

THE ART OF  
RENAISSANCE EUROPE  
A RESOURCE FOR EDUCATORS

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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Image on box:

*The Story of Esther*, ca. 1460–70

Marco del Buono Giamberti, Florentine, 1402–1489.

Apollonio di Giovanni di Tomaso, Florentine,

1415/17–1465. Tempera and gold on wood;

17 1/2 x 55 3/8 in. Rogers Fund 1918 (18.117.2)

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# FOREWORD

We invite you to enter the world of the Renaissance in Europe, a time of great discovery and achievement in art, science, music, and literature. The richness and diversity of Renaissance art is represented in many different departments at The Metropolitan Museum of Art: in Arms and Armor, European Paintings, European Sculpture and Decorative Arts, Musical Instruments, Prints and Drawings, and the Robert Lehman Collection. The art selected for these teacher materials includes paintings, ceramics, armor, musical instruments, and sculpture that embody the Renaissance interest in classical learning, fame and human achievement, and beautiful objects.

Through the art of the Renaissance your students will discover the great cities of Florence, Bruges, London, and Toledo, and meet the powerful personalities of Michelangelo, Lorenzo de' Medici, Desiderius Erasmus, and Eleanora d'Este. By studying the human body, gesture, and narrative, students will work as Renaissance artists did when they created paintings and drawings. By studying perspective, students will explore the Renaissance interest in science and mathematics. Through language arts activities based on Renaissance poetic forms, students will write about their response to art. The activities and lesson plans are designed for a variety of classroom needs, and we encourage you to adapt these materials to your own curriculum, to approach them in an interdisciplinary fashion, and to let students choose topics for independent study from the extensions and connections. If possible, a visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art will be the highlight of your students' encounter with the Renaissance.

This teacher resource is supported by a generous grant from Mr. and Mrs. Frederick P. Rose, who share our commitment to teachers. It has been tested through focus groups, surveys, input from New York teachers, and consultations with educators throughout the country. The Museum's internet site at [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org) will supplement the slides, texts, posters, CD-ROM, and activities of this resource.

Philippe de Montebello  
Director and Chief Executive Officer

Kent Lydecker  
Associate Director for Education



# HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

**T**he Art of the Renaissance presents selected works of art from the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. This teacher packet is a visual guide to the works of art and a resource for curriculum development. Rather than providing a curriculum, it will give you the tools to create teaching units based on your own understanding of the Renaissance. In this way, you can meet the interests and needs of your specific students, and you can adjust your plans to the time available—whether it is an hour, a week, or an entire semester.

## TIMELINE

PP. 7–8

We suggest you begin by looking at the timeline, in which thirty works of art appear chronologically. This visual reference allows you to see quickly the range of subject matter and the development of aesthetic ideas within the time frame of the Renaissance.

## INTRODUCTION

P. 9

This is a general introduction to the art of the Renaissance and the world in which it was produced.

## SLIDE ENTRIES

P. 17

Each slide entry presents a way of looking at the individual work of art and information about it. At the end of each entry, a list of **THEMATIC CONNECTIONS** opens avenues for inquiry and discussion.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL

P. 79

This selection of original texts from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries includes letters and contracts between patrons and artists, family letters, descriptions of events, and philosophical writings. These sources provide a cultural context for the works of art.

## PLANNING YOUR LESSON

P. 95

This section is designed with the teacher in mind. Reading through this section will assist you in planning your lessons.

### 1. QUESTIONING STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

This exercise provides you with a method of looking at a Renaissance work of art before you introduce it to your students in your individual curriculum. The questions will help you explore the work as a primary resource.

### 2. AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH TO THE USE OF SLIDES

This section provides two activities to introduce slides in your classroom.

### 3. THE SHORT LIST

These works of art have been selected for the junior high and high school teachers who have limited time. With these slides, teachers can present the art of the Renaissance to enhance a social studies, humanities, history, or art class.

## LESSON PLANS AND CHECKLISTS

P. 101

The Lesson Plans outline specific classroom activities that encourage an in-depth exploration of the works of art. They can stand alone or be used to develop an interdisciplinary curriculum on the Renaissance. Three of the lesson plans have been designed especially for kindergarten through third grade. However, all the lesson plans have been designed to be adaptable for all age levels.

The checklists provide visual inventories on the following themes:

- HUMAN FIGURE
- PERSPECTIVE
- COMPOSITION
- PORTRAIT
- THE STORY IN ART
- DAILY LIFE

## GLOSSARY

P. 209

## SELECTED RESOURCES

P. 213

Bibliographic references are abbreviated throughout this resource. Full listings are found in this section.

- BOOKS
- VIDEOGRAPHY
- CD-ROMS
- WEBSITES
- MUSEUMS

# THE ART OF RENAISSANCE EUROPE



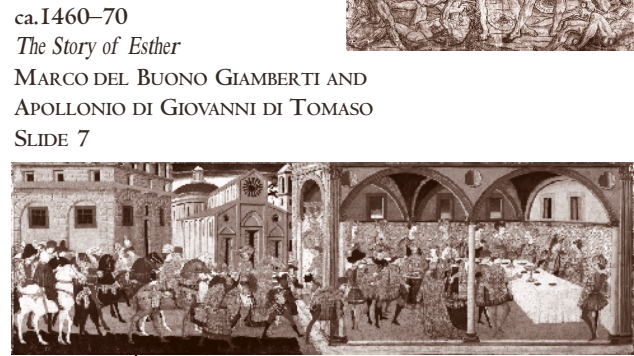
ca. 1320  
*The Epiphany*  
GIOTTO DI BONDONE  
SLIDE 1



ca. 1431  
*Apothecary Jar*  
GIUNTA DI TUGIO  
SLIDE 3



1449  
*Birth Tray, The Triumph of Fame*  
SCHEGGIA  
SLIDE 5



ca. 1460-70  
*The Story of Esther*  
MARCO DEL BUONO GIAMBERTI AND  
APOLLONIO DI GIOVANNI DI TOMASO  
SLIDE 7



ca. 1475-1500  
*Battle of the Naked Men*  
ANTONIO POLLAIUOLO  
SOURCE MATERIAL, P. 94



1482  
*Annunciation*  
HANS MEMLING  
SLIDE 10



1485-90  
*Study of a Bear Walking*  
LEONARDO DA VINCI  
SLIDE 11



bet. 1425-30  
*The Crucifixion and The Last Judgment*  
JAN VAN EYCK  
SLIDE 2



ca. 1440  
*Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*  
FRA FILIPPO LIPPI  
SLIDE 4



1449  
*Saint Eligius*  
PETRUS CHRISTUS  
SLIDE 6



ca. 1465-67  
*The Birth of the Virgin*  
FRA CARNEVALE  
SLIDE 8



ca. 1478-83  
*The Liberal Arts Studiolo*  
FROM THE DUCAL PALACE AT GUBBIO  
GIULIANO DA MAIANO AND  
WORKSHOP  
SLIDE 9



1490-95  
*Adam*  
TULLIO LOMBARDO  
SLIDE 12

# THE ART OF RENAISSANCE EUROPE

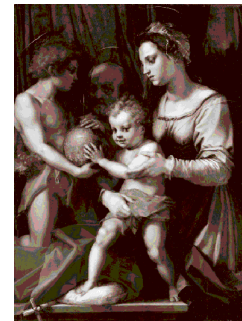
1504  
*Adam and Eve*  
ALBRECHT DÜRER  
SLIDE 13



ca.1505-7  
*A Hunting Scene*  
PIERO DI COSIMO  
SLIDE 15



ca.1528  
*The Judgment of Paris*  
LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER  
SLIDE 18



ca.1530s  
*The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John*  
ANDREA DEL SARTO  
SLIDE 19

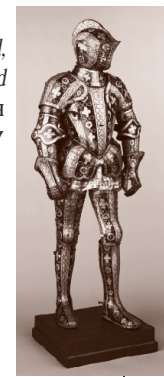


1540  
*Portrait of a Young Man*  
BRONZINO  
SLIDE 21



1543  
*Parade Helmet*  
FILIPPO NEGROLI  
SLIDE 23

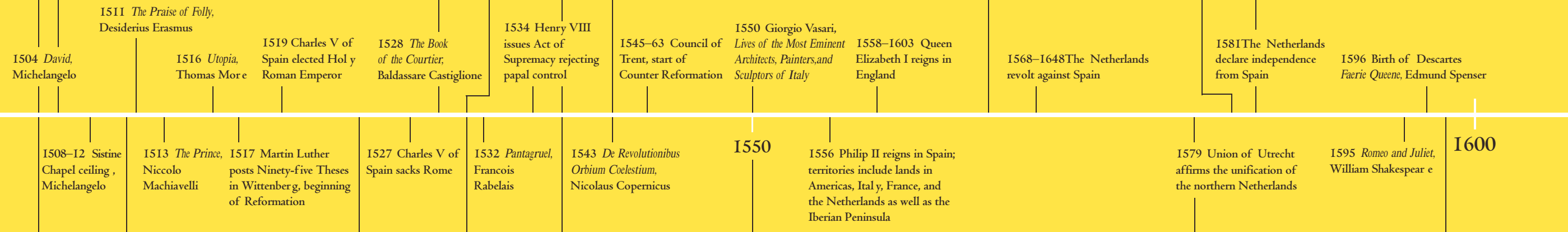
ca.1580-85  
*Armor of George Clifford, Third Earl of Cumberland*  
ENGLISH  
SLIDE 27



1581  
*Double Virginal*  
HANS RUCKERS THE ELDER  
SLIDE 28



1565  
*The Harvesters*  
PIETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER  
SLIDE 25



1504-5  
*Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*  
RAPHAEL  
SLIDE 14



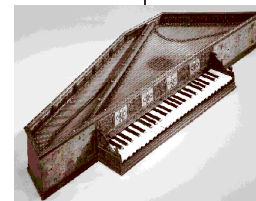
ca.1508  
*Studies for the Libyan Sibyl*  
MICHELANGELO  
BUONARROTI  
SLIDE 16



1523  
*Erasmus of Rotterdam*  
HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER  
SLIDE 17



ca.1530-40  
*Broth bowl and cover*  
BALDASSARE MANARA  
SLIDE 20



1540  
*Pentagonal Spinnet*  
VENETIAN  
SLIDE 22



1545-50  
*The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*  
TINTORETTO  
SLIDE 24



1579  
*Celestial Globe with Clockwork*  
AUSTRIAN  
SLIDE 26



ca.1597  
*View of Toledo*  
EL GRECO  
SLIDE 29



# INTRODUCTION

The French word *renaissance*, or rebirth, was first used in the nineteenth century, to describe the period in western European history that spans the years roughly from 1400 to 1650, depending on the country and the type of cultural achievement—painting, sculpture, architecture, literature, science, or music. With the advantage of historical perspective we see that a number of sources and events that shaped this period started before or ended after these dates. In many ways the Renaissance builds on its medieval heritage and flows imperceptibly into the next major unfolding of European history—the Enlightenment.

From the thirteenth century, European society evolved from a primarily agrarian to an urban system. Fueled by the international trade in raw and manufactured goods, the independent city-states became vital commercial centers. Commerce created a more fluid social structure, one that rewarded personal ability and encouraged political effectiveness. The established hereditary nobility still existed, but gradually it came to wield less influence as the new middle class of tradesmen, artisans, and bankers formed an increasingly important social group with great economic power.

As in our own times, historical events and technological inventions helped shaped this fifteenth- and sixteenth-century world. Precise tools of measurement like the magnetic compass facilitated the navigation of the globe, which in turn brought about economic and political expansion, as well as intellectual and technological exchanges—even a radical change in diet. Gunpowder, originally invented in China, led to the development of firearms and cannons, which initiated a new era in warfare. Mass printing was made possible by the development of movable type, which also had been used previously by the Chinese. This changed the face of Europe, contributing to the standardization of language, and allowing more people access to more texts. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Greek scholars migrated to Italy, bringing Greek and Latin manuscripts, which they deposited in libraries like the Laurentian Medici Library in Florence. The great philologists of the time studied and edited these texts and prepared them for printing, with far-reaching consequences; for example, Desiderius Erasmus's (1466–1536) translation of the New Testament into Latin was a driving force in the Protestant Reformation.

LESSON PLAN: ERASMUS  
OF ROTTERDAM, P. 179  
SOURCE MATERIAL, P. 80  
SLIDE 17

The Florentines of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries characterized their times as a period of reawakening to the ideals and achievements of classical Rome, which they felt had been ignored for a thousand years, since the fall of the Roman Empire. In 1492, Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), a Florentine philosopher, wrote: “This century, like a golden age, has restored to light the liberal arts, which were almost extinct. . . .”

SOURCE MATERIAL, P. 79

In 1550, Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574), the Florentine painter, biographer, and art historian claimed in his book *Lives of the Most Excellent Painters, Sculptors and Architects* that visual art was reborn with the painter Giotto. Giotto, who also was inspired by Roman ideals, initiated a more human artistic vision that reached its high point with Michelangelo.

SLIDE 1

Humanism, the underlying philosophy of this period, often is summarized in a quotation from the Greek philosopher Protagoras (ca. 485–410 B.C.): “Man is the measure of all things.” “Humanism” refers not only to the revival and publication of classical Greek and Latin texts but to new works of art modeled on classical Greek and Roman sculpture, painting, architecture, literature, and music. The Renaissance humanist authors imitated the style of great Roman writers like Cicero, just as the artists studied and emulated ancient sculptors and architects. While medieval scholars had interpreted classical texts to clarify Christian theology, (for example, Thomas Aquinas’s reading of Aristotle), the authors and artists of the Renaissance took classical works as philosophical models of reason, intelligence, and taste to be applied in the material world.

In 1486, the young humanist philosopher Giovanni Pico della Mirandola wrote *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, in which he proposes a revolutionary view of the universe, that individuals can be trusted to act on the principles of logic. He states that God has given human beings the power to use reason to overcome original sin and rise above it—in short, to think for themselves: “Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will . . . shalt ordain the limits of thy nature.”

SOURCE MATERIAL, P. 81  
SLIDE 12

It is this perspective combined with the self-conscious awareness of being part of something new and superior that gives a confident and cohesive character to the Renaissance.

#### LOOKING AT THE ART OF THE RENAISSANCE

When we look at and study a Renaissance work of art we take pleasure in it, and we are uplifted by the expression of profound emotions, the subjects both human and divine, the spirit of discovery, and the love of antiquity. The Renaissance, like the Middle Ages, was a deeply religious period, although the educated lay population became progressively more concerned with understanding the natural world and the human beings who inhabited it. In art, this was manifested in a new interest in naturalism, which the Italians found in their ancient Roman past and the northern artists found in the observation of nature. The intersection of these two approaches is one of the factors that defines the look of Renaissance painting and sculpture.



SLIDE 16

Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472), a Florentine painter, sculptor, architect, musician, and poet who also was skilled in warfare, defined himself as *l'uomo universale* (the universal man)—what today we call a Renaissance individual. Alberti wrote definitive treatises on painting, sculpture, architecture, and the family. His seminal book *On Painting* was extremely influential in its own time, and today it is considered a primary source for understanding the visual art of the Renaissance. We will refer to it throughout this teacher resource.

Following are three major categories, each defined by the approach to subject matter in Renaissance works of art.

### NARRATIVE

NARRATIVE CHECKLIST  
P. 151

LESSON PLANS: THE  
STORY IN ART, PART I,  
P. 105, AND PART II, P. 153

Alberti believed that *istoria*, the story or narrative, was the most important approach for the painter. The subject of the Renaissance story could be religious or secular. For example, altar-pieces might depict the lives of Mary or Christ, or mythological stories might decorate household objects and furniture. Alberti urged visual artists to become friends with poets and orators, because their “. . . knowledge of many things . . . could be useful in composing the *istoria*.” He goes on to write, “the *istoria* which merits both praise and admiration will be so agreeably and pleasantly attractive that it will capture the eye of whatever learned or unlearned person is looking at it and will move his soul.”

### PORTRAITURE

SLIDES 4, 17, 21;  
PORTRAIT CHECKLIST,  
P. 175

LESSON PLAN:  
PORTRAIT, P. 177

The human face, both realistic and ideal, was another important subject for the painter and sculptor. Portraits could serve commemorative functions, such as celebrating a marriage, a birth, or recording a face from a death mask.

### LANDSCAPE

SLIDES 4, 18, 25

Landscapes often were used as background, in portraits and narrative paintings or relief sculpture. While landscape was rarely the main subject of a work of art, it was an important component of northern European painting.



SLIDE 29

The characteristic treatments of the human figure, perspective, composition, and the materials in Renaissance paintings are discussed below.

### THE HUMAN FIGURE

HUMAN FIGURE  
CHECKLIST, P. 115  
SLIDE 13; LESSON PLAN:  
CONTRAPPOSTO  
POSE, P. 123

With the rediscovery of classical figurative sculpture, including the nude of the pre-Christian world, artists began to look at the human figure as an object of aesthetic beauty in its own right. Realistic representation became important once more. Alberti writes: “[A] painting in which there are [human figures] in many dissimilar poses is always especially pleasing.” Renaissance artists sought to convey the illusion of movement and thus adopted the classical *contrapposto pose*. This pose gives the illusion of arrested motion by creating a slight twist in the body.

SLIDE 19 Alberti continues: “to get the right proportions in painting living creatures, first visualize their bony insides, for bones, being rigid, establish fixed measurements. Then attach tendons and muscles in their places and finally clothe the bones and muscles with flesh and skin in order to show clearly where the muscles are. . . .” He discusses the importance of the use of light and shadow to render the volume of body parts, as well as to describe gestures and facial expressions.

Since antiquity, artists referred to the human figure as a measure of proportion. The Roman engineer Vitruvius equated the symmetry and proportion of the figure with the plan of the temple. Alberti used Vitruvian principles when he designed the façade of Santa Maria Novella, in Florence. Albrecht Dürer also followed Vitruvian ideas and measured people of all ages with calipers. He made schematic figure drawings, formulating systems of proportion and measurement in the attempt to discover the ideal human figure. Leonardo da Vinci worked with physicians to dissect cadavers, drawing bones and muscles from his observations, then checking

LESSON PLAN:  
FORM TO MEASURE, P. 117

his findings by measuring. Many artists compiled books and made prints that facilitated the dissemination of newly discovered anatomical information. For example, in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, Antonio Pollaiuolo's engraving *Battle of the Naked Men* became a template for many of the poses depicted in Renaissance paintings.



P. 93

The human figure needs a viable space in which to exist, move, and convey a story. Through perspective, artists created the illusion of a three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional surface (picture plane) such as a piece of paper, canvas, wood panel, wall, clay, or stone slab.

### PERSPECTIVE

Renaissance paintings invite the viewer to look into habitable spaces where religious and mythological events occur and where life is chronicled through the observation of detail. Artists in both northern and southern Europe shared a belief in the power of observation and in the verity of what is seen by the eye. Albrecht Dürer agreed with the Greek philosopher Aristotle that “sight is the noblest faculty of man.” Leonardo da Vinci stated that observation is the common mother of “all Sciences and the Arts.” He believed that “the eye is the least easily deceived of all the senses.” Artists devised pictorial systems like perspective to imitate what they observed. It has been said that in the north the room is fixed and the viewer’s eye is invited to wander about the room or space, while in the south, it is the artist’s viewpoint that is fixed, and it guides the viewer to the important event.

PERSPECTIVE CHECKLIST,  
P. 127

Linear one-point perspective is based on a mathematical system with a fixed viewpoint; Alberti was one of the artists who developed its underlying geometry. He describes the picture plane as an open window: “I first draw a rectangle of right angles, where I am to paint, which I treat just like an open window through which I might look.” This system guides the viewer’s eye through the picture plane to the focal point or **vanishing point**.



SLIDE 8

LESSON PLAN: LINEAR  
ONE-POINT  
PERSPECTIVE,  
P. 135

Atmospheric, or aerial, perspective is based on the optical effect caused by light being absorbed and reflected by the atmosphere: a mist of dust and moisture. Since mist is denser at Earth’s surface, it scatters light and causes distant tones to be lighter. Blue light easily penetrates the mist, making the sky appear blue and giving distant objects a bluish cast. Leonardo da Vinci closely observed nature and natural phenomena, incorporating atmospheric perspective into his paintings. He also documented his observations in writing: “I say that the blueness we see in the atmosphere is not intrinsic color, but is caused by warm vapor evaporated in minute and insensible atoms on which the solar rays fall. . . .” Northern painters were known for their mastery of atmospheric perspective. Sometimes artists combined systems of perspective, so we find both linear and atmospheric perspective used in the same work of art.

SLIDES 2, 25

## COMPOSITION

COMPOSITION  
CHECKLIST, P. 139

Composition is the arrangement of the elements of a work of art. Or, as Alberti writes: “Composition is that rule by which the parts of things fit together. . . .” Looking back to antiquity, artists developed systems of composition based on harmonious proportions, or the relationships of parts. Classical composition applied measurable standards of symmetry, balance, and harmony; the *golden rectangle*, for example, was adopted from Euclid, the ancient Greek mathematician. This geometrical and mathematical construct was endowed with harmonious proportions that had divine implications. It was employed throughout the Renaissance in architecture, painting, and sculpture. In addition, the composition of a Renaissance painting is inextricably linked with perspective, the placement of the human figure and objects, and is further unified by the use of color and the distribution of light and shadow.

LESSON PLAN:  
DRAW THE GOLDEN  
RECTANGLE, P. 147

## MATERIALS

From their earliest training, artists were taught to think of form and material as being parts of a single whole. The great frescoes, panel or canvas paintings, and sculptures are as much about material and technique as they are about form or subject. In some cases, artists continued in the traditions of the past centuries, while others discovered new materials and images in the world around them. Paintings were executed in egg tempera, oil, or fresco. For all three types of paint, the colors or pigments were extracted from minerals, vegetables, and manufactured salts, including berries, flowers, insects, metal oxides, copper acetate, and other materials, which were ground to a paste. The pigments for egg tempera were mixed with egg yolk, a binder, and occasionally the white of the egg was added. This mixture then was diluted with water. Tempera dries quickly and is most suitable for covering small, clearly defined areas. It provides colors that are pure and bright. The same pigments, mixed with oil as the binder, were used for oil paint, which differs from tempera paint in significant ways. Oil paint is a more malleable substance than tempera: its propensity to blend makes it a good medium for creating the illusion of light and shade. It also covers larger areas more easily and lends itself to variation of texture. Fresco is usually a wall painting. The paint is applied on fresh plaster, hence the use of the Italian word *fresco*.

SLIDE 5; LESSON PLAN:  
TEMPERA, P. 185

SLIDE 19

Sculptors continued to work in traditional ways, but with subtle changes as new approaches to materials were discovered. The softness of red chalk, a new drawing medium, allowed for more spontaneity of expression. Printmaking techniques allowed many copies of an original artwork to be made; this challenged the uniqueness of an image. The most popular methods of printmaking were woodcuts and engravings.

SLIDES 13, 16;  
LESSON PLAN:  
PRINTMAKING, P. 191

The art of embossing metal was revived and used to create extraordinary dimensional decorations on suits of armor. New techniques in the art of firing made it possible to create costly objects of majolica, tin-glazed earthenware ornamented with subtly painted narratives. These are only a few of the new materials and techniques that were discovered and developed in the Renaissance.

SLIDE 23

SLIDE 20

## THE WORLD OF THE ARTIST AND THE PATRON

### THE ARTIST

Artists came from various strata of society. Raphael and Holbein were sons of painters, while Andrea del Sarto was the son of a tailor. Giotto was the son of a farmer, but Albrecht Dürer's and Piero di Cosimo's fathers were goldsmiths. Michelangelo came from the prosperous middle class. Filippo Negroli was part of a large family of armorers, each with a specialty. Jan van Eyck and his brother worked together, as did Antonio Pollaiuolo and his brother.

SLIDES 14, 17  
SLIDES 19, 1, 13  
SLIDES 15, 16  
SLIDE 23  
SLIDE 2, P. 93

An artist's training began between the ages of seven and fifteen, when a child was apprenticed to a master artist for at least five years. Andrea del Sarto was apprenticed to Piero di Cosimo. The apprentices maintained the workshop, performing menial tasks such as sweeping the floors, while they learned practical skills like grinding the pigments that would be used in the paint, preparing the plaster coating for wood panels, gilding, and punching decorative patterns on gilded halos and backgrounds. Apprentices also practiced drawing with the master, and eventually assisted the master by completing the less demanding parts of a work, like the drapery.

SLIDES 19, 15

When the fledgling painter completed an apprenticeship he, or, rarely, she, was considered a professional, eligible to join the painters' guild. Merchants, doctors, and bankers also belonged to guilds, precursors of the modern trade unions, which were organized either by trade or by the raw materials the artisans used. Guilds established and maintained standards of performance, and they might even be called on to settle disputes between artists and patrons. In Florence, the painters, because they ground and mixed their own pigments, belonged to the *Medici e Speciali*, along with doctors, pharmacists, and spice dealers. Goldsmiths joined the silk weavers' *Arte della Seta*, as did the spinners who spun gold and silver into threads to be used in the weaving of costly cloth. Sculptors joined the stoneworkers' and woodworkers' guild, the *Arte dei maestri di pietra e legname*. In northern Europe, painters joined the imagemakers' guild, while goldsmiths belonged to the goldsmiths' guild.

SOURCE MATERIAL,  
PP. 85–88

The guilds had religious affiliations, each one being under the protection of a patron saint, and often they commissioned works of art to decorate their halls and chapels. It is thought that the Goldsmiths' Guild in Bruges may have commissioned Petrus Christus to paint *Saint Eligius*, a devotional painting, for the guild's chapel. Saint Eligius (d. 660), who was both a bishop and a metalworker, was the patron saint of the goldsmiths. The patron saint of painters was Saint Luke, who was believed to have painted the Virgin's portrait from life.

SLIDE 6

The newly certified artist usually joined the workshop of an established master and became one of his assistants. Depending on the type of workshop, the assistant might spend time studying anatomy by drawing male models, both clothed and unclothed. The workshops could be specialized or diversified. For example, the workshops of Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni and Scheggia specialized in painting domestic furniture like marriage chests and birth trays. Another workshop might practice only one art form, such as painting, sculpture, or armor making. Other workshops practiced a variety of art forms. The workshop of the Pollaiuolo brothers produced not only prints, sculpture, and paintings but also liturgical objects, brocade vestments, and domestic goldsmith work. Young artists who had completed their training traveled widely to broaden their knowledge before setting up their own shops.

SLIDES 5, 7

SLIDE 23

A number of women worked as artists. Nuns illuminated, or decorated, manuscripts, and they painted their religious visions on the walls of their convent or church. Daughters of established artists, like the Italian painter Artemisia Gentileschi (c.1597–after 1651), often trained in their fathers' workshops. Philip II invited Sofonisba Anguissola (1532/1535–1625), whose four sisters also painted, to be an artist in his court at Madrid.

## PATRONS

The patrons were the individuals and organizations who commissioned the works of art we see today. Traditionally, patrons and collectors were aristocrats. Philip II of Spain, one of the great collectors, invited native and foreign artists to his court in Madrid. The dukes of Burgundy patronized Jan van Eyck and other artists in Bruges. The Catholic Church remained a major patron of the arts during the Renaissance, through the popes and other prelates, as well as the convents, monasteries, and confraternities (assemblies of lay persons dedicated to strict religious observances). Pope Julius II invited Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, and the artist's *Studies for the Libyan Sibyl* was done in preparation for the project. Raphael, who also painted frescoes in the Vatican, was commissioned by the convent of Sant'Antonio da Padova at Perugia to paint the altarpiece *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints*.

SOURCE MATERIAL, P. 89

SLIDE 16

SLIDE 14

The new middle class, wishing to emulate the aristocracy, quickly learned they could elevate their status and beautify their homes by acquiring and sponsoring art. They often competed with the Church and the aristocracy for the services of the better known artists. The Florentine wool merchant Francesco Pugliese commissioned Piero di Cosimo to do a series of secular paintings, one of which may be *A Hunting Scene*. Nicholas Jongelinck, a businessman from Antwerp, commissioned Pieter Bruegel the Elder to paint a series of the Labors of the Months to decorate a room in his suburban home. *The Harvesters* is one of these. Church renovations and decorations were supported by lay patrons, who sometimes also decorated their private chapels in the churches with devotional paintings and sculptures. Many times the patrons would specify that their portraits be painted within religious scenes, to directly connect them with the religious event.

