



## **The Influence of WWI on Art and Artists**

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Art and Social Studies/Grade 3

**Keywords:** WWI Artists, Trench Art, Shell Shock, Influenza Pandemic 1918 -1920, Georgia O’Keeffe, Claggett Wilson, George Bellows, John Singer Sargent, Charles E. Burchfield, Horace Pippin, War Artists, virtual art gallery

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** This Curriculum Unit will help my Third Grade students discover the many ways that artists responded to World War I and the influence of the war had on an individual’s art work. The unit will look at art by soldiers and civilians, art commissioned by the military, and individuals expressing their emotions within their art. I will introduce my students to the artists of WWI, artists who served in the war as soldiers and those men whose military role was as a “war artist”. This unit will also look at how the 1918 – 1920 Influenza Pandemic affected the home front and soldiers who served. Art can help soothe one’s feelings whether it is anger, grief, fear, or uncertainty.

John Singer Sargent is an example of a “war artist” who was placed in the war to document it by painting battles and the soldiers' emotional fatigue. Other artists served in the war or were drafted into it such as Horace Pippin, Charles E. Burchfield, and Claggett Wilson. Georgia O’Keeffe is the only woman that I highlighted in this unit. She did not serve in the war, but her brother Alexis did. O’Keeffe became ill with the virus during the pandemic that broke out at the end of the war. O’Keeffe painted a picture called “The Flag” that expressed her strong emotions about the effects of war on soldiers and about the pandemic that took the lives of so many people.

This unit also includes how families were soothed by the arts during a stressful time in our history, the 1918 – 1920 Influenza Pandemic. I compare how families then coped with Influenza and our present pandemic COVID-19 by using the arts to pass the time during quarantine. Soldiers also used the arts to pass the time in the trenches between fighting by finding pieces of metal and turning them into pieces of art. The arts keep your mind busy and your hands doing something, like with cross-stitch, knitting, painting, sculpting with found objects, or writing. I want my third graders to understand that the arts communicate a message,

record an event, express opinions/feelings and become an outlet to comfort people in a time of uncertainty.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 210 students in Art/Grade 3.*

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# **The Influence of WWI on Art and Artists**

*Teresa S. Strohl*

## **Background**

Elon Park Elementary is an elementary school located in Charlotte, NC. It is in Charlotte Mecklenburg school district, which is one of the largest in the State of North Carolina and diverse with 178 schools. There are 1096 students within the school with a wide range of academic abilities. Elon Park Elementary is referred to as a neighborhood school located in the suburbs of Charlotte, NC. The majority of the student population comes from highly educated families with the means to travel outside of the Charlotte area. This is significant because students from this school may be more aware of art museums and local attractions. I keep this in mind when I plan my lessons by bringing in more local artists, and including local themed art exhibitions. This school promotes excellence in student achievement and growth. There are 54 classrooms with 100% fully licensed teachers, 85% are highly qualified. The demographics of the school is 44.5% White, 37.6% Asian, 6.9% African American, Hispanic 8.7%, 1.8% Multi-Racial, .3% American Indian, and .2% Pacific Islander.

I teach Visual Arts at Elon Park Elementary two times a week for 55 minutes each time. Due to the nature of the topics and the limited time with students, most of my lessons require at least two or more class sessions. This specific unit “The Influence of WWI on Art and Artists” will take approximately six weeks to complete about 12 class times. As an art educator, I inspire my students by exposing them to famous art masterpieces that relate to the themes I am covering. I routinely look for ways to connect my art lessons to the subjects that the students are focusing on in the general education classroom, their life experiences, and virtual learning setting.

I am lucky to have a large art room with eight tables and a large drying rack. I have storage for supplies, three sinks and a separate room for the kiln. My students can create an array of 2D and 3D projects. My school website has student work displayed and a blog page for families to post comments about student work. I frequently display student work in the community which provides an opportunity for students to learn from each other; it motivates students and let students to appreciate the work of others.

This unit “The Influence of WWI on Art and Artists” will be implemented in the third grade. Because I teach both academically gifted and general education students, it is imperative that I differentiate my lessons to keep the students motivated and challenged in my art room. Art brings forth excitement and enthusiasm of most students and these third graders are no exception! Presently my classes have temporarily changed due to COVID-19, I have fewer

students in-person on an A and B rotation and more students as remote learners at home. In the future, I will be teaching these lessons to four separate classes with approximately 26 students to a class. Producing art taps into the critical mind-set of students as they develop answers to questions, conduct research, develop comprehension skills, make meaningful connections, communicate meaning, show beauty and practice creativity.

