





Gallery Tour Lesson Plan | RISD Museum of Art

Brittney Bevel | December 2, 2011

Subject: World History	Grade: 10
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	
Tour Theme: Art and Society	
Tour Goal: Study works of art in relation to the social and political contexts in which they were created and received, and consider the strategies artists use to promote awareness, reflection, and change.	
Lesson Theme: Reading Art as Primary Source	
<p>GSEs:</p> <p>HP 1: History is an account of human activities that is interpretive in nature.</p> <p>HP 1-1: Students act as historians, using a variety of tools by formulating historical questions obtaining, analyzing, evaluating historical primary and secondary print and non-print sources</p> <p>HP 3: The study of history helps us understand the present and shape the future</p>	
<p>Lesson Objectives/ Learner Outcomes: <i>As a result of instruction, students will be able to:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determine if an artwork is a viable primary source document 2. Determine bias 3. Critically analyze visual imagery 4. Relate a work of art to cultural/historical contexts 	<p>Evaluation Criteria/Evidence of Success</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students are involved in discussion to create a working definition of primary source and relate that definition to later discussions 2. Students are actively involved in a discussion about who is pictured and who is not. Students show an interpretive understanding of the artist's opinion of the subject 3. Students create a written or drawn narrative showing their understanding of a specific character based on visual clues 4. Students use their and their classmates' narrative to determine cultural/historical context of the artwork
<p>Visual References:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-end;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Robert, <i>Architectural Fantasy</i></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Douglas, <i>Building More Stately Mansions</i></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Dine, <i>Pink Bathroom</i></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Laura Ashley, <i>Sundress</i></p> </div> </div>	
<p>Vocabulary:</p> <p>Society: the aggregate of people living together in a more or less ordered community</p> <p>Primary Source: an artifact, a document, a recording, or other source of information that was created at the time under study. It serves as an original source of information about the topic.</p> <p>Bias: prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another</p> <p>Context: the circumstances that form the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed</p> <p>Mass Media: refers collectively to all media technologies, including the Internet, television, newspapers, film and radio, which are used for mass communications, and to the organizations that control these technologies.</p>	

ADVANCED PREPARATION	
<p>Modifications: Visual references can be altered to fit in a specific unit or curriculum. Educator should plan multiple routes, one including elevators to accommodate for disabled students. Stools provided for students who can't stand.</p>	
<p>Responsibilities During Tour: Monitor students attention levels Model good museum behavior Listen, paraphrase, link Be aware of safety both of museum/objects and of students</p>	<p>Supplies: Pencils Clipboards Postcards or index cards Reproduction of Fisk Douglas</p>
<p>Safety Procedures: Be aware of spaces. Keep pathways open. Be aware of objects. Teacher will carry supplies. No touching. Pencils only.</p>	<p>Additional Logistics: Standing tour of museum</p>
<p>Sources:</p> <p>Earle, S. E., & Ater, R. (2007). <i>Aaron Douglas: African American modernist</i>. New Haven: Yale University Press.</p> <p>Feinberg, J. E. (n.d.). Jim Dine. <i>MoMA The Museum of Modern Art</i>. Retrieved December 1, 2011, from http://www.moma.org/collection/artist.php?artist_id=1547</p> <p>Heritage at Laura Ashley. (n.d.). <i>Laura Ashley</i>. Retrieved December 1, 2011, from http://www.lauraashley.com/page/heritage</p> <p>Jim Dine Prints. (n.d.). <i>Denis Bloch Fine Art</i>. Retrieved December 1, 2011, from http://denisbloch.com/showall.php?id=12</p> <p>Michie, T. S. (2008). <i>Selected works</i>. Providence R.I.: The Museum.</p> <p>Rosenfeld, D. (1991). <i>European painting and sculpture, ca. 1770-1937: in the museum of art - Rhode Island school of design</i>. Providence (R.I.): Rhode Island school of design.</p> <p>RISD Museum of Art</p>	

Introduction: In your 10th grade world history class you have been examining societies and the reactions to major events. What types of sources do historians use to determine societal perceptions of events? What is the difference between a Primary Source and a Secondary Source? What are some examples of each? Today we are going to look at the role that art plays in society. We will see if we can read art objects as Primary Sources.

Hubert Robert, *Architectural Fantasy*, 1802

Essential Ideas/Concepts/Questions investigated:

- Is this a real place?
- Why might Robert have wanted to create a fantasy place?
- Who do you see? What are they doing?
- What do the artist's choices say about the society? What message is Robert conveying by putting these people in this place?
- What is the artist's opinion about these people?
- What is the mood of this painting? What tells you that?
- In light of the French Revolution, what does this say about Robert's opinion and reaction?

Activity: Postcard Quick-Write

- **Goal:** To put students in the moment of creation, to ask them to become a witness and to ask them to interpret the scene in concise writing
- **Materials:** pencils and 3 x 5 index cards (or postcard-sized sheets of paper).
- **Directions:**
 - Take a few minutes to look closely at the artwork. Imagine you were an eyewitness; a part of the scene.
 - Write a description of what you observed (as you would write a postcard message) to someone who wasn't there.
 - Share your completed postcards with the class.

Notes:

- Educated in Paris and Rome, fascination with ruins in Rome
- Views of Paris among the most topographically accurate
- AF contains several famous Roman Monuments but also imaginary buildings and cityscapes
 - References to Horces of San Marco, Apollo Belvedere, Venus d'Medici, Cleopatra, Antinous bas-relief from the Villa Albani, Laocoon Group, Basilica Maxentius in the bridge arch, Winged Victories from the Arch of Titus
- Perspective is the influence of Piranesi's views of Rome
- Optimism for the future of the Louvre

Conclusion: If this isn't a real place, is this painting a valid primary source? Something to consider as we move onto the next work of art is how this particular use of appropriation is essential to the meaning the artist is trying to convey, to the message the artist wants viewers and later generations to hear.