SLIDE 15



SLIDE 25

MERODE ALTARPIECE OF THE ANNUNCIATION  
ROBERT CAMPIN, FLEMISH,  
CA. 1377–1444;  
OIL ON WOOD; 56.70 IN THE  
COLLECTION OF THE CLOISTERS

Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century artists, especially in southern Europe, enjoyed a new status. No longer thought of as mere craftsmen who produced predictable though high-quality products, they came to be recognized as individuals, and at times even geniuses. Two celebrated examples are Leonardo da Vinci in the south and Albrecht Dürer in the north.

As has been noted, the Renaissance was an age of striking personalities, great achievement, and startling contrasts. Within one hundred years Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), Michelangelo (1475–1564), and Raphael (1483–1520), in southern Europe, and Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) and Hans Holbein (1497–1543) in the north produced their great works. Columbus encountered the New World (1492), Copernicus articulated his heliocentric theory of the solar system (1543), and Martin Luther posted his ninety-five theses in Wittenberg (1517) that led to the beginning of the Protestant Reformation.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art has one of the greatest collections of Renaissance art in the world. We invite you to embark on a journey into the Renaissance through selected works of art from its collections. We hope this resource will inspire you to visit the Museum with your students and that you will take pleasure in the presence of the works of art themselves.





# GIOTTO DI BONDONE

SLIDE 1

*For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him. (Matthew 2:2)*

**T**he golden sky or heavenly sphere with angels and star connects the two biblical narratives illustrated in this small panel, the Adoration of the Magi, also known as the Epiphany, and the Annunciation to the Shepherds. The triangular shape of the mountain both forms the backdrop and points heavenward; the gold illuminates the spiritual truth of the event.

The central focus of the painting is the Christ Child, held for all to see by the kneeling magus, who has laid his crown on the ground in a gesture of humility. Joseph, on the left, leans toward the child and holds the magus's gift. The two other magi look toward Christ, as does Mary, as she rests in the stable. The body of one of the magi is turned slightly toward the viewer, perhaps inviting us to participate in the moment, even though the gestures and the positions of these five figures appear to encircle the child. Giotto's vision is filled with humanity.



Behind Joseph, two shepherds with bagpipe and dog, also wonder at the news the angel tells them: “Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good news of a great joy” (Luke 2:10). The logical and ordered composition is arranged like a stepped stage, on which the scene of the adoration of the magi in the **foreground** overlaps the annunciation to the shepherds in the **middle ground**. The angels are part of the heavenly sphere in the **background**; two of them gesture toward a higher presence, not visible in this panel.

Giotto's human vision deeply affected later artists. According to Giorgio Vasari, he “brought to life the great art of painting as we know it today, introducing the technique of drawing directly from life, which had been neglected.” Giotto's famous fresco cycles, such as those in the Arena Chapel in Padua, served as textbooks for other artists, and he influenced many of the great artists of the Italian Renaissance, including Michelangelo. This panel is one of a series of seven that depicts the life of Christ. Giotto may have painted them for a *predella* on a large altarpiece .

Giotto, the son of a poor peasant, was discovered by the painter Cimabue, who became his master. Apparently Giotto loved to play jokes, and one day in Cimabue's workshop he painted a fly “on the nose of one of [the master's] figures. [It was] so lifelike that when Cimabue returned he tried several times to brush it off with his hand before he realized his mistake” (Vasari, *Lives*, pp. 57–81).



### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Society; altarpiece; New Testament narrative; overlapping shapes; symbols; gold; tempera paint

COMPARE SLIDE 10 (narrative; southern versus northern European composition; tempera versus oil paint); SLIDES 14, 19 (Christ child)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Michelangelo's Discourse, p. 82

LESSON PLANS: Overlapping Shapes, p. 129; Gesture, p. 125; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153

### SLIDE I

*THE EPIPHANY*, CA. 1320

GIOTTO DI BONDONE

Florentine, 1266/76–d. 1337

Tempera on wood, gold ground;

17 3/4 x 17 1/4 in.

John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1911

(11.126.1)

# JAN VAN EYCK

SLIDE 2

These two panels, *The Crucifixion* and *The Last Judgment*, have been said to resemble two small theatrical worlds. The pictorial space is packed profusely with details and a dramatic display of physiognomies, costumes, actions, emotions, and landscape. The observation of detail is perfect, yet the dimensionality of the scene seems monumental in its presentation. In this work, we see that Jan van Eyck was a great and masterful painter, skillfully utilizing his knowledge of sophisticated oil techniques and beautiful, rich pigments to create a Christian vision.

To understand these paintings one must study them closely. At first glance, they will reveal only the broadest ideas of their subjects, each compositionally structured according to its content. *The Crucifixion* shows Christ on the central axis of the composition. The scene is taken from the narrative moment in which “one of the soldiers pierced his side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water” (John 15:35). The spear creates a visual diagonal, with strong emotional content, pointing to Christ. On either side are two other crucifixions, clearly differentiated from Christ, the thieves hanging blindfolded and twisted. Below are soldiers, onlookers, and bystanders. In the foreground, a group expressing great grief at the events is set apart from the activity by an empty patch of ground. This biblical narrative incorporates costumes contemporary to van Eyck’s time. It is believed that the man dressed in the height of style in a coat with ermine trim who is standing below the thief on Christ’s left may be the aristocrat who commissioned the painting.



*The Last Judgment* shows us both heaven and hell. In the lower half is the vision of hell on the day of the Last Judgment. Fantastic monsters and nightmarish creatures are portrayed in chaotic abandon. The perforated space above, a visual purgatory, gives way to the orderliness and harmony of the heavenly sphere. Neither vision can fully prepare us for the other. They are disparate, and van Eyck brings them within the moment of choice: the horrors of hell or the vision of paradise. He lays out before us the cosmology of Christianity and allows us to experience, more clearly perhaps than any other painter, how the use of form can create story and composition.

Van Eyck’s remarkable skill is visible in the rendering of atmospheric and light effects. In *The Crucifixion*, warm and luminous tones separate near space from the blue of the distant space in which we see a city. With infinite patience and tiny brushstrokes, he recorded the smallest of observable details and tonal gradations. In both paintings, rich, pure, bold colors abound, and we see his ability to modulate color and form under the effects of light. Notice the jewel-like surfaces and interlocking color harmonies, and how the colors move the eye from figure to figure in *The Crucifixion*. Pictorial space in that painting is created by the decreasing size of the figures and the suggestion of atmospheric perspective. In the hell scene of *The Last Judgment*, interlocking shape and line create dense activity and movement, while a powerful vertical thrust culminates in the figure of Christ. Everywhere there is exactness of detail, fullness of form. His understanding of the nature and essence of objects persuades us that this is not a vision but an actuality. Take note of the poignant expressions on the faces, the clear dramatic gesturing of arms and legs. The story is told by means of the artist’s understanding of human emotions.



SLIDE 2, 2A  
*THE CRUCIFIXION AND  
 THE LAST JUDGMENT*, 1425–30  
 JAN VAN EYCK  
 Netherlandish, active by 1422–d.1441  
 Tempera and oil on canvas, transferred  
 from wood; each panel  
 22 1/4 x 7 3/4 in.  
 Fletcher Fund, 1933 (33.92a,b)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Jan van Eyck, at one time court painter to the Burgundian duke Philip the Good, is considered one of the founders of the Netherlandish school of painting. The specific shape of the two companion panels may indicate that they originally were meant to be the side wings of a movable **triptych**, whose central panel has been lost. However, this particular combination of themes was used for private devotion, especially in court circles, which suggests that the two panels could have formed a **diptych**. Although transferred from wood to canvas, the panels retain their original frames, which contain lengthy biblical quotations from the books of Isaiah, Revelation, and Deuteronomy.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Home; society; devotional; altarpiece; New Testament narrative; judgment (heaven and hell); human figure; costume; oil paint

COMPARE SLIDES 8, 14 (altarpiece, composition, oil versus tempera paint);

SLIDES 8, 15, 24 (human figures and narrative)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist/Patron: Philip the Good on Jan van Eyck, p. 89

LESSON PLANS: Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131; Gesture, p. 125; Story in Art, Part II, p. 153

# APOTHECARY JAR

SLIDE 3

This egg-shaped apothecary jar (*orciuolo*) has a short neck and two double-strap loop handles; it is made of a tin-glazed earthenware called *majolica*. Majolica jars were ideally suited for storing herbs and other medicinal components found in Renaissance apothecaries, or pharmacies, because they kept substances dry and prevented evaporation. Often, the jars were sealed with a piece of fabric stretched over the mouth and tied tightly with string around the lip. This jar is painted in a thickly applied deep blue pigment (manganese), the only color that fifteenth-century kilns were able to control. The pattern of stylized oak leaves or fern fronds is reminiscent of the decorative patterns used on pottery from Moorish Spain, and these overall patterns are found on many jars from this period. The middle of each side is decorated with a stylized crane facing right with a roundel on its body.



There is a crutch painted on either handle of this jar, which is visible in the detail, p. 22. The crutch is a symbol of the oldest and best-known monastic hospital in Florence, Santa Maria Nuova. Late-medieval and Renaissance hospitals were powerful institutions that played important roles in the civic and religious life of the city or town in which they were located, serving also as asylums for the indigent and the sick, and for orphaned or illegitimate children. Like Santa Maria Nuova, they frequently owned large tracts of land that provided grain and other food products for both their own needs and to sell.

An archival document reveals that Giunta di Tugio, the maker of this and other apothecary wares, delivered many majolica containers to the hospital's pharmacy in 1431, of which this jar is believed to be one.

An apothecary, or pharmacist, belonged to the *Medici e Speziali*, the same guild as the painters, because both professions used similar types of raw materials (See p. 14). The diffusion of printed books made possible the wide availability of pharmacopoeias (handbooks) telling how to identify and combine herbs, minerals, and spices, causing pharmacies to grow in number and size.

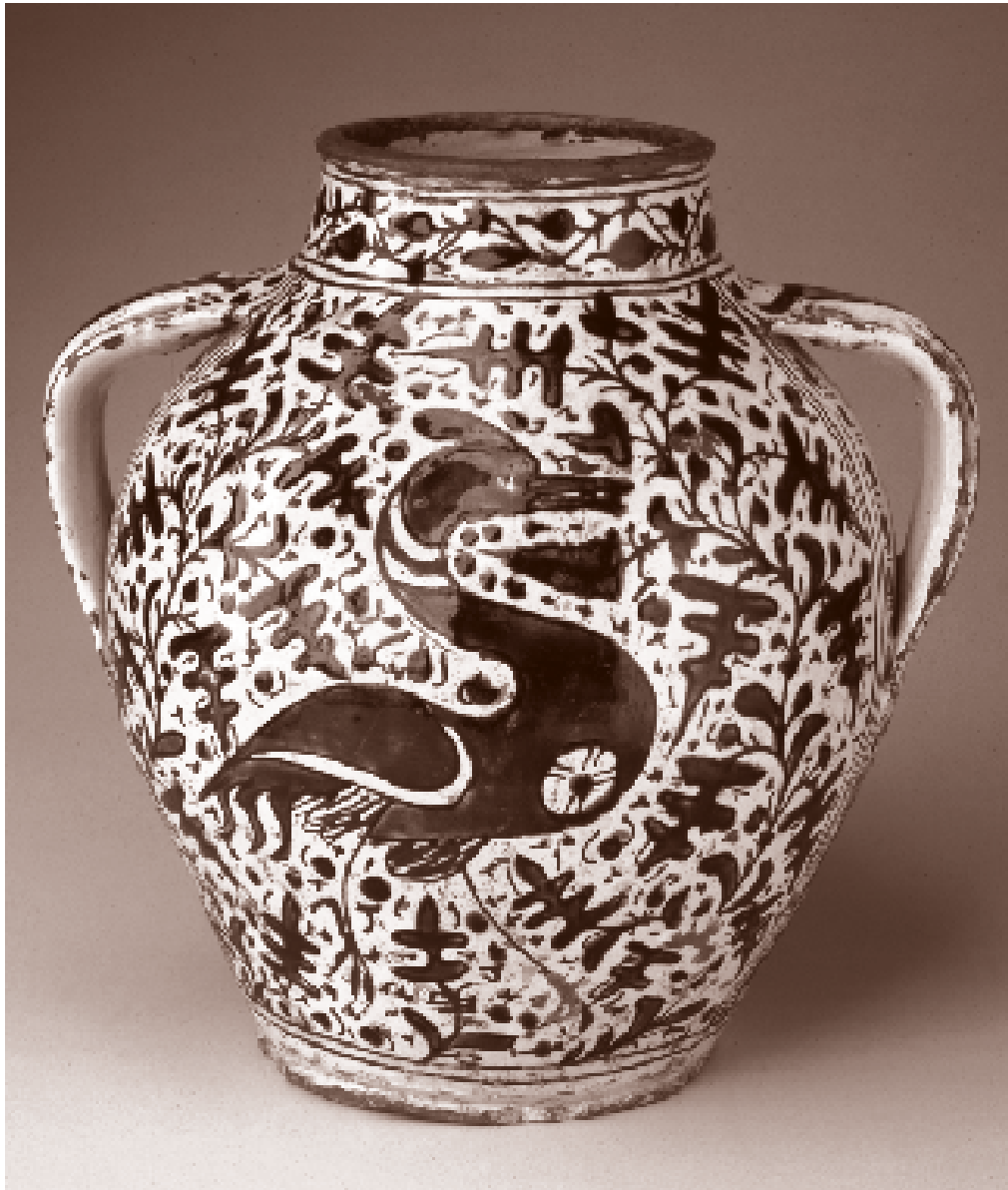
The world of an apothecary shop recalls Romeo's famous lines when he hears of Juliet's death:

O mischief! thou art swift  
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men.  
I do remember an apothecary.

Later the apothecary enters the scene, and Romeo says:

Come hither, man. I see that thou art poor;  
Hold, there is forty ducats; let me have  
A dram of poison.

(Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act 5, scene 1)



SLIDE 3  
APOTHECARY JAR (*ORCIUOLO*),  
CA. 1431  
GIUNTA DI TUGIO  
Florentine, d. ca. 1466  
Majolica; h. 12 3/8 in.  
Robert Lehman Collection, 1975  
(1975.1.1061)



DETAIL OF HANDLE

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Society, apothecary, and hospital; functional object; majolica

COMPARE SLIDE 20 (overall pattern versus narrative painting on functional object)

LESSON PLAN: Daily Life, p. 197; Poetic Forms, p. 159

# FRA FILIPPO LIPPI

SLIDE 4

Who are these people? The viewer is invited to look into and through a room in a Florentine *palazzo*. There are stone moldings around the windows and the ceiling is coffered. The light falls on the profiles of a man and a woman, and the man's casts a shadow on the back wall. The faces are outlined and the details of their clothes are finely drawn. The tempera colors are clear and opaque. The features and the status of the woman are recognizable; the man's placement almost makes his portrait look like an afterthought.

The woman displays her wealth and social class through her fashionable clothing and jewelry. In an equally fashionable gesture, she holds the excess fabric of her outer, fur-lined garment, a *giornea*, with organ pleats beginning at the midriff. Her high forehead, which has been modishly plucked—a sign of elegance and female beauty—is further set off by an elaborate headdress in the shape of a saddle, called, in fact, a *sella alla francese*, or “French-style saddle.” Its embroidered cap is edged with pearls and completed with a train, which also is embroidered and decorated with pearls. Pearls, a symbol of purity and wealth, were the crowning glory of a wealthy woman's costume. The word *leal[tà]*, meaning “fidelity,” is embroidered with pearls on the sleeve of the *giornea*. The woman wears a pearl necklace, two brooches (one on her shoulder and the other on the headdress), and many rings on her fingers, symbolic of her acceptance into her husband's extended family. The man wears a bright red hat, a *berretta alla capitanesca*, and he also wears a ring on his little finger. With his hands he may be indicating the **coat of arms** of his family, the Scolari.



The two people are placed in front of the far window that leads our eyes into a landscape. The architecture surrounding the windows defines the space, which is constructed in linear one-point perspective. To see how linear perspective works in this painting, let your eye find the ledge on the lower left side of the painting. Follow the line of the ledge to the corner of the room. Imagine the line going through the wall and joining the world outside. Now, look at the ceiling and follow the line made by the left edge of the ceiling and wall. If both lines—the line of the lower ledge and the line of the ceiling—were extended, they would meet behind the woman's cheek. This juncture is called the **vanishing point**.

Although scholars do not agree on why this double profile portrait was commissioned, town records indicate that Lorenzo di Ranieri Scolari (1407–1478) married Agnola di Bernardo Sapiti in 1436. The painting may have been made to record the sitters' marriage or the birth of their first child. It has also been suggested that the awkward placement of the man may be intended to recall the biblical love song from the Song of Solomon (2:9): “My beloved . . . Behold, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice.”

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fra Filippo Lippi was educated and took his monastic vows in the monastery of the Carmine in Florence (“Fra” is the title given a monk). Vasari says that as a child “instead of studying [Filippo] spent all his time scrawling pictures on his own books and those of others, so eventually the prior decided to give him every chance and opportunity of learning to paint.” As a



SLIDE 4, 4A  
*PORTRAIT OF MAN AND WOMAN  
AT A CASEMENT, CA. 1440*  
FRA FILIPPO LIPPI  
Florentine, ca. 1406–d. 1469  
Tempera on wood; 25 1/4 x 16 1/2 in.  
Marquand Collection, Gift of  
Henry G. Marquand, 1889 (89.15.19)

young boy he may have been allowed to work with Masaccio, who was painting the Brancacci Chapel in the Church of the Carmine at that time. (Scheggia, the painter of the birth tray, [SLIDE 5], was Masaccio's younger brother.) Vasari continues, "Filippo liked to have cheerful people as his friends and himself lived a very merry life. . . . [He] was a first-rate draughtsman, as can be seen, . . ." and he taught art (Vasari, *Lives*, pp. 435–438). Among Filippo Lippi's pupils were his son Filippino Lippi, Sandro Botticelli, and Fra Carnevale (SLIDE 8).

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Family, marriage; society; urban aristocracy; fashionable costume; profile portraits; linear perspective

COMPARE SLIDE 6 (marriage); SLIDES 6, 17, 21 (portrait); SLIDES 6, 7, 8 (costume/fashion); SLIDE 10 (southern versus northern European perspective; tempera versus oil paint); SLIDE 9 and details (personal symbols and emblems)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist/Patron: Letter from Fra Filippo Lippi, p. 88; Family: Letter from Alessandra Strozzi, p. 92; Family: Discourse by Giovanni della Casa, p. 90

LESSON PLANS: Linear One-point Perspective, p. 135; Tempera, p. 185; The Renaissance Portrait, p. 177; Daily Life, p. 197; Poetic Forms, p. 159; Inside and Outside, p. 109



# SCHEGGIA

SLIDE 5

A birth tray, or *desco da parto*, is made of wood, often painted on both sides, and usually round in shape. It was given as a gift to an expectant mother, and was used to carry sweets to her. The trays were considered auspicious for the infant, and after the birth they were preserved for posterity and displayed in the home.

This *desco da parto*, too large to have been used as a tray, is thought to have been commissioned by Piero de' Medici to honor the birth of his son Lorenzo de' Medici (1449–1492). The subject of the front panel is the Triumph of Fame—most appropriate for the man whose name, Lorenzo the Magnificent, became synonymous with the Renaissance. A celebrated ruler as well as a poet and patron of the arts, he was an example of the enlightened “Renaissance Man.” In this painting, Fame holds a sword in one hand and a cupid in the other, perhaps as symbols of war, valor, and love. She is the focal point, placed in the center, high above the knights on horseback who converge from all directions extending their hands in allegiance or exhortation to her. She stands on a perforated globe from which trumpets emerge—it is easy to imagine that they play a fanfare. Directly below her, a prisoner dressed in saffron clothes is bound to the pedestal that supports the globe, while behind her appears the world in miniature: earth, cities, and sea.



The composition of this circular painting is symmetrical. The top and bottom halves are distinct. The two trees placed on either edge of the diameter draw attention to the horizontal axis, while Fame and the prisoner define the central vertical axis. The landscape is described in unearthly pale and dark colors that run deep into the background. Red adorns the mantles of the knights' gray armor and the horses' saddles. Painted with tempera, the colors are vivid, crisp, and opaque.

What is a **triumph** and why is fame described as “in triumph”? The classical triumph was an ancient Roman tradition that honored the return of a victorious general with a parade of his soldiers, prisoners, and spoils through the city streets. The great Florentine poets Giovanni Boccaccio and Petrarch created allegorical triumphs using themes such as Love, Chastity, Fame, Fortune, and Death. Both poets describe Fame in triumph as a winged goddess, the former in his *Amorosa Visione* and the latter in his *Trionfi*. The ancient triumphs also inspired the street pageants and other popular processions that celebrated both religious and civic events in Florence.

The Medici family lineage is documented on both sides of the tray: the marriage of Lorenzo's father and mother, Piero de' Medici and Lucrezia Tornabuoni, united the two most powerful families of Florence. The ostrich feathers, symbolic of steadfastness, that decorate the front rim of the frame are one of Piero's heraldic devices. On the reverse side, a banderole, or long narrow streamer, with the word *Semper* (Forever) written on it, unites three ostrich feathers to the Medici's diamond ring. The two families' coats of arms are displayed at the top.



SLIDE 5  
 BIRTH TRAY: *THE TRIUMPH OF FAME*  
 (FRONT)  
*IMPRESA OF THE MEDICI FAMILY AND*  
*ARMS OF THE MEDICI AND TORNABUONI*  
*FAMILIES (BACK), 1449*  
 GIOVANNI DI SER GIOVANNI,  
 CALLED SCHEGGIA  
 Florentine, 1407–1486  
 Tempera, silver, and gold on wood;  
 diam. (painted surface) 24 3/8 in.  
 Purchase in memory of Sir John Pope-  
 Hennessy: Rogers Fund, The Annenberg  
 Foundation, Drue Heinz Foundation,  
 Annette de la Renta, Mr. and Mrs. Frank  
 E. Richardson, and the Vincent Astor  
 Foundation Gifts, Wrightsman and  
 Gwynne Andrews Funds, special funds,  
 and Gift of the children of Mrs. Harry  
 Payne Whitney, Gift of Mr. and Mrs.  
 Joshua Logan and other gifts and  
 bequests, by exchange, 1995 (1995.7)



BACK OF BIRTH TRAY

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Alberti (See p. 10) describes a Renaissance man and the pursuit of Fame:

. . . assiduous in the science and skill of dealing with arms and horses and musical instruments, as well as in the pursuit of letters and the fine arts, he [is] devoted to the knowledge of the most strange and difficult things. Finally, [he] embrace[s] with zeal and forethought everything which pertain[s] to fame.

Ross and McLaughlin, eds., *Renaissance Reader*, p. 480

One of the reasons that Scheggia, the painter of this tray, is not well known is that it is only within the last twenty-five years that art historians have begun to identify and recognize the work of artists who specialized in painting objects for domestic use, like this birth tray or the *cassone* (chest) panel (SLIDE 7). Scheggia's brother was the famous Florentine painter Masaccio.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; family and home, birth; society; pageantry; allegory; fame and prestige; tempera paint

COMPARE SLIDES 9, 23 (fame and prestige); SLIDE 20 (object to celebrate birth as a dynastic event); SLIDES 7, 8, 25 (daily life); SLIDES 1, 2, 14 (composition)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist: Albrecht Dürer's Journal, p. 83

LESSON PLAN: The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153; Tempera, p. 185; Personal Armor, p. 111; Allegory, p. 171

# PETRUS CHRISTUS

SLIDE 6

The eye is drawn to this painting by its impelling characters, its color, and its intricacy. Three people appear before us in a very small room. A central figure clothed in the boldest of reds sits behind a counter, holding a balance. To his right an elegantly attired man and woman stand closely together. Carefully arranged objects sit on shelves to their left, and others rest on the counter before them. The people's faces are lit by warm, strong light, and their gazes and gestures direct our eyes to look into this intricate world.

It is not long before we see on the counter a small oval frame with the image of two very small people standing in a street of row houses. At first this appears to be a painting within a painting, but when we see a red reflection from the man's bold red shirt along the edge, we realize it is a mirror. The artist, Petrus Christus, has given us, the viewers, a space of our own. We find we are on the same street as these two people, looking with them into this interior that has been identified as a fifteenth-century goldsmith's shop in Bruges, the artist's city of origin, in what is today Belgium.



In this shop are the raw materials of the goldsmith's trade—a branch of coral, crystal, porphyry, and open sacks of seed pearls and precious stones. There are also the finished products: brooches, rings, a belt buckle, a crystal container for the church, a cup made from a coconut, and on the top shelf, a double wedding cup and other pewter vessels that city officials might award to distinguished guests on official occasions. This inventory of objects tells us not only of the time and the trade, but suggests an intermingling of the sacred and the secular.

Let's return to the three people and the space they occupy in the painting. As we said before, this is a small space, narrow and shallow. We see how closely the wall and shelves press in on the people—there is barely room for them to stand, let alone move about. This closeness intensifies our encounter with these people and the visual experience of their world. We see everything in great detail, from their elaborate headgear to the woman's richly textured brocade dress and the expressive faces.

On the shelf a box lined in red holds thirteen rings; we see another ring on the goldsmith's counter, placed between his fingers. The woman's gaze and her pointing hand direct our focus there, as do the many circular shapes (scales, gold coins) of objects sharing the counter space. It is these details that suggest to us that this betrothed couple is here choosing rings for a wedding ceremony. This is confirmed by the long maroon-red ribbon also on the counter, a betrothal girdle now cast aside.

Although we do not know the identities of the man and woman, it has been suggested that the man in the brilliant red jacket is Saint Eligius, the patron saint of goldsmiths. We venture into the mingling worlds of the secular and the sacred through his image, seeing his eyes gaze into an unknown source of illumination, perhaps divine light, and the small, inexplicable space in which these people find themselves is less actual than visionary. The painting guides us from this world to another world: where we stand, as defined by the mirror on the counter, reminds us of the separation but coexistence of the sacred and secular worlds.



## THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual, family, society; larger world; devotional; guild; oil paint

COMPARE SLIDES 4, 7 (marriage, portrait, oil versus tempera paint, perspective); SLIDE 9 (*trompe l'oeil* technique); SLIDE 19 (devotional); SLIDES 7, 8, 25 (daily life)

LESSON PLANS: Daily Life, p. 197; Gesture, p. 125; Portrait, p. 177; Poetic Forms, p. 159. See Questioning Strategies, p. 95

SLIDE 6, 6A, 6B  
SAINT ELIGIUS, 1449  
PETRUS CHRISTUS  
Netherlandish,  
act. by 1444–d.1472/73  
Oil on panel; 39 x 33 7/16 in.  
Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975.1.110)

# MARCO DEL BUONO APOLLONIO DI GIOVANNI

SLIDE 7

The subject of this narrative panel is the Book of Esther (2:17–19) from the Old Testament: “King Ahasuerus [of Persia] loved Esther [a Jew] more than all the women, and she found grace and favor in his sight more than all the virgins, so that he set the royal crown on her head and made her queen. . . . Then the king gave a great banquet to all his princes and servants.” Through this marriage Esther would be able to save the Jews.

The composition is simple; it is divided into exterior and interior scenes. The story is revealed in three sequential episodes, reading from left to right, like a comic strip. In the foreground, the Persian king Ahasuerus arrives in Florence on a gray horse. Gold leaf decorates his fashionable attire and distinctive puff-shaped hat. He appears a second time, at his marriage to Esther, in the left-hand section of the loggia. Esther wears a blue cap and a fashionable dress, also decorated with gold leaf. Ahasuerus appears a third time standing in front of the banquet table where Esther is seated. Mordecai, a key figure in this story and Esther’s cousin, is on the outside of the loggia looking in.



The story has been set in fifteenth-century Florence. The building on the left with its rusticated ground floor resembles the Palazzo Medici, while the church is reminiscent of fifteenth-century images of Santissima Annunziata, a church in the same neighborhood. The loggias, or private porticos, were built as extensions of family *palazzi*, providing space for the family business, as well as a sheltered place for entertaining and enjoying fresh air. Painted in tempera, the colors are bright and clear, and the walls of the loggia are covered with gold leaf.