## **Rationale**

No matter what unit I am teaching, I want my students to leave my class with a strong understanding of the subject that I am integrating into visual arts. I always strive to intersect two or more topics of interest, keeping my students continuously engaged. Through this curriculum unit, I aim to incite curiosity about war artists during WWI and how the home front relied on the arts to maintain the mental well-being and stability throughout the war. The WWI artists that I have selected for this unit had their health impacted in some way, resulting in the need for emotional and physical healing. This unit will show third graders that war has a rippling effect through a nation -- not just on the soldiers, but on the home front as well. I plan to show them how war lingers on beyond the end of the war.

Originally this unit was going to end with an in-person art show but since our present-day challenges with COVID-19 have impeded all gatherings, I came up with the virtual art gallery. I created the virtual art gallery to show my third graders the artists' famous works that they would be learning about in this unit. Students will create their own virtual art gallery to display their 5 mini narrative artworks. During COVID-19 I needed a way to display my students' work so I copied the virtual art gallery from this unit and made one that I could use for my remote learners. It turned out to be a great way for parents to see their work.

Soldiers had to contend with heightened levels of stress and boredom thanks to WWI, just as my third graders have had to deal with throughout COVID-19. I recently polled my third-grade students and asked what they did during the first few weeks of being homebound or quarantined. Of the students polled, 17 out of 21 relied on some form of the arts to get them through the emotions and anxiety they felt. Everyone had to find a way to cope with uncertainty, stress, and anxiety. Soldiers in the trenches, who at this time were mostly British, French and German, had to escape momentary boredom during the war. Soldiers waited in the trenches for long periods of time awaiting action. Soldiers were on edge and needed to keep their hands and minds busy. While waiting soldiers would find pieces of metal on the ground to sculpt into pieces of art. Soldiers would pick up old artillery shells and etch onto them and draw in their journals to relieve the stress they were feeling. Some soldiers made instruments out of old pieces of wood lying around so they could relax to the sound of music. Today we take for granted that war damages and isolates individuals both physically and psychologically, but it was not until

this war that doctors began to recognize it. Up until WWI most soldiers were unable to access medical aid for mental anguish as a result of war. Keeping their minds busy with distractions soothed them, just as my students felt during their time in quarantine. The art soldiers made while fighting in war is referred to as trench art.

The United States decided to enter the war in April of 1917, but many American soldiers did not arrive overseas until 1918. Americans wanted the US to stay neutral because of the economic boom the country was experiencing, dividing opinions about the war. The Spanish-American War left Americans wanting to stay out of foreign affairs. Americans realized the war destroyed European buildings, roads, and power supplies and they didn't want that to happen in the United States. Europe experienced long-lasting effects on its economy, public health and infrastructure. While men were fighting in Europe, women's work shifted from invisible labor on farms and factories to more visible positions in the public sphere to where they often held positions of authority.

Meanwhile, the United States built a stronger economy during the war due to a substantial increase in manufacturing needs. Charlotte, North Carolina was selected by the federal government to have a training camp site called Camp Greene. This was exciting news the Federal Government was going to invest in Charlotte, North Carolina. The economic boom was hitting the Charlotte area by building roads, buildings, and providing more food and medical supplies to the war front. Before America entered the war, a neighboring area in North Carolina now called Rowan County had large textile mills that produced cloth, towels, and tents to sell overseas and eventually in the US.

During 1918, another mysterious threat struck the world – the 1918-1920 Influenza Pandemic nicknamed the Spanish Flu. Medical professionals did understand influenza, but they had never seen this strain before. It was unpredictable and untreatable, similar to our own recent experience with COVID-19. Doctors were not sure in the beginning how it was spread. They urged communities to wear masks, not to spit, and to avoid gathering in groups. With this illness came a quarantine, keeping soldiers and families isolated. They needed an outlet to pass the time, similar to what the soldiers would do in the trenches while waiting to fight, create trench art from found objects. On the home front, families were buying a Victrola for listening to music, writing in journals, painting, and writing postcards. All these past times during 1918 relieved the stress citizens and soldiers were feeling from war and from being isolated during a global pandemic. During both the global pandemic of 1918 and the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, the arts were the main source of entertainment because art is an activity that can be created or enjoyed while in isolation.

