

# **Modern Art in the Media Center: Information Literacy Across the Curriculum**

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## **Introduction**

Each year, students arrive in the media center eager to check out books. This is, in fact, the reason many give for the media center (a.k.a. the school library) to be in existence. To promote reading advocacy is one of the big three areas that a media specialist is supposed to teach. However, some students are going to enjoy reading and others are not. There will always be students that do not enjoy reading. I am not going to make students like to read, but I will try to make them acknowledge the usefulness of the written word and information technologies to discover how to use it in order to become effective users and producers of information and ideas. While much of the information studied will require reading to access the information, but visual literacy is just an important for gaining information. Students will use many resources, such as websites, videos, in addition to books and reference materials to locate information for this project.

In order to teach information technology, I will be using modern art as my vehicle of delivery. Teaching students about information technology gives them the basis to use technology mediums to find, digest and produce information. By using the surprising art, I hope to draw students into a category not usually shown to them at an elementary school level. I typically use generic projects to introduce students to information technology, such as research of famous African Americans in February. When I do offer a lesson as such, many students already have an understanding of the topic, being taught it in regular curriculum. Offering my curriculum with a partnership with art, students will be able to express creativity in technology and learn about a brand new subject that may spark personal interest.

I am drawn to this topic for several reasons: I have a personal attraction to the visual arts; secondly, I feel that will relate several twenty-first century skills to my students, allowing them to use many different mediums to present the information that they have found and produced. Also, students will be able to use this information in styles that will highlight their styles of learning and personal talents. As it is the goal of the unit for students to become information literate, by expressing their research findings in a method comfortable with each students or groups, the stress of doing poorly is minimized. Modern art breaks away from convention, as students will learn, so this unit will allow flexibility with compilation of research information.

## **Background Information**

I am a media specialist and each grade kindergarten through fifth grade in a Title 1 elementary school. The school is part of a very large, urban school district in Charlotte, North Carolina. The school is located in a low-income area of the city, with a high population of African American and Hispanic students. The school boasts a magnet program that brings students in

from farther than the surrounding neighborhood. This magnet program is a Learning Immersion and Talent Development program, which adds approximately six classes with academically gifted students. The school also has a high population of English as Second Language (ESL) students, with first languages ranging from Spanish to Hmong.

Instructors should have basic background knowledge of Modern Art, in order to support the students in the field. By becoming familiar with popular artists and movements of modern art, the instructor can lead students to become more knowledgeable of the subject. Dempsey's<sup>1</sup> book is a great resource for instructors, as well as viewing modern art at a local museum of modern art (i.e. Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in Charlotte, North Carolina). This curriculum unit focuses on art pieces exhibited and artists represented at the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in Charlotte, North Carolina. The Bechtler's website and accompanying material has been very useful in creating this unit, but all pieces specified are available online.

## **Rationale**

Most school curriculum focuses on reading and writing and the arts often become abandoned in times of financial downturn. When the art teachers disappear from the schools, many times the teachers of the arts go with them. Many teachers are uncomfortable with stepping out of the standard curriculum to integrate arts into their lessons. With only reading, writing and other core subjects, student's visual literacy will suffer. Students today are "immersed in a visual culture of television, videos, and computers"<sup>2</sup> and while these students are using and interpreting these visual images, "they often are unable to analyze and think critically about these images."<sup>3</sup> This curriculum unit will allow instruction of informational tools while creating visually literate students.

Visual literacy is defined as "the ability to interpret, recognize, appreciate, and understand information presented through visible actions, objects and symbols, natural or man-made."<sup>4</sup> Identified as a twenty-first-century skill, visual literacy is essential in navigating the modern world.<sup>5</sup> When financial woes restrict the arts, "the library can step in to fill the need for visual arts education."<sup>6</sup>

To begin a library-based art program, it can begin with analyzing picture books. Lee Galda is a researcher in the field of children and literature and she explores the importance of illustration of children's books and visual literacy. According to Galda, a picture book "is a book in which both illustrations and printed text are essential to the story."<sup>7</sup> In order to fully comprehend a picture book, the reader needs to read the words and look at the picture. Reading a picture book and leading a discussion to read the pictures will allow students to gain a deeper meaning from the book.<sup>8</sup>

In order to understand and discuss visual materials, students need to be comfortable voicing opinions. Many times, modern art is not a replication of the real world (i.e. it does not imitate the world as we know it) and this means students will need to use their imaginations and words to describe it. Students should have this knowledge of modern art and be informed that there is not one correct way to view this art. According to Coad, "children, including those who are not literate or have language difficulties, appear to enjoy the spontaneity of using art-based

techniques as they can provide child-centered structure to enable them to describe their views, environments and worlds in a way that is meaningful to them.”<sup>9</sup>

The average student can benefit from adding visual elements to assist with writing and information skills. An English as a Second Language (ESL) student may see an even bigger benefit with using visuals. “ESL students are the fastest growing group in the U.S. schools today.”<sup>10</sup> and as such, educators need to be prepared to work with them and bring ESL students to the same standards as other students. This is essential with the No Child Left Behind Act, and the arts are included in the general definition of core academic subjects.<sup>11</sup>

A strong art program in a school can have a positive affect on the overall student achievement.<sup>12</sup> Art often gives students a flexible way to think through problems by using creativity. By giving students this “ownership of what they have learned, their perception of academic accomplishment is high.”<sup>13</sup> By using art as a background in teaching core curriculum, “they connect motivation, instruction, assessment and practical application in a way that leads to deep understanding; they merge learning process and content and the encourage higher-order thinking skills.”<sup>14</sup> By using multiple tools of expression (writing, drawing, etc) and a modern art curriculum, students will benefit and grow as learners and gain information literacy by using their visual skills.