Originally this panel decorated the front of a *cassone* (a chest, often a wedding chest), an essential piece of furniture. It was used as a repository for the family’s most precious possessions; often it held the bride’s trousseau, made up of linens and other textiles. The panels on a *cassone* were designed to give pleasure and, indirectly, to educate. The subjects are usually biblical, classical, mythological, or historical, and many feature female protagonists. It is easy to visualize small children sitting on the floor looking at the painted tales; the settings and costumes were familiar, so they easily could imagine themselves in the scene, while the adults retold the stories that illustrated family and civic values.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This panel was painted in the workshop of Apollonio di Giovanni and Marco del Buono, which specialized in painting domestic objects. The accounts of this workshop indicate that in the mid-fifteenth century almost every important family of Florence commissioned a *cassone* from them. The patron of this *cassone* probably requested the use of gold leaf on the panel to add to the monetary value of the *cassone* and consequently to the family's prestige.

### SLIDE 7

*THE STORY OF ESTHER*, CA. 1460–70  
 MARCO DEL BUONO GIAMBERTI  
 Florentine, 1402–1489  
 APOLLONIO DI GIOVANNI DI TOMASO,  
 Florentine, 1415/17–1465  
 Tempera and gold on wood;  
 17 1/2 x 55 3/8 in.  
 Rogers Fund 1918 (18.117.2)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Family, marriage; society; biblical narrative; architecture

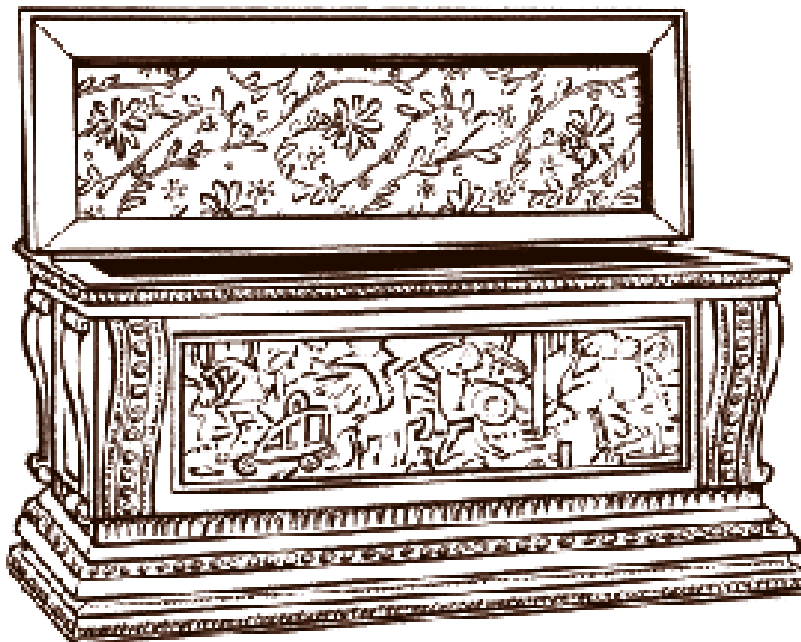
COMPARE SLIDE 8 (narrative and composition);

SLIDES 4, 6 (marriage); SLIDES 5, 8, 25 (daily life)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist/Patron: Contract, p. 87

LESSON PLANS: The Story in Art, Part I, p. 105, and Part II, p. 153;

Gesture, p. 125; Daily Life, p. 197; Poetic Forms, p. 159



# FRA CARNEVALE

SLIDE 8

**T**his painting tells the story of the birth of the Virgin, which is found in the Apocrypha. Fra Carnevale integrated the event, a popular subject in fifteenth-century Italian painting, into rituals of aristocratic daily life. He agreed with Alberti, who wrote that the intention of narrative painting was “to edify and to delight the eye. . . The first thing that gives pleasure in a narrative is a plentiful variety.”

Elegant ladies meet and greet each other in front of a *palazzo*, as men return from a hunt. The clothes are the latest fifteenth-century fashion. The placement of the figures and the colors of their outfits create a rhythmical pattern that draws the viewer's eye into the pictorial space. For example, the three women in the left foreground are placed on a diagonal axis that directs the viewer's eye into the palazzo where the exterior wall has been removed. This directional thrust is enhanced by the use of the color blue. Two of the women are dressed in blue and varying shades of red; one holds a child's hand. Follow the diagonal axis into the palazzo, where two more women, one dressed in blue, wash the infant Mary, while two other women sit and wait to swaddle her. The diagonal thrust continues into the back room where Anne, Mary's mother, is resting in bed, surrounded by attendants who carry trays of food; one woman sits on the edge of the bed looking out at the scene. The color blue in the men's mantles and the sky lead the viewer's eye into the distance, where farmers plow the fields and boats sail the ocean. The tempera colors are brilliant, sharp, and opaque. The architecture, an ideal Italian Renaissance palazzo, provides the structure that unifies the varied activities. Flanked by columns and pilasters, the arches define the rooms and portico and separate the men's and women's realms. The façade of the building is decorated with architectural details inspired by classical reliefs, such as the garlands and *putti* (winged heads) on the entablature and the medallions with eagles in the spandrels. On the second story are panels illustrating figures from classical mythology. The reliefs are rendered in a technique called *grisaille*, which uses shades of gray to render the effect of relief. This technique was adopted from northern painting.



Fra Carnevale has employed **linear one-point perspective** to construct the space; he plotted and incised the lines into the gesso before he started to paint this panel. The architectural elements are used to plot the converging lines, which meet at the **vanishing point**; the figures and objects diminish in size as they move closer to the vanishing point and farther from the viewer. To find the vanishing point, let your eye follow and extend the lines made by the meeting of the floor and the walls of the palazzo. Now, follow the imaginary lines made by joining the top edge of the capitals, the two **cornices** on the **entablature**, and the line of birds in the sky. All these lines converge at the vanishing point, on the outer left edge, a little above the **horizon line**. (P. 12)

This painting is a good example of southern Renaissance painting. It uses linear one-point perspective; it reflects interest in classical architecture, figurative sculpture, and literary texts; and it sets a religious narrative in a contemporary (fifteenth-century) secular setting. As Alberti said, “The story that you can praise and admire will . . . be the one that holds anyone who sees it, educated or uneducated, with pleasure and emotion. . . .”



SLIDE 8, 8A  
*THE BIRTH OF THE VIRGIN*, ca. 1465–67  
 FRA CARNEVALE  
 (BARTOLOMEO DI GIOVANNI CORRADINI)  
 Marchigian, act. by 1445–d. 1484  
 Oil and tempera on wood; 57 x 37 7/8 in.  
 Rogers and Gwynne Andrews Fund, 1935 (35.121)

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Fra Carnevale, a monk, is generally thought to be the painter of this painting. He was born in Urbino, and in the 1440s he trained in Florence in Fra Filippo Lippi's workshop. By 1449, he had returned to Urbino, where he was involved in painting as well as in architectural projects, possibly including the building of the great Ducal Palace. In 1467, the hospital church of Santa Maria della Bella in Urbino commissioned Fra Carnevale to paint an *altarpiece*, of which this panel is the left wing. The subject of the right wing panel, located in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, is the Presentation of the Virgin. The central panel is missing.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Society; larger world; religious narrative and secular setting; daily life; costume; classical reference; linear one-point perspective; tempera

COMPARE SLIDES 2, 7 (narrative); SLIDES 4, 5, 6, 25 (daily life, costume; oil versus tempera paint); SLIDES 4, 6, 25 (perspective); SLIDES 2, 15 (gesture and the human figure)

LESSON PLANS: Linear One-Point Perspective, p. 135; Tempera, p. 185; Gesture, p. 125; The Story in Art, Part I, p. 105, Part II, p. 153; Daily Life, p. 197; Poetic Forms, p. 159



# THE LIBERAL ARTS *STUDIOLO* FROM THE DUCAL PALACE AT GUBBIO

SLIDE 9

The Gubbio *studiolo* (“small study”) consists of a series of wooden intarsia panels installed in such a way as to replicate their original location in the Ducal Palace in Gubbio, a small hill town in Umbria. The patron of the Gubbio *studiolo* was Federico da Montefeltro (1422–1482), duke of Urbino. The *studiolo* was probably created by Giuliano da Maiano (1432–1490), who also was responsible for important intarsia works in the Cathedral of Florence. Like many artists in fifteenth-century Florence, Giuliano worked along with several other artists, often family members, in a workshop where each artist may have had a slightly different expertise. This division of labor allowed several commissions to be carried out at the same time.



The *studiolo* at the Metropolitan, one of the most important works of Renaissance art in North America, should be approached from several points of view, including its materials and technique, social and historical context, and imagery.

## MATERIALS AND TECHNIQUE

The art of wood intarsia was practiced long before the fifteenth century in Italy, but it was at this time that the art form reached its height. Craftsmen shaped the mosaic of approximately five-millimeter-thick (less than one-quarter-inch) sections of wood with a variety of saws, planes, adzes, chisels, and knives. Many kinds of wood were used in fifteenth-century Florentine intarsia, including walnut, pear, cherry, maple, and oak. The artisans looked for natural variations in color and texture to achieve the desired effects, since no paint or pigment was used.

## SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Duke Federico was truly a “Renaissance individual” in the sense in which we use the term today. He was a brilliant military leader and an intellectual who successfully combined the values of the active and contemplative life. As a *condottiere*, or mercenary general, he fought for all of the major powers on the Italian peninsula: Milan, Florence, Naples, Venice, and the Papal States. As a patron of the arts, he commissioned many works of art and architecture, which are lasting monuments to his vision, as is this, his private *studiolo*.

As one room within the larger palace, the Gubbio *studiolo* was decorated with a series of images that reflected its specific function as well as the identity of its patron. The room is trapezoidal, which allowed it to fit into its original location; in the Museum, the original light source has been simulated. The walls are entirely covered with intarsia panels depicting a series of illusionistic cupboards and shelves filled with various objects. A Latin inscription in gold lettering on a blue background celebrates the virtues of knowledge. A series of *trompe l'œil*, or illusionistic, benches lines the lower zone of the walls. A richly coffered ceiling completes the room.

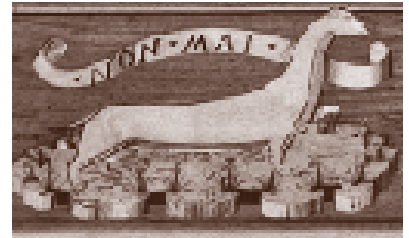


SLIDE 9, 9A  
*THE LIBERAL ARTS STUDIOLI* FROM  
*THE DUCAL PALACE AT GUBBIO*, ca. 1478–83  
GIULIANO DA MAIANO AND WORKSHOP  
Florentine, 1432–1490  
Intarsia of walnut, bog oak, pear, maple,  
spindlewood, and other fruit woods  
Measurements: h. 17 ft. 5 in.; l. 16 ft. 10 in.; w. 12 ft. 6 in.  
Rogers Fund, 1939 (39.153)

## IMAGERY

The many objects depicted on the shelves allude to the virtues and honors of Duke Federico. Taken as a whole, they illustrate the seven liberal arts, the backbone of late-medieval and Renaissance education, which were divided into two parts, the *trivium* (rhetoric, grammar, and dialectic) and the *quadrivium* (astronomy, geometry, music, and arithmetic). The arts of music, for example, are represented by the many different musical instruments, including an organ, fiddle, and several types of lutes. The arts of mathematics and geometry are represented by measuring instruments, such as the compass, the square, and the hourglass. Astronomy is represented by the armillary sphere, and rhetoric, grammar, and dialectic by the many books, a number of which are open to display pages with writing. A series of paintings of women representing these liberal arts, now in other museums, once decorated the upper zone of the *studiolo*, reinforcing the message of the intarsia panels.

In addition to these objects, we find a number of pieces of armor, suggesting the military prowess of Duke Federico. Personal devices, including coats of arms, underscore his ownership of the room. One of the duke's emblems was the ermine, a small mammal that stood for innocence and purity, and it was also the symbol of the chivalric Order of the Ermine. It is depicted here on a piece of mud with the words *non mai*, meaning “never,” alluding to the belief that the animal preferred death to soiling its white coat. Another personal emblem of the duke was the ostrich holding an arrowhead in its beak. The assertion written in German, “I can swallow a big iron,” alludes to the duke's resistance to adversity. The duke also included a garter, representing his membership in the prestigious English Order of the Garter. Other images in the room, such as the parrot in a cage, were included as status symbols, since the parrot was an exotic bird that came from distant lands.



## PERSPECTIVE

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the Gubbio *studiolo* is the use of linear perspective, along with light and shadow, to create convincing representations of the many objects depicted and, in general, the illusion of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface—the definition of perspective. Duke Federico maintained close ties with the intellectual world of Florence, which was the center of humanistic studies, and he would have been keen on replicating the latest techniques of perspective design. One of his best friends was Leon Battista Alberti, who is credited, as we have already read (See p. 12), with one of the first formulations of linear perspective.

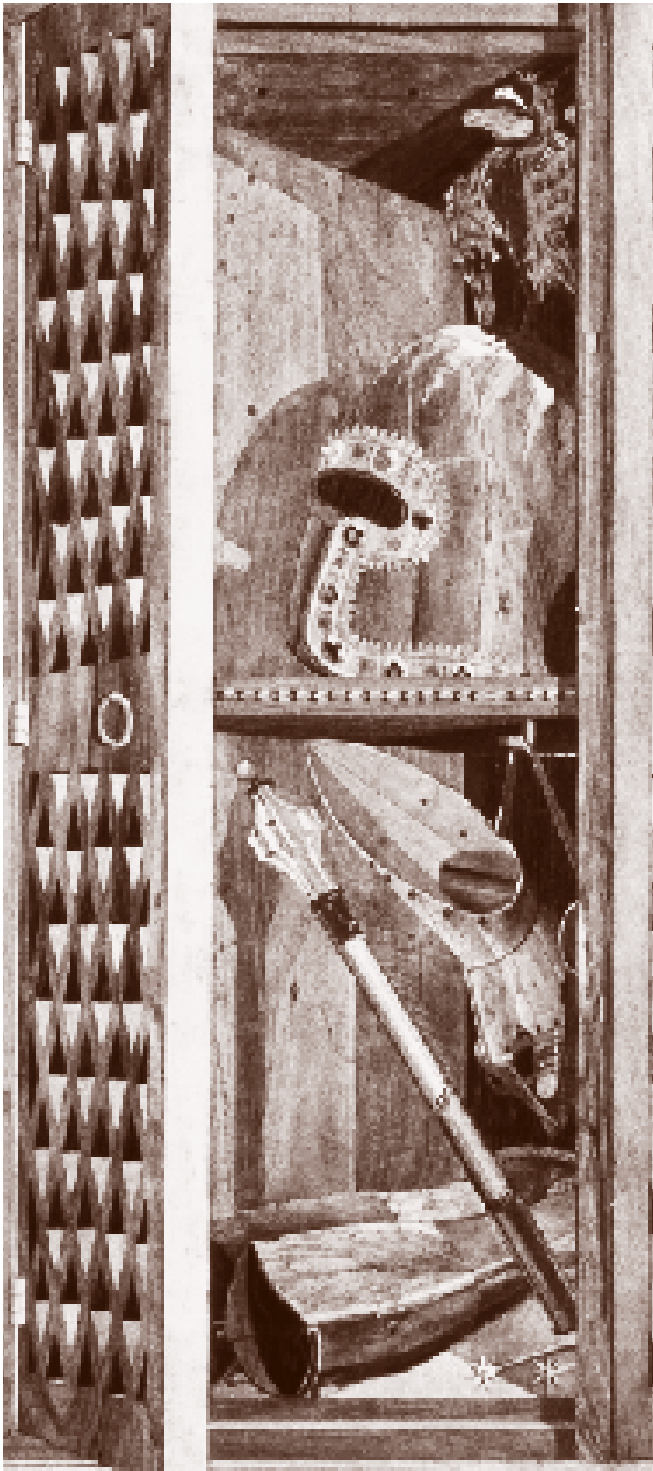
## THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: “Renaissance individual”; family and home; society; larger world; light and shade, wood intarsia

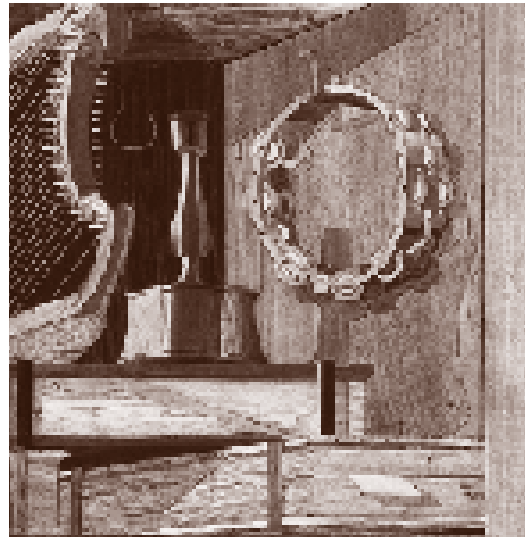
COMPARE SLIDES 5, 23 (fame and prestige); SLIDE 6 (*trompe l'oeil*); SLIDE 17 (the “Renaissance man”)

SOURCE MATERIALS: Humanist: Marsilio Ficino, p. 79; Family: Discourse by Giovanni della Casa, p. 90

LESSON PLANS: Allegory, p. 171; Linear One-Point Perspective, p. 135



DETAIL: ARMOR



DETAIL: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS



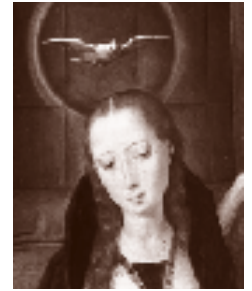
DETAIL: BIRD IN CAGE

FOR THE TEACHER: More images of the *studiolo* are found in the special CD-ROM that is included in the packet.

# HANS MEMLING

SLIDE 10

Were it not for the wings on the backs of three figures in this painting, we might for a moment think this was a regal domestic scene inside a richly appointed home. A group of people cluster together. A window on the upper left lets in soft light from above, sumptuous textures adorn fabrics, floor, and objects everywhere. The colors are a feast for the eye. Great attention has been paid to everything, from the smallest of details to the organization of the room itself. Further visual investigation reveals, in addition to wings, the presence of other preternatural elements, most notably a hovering bird in a radiant circle, the scepter in the hand of the figure on the left, and a bare toe protruding from the hem of the richly brocaded robe on the winged figure we can call an angel. Light from a source we cannot see falls on the hands and faces of the figures.



It is the wings and encircled dove, along with the presence of other religious symbols in the guise of simple household objects, that tell us we are witnessing a sacred scene. This is the moment of the Annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel, identified here by his wings, scepter, and extraordinary robe, appears to Mary to tell her she is with child. This is one of the fundamental events of Christianity, described in the New Testament (Luke 1:26–38), and it is the prelude to the redemption of humankind through Christ.

Notice the serene atmosphere that Hans Memling has created for the moment of this story, as Mary quietly accepts the news with grace and gentle happiness. Two small angels attend to her with consideration and respect. This annunciation takes place in the room of a well-appointed home not unlike, perhaps, that of the pious person who might originally have purchased this painting for private devotional use. Window, furniture, floor tiles, and bed are all described in very specific detail. Memling's use of color is lush and harmonious. The four figures are connected by the use of blues and lavenders, and Mary's blue cloak and the flow of the angels' robes tie the figures to the frontal plane. The angel Gabriel wears a rich brocade of red and gold. Notice how these colors are repeated, the same as that of the bed, uniting foreground and background in a single stroke of color that alludes perhaps to the blood of the Passion. Mary's hand points to the open book, as if to suggest that this is the fulfillment of the prophecies. Other symbols in the painting would have been understood by viewers of the period, such as the lilies that are Mary's symbol, and the brass candlestick and the half-filled glass bottle that represent the Virgin in her glory. Just as Memling used these simple objects as symbols of something much greater, so he suggested heavenly meaning in his use of light, especially the presence of dual light sources. In this way, we can understand the presence of the natural light of this world coming in through the window, and the light of God radiating onto the figures.

The space described in this painting suggests depth and volume, but it does not follow the mathematical perspective system favored by Renaissance artists in southern Europe. The relationship of objects to the space in which they reside is designated close and far by overlapping and by the use of lights and darks, rather than by a unified perspectival relationship to a vanishing point. Here, the eye moves in and around each object, similar to the way the eye moves as it looks into a room. Each "thing" then is discovered and considered in



SLIDE 10  
ANNUNCIATION, 1482  
HANS MEMLING  
Netherlandish,  
active by 1465–d. 1494  
Oil on wood; 32 x 21 5/8 in.  
Robert Lehman Collection, 1975  
(1975.1.113)

turn, and each has a position in the room as we experience it. It has been said that in southern Europe, the eye sees the room from a fixed point; in the North, the room is fixed and the eye moves freely about the space.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Hans Memling may have begun to paint in Germany, where he was born, but it is very likely that he studied with Rogier van der Weyden in Brussels. By the 1470s, Memling is listed in the town records of Bruges as its leading painter and one of its wealthiest citizens. He was very much in demand as a portrait painter especially in the Italian community of Bruges. The Metropolitan Museum owns the portraits of Tommaso Portinari, the manager of the Bruges branch of the Medici banking empire, and his wife Maria Maddalena Baroncelli (MMA 14.40.626 and MMA 14.40.627). Memling also was known for his devotional paintings.

#### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Family and home; devotional; New Testament narrative; symbols; perspective; color; light and shade; oil paint

COMPARE SLIDES 1, 8 (religious narrative); SLIDES 4, 8 (northern and southern European perspective; oil versus tempera paint); SLIDES 14, 19 (devotional)

LESSON PLAN: Overlapping Shapes, p. 129; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153

# LEONARDO DA VINCI

SLIDE 11

Leonardo da Vinci's curiosity led him to study and sketch such diverse subjects as human and animal anatomy; the way rocks are coated by running water; and the motion of planets and stars. He drew designs for forts, theater sets, equestrian statues, flying machines, and war devices. Of course, he is known as the painter of such great works as the *Last Supper* in Milan and the *Mona Lisa*. He filled hundreds of notebooks with interpretations of his direct experiences. Leonardo believed in the importance of observation; he writes, for example, "the eye, which is called the window of the soul, is the principal means by which the central sense can most completely and abundantly appreciate the infinite works of nature. . . ." He continues, ". . . O painter! . . . you cannot be a good one if you are not the universal master of representing by your art every kind of form produced by nature. . . ."

This is a drawing of *Ursus arctus*, a brown bear then common in the Alps north of Milan. The bear's distinguishing trait is the ruff of hair that grows through the matted fur around its neck and shoulders during the summer months. This drawing allows the viewer to experience the bear's movements as well as see the shape of the body and the texture of the fur. Scholars believe that Leonardo probably observed a bear in captivity and that he may have studied the fur and skin of a dissected bear.

Leonardo followed the bear's movements. He sketched the bear's hind legs several times, slightly varying their placement each time. The front right leg is lifted, while the left, the weight-bearing leg, rests firmly on the ground. A single line describes the contour of the back, and repeated lines describe the head and belly of the bear. Leonardo focused on the anatomical structure of a particular paw, distinguishing the muscles and claws. He notes that he ". . . will discourse of the hands of each animal to show in what way they vary; as in the bear which has the ligatures of the toes joined above the instep."



This is a silverpoint drawing. For silverpoint, the paper first must be coated with an opaque pigment; in this case a mixture of pulverized bone and glue gives the paper its light-buff color. Leonardo used the tip of a thin silver stylus or wire to make the drawing; the point deposits a layer of silver that eventually tarnishes. The fine gray line resembles the line made with a hard graphite pencil, but silverpoint lines cannot be erased. The only way to shade a silverpoint or metalpoint drawing is to build up the tones by *hatching*. Leonardo used short repeated curved strokes to describe the texture of the ruff and long diagonal lines to create the volume of the bear's broad body.

The bear is drawn over a sketch of a pregnant woman. Scholars believe that Leonardo may have drawn the female figure on the untreated paper; then, because paper was scarce and expensive, he coated its surface and reused it.

Leonardo's genius was recognized and appreciated in his lifetime. Observers described him as handsome, gracious, and gentlemanly, with interests and activities so wide-ranging that it was difficult for him to finish a project. He was born in Vinci, a small town near Florence. His



SLIDE 11  
STUDY OF A BEAR WALKING, CA. 1485–90  
LEONARDO DA VINCI  
Florentine, 1452–1519  
Silverpoint on light buff prepared paper;  
4 1/16 x 5 1/4 in.  
Robert Lehman Collection, 1975  
(1975.1.369)

father was a notary, equivalent to a present-day lawyer. His parents never married, and he grew up in his father's house with his paternal grandparents. In Florence, the painter and sculptor Andrea Verrocchio became his teacher, and Leonardo later worked in Milan, Florence, and Rome. In 1516, he moved to France. He lived and died in Cloux, in a château given to him by the king, Francis I.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Observation; science and art; animal anatomy

COMPARE SLIDES 13, 16, and *Battle of the Naked Men*, p. 93 (drawing and printmaking techniques)

LESSON PLANS: Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121; Tempera, p. 185; Printmaking, p. 191

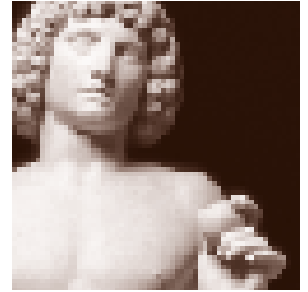


# TULLIO LOMBARDO

SLIDE 12

Originally, this life-size sculpture of Adam stood in a niche on the resplendent tomb that Tullio Lombardo made for the *Doge* Andrea Vendramin. This funerary monument, resembling a Roman triumphal arch, is in the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice.

The sculpture was intended to be seen from the front and sides. Adam contemplates the apple in his left hand, the cause of his downfall, as his right hand rests delicately on a broken branch, and the serpent appears at the bottom of the tree trunk decorated with ivy. The smooth white marble and subtle modeling of the muscles recall the serenity of Greek classical sculpture. His posture is a version of the classical *contrapposto* pose found in most Renaissance figures. The slight twist raises his right hip slightly higher than the left, and his left shoulder higher than the right.



This nude Adam resembles a beautiful pagan god, rather than the “naked” Adam whose fig leaf he wears, as described in Genesis 3:7: “And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons.”

Why Adam for a Christian funeral monument? With Adam and Eve’s estrangement from God, mortality—death and sin—are introduced to humanity: “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19).

While this statue represents the Christian tradition, it also encapsulates the Renaissance classical belief in man’s capacity to make whatever he desired of himself. As the Florentine philosopher Pico della Mirandola stated in 1486 in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (*Oratio de hominis dignitate*): “Neither a fixed abode nor a form that is thine alone nor function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam. . . . Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will, in whose hand We have placed thee, shalt ordain for thyself the limits of thy nature” (Cassirer, Kristeller, and Randall Jr., *Renaissance Philosophy*, pp. 224–25).

The Lombardo family, Pietro and his sons Antonio and Tullio, were sculptors of Lombard origin who settled in Venice, where they designed, built, and carved many monuments reflecting their admiration of classical architecture, ornament, and sculpture.



SLIDE 12  
ADAM, 1490–95  
TULLIO LOMBARDO  
Venetian, ca. 1455–d. 1532  
Marble; h. 75 in.  
Fletcher Fund, 1936 (36.163)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; society; aristocratic patron; classical figurative sculpture; marble; Old Testament, Genesis, Adam and Eve

COMPARE: SLIDE 13 (narrative); SLIDES 13, 16, and *Battle of the Naked Men*, p. 93 (human figure)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Humanist: Pico della Mirandola, p. 81

LESSON PLANS: A Form to Measure, p. 117; Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121; The Contrapposto Pose, p. 123; Gesture, p. 125; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153

# ALBRECHT DÜRER

SLIDE 13

Albrecht Dürer signed his full name and authorship in Latin, ALBERTUS DÜRER NORICUS FACIEBAT 1504, in a high and prominent place, overlooking the scene he created of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The subject of this highly celebrated engraving fills the frame. Adam and Eve, wearing only leaves, stand before the dark and dense forest that is Dürer's vision of the Garden of Eden.