Another way in which the arts evokes emotion is through conveying a message, recording an event, and telling a story. The artists I have chosen for my third graders to look at are mostly

men who served in the military. They were charged to illustrate the war, or had a personal emotional connection to the war. John Singer Sargent was a famous portrait painter who had painted two Presidents: Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. He was the perfect artist to illustrate new weaponry used in war and the soldiers' fatigue and facial expressions. Sargent was placed in the war as a "War Artist".<sup>1</sup> Charles Burchfield was drafted in the Army and was honorably discharged with the rank of Sergeant. Claggett Wilson also served as a Brigade Headquarters Chief in the Navy and later as an aide to Brigadier General, Wendell Neville. Both Burchfield and Wilson served as officers so they had a different view of the war than an enlisted man.<sup>2</sup> George Bellows enlisted in the Army, but he never fought overseas. He relied on the news for his depictions of the war.<sup>3</sup> Horace Pippin also enlisted in the Army first in the 15<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment and then was re-designated to 369<sup>th</sup> US infantry after the US declared their entry into the war. Pippin's infantry was all black with white officers.<sup>4</sup> Georgia O'Keeffe is the only female artist I chose to show how emotions are a big part of an artists' work. O'Keeffe did not serve in the war but she had a personal connection and helped illustrate the extent of the war's deep impact on Americans.<sup>5</sup>

The arts have been a way to release one's worries and to tell a story through expression, whether with music, painting, fiddling with found objects, or cross-stitch embroidery/knitting. Soldiers and civilians needed the arts to relieve their stress and worries over the war the uncertainty of war. Soldiers were injured and were permanently disabled from fighting in the war, resulting in a dire need for some kind of release. Soldiers in 1917 also dealt with "Shell Shock," thought to be triggered by the shock of thousands of shells raining down above your head. The shell casings shook the earth and were thought to shake the minds of the soldiers. In 1917, doctors couldn't agree on whether "Shell Shock" was a real thing or just a way for soldiers to get out of fighting, fake an injury, or get sent home. For decades the legitimacy of shell shock was debated, but today medical professionals call it Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

The artists throughout this unit are narrative painters who tell a story of the war through their paintings or express strong feelings about the war. One of the artists that I have chosen is my all-time favorite, Georgia O'Keeffe. She started teaching art in 1911 and left to pursue her own art in 1914. What I did not know was that her brother, Alexis, entered the war in France and eventually died in 1931 from the long-term, debilitating effects of mustard gas he experienced during the war. Georgia was directly affected by WWI, as she experienced the gradual effects of the mustard gas secondhand by watching her brother live through it for 12 more years. At the end of the war Georgia painted a large picture of a flag dripping it is called, "The Flag". The red color dripping from the flag representing blood which expressed Georgia's disdain toward the glorification of war. She felt the young boys who were sent to war needed to understand the reasons behind fighting in the war.<sup>6</sup>

Another artist was Horace Pippin, a self-taught black artist from West Chester, PA. He started painting at a young age. Before the war, friends and neighbors asked him to paint them doing everyday activities. As a soldier, Pippin was shot in the arm during the war and ended up with limited mobility thanks to a lack of immediate medical attention, most likely due to the racial discrimination in the army's medical care system. Pippin did persevere and found a way to hold up his arm to help him paint. He started showing his work in local galleries and his art was soon referred to as primitive narratives. These artists are just a few that students will learn about during this unit. <sup>7</sup>

## Objectives

This third-grade unit will explain how the visual arts communicate a message and comfort people with sounds and feelings in a time of crisis. War artists were placed in battle to depict the emotions of the soldiers and battles that were fought. This unit will give students an understanding of how people illustrate a message by interacting with objects and places that define or shape one's life. Students will create their own narrative pictures of everyday life, like those of Horace Pippin, "Man on a Bench" or "Chairs". Artists have influenced opinions, raised questions, inspired dialogue, and created broader awareness both in their communities and around the world. Each of the artists in this unit corresponded not only to the historical periods in which the artist worked but also reflects ways art can be used to soothe and cope with anxiety.