## **Objectives**

The mission of the modern media center is to ensure that students are effective users and producers of information and ideas. Classroom teachers have many standards and objectives to meet with many curricular areas, so it is on the media center to assist students to learn the skills necessary to find information and use it properly. This unit will use and teach the Standards for the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Learner as well as North Carolina Standard Course of Study Standards in Information Skills for grade five. In addition to these standards, the Big6 Instructional Strategy will be implemented in this unit of study.

This unit is intended for fifth grade students in traditional classroom settings. Ideally, the students will be on average reading levels and understand the basic uses of media center tools. I also plan to group ESL students will lower English skills with higher level ESL students, so that understanding can be made between students. In addition, to assist with ESL students, vocabulary cards can be prepared for each lesson. Words that may be unfamiliar with students (ESL or not) will be paired with an image and posted at the front of the classroom.

Books used in these units should be well below the average reading level for average fifth graders, as the unit focuses more on the visual art of the reading material. This unit also allows for growth of writing skills and discussion skills, as students will keep an ongoing journal throughout the semester-long unit. This journal will serve has a compilation tool for students to maintain their research; and, it can be used for students to put ideas, drawings and notes. Occasionally, throughout the semester, handouts may be given. Students can glue these into their journals to keep everything organized and they can refer back to them. The journals will be essential is reflection and memory of artwork. Students can use these to sketch ideas as well as write. As a semester is a long length of time, the journals will become helpful tools for student

to compare and contrast art studied and reflect back on material covered for the final project. Journals will stay in the media center for the semester and any notes students accumulate outside of the media center can be glued in separately. Students can have access to the journals outside of class meeting time, but by note allowing the journals outside of the media center will help in loss.

I see five fifth grade classes, one each day, on a six-day rotation schedule. This unit is to be used over the course of two instructional quarters. This allows each class to visit the media center approximately fourteen times over the two quarters. Each class visit is forty-five minutes in length. However, approximately five to ten minutes must be given for book checkout time. Each lesson in this unit is designed to last for approximately thirty-five minutes.

## **Strategies**

This unit is broken down into six sections to be spread out over approximately one-half of the school year, and is broken down into fifteen thirty-five-minute class meetings. Some lessons may need additional class periods depending on the previous knowledge of students and speed of instructor. The six sections of this unit follow the Big6 Instructional Strategy. This strategy will be integrated into the unit because it teaches students to “identify information needs and then find, use, apply, and evaluate information of those needs.”<sup>15</sup>

All strategies and following classroom activities will bring in the study of Modern Art and allow students to identify the information assigned, as well as allow students to discover content and create a final project defining what Modern Art means to them. The study of Modern Art will focus on the instruction of popular modern artists and share brief information about movements. Additional information about popular modern art movements from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries can be found in the Dempsey book, but can include Fauvism (Henri Matisse), Cubism (Pablo Picasso), Surrealism (Salvador Dali) and/or Pop Art (Andy Warhol). It is important that students learn information skills with knowledge of modern art coming from the research discovered during the length of the unit and collaboration with the school’s art teacher. This allows the ongoing project to be a large introductory study of Modern Art to fifth grade students.

An ongoing strategy that will be implemented in this unit will be the use of journals. Each student will receive a composition notebook to compile information gathered for the semester. This journal will be the outlet for students to create and print activities. Also, each class session will consist of a five-to-ten minute warm-up activity. Using a writing prompt, interview or video of artist, etc, the students will have a short journal entry each class to grow knowledge and express personal ideas on modern art and its creators. The students can be given the option to write a reflection, or draw a picture expressing what they see. Students should be supported in writing their own opinions of what they see, as modern art can be viewed very differently for each individual. Students should feel free to ask questions and express appropriate opinions without fear of being wrong. Millard and Marsh studied the effects of words with pictures and found that many children “preferred to draw before writing, because this helped them to think about the content of their composition.”<sup>16</sup> Sample journal writing prompts can include, but not limited to:

Instruct students to create a KWL chart in their journals. In the first page of their journal (before instruction begins), students should fill in the “K” (What I Know) and “W” (What I’d like to Know) about modern art. This could include techniques, artists, places, and/or dates. The students will leave the “L” (What I Learned) blank for now. Students can add to the “L” section as they learn more about modern art and it’s creators.

Present Jackson Pollack’s *Blue Poles*. Ask students what they feel about the painting. Students can also draw during the journal entry to express opinions or assist in writing. Present two images to students presented side-by-side. These images could include Jean Tinguely’s *Albatros* and Pablo Picasso’s *Femme au Chapeau*. Give the students a Venn Diagram to paste into their journals. Ask the students to compare and contrast the two images.

Present two works of different mediums side-by-side. This could include Nicolas de Stael’s *Landscape* and Eduardo Chillida’s *Leki II*. Students can compare and contrast the two works, explaining how they are similar and/or different. Chillida’s is a sculpture, while de Stael’s is a painting. While that is an obvious difference, students should be able to point out similarities in style and/or mood of the works.

Present Paul Klee’s *Ohne Titel (Tanzende Figuren)*. Ask students what this image reminds them of in the real world. Students should respond with a brainstorm of answers reflecting what they see. Students can also draw an image to begin with, and then complete the journal entry with a few sentences of writing.