Dürer was an acute observer and transcriber of the natural world, and he rendered objects and people with the closest possible attention to their form and character. What is difficult for modern eyes to discern, however, is the symbolic aspect of this bravura display of the details of the natural world. This is the moment before the Fall.

The serpent gives Eve the apple, Adam stands ready to receive it. He holds the branch of an ash tree, the symbol of the Tree of Life. A fig tree stands between Adam and Eve, providing the leaves that cover her, but, curiously, also bears apples, suggesting that it is also the Tree of Knowledge with its forbidden fruit. Among the animals we discover in the foliage, four are especially significant: the cat, ox, rabbit, and elk, who collectively represent the four temperaments of man that are unleashed by the events in the story of Adam and Eve. Other details invite bemused speculation: Does Adam step on the outstretched tail of a mouse? Has the cat fallen asleep between mouse, rabbit, and bird above? Does the ram refer to the story of Abraham and Isaac, or does it sit behind the tree as a symbol of the future Christ? Is the stillness of the scene, like the calm before the storm, suggestive of imminent tragedy? Does the goat on the high crag in the background peer into an abyss?

So finely rendered are the textures and so fully rounded are the dimensions that we almost forget that there is no color in this work of art. Its story is evocative and imaginative and rendered with technical brilliancy, while the figures have been rendered in accordance with principles of human proportion that Dürer strove to articulate and write about. From his writings on human proportions in *Aesthetic Excursus*, we have his thoughts:

I hold that the more nearly and accurately a man is made to resemble man, so much better will the work be. If the best parts, chosen from many well-formed men, are fitly united in one figure, it will be worthy of praise. The Creator fashioned men once and for all as they *must* be, and I hold that the perfection of form and beauty is contained in the sum of all men.

Dürer traveled from Germany to Italy in 1494, ten years before this engraving was made, and he returned a second time shortly after its publication. It is generally understood that in his travels Dürer sought knowledge of anatomical proportions as embodied in classical works of art. As we see in this beautiful engraving and in his writing, his achievement was to bring together the ideas of religious faith, classical aesthetics, and impeccable artistry.



SLIDE I3  
ADAM AND EVE, 1504  
ALBRECHT DÜRER  
German, 1471–1528  
Engraving; 9 3/4 x 5/8 in.  
Bequest of Ida Kammerer, in  
memory of her husband,  
Frederic Kammerer, M.D., 1933  
(33.79.9)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Home; society; human figure; print; narrative, Genesis—Old Testament

COMPARE SLIDE I2 (Adam); SLIDES I6, I9, 24, and *Battle of the Naked Men*, p. 93

(human figure and contrapposto pose); SLIDE II (animals)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist: Dürer's Journal, p. 83; Artist/Patron: Dürer on Lady Margaret of Austria, p. 89

LESSON PLANS: The Contrapposto Pose, p. 123; Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153; Printmaking, p. 191

According to Giorgio Vasari, “this [altarpiece] is certainly a marvelous and devout work of art.” The Madonna (Mary), the Christ Child, and the infant John the Baptist occupy the middle of the panel and are flanked by four saints. The scene is set against a distant landscape. Mary sits on the throne with Christ on her lap; she looks down at Saint John. He in turn looks up at Christ, who responds with the hand sign for benediction. The three figures fit into an equilateral triangle, the apex of which is Mary’s halo. God the Father sends his blessing from the center of the lunette, repeating the Child’s gesture. His head is the apex of a second triangle that frames the entire composition in the main panel. The triangle is a stable shape as well as being the Christian symbol for the Trinity.



The composition of the altarpiece is symmetrical, with God the Father and Mary along the vertical axis, and the angels, Christ, John, and the other saints distributed on either side. The saints’ gestures provide a sense of movement as they are virtually mirror images of each other, and their gazes cross the holy scene from upper left to lower right. For example, Saint Peter, on the lower left, looks out toward the viewer. Saint Catherine of Alexandria, standing behind and above him, looks at the Christ child. On the lower right, Saint Paul, like Saint Catherine, looks toward the group in the middle of the panel, as Saint Cecilia, above and behind him, looks out toward the viewer. This well-balanced and harmonious plan derives from classical geometric propositions on proportions. In Christian thought, the manifestation of a logical system stands for divine intention. Thus, the geometric configurations illuminate the spiritual significance of this devotional image that was designed to inspire prayer and meditation.

The sixteenth-century churchgoing public was familiar with the lives of the saints, whose stories they often heard at Mass. Artists depicted the saints with specific objects, called “attributes,” that allude to their stories and thereby allowed the faithful to identify them. Saint Peter, one of the twelve apostles, is shown holding his attribute, the keys to heaven. Jesus named him Peter, which means “rock,” to signify that he would be the foundation upon which the Church would be built. Saint Paul holds an open Bible, referring to his writing of the Epistles. Saint Catherine of Alexandria holds a palm leaf, a symbol of martyrdom, and her right hand rests upon a wheel. According to Christian legend, she was a noblewoman of great learning. When she refused to worship idols, the emperor had her tortured on a spiked wheel, then beheaded. Saint Cecilia also holds a palm leaf and a book. She was a Roman Christian of the second or third century who was beheaded when she refused to worship the Roman gods. She is the patron saint of music and musicians. Sometimes specific colors also have symbolic meaning. For example, Mary traditionally wears a mantle of blue, a symbol of the sky and heaven. In this painting the azurite blue pigment has turned black with time.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Raphael began his studies with his father, a provincial painter in the court of Federico da Montefeltro in Urbino. Raphael assimilated what he could use from many artists and still retained his originality and deep interest in classical form. In Rome, Raphael became one of the principal artists to work for Pope Julius II.



SLIDE 14  
 MADONNA AND CHILD ENTHRONED  
 WITH SAINTS, 1504–5  
 RAPHAEL (RAFFAELLO SANZIO OR SANTI)  
 Marchigian, 1483–1520  
 Tempera and oil on wood;  
 main panel 66 7/8 x 67 7/8 in.  
 Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1916  
 (16. 30a,b)

Vasari writes that the convent of Sant'Antonio da Padova at Perugia commissioned the young Raphael to paint this altarpiece and asked him to clothe the Christ Child. He also states that Raphael worked on this altarpiece in two stages, painting the female figures before he left for Florence in 1504, and the male figures when he returned the following year. In Florence, he was influenced by many painters, including Michelangelo and Leonardo. Thus, the bodies of the male saints are rendered with greater volume, and the facial features show more individual expression than those of the female saints. Vasari also describes the three scenes of the *predella*. The Metropolitan Museum owns one of the panels, *The Agony in the Garden*. It is interesting to imagine a lively narrative painted on small panels below the monumental image we have just looked at (Vasari, *Lives*, pp. 710–740). At present, Vasari's account is considered hypothetical, but since no other definitive information exists, we have included it in this packet.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Home (convent); society; devotional; altarpiece; composition; symbols

COMPARE SLIDE 2 (altarpiece, composition, oil versus tempera); SLIDES 1, 19 (Christ Child); SLIDES 1, 2, 5 (composition); SLIDE 1 (a *predella* panel)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist: Michelangelo, p. 82

LESSON PLAN: Classical Composition, p. 141; The Contrapposto Pose, p. 123; A Form to Measure, p. 117

# PIERO DI COSIMO

SLIDE 15

**A**t first glance, this unusual painting seems chaotic, full of action and violence. Satyrs (half-man, half-goat) and centaurs (half-man, half-horse) intermingle with men wearing loincloths and fur capes that recall the lionskin worn by Hercules. A fire blazes in the forest while people and wild animals flee, only to be ambushed by hunters (see SLIDE 15A). A reddish-yellow glow illuminates the distant landscape. The painting is divided vertically by two trees that lead the viewer's eye into the landscape in two directions. The trunks of the two trees frame a figure holding or strangling a wild boar. A small monkeylike creature hangs on to the right tree trunk.



On the right side, Piero placed trees on a diagonal axis, creating the perspective line that leads the viewer's eye deep into the rocky, barren landscape. He reinforced this axis by aligning the figures: a man crouched on a fast-moving horse, two centaurs in the distance, and a perfectly foreshortened dead figure that lies on the ground with a large stick by its side. Further movement is created by the two satyrs who come out of the lower right edge of the painting and head in the opposite direction, toward the painting's center. On the left side, men and satyrs work together to subdue the wild animals who are fighting among themselves. The faces of Piero's figures are expressive, and their bodies are active and flexible.

Vasari describes the young Piero as “by nature a most lofty spirit, and he was very strange, and different in fancy from other youths.” Like Leonardo da Vinci, Piero believed in observing and investigating all kinds of natural phenomena. Vasari says he shows “a certain subtlety in the investigation of some of the deepest and most subtle secrets of Nature. . . .”

This panel is part of a series: the Metropolitan Museum owns a second panel, *The Return from the Hunt*, and the third, *The Forest Fire*, is at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. In this series Piero explored contemporary and classical notions about the beginning of civilization—the evolution of humanity from a primitive, feral state to one of relative civilization. In this panel, the blazing fire may allude to a popular idea, originally expressed by the Roman architect Vitruvius (first century B.C.) and widely quoted in the Renaissance, that the discovery of fire led to the invention of human speech, social units, and dwellings, and thus, ultimately, to civilization:

In the olden days men were born like wild beasts in woods and caves and groves, and kept alive by eating raw food. Somewhere, meanwhile, the close-grown trees, tossed by storms and winds, and rubbing their branches together caught fire. Terrified by the flames, those who were near the spot fled. When the storm subsided, they drew near, and since they noticed how pleasant to their bodies was the warmth of the fire. . . sounds were breathed forth . . . Then, giving names to things more frequently used, they began to speak because of this fortuitous event . . .

Vitruvius, *De Architectura Libri Decem II*, Erwin Panofsky, “The Early History of Man,” *The Warburg Journal*, vol. 1, (1937), p. 12.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

According to Vasari, the Florentine wool merchant Francesco Pugliese commissioned Piero to paint a series of panels that formed a cycle of “diverse stories of small figures.” This may be one of the panels. Piero, the son of a Florentine goldsmith, was apprenticed as a young boy to the painter Cosimo Rosselli, and that is why he is known as Piero di Cosimo. Vasari says that Piero’s behavior became eccentric after his teacher’s death:

SLIDE I5, I5 A  
 A *HUNTING SCENE*, 1505–7  
 PIERO DI COSIMO  
 (PIERO DI LORENZO)  
 Florentine, 1462–1521  
 Tempera and oil on wood;  
 27 3/4 x 66 3/4  
 Gift of Robert Gordon 1875  
 (75.7.2)

He cared nothing for his own comfort, and reduced himself to eating [only] boiled eggs, which, in order to save firing, he cooked when he was boiling his glue, and not six or eight at a time, but in [the] fifties; and keeping them in a basket he would eat them one by one. He would never have his rooms swept, he would only eat when hunger came to him, and he would not let his garden be worked. He could not bear the crying of children, the coughing of men, the sound of bells, and the chanting of friars (Vasari, *Lives*, pp. 650–58).

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; society; secular narrative; spirit of inquiry and observation; classical texts

COMPARE SLIDES 18, 25, 29 (landscape and perspective);

SLIDES 2, 18, 24, 25, and *Battle of the Naked Men*, p. 93 (human figure);

SLIDES 11, 13 (animals); SLIDES 13, 25 (tree)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Humanist: Pico della Mirandola, p. 81

LESSON PLANS: Gesture, p. 125; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153; Poetic Forms, p. 159;

A Writing Activity, p. 157



# MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI

SLIDE 16

The drawings on this page are studies for the figure of the Libyan Sibyl in the Sistine Chapel frescoes. The sibyls were the ancient Greek priestesses of Apollo whose prophecies were believed by early Christians to have been inspired by God and to have predicted the coming of Jesus and the Apocalypse.

This page of drawings allows the viewer to follow Michelangelo's artistic process and appreciate his masterful hand. In these anatomical drawings of a figure in motion, Michelangelo identified and highlighted specific shoulder muscles by using two functional notations, a round circle and a straight line. Compare the more finished study of the Sibyl with the drawing immediately below her raised left arm. In the latter, line describes the structure and dimension of the left shoulder, the foreshortened arm and hand, and the torso. In the more complete study, light and shadow carefully model the volume of the muscles, creating a feeling of taut skin. In some areas, Michelangelo rendered the shadows with a repetition of close parallel lines called *hatching*: the closer the chalk lines, the darker the shadow. In other places, he achieved the deep rich orange hue we see by wetting the paper so that the soft chalk soaked into it. He used red chalk, a new medium at the time, because it is soft and it permits the responsive, rapid drawing so necessary for quickly setting down thoughts and impressions. (Natural chalks are found in the earth; red chalk is a variety of red ochre.)



This page illustrates bent toes, a turned foot, foreshortened hands and fingers, and the Sibyl's profile. In addition, the more finished Sibyl looks back over her left shoulder while her arms and hands—which in the fresco hold a heavy book—reach forward. This slight twist is an example of *contrapposto*, a pose often used in the Renaissance.

Like most artists at this time, Michelangelo probably drew from nude male models, usually young assistants in the master artist's workshop. Michelangelo's career epitomizes the Renaissance idea of the inspired artist-genius. Although he was an architect, sculptor, painter, poet, and engineer as well, he thought of himself first as a sculptor and believed that the sculptor shared in something like divine power to "make man." He was a man of dramatic contradictions. Impulsive and antagonistic toward his rivals, he was deeply sympathetic and concerned about those close to him. He often opposed the demands of his patrons. He was born into a prominent Florentine family and as an adolescent was befriended by Lorenzo de' Medici, a relationship that gave him the opportunity to copy that family's classical sculptures and to study classical literature from their library. He spent much of his career in Rome working for a succession of popes, including Julius II, for whom he frescoed the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. It was unveiled in 1512.



SLIDE I6  
STUDIES FOR THE LIBYAN  
SIBYL, CA. 1508  
MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI  
Florentine, 1475–1564  
Red chalk; 11 3/8 x 8 3/8 in.  
Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer  
Bequest, 1924 (24.197.2)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; artist-genius; drawing; anatomy; red chalk

COMPARE SLIDES I2, I3, I9 (human figure); SLIDE I3, and *Battle of Naked Men*, p. 93 (observation versus measurement of human figure); SLIDE II (drawing)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist: Michelangelo, p. 82

LESSON PLAN: Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121, The Contrapposto Pose, p. 123; Gesture, p. 125

# HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

SLIDE 17

A great portrait painter can introduce the viewer to the subject as though we were in the same room, allowed to examine unabashedly the facial characteristics and sometimes the very soul of the person. Hans Holbein was such a painter, renowned for his portraits and his extraordinary insight into the character of those he painted. The intimacy and immediacy in this painting belie the very small size of the original: the resolute strength, penetrating gaze, and fame of the sitter make this image appear larger than life. The subject is the great humanist Erasmus, whose appearance is known to us today through this and other portraits painted by Holbein.

With meticulous skill and precise brushwork, Holbein recorded specific details of character, such as Erasmus's steady, benevolent gaze; the delicate wrinkles around his deep-set eyes, the sharp nose, and the soft folds of flesh around the determined mouth; his high cheekbones; a readiness to smile; the wispy gray strands of hair that curl around his hat; the slightly hollow cheeks and pronounced stubble of his beard. Note the simple, sober costume and the austere background against which the figure sits, and the skill with which Holbein painted the fur, whose texture is silky to the eye. Erasmus's hands are clasped, as he faces a light source we cannot see, which illuminates him in a three-quarter view. The dark hat and high collar of his robe frame his face.



Holbein achieved the subtle tonal gradations on Erasmus's face by using newly developed oil techniques. The warm flesh tones and orange-red fur cuffs are particularly effective against the cool tones of the rich blue background. The small white rectangle in the upper-left corner is a later addition, with an inscription now illegible, perhaps the name of one of the owners.

It has been said that the subject of this painting, Desiderius Erasmus, was the greatest humanist of the Renaissance. Widely traveled and profoundly learned, he was first and foremost a theologian who served as an intermediary between the Greek scholars of antiquity and the humanists of the Renaissance. His translation of the New Testament into Latin and his accompanying edition of the original Greek influenced the Protestant Reformation.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

By 1515, Hans Holbein the Younger, the most talented scion of a family of painters, moved from Germany to Basel, Switzerland. When the Reformation reached Basel in the last years of the 1520s, great violence erupted. Provided with a letter of recommendation from his friend and patron Erasmus, Holbein went to England, where he became a favorite painter of the court of Henry VIII.



### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual, portrait, humanist; society; larger world;  
Protestant Reformation

COMPARE: SLIDES 4, 6, 21 (portrait); SLIDE 9 (Renaissance individual)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Humanist: Letter from Erasmus to  
Sir Thomas More, p. 80

LESSON PLANS: Erasmus of Rotterdam, p. 179; Portrait, p. 177

### SLIDE 17

ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM, 1523

HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

German, 1497/98–1543

Oil on wood; 7 3/8 x 5 3/4 in.

Robert Lehman Collection, 1975  
(1975.1.138)

# LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER

SLIDE 18

One does not need to look closely to see that this painting depicts a dream or a mythological story. Three women without clothes stand coyly in the lower right corner. Just inches away are two fully clothed and armored men. The older one gestures and talks with the women, the younger man gazes, unblinking, as if entranced, bewitched, or dreaming. A horse pokes its head around a tree and appears to look us in the eye, almost with a wink. Cupid appears in a puff of gray cloud above with a drawn bow and arrow. Dense, lush foliage creates a kind of stage set, separating the characters and their tale in the foreground from the harbor and mountains in the distant background and revealing their story to us in the foreground.

This painting represents one of the great myths, the story of the judgment of Paris, in which Paris must decide who among the goddesses Venus, Juno, and Minerva is the most beautiful. The artist, Lucas Cranach, frequently depicted mythological and other classical subjects. Here he follows a German version of the tale, choosing a witty and titillating tone to do so. The men are depicted not in the costumes of antiquity, but in the costumes of German knights and northern medieval mythology. The women wear golden chains and elegant hair ornaments and little else. In this version, the sleeping Paris sees the three goddesses in a dream, transported to him by Mercury. Imaginatively and easily, Cranach tells us visually which of the three is the winner. Not only is she pointing to Cupid with his bow and arrow in the upper-left corner, but she is distinguished from the others by her red and gray plumed hat, matching the color and feathers on Paris's costume. It is Venus, the goddess of love, and it is she who will receive the prize, which in this version of the story is the glass orb held by Mercury.



The distant scene of water, harbor, mountains, castles, and boats displays Cranach's skill as a landscapist; in his early years as a painter he studied the northern landscape in search of old forests and romantic vistas. The landscape fades to silvery blue in the background, following the color gradations of atmospheric perspective. To this he added a romanticized Gothic city and castled rocks, achieving a panoramic view that makes the scene complete.

Cranach was a great engraver and designer of woodcuts as well as a painter, and his versatility in these different media is evident in *The Judgment of Paris*. The surface is smooth, and no visible brushwork disrupts the brilliant illusion of this dream. Note the cool, classical idealizing of the female nudes, showing their sensual outlines from a variety of viewpoints. In contrast is the highly detailed rendering of armor on the two men. The foliage behind is beautifully delineated, each leaf appearing to be illuminated with light so as to suggest the heightened reality of a dream-like state.



SLIDE 18  
*THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS*, CA. 1528  
LUCAS CRANACH THE ELDER  
German, 1472–1553  
Tempera and oil on wood; 40 1/8 x 28 in.  
Rogers Fund, 1928 (28.221)

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Lucas Cranach could be considered a Renaissance man of the north; he lived in Vienna and was a member of humanist intellectual circles there. In 1504, the Elector of Saxony, Frederick III, called him to Wittenberg, where he became court painter and a close friend of Martin Luther. In his latter years, he established a large workshop that produced many portraits and Protestant paintings. Eventually he became involved in the events of the Reformation and accompanied the last Saxon elector into exile in 1550.

#### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Home; larger world; classical narrative; nude; costume; atmospheric or aerial perspective; oil paint

COMPARE SLIDE 13, 16 (nude and human figure); SLIDE 25 (aerial or atmospheric perspective); SLIDE 29 (landscape)

LESSON PLANS: Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121; Gesture, p. 125; Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131; Poetic Forms, p. 159

# ANDREA DEL SARTO

SLIDE 19

In this painting, the Christ Child is the central figure. Behind him, Joseph looks directly at the viewer, while Mary and the young John the Baptist look pensively at Christ, who seems oblivious to their concern and the importance of the moment. He is portrayed as a gleeful child who grabs the globe as if it was a toy, his gesture encircled by the mirroring poses of Saint John and Mary. The line of their arms unites the three and creates a circle, as well as the sculptural space the figures inhabit.



The four figures are set against an olive green background. The use of oil paint allowed Andrea to model the volume of the figures subtly with light and shade. His figures appear lifelike; he has done what Leon Battista Alberti suggests: “clothe[d] the bones and muscles [of the human figure] with flesh and skin.” Light falls on Saint John’s right shoulder but illuminates only a small patch on the top of Joseph’s head; Mary and Christ are in full light, and a dark shadow describes the space behind Christ’s legs. The shadow and the swath of vibrant red and blue cloth intensify the feeling of an inner circle. As humble spectators we—the viewer and Joseph—observe the scene from the outside.

The generous quantity of red and blue silk fabric casually draped on the table attracts the viewer’s eye, as do the violet of Mary’s dress and her yellow sleeve. The blue fabric wraps around Mary, and a tiny strip emerges on her left cuff, perhaps to remind the viewer of her traditional blue mantle, a symbol of her heavenly status. The red cloth, a symbol of the Passion, links John and Christ. In the lower left corner of the painting, a small wooden cross, also a symbol of the Passion, contrasts with the bronze cross on top of the globe, a symbol of the established Church and its dominion. The composition, the emphatic use of light, and the choice of symbolic colors and objects reveal the mystical themes and spiritual function of this devotional painting.

Sarto in Italian means “tailor”—Andrea was the son of a tailor. He was born in and lived most of his life in Florence. At the age of seven he went to work in a goldsmith shop, where Vasari says he gained an appreciation for precise detail. He studied painting with Piero di Cosimo, and Giorgio Vasari, the great Florentine biographer and painter, became his student. Vasari wrote of Andrea, “In [his] single person, nature and art demonstrated all that painting can achieve by means of draughtsmanship, colouring, and invention. His figures, however, for all their simplicity and purity, are well conceived, free from errors, and absolutely perfect in every respect” (Vasari, *Lives*, p. 823). After Michaelangelo and Raphael left Florence, Andrea was considered the city’s leading painter.



SLIDE I9  
*THE HOLY FAMILY WITH  
THE INFANT SAINT JOHN,*  
CA. 1530S  
ANDREA DEL SARTO  
Florentine, 1486–1530  
Oil on wood;  
53 1/2 x 39 5/8 in.  
Maria DeWitt Jesup Fund,  
1922 (22.75)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Family and home; devotional; narrative, human figure; light and shade; color; oil paint

COMPARE: SLIDE I6 (human figure); SLIDE I0 (devotional, use of color, space); SLIDES I, 8, I4 (Christ Child, narrative, composition, tempera versus oil paint, and color)

LESSON PLANS: Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121; Gesture, p. 125; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153



# BROTH BOWL AND COVER

SLIDE 20

This bowl (*scodella*) and its cover (*tagliere*) were part of a matching set presented to a mother as a gift upon the birth of a child, perhaps to serve a celebratory and healthful broth. Although no complete sets have survived intact, a drawing in a mid-sixteenth-century treatise on the arts of the potter implies that these sets originally comprised five pieces. In addition to the bowl and its cover there would have been a drinking cup, a saltcellar, and a lid to enclose all the parts. The two pieces are made of tin-glazed earthenware called *majolica*. Many types of *majolica*ware were produced in Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for both practical and ceremonial purposes. Sixteenth-century advances in glazing and firing techniques made possible the painting of complicated narratives in brilliant and subtle colors. This set with its beautifully painted narratives was costly and would have been considered a luxury item.

The bowl rests on a high stem. On opposite sides of the bowl are two medallions that contain unidentified coats of arms, probably belonging to the mother and father. As on Lorenzo de' Medici's birth tray, the coats of arms celebrate birth as a dynastic event. Two auspicious inscriptions address the mother and child; the one on the rim of the bowl reads: "God with his hands created you so fair that now to mortal eyes you appear more precious than any Oriental gem." The other, on the inside of the cover, reads: "Virtue, beauty, and bravery united in a single person—it is as if an enormous sea flowed into a little brook."

The three episodes that decorate this set are from classical Roman literature. They illustrate three important virtues: filial devotion (*pietas*), lovers' loyalty (*fides*), and courage (*virtu*). The inside of the bowl depicts Aeneas rescuing his father, Anchises, from Troy as it burns, a scene from Virgil's *Aeneid*. On the outside of the cover of the bowl, we find a scene from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: in a rocky landscape with a sarcophagus (stone coffin) and tree to the left, and a village and mountains in the distance, two lovers play out their fate. Pyramus lies dead on the ground, bleeding, while his beloved Thisbe stands over him, about to fall on her lover's sword and complete their tragic double suicide. (Ovid's tale also inspired the death scene in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* and the play-within-a-play in his *Midsummer Night's Dream*.) On the inside of the cover, Hercules slays the Nemean lion. The inscription "He who wanted to conquer Paradise, he who slew Cacus, he who was possessed by the fury" is found on the outside of the cover, along with the passage that refers to the story of Aeneas and Anchises: "He who made his way through fire like a salamander, with Julius [Ascanius] and Anchises."



Although the use of classical imagery and language was widespread by the middle of the sixteenth century, no assumptions could be made about people's ability to recognize specific episodes from the stories. When they were combined in a somewhat random way, as we see here, it was necessary to provide inscriptions to identify them.



OUTSIDE COVER: *PYRAMUS AND THISBE*

SLIDE 20  
*BROTH BOWL (SCODELLA) AND COVER (TAGLIERE)*, CA. 1530-40  
 BALDASSARE MANARA, D. 1547  
 Faenza, Majolica; h. 4 1/8 in.; cover diam. 7 3/4 in.  
 Robert Lehman Collection, 1975 (1975. 104.3a, b)



INSIDE OF COVER: *HERCULES SLAYS THE NEMEAN LION*



INSIDE OF BOWL: *AENEAS RESCUING HIS FATHER, ANCHISES*

## THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Family; birth; virtues; classical texts; majolica; luxury object

COMPARE: SLIDE 3 (narrative and overall pattern on functional objects); SLIDE 5 (objects to celebrate dynastic events); classical and Renaissance texts—*Pyramus and Thisbe* from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and either Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* or *Midsummer Night's Dream*

LESSON PLANS: The Story in Art, Part I, p. 105, and II, p. 153; Poetic Forms, p. 159

# BRONZINO

SLIDE 21

**W**hat do we know about this man? He stands in an architecturally complex space and looks down at the viewer. His posture, left hand on hip, displays his broad shoulder and fashionable clothes. His right hand marks his place in a well-thumbed book. His face and hands look chiseled, as does the purple stonelike table. The shapes are clearly defined by the strong contrast of light and shade.

The muted color of the walls of this elegant, austere *palazzo* provides a foil for the rich blackness of the young man's costume. The vertical architectural lines that define the corner echo his erect posture. The appearance of this unidentified young man might recall the absolute aristocratic rule of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici that followed upon the failure of the Florentine republic. He is well dressed, cultivated, self-possessed, and aloof: it is thought that he was a writer or poet, a friend of Bronzino's and part of his literary circle—a gentleman who spent his time inventing and writing whimsical poems. The soft, rounded, even squashed features of the *grotesques* carved on the table and chair are in contrast with the sharp, hard lines of the young man's face. Bronzino has created a visual conceit for this gentleman of witty conceits.



The young man is wearing a fashionable and costly costume, called a *landsknecht*. The outer garment is slashed, so the inner one, in a subtly different tone of black, is exposed. This style was adopted from the worn and ravaged look of Swiss mercenary soldiers' garments. Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1529), who wrote the *Book of the Courtier (Il Cortegiano, 1528)*, the first book on etiquette in Europe, commented on clothes: "I am . . . always pleased when clothes tend to be sober . . . the most agreeable color is black." Castiglione lived in Urbino, first at the court of Duke Guidobaldo, the son of Federico of Montefelto (SLIDE 9) and then at the court of his successor, Duke Francesco Maria Della Rovere.