Another way for soldiers to communicate was to write short messages on postcards. The world today is technologically advanced, so students do not think to write a letter or even a postcard; their first thought is to write an email or tweet. In 1917 soldiers could only write letters or a postcard, and soldiers were pressed for time on the battlefield so short messages on the back of a postcard was their primary source of communication. Postcards communicate thoughts and emotions through words and images. In this unit, one of the lessons will be to design a handmade postcard, write a short message, and mail the postcard to our service men and women, giving the students a sense of what the soldiers experienced in 1917. My niece's husband is a pilot for the Navy and I will have him connect me and my students with servicemen and women who we can write to. Like pen pals, my students will send hand-drawn postcards instead of letters. Students enjoy getting and reading postcards from others, giving them a special feeling of importance.

I want third graders to understand how images influence our view of the world. Georgia O'Keeffe's famous painting of "The Flag" was painted shortly after she contracted Influenza. She survived the virus but she knew millions didn't. An artist incorporates their feelings and emotions in their work, and this passion communicates a message. George Bellows painted his strong feelings about the execution of Edith Cavell, a British nurse. The Germans believed Edith Cavell was a spy and eventually executed her. This caused an international controversy for many

reasons. Cavell became a controversial symbol of the war, and many poets wrote poetry and artists painted pictures of her.<sup>8</sup>

Governments involved in the war would censor communication to the home front. They wanted the war to only show the upbeat stories, not the horrors of war. The government would read postcards and letters and artists were placed in the war as war artists to paint what they were told so governments could control the message and to keep maneuvers and troop locations a secret. John Singer Sargent's "Gassed" did get criticized by the government when he showed the harsh realities of a field full of gassed and blindfolded men walking in somewhat of a line.<sup>9</sup>

I want my third-grade students to find their own voice and style in their drawing or paintings similar to the artists I have highlighted. I want students to understand that if artists cannot find something interesting to communicate to the viewer, the artwork will be lacking that special something. The arts do influence our views of the world around us by providing a message quickly and effectively communicating a feeling or emotion. The arts also soothe our uncertainty and anxiety about a situation.

## **Artists' Biographies**

Artists: Horace Pippin, Charles E. Burchfield, Claggett Wilson, John Singer Sargent, George Bellows, and Georgia O'Keeffe

*Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 - 1986)*

Georgia O'Keeffe graduated in 1904 from Chicago Institute of Art with an art education degree. She taught art for a few years. Georgia lived on a farm with her parents and six siblings. Her brother Alexis trained as an engineering officer in WWI. Georgia did not agree that the United States should enter WWI she tried to persuade her young students to continue their education instead of joining the war effort. Georgia soon became smitten with a popular photographer and art dealer named Alfred Stieglitz. She still discouraged glorifying the war. In the midst of her antiwar efforts she contracted Influenza and left teaching for good. While recuperating from the flu she painted one of her least famous paintings, "The Flag". According to a letter O'Keeffe wrote to Paul Strand, a friend and fellow photographer, "Everything seems to be whirling or unbalanced—I'm suspended in the air—can't get my feet on the ground... I should think going to war would be a great relief from this everlasting reading about it—thinking about it—hearing talk about it—whether one believed in it or not—it is a state that exists and experiencing it in reality seems preferable to the way we are all being soaked with it second hand—it is everywhere... it's all like a bad dream."<sup>10</sup>In this quote she expresses her feelings about the war and adding to her fears of her brother's safety.





Figure 21: O'Keeffe in 1917

The Flag painting represented O'Keeffe's fears about the war and her reaction to Spanish Influenza that she had contracted around the same time as she painted "The Flag" and when the US entered the war. Her brother Alexis who entered WWI in France and died from exposure to Mustard Gas 12 years later. The red coloring in the flag represents blood and the gradual effects of the war such as Mustard Gas exposure, millions of people who contracted and died from Influenza, and soldiers who experienced disability. According to one of many biographies written about O'Keeffe, Roxana Barry Robinson describes "The Flag", "sets a drooping flag against a starless darkening sky. The flag flutters limply, stripped of its stars and stripes, its only color, and that of the pole, is blood red." <sup>11</sup>Georgia O'Keeffe became famous for her large flower and bone compositions. "The Flag" is in the Milwaukee Art Museum but it was not displayed for many years after the war due to its antiwar sediment.