Segue and Introduction: We are jumping ahead in history 142 years to look at a work of art that employs many of the same strategies that Robert's *Architectural Fantasy* does. This is Aaron Douglas' *Building More Stately Mansions*. Take a close look for a few minutes.

Aaron Douglas, *Building More Stately Mansions*, 1944

Essential Ideas/Concepts/Questions investigated:

- How is Douglas using the architecture similarly or differently than Robert?
- Why are these artists referencing the past?
- Why over 100 years later is Douglas employing the same techniques Robert used?
- Who is depicted?
- Who did the artist leave out?
- Does Douglas give us hints about society's perception of these people?
- Is Douglas looking to the past? Or looking to the future?
- What is the mood of this painting? How is that different from the mood of the Robert?

Notes:

- From Topeka, KS, which is flat and low-built
- Moved from the mid-west to Harlem in NYC after getting a degree from the University of Nebraska
- Produced illustrations for *The Crisis* and *Opportunity*, important Harlem Renaissance magazines
- African and Egyptian interests brought him to the attention of WEB Du Bois and Alain Locke
- Considered "the Father of African American arts"
 - Response: "Do not call me the father of African American arts, for I am just a son of Africa, and paint for what inspires me"
- Actively looked for opportunities to increase his knowledge about art early in his career
- Received an Masters from Columbia
- 1940 he moved to Nashville and founded the art department at Fisk University where he taught for 29 years
- Used architecture to connect both history and modernity
- Education and African American labor are the links for disparate landscape
- Study for a mural, another study is at the Fisk museum
- "What I wish to see here is simply that each new generation can and must look back on, face up to, and learn from the greatness, the weaknesses and failures of our past with the firm assurance that the strength and courage certain to arise from such an honest and dutiful approach to our problems will continue to carry us on to new and higher levels of achievement."

Conclusion: Both of these artists present to us their view of an entire society and hopes for the future of that society. Speaking of this painting, a scholar states: "Architecture is symbolic of the mind, of expansion and possibilities, of future growth and ancient civilizations..." All of these elements make architecture ideal imagery through which to view the past, present, and future of people.

Segue and Introduction: Where the last two works are broad and all encompassing, representing an entire group of people, the next two are much more personal reactions. This is Jim Dine's *Pink Bathroom*. As you look closely, try to follow the lines and enter into the painting.

Jim Dine, *Pink Bathroom*, 1963

Essential Ideas/Concepts/Questions investigated:

- If this was the only artifact left by a society, what would your impressions of that society be?
- How is that different or similar to the societies Robert and Douglas presented us?
- What is Dine reacting to?
- What is the mood of this painting?
- What was happening during the 60's? What was the general mood of the country?
- Do those moods match?

Notes:

- Painter, sculptor, printmaker, illustrator, performance artist, stage designer, and poet
- Studied at Cincinnati Arts Academy, Boston Museum School, and Ohio University
- 1st involvement with the art world were Happenings with Allan Kaprow, Claes Oldenburg, and Robert Whitman 1959-1960
- Created first assemblages during the same time period
- Favored motifs include clothing, domestic objects, ties, shoes, and bathroom items, tools and art supplies
- Method involved repeating theme again and again in several mediums
- "personally invested, image-dictated content"
 - common and public become emotional and personal
- Categorized as being apart of several movements but doesn't fit any of them
- Common elevated to iconic
- Work of the 60's is characterized by the aggressive, haphazard energy of Happenings and Abstract Expressionism
- Everywhere he has lived and worked he has established a home base
- Personal is very important

Conclusion: For Dine, personal experiences and perceptions are at the root of everything. He is reacting to events rather than projecting results of those events.

Segue and Introduction: We have looked at three very different works of art and considered them in light of the societies in which they were each created. We discussed the different approaches of the artists to convey meaning. Now let's turn something very different. Laura Ashley created this sundress in 1975. Take a minute to look closely, please feel free to look at the back of it as well. As you're looking, consider this, how can a dress and fashion in general serve as a primary source?

Laura Ashley, Sundress, 1975

Essential Ideas/Concepts/Questions investigated:

- What choices did the artist make?
- What mood is created with the small floral pattern of the textile?
- Is that the same mood that is created by the shape and style of the dress?
- What can clothing tell us about society?
- Contemporary of Dine, how is Ashley's reaction to the 60's and 70's different?
- How do these two very different ideas convey the same message about the time period?

Notes:

- Started printing fabric at her kitchen table in 1953
- Inspired by Victorian handcrafts from the Women's Institute Exhibition at the V&A
- Ashley Mountney became a registered company in 1954, changed their name Laura Ashley Limited to better convey style/audience/mission
- Bernard and Laura moved Wales in 1960
- Rustic and rural Wales served as the primary inspiration for her early patterns
- 1st began making garments in Wales with the help of a seamstress
- Shirts and smocks were meant to be for work and everyday, high popularity turned the focus to fashion
- Victorian interest and late 60's fashion resulted in the maxi length
- 1970's became a worldwide company
- 1980's shift from fashion to home furnishing
- 1985 Laura Ashley dies
- Company now produces clothing, furnishings, paint, wallpaper curtains, carpets, eyewear, towels, tiles, and perfume

Conclusion: As you move on in your studies, consider the major events that are happening right now. What sources of information about those events exist? Analyze those sources for points of view and bias. What will students forty years from now be saying about you and the society you live in?