Present Paul Klee’s *Ohne Titel (Tanzende Figuren)* is part of the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in Charlotte. When budget allows a field trip to a local museum, the students can complete a final journal entry comparing the image presented on a projector/print out to the real thing. Ask the students, “How does the presentation change how you see the image?” This is allowing students to compare the initial to the actual and how it impacts their opinion of it. The nature and feel of an art piece can drastically change by viewing it in person. Students will have a mental picture of how an art piece may look, and viewing it in person may change this opinion. By viewing it virtually, the students will see the image, but not experience it.

After journal entry writing is complete (approximately five-to-ten minutes), I will lead a short discussion about the writing assignment. On the third week on the unit, these talks will become Socratic Seminars led by the students. I will spend this third class period explaining the Socratic Seminar and establishing ground rules. The teacher is to remain silent on these seminars and allow students to lead them. Only one student can speak at one time, and the group will be given a token (such as a paintbrush) to use as a talking tool. Only the person holding the brush can talk, and students will pass it around, allowing each student to discuss his or her journal entry. Emphasis should be placed on respecting each opinion. The guidelines for the Socratic Seminar are:

The instructor should lead the initial Socratic Seminar. The first week of seminars should emphasize behavior management, and strict rules. The instructor should post rules to the Socratic Seminars as a reminder for students each week.

Have students sit in a circle, and only students in the circle can participate.

Assign a leader. This could be the instructor or a student. The leader has a dual role and should lead the group with open-ended questions, but should also participate in the

seminar.

**The Questions:** The questions should be open-ended with no right or wrong answer. The key is for each student to listen to each other, not just offering additional opinions.

Students should observe and reflect on other's opinions.

**The Participants:** The class should actively listen and share their opinions. The leader can guide the answers around the circle, at first, to allow each student to share their ideas and/or opinions.

The instructor and teacher should teach and assist students to disagree in a positive manner and not to argue without good reasoning.

Allow students to pass if they wish. For a student to pass, they simply pass their paintbrush to the next person. The instructor should keep a record book and encourage students to speak throughout the semester. Each student should have participated at some point through the unit.

Given time restraints, the seminars should last no more than 10 minutes. This is a short time for an activity as this, so they will be extended as needed. If students are finding a valuable discussion of opinions, the discussion can be extended and the daily activity can be pushed back. This curriculum unit allows for extra meeting dates for additional work.

Throughout the unit, the use of graphic organizers will be created in the students' journals. This will help in their organization of information that will be used to create final projects. For these final projects, students will be placed in small groups of three to four students during the third (of six) parts of the unit in order to work together to gather, use and organization information. Each group will select an information problem to be solved, with my guidance. These information problems will be to find, use and organize knowledge of modern artist or modern art movements. The graphic organizers can also be used as journal entries, such as a Venn Diagram. Students can compare and contrast works of art using this format. After completing the diagram, students can then write a short entry. This may help those uncomfortable with writing organize their thoughts before writing their entry.

Throughout the unit, the classroom activities will teach information literacy using the aforementioned strategies and multimedia presentations. In addition to discussions, I will lead each activity with a presentation to demonstrate the skills that will be learned during that session. The skills presented will include highlighting information found by students and the information will be presented in a technology format, such as PowerPoint, short videos, or computer-created brochures. These presentations will benefit from the use of an interactive white board, in addition to short lectures. After presentation, students will be asked to practice demonstrated skills with classroom activities.

A "Museum Parking Lot" will also be made available for on-going student questions and concerns. This consists of a poster or small bulletin board, labeled as such, with sticky notes and pencils attached. This board will have a picture of the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in the middle, with questions able to be filled in around the image. If, during the process of the unit, a student has a question, comment or concern he/she can write it on the sticky note and place it in the Parking Lot. When time allows, I can review these notes and answer questions to class and address concerns. Since all questions do not always come up during class, this allows students to address them, and it allows me to give the answer to an entire class, for surely, more

than one student has the same question.

## 1.0 Task Definition

The first section will take three 35-minute class sessions. The Task Definition phase will be used to teach an introduction of Modern Art and proposal of semester project. During these meetings, students should become familiar with the basics of modern art and work with the instructor to determine the information problem that will be solved. For this unit, I will lead them in the information problem. Our “problem” will be to answer questions such as:

What is modern art?

Who was responsible for creating modern art?

Where can I find information about modern art and modern artists?

What did modern art change in the world?

I will be integrating the use of an interactive white board during these meetings to use multimedia resources to give students a basic understanding of Modern Art as it differs from what they already know about art. The active learning environment will also include class discussions to determine what the students want to learn about the subject.

### *Classroom Activity 1 | Essential Question: What is modern art?*

The object of the first classroom activity is to familiarize the students with the task ahead of them. In order to prepare them, they must first have a basic understanding of modern art. This could take several sessions, depending on the time available.