"Figure 12: "The Flag," Georgia O'Keeffe, 1918

### *Charles E. Burchfield (1893 - 1967)*

Charles E. Burchfield was drafted and honorably discharged from the Army as a Sargent. When Burchfield was a child he loved nature, bringing about his obsession with camouflage designs. Burchfield didn't create the camouflage design, an American artist named Abbott Thayer did. Burchfield was influenced by Thayer's design of camouflage and the cubism art movement which helped to create his puzzle piece camouflage look. Burchfield used watercolor in his Camouflage paintings using colors from nature to blend into the landscape. Burchfield did paint

primarily with watercolor showing other artists that watercolors would travel well and used properly could get the same hues as oil paints.



Figure 3: "Untitled (Camouflage Design)," Charles Burchfield, 1918

This painting was extremely large and used the same color palette as nature with green hues, brown hues, and yellow hues all loosely blended together to capture the look of the landscape.<sup>12</sup>

#### *Horace Pippin (1888 - 1946)*

Horace Pippin a self-taught artist before serving in WWI. While fighting in France during WWI he filled his sketchbook with pictures of wounded soldiers, the trenches, and military weapons until he was wounded. His arm was wounded in battle. He lost muscle control in his right arm so after the war he didn't know how he would paint again. He soon realized that he could hold up his paint brush with his other hand so that is how he continued to paint. Pippin was lucky to find his way back to painting. Many soldiers were not as lucky they were forever changed by their disability.

Pippin's paintings looked like they were firsthand accounts of a scene but in reality he was never there, such as in the painting of "John Brown Going to His Hanging." I realize the John Brown painting is dated 1942 well after WWI. This painting is one of Pippin's most famous. I thought this painting demonstrated how successful Pippin was after the war especially for a black artist. The subject of Pippin's painting, John Brown became a symbol or martyr for anti-slavery, and he was an abolitionist who was hung similar to George Bellows painting of "The Murder of Edith Cavell" who also became a symbol during this time period. Pippin's simple figures and one color backgrounds brought the viewer into the scene. According to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, "Pippin's grandmother was present at the hanging which has never been proven. By including her - the only black figure in any of the artist's history paintings - Pippin emphasized his personal connection to Brown's legacy of black liberation".<sup>13</sup> He eventually was known for his primitive narratives (simple paintings that tell a story).



Figure 4: "John Brown Going to his Hanging," Horace Pippin, 1942

*Claggett Wilson (1887 – 1986)*

Wilson served as a Brigade Headquarters Chief and later became an aid to Brigadier General, Wendell Neville. Wilson served as a lieutenant in the Marines seeing a great deal of combat on the frontlines. He was awarded the Navy Cross and a citation for bravery under fire. He was wounded twice and always felt the effects of the mustard gas. He painted a series of war paintings which were gruesome due to the death and injury he saw being on the frontlines but the paintings have a dream-like quality about them. After the war he became a versatile artist he painted portraits, murals, clothing designer, and set designer.

Wilson depicted the soldiers during the war with grimace on their faces, the yellow hue in the air and exhaustion due to fighting.



Figure 5: Grenadier Cut Off in the Flaming Woods," Claggett Wilson, 1919

As you can see in this painting the yellow mustard gas is all over the background. The German soldier is carrying a weapon ready to engage at any time because he heard an explosion that shattered the tree. Wilson drew the body using simple shapes and exaggerated facial expressions giving the painting a cartoon-like look. Art critics have pointed out that his work is, "pure cinema".<sup>14</sup> Wilson depicted German foot soldiers as well as fellow victims of World War I.

*George Bellows (1882 - 1925)*

Bellows narrative paintings were similar to Horace Pippin, both men were able to bring the viewer into the scene they painted. Duncan Phillips part of a committee composing the exhibition of George Bellows, “Edith Cavell” painting said, “He has created an unforgettable composition – the finest of his career. There is about it an element of grandeur and tragic beauty, never before seen in the rather journalistic art of this brilliant painter”.<sup>15</sup> Bellows was not an eyewitness to the murder of Edith Cavell he heard about her execution and depicted her as an angel because she was murdered for saving Allied soldiers. Edith Cavell became a symbol of the war similar to Pippin’s John Brown painting. There were books, paintings, and poems written about her and John Brown. Bellows was highly critical of censorship during the war. Some war artists were told what to paint so that the home front wouldn’t be worried about their soldiers or that potential soldiers wouldn’t join the service.

