



Artful Connections

Teacher Guide:

Young America

Grades 4+



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) with your comments and suggestions. Evaluation and program improvement are a priority and we welcome your comments.
- ❑ Follow the link to CILC below and complete a brief survey about your videoconference experience.
 - Young America <http://cilc.org/evaluation.aspx?pass=Q0jE6f4rUh>



Young America (Grades 4 +)

Overview

Made as Americans transformed themselves from colonists to citizens of a new nation, colonial and early federal art tells the story of national ambitions, territorial expansion, and the beginnings of industry. After an introduction to America as a new nation through a pre-visit activity, participation in the videoconference, and a post-visit lesson to cement concepts, your students will be better able to:

- Understand the historical context of the creation of America as a new nation as well as the resulting political infrastructure and economic development
- Understand the effect the newly created nation had on those living in America during the 1700s and 1800s
- Reflect upon and assess artworks portraying growing national ambitions, territorial expansion, and the beginning of industry
- Use visual vocabulary to articulate observations and interpretations of artworks

National Standards

Visual Arts

K-12.3 Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas;

K-12.4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures;

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.

US History

K-4.3 The history of the United States: democratic principles and values and the peoples from many cultures who contributed to its cultural, economic, and political heritage;

5-12.3 Era 3 revolution and the new nation (1754-1820s).

Civics

K-4.2 Values and principles of democracy;

5-12.2 Foundations of the political system;

5-12.3 Principles of democracy.



Vocabulary

US History/Civics

American Revolution – (n.) a period of political upheaval during which the thirteen British colonies strove for self-governance and gained political independence from the British Empire

colonist – (n.) a person living in one of the thirteen original colonies, someone who is living in a new country or territory to serve the economic and political interests of their country of origin (ex: England)

Federalist Papers – (n.) a collection of 85 essays written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison between 1787 and 1788 to advocate that the states ratify the United States Constitution

independence – (n.) the quality of not being subject to the rule of others.¹ For example, the United States of America’s freedom from England as declared in 1776 through the Declaration of Independence

Industrial Revolution – (n.) a period in the early 1800s during innovations such as interchangeable parts, water-powered factories, the cotton gin, and expanded contributed to industrialization and greater output and higher production of goods

liberty – (n.) the enjoyment of certain social, political, and economic rights and privileges². For example, America’s freedom from the rule of England and ability to self-govern.

Minute Men – (n.) a group of men who pledged to take up arms at a minute’s notice just before and during the American Revolution

nation – (n.) a community of one or more nationalities in possession of one or more territories and independent of other communities

soliloquy – (n.) speaking one’s thoughts aloud. Also, a device used in theater when an actor talks to himself (and the audience) when no one else is on stage

Visual Arts

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

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

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

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 resemblance³

¹ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. 11th ed. Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc. 2004. [adapted]




² Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. [adapted]

³ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary. [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: Young Moravian Girl DATE: ca. 1755-1760 ARTIST: John Valentine Haidt MEDIUM: oil on canvas DIMENSIONS: 30 3/8 x 25 1/4 in. (77.2 x 64.2 cm.) CREDIT LINE: Gift of the American Art Forum ACC. NUMBER: 1987.32 WEB LINK: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=9824</p>	
<p>TITLE: Mrs. George Watson DATE: 1765 ARTIST: John Singleton Copley MEDIUM: oil on canvas DIMENSIONS: 49 7/8 x 40 in. (126.7 x 101.6 cm) CREDIT LINE: Partial gift of Henderson Inches, Jr., in honor of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Inches, and museum purchase made possible in part by Mr. and Mrs. R. Crosby Kemper through the Crosby Kemper Foundation; the American Art Forum; and the Luisita L. and Franz H. Denghausen Endowment ACC. NUMBER: 1991.189 WEB LINK: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=32432</p>	
<p>TITLE: Mrs. James Smith and Grandson DATE: 1776 ARTIST: Charles Willson Peale MEDIUM: oil on canvas DIMENSIONS: 36 3/8 x 29 1/4 in. (92.4 x 74.3 cm.) CREDIT LINE: Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Levering Smith, Jr. and museum purchase ACC. NUMBER: 1980.93 WEB LINK: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=19292</p>	