Start the lesson with a quick comparison of various art forms. Show students a classic painting, such as Da Vinci’s *Mona Lisa*. Begin a teacher-lead discussion and ask the children what they see. Next, give them a modern piece, such as Picasso’s *Femme au Chapeau*. Ask the same question. Then, give them the two paintings side-by-side on the screen for the class to see. Allow the discussion to lead into the similarities and differences of the painting. Students should note that the *Mona Lisa* is lifelike (it reflects the real world and/or imitates it), while Picasso’s *Femme au Chapeau* is not. Students can turn and share opinions with their classmates for a few minutes. Does it make it better or worse to create abstract art versus real world imitations? Are there benefits of one or the other? Why? The instructor will then ask the students to create a Venn Diagram in their journals. Teacher will model this in front of the classroom, with the bubbles labeled *Mona Lisa* and *Picasso*. Students should be able to fill in many the Venn diagram with knowledge from the discussion. After this has been completed, the instructor will offer a brief PowerPoint on basic information of Modern Art. This will include dates of modern art and several movements (Fauvism, Expressionism, Ashcan School, Cubism, Futurism, etc). The PowerPoint presentation will also highlight several important modern artists and their work, such as Pablo Picasso, Alberto Giacometti, Jackson Pollock, Fernand Léger, Max Ernst, Jean Tinguely and Le Corbusier. The presentation will also offer a segment with many pieces of art, students will be ask to answer “Modern or Not... and Why?” The purpose of this comparison is to get students with the vocabulary and recognizes that not all art imitates the real world. Art can be created for the sake of creation, not just to reflect what is seen in the everyday. The modern images can include:

Jean Tinguely's *Albatros* (1991)  
Le Corbusier's *Spirales Logarithmiques* (1929-1931)  
Max Ernst's *Projet Pour un Monument a W.C. Fields* (1957)  
Fernand Léger's *Komposition* (1933)  
Andy Warhol's *Marilyn Monroe* (1967)

Students are encouraged to take notes in their journal, as this will be important for the semester project that follows. The instructor will end the first session explaining the project, including daily journal entries, research summary and final project evaluation.

The entire project will take the entire course of the semester. Students will continue to take notes and compile information in their journals. Later in the semester, as noted below, students will have research days in the media center, when they will be using all available resources to gain information on their topics. As decided on the first and second class meetings, students will choose to work individually or in groups to complete this assignment and they will decide what artist or art movement they would like to research.

*Classroom Activity 2 / Essential Question: What do I want to know about modern art?*

To begin, I would lead the students with a KWHL chart (see Appendix A). This chart offers more than the classic KWL chart and prepares students for the task of information seeking. This will be created in their journals and will be the warm-up activity for the day. The "K" and "W" should be one page, with "H" and "L" owning individual pages. Instructor will introduce the KWHL chart and ask students to fill in only the "K" (What I know about Modern Art) and "W" (What I want to know about Modern Art). After students have completed this assignment, the instructor will ask students what they filled in on their charts. After a brief sharing period, the instructor will explain the "H" (How will I find the information?) column of the chart. This part of the chart is very important for information seeking. The mission of this unit is to teach students to become effective users and producers of information and the "H" will serve as the task definition. The students' goals and questions will be laid out in the "H" page/column. The instructor will begin by asking several questions. The students should know that their project will be about modern art and/or famous modern artists, so the following questions should be asked, with students defining their task. If teaching this to multiple classes, each class may outline the project slightly differently. The following questions should be asked to students, and possibly given as a handout for students to fill out and glue to journal:

What does this assignment require me to do?  
What information do I need to complete this assignment?  
What will my final project look like if I do a great job?  
What is the problem that I need to solve?  
What kind of technology would be appropriate for me to use to solve this problem?  
What type of information do I need (i.e. pictures, charts, maps, facts)?  
How much information do I need?  
How much time do I have to complete this project and when can I work on it?  
Am I working alone or in a group to complete this project?  
What are terms and vocabulary I need to understand this subject? What is compilation, space,



color, mood, context, etc?

After answers are acquired, the instructor should compile answers and make copies for students to glue into their journals for future reference. This should clearly outline the assignment for the students and will vary depending on the group of students. I will assign pairs or groups to work on this project together.

## 2.0 Information Seeking Strategies

During the second step of the unit, students will be introduced to the variety of sources that are available and recognize that this information can be obtained from many sources. In addition to investigation, students can gather information by observation and human resources. Discussions will include local places to learn about their subjects, such as local Modern Art museums. If funding is available, students can take a field trip to a local Modern Art museum. Here, they can observe and view Modern Art, as well as using employees to gather information. Students will visit the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in Charlotte, NC and compare images used in class with the actual piece. Students should include a journal entry about viewing the piece in person versus seeing it in class. This trip will be lead by me, with assistance from the fifth grade teachers and the art teacher. Students will be led in a short lesson about the etiquette and rules of the art museum. Students should understand the following rules and be respectful of them.

Keep hands to self. This includes not touching the artwork, museum patrons or each other.

Keep a safe distance between you and artwork.

Use only pencils for note-taking.

No food or drink allowed.

There will only be inside voices.

### *Classroom Activity 3 | Essential Question: Where can information be gathered? (one class)*

Begin the session with a warm-up journal activity and discussion of topic. When warm-up time is complete, the instructor will lead a brainstorming session to discuss the possible places to find the information needed for the project. Students should begin a new page in their journals and write down any place or tool to use to find the information they need to complete the project on modern art. Let students use their imagination to come up with ideas and walk around the media center to take notes.

When the students are winding down, ask the students to circle places that are actually available to them in their media center and/or school. After this is completed, the students can share with one another the ideas they have. The instructor will confirm or deny which resources are available to the students. These resources can include, but not limited to, the internet, reference books, nonfiction books, periodicals, art professionals, and art museums. The instructor can write each of the ideas on cards and stick them to the front of the classroom. When all ideas are up, the class will be asked to rank each of the locations from best to worse. Students can work in groups and decide the rankings of the information seeking places. The

class will come to a consensus and have a ranking for best materials to use to find the information concerning the modern art project.

