for students to draw. After a few minutes, have them change moods and begin another drawing. Create a display for each mood and have students compare and contrast the results.
2. Have students create their own visual museums! Bring in as wide an assortment of images and objects as you can find: magazines, newspapers, old photos, postcards, small found objects, Internet images, and so on. Give each student a piece of posterboard or construction paper and instruct them to select a specific number of images to include in their "museum." As a wrap-up, have each student explain how they chose objects for their museum and why they arranged them the way they did. What story do their objects tell?

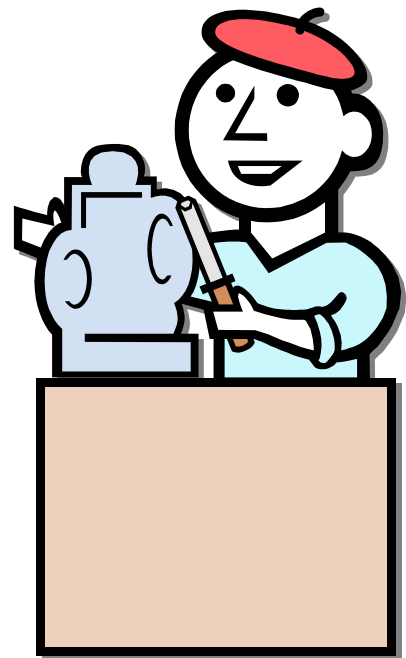
### SUMMARY

A childish scribble, a woven tapestry, a Greek sculpture—are these objects art? Are they art in the same way? What, exactly, is "art"?

Taking an open-ended approach to this elusive question, the program features narrative segments and two field trips. Topics covered include how and why art is made; the role of line, light, and color in art; and the ways artists communicate meaning through their work.

The program aims to provide students the tools to be confident, competent critics and the inspiration to make their own art. Students will learn helpful ideas they can use to explore unfamiliar works or styles, such as artistic intention, mood, and subject. And they'll see artists at work: children their own age planning, executing, and analyzing their drawings.

Stressing the importance of individual creativity, *What Is Art?* provides young learners with a framework for learning the characteristics of the visual arts.



## RELATED RESOURCES



### Captioned Media Program

- Easy Art Projects #3234
- Is It Art? #9261
- Visualizing What You Paint #8373
- Young Artists #9508



### World Wide Web

The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **ARTEDVENTURES**

<http://www.sanford-artedventures.com/play/play.html>

Select certain grade levels to learn about and to create landscape paintings, redesign a playground, explore line and shape, identify artists by their portraits, and much more!

- **EDUWEB: ADVENTURES**

<http://www.eduweb.com/adventure.html>

Eight topics to choose from, such as "A. Pintura: Art Detective" where art history is disguised as a noir mystery; "Inside Art" to explore a painting from the inside out; and others.

- **ARTSEDNET**

<http://www.getty.edu/artsednet/home.html>

By the Getty Education Institute for the Arts, supports the needs of the K-12 arts community.