Cosimo I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, was Bronzino's chief patron. Bronzino painted many portraits of the duke's family and became known for his ideal aristocratic portraits, but he also decorated the chambers of the duke's wife, Eleanora of Toledo, with a series of frescoes.



### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual, portrait; urban aristocratic society; fashion; grotesque; oil paint

COMPARE SLIDES 4, 17 (attitudes and poses of portraits);

SLIDES 22, 23 (grotesque and classical ornament); SLIDES 9, 22, 23, 27, 28 (urban, aristocratic life)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Humanist: Marsilio Ficino, p. 79; Family: Giovanni della Casa, p. 90

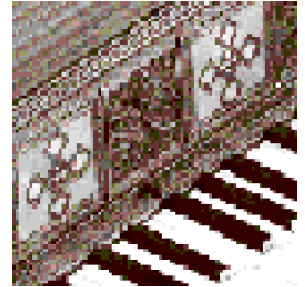
LESSON PLANS: Portrait, p. 177; Poetic Forms, p. 159; Gesture, p. 125

SLIDE 21  
*PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN, 1540*  
AGNOLO DI COSIMO DI MARIANO,  
ALSO KNOWN AS BRONZINO  
Florentine, 1503–1572  
Oil on wood; 37 5/8 x 29 1/2 in.  
Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer,  
H. O. Havemeyer Collection, 1929  
(29.100.16)

# PENTAGONAL SPINET

SLIDE 22

Still playable after 450 years, this spinet embodies the spirit of Italian humanism in its sophistication and elegance. The graceful pentagonal shape of the case conforms to the layout of the strings stretched over the sound board, and the exterior is richly decorated with panels of inlaid wood, mother-of-pearl, and tracery. Layers of pierced parchment re-create a Gothic rose in the sound hole. Emblematic carvings bracket the keyboard, and over the keys is a line of poetry that translates as “I’m rich in gold and rich in tone; if you lack virtue, leave me alone.” This poem contains a pun on the word “virtue” (*del buono*); the musician should have personal goodness as well as musical skill.



Spinets were popular among amateur musicians, especially women. In the Renaissance, the word “amateur” did not mean that the player lacked professional competence, rather it implied that he or she was studying and performing for the love of music, not for pay. In *The Book of the Courtier*, Baldassare Castiglione explains:

So the courtier should turn to music as if it were merely a pastime of his and he is yielding to persuasion, and not in the presence of common people or a large crowd. And although he may know and understand what he is doing, in this also I wish him to dissimulate the care and effort that are necessary for any competent performance, and he should let it seem as if he himself thinks nothing of his accomplishment which, because of its excellence, he makes others think very highly of.

The musician who commissioned this instrument was Eleanora della Rovere (daughter of Isabella d’Este), who grew up in a cultivated court where both religious and secular music would have been heard and played. Eleanora became duchess of Urbino (SLIDE 9) when she married Francesco Maria della Rovere and set up her own court. Her commission of this instrument and the price paid are recorded inside the case, but the name of the maker is not known.

Like the Flemish virginal, the spinet is a kind of harpsichord. The strings are plucked by a quill protruding sideways from a jack that rises when a key is depressed. As the jack descends, the quill pivots to prevent a second pluck, and a cloth damper silences the string. (See diagram in Lesson Plan: Compare and Contrast Two Keyboard Instruments, p. 205.) The sound is light, bright, and crisp. Spinets and virginals are not capable of dynamic changes; the force of the player’s fingers on the keys does not affect the loudness or softness of the sound.

The elaborate design, executed in a subtle and personal style, is both playful and urbane. It seems to have been meant for the delight of the musician performing on the instrument rather than as an ostentatious display for an audience. The grotesque figures carved in the keyboard bracket can be seen only on close inspection, and the witty inscription above the keys is obviously intended for the musician’s eyes only.



## THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; women; family; home; society; pastime; music

COMPARE: SLIDE 28

LESSON PLAN: Compare and Contrast Two Musical Instruments, p. 205

## SLIDE 22

*PENTAGONAL SPINET, 1540*

Unknown maker, Venetian

Wood, various other materials; 57 1/4 in. x 19 in.

Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1953 (53.6)

# FILIPPO NEGROLI

SLIDE 23

Medusa's face, framed with flowing hair and wings, decorates the front of this helmet like a protective talisman, a reminder of the hero Perseus's gift to the Greek goddess Athena. Medusa's penetrating upward gaze looks out at the viewer, perhaps not to turn to stone those who see her, as in the myth, but to beckon us to examine closely this exquisitely embossed helmet. The two snakes that coil above her head lead our eye to the siren or mermaid whose graceful body forms the top, or "comb," of the helmet. A small cartouche bearing faint traces of gold-damascened decoration hangs from the snakes' tails that cross below Medusa's chin (SLIDE 23A).



The siren's head, flowing hair, and outstretched arms reach over the front of the helmet, her hands grasping Medusa's hair. She wears a skintight *lorica* (Roman cuirass). Layered *acanthus* leaves form her tail, which gracefully splits in two at the back, creating a sinuous arc over a grotesque leafy mask (not visible in the slides) that decorates the nape of the helmet. Each side of the tail ends in a thick bundle of *acanthus* leaves, from which issues a wide leafy tendril that spirals twice around each side of the helmet and ends there in a flower. Out of the flower's center emerges a winged *putto*, or *eros*, who grabs onto the tendril with one hand and the siren's hair with the other. The design seems to grow organically from the siren at its center.

This *burgonet*, or open-face helmet, was made from a single sheet of steel, which was hammered, stretched, and shaped to form the deep bowl. It was then placed face down on a soft surface, such as warm pitch or a block of lead, and the design was carefully hammered, creating an embossed relief of varying heights. It took great skill to achieve the very high relief of the crowning element—the siren with her beautifully modeled torso. The line of the design is crisp and often undercut along the edges to emphasize the plasticity of the forms; these finishing touches were delicately chiseled on the outside. The deep rich brown color of the helmet recalls ancient bronze helmets, and the design of the ornament is similar to that found on classical Roman metalwork, including parade helmets.

This type of decoration, called *grotesque*, is derived from Roman wall paintings that were excavated at this time, especially Nero's Golden House. (Because these excavations were underground, they were called "grottoes," and the ornamentation found there "grotesques.") These wall decorations featured motifs characterized by imaginative, organic connections between disparate elements, including human figures, animals, insects, and birds, as well as mythological and fantastic beasts and architectural and plant elements. These designs satisfied both the Renaissance regard for the classical and the period's pleasure in fanciful ornament. Filippo Negroli, the maker of this helmet, created his own interpretation of this design, signing his name on the brow plate, a separate piece that snapped into place on the inside front of the bowl.

The Negroli of Milan were the leading practitioners of embossed armor making and interpreters of classical ornament. Filippo was generally considered the most talented member of the family: chroniclers praised his work as "miraculous" and "deserving of immortal praise." His patrons included the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.



DETAIL: MEDUSA AND SIREN



DETAIL, BACK OF NECK: GROTESQUE MASK

SLIDE 23, 23 A  
 PARADE HELMET, 1543  
 FILIPPO NEGROLI  
 Milanese, ca. 1510–d. 1579  
 Steel, embossed and damascened with gold;  
 w. 7 5/16 in., h. 9 1/2 in.; weight 4 lb. 2 oz.  
 Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1720)



DETAIL, BROW PIECE: ARTIST SIGNATURE

Parade armor was worn on ceremonial occasions, and it tends to be ornate and delicate. It differs from battle armor, which is smooth and rounded to deflect the violent blows of lance and sword. Because of the time-consuming and precise craftsmanship, parade armor was expensive, and so it enhanced the patron's prestige and fame. This helmet is small, so it is thought to have been made for a very special young man.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; family; society; classical ornament (grotesque) and classical text (Perseus and Medusa, and Odysseus's encounter with the sirens)

COMPARE SLIDE 21 (grotesque as ornament); SLIDES 5, 9 (fame and prestige);

SLIDES 3, 22, 28 (classical versus Moorish design and pattern)

SOURCE MATERIAL: Artist: Albrecht Dürer's Journal, p. 83

LESSON PLANS: Personal Armor, p. 111; Poetic Forms, p. 159



# TINTORETTO

SLIDE 24

*Jesus said, make the people sit down. Now, there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted.*

(John 6:10–11)

In this large, dramatic canvas, Tintoretto shows the moment of the miracle. Our eye is drawn up to Christ, standing in the center, surrounded by the anonymous crowd. With his left hand he takes a loaf of bread from the young man's platter, and with the right he gives a loaf to Saint Andrew, one of the apostles. Andrew's gesture leads the viewer's eye to the elegant ladies and gentlemen seated on the grass, as if waiting for a performance or a picnic to begin. This painting was designed to hang above eye level. Thus, no one looks out at us, though many seem to be facing our way, as if we, too, were part of the crowd.

The grass in the **foreground** is in shadow, and the rich colors of the silk mantles and head-dresses embroidered with pearls guide the viewer's gaze around and into the **background** where light falls on the multitude. Tintoretto evokes the anonymity of the crowd in the back with quick, repeated, undifferentiated brushstrokes. The figures in the front sit in small groups mirroring each other; for example, the woman in front of Christ and to his right, playing with a child and dog, faces the viewer, while we see the back of another woman on his left. Such reversals construct dynamic counterpoints that create a mood of expectancy, further emphasized by the standing figures placed parallel to the sides of the canvas. Tintoretto's colors vibrate because he juxtaposed contrasting hues, such as Christ's blue mantle and his red robe. The artist made no attempt to hide either his brushstrokes or the grain of the canvas.



In this painting, Tintoretto created a mood, rather than an illusionistic rendering of an actual place. The combination of the well-balanced, harmonious composition, the dramatic activity created by the gestures and attitudes of the figures, and the painterly strokes makes the miracle truer than life, perhaps reproducing the mystical awe of the Gospel's narrative.



### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Tintoretto's expressive way of painting was not accepted by many of his contemporaries. In fact, Vasari was appalled by his technique, which he called "crude." He disliked Tintoretto's "lack of finish" and "careless execution and eccentric taste." He wrote that if Tintoretto "had not abandoned the beaten track but rather followed the beautiful style of his predecessors, he would have become one of the greatest painters seen in Venice" (Vasari as quoted in Gombrich, *Story of Art*, p. 286). Tintoretto spent his entire life in Venice where he painted large narrative cycles for Venetian religious *confraternities*. He always worked with assistants and apprentices.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Society; New Testament narrative; devotional; oil paint and canvas; large size, horizontal composition

COMPARE SLIDES I, 8 (composition, size, narrative); SLIDE 25 (use of oil paint);

SLIDES 13, 15, 19, and *Battle of the Naked Men*, p. 93 (human figure);

SLIDES 15, 25, 29 (landscape)

LESSON PLANS: Gesture, p. 125; The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153;

Contrapposto Pose, p. 123; A Writing Activity, p. 157

### SLIDE 24

*THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISHES*, 1545–50

TINTORETTO (JACOPO ROBUSTI)  
Venetian, 1518-1594

Oil on canvas; 61 x 160 1/2 in.

Francis L. Leland Fund, 1913

(13.75)

# PIETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER

SLIDE 25

From the smallest detail on the distant horizon to the imagined day in the life of the harvesters that unfolds before us, *The Harvesters* is a great scene painting—its rich and full anecdotal world tells us about everyday life and activity in sixteenth-century northern Europe. The foreground is filled with simply dressed harvesters who rest, eat, drink, and cut bread, while others continue to work in the fields behind. The harvester who catches our eye first sleeps under the tall tree in the cut fields, undisturbed by the nearby group of workers or by those trudging off down the path in the fields. Houses appear in clusters in the distance, beckoning us to look more closely, and in the far reaches of the painting is a harbor with boats. Warm yellow tones bring the festive scene to center stage, while cooler tones create the atmospheric perspective that makes the harbor appear to be at a great distance. Our ability to see easily what the harvesters are doing and to identify with their activities instantly brings this painting close to us. Time is transcended by the universality of experience.

This is an inventive work of art, carefully constructed and composed. Perhaps with some humorous intent, Pieter Bruegel uses the sleeping man to first catch our eye and then to lead us into and through the world of the painting. Note the shape of the man and in particular the shape made by his legs. This triangle is repeated throughout: in the stacks of wheat, the opening into the fields, the rooftops, some of the hats. Pathways direct and invite us to wander into the distance in our imagination. The warm and earthy colors assure us that this is a world where nature has provided well for its inhabitants. The white shirts of the harvesters guide our eyes to still other parts of the painting, and we make many discoveries: a pair of birds flying low over the field, workers carrying sheaves of wheat, people moving along the roads everywhere. The viewer has the simultaneous sensation of being an onlooker and a traveler into the deep space. This investigation into a bountiful landscape is visually connected through the presence in the frontal picture plane of the large tree that runs from earth to sky, where it spreads its branches and connects near and far space.



*The Harvesters* is from a series of paintings describing what have been called the Labors of the Months (in accord with the calendar cycles of Books of Hours), in which the overriding themes are the powerful rhythms and cycles of nature. Extant works from this series include *The Return of the Herd*, *The Hunters in the Snow* (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), and *Haymaking* (Roudnice Lobkovicz collection, Nelahozeves, Czech Republic).

With a date of 1565, *The Harvesters* is chronologically one of the last paintings to be examined here in the context of the Renaissance. Note the great shifts in artistic sensibilities and interests from the earliest paintings of the northern Renaissance to this one. Pieter Bruegel tells a story from everyday life, one that we still recognize. The realities of the harvest are interpreted without moralizing and without symbols; the landscape is large by the standards of the northern Renaissance paintings that preceded it. Bruegel is inventive not only in his use of secular subject matter but in visual style. Highly detailed investigations of fabrics, faces, and light give way to broadly defined solid forms that convey movement and activity, but not the insistent physicality of the early sixteenth century. Bruegel describes with exuberance and humor a world that is



complex but not overburdened, physical but not psychological, playful but not trivial. Convention gives way to invention, and the sensibility, rooted in the observation of the everyday, is close to our own experience in the twentieth century.

#### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In the fall of 1998, *The Harvesters* was cleaned, making it possible for the viewer to appreciate Bruegel's subtle use of texture and variation of tone in color. Scholars believe that Nicholas Jongelinck, a wealthy Antwerp businessman and a government official under Philip II, the Spanish ruler of the Netherlands, commissioned Bruegel to paint this work and the other *Labors of the Months*; they are listed in a 1566 inventory of the Jongelinck art collection.

#### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

**THOUGHTS:** Individual; family and home; society (This painting can be used by the social studies teacher as an illustration of rural, agrarian life. The castle, the church, and the towns are discreetly visible in the background); larger world; daily life; aerial or atmospheric perspective; oil paint

**COMPARE:** SLIDES 15, 18, 29 (landscape); SLIDES 8, 15 (human figure);

SLIDE 8 (linear one-point perspective to atmospheric perspective; oil versus tempera paint);

SLIDES 6, 7, 8 (daily life); SLIDES 13, 15 (tree)

**LESSON PLANS:** Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131; Daily Life, p. 197; A Writing Activity, p. 157; Poetic Forms, p. 159

SLIDE 25, 25A, 25B  
*THE HARVESTERS*, 1565  
PIETER BRUEGEL THE ELDER  
Netherlandish,  
active by 1551–d. 1569  
Oil on wood; 46 1/2 x 63 1/4 in.  
Rogers Fund, 1919 (19.164)

# CELESTIAL GLOBE WITH CLOCKWORK

SLIDE 26

To see this shining, reflective, and luminous globe is to be reminded that we are part of a celestial universe and a larger cosmic order. The silver globe, with its exquisitely rendered constellations, rests on a silver and brass Pegasus, the winged horse of classical mythology. Renaissance interest in observation and empirical understanding led to a more extensive charting of the earth, seas, skies, and stars than ever before. Time was understood to be a continuum, and clocks to be time-measuring machines whose use affected everyone. No longer were day-to-day activities determined solely by natural events. Events could be scheduled independent of the position of the sun, and human activities could be freed from nature's basic rhythms.



This *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*, described in an early seventeenth-century inventory of the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612), reflects the Renaissance interest in classical mythology while expressing the advent of the modern age as it places the universe before the viewer for study and contemplation. The clockwork movement rotates the celestial sphere and drives a small image of the sun along a track that is approximately the apparent celestial path of the sun among the stars. The hour is indicated in a dial mounted at the top of the globe's axis, and the calendar rotates to the day of the year in the horizon ring.

Clocks and timepieces of all kinds, collected by many princes of northern Europe, were a luxury that only a few could afford. Clocks were expensive to purchase and difficult to maintain, so they were prized by their owners. No one knows exactly when or where clocks were invented, but they were found in European towns and cities by the thirteenth century. They were true Renaissance artifacts, representing a collaboration between artists, artisans, and scientists. Time is governed by the apparent rotations of the heavenly bodies, and astronomer-scientists observed and determined time by the stars. The mechanical clock—a simple apparatus that keeps a steady rate for relatively short intervals—created the possibility of accuracy in keeping time. Artists could then create clocks that not only measure the passage of time but are also extraordinary visual and symbolic objects, objects in which aesthetics and mechanics were combined to bring the larger order of the universe into daily life.



SLIDE 26  
*CELESTIAL GLOBE WITH  
CLOCKWORK, 1579*  
Austrian  
Case: silver, partly gilded, and brass;  
movement: brass and steel;  
10 3/4 x 8 x 7 1/2 in.  
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917  
(17.190.636)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Past, present, and future; home; luxury object

COMPARE: SLIDE 25 (mechanical time versus nature's rhythm); SLIDE 23 (classical images from the myth of Perseus, Medusa, and Pegasus); SLIDES 9, 13, and *Battle of the Naked Men*, p. 93 (measurement)

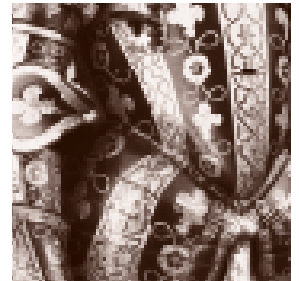
LESSON PLANS: Time, p. 201; Poetic Forms, p. 159

# ARMOR OF GEORGE CLIFFORD, THIRD EARL OF CUMBERLAND

SLIDE 27

**T**his magnificent suit of steel and gold was made for an English knight, Sir George Clifford, third earl of Cumberland, who lived from 1558 to 1605. His life and career were closely allied with service to his monarch, Elizabeth I.

Suits of armor originally were designed to protect knights during battle. The rounded, overlapping steel plates offered protection by blocking and deflecting blows from swords and lances. For flexibility, many small, moveable plates were riveted together. By the sixteenth century, however, gunpowder had been invented, and steel plates thick enough to deflect bullets would have made a complete suit of armor too heavy to wear. Suits like Clifford's were worn for jousts, tournaments, and parades. Because of the lavish gold decoration and the excellent condition of the suit, it is doubtful that Clifford ever wore it for anything other than ceremonial duties. It combines the cut of a fashionable doublet with the decorative effect of rich brocaded fabric, executed in techniques and with materials often identified with jewelry. Its visual impact is heightened by the associations of metal and armor with strength and power.



This suit was made in the royal armory established at Greenwich in 1515 or 1516 by King Henry VIII, father of Elizabeth I. The elegant and shapely silhouette of the suit of armor was the result of careful measuring, cutting, and shaping of flat steel plates hammered to three-dimensional forms that would overlap to suggest the contours of an Elizabethan doublet with its pointed peascod belly and flaring tassets. Extra protection was provided to the neck, elbows, and shoulders, and the helmet visor could be pushed up or left down, in which case the knight looked through two narrow slits cut into the metal. The gauntlets or gloves extended over the wrists while allowing each finger to move separately.

Alternating bands of decoration—gilded emblems against a dark background and dark linear designs against a gilt background—accentuate the height and stance of the knight. The bands taper and widen to emphasize the body's contour, and the designs retain their continuity on the leg, arm, and finger areas where several plates telescope together to allow for movement.



SLIDE 27  
*ARMOR OF GEORGE CLIFFORD, THIRD EARL  
OF CUMBERLAND*  
English, Greenwich, ca. 1580–85  
Steel, blued, etched, and gilded; height 69 in.  
Munsey Fund, 1932 (32.130.6)

The rich decoration was the result of three different processes:

- **ETCHING** Designs were painted onto the metal with an acid-proof substance. Acids applied to these areas would eat away at the exposed metal, leaving high and low areas defining the design;
- **GILDING** The low areas of the design were filled with a paste made of gold powder and mercury. When this paste was heated, the mercury burned away, melting the gold into the etched design;
- **BLUING** Finally, the metal plates were heated slowly. At a certain temperature, the surface of the metal would darken and take on an iridescent quality.

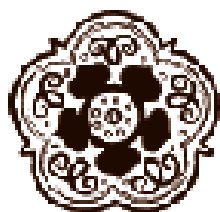


George Clifford would have needed assistance from his squire to dress in his armor, which as assembled here would have weighed 60 pounds. A variety of hooks, hinges, straps, and laces allowed the fourteen separate pieces to be attached to each other, to the clothes worn under the armor, and around the body. At The Metropolitan Museum of Art, you will see a number of additional pieces displayed around the suit of armor. They could be attached as reinforcement to the basic suit, or swapped for one of the other pieces; for example, depending upon the occasion, Clifford could choose between the two helmets. There are extra vamplates, or hand guards used during jousting, as well as armor for Clifford's horse. The complete set, with all its companion pieces, is known as a garniture.

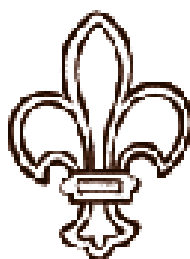
In the early days of armor, heraldic devices and emblems were applied to identify the knight on the battlefield, and this tradition persisted, with designs becoming even more decorative and symbolic. The emblems on George Clifford's armor have political significance. The five-petaled roses are an emblem of the royal Tudor family, and the fleur-de-lys shape appears on the English coat of arms as a reminder of England's claim over certain French territories. The letter E entwined with knots and rings appears down the front of the cuirass and on other parts of the armor. It is Elizabeth's initial, and it indicates homage from the knight to his queen.

After studying mathematics and geography at Cambridge and Oxford, Clifford sailed the ocean as a "gentleman pirate," robbing Spanish ships of their New World gold and transporting it back to England for the Queen. His most notable feat was the capture of El Morro fortress in San Juan, Puerto Rico, in 1598, which he then held for five months. Clifford participated in jousts and tilts at the court of Elizabeth, and in 1590, he was named the Queen's Champion, a post that involved presiding over the tournaments held every Queen's Day (November 17).

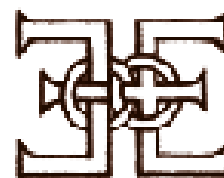
A contemporary described George Clifford in terms that an armorer would have understood when he said of the knight, "He was as merciful as valiant, the best metal bends best."



TUDOR ROSE



FLEUR-DE-LYS



DOUBLE E

#### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Renaissance individual; nobility; the world at large

COMPARE: SLIDES 23, 23A (costume); SLIDES 5, 9 (fame and prestige)

LESSON PLANS: Personal Armor, p. 111; Daily Life, p. 197



# HANS RUCKERS THE ELDER

SLIDE 28

Similar to the spinet in its musical aspects, the double virginal differs markedly in its visual impact. The spinet is elegant and sophisticated, intricately inlaid, with a subtle and witty inscription, while the virginal is bulky, boldly painted, and forthright in its message.

This double virginal was made in Antwerp in 1581 by Hans Ruckers the Elder, the head of a renowned family of Flemish harpsichord builders. Instrument makers were members of Saint Luke's Guild, which included painters and other artists as well.

Its boxy shape is typical of Flemish virginals. When not in use, the front panel swings up to conceal the keyboards, and the lid closes to protect the strings. The inner surfaces, revealed when the instrument is opened, are simply decorated, and the Latin inscription hangs from the instrument like a banner. The lid painting shows people in a landscape and architectural scene. The noble courtiers, both men and women, wear Spanish-style clothing and lounge in graceful poses as they arrive on a boat, sit and listen to music, eat, dance, or play a croquet-like game. In two gold-painted medallions, profile portraits of Philip II of Spain and his wife, Anne of Austria, face each other over the larger keyboard.



The images of Spanish royalty on this virginal are not surprising, since in 1581 Flanders was ruled by the Spanish. The royal family may have commissioned this instrument to send to friends in the New World, as it was found in Cuzco, Peru, in a hacienda chapel early in this century. Virginals often were associated with women musicians. Queen Elizabeth I of England and her cousin and rival Mary Stuart both played the virginal, and even the name “virginal” suggests young women.

Keyboard instruments such as spinets, harpsichords, and virginals were ideal for playing the polyphonic, or “many-voiced,” music of the Renaissance, because more than one key or melody could be played at the same time. The quill mechanism activated by the keys rises to pluck the strings that are stretched parallel to each other like the strings of a harp. This double virginal incorporates two keyboard instruments, the “child,” or smaller, higher-pitched instrument on the left, and the larger and lower-pitched “mother” on the right. The smaller keyboard could be removed from the case and placed on top of the larger keyboard, so that the player could use both at once.



The Latin inscription written in large letters along the front of the instrument, *Mvsica dvlce laborvm levamen*, means “Sweet music is a balm for toil.” It reflects a northern humanist aesthetic based on a strong work ethic, although it is echoed by Baldassare Castiglione in the *Book of the Courtier*:

No rest from toil and no medicine for ailing spirits can be found more decorous or praiseworthy in time of leisure than this [music].

SLIDE 28  
 DOUBLE VIRGINAL, 1581  
 HANS RUCKERSTHE ELDER  
 Flemish, ca. 1545–d. 1598  
 Wood, various other materials;  
 w. 74 3/4 in.  
 Gift of B. H. Homan, 1929  
 (29.90)

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; women; family; home; nobility; guilds; society; the world at large; music

COMPARE SLIDE 22

LESSON PLAN: Compare and Contrast Two Musical Instruments, p. 205

# EL GRECO

SLIDE 29

Landscape as the sole or even primary subject of a painting was unusual in the sixteenth century—even more unusual is this painting, in which the dramatic sky is as important as the earth. The human figures appear as mere specks scattered throughout the painting, some walking on the road near the ancient Roman bridge, others washing strips of cloth in the river. El Greco manipulated the terrain: he intensified the steepness of the hill and contrasted the lush green, almost tropical vegetation in the foreground with the barren landscape in the background. The dark sky vibrates with the intensity of lightning and illuminates the landscape and architecture with an unnatural blue light.



The town of Toledo rises, ghostlike, on top of the hill. As he did with the landscape, El Greco reconfigured the layout of the town, moving the cathedral and the Alcázar—the royal palace—to heighten the drama. This is a uniquely personal painting, a visionary moment full of turmoil and hope, expressed through the richness and flexibility of oil paint and the movement and quality of the artist's brushstrokes.

In this painting, El Greco describes the character of the city and a glimpse into its daily life. Toledo was the seat of the Spanish Counter-Reformation and a center of higher learning, and by depicting the washing of cloth he informs the viewer about the city's successful textile production. At the time El Greco painted this unforgettable view there was a campaign in this ancient city to restore its past fame and glory; most probably this is the painter's tribute to his adopted city.

El Greco was born in 1541 on the island of Crete, where he studied the tradition of Byzantine painting. By 1568, he was studying in Italy, where he was impressed profoundly by the Venetian painters, especially Titian and Tintoretto. Eight years later he moved to Spain, hoping to gain the support of Philip II. This was Spain's Golden Age of artistic patronage and production. Philip II, the period's greatest patron, eventually transferred the court—and hence the artistic nucleus of Spain—from Toledo to Madrid. Though he employed native artists, he also imported art and artists from other countries, mostly Italy and Flanders. El Greco settled in Toledo, but Philip II never invited him to become a court painter.

Even though Spain was not in the mainstream of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century European artistic achievement, El Greco thought of himself as a Renaissance man and painter. He read Vasari's *Lives* and wrote notes in the margin, where he compared himself favorably to Michelangelo and other Italian painters of the Renaissance. His copy of the book is in the library of Toledo.



THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Society; earth and sky (nature); space; oil paint; daily life—cloth making

COMPARE SLIDES 4, 15, 18, 25 (landscape)

LESSON PLANS: Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131; Poetic Forms, p. 159

SLIDE 29

*VIEW OF TOLEDO, CA. 1597*

DOMENICO THEOTOCOPOULOS,  
CALLED EL GRECO ("THE GREEK")  
Greek (Crete), 1541–1614

Oil on canvas; 47 3/4 x 42 3/4 in.