### 3.0 Location and Access

This phase of the unit will focus on determining what sources are available and if they are usable. As an art unit, sources will extend out of the typical online databases, electronic multimedia and tangible sources within the media center itself. Students will be urged to find sources locally – such as local museums, modern artists and critics. One such resource may be the school’s art teacher, who may be able to offer easy access to art knowledge.

*Classroom Activity 4 | Essential Question: What are appropriate criteria for selecting electronic sources? (one class)*

This session is aimed at teaching students about judging electronic tools, specifically websites. Students will be given a rigor in which to judge the trustworthiness and value of website and information. There should be a ranking, 1-10, for the following questions, with one being “worst” to ten being “best.” The following questions should judge the websites:

- Who wrote the webpage? Can they be contacted?
- What institution published this webpage (university, business, etc)?
- Is the person and/or institution qualified to write this information?
- When was it published and/or updated?
- Do the links on the webpage work?

The instructor will also give the students websites on modern art to peruse and rank. There should be up to five websites for the students to check for validity. The following websites can be used (using search term “modern art”):

- Wikipedia
- Britannica Online
- About.com (“What is Modern Art?”)
- The Museum of Modern Art
- Yale University Art Gallery Online
- Scholar Resource or Online Database
- JSTOR (highly suggested for higher reading abilities)
- Junior Reference
- Academic Search Premier

The students will keep the rankings and notes in their journal. At the end of class, the students should write a brief narrative about the importance of checking the validity of websites before using the information.

*Classroom Activity 5 | Essential Question: How do I locate and use sources in various formats in the media center? (one class)*

In order to gain understanding of location and access of materials in various formats at the media

center, students should practice using them. In this lesson, students will go on a scavenger hunt to find answers in various materials. The instructor will set up the media center with eight different “stations.” These stations will be labeled with the names of various modern artists. The students will be given a handout to be glued into their journal. The handout will name each of the artists to be studied and a blank for citation information. For each of the stations, the student will need to identify three to five facts about the given artist. This information can be compiled in their journal by writing out answers, or by creating a web graphic organizer. Students will write the artist name in a center circle and list facts, definitions or examples on individual arms of the web. (See Appendix B). The questions should include basic information about the artist (birth date and famous art pieces). The stations should be spread out in the media center and students can work in groups or individually. The stations will be:

Magazine Article: *Wacky Artist of Destruction*

Picture Book: *Paris in the Spring with Picasso*

Nonfiction book: *Le Corbusier : A Life*

Nonfiction book: *Bechtler Museum of Modern Art Catalog*

Computer station #1: Giacometti at MOMA

Computer station #2: School of Paris Audio, Bechtler Museum

Encyclopedia: Search “E” for Max Ernst

YouTube Video: Pollock Painting (1950)

Online database search: Gale CENGAGE Learning, *Junior Reference Collection*

In addition to answering the question, each answer should have a citation, where the student indicated the location of the answer (page number, website address, etc) and the student should rank the source from 1-10 depending on the helpfulness and/or ease of use.

#### 4.0 Use of Information

This section of the unit is to allow students to find the information they need for their individual group projects. Students should be familiar with how to use each of the sources and find information. During this phase, students will use journals to compile information found and properly give credit to creators and artists, including written, oral and visual resources.

*Classroom Activity 6 / Essential Question: Where do I find the information I need? (3 classes)*

Now that students are familiar with the variety of sources available to them, it is time for the students to get the information they need to complete their projects on famous modern artists or modern art movements. The students will be given handouts with basic questions to answer. The handouts will be guides to get students started, but with plenty of blank spaces so students can add additional information as needed. (See Appendix C) Students will be given multiple class meetings to compile their information. The instructor will be available and circulating the media center to assist students with using tools to find the information. Students should also find pictures and graphics to go with their assignment. Students should cite the sources they use. The handout will have spaces for citations and instructor will assist with this as well.

#### 5.0 Synthesis

This section of the unit will allow students to work in their small groups to compile information into a presentable product. Students must present information in an appropriate manner to their project. Examples could include PowerPoints, Movies, Podcasts, mock interviews, role-play or creation of artwork that best represents their original information problem – solved. The students will be allowed to choose how to present their information that best suits their learning styles and creative strengths.

*Classroom Activity 7 | Essential Question: How can I best organize my information? (one class)*

Once students have completed note-taking and collecting information, they need to be able to put together the information. This class session should begin with students creating a journal entry about how they would like to present the information they have collected. An instructor-led discussion should follow, with the instructor making notes at the front of the class. Students will share how the best way to share their information. Students can then discuss with groups and decide on how best to proceed with individual projects. Tools to use to compile information can include, but not limited to:

PowerPoint Show

Slide show: Animoto (online-based), Photostory, etc.

Short Movie: Microsoft Movie Maker, iMovie

Brochure: Microsoft Publisher

Audio/Podcast: Audacity

## 6.0 Evaluation

The evaluation period will be spanned out over three class periods, with a possible special extension for the final class meeting. This will allow time for the evaluation of final projects. Before final products are presented, the class and I will work together to create a criterion to evaluate classmate's work. Each product will be judged on the same scale, with peer reviews and teacher reviews. The first activity will be deciding on the rubric to judge the student products, the second class meeting will be the presentation of class products and the third will be discussion of the presentation. The final meeting will also include questions about the success of the semester project as well as time for personal reflections in journals.