<p>TITLE: Washington Resigning His Commission</p> <p>DATE: ca. 1841</p> <p>ARTIST: Ferdinand Pettrich</p> <p>MEDIUM: painted plaster</p> <p>DIMENSIONS: 86 x 48 1/2 x 36 3/8 in. (218.3 x 123.2 x 92.3 cm)</p> <p>CREDIT LINE: Gift of the artist</p> <p>ACC. NUMBER: XX35</p> <p>WEB LINK: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=19679</p>	
<p>TITLE: The Great Horseshoe Fall, Niagara</p> <p>DATE: 1820</p> <p>ARTIST: Alvan Fisher</p> <p>MEDIUM: oil on canvas</p> <p>DIMENSIONS: 34 3/8 x 48 in. (87.2 x 122.0 cm.) Smithsonian American Art Museum Museum purchase</p> <p>CREDIT LINE: 1966.82.1</p> <p>ACC. NUMBER: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=8341</p> <p>WEB LINK: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=8341</p>	
<p>TITLE: Concord Minute Man of 1775</p> <p>DATE: 1889, cast 1917</p> <p>ARTIST: Daniel Chester French Gorham Manufacturing Company (Founder)</p> <p>MEDIUM: Bronze</p> <p>DIMENSIONS: 32 1/4 x 17 1/8 x 18 3/8 in. (81.9 x 43.5 x 46.7 cm.)</p> <p>CREDIT LINE: Smithsonian American Art Museum Museum purchase</p> <p>ACC. NUMBER: 1991.193</p> <p>WEB LINK: http://americanart.si.edu/collections/search/artwork/?id=32650</p>	



Additional Resources

Young America

<http://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/online/t2go/1ya/index.html>

This slide show traces the transformation of the colonies into nationhood from about 1760 to the decade after the Civil War.

American Origins

<http://www.npg.si.edu/exhibit/origins/index.html>

This slide show hosts a “conversation about America” and takes students from the days of contact between Native Americans and European explorers, through the struggles of independence, to the Gilded Age.

Young America: Treasures from the Smithsonian American Art Museum by Amy Pastan (Watson-Guption Publications: 2000).

In this book, portraits, still lifes, landscapes, and everyday scenes reveal the ideals and vision that shaped America as it evolved from a collection of British colonies into an independent nation. Created between the 1760s and the 1870s, these paintings and sculptures reflect life in New England and the mid-Atlantic. John Singleton Copley, Charles Willson Peale, Thomas Birch, Thomas Cole, Jasper Cropsey, Horatio Greenough, and Thomas LeClear are among the featured artists.

Your Travel Guide to Colonial America by Nancy Day (Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Group Publications: 2001).

Written in a conversational voice and illustrated with photographs and engravings, this book provides details that describe the lives of early Americans from 1607 to 1750.

Come Look With Me: Art in Early America by Randy Osofsky (New York, NY: Lickle Publishing: 2003).

Art in Early America pairs art reproductions with thought-provoking questions, encouraging children to learn through visual exploration and interaction. Thoughtful text introduces the world and work of the various artists.



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?

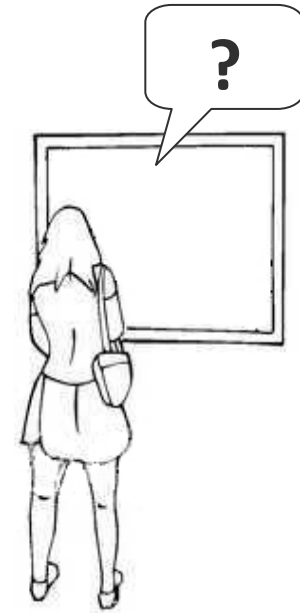
Here I am...

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>
What is the main idea of the artwork?	



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: Young America

Grades 4 – 6

Overview

After completing this lesson, students will better understand the application of symbolism in artwork and will be better able to decode artworks in the future.

Background

The Great Seal, depicted below and available in detail at <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/seal.html>, was adopted by Congress on June 20, 1782 as a symbol of the hopes and aspirations of the new American government. Having a practical use, the Great Seal is impressed upon documents such as international agreements, ratified treaties, and civil officer and other appointment commissions.



The following symbols appear in the Great Seal as embodiment of American ideals:

- The American bald eagle, native to North America and our national bird, is a symbol of freedom, courage, and strength.
- The arrows in the eagle's left claw represent the power to wage war.
- The olive branch in the eagle's right claw represents the power to make peace. (Notice that the eagle's head is turned toward the olive branch.)
- The number 13, repeated throughout the seal, refers to the original 13 states. This significant number is incorporated into the image as the number of stars above the eagle, stripes on the eagle's shield, arrows, olive branch leaves, and even the number of letters in "E pluribus unum."
- The colors red, white, and blue have their own significance. Red stands for valor and hardiness, while white stands for innocence, and blue vigilance and justice.
- "E pluribus unum" means "from many, one" and is intended to show the unification of the original 13 colonies into one, new country.⁴

Discussion

⁴ U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, "Ben's Guide (3-5): Symbols of U.S. Government – The Great Seal of the United States," [Ben's Guide to U.S. Government for Kids](http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/seal.html), January 31, 2008, <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/symbols/seal.html> > (September 24, 2010).



