

*A Place of One's Own:
Awareness of Self, Others, and the Past in the Places Portrayed at the Biggs*

Grades: Grade 8
Subject: Visual Arts, Social Studies
Time Required: 30-45 minutes
Author: Angelina Shinas, Smyrna Middle School and Biggs Curator of Education
Featured Biggs
Artwork: *View of Mount Vernon*, Unidentified artist, 1860
Horseshoe Falls, Niagara, James Hamilton, 1866
Tenth Street Studio of William Merritt Chase, Reynolds Beal, 1894

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ANCHOR STANDARDS:</u></p>	<p>VA: Pr4.1.8a</p> <p>VA: Pr6.1.8a</p> <p>VA: Re7.1.8a</p> <p>VA: Re8.1.8a</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>ESSENTIAL QUESTION and ENDURING UNDERSTANDING:</u></p>	<p>What criteria, methods, and processes are used to select work for preservation or presentation? Why do people value objects, artifacts, and artworks, and select them for presentation?</p> <p>What is an art museum? How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences? How do objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation and understanding?</p> <p>How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art? How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world? What can we learn from our responses to art?</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>PERFORMANCE STANDARD:</u></p>	<p>Develop and apply criteria for evaluating a collection of artwork for presentation</p> <p>Analyze why and how an exhibition or collection may influence ideas, beliefs, and experiences</p> <p>Explain how a person's aesthetic choices are influenced by culture and environment and impact the visual image that one conveys to others.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>I CAN STATEMENT</u></p>	<p>I CAN decide which works of art can be selected for presentation based on certain criteria</p> <p>I CAN analyze the influence of an art exhibition on people's ideas, beliefs, and experiences</p>

	I CAN explain how an individual’s aesthetic choices are influenced by culture and environment
<u>ACCELERATION STRATEGIES:</u>	Students will discuss “place” prior to their visit and will be asked to imagine a place – real or not - in their minds. They will see three works from the Biggs collection that examine place in relation to history and environment, larger abstract concepts, and personal feelings Students will be asked to think about their imagined place again and closely examine how it reflect history, concepts, and personal feelings. They will be asked to represent this place in a sketch or piece of writing.
<u>LEARNING STRATEGIES:</u>	Students will take what they’ve learned about place and apply it to their own sketch or description of an imagined or real place.
<u>ACTIVATING STRATEGIES:</u>	Encouraged discussion about what place can mean to people from different eras, different backgrounds, and to the artist
<u>SUMMARIZING STRATEGIES:</u>	Students will be asked to verbally reflect on their visit at the end of the trip and come up with three hashtags to describe the experience
<u>EXTENDED THINKING STRATEGIES:</u>	Students can create a more developed work of art or piece of creative writing using the sketches and notes they created on their trip. They should consider today’s culture or the environment and how that affects their space. Students should be mindful of the materials that they use to ensure that it helps deliver the message of their piece.

Featured Artwork

View of Mount Vernon, Unidentified artist, 1860

Horseshoe Falls, Niagara, James Hamilton, 1866

Tenth Street Studio of William Merritt Chase, Reynolds Beal, 1894

Lesson Objectives

Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments through individual aesthetics and empathetic awareness by learning about and creating a “place”

Materials

Included graphic organizer

Paper and pencils

Lesson Steps

Pre-Visit Lesson

1. Introduction to Museum Tour – How artists create a space.
2. Describe the types of places we will expect to see in the artwork along the tour (landscapes, cityscapes, interior spaces, etc.).
3. Ask students to consider the materials that the artists are using to create the work of art. Why would they use those materials? How do those materials affect the work of art?
4. Also ask students to consider what could have influenced the artist to create this work of art (culture, environment, personal affinity for the space, etc.)
5. Ask students to consider which works of art capture places that are aesthetically pleasing to them.
6. Provide students with a clipboard, graphic organizer, and writing tool. Encourage the students to take notes, jot down questions, or make sketches on the paper while on the tour.
7. Prior to the tour, ask students to take a moment, close their eyes, and think about a place. It can be the place they find to be the most beautiful, interesting, or comfortable. What does it look like? Smell like? Feel like?