H. O. Havemeyer Collection,  
Bequest of Mrs. Havemeyer, 1929  
(29.100.6)

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL HUMANIST

**LETTER** Marsilio Ficino (1433–1499), a Florentine philosopher writes to his friend the astronomer Paul of Middleburg that this is a “golden age,” a time of awakening and rebirth, after a thousand years of sleep, following the fall of the Roman Empire. Both men were friends of Federico da Montefeltro, the duke of Urbino (SLIDE 9).

To Paul of Middleburg, 1492

What the poets once sang of the four ages, lead, iron, silver and gold, our Plato in *The Republic* transferred to the four talents of men, assigning to some talents a certain leaden quality implanted in them by nature, to others iron, to others silver and to still others gold. If then we are to call any age golden, it is beyond doubt that age which brings forth golden talents in different places. That such is true of our age he who wishes to consider the illustrious discoveries of this century will hardly doubt. For this century, like a golden age, has restored to light the liberal arts, which were almost extinct: grammar, poetry, rhetoric, painting, sculpture, architecture, music, the ancient singing of songs to the Orphic lyre, and all this in Florence. Achieving what has been honored among the ancients, but almost forgotten since, the age has joined wisdom with eloquence, and prudence with the military art, and this most strikingly in Federigo [Federico], Duke of Urbino, as if proclaimed in the presence of Pallas herself, and it has made his son and his brothers the heirs of his virtue. In you also, my dear Paul, this century appears to have perfected astronomy, and in Florence it has recalled the platonic teaching from darkness into light. In Germany in our times have been invented the instruments for printing books, and those tables in which in a single hour (if I may speak thus) the whole face of the heavens for an entire century is revealed, and one may mention also the Florentine machine which shows the daily motions of the heavens.

James Bruce Ross and Mary Martin McLaughlin, eds., *The Portable Renaissance Reader*. New York: Penguin Books, 1981, p. 79.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL HUMANIST

LETTER from Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536), the Dutch humanist, to his friend Thomas More (1478–1535), the English humanist and author of *Utopia*. Erasmus wrote the book *Moriae encomium* (*The Praise of Folly*), a satire that he dedicated to More. In a witty preface, Erasmus explains the pun on the word for folly (*moria*) and the name More (SLIDE 17).

[Paris?] 9 June [1511]

To his friend Thomas More, greetings:

In days gone by, on my journey back from Italy into England, in order not to waste all the time that must needs be spent on horseback in dull and unlettered gossiping, I preferred at times either to turn over in my mind some topic of our common studies or to give myself over to the pleasing recollection of the friends, as learned as they are beloved, whom I had left behind me in England. You were among the very first of these to spring to mind, my dear More; indeed I used to enjoy the memory of you in absence even as I was wont to delight in your present company, that which I swear I never in my life met anything sweeter. Therefore, since I thought that I must at all hazards do something, and that time seemed ill suited to serious meditation, I determined to amuse myself with the Praise of Folly. You will ask what goddess put this into my mind. In the first place it was your family name of More, which comes as near to the word *moria* [folly] as you yourself are far from the reality—everyone agrees that you are far removed from it. Next I suspected that you above all would approve this jeu d'esprit of mine, in that you yourself do greatly delight in jests of this kind, that is, jests learned (if I mistake not) and at no time inspid, and altogether like to play in some sort the Democritus [c. 460–370 B.C.; a Greek philosopher who derided or laughed at people's follies and vanities] in the life of society. Although you indeed, owing to your incredibly sweet and easy-going character, are both able and glad to be all things to all men, even as your singularly penetrating intellect causes you to dissent widely from the opinions of the herd. So you will not only gladly accept this little declamation as a memento of your comrade, but will also take it under your protection, inasmuch as it is dedicated to you and is now no longer mine but yours.

Johan Huizinga, *Erasmus and the Age of Reformation*, New York: Harper & Row, 1957, p. 209.



## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL HUMANIST

ORATION by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), a young nobleman with a voracious appetite for knowledge. He studied at the universities of Padua and Paris and at the Platonic Academy in Florence. From his study of Arabic and Hebrew he was led to investigate Asian religion and philosophy. The following excerpt comes from the first part of his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*.

At last it seems to me I have come to understand why man is the most fortunate of creatures and consequently worthy of all admiration and what precisely is that rank which is his lot in the universal chain of Being—a rank to be envied not only by brutes but even by the stars and by minds beyond this world. It is a matter past faith and wondrous one. Why should it not be? For it is on this very account that man is rightly called and judged a great miracle and wonderful creature indeed.

At last the best of the artisans ordained that the creature to whom He had been able to give nothing proper to himself should have joint possession of whatever had been peculiar to each of the different kinds of being. He therefore took man a creature of the world, addressed him thus: “Neither a fixed abode nor a form that is thine alone nor any function peculiar to thyself have we given thee, Adam, to the end that according to thy longing and according to thy judgment thou mayest have and possess what abode, what form, and what functions thou thyself shalt desire. The nature of other beings is limited and constrained within the bounds of laws prescribed by Us. Thou, constrained by no limits, in accordance with thine own free will, in whose hand We have placed thee, shalt ordain for thyself the limits of thy nature. We have set thee at the world’s center that thou mayest from thence more easily observe whatever is in the world. We have made thee neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, so that with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer. Thou shalt have the power to degenerate into the lower forms of life, which are brutish. Thou shalt have the power, out of thy soul’s judgment, to be reborn into the higher forms, which are divine.”

Ernst Cassirer, Paul Oskar Kristeller, and John Herman Randall, Jr., eds,  
*The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956,  
pp. 223–25.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL ARTIST

CONVERSATION between Michelangelo Buonarroti and the poet Vittoria Colonna. The conversation, which took place in Rome, was recorded by the Portuguese painter Francisco de Hollanda in his *Four Dialogues* (1547–49).

And smiling, she said: I much wish to know, since we are on the subject, what Flemish painting may be and whom it pleases, for it seems to me more devout than that in the Italian manner.

Flemish painting, slowly answered the painter, will, generally speaking, Signora, please the devout better than any painting of Italy, which will never cause him to shed a tear, whereas that of Flanders will cause him to shed many; and that not through the vigor and goodness of the painting but owing to the goodness of the devout person. It will appeal to women, especially to the very old and the very young, and also to monks and nuns and to certain noblemen who have no sense of true harmony. In Flanders they paint, with a view to deceiving sensual vision, such things as may cheer you and of which you cannot speak ill, as for example saints and prophets. They paint stuffs and masonry, the green grass of the fields, the shadow of the trees, and rivers and bridges, which they call landscapes, with many figures on this side and many figures on that. And all of this, though it pleases some persons, is done without reason or art, without symmetry or proportion, without skillful selection or boldness and, finally, without substance or vigor. Nevertheless there are countries where they paint worse than Flanders. And I do not speak so ill of Flemish painting because it is all bad but because it attempts to do so many things well (each one of which could suffice for greatness) that it does none well.

Robert Klein and Henri Zerner, eds., *Italian Art, 1500–1600: Sources and Documents*, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1989, p. 33.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL ARTIST

**JOURNAL ENTRY** Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) describes a procession in Antwerp. This procession may have been similar to a **Triumph** (SLIDE 5). Albrecht Dürer was a German painter, humanist, and art theorist whose use of the popular graphic media, won him fame. (SLIDE 13, Lesson Plan: Printmaking, p. 191)

On the Sunday after our dear Lady's Assumption I saw the great procession from the Church of Our Lady at Antwerp, when the whole town of every craft and rank was assembled, each dressed in his best according to his rank. And all ranks and guilds had their signs, by which they might be known. In the intervals great costly pole-candles were borne, and their long old Frankish trumpets of silver. There were also in the German fashion many pipers and drummers. All the instruments were loudly and noisily blown and beaten.

I saw the procession pass along the street, the people being arranged in rows, each man some distance from his neighbour, but the rows close one behind another. There were the goldsmiths, the painters, the masons, the broiderers, the sculptors, the joiners, the carpenters, the sailors, the fishermen, the butchers, the leatherers, the clothmakers, the bakers, the tailors, the shoemakers—indeed workmen of all kinds, and many craftsmen and dealers who work for their livelihood. Likewise the shopkeepers and merchants and their assistants of all kinds were there. After these came the shooters, with guns, bows, and cross-bows; and the horsemen and foot-soldiers also. Then followed a great crowd of the lord's magistrates. Then came a fine troop all in red, nobly and splendidly clad. Before them, however, went all the religious orders and the members of some foundations very devoutly, all in their different robes.

A very large company of widows also took part in this procession. They support themselves with their own hands and observe a special rule. They were all dressed from head to foot in white linen garments, made expressly for the occasion, very sorrowful to see. Among them I saw some very stately persons. Last of all came the chapter of Our Lady's Church, with all their clergy, scholars, and treasures. Twenty persons bore the image of the Virgin Mary with the Lord Jesus, adorned in the costliest manner, to the honour of the Lord God.

In this procession very many delightful things were shown, most splendidly got up. Wagons were drawn along with masques upon ships and other structures. Among them was the company of the prophets in their order and scenes from the New Testament, such as the Annunciation, the Three Holy Kings [magi] riding on great camels and other rare beasts, very well arranged; also how Our Lady fled to Egypt—very devout—and many other things, which for shortness I omit. At the end came a great dragon, which St. Margaret and her maidens led by a girdle; she was especially beautiful. Behind her came St. George with his squires, a very

goodly knight in armour. In this host also rode boys and maidens most finely and splendidly dressed in the costumes of many lands, representing various saints. From beginning to end the procession lasted more than two hours before it was gone past our house. And so many things were there that I could never write them all in a book, so I let it well alone.

James Bruce Ross and Mary Martin McLaughlin, eds., *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, New York: Penguin Books, 1981, pp. 228–30.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL ARTIST / TRAINING

LETTER outlining a young painter's studies, written by the master painter Francesco Squarcione of Padua to the master painter Guzon. Guzon's son will study with Squarcione.

October 30, 1467, Padua

Be it known and clear to whoever may read this writing that master Guzon, painter, has agreed with master Francesco Squarcione, painter, that the latter is to teach the former's son, Francesco, and namely the principle of a plane with lines drawn according to my method, and to put figures on the said plane, one here and one there, in various places on the said plane, and place objects, namely a chair, bench, or house, and get him to understand these things, and teach him to understand a man's head in foreshortening by isometric rendering, that is, of a perfect square underneath in foreshortening, and teach him the system of a naked body, measured in front and behind, and to put eyes, nose, mouth and ears in a man's head at the right measured places, and teach him all these things item by item as far as I am able and as far as the said Francesco will be able to learn, and as far as my knowledge and basic principle will go and always keep him with paper in his hand to provide him with a model, one after another, with various figures in lead white, and correct these models for him, and correct his mistakes so far as I can and he is capable, and this is agreed by both sides for four months from now, and he is to give me half a ducat every month as my fee [detailed payment provisions, including food provided] and if he should damage any drawing of mine the said Guzon is required to pay me its full worth, etc.

And I Francesco Squarcione wrote this with my own hand.

Creighton E. Gilbert, ed., *Italian Art, 1400–1500: Sources and Documents*, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1992, p. 34.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL ARTIST / TRAINING

CONTRACT for an artist's apprentice. This contract is between the Florentine artist Neri di Bicci and his apprentice Cosimo di Lorenzo.

March 1, 1456

I record that on the above day I, Neri di Bicci, hired as a disciple in the art of painting Cosimo di Lorenzo, for a year beginning on the same day and ending on the same day in 1457, with these agreements and procedures, that the said Cosimo must come to the shop at all times and hours that I wish, day or night, and on holidays when necessary, to apply himself to working without any time off, and if he takes any time off he is required to make it up. And I Neri must give the said Cosimo for his salary in the said year 18 florins, paying him every three months: and this was agreed with the said Cosimo on the above day in my house and so I have made this record at his desire with this agreement.

Creighton E. Gilbert, ed., *Italian Art, 1400–1500: Sources and Documents*, Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1992, p. 31.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL ARTIST /PATRON

CONTRACT between the artist and the patron. This is a contract between Domenico Ghirlandaio, the Florentine painter, and the patron Francesco di Giovanni Tesori for the commission of an altarpiece titled *The Adoration of the Magi*.

Be it known and manifest to whoever sees or reads this document that, at the request of the reverend Messer Francesco di Giovanni Tesori presently Prior of the Spedale degli Innocenti at Florence, and of Domenico di Tomaso di Curado Ghirlandaio, painter, I, Fra Bernardo di Francesco of Florence, Jesuate Brother, have drawn up this document with my own hand as agreement contract and commission for an altar panel to go in the church of the above said Spedale degli Innocenti with the agreements and stipulations stated below, namely:

That this day 23 October 1485 the said Francesco commits and entrusts to the said Domenico the painting of a panel which the said Francesco has had made and has provided; the which panel the said Domenico is to make good, that is, pay for; and he is to colour and paint the said panel all with his own hand in the manner shown in a drawing on paper with those figures and in that manner shown in it, in every particular according to what I, Fra Bernardo, think best; not departing from the manner and composition of the said drawing; and he must colour the panel at his own expense with good colours and with powdered gold on such ornaments as demand it, with any other expense incurred on the same panel, and the blue must be ultramarine of the value of about four florins the ounce; and he must have made and delivered complete the said panel within thirty months from today; and he must receive as the price of the panel as here described (made at his, that is, the said Domenico's expense throughout) 115 large florins if it seems to me, the above said Fra Bernardo, that it is worth it; and I can go to whomever I think best for an opinion on its value or workmanship, and if it does not seem to me worth the stated price, he shall receive as much less as I, Fra Bernardo, think right; and he must within the terms of the agreement paint the predella of the said panel as I, Fra Bernardo, think good; and he shall receive payment as follows—the said Messer Francesco starting from 1 November 1485 and continuing after as is stated, every month three large florins. . . .

And if Domenico has not delivered the panel within the above said period of time, he will be liable to a penalty of fifteen large florins; and correspondingly if Messer Francesco does not keep to the above said monthly payment he will be liable to a penalty of the whole amount, that is once the panel is finished he will have to pay complete in full the balance of the sum due.

Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 6.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL

### ARTIST /PATRON

LETTER from an artist asking his patron for money. This letter is from Fra Filippo Lippi to Giovanni di Cosimo de' Medici. Giovanni was often out of Florence, and Lippi tried to keep in touch with him by letter (SLIDE 4).

I have done what you told me on the painting, and applied myself scrupulously to each thing. The figure of Saint Michael is now so near finishing that, since his armour is to be of silver and gold and his other garments too, I have been to see Bartolomeo Martelli: he said he would speak with Francesco Cantansanti about the gold and what you want, and that I should do exactly what you wish. And he chided me, making out that I have wronged you.

Now, Giovanni, I am altogether your servant here, and shall be so indeed. I have had fourteen florins from you, and I wrote to you that my expenses would come to thirty florins, and it comes to that much because the picture is rich in its ornament. I beg you to arrange with Martelli to be your agent in this work, and if I need something to speed the work along, I may go to him and it will be seen to.

If you agree . . . to give me sixty florins to include materials, gold, gilding and painting, with Bartolomeo acting as I suggest, I will for my part, so as to cause you less trouble, have the picture finished completely by 20 August, with Bartolomeo as my guarantor. . . . And to keep you informed, I send a drawing of how the triptych is made of wood, and with its height and breadth. Out of friendship to you I do not want to take more than the labour cost of 100 florins for this: I ask no more. I beg you to reply, because I am languishing here and want to leave Florence when I am finished. If I have presumed too much in writing to you, forgive me. I shall always do what you want in every respect, great and small.

Valete [Be well]. 10 July 1457  
Fra Filippo the painter in Florence.

Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 4.



## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL ARTIST /PATRON

LETTER from a patron concerning the welfare of an artist. In this letter, Philip the Good writes his accountants, regarding Jan van Eyck's pension (SLIDE 2).

We have heard that you do not readily verify certain of our letters granting life pension to our well beloved equerry painter, Jan van Eyck, whereby he cannot be paid said pension; and for this reason, he will find it necessary to leave our service, which would cause us great displeasure, for we would retain him for certain great works with which we intend henceforth to occupy him and we would not find his like more to our taste, one so excellent in his art and science.

Wolfgang Stechow, ed., *Northern Renaissance Art, 1440–1600: Sources and Documents*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966, p. 4.

JOURNAL ENTRIES Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528) comments on Lady Margaret of Austria, a patron and collector with a changeable nature.

Margaret sent after me to Brussels and promised she would speak in my behalf to King Charles, and has shown herself quite exceptionally kind to me; and I sent her my engraved *Passion*. . . .

I have been to Lady Margaret's, and I let her see my Kaiser and would have presented it to her, but she disliked it so much that I took it away again. And on Friday Lady Margaret showed me all her beautiful things, among them I saw about 40 small pictures in oils, the like of which for cleanness and excellence I have never seen. And there I saw other good works by Jan [Van Eyck] and Jacopo [de' Barbari]. I asked my lady for Jacopo's little book, but she had promised it to her painter; then I saw many other costly things and a fine library. . . .

In all my doings, spendings, sales, and other dealings in the Netherlands, in all my affairs with high and low, I have suffered loss, and Lady Margaret in particular gave me nothing for what I gave her and did for her.

Roger Fry, ed., *Dürer's Record of Journeys to Venice and the Low Countries*, New York: Dover, 1995, pp. 48, 91, 95.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL FAMILY

**DISCOURSE ON MANNERS** Giovanni della Casa, a papal nuncio, probably wrote this passage around 1555 for his young nephew, Annibale Rucellai, to instruct him in the manners of the perfect gentleman.

To help you understand how to behave I must first teach you that your conduct should not be governed by your own fancy, but in consideration of the feelings of those whose company you keep. . . . For this reason it is a repulsive habit to touch certain parts of the body in public, as some people do. . . . Again, when you have blown your nose, you should not open your handkerchief and inspect it, as though pearls or rubies had dropped out of your skull. Such behavior is nauseating and is more likely to lose us the affection of those who love us than to win us the favor of others. . . . It is not polite to scratch yourself when you are seated at table. You should also take care, as far as you can, not to spit at mealtimes, but if you must spit, then do so in a decent manner. . . . We should also be careful not to gobble our food so greedily as to cause ourselves to get hiccups or commit some other unpleasantness. . . . It is also bad manners to clean your teeth with your napkin, and still worse to do it with your finger, for such conduct is unsightly. It is wrong to rinse your mouth and spit out wine in public, and it is not a polite habit, when you rise from the table, to carry your toothpick either in your mouth, like a bird making its nest, or behind your ear. . . . It is also unmannerly to sprawl over the table or to fill both sides of your mouth so full with food that your cheeks are bloated. And you must do nothing to show that you have found great relish in the food or the wine, for these are the customs of the tavern and the alehouse. . . . I do not think it right to offer food from one's own plate to anyone else, unless the person who offers it is of much more exalted rank, in which case it would be a mark of honor for the other. If both are of the same rank, it is rather a presumption of superiority for one of them to offer his food to the other, and sometimes the tidbit might not be to his taste. . . . No one must take off his clothes, especially his lower garments, in public, that is, in the presence of decent people, because this is not the right place for undressing. . . . You should neither comb your hair nor wash your hands in the presence of others, because—except for washing the hands before going in to a meal—such things are done in the bedroom and not in public. . . . Again, you must not appear in public with your nightcap on your head or fasten your hose when other people are present. . . . Anyone who makes a nasty noise with his lips as a sign of astonishment or disapproval is obviously imitating something indecent, and imitations are not too far from the truth.

James Bruce Ross and Mary Martin McLaughlin, eds., *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, New York: Penguin Books, 1981, p. 340.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL FAMILY

LETTER from Friedrich Behaim, a fourteen-year-old German student, to his mother.

13 October, 1578

Filial love and devotion, dear Mother. When you are well and hardy, it gives me great joy to hear it. I am also still in good health.

Dear Mother, know that although the first quarter is not yet over, I have been unable to get by on the gulden you gave me [for my personal use], and I have spent an additional half-gulden. I would still like to make do on a gulden per quarter in the future, but I need many things for which I must spend money. So I ask you to send me as much as you will, and I will use it [accordingly] for my needs.

Also, my everyday trousers are full of holes and hardly worth patching; I can barely cover my rear, although the stockings are still good. Winter is almost here, so I still need a [new] lined coat. All I have is the woven Arlas, which is also full of holes. So would you have my buckram smock lined as you think best? I have not worn it more than twice.

Oertel's cooking declines daily. Seldom if ever do I enjoy a meal, for the food he is serving now is thoroughly unclean, especially the meat, which is spoiled. Also, my throat is so swollen that I can barely swallow. I need some warm mead for it.

Nothing more for now. I would like to have written you sooner, but I have not had the time because exams were held last week and I had to study.

Greet all the household for me. Please write me when Sigmund Oertel and Appolonia Loffelholz are getting married. 13 October, 1578.

Y[our] L[oving] S[on]  
Friedrich Behaim

Steven Ozment, trans., *Three Behaim Boys: Growing Up in Early Modern Germany*, 1990, pp. 105.

## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL FAMILY

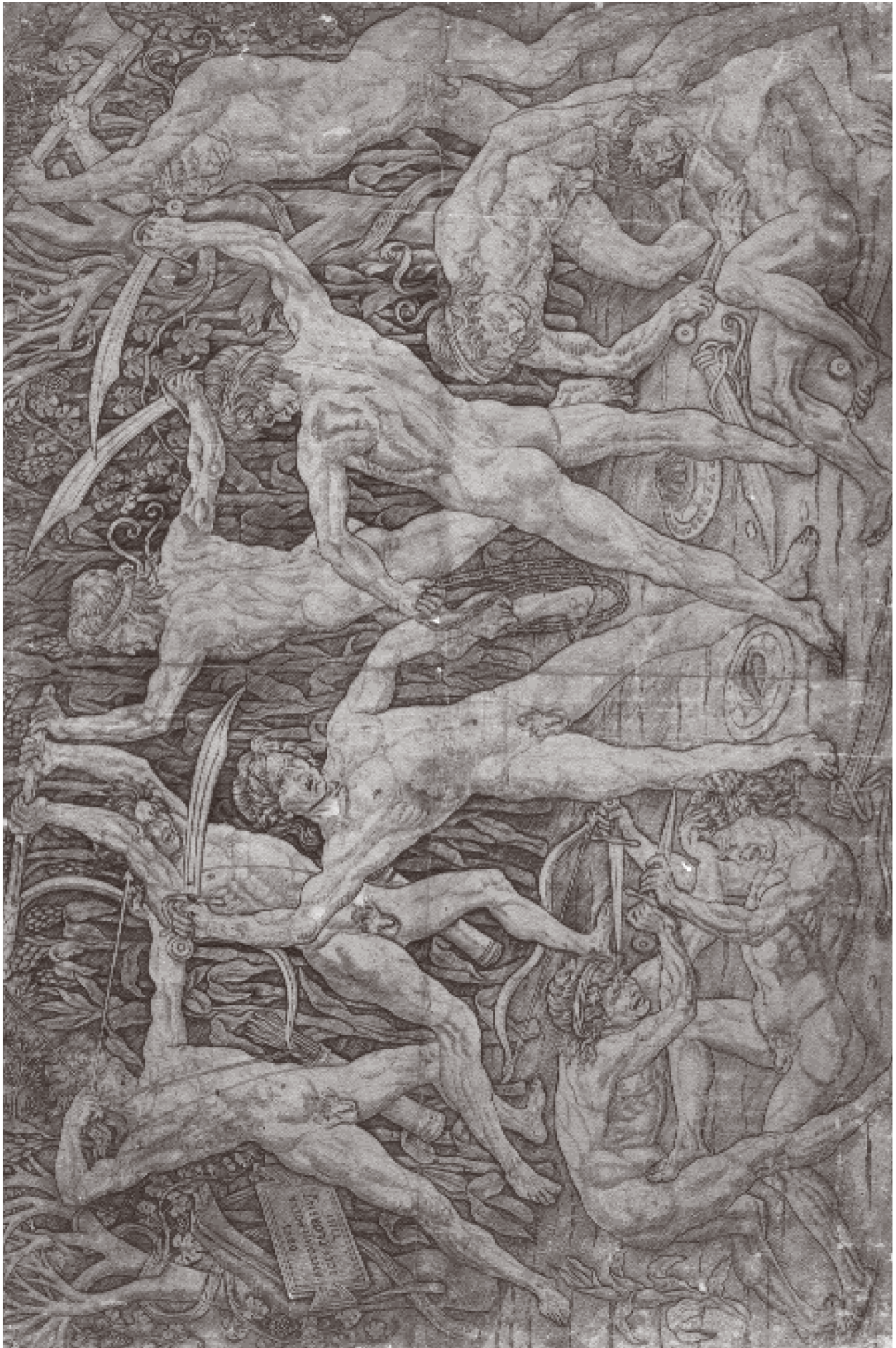
LETTER from Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi to her son on the subject of his sister's marriage.

In the name of God. 24 August 1447

Dearest son, in the last few days I have received your letter of the 16th of July, which I will answer in this one.

And first I must tell you how by the grace of God we have arranged a marriage for our Caterina to the son of Parente di Piero Parenti. He is a young man of good birth and abilities and an only son, rich and twenty-five years of age, and he has a silk manufacturing business. And they take a small part in the government, as a little while ago his father was [an office holder] in the College. And so I am giving him one thousand florins of dowry, that is, five hundred florins that she is due in May 1448 from the Fund, and the other five hundred I have to give him, made up of cash and trousseau, when she goes to her husband's house, which I believe will be in November, God willing. And this money will be partly yours and partly mine. If I hadn't taken this decision she wouldn't have been married this year, because he who marries is looking for cash and I couldn't find anyone who was willing to wait for the dowry until 1448, and part in 1450. So as I'm giving him this five hundred made up of cash and trousseau, the 1450 [money] will be mine if she lives until then. We've taken this decision for the best because she was sixteen and we didn't want to wait any longer to arrange a marriage. And we found that to place her in a nobler family with greater political status would have needed fourteen or fifteen hundred florins, which would have ruined both of us. And I'm not sure it would have made the girl any happier, because outside the regime there's not a great choice, and this is a big problem for us. Everything considered, I decided to settle the girl well and not to take such things into account. I'm sure she'll be as well placed as any girl in Florence, because she'll have a mother and father-in-law who are only happy making her happy. Oh and I haven't told you about Marco yet, [Caterina's] husband, he's always saying to her, "If you want anything ask me for it." When she was betrothed he ordered a gown of crimson velvet for her made of silk and a surcoat of the same fabric, which is the most beautiful cloth in Florence. He had it made in his workshop. And he had a garland of feathers and pearls made for when she goes to her husband's house. And he's having a rose-colored gown made, embroidered with pearls. He feels he can't do enough having things made, because she's beautiful and he wants her to look even more so. There isn't a girl in Florence to compare with her and she's beautiful in every way, or so many people think. May God give them his grace and good health for a long time, as I wish.

Cesare Guasti, ed., *Lettere di una gentildonna fiorentina del secolo XV ai figliuoli*, Florence: Sanson, 1877.



## RENAISSANCE SOURCE MATERIAL TEMPLATE FOR ARTISTS

### ENGRAVING

*BATTLE OF THE NAKED MEN,*

LAST QUARTER OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

ANTONIO POLLAIUOLO

Florentine, 1429–1498

Engraving; 15 5/8 x 23 1/4 in.

Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1917 (17.50.99)

The publication of this engraving made history because it compressed a whole course of artistic anatomy into one picture. Because prints were affordable and easy to transport, this one became a template for many of the poses depicted in paintings of the time. Antonio Pollaiuolo conceived of the body as a powerful machine, and he liked to display its parts, its knotted muscles and taut sinews. According to Vasari, Pollaiuolo was the first artist to strip the skin off cadavers in order to investigate the muscles and bones. It is believed that he made wax models of the flayed cadavers and then bent them into various positions so that he could draw the body in motion.