*Classroom Activity 8 | Essential Question: How can I decide the quality of each product? (one class)*

The students and I will work together to create a rubric to grade the projects on. Using a one-to-ten scale, students should judge projects. The rubric will be one (did not meet this standard at all, to ten (exceeded expectations). The scale should add up to one hundred points, allowing students to “grade” each other. The teachers will also use the same scale. Questions can include, but not limited to:

Did the assignment answer the information questions?

Could all information be read and understood easily?

Was the assignment entertaining?  
Did you learn something by viewing the project?  
Would you recommend this project to someone else?

### *Classroom Activity 9 / Class Presentations of Products (one-two classes)*

Students will present works of art in an art gallery format. Projects and art from the art classroom collaboration will be displayed and students will have the opportunity to view works. Each work should be numbered for easy identification. Several computers will be set up around for viewing of multi-media projects. During this time students will circulate with rubrics and fill out critiques for other projects. This can be done with individual classes, or students can view and critique projects from other classes. Each student should be given three critique forms, with a place for project number and student names. Teachers from fifth grade classrooms and media specialist will also complete critiques based on the rubric created in activity eight.

### *Classroom Activity 10 / Essential Question: Did the products have successful results? How can they be improved? (one class)*

After the class has presented projects, students will be asked to discuss results, critiques, and scores of individual projects. This should be a discussion involving the students and instructor. Questions that should be addressed:

What did you like about the project? Dislike?  
What could be changed to make this a better experience?  
Do you agree with the average score received? What could you have done better for your individual project?  
What did you learn? Did you enjoy learning about modern art?  
How will you use information skills in the future (i.e. middle school)?

This is the time for students to reflect and really take ownership of their work and grades. It is a very good time for me to see what worked and what did not, in the eyes of the students. I will also spend time with the fifth grade teachers to gain their opinions and insights to the project.

### *Collaboration*

Collaboration is a large component within my school system. Adding additional, supplementary, classroom activities in other special area classrooms can strengthen this unit. The following classroom activities can be completed outside of the media center lessons with Technology and Art teachers during the same semester.

### *Technology Classroom Activities*

As students become knowledgeable of modern artists, they will need a way to organize the information. As stated above, step six is the synthesis of information. Students should decide how to put their information together in a format to be presented to the classes. Collaborating with the technology teacher, the technology instructor will lead the classes researching modern

art, simultaneously, in learning the tools to compile information found. In individual class periods, the technology instructor will guide students in the use of PowerPoint, Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft MovieMaker, or available software. Students can also use online-based tools, such as Animoto. All of these tools should be computer-based and help students understand compiling information in a visually pleasing and understandable manner.

### *Visual Art Classroom Activities*

To fully appreciate the modern art movement, students should have a hands-on experience with creating art. While students are researching in the library, learning composition tools in technology class, students should be creating art in style of modern artists. The art teacher can lead students in creating works of art like cubism and action painting. For action painting, the instructor can lead the class into a brief introduction to Jackson Pollock. She can begin by projecting Jackson Pollock's *Lucifer*. The students should be asked how they believe the painting was created. After a brief discussion, the students will be prepared to create their own action painting by dripping and pouring paint onto paper.

If an art teacher is not available for this activity, this can be integrated into a media center classroom activity. Students should have access to create the artwork they are studying to realize the full affect of importance of what they are researching. The art instructor can also lead students in creating visual art for their projects. Some students may choose not complete their project with computer software, but rather a poster or display. The art instructor can assist with creating visual materials for the final project.

### **End Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Dempsey, Amy. *Styles, schools and movements: the essential encyclopaedic guide to modern art*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Galda, Lee, and Kathy Short. "Visual Literacy: Exploring art and illustration in children's books." *The Reading Teacher* 46, no. 6 (1993): 506-515.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Kramer, Maria V.. "Taking Part in Art." *Children & Libraries* 8, no. 2 (2010): 31-37.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> Galda, Lee, and Kathy Short. "Visual Literacy: Exploring art and illustration in children's books." *The Reading Teacher* 46, no. 6 (1993): 506-515.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

<sup>9</sup> Coad, Jane, Gill Plumridge, and Alison Metcalfe. "Involving Children and Young People in the Development of Art-based Research Tools." *Nurse Researcher* 16, no. 4 (2009): 56-64.

<sup>10</sup> Vardell, Syliva M., Nancy L. Hadaway, and Terrell A. Young. "Sharing the Arts with ESL Students." *Book Links* 12, no. 6 (2003): 55-61.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Miller, Shawn R., and Peggy F. Hopper. "Supporting Reading Goals Through the Visual Arts." *Reading Improvement* 47, no. 1 (2010): 3-6.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Stuht, Amy Colcord, and Janie Yuguchi Gates. "The Case for an Arts-Based Curriculum." *Leadership* 36, no. 4 (2007): 30-33.

<sup>15</sup> Eisenberg, Michael B., and Robert E. Berkowitz. *The Definitive Big6 Workshop Handbook*. 3rd ed. Worthington, OH: Linworth , 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Millard, Elaine, and Jackie Marsh. "Words with pictures: the role of visual literacy in writing and its implication for schooling." *Reading* 35, no. 2 (2001): 54-6

### **Bibliography for teachers**

"Alberto Giacometti." MoMA: The Museum of Modern Art.

<http://www.moma.org/interactives/exhibitions/2001/giacometti/start/flash.html> (accessed September 12, 2010).

This is an interactive website that highlights Giacometti's work displayed at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in late 2001. Users can view works and information about the artist.

"Animoto - The End of Slideshows." Animoto - The End of Slideshows.

<http://www.animoto.com> (accessed October 3, 2010).