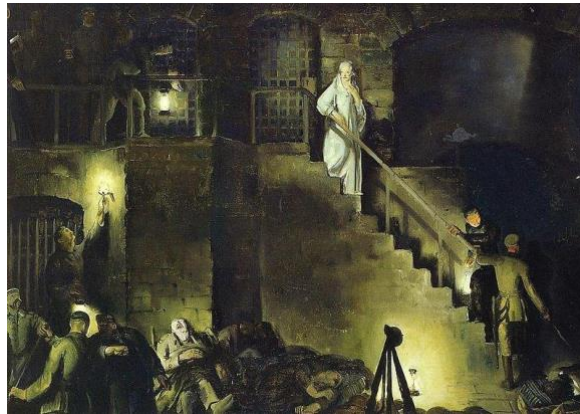


Figure 6: “Edith Cavell,” George Bellows, 1918

*John Singer Sargent (1856 - 1925)*

One of the most iconic paintings of WWI called “Gassed”. John Singer Sargent was originally a portrait painter but was appointed by The British Memorial Committee to be an official war artist during WWI. Art critics viewed “Gassed” both negatively and positively. President of the Royal Academy, Sir Aston Webb said “Gassed” showed “how the bravery of our men had persisted in spite of the most devilish inventions, “which means that our men never gave up even in adverse circumstances.”<sup>16</sup> The Royal Academy also said the painting is “the most interesting since the war began”. The opposite view of “Gassed” it failed, with all its painter-like qualities and by no means altogether satisfactory compromise between decoration and pictorial realism. Mr. Sargent has spent months at the front to collect the material for his picture. He is so keen an observer as a rule, that it would be foolhardy to accuse him of inaccuracy.”<sup>17</sup>



Figure 7: "Gassed," John Singer Sargent, 1918-1919

Sargent sketched many war scenes. This one was very poignant because of its extremely large size 20 ft. wide x 9ft. high and the harsh reality of everyday life for a soldier during WWI. The soldiers are exhausted, eyes were bandaged all the while trying to stay in a straight line. Sargent used the yellow to show the poisonous gas in the air. When his assignment ended Sargent had contracted influenza he survived and continued to paint more of his sketches from WWI.

All of these artists have various links to WWI but all expressed their views, experiences, and feelings through their art using their own style. I want to express to my third graders that they should find their own voice in their art. Art communicates a message either by telling a story, documenting a time period or expressing views/opinions. Art expands our imagination and lets us redirect our focus instead of dwelling on stressful situations.

### **Teaching Strategies**

The teaching strategies will vary greatly throughout the lessons to ensure all learning styles are met. There are some strategies that work better than others within certain lessons. Also I had to revise teaching strategies to include teaching in a virtual setting along with seeing some in-person students.

### **Collaboration**

I am not lucky enough to have a formal time to collaborate with my colleagues so organizing, executing, and planning are done after school hours. In my experience the benefits to students outweigh the challenges of planning a collaborative lesson. Students retain much more content when there is an extension into one of the special area classes, especially art. Students are more apt to remember and make connections to the art discussed if they create a tactile project. This unit will use cross disciplinary teaching strategies. Classrooms like this require planning and cooperation. Creating integrated lessons give the arts greater visibility in the school and community because they create hands-on activities related to the content area. Teachers create more rigorous and meaningful lessons by working together. As teachers, displaying collaboration in their classroom will set an expectation for students to work together and communicate more

effectively. I planned to have students add to a virtual art gallery as a collaborative piece that can be sent out to parents to view electronically.

### Technology

Technology will be used as a tool to engage student learning. Students respond well to technology because of the overwhelming use of it in our society today. In our district student's in grades 3-5 have their own computer everyday my students bring their chrome books to the art room. Due to remote learning students are much more advanced on their chrome books than in previous years. When students produce something on a technological device they seem to absorb it more easily because students today are digital learners. The best teaching strategies are the ones in which students do not realize they are learning. I have set-up a virtual art gallery of WWI war artists studied in this unit. Students will review the gallery and then create a series of mini paintings that communicate a message to place in their own virtual art gallery.