In this engraving, in fact, the ten figures engaged in violent actions look more flayed than naked. It has been suggested that reliefs on Roman sarcophagi (stone coffins) may have inspired the arrangement of the background and the figures, which reach, stride, strike, stoop, and fall. Some are mirror images of others. They appear stiff and frozen, because Pollaiuolo illustrates all the muscle groups at maximum tension. Later artists understood and rendered the subtler workings of the muscles, but, as Hyatt Mayor, a past curator of prints at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, writes, “Pollaiuolo was discovering man with the eagerness of the navigators who were then exploring the shores of the expanding world. [He] tried to chart nothing less than the totality of man’s muscles, in the age when the Italian cartographers were trying to map the daily discoveries of harbors and rivers” (Hyatt Mayor, *Artists and Anatomists*, MMA, 1984, p. 50).

Antonio Pollaiuolo and his brother Piero ran a large and successful workshop in Florence, which made prints, sculpture, paintings, and liturgical objects like embroidered vestments, as well as domestic goldsmith work. The word *pollo* in Italian means “chicken,” and, as their name indicates, their father was a poulterer.

### THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

THOUGHTS: Individual; society; anatomy; human figure in motion; engraving; printing

COMPARE SLIDES 8, 15, 24, 25 (gesture);

SLIDES 12, 13, 16, 18 (human figure); SLIDE 13 (print)

LESSON PLANS: Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121; Contrapposto Pose, p. 123;

Gesture, p. 125

# PLANNING YOUR LESSON

## QUESTIONING STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

The following questions provide a way of looking at a Renaissance work of art. We suggest that before you plan your lessons you ask yourself the following questions while you look at the work of art. You will find useful information in the introduction and slide entries. The first four questions invite you to look at a Renaissance painting. The fifth question requires you to synthesize what you have learned from answering the first four questions with your own knowledge of the Renaissance. The sixth question asks you once again to contemplate the work of art. While this method may be used for any of the artworks, we have chosen to demonstrate the questioning strategies with the painting, *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus, SLIDE 6.

### 1. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

This is an open-ended question that seems simple; it is the first step to looking. Each artist invites us to see the world in a different way. The information that you gather from this observation provides a basis for the following questions.

### 2. WHAT ROLE DOES THE HUMAN FIGURE PLAY IN THE ARTWORK?

The human figure plays a central role in Renaissance works of art. It reflects the Renaissance belief in the importance of the individual, along with the period's renewed awareness of classical representations of the human figure.

### 3. HOW HAS THE ARTIST CREATED THE ILLUSION OF SPACE ON A FLAT SURFACE OR THE PICTURE PLANE?

The importance of perspective in the Renaissance is attached to the desire of the painter to create a worldly space, elegant and habitable, and ordered by the intellect.

### 4. HOW ARE UNITY AND HARMONY ACHIEVED IN THE WORK OF ART?

This question asks the viewer to observe and analyze how the parts of a painting are arranged. The development of the subject matter is an element in the design of the composition, along with line, shape, and color.

### 5. WHAT DO THE PARTICULAR DETAILS IN THE PAINTING TELL US?

This question suggests that you look at the painting as primary source material that will raise new directions of inquiry. Use your knowledge of the Renaissance along with the information in this packet; identify particular details that relate to your curriculum. Following is a detailed analysis of this question.

### 6. WHAT DO YOU SEE?

We suggest you take ten minutes to look at the painting again. Remember what you first thought and what you think now. These paintings speak to us through a shared and continuous sense of our humanity.

## AN ANALYSIS OF QUESTION 5

### SAINT ELIGIUS BY PETRUS CHRISTUS, SLIDE 6

It is important to have the image of *Saint Eligius* in front of you as you answer the questions. When you reach Question 5, which asks you about the particular details of the painting, use the following method to initiate an exploration of daily life in northern Europe during the fifteenth century. The questions investigate themes relevant to social studies, humanities, and history units: the individual, family and home, society, and the larger world.

#### BACKGROUND

In the fifteenth century, Flanders was agriculturally productive and densely populated. It was one of the principal commercial hubs of Europe. Petrus Christus lived in Bruges, which at the time was a thriving economic and cultural center.

#### INDIVIDUAL

This refers to the central Renaissance idea that “man is the measure of all things.” Personal identity is conveyed through portraits, personal emblems or *coats of arms*, and special commissions, such as the parade helmet, SLIDE 23, or the *Studiolo from the Ducal Palace at Gubbio*, SLIDE 9. Aesthetically, the importance of the individual is reflected in the portrayal of the human body in motion, the depiction of emotion, and the development of perspective.

Specifically in *Saint Eligius*:

Clothes indicate social status. The couple belongs to the urban elite. The woman’s headdress and dress reflect the highest fashion of the day. She indicates the yardage of her dress—another sign of wealth—by holding it folded under her arm. Her forehead is plucked, in keeping with the fashion of the day that considered a high forehead to be a sign of beauty.

Saint Eligius is portrayed as a goldsmith who is part of the growing, prosperous middle class. He wears the simpler clothing of an artisan.

#### FAMILY AND HOME

The growth of notable and prestigious families strongly affected the cultural, civic, and religious life of the independent cities of northern and southern Europe. The new urban middle class built homes and decorated them with both secular and devotional art. Much of the art is connected with the life cycle—birth, marriage, and death.

Specifically in *Saint Eligius*:

The bridal belt, the ring, and the pewter wedding cup on the top shelf are allusions to marriage.

The affection represented between the two figures in this painting may refer to marriage. (See SOURCE MATERIAL, p. 92.) At this early date marriages between people of such obviously opulent means were often arranged for dynastic, political, or economic reasons. (See SLIDE 4.) The circular convex mirror introduces a complex intertwining of religious and secular life in both family and society (see Society, below). The image of the falcon reflected in the mirror might refer to hunting, a popular courtly sport and one that allowed engaged couples to meet in public before they were married.



## SOCIETY

The independent city-states allowed, even required, families to practice civic responsibility. They valued their participation in the representative forms of government that replaced the earlier feudal hierarchies. Many Renaissance works of art describe the settings as well as the activities of political, economic, and communal daily life.

Specifically in *Saint Eligius*:

The presence of the circular convex mirror has been interpreted in other ways; for example, the fact that the mirror is cracked may indicate that the viewer's world is not a perfect one. In Christian literature, the falcon is a symbol of pride and greed, and the mirror is a symbol of *Superbia*, the personification of pride (one of the seven deadly sins). In this interpretation, Petrus Christus's painting may be contrasting sinful human behavior with the devout behavior of the couple inside the shop.

Bruges was a famous center for the production and consumption of luxury goods. While the extensive depiction of objects can be considered an inventory of a fifteenth-century goldsmith's shop, the more fabulous and exotic objects allude to the growth of cities and the rise of the middle class and their desire for show. The new medium of oil paint gave artists the freedom to render the material world in all its colors and radiance, creating a magical illusion.

The inclusion of the figure of an artisan in this painting can lead to a discussion of guilds and their place in society and religion. For example, this panel may have been commissioned by the Goldsmith's Guild of Bruges for their chapel, and the figure may represent their patron saint, Eligius.

## THE LARGER WORLD

A corollary of the increased consciousness of the individual as a force in history is the heightened awareness of others. The details in the works of art demonstrate the great extent of trade and travel during the Renaissance.

Specifically in *Saint Eligius*:

That Bruges was an international center of trade and commerce is evidenced by the following details in the painting:

The gold, coral, coconut, and silver on the shelves of the goldsmith shop are imported from other parts of the world. The Islamic influence in the pattern of the lady's dress fabric indicates that it was probably woven in Venice, which had a history of contact with the East. Textile production was the first trade in Europe to expand internationally. North of the Alps, the Flemish cities of Bruges and Ghent became centers of cloth making, while in the south, Venice and Florence built their economies on luxury textile production.

**GO BACK TO QUESTION 6:** At the end of this exploration, it is essential to go back and look at the painting as a whole and reconsider the first question: What do you see?

The details in this painting can also be selected to stimulate lessons in Science, Visual Arts, and Language Arts curricula.

## AN INTERACTIVE APPROACH TO THE USE OF SLIDES IN THE CLASSROOM

Looking at works of art can be enjoyable and inspiring. To truly experience art in this way, we must engage personally with it. An interactive approach engages the student! We suggest that you start your lesson with one of the following exercises, designed especially to stimulate students' visual reactions.

The following exercise gives students the opportunity to respond intuitively to a work of art. The students will discover that they do not need to have prior knowledge of the history or content of the work.

**STEP 1:** Show at least five slides, leaving each slide on the screen for one minute. During the time each slide is projected ask students to jot down a word that best describes the image they are looking at.

**STEP 2:** From the five slides, select a work that is relevant to your curriculum to discuss at length. Project the work again and ask the students to share their one-word reactions to it.

**STEP 3:** Choose the reactions that you feel will lead the class into a fuller exploration of the work. (As the discussion proceeds, try to include each student's first reaction into the conversation.) The students' initial reactions will lead them to another level of understanding of the work.

**STEP 4:** Allow time so the students can look at the entire painting. At this point begin your lesson.

This exercise draws students into the work of art by concentrating on parts or details of the work.

**STEP 1:** Choose a painting from the packet that has at least two or three slides of details. It is important that the content in the painting of your choice be relevant to the curriculum you are teaching.

**STEP 2:** Project the details first, one slide at a time. Ask the students to describe what they see. To spark their curiosity, ask them about clues that allude to objects or events that are not obvious or complete in the projected part.

**STEP 3:** Allow time so the students can look at the entire painting. Begin your lesson.

## A SHORT LIST

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

We have selected ten works of art with which you can present the art of the Renaissance, if your time is short.

- SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus
- SLIDE 10 *Annunciation* by Hans Memling
- SLIDE 13 *Adam and Eve* by Albrecht Dürer
- SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris* by Lucas Cranach the Elder
- SLIDE 25 *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder
- SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by Fra Filippo Lippi
- SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin* by Fra Carnevale
- SLIDE 9 *The Liberal Arts Studiolo* from the Ducal Palace at Gubbio
- SLIDE 12 *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo
- SLIDE 16 *Studies for the Libyan Sibyl* by Michelangelo

See the following checklists—a checklist is a visual inventory on specific theme.

HUMAN FIGURE	p. 115
PERSPECTIVE	p. 127
COMPOSITION	p. 139
NARRATIVE	p. 151
PORTRAIT	p. 175
DAILY LIFE	p. 195

### MEDIUM

TEMPERA PAINT	SLIDES 4, 8
OIL PAINT	SLIDES 6, 18, 25
ENGRAVING	SLIDE 13, p. 93
DRAWING	SLIDES 11, 16
SCULPTURE	SLIDE 12



# LESSON PLANS AND CHECKLISTS

The chart on the following pages is designed to facilitate selection of the lesson plans for individual classroom needs.

## MAIN HEADINGS

- Under Lower Elementary, we have grouped together three lesson plans that have been especially designed for kindergarten through third grade.
- Each subject and theme is preceded by a checklist of images for easy reference. The checklists are visual inventories of the slides included in the packet.

## INDIVIDUAL LESSON PLANS

- The LESSON PLANS are listed by name in the column on the left.
- CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS provide interdisciplinary links.
- A suggested GRADE LEVEL is identified, although teachers may adapt any of these lesson plans to the needs of their own students.
- The PAGE NUMBER of the lesson plan is given.

The textile image appearing at the top of each lesson plan is a detail from an Italian, mid-fifteenth century silk piece, 1.25 w. x 20 1/2 in. (Made/Manufactured: Venice, Italy) Fletcher Fund, 1946 (46.156.115)



LESSON PLAN	CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS	GRADE LEVEL	PAGE NUMBER
<b>LOWER ELEMENTARY</b>			
THE STORY IN ART, PART I	Visual Arts Language Arts	Kindergarten–3rd grade	p. 105
INSIDE AND OUTSIDE	Visual Arts Language Arts	Kindergarten–3rd grade	p. 109
PERSONAL ARMOR	Visual Arts Language Arts	Kindergarten–3rd grade	p. 111
<b>HUMAN FIGURE</b>			
CHECKLIST			p. 115
A FORM TO MEASURE	Mathematics Visual Arts Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 117
DRAWING THE HUMAN FIGURE	Visual Arts	Kindergarten–3rd grade	p. 121
CONTRAPPOSTO POSE	Visual Arts Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 123
GESTURE	Visual Arts Language Arts Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 125
<b>PERSPECTIVE</b>			
CHECKLIST			p. 127
OVERLAPPING SHAPES	Visual Arts Language Arts	Elementary Junior High	p. 129
AERIAL OR ATMOSPHERIC PERSPECTIVE	Science Visual Arts Language Arts Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 131
LINEAR ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE	Visual Arts Mathematics Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 135
<b>COMPOSITION</b>			
CHECKLIST			p. 139
CLASSICAL COMPOSITION	Visual Arts Mathematics Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High	p. 141
DRAW THE GOLDEN RECTANGLE	Visual Arts Mathematics Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 147

LESSON PLAN	CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS	GRADE LEVEL	PAGE NUMBER
<b>NARRATIVE</b>			
CHECKLIST			p. 151
THE STORY IN ART, PART II	Language Arts Visual Arts	Upper Elementary Junior High High School	p. 153
A WRITING ACTIVITY	Language Arts Visual Arts	Elementary Junior High High School	p. 157
<b>LANGUAGE ARTS</b>			
POETIC FORMS	Visual Arts Drama Social Studies/Humanities Music	Junior High High School	p. 159
ALLEGORY	Language Arts Visual Arts	Junior High High School	p. 171
<b>PORTRAIT</b>			
CHECKLIST			p. 175
THE RENAISSANCE PORTRAIT	Visual Arts Mathematics Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 177
ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM	Visual Arts Language Arts Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 179
<b>TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS</b>			
TEMPERA	Science Visual Arts	Junior High High School	p. 185
PRINTMAKING	Visual Arts Language Arts	Elementary Junior High High School	p. 191
<b>DAILY LIFE</b>			
CHECKLIST			p. 195
DAILY LIFE IN THE RENAISSANCE	Humanities Social Studies Visual Arts	Junior High High School Upper Elementary	p. 197
TIME	Visual Arts Science Language Arts Social Studies/Humanities	Junior High High School	p. 201
COMPARE AND CONTRAST TWO KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS	Visual Arts Music Social Studies/Humanities Science	Junior High High School	p. 205





The greatest work of the painter is the *istoria* [narrative]...

From Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*

## LESSON PLAN: LOWER ELEMENTARY THE STORY IN ART, PART I

### GRADE LEVEL

Kindergarten through Third Grade

### OBJECTIVE

- Students will observe how shapes and colors create a narrative.
- Students will analyze a narrative presented in three sequential episodes.
- Students will make individual storybook collages.

### WORK OF ART

SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther* by Marco del Buono Giamberti and Apollonio di Giovanni di Tomaso

### MATERIALS

- 6 x 12 in. rectangles of white or black construction paper, folded in three equal parts, then laid flat
- small (approximately 3 x 4 in.) pieces of construction paper in different colors
- yarn, hole punch, scissors, glue

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

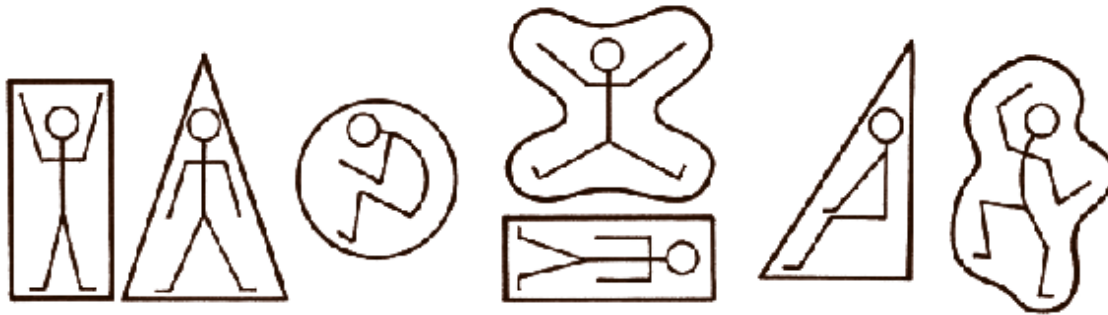
**FOR THE TEACHER:** Study SLIDE 7 and read the entry. Before this lesson show a photograph from a newspaper to the class and discuss how it tells a story.

Project the slide. Ask the students to look at the painting and describe what they see. Ask students to try to identify the characters that appear more than once. See if the students can figure out the story line. At this point you may want to read or tell the story of Esther. The key characters—King Ahasuerus, Esther, and Mordecai—can be identified by the shape and color of their hats and costumes. The story is illustrated in the following sequence: arrival, ceremony, and banquet.

Explain that students will have an opportunity to create their own narrative work of art. Review the elements of a story with students—it has a beginning, a middle, and an end, as well as main characters. Ask students to look again at the shapes and colors in the painting and how they work together to tell the story.

### ACTIVITY

Ask for a student volunteer to model a pose (standing up straight, hands close to the sides, bent over, taking a long stride, etc.). Ask the class to notice the shape that the student's body makes and perhaps trace it with their finger in the air. Is it a straight shape, a curved shape, a triangle, or some other shape? Ask for another volunteer to try a different pose.



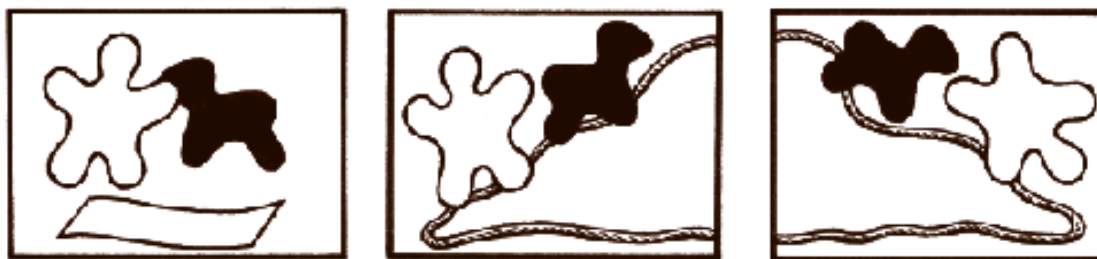
Distribute a scissors and three small pieces of construction paper (approximately 3 x 4 in.) to each student. Again, have a volunteer take a pose, but this time have students cut the pose from one of the pieces of construction paper. Repeat until everyone has three different shapes, each a different color.

Ask the students to pretend that these three shapes are characters and have them make up a story. They will need to make at least three copies of each shape. They should practice arranging them to suggest a beginning, middle, and end. The teacher may wish to demonstrate this in front of the class. For example:

*Squiggle Sam walks along the street with Tina Triangle and all of a sudden they bump into roly-poly Roger, and on . . .*



Distribute 6 x 12 in. pieces of white or black construction paper, folded in thirds. Each panel of the paper represents an episode of the story, its beginning, middle, or end. Ask students to arrange their shapes to tell the story, then glue them down. They may wish to glue down other pieces of paper, dots from a paper punch, or yarn to create the background.



When students are finished, ask them to display the narrative artwork they have made and share their stories.

#### EXTENSION FOR OLDER STUDENTS: LANGUAGE ARTS

Older students may wish to write out their stories and develop dialogues between the characters.

#### RESOURCES

D'Amico, Victor. *Assemblage*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1972.

Lionni, Leo. *Little Blue and Little Yellow*. New York: Morrow, 1994.



## LESSON PLAN: LOWER ELEMENTARY INSIDE AND OUTSIDE



First draw a rectangle of right angles, where I am to paint, which I treat just like an open window through which I might look . . .

From Leon Battista Alberti,  
*On Painting*

### GRADE LEVEL

Kindergarten through Third Grade

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will become aware of the Renaissance pictorial innovation that makes a painting like a window into or through which the viewer can look.
- Students will make an individual work based on the above idea.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by Fra Filippo Lippi

SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus

SLIDES 8, 8A *The Birth of the Virgin* by Fra Carnevale

### MATERIALS

- DRAWING: paper, marking pens
- PAINTING: paper, paint, brushes
- COLLAGE: paper, colored paper, scissors, glue sticks

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Look at the slides and read the entry before the lesson. Select one of the slides. Following is a suggested sequence of questions for SLIDE 4.

Ask students to describe what the outside of the school building and the grounds look like. Then have them describe the inside of the building. Ask them: How might they show both the outside and inside of a building in one painting or drawing?

Project SLIDE 4. Ask students to look at the painting and describe what they see. Give students time to explore the relationship between the couple, then guide the discussion to the composition of the painting, asking the following questions:

- What part of the painting is closest to the viewer? Ask students to describe the frame of the painting and notice the illusion of molding.
- What part is farthest away? Ask students to describe the view beyond the window.
- Where is the woman standing?
- Where is the man standing?
- Where is the viewer—inside or outside the *palazzo*? The viewer is looking into the space or room where the woman is standing, as well as beyond to the scene outside the window.

Ask students to imagine standing outside their house or a building of their choice. Ask them to imagine looking through a particular window at the space inside. (This could be the student's own room, a family area, or a special study corner.)

## ACTIVITIES

Provide drawing, painting, or collage materials so students can make their own “inside/outside” artwork. For drawing or painting, ask them to measure and draw a window, leaving some space around the shape to represent the outside of the building.

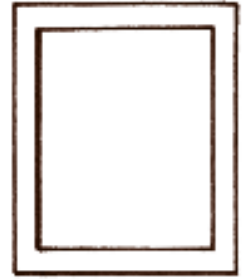
For collage, provide two different colors of construction paper in a rectangular or square format, one sheet larger than the other. Ask students to glue the smaller sheet to the larger sheet. Then proceed as above.

Remind students that the window shape can be filled with objects and events that go on inside the room (for example: a bed, chair, or desk; a figure sitting down, walking, or dancing), and that the area around the window shape is the outside of the building. This can be illustrated, for example, by depicting the facing or façade of the building (brick or wood) and farther to the sidewalk, a lamppost, a person walking a dog, or a car.

## EXTENSIONS

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** Have students write a diary or journal entry about what is going on inside the house based on the scene that they have depicted in their artwork. Is it a birthday party, or are the figures studying? Are they listening to music or watching TV? What is going on outside the house? Are guests arriving? Is it raining? Do they hear the sounds of cars or fire trucks or crickets chirping? Display the journal writings with the artworks.

**CONNECTION:** Lesson Plan: The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153.



OR





## LESSON PLAN: LOWER ELEMENTARY PERSONAL ARMOR — MAKE A HELMET OR BREASTPLATE AND DECORATE IT WITH PERSONAL SYMBOLS

If [the courtier] happens to engage in arms in some public spectacle, such as jousting, tourneying or volleying, or other kind of physical recreation . . . He will ensure . . . that he himself is suitably attired, with appropriate mottoes and ingenious devices to attract the eyes of the onlookers in his direction.

From Baldassare Castiglione,  
*The Book of the Courtier*

### GRADE LEVEL

Kindergarten through Third Grade

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will discuss knights and armor.
- Students will look at Renaissance parade armor.
- Students will explore and discuss the use of symbols.
- Students will design a personal symbol to decorate their own paper helmet or breast- and backplate.

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 5      *The Triumph of Fame* by Scheggia  
SLIDE 23     *Parade Helmet* by Filippo Negroli  
SLIDE 27     *Armor of Sir George Clifford*

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Look at the slides and read the entries before the lesson.

Project SLIDE 5. Present and discuss the role and training of a knight. Why did a person become a knight? Compare armor used for war and parade armor. Discuss the parts of the suit of armor: Was it difficult to recognize the person wearing a complete suit of armor?

Project SLIDE 27. When Sir George Clifford wore this suit of armor in a parade, how did the onlookers recognize him?

WHAT IS A SYMBOL? Explore the use of familiar symbols whose function is to impart information, such as stop signs, restroom symbols, or handicapped access. What animals are used as symbols? (Lions for courage, doves for peace, eagles for patriotism, dogs for protection and/or loyalty.) Ask students to think of animals or characters that are used to advertise certain products. For example, the image of a laughing cow stands for the French cheese *La vache qui rit*. What colors have symbolic meaning? (White for purity, red for courage, blue for honor.)

PHOTOCOPY THE THREE SYMBOLS: the Tudor rose, fleur-de-lys, and entwined *Es*. Give a copy to each student. Ask students to look for the symbols and try to describe the pattern.

#### EXPLORE THE DECORATION ON THE SUIT OF ARMOR AND THE HELMET

Project SLIDE 27. The Tudor rose, fleur-de-lys, and double *Es* tied together refer to Queen Elizabeth I's family. Sir George Clifford had them engraved on his suit of armor to honor her. He was the "The Queen's Champion."

#### STORYTELLING

Project SLIDE 23. Point out the decoration: Medusa's face, the spiraling vines, the acanthus leaves, and the small winged putti. The image of Medusa on the Negroli helmet refers to the myth of Perseus. The mermaid or siren refers to the section in the *Odyssey* where Circe the enchantress warns Odysseus of the sirens' power.

Square in your ship's path are Sirens, crying  
Beauty to bewitch men coasting by;  
Woe to the innocent who hears the sound!

You may want to read one or both stories to your students. We do not know why the nobleman who wore the parade helmet chose these symbols, but we can guess that he may have wanted to be associated with bravery and the heroic deeds of Perseus and Odysseus.

#### ACTIVITY PART I: DESIGN YOUR OWN SYMBOL

##### MATERIALS

- paper and pencil

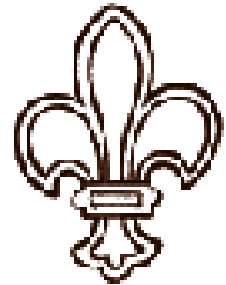
Ask students to brainstorm and invent a personal symbol. How do they want people to recognize them?

- From their given names? Would they use a letter of their first or last name? Ask if there is a visual equivalent for their first or last names, for example, Baker, Bush, or Bird.
- From the place they live? Would they want to incorporate a flag or city logo? For example, an apple for New York City.
- From the student's personal qualities? What are they admired for? Are they neat like a cat or faithful like a dog? Do they have a favorite sport or activity that might be used as a personal symbol?

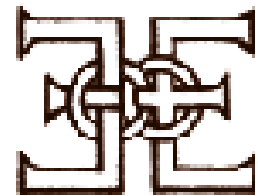
On a sheet of paper, have students draw two or three symbols. Ask them to combine them or repeat them to form a pattern. They may wish to experiment with connecting the decorative elements, as the vines and the love knots do on the helmet and suit of armor. They will use this pattern to decorate their breastplate or helmet.



TUDOR ROSE



FLEUR-DE-LYS



DOUBLE E

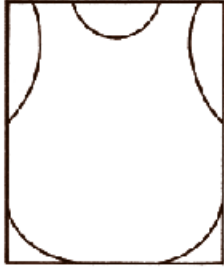


## ACTIVITY, PART II: MAKE A BREASTPLATE AND BACKPLATE AND/OR HELMET

### MATERIALS

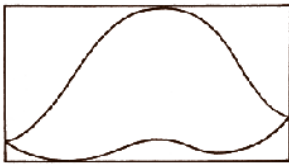
for each child, two 12 x 18 in. pieces of oak tag, or a plain brown grocery bag, or a large piece of poster board

- pencils, paint, markers
- stapler



**BREASTPLATE:** A large paper grocery bag may function as a simple piece of armor, with holes cut in the top and sides for the student's head and arms. A large sheet of oak tag may be cut into the shape of a breastplate and backplate, and attached over the student's shoulders.

Students will decorate the front and back of the bag or oak tag with their personal symbols, using paint or markers.



**HELMET:** Distribute two large sheets of oak tag. Ask students to draw the outline of a helmet on one sheet, making sure that they start at one short end and finish at the other short end so that the bottom of the helmet runs along the long edge of their paper and will fit on their head (See illustration.) After they cut the first shape, they should use it as a template to cut the same shape from the second sheet of paper. Students will decorate each side of the helmet with their personal symbols in paint or markers. Then the two sides can be stapled together along the top edge, leaving the bottom edge open to be placed over the head.

Depending on the ability of each class, you may ask the students to repeat the same pattern on both sides of the helmet or on the breastplate and backplate, so the patterns match and are symmetrical.

### EXTENSIONS

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** Students may wish to write a short poem or paragraph about the designs and symbols they chose and why.

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** Compare Renaissance arms and armor with parade uniforms or soldiers' battle gear from other eras. What symbols or decorations are used for these uniforms? Do particular ribbons or colors have symbolic meanings?

### RESOURCES

Colum, Padraic. *The Children's Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1918.

D'Aulaire, Ingri, and Edgar Parin. *Book of Greek Myths*. New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962.