Have students compare and contrast the Great Seal with Paul Manship's *John F. Kennedy Inaugural Medal (Galvano of reverse)*. Discuss the symbolism of the common elements, those that appear in both images.

Encourage discussion by asking the following questions:

- Why do you think an eagle is depicted on the Great Seal?
- How many stars can you count in the sky above the eagle? How many stripes are on the eagle's shield? Why is 13 an important number for the United States?

Have students compare the *John F. Kennedy Inaugural Medal (Galvano of reverse)* to *American Eagle Pin* and *National Defense Badge of Service Pin*.

- Which symbols do you see in all three of the artworks?
- What differences do you notice among the three artworks?

Explain that the olive branch clasped in the talon of the eagle on the Great Seal is a biblical symbol of peace and the crown of laurels ringing the *American Eagle Pin* is a mythological symbol of victory.

- Who do you think might wear the *American Eagle Pin*? Why might the symbol of victory be important to that person?

Activity

Have students develop a seal for your classroom or school by discussing important aspects and principles of your school or classroom.

Have students list two to three symbolic images it might contain and vote for the one they think is most appropriate – the “classroom symbol.” Have students work independently to develop their own seals that incorporate the agreed-upon classroom symbol. Once finished, have students compare their work and discuss differences in artistic vision and symbolism.



Paul Manship *John F. Kennedy Inaugural Medal (Galvano of reverse)* 1961 1966.47.114



Anthony de Francisci *American Eagle Pin* ca. 1922? 1966.51.77



Anthony de Francisci *National Defense Badge of Service Pin* ca. 1925 1966.110.17



Post-Visit Lesson: Young America

Grades 7 – 12

Overview

After completing this lesson, students will better understand daily life around the time of the American Revolution as well as how portraits are elements of the historical record.

Background

Her erect posture and stern expression characterize Mary Alsop as a formidable woman. Born Mary Wright, Mrs. Richard Alsop was married in 1760. After her husband's death in 1776, Mary successfully managed her family's international mercantile business, including shipping, dry goods, and real estate while raising a large family. The river seen through the window, probably the one near her parents' Connecticut farm, refers to the vital role water route played in her business ventures as a merchant. Her carefully rendered clothing shows her economic status, while her silver snuffbox suggests the common use of tobacco in eighteenth-century America.

Discussion

Share *Mrs. Richard Alsop* with your students. Encourage discussion by asking the following questions:

- Is this woman wealthy or poor? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Looking closely at this artwork, what other clues can you find about this woman's status and life?

Introduce students to the background information highlighted above. Have students revisit the portrait to link this new knowledge to elements of the portrait.

- Black band at throat (widowed)
- Silver snuff box (widespread tobacco use)
- River outside window (connection to trade or commerce)
- Stern expression (Mary Alsop's personality)

Explain that Mrs. Richard Alsop (born Mary Wright) was widowed in 1776. Her husband, born into a family of merchants in New York City, left her with a large family and a shipping and dry goods business in Connecticut upon his death. Her brother-in-law, John, had recently moved with his family to Connecticut. John Alsop was sympathetic to the Revolutionary cause but believed that the Declaration of Independence was too radical to be supported.

- What choices might Mrs. Alsop have faced in 1776 in her personal life? In her new life as a businesswoman?
- What choices did she face as a result of the movement to gain Independence?
- What affect might the American Revolution have had on her family? Her business concerns?
- How might all of these things factored into her thoughts about whether or not to support American independence?



Activity

Working independently, have students take on the persona of someone in Mrs. Alsop's position as an affluent business owner and head of household. On the worksheet below, have students create a comparative list for staying in America during the American Revolution versus returning to Europe given their existing knowledge of economics, family loyalty, and American history.

Finally, have students decide whether they, in their persona, would choose to stay and support the bid for independence or return to Europe. Have students write a letter to a friend that explains their choice and the reasoning behind this choice using the reasons generated from the graphic organizer.



Ralph Earl *Mrs. Richard Alsop* 1792 1975.49.1



Mrs. Alsop's Decision		
	Reasons to Stay in America	Reasons to Go to Europe
Economics		
Family Ties		
History		