### Art Talk

Throughout the school year I encourage my students to speak using art vocabulary. I call this Art Talk. I feel strongly that students should use art words to analyze art, interpret art and reflect on their own artwork. As I set this expectation year after year, I see the students use the words correctly, not just in the art room but in their classrooms. I will show paintings from these artists that depict the war and students will use their art talk while analyzing the paintings.

### Visual Notetaking

Students will learn about Visual Notetaking which is similar to Cornell Notes. Students will create a visual notebook similar to Horace Pippin's. Students will draw symbols and write words to illustrate their everyday experiences.

### Word Wall

The word wall that is posted in the art room is divided into modes of creative expression such as clay, fiber arts, drawing, painting, and sculpture with art terminology listed under each category. Vocabulary is an important teaching strategy. I start every year with a word wall lesson specific for each grade level. I continually point out the art word that I am concentrating on in the lesson. An example of the words that will be used in this unit are *foreground*, *middle ground*, *background*, *found objects*, *horizon line*, *overlapping*, and *balance* to name a few. Students need to be aware that words have different meanings within different content areas. I set this expectation in the art room at the beginning of the year while in my room the students will speak

using the protocol of art talk. I will remind them to use their art words. This sets an expectation that the visual arts matter!



## Reflection

Rubrics are a strategy that I often include in my lessons. A rubric that focuses on a specific skill and places accountability on the student. I find it easy to measure a student's performance through rubrics. I have students glue their rubrics on the back of their art so students and I can easily see their performance over the school year. This year every student has an art journal; on the inside cover of the journal there is a checklist for their artwork. I have the students glue the checklist in their journals as a reminder to be creative, neat, colorful, and complete. Another strategy for reflection is called two stars and one wish and it is conducted after a student completes his/her work. The students answer two questions on the back of their work. The questions are: What two things did you like best about your work? and What is it that you might change about your work? I lead a discussion on the answers that are acceptable to these questions. The expectation in my classroom is while discussing works of art they must cite supporting information about the piece of art. I want students to be aware of how the viewer analyzes art and that it is the opinion of the viewer, there is not a right or wrong answer

## Demonstration

Throughout this unit I will review previously learned material to help reinforce learning. All activities are modeled first to demonstrate the new art technique. I feel the students have greater success at the activity if they see examples. All four lessons in this unit require hands-on participation so there will be an art product after every lesson. This hands-on strategy meets the needs of the tactile and visual learners. If I model the activity step-by-step, the student feels more successful at each step.

## Classroom Activities

Lesson One:

### *Mini - Narrative Paintings*

Create five mini paintings from your everyday life. This series of work should tell a story when displayed together. Students will paint similar to Horace Pippin and George Bellows not experiencing what they are painting but using strong observational skills to complete a series of mini paintings. This activity will use the elements/principles of art to communicate to the viewer and apply these elements creatively to express a message.

Objective: I **can** tell a story through my paintings. I **can** evoke emotion in my work.

Tools:

Pencil, Black Sharpie, White Paper 3x3, watercolor, crayons

Lesson Two:

### *Handmade Postcards*

Send postcards to active military. Draw a picture evoking a feeling on one side then write a short message on the back. This will be hard for students to limit their words to the size of a postcard. By writing to service men and women students will realize the significance that their postcard had on people fighting for our country. Understanding how their art or postcard is viewed by many people as it is sent off to different countries.

Objective: I **can** paint a picture that gets a reaction from the viewer. I **will** be able to communicate a short message.

Tools:

Pencil, Sharpie, Crayon and Watercolor, white paper

Process is Crayon Resist, draw using crayon then paint over with watercolors.

Students will use Elements of Art line, shape, and color to create their paintings and add in balance, perspective, and unity from Principles of Art. Students will observe their surroundings more carefully. Draw using shapes first then adding details to pull the painting together.

Lesson Three:

### *Found object art*

Found object art is similar to trench art made from found pieces of metal, wood.



I will set out found objects from the art room. Students at home can find objects from around their house to create a found sculpture. This activity resembles how soldiers sitting in the trenches would find objects to make into something else. Students will understand how trench art was created during our history.



Figure 8: Example of trench art

Objective:

I **can** use my imagination to manipulate a found object into a sculpture.