This is an internet-based software program that allows users to upload pictures and sound in order to create a slideshow. Educators can receive a free full-access pass by signing up through the education link at the bottom of the main page.

"Bechtler Museum of Modern Art - School of Paris." Bechtler Museum of Modern Art.

<http://www.bechtler.org/School-of-paris#/> (accessed November 7, 2010).

The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in Charlotte, NC offers this interactive page that introduces their collection of Post World War II artwork. This is an audio feature that introduces some of the work.

*Bechtler Museum of Modern Art Catalog*. Charlotte, NC: Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, 2009.

The Bechtler's current catalog offers a wide array of artwork used throughout this unit.

"Big 6 Resources - UEN." Utah Education Network.

<http://www.uen.org/k12educator/big6/> (accessed November 4, 2010).

This is a resource that outlines the Big6 instructional strategy, including examples of plans for each of the six steps.

Brouillette, Liane. "How the Arts Help Children to Create Healthy Social Scripts: Exploring the Perceptions of Elementary Teachers." *Arts Education Policy Review* 111 (2010): 16-24.

This study focuses on the development of children in emotions and the responses to the actions of other people. This study included interviews with inner-city elementary school teachers who have worked with artists in their classrooms.

Brown, Eleanor D., Barbara Benedett, and M. Elizabeth Armistead. "Arts Enrichment and School Readiness for Children at Risk." *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (2010): 112-124.

This article supports the arts as it offers school readiness skills to students from various backgrounds.

Bryon, William. "Wacky Artist of Destruction." *Saturday Evening Post*, April 21, 1962. This is a primary source that offers an insight to Jean Tinguely's life and works.

Coad, Jane, Gill Plumridge, and Alison Metcalfe. "Involving Children and Young People in the Development of Art-based Research Tools." *Nurse Researcher* 16, no. 4 (2009): 56-64.

This study focuses on creating art-based activities to work with family communications. These activities can help children communicate their feelings and get them started talking.

Cooper, Linda. "Supporting Visual Literacy in the School Library Media Center: Developmental, socio-cultural, and experimental considerations and scenarios." *Knowledge Quest* 36, no. 3 (2008): 14-19.

The author focuses on the importance of teaching children to interpret visual messages in a society that focuses on how to understand and construct textual messages.

Dempsey, Amy. *Styles, schools and movements: the essential encyclopaedic guide to modern art*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

This book provides a basic knowledge of modern art, including the history, movements and prominent artists.

Drumm, John E, and Frank M Groom. "Teaching Information Skills to Disadvantaged Children." *Computers in Libraries* 19, no. 4 (1999): 48-51.

This article is a brief look at teaching disadvantaged children information skills, particularly internet skills. This is often difficult when children are not exposed to internet at home.

Eaton, Gale, and Cheryl McCarthy. "The Art of the Possible: Integrating Information Skills and Literature into the Curriculum." *Emergency Librarian* 23, no. 1 (1995): 24-29.



Using the goals of ‘Information Power: Guidelines for School Media Programs’ the author focuses on created a good library program, even with financial restraints.

Eisenberg, Michael B., and Robert E. Berkowitz. *The Definitive Big6 Workshop Handbook*. 3rd ed. Worthington, OH: Linworth , 2003.

This book includes introduction and details of the Big6 instructional strategy by the creator of the program.

FunnyorDie. "Reading Rainbow Arthur's Eyes pt. 1." YouTube .

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCrocgCnR2M> (accessed November 9, 2010).

YouTube video that offers tricky images as “riddles for the eye” and shows how people may see the same image differently.

Galda, Lee, and Kathy Short. "Visual Literacy: Exploring art and illustration in children's books." *The Reading Teacher* 46, no. 6 (1993): 506-515.

This article introduces the concept of visual literacy and the importance of using images to develop comprehension with children. The author uses picture books and activity ideas to build visual literacy.

Hallam, Jenny, Mani Das Gupta, and Helen Lee. "An Exploration of Primary School Teachers' Understanding of Art and the Place of Art in the Primary School Curriculum." *Curriculum Journal* 19, no. 4 (2008): 269-281.

This research connects the link between educational policy and the development of expression in child art. The authors also explore the understandings of art and teaching practices.

"Jackson Pollock." Abstract Art. [http://www.abstract-art.com/abstr\\_expressionism/ap01\\_pollock\\_blue\\_poles.htm](http://www.abstract-art.com/abstr_expressionism/ap01_pollock_blue_poles.htm) (accessed October 28, 2010).

A website that offers an image of Pollock’s *Blue Poles* to use in this unit.

"Junior Reference Collection." Gale. <http://www.gale.cengage.com/jrc/> (accessed September 12, 2010).

This is a link to the Junior Reference collection, an online database for primary-aged students.

Kramer, Maria V. "Taking Part in Art." *Children & Libraries* 8, no. 2 (2010): 31-37.

This article offers a program that builds an art center in the library, which can help make up for lack of arts in schools.

Marcus, Isabel. "Using Storytime to Teach Information Skills." *Library Talk* 15, no. 4 (2002): 12-14.

Focusing on the importance of reading aloud to children, the article offers ideas to using story time that invite conversation and expression of feelings and ideas.

McPherson, Keith. "Visual Literacy and School Libraries." *Teacher Librarian* 32, no. 2 (2004): 58-59.

The author discusses ways to improve visual literacy in the classroom, including student and teacher's skills and learning preferences.

Millard, Elaine, and Jackie Marsh. "Words with pictures: the role of visual literacy in writing and its implication for schooling." *Reading* 35, no. 2 (2001): 54-61.