Museum Tour

1. Introduction
 - a. Explain that this tour is focused on the idea of “place”
 - b. Ask the students what that word means to them
 - c. Explain to students that the tour will address how history shapes what kinds of places artists show and how they represent those places; how images of places can convey big ideas; and how images of places can reflect the artists’ personal feelings about that place
 - d. Explain that the tour will also address how curators can tell us about the places seen in a work of art by putting it near other, related works of art
 - e. Explain that you will be asking them a lot of questions and that there are no wrong answers
 - f. Explain that they’re encouraged to use their graphic organizers to sketch and write questions and notes as you go along
 - g. If they have not already been asked to do so prior to their trip, ask students to take a moment, close their eyes, and think about a place. It can be the place they find to be the most beautiful, interesting, or comfortable. What does it look like? Smell like? Feel like?
 - h. Ask them to keep this place in mind as you go through the collection
2. View *View of Mount Vernon*, Unidentified artist, 1860
 - a. Ask students what Mount Vernon is
 - i. It was George Washington’s Virginia home
 - b. Explain that this artist painted this painting almost 100 years after George Washington was president
 - i. Ask students what major event in US history took place in the 1860s

1. If they need a hint, remind them that this was during the time when Abraham Lincoln was president
 - ii. Ask them why people might want to see or paint the home of our country's first president during the Civil War
 1. If they need help, guide them towards discussing the divides in America during the time and how looking back towards a time when our country was united might have given people hope and comfort about their uncertain times
 - iii. Explain that in addition to the topics they mentioned, this home was actually falling into disrepair during this era and was being restored, so the mansion was on people's minds
 - c. Remind students about the role of a curator and ask them why this painting might be in this room and if there are other objects that relate to this painting
 - i. If they need help, point out the portrait and statue of George Washington, as well as the dates on the furniture
3. View *Horseshoe Falls, Niagara*, James Hamilton, 1866
 - a. Ask students if they know this place
 - b. Explain that Niagara Falls became a tourist destination in the early 1800s
 - i. Ask students what new invention might have made it easier to travel to Niagara Falls during this time (railroads)
 - c. Explain that this artist was part of the Hudson River School of painters and that all of the paintings in this room were created by members of this group
 - i. Ask students to take a few minutes to look around the room
 - ii. Ask students how they feel when they look at these paintings
 - iii. Ask students what larger idea they think these painters were trying to convey
 1. It's possible that the artists believed anything that students might say, but we know for certain that they believed going out into nature to be a spiritual experience that makes one feel small in relation to nature's grandeur
 2. Be sure to bring in to the discussion the scale of the human figures in these works in relation to the landscapes and explain that this is called a figure of identification. The figures almost always have their back to the viewer and are meant to be access points for viewers to put themselves inside the scene.
4. View *Tenth Street Studio of William Merritt Chase*, Reynolds Beal, 1894
 - a. Ask students what kind of place they think this is
 - b. Ask them how it makes them feel
 - c. Explain that this is a painting of the studio of William Merritt Chase, who was the teacher of the artist of the painting, Reynold Beal
 - d. Ask students what they think this painting tells us about how Beal felt about Chase
 - e. Ask students what they think the artist was trying to tell us about Chase or his methods through this painting – ask them to look closely at the objects and why Beal might have chosen to include them in the painting

5. Activity

- a. Ask students to take a moment, close their eyes, and think about their place again
- b. Ask students if it looks different now that they've seen other place
- c. Ask them what time period and environment this place belongs to and how that can be deduced from what the place looks like
- d. Ask students this place represents a larger idea to them or to the world – how does it make them feel? How might they show this emotion in a representation of this place?
- e. Ask students to open their eyes and either draw their version of this place or write a descriptive essay or poem about this place.
 - i. Encourage them use include details that allude to the era in which this place exists, a large concept it might represent, and/or a personal connection they have to this place
- f. If time allows, encourage students to look over their notes and ask any questions that they may still have from the tour and encourage a discussion of any themes or trends throughout the tour. Ask students if they have a new definition or new perspective on the word “place”

Name _____ Date _____

- While on your tour:
- Write down notes about pieces that stand out to you in some way (Include names and/or artists)
 - Write down any questions you may have
 - Quickly sketch a work of art that you want to remember

Think about: Materials used, the message the artist is trying to send, the culture, and the environment.

HAVE FUN!!!