Tools:

Found objects, Glue, Hot Glue, Paint

Lesson Four:

*Virtual Art Gallery tour*

Look through the art gallery of WWI artists read about their history. Using the template create your own virtual gallery using your own five mini-narrative paintings. I will gather the virtual art galleries and string them together to create a collaborative piece. Students will become familiar with artists from WWI. They will think critically and creatively to design and place their paintings into the virtual gallery.

Originally, lesson four was supposed to be an in-person art gallery but with the restrictions of COVID-19 I turned it into a virtual art gallery

Objective: I **can** set-up a display of my own work.

Tools:

Please click below to see the gallery on Google Slides

## [Virtual Art Gallery](#)

### **Art Rubric**

#### Two Stars and one Wish

Two things the student did well on his or her picture and one thing they would change about their picture. This is a way for students to practice critiquing or reflecting their work.

The image shows a 'Two Stars and a Wish' feedback form. At the top, it says 'Two Stars and a Wish'. Below that, there are two lines for 'Name' and 'Subject'. The student has written 'Tibby N.' for the name and 'War on Terror' for the subject. There are three sections for feedback, each with a star icon. The first section says 'The girls position in the picture'. The second section says 'I like the smoke coming out of the building'. The third section says 'The background of the picture could have more detail. I wish she had more color'. At the bottom, there is a paragraph that says 'Use the two stars and a wish to tell me two things you really liked about your work and one thing that could be improved.'

### **List of Materials for Classroom Use**

#### Resources for Students

Bryant, Jennifer, and Melissa Sweet. *A Splash of Red: The Life and Art of Horace Pippin*. 2013. A great children's book with excellent illustrations about Horace Pippin's life and art.

Hunter, Nick. *World War I: Frontline Soldiers and Their Families*. 1st ed. New York, NY: Garth Stevens Publishing. Accessed 2016.

This is a newsprint that is similar to present day Scholastic Arts. The article an easy read for elementary students about WW1 soldiers and their families during difficult times.

#### Resources for Teachers

#### Google Arts and Culture

A site that holds many copyright free famous paintings for all to use.

#### Google Slides

I created the virtual art gallery with google slides.

[Virtual Art Gallery](#)

[\(Printable PDF for Gallery\)](#)

## **Vocabulary**

- WWI - 1914 – 1918 a global war originating in Europe
- 1918 – 1920 Influenza Pandemic – is a virus that swept US and Europe that infected many people and many died from the virus. The virus was a strand of H1N1
- Shell Shock – a term from 1915 Charles Myers described people who involuntarily shivered, cried, fearful and lost a memory. This term is not used today it is now called PTSD Post traumatic stress disorder.
- Trench Art – Art made from found objects while soldiers awaited battle in the trenches.
- War Artists – Artists that were commissioned to record the war by painting soldiers fighting and grit of war.

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"Horace Pippin, "John Brown Going to His Hanging " (1942): PAFA - Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts." PAFA. December 28, 2014. Accessed November 08, 2020. <https://www.pafa.org/museum/collection/item/john-brown-going-his-hanging>.

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## **Appendix 1 - Implementing District Standards**

### Third Grade Standards

- 3.H.2.1 Explain change over time through historical narratives. Multiple perspectives portrayed through historical narratives.
- 3.H.2 Use Historical Thinking Skills to Understand the Context of Events, People and Places
- EL Curriculum Overcoming Learning Challenges Near and Far  
Through stories, students consider the challenges students face with education around the world, and how geography and where one lives in the world affect how one views the world.

### Visual Arts Essential Standards

- 3.V.1 Use the language of visual arts to communicate effectively.
- 3.V.2 Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.
- 3.CX.1 Understand the global, historical, societal and cultural contexts of the visual arts.

### National Visual Arts Standard

- Enduring Understanding People create and interact with objects, places and design that define shape, enhance and empower their lives.

## End Notes

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<sup>6</sup> Wilson, Malin. "Watercolors Expand View of O'Keeffe." *Albuquerque Journal* 6 (April 16, 1998).

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<sup>11</sup> "Roads to the Great War." Roads to the Great War. Accessed November 18, 2020. <https://roadstothegreatwar-ww1.blogspot.com/>.

<sup>12</sup> "Artwork Share Tweet." Untitled (Camouflage Design) Collection Burchfield Penney Art Center. Accessed November 08, 2020. <https://www.burchfieldpenney.org/collection/object:a2006-008-450-005-untitled-camouflage-design/>.

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