This dual-study article highlights the importance of visual and drawing in the process of writing. Students, particularly boys, express themselves with drawing and that often leads to meaningful writing.

Miller, Shawn R., and Peggy F. Hopper. "Supporting Reading Goals Through the Visual Arts." *Reading Improvement* 47, no. 1 (2010): 3-6.

This article supports the studies that students develop better learning habits with integrated art studies, because children can take ownership of what they have learned, by creating art, they create learning.

Miller, Susan A., and Ellen Booth Church. "How Children Build Skills Through Art." *Early Childhood Today* 17, no. 7 (2003): 26-30.

As the title would indicate, this article shows how children build various skills through art, including hand-eye coordination and creativity.

Rabkin, Nick, and Robin Redmond. "The Arts Make a Difference." *Educational Leadership* 63, no. 5 (2006): 60-64.

This article focuses on the importance of arts in public education. Studies show that arts improve student achievement, although they are often cut before other programs.

Scott, Kristen J., and Lee A. Plourde. "School Libraries and Increased Student Achievement: What's the Big Idea?." *Education* 127, no. 3 (2007): 419-429.

This article develops a plan to deepen information skills in the media center and studies research that bridges the connection of a quality school media program and student achievement.

*Standards for the 21st-Century Learner*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2007.

The book that states the standards of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner and its implementation in the classroom.

Stuht, Amy Colcord, and Janie Yuguchi Gates. "The Case for an Arts-Based Curriculum." *Leadership* 36, no. 4 (2007): 30-33.

This article focuses on the importance of using arts in the curriculum to work with different learning styles of children.

Vardell, Syliva M., Nancy L. Hadaway, and Terrell A. Young. "Sharing the Arts with ESL Students." *Book Links* 12, no. 6 (2003): 55-61.

The article highlights the opportunities of using arts with ESL students, including the benefits of visual aids in comprehension.

Weber, Nicholas. *Le Corbusier: a life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008.  
An in-depth biography of artist as he became a self-taught architect in Paris.

"Yale University Art Gallery." YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY.  
<http://artgallery.yale.edu/> (accessed November 7, 2010).

This website highlights some of the basic information about art, as well as introduces visitors to the galleries upcoming shows.

jubmonteiro. "Pollock painting (1950) ." YouTube .  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7bICqvmKL5s> (accessed November 7, 2010).  
A YouTube video showing Jackson Pollock painting, while the artist speaks about it.

### **Reading List for Students**

Appel, Julie, and Amy Guglielmo. *Feed Matisse's fish* . New York: Sterling, 2006.  
A picture book that includes artwork from Matisse, Kahlo and Chagall with a touch-and-feel element.

Chagall, Marc, Elisabeth Lemke, and Thomas David. *Marc Chagall: what colour is paradise?*. Munich: Prestel, 2000.  
An illustrated biography that guides readers to look at and decipher Chagall's art.

"Destination Modern Art." MoMA: The Museum of Modern Art.  
<http://www.moma.org/interactives/destination/#> (accessed November 7, 2010).  
An interactive website that allows children to delve into the MoMA.

Finger, Brad. *13 modern artists children should know*. Munich: Prestel, 2010.  
Stories, information and bright art allow children to learn about modern and postmodern art and their creators. This book also includes do-it-yourself activities.

Ipcar, Dahlov Zorach. *The cat at night* . Yarmouth, Me.: Islandport Press, 2008.  
The artwork resonates Matisse cutouts, while readers follow a view from a cat's perspective and how it differs from that of humans.

Manetas, Miltos. "Jackson Pollock." Jackson Pollock by Miltos Manetas.  
<http://www.jacksonpollock.org> (accessed July 7, 2010).  
An interactive website that allows users to create electronic drip-paint artwork.

Oldham, Todd. *Kid made modern*. Los Angeles: Ammo Books, 2009.  
Hands-on art projects that reflect modern design.

Reynolds, Peter. *Ish* . Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick Press, 2004.  
Follows a young girl who likes her older brother's drawings, even though they are realistic. She says a picture of a vase looks "vase-ish," with lots of unique line drawings.

Rodari, Florian, and Henri Matisse. *A weekend with Matisse*. New York: Rizzoli, 1994.  
Learn about Matisse by taking a tour through his life.

Rodari, Florian. *A weekend with Picasso*. Pbk. ed. New York: Rizzoli, 1996.  
A book that steps into the world of Picasso by allowing the reader a tour through the artist's studio and life.

Saxton, Jo. *Snail trail: in search of a modern masterpiece*. London: Frances Lincoln Children's, 2010.  
An early reader will appreciate the snail as he travels past eight modern art pieces, looking for a picture that best represents him.

Sortland, Bjorn, and Lars Elling. *Anna's art adventure*. Minneapolis, Minn.: Carolrhoda Books, 1999.  
This picture book follows Anna, in her imagination, as she visits an art museum, but blends into the pictures and meets many famous artists and learns about their styles.

Wright, Jessica Noelani. *Come look with me: exploring modern art*. New York: Bank Street College of Education for Lickle Pub., 2002.  
A beautifully printed book that shows children twelve works of art with narrative about the artist and work and well as questions to think about.

Yolleck, Joan. *Paris in the Spring with Picasso*. New York: Schwartz & Wade , 2010.  
Illustrations by Margorie Priceman adds to the educational content of the story and pull you into Paris.

### **List of Materials**

Journal for each student  
Glue sticks  
Pencils  
Computer