Fitzgerald, Robert, trans. *The Odyssey of Homer*. New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963.



# HUMAN FIGURE CHECKLIST

The Renaissance artist's interest in the human figure reflects the period's belief in the importance of the individual. In part, this was derived from a renewed awareness of classical Greek and Roman literary texts, figurative sculpture, and painting.

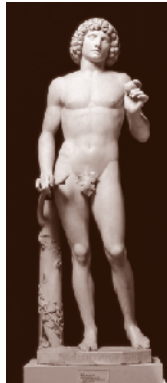


*Battle of the Naked Men,*  
Antonio Pollaiuolo, p. 93



SLIDE 15 *A Hunting Scene,*  
Piero di Cosimo

In seeking to convey the illusion of movement, Renaissance artists adopted the classical model of the *contrapposto* pose. Lesson Plan: *Contrapposto Pose*, p. 123.



SLIDE 12 *Adam,*  
Tullio Lombardo



SLIDE 13 *Adam and Eve,*  
Albrecht Dürer



SLIDE 16 *Studies for the Libyan Sybil,*  
Michelangelo

Artists tell stories by combining the *contrapposto* pose with other poses and/or gestures.



SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris*,  
Lucas Cranach the Elder



SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*,  
Fra Carnevale



SLIDE 19 *The Holy Family with the  
Infant Saint John*, Andrea del Sarto

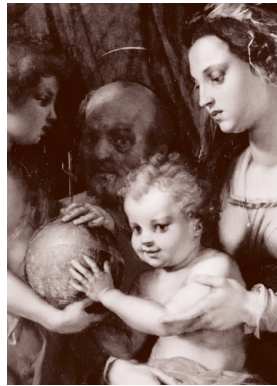
Facial expressions add to the story.



SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris*  
(detail), Lucas Cranach the  
Elder



SLIDE 2A *The Crucifixion*  
(detail), Jan van Eyck



SLIDE 19 *The Holy Family with  
the Infant Saint John* (detail),  
Andrea del Sarto

## LESSON PLAN: HUMAN FIGURE A FORM TO MEASURE



Man is the measure of  
all things.

Protagoras (ca. 480–410 B.C.)

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will study a Renaissance sculpture.
- Students will study the basic proportions of the human figure through observation and the use of thinking, drawing, and writing skills.
- Students will have the possibility to use the mathematical formula for the golden section in relation to proportions of the sculpture of *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE I2 *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo

PAGE 93 *Battle of the Naked Men* by Antonio Pollaiuolo

### MATERIALS

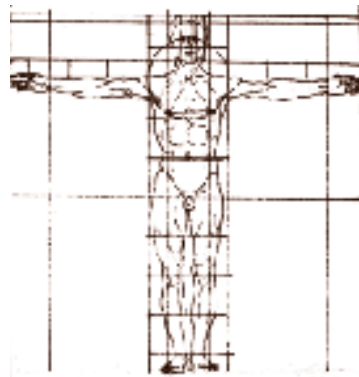
- one photocopy of *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo for each student, or a printout of this image from the CD-ROM
- pencils, rulers

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION: DEVISING SYSTEMS OF MEASUREMENTS

FOR THE TEACHER: Since antiquity the human figure was used as a measure of proportion. The Roman engineer Vitruvius believed that the planning of temples depended on symmetry. He calculated an intricate table of proportions of the well-built man and related it to the well-designed façade of a building. He said that proportion consisted “in taking a fixed module, in each case, both for the parts of a building and for the whole building.”



Wall Fountain, Simone Mosca



Measurement/the human figure,  
Albrecht Dürer

As a young man Albrecht Dürer traveled to Venice, where the Vitruvian proportions were being used and discussed. In Venice, Dürer met the painter Jacopo de' Barbari. He wrote that de' Barbari

. . . showed me the figures of a man and a woman, which he had drawn according to a canon of proportions. . . . I was still young and had not heard of such a thing before. However, I was very fond of art, so I set to work on my own and read Vitruvius, who writes somewhat about the human figure. Thus, I took my start from these two men, and thence from day to day I have followed up my search according to my own notions.

Dürer spent years studying Vitruvius. He measured people of all ages with calipers (a measuring instrument with two legs or jaws that can be adjusted to determine distances between parts) and made schematic figure drawings. He attempted to discover ideal beauty by bringing the parts of the body into perfect harmony with the whole, as an architect does when designing a building.

The ancient Greek sculptor Polyclitus devised a system of human proportion which was known to Renaissance architects, sculptors, and painters:

. . . that beauty does not consist in the elements but in harmonious proportion of the parts, the proportion of one finger to the other, of all the fingers to the rest of the hand, of the rest of the hand to the wrist, of these to the forearm, of the forearm to the whole arm; . . . of all parts to all others. . .

(As quoted by Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in Visual Arts*, New York: Doubleday, 1955, p. 64.)

#### MATHEMATICAL FORMULA FOR THE GOLDEN SECTION

The golden section, also called the golden mean, refers to a harmonious proportional relationship. It is defined as a line that is divided in such a way that the smaller part is to the larger as the larger is to the whole.

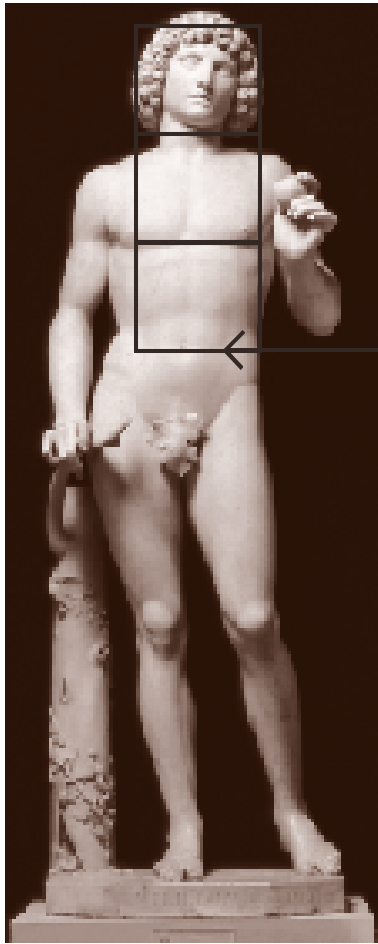
The golden section is believed to be based on a mathematical formula present in nature and known as the Fibonacci sequence. Numerically, this sequence is 0 1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89, and so on. Each new number of the sequence is generated by adding together the last two numbers:  $0+1=1$ ,  $1+1=2$ ,  $1+2=3$ ,  $2+3=5$ , etc. An example found in nature would be a flower with 13 petals in one row—its adjacent rows would have 8 or 21 petals.

The mathematical formula for the golden section is derived by dividing one number in the Fibonacci sequence by the next highest number. For example, if you divide 55 by 89, the quotient is .618. If you divide 34 by 55 the quotient is .618.

## ACTIVITIES

### PART I

Explain that students will work in small groups to devise a measuring system for the proportions of the human figure, using a part of the human body as the unit of measurement; for example, a finger, a foot, or a forearm. Rulers may not be used. Each group should make diagrams and drawings to support their measuring system. Have each group present their system of measurement to the class.



### PART II

Distribute photocopies or printouts of *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo. Ask students to measure the head (from the top of the head to the chin) and use it as a unit of measurement to determine the length of the entire body. Ask students to record the location of each of these units down the length of the body. For example, two heads down is the breast, three the waist, etc.

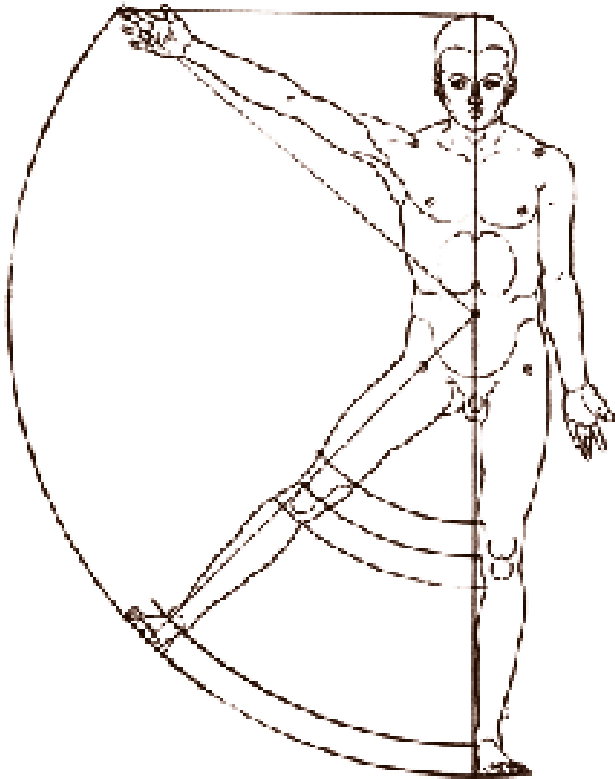
### PART III

Ask students to measure the photocopy of *Adam* from head to foot, using a ruler. Then ask students to multiply the number by .618. Use the product to measure up the distance from Adam's foot. Where does the point intersect the body? (The answer is the navel, where life begins, or the center of life.)

### PART IV

Two types of measuring systems have been discussed. Ask students to choose one of the systems to draw a human figure.

In this drawing by Albrecht Dürer, an arm and a leg of the figure are extended diagonally. If a circle is drawn around the outstretched arm and leg, the figure's navel becomes the center of the circle.



#### CONNECTIONS

- Lesson Plan: Classical Composition, p. 141.
- Lesson Plan: Contrapposto Pose, p. 123.
- Lesson Plan: Draw the Golden Rectangle, p. 147.

The ancient Egyptians used a square grid to fix the proportions of the human figure, which they measured using the width of the palm of the hand as a unit. (See *The Art of Ancient Egypt: A Resource for Educators*, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998.)

#### RESOURCES

Fibonacci numbers and the golden section:

<http://www.mcs.surrey.ac.uk/Personal/R.Knott/Fibonacci/fib.html>

Heath, Sir Thomas L., trans. *The Thirteen Books of Euclid's Elements*, Volume I, Introduction and Books I and II. New York: Dover, 1956, Proposition 4, p. 379.



# LESSON PLAN: HUMAN FIGURE DRAWING THE HUMAN FIGURE



Set yourself to practice drawing, only a little each day, so that you may not come to lose your taste for it, or get tired of it.

From Cennino Cennini,  
*Il Libro dell'Arte*, ca. 1435

## GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will look closely at Renaissance drawing and printmaking techniques.
- Students will draw parts of the figure. They will render the parts using both drawing and printmaking techniques.
- Students will choose from a variety of individual or group extensions.

## WORKS OF ART

PAGE 93	<i>Battle of the Naked Men</i> by Antonio Pollaiuolo
SLIDE 11	<i>Study of a Bear Walking</i> by Leonardo da Vinci
SLIDE 12	<i>Adam</i> by Tullio Lombardo
SLIDE 13	<i>Adam and Eve</i> by Albrecht Dürer
SLIDE 16	<i>Studies for the Libyan Sibyl</i> by Michelangelo
SLIDE 21	<i>Portrait of a Young Man</i> by Bronzino

## ACTIVITY I: USING LIGHT AND SHADE TO DEFINE A FORM

### MATERIALS

- soft black charcoal
- white conté crayon
- kneaded erasers
- drawing paper

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

**FOR THE TEACHER:** Before planning the lesson read the slide entries. Familiarize yourself with use of red chalk, silverpoint, and engraving techniques. Do not tell students that they are going to draw a figure or sculpture. The element of surprise is important in the exercise.

Distribute materials. Ask students to apply charcoal to the entire sheet of paper so that it is covered with an even dark gray tone.

Project SLIDE 12 upside down and unfocused so the image is blurred. (You may choose any slide in which the figure or face has sharp contrasts of light and dark.) Ask students to notice the areas of white in the unfocused image, then to copy these areas by erasing the charcoal on the paper. Slowly focus the slide so the dark and light areas become clearer. Pause so students can either add charcoal to make their image darker or continue to erase the charcoal to make it lighter.

When the slide is completely focused the students will see how they have created the form of the figure by looking for areas of light and shade.

Contrast the finished drawings with SLIDE I6, *Studies for the Libyan Sibyl* by Michelangelo and SLIDE II, *Study of a Bear Walking*, by Leonardo da Vinci. Ask students to notice the use of red chalk and silverpoint to render areas of light and shade.

## ACTIVITY II: RENDERING AND SHADING

A comparison of how lines are used in drawing and in printmaking.

### MATERIALS

- select and print out two of the following images from the CD-ROM:  
*Battle of the Naked Men* by Pollaiuolo, SLIDES II, I3, and I6
- paper
- drawing pencils (soft and hard leads), pen and India ink
- soft charcoal, pastel
- eraser

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Discuss the techniques of drawing and printmaking.

Ask students to look at SLIDE I3, the engraving of *Adam and Eve* and ask them to compare the two figures with those in the *Battle of the Naked Men*. How has each artist rendered the volume of the limbs? Ask students to look for the types of lines used to create the illusion of volume and to copy different examples. Explain the terms hatching and cross-hatching.

Have students compare the two engravings, *Battle of the Naked Men* and *Adam and Eve*, with the drawings, *Studies for the Libyan Sibyl* and *Study of a Bear Walking*. What differences do they see in the way the volume of the limbs and bodies are rendered?

Ask students to study and explain the difference between a line made with soft chalk, with silverpoint, and a line made with a burin used in engraving. Ask students to copy parts of Michelangelo's drawing with soft pastel or soft charcoal and then to copy parts of Leonardo's drawing or one of the engravings using a pencil or pen and India ink. Which method do the students prefer?

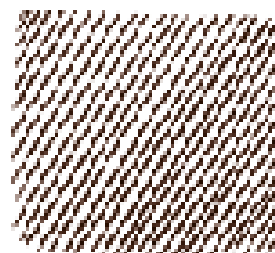
### EXTENSIONS

Ask students to look at Renaissance art books and find engravings they would like to copy. In the Renaissance, apprentices and artists always copied engravings.

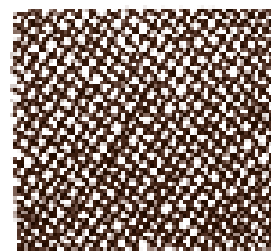
Ask students to choose one of the paintings in this resource, for example, SLIDE I8, *The Judgment of Paris* by Lucas Cranach the Elder. Ask them to copy the painting using one of the techniques they have observed. Give them a choice of pencil, pen and ink, or silverpoint. (Lesson Plans: Gesture, p. 125, and Contrapposto Pose, p. 123)

As part of a printmaking class, have students experiment with drawing and shading a form with hatching and cross-hatching. This can be accomplished by carving hatching lines into linoleum blocks, engraving or etching metal plates. (Lesson Plan: Printmaking, p. 191)

Have students create a tempera painting or an oil painting of a shaded human form. (Lesson Plan: Tempera, p. 185)



HATCHING



CROSS-HATCHING

## LESSON PLAN: HUMAN FIGURE CONTRAPPOSTO POSE



Bodies themselves move in several ways, rising, descending . . . and moving from place to place.

From Leon Battista Alberti,  
*On Painting*

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will recognize and draw the contrapposto pose.
- Students will create a work of art with a group of figures in this pose.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE I2	<i>Adam</i> by Tullio Lombardo
SLIDE I3	<i>Adam and Eve</i> by Albrecht Dürer (engraving)
SLIDE I6	<i>Studies for the Libyan Sibyl</i> by Michelangelo (drawing)

### MATERIALS

- photocopy of *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo, one for each student

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Project SLIDE I2, *Adam* by Tullio Lombardo. If necessary, discuss with the students the differences between a two-dimensional photograph or slide of a sculpture and the actual three-dimensional sculptures they can see in the museum.

Introduce the Italian word *contrapposto*, which means “opposite” or “opposing.” It refers to an ancient Greek pose that creates the illusion of possible movement. In such a pose, the parts of the body are arranged in balanced but opposing oblique axes. For example: the straight weight-bearing leg (right) is opposed to the bent, relaxed leg (left). The hip of the weight-bearing leg (right) is raised, and the corresponding right shoulder is slightly lower. The vertical axis of the body should relax to a subtle S-curve. The left shoulder twists slightly forward to balance the projection of the right hip.

Ask students to imitate Adam’s pose. Can they stand in this pose? Are they balanced? Which foot is bearing most of their weight? Ask students to lift the foot that is not bearing their weight. What happens? Can they stand like that? Discuss what happens to their head, shoulders, and spine.

Project SLIDE I3, *Adam and Eve* by Albrecht Dürer, or give each student a photocopy of the engraving. Now, ask students to assume the pose of Dürer’s Adam. What is different between the two poses and what is similar? Ask students once again to note and identify the location of the foot that is bearing most of the weight. Ask students to note the position of their shoulders and arms. Is the shoulder over the weight-bearing leg lower or higher than the other shoulder?

Ask students which version of Adam creates the illusion of taking up more space? Which Adam gives the illusion of more movement or activity? The wider spread of the arms and legs creates the illusion of more space and movement in a drawing, painting, or sculpture. Each Adam is symmetrical and balanced. Eve also assumes a *contrapposto* pose. Is she balanced and symmetrical? Ask students to compare the poses of Dürer's *Adam and Eve* and notice the space described by their bodies.

Give each student a photocopy or printout of Tullio Lombardo's *Adam*. Ask students to cut around the outside of the image, then to fold the image of *Adam* in half both vertically and horizontally.

What do the students notice about where the lines of the folds occur in relation to the parts of the body? Although the statue is not a rigidly symmetrical composition, the body is divided clearly into symmetrical areas. Ask them to note and identify the location of the foot that is bearing most of the weight. Have students draw action lines at the shoulders, hips, and knees.

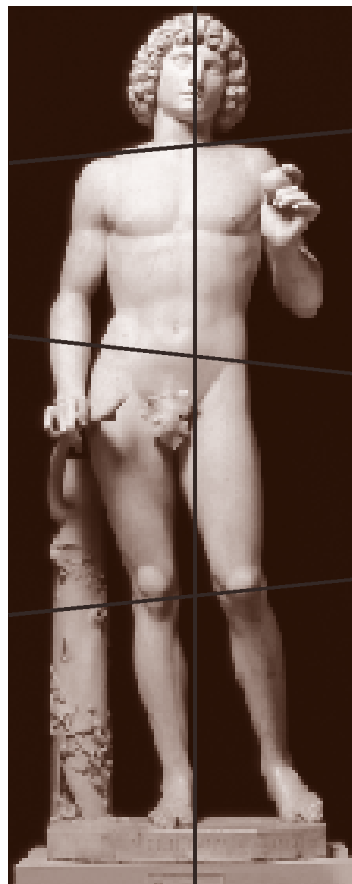
#### EXTENSIONS

Ask students to look at other works of art and to identify examples of the *contrapposto* pose. (Suggested images are SLIDES 15, 21, and 24.) Ask students to draw at least three figures in the *contrapposto* pose. Each figure should relate to each of the others, creating the illusion of movement in space. (Refer to Lesson Plan: Gesture, p. 125.)

Ask your students to go to the Ancient Greek Galleries at The Metropolitan Museum of Art and look, sketch, and compare the pose of one of the following sculptures:

- *Diadoumenos*, Marble Roman copy of Greek original of ca. 440–430 B.C., Fletcher Fund, 1925 (25.78.56)
- *Wounded Warrior Falling*, Marble Roman Copy of Greek Bronze original of 440–430 B.C. by Kresilas, Frederick C. Hewitt Fund, 1925 (25.116)
- *Veiled and Masked Dancer*, Greek, 3rd c. B.C., Bronze, Bequest of Walter C. Baker, 1971 (1972.118.95)

This experience will allow your students to understand how the Renaissance artist adopted the *contrapposto* pose from the ancient Greeks.



## LESSON PLAN: HUMAN FIGURE GESTURE



The painting ought to have pleasant and graceful movements, suitable to what is happening there. The movements of youth are light . . . of men . . . are adorned with firmness . . . of the old . . . are fatigued . . .

From Leon Battista Alberti,  
*On Painting*

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will experience the way a painted gesture attracts the viewer.
- Students will focus on how gestures express moods and emotions and evoke a narrative.
- Students will create a charade, story, or poem inspired by human gestures, or make gesture drawings, or combine these activities.

### WORKS OF ART

PAGE 93	<i>Battle of the Naked Men</i> by Antonio Pollaiuolo
SLIDE 1	<i>The Epiphany</i> by Giotto
SLIDE 6	<i>Saint Eligius</i> by Petrus Christus
SLIDE 7	<i>The Story of Esther</i> by del Buono and Apollonio
SLIDE 15	<i>A Hunting Scene</i> by Piero di Cosimo
SLIDE 16	<i>Studies for the Libyan Sibyl</i> by Michelangelo
SLIDE 19	<i>The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John</i> by Andrea del Sarto
SLIDE 24	<i>The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes</i> by Tintoretto
SLIDE 25	<i>The Harvesters</i> by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

FOR THE TEACHER: Read the entries before you plan your lesson.

### MATERIALS

- pencils, charcoal, paper

### ACTIVITY

#### PART I: NAME THE GESTURE

Select one of the paintings with many figures and project the slide. Ask each student to identify at least one gesture and select a word to describe the gesture. Ask students to notice if the gesture they chose connects with another gesture. If so, how? Ask students to identify the gestures that help the viewer see the action in the painting.

#### PART II: FOCUS ON HOW GESTURE CREATES TENSION IN A PAINTING

Project one slide, for example, SLIDE 19, *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John* by Andrea del Sarto. Do not tell the students the title of the painting.

What is the child doing? Thinking? What is in his hand? What is the woman doing? What would happen if the woman let go? What is the relationship of these people to each other? Is anyone looking out at us? What would a speech bubble from each figure's mouth say? Ask students to give the painting a title.

Discuss how the gestures and facial expressions have allowed the students as viewers to understand the emotion, mood, and meaning of the painting. Discuss how the gestures create tension in the painting.

### PART III: CHARADES

Project either one or two slides, making sure the chosen images have many figures. Divide the class into groups of five. Each student in each group must select a gesture in the painting. Together they will develop a two-minute skit using the gestures. Allow the students about fifteen minutes to prepare. Have each group pantomime their skit.

Additional suggestions:

As skits are performed, the rest of the class can suggest dialogue for the gestures and compare the viewers' version with that of the actors. After the skits have been performed, students can compare the way individuals and groups interpreted similar gestures.

### PART IV: WRITING ACTIVITY

Ask students to pick two gestures from a painting and write a dialogue based on them, developing the dialogue into a story or journal entry, or a skit. (See Extensions and Lesson Plan: The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153.)

### PART V: GESTURE DRAWING

As a warm-up exercise, ask students to quickly and loosely draw lines that look like tight spirals or metal springs.

Ask for volunteers to pose. Student must take action poses for one minute; for example, the model may pretend to shoot a basket, bend to pick up a flower, or stretch. Ask the students to sketch the pose with the spiral lines that capture the movement and direction of the pose. Have the students sketch at least five poses.



Ask students to look closely at the engraving of *Battle of the Naked Men* by Pollaiuolo. Have them identify and draw at least five different positions for each of the following: hands, feet, arms, and legs.

### EXTENSIONS

Students may use the previous exercises along with their gesture drawings to create their own visual narrative as a drawing or painting. Students can identify a moment in one of the charades, and paint or draw it, using the appropriate gestures.

# PERSPECTIVE CHECKLIST

The Renaissance painters strove to create the illusion of a habitable space. By using perspective, they were able to represent the three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional surface—a canvas, a piece of paper, a wood panel, a wall, or a slab of clay or stone. Following are three methods by which this was achieved.

## OVERLAPPING SHAPES



SLIDE 10 *Annunciation*,  
Hans Memling



SLIDE 1 *The Epiphany*, Giotto

## AERIAL OR ATMOSPHERIC PERSPECTIVE

Aerial or atmospheric perspective creates a sense of depth in landscape paintings. It imitates the effect of atmosphere so objects look paler and sometimes bluer the farther they are from the viewer.



SLIDE 2 *The Crucifixion*  
(detail), Jan van Eyck



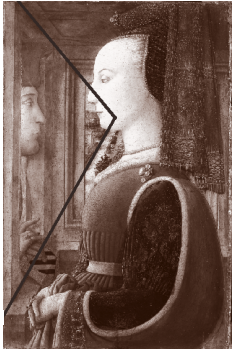
SLIDE 25 *The Harvesters* (detail),  
Pieter Bruegel the Elder



SLIDE 29 *View of Toledo* (detail),  
El Greco

## LINEAR PERSPECTIVE

The ancient Greeks understood and employed linear perspective. Artists in fifteenth-century Florence revived and developed this mathematical ordering of space to depict what they observed in the physical world. The system enables artists to create a deep geometric space and direct the viewer's eye to a focal point. Alberti developed its underlying geometry.



SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*,  
Fra Filippo Lippi



*The Miracles of Saint Zenobius*,  
Sandro Botticelli, Florentine  
John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1911  
(11.98)



SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*,  
Fra Carnevale

## LIGHT AND SHADOW

Along with perspective, artists use light and shadow to create volume and enhance the illusion of a habitable space.



SLIDE 10 *Annunciation*,  
Hans Memling



SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius*,  
Petrus Christus





Be it known and clear to whoever may read this writing the master Guzon, painter, has agreed . . . to teach . . . namely the principle of a plane . . . and to put figures on the said plane, one here and one there, in various places on the said plane, and place objects, namely a chair, bench, or house . . .

From Contract between Master Painter and Apprentice, 1467. Source material, p. 85.

## LESSON PLAN: PERSPECTIVE OVERLAPPING SHAPES

### GRADE LEVEL

Elementary and Junior High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will observe how overlapped shapes create a sense of space as they establish a foreground, middle ground, and background.
- Students will make a collage. They will determine the horizon line and define a foreground, middle ground, and background.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE I *The Epiphany* by Giotto

SLIDE IO *Annunciation* by Hans Memling

### MATERIALS

#### COLLAGE

- large sheets of colored construction paper; a variety of scraps of different colored construction paper and other types of paper, wallpapers, wrapping papers, magazines, and photocopies or printouts of the works of art in this packet
- scissors, pencils, glue

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Read the slide entry before planning your lesson.

Project SLIDE I. Ask students to look at and decipher the narrative.

Which figures are larger? Which are smaller? Are the larger figures placed so they overlap the smaller figures? Where is the stable placed in relation to the figures of the three kings and Joseph? Where is Joseph in relation to the shepherds? Where is the mountain? Where are the angels? What is the relation of the horizon line to the sky, mountain, and earth?

Keep asking this type of question until the students see that the larger figures are placed in the lower half of the panel, in fact, they are standing on the ground line. Because they are in the foreground, they appear to be closer to the viewer. The foreground figures overlap the figures in the middle ground, the shepherds, and Mary. The stable and the shepherds overlap the gold sky. The angels are in the sky at the top of the panel. They are in the background and appear to be the figures farthest from the viewer.

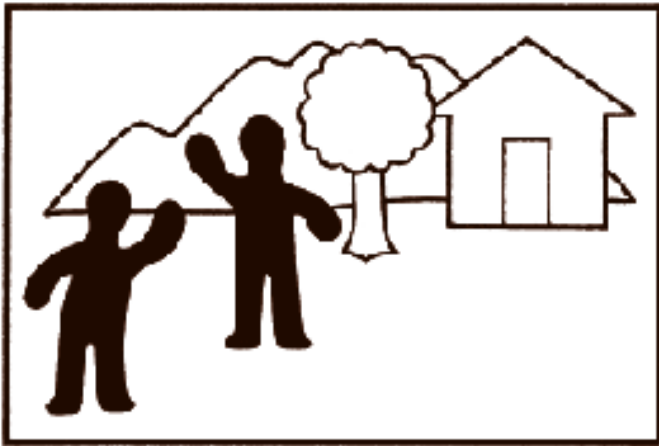
## ACTIVITY

Ask students to think of some activities or events in which they have participated—sports events, concerts, dances, nature hikes, visits to the zoo, and so on. Or have students imagine an event in the Florence or Bruges of the Renaissance. Ask students to make up a story that involves only two or three figures at the event or activity.

Ask students to cut their figures from scraps of construction paper, photographs from newspapers and magazines, or the photocopies of the works of art.



Distribute one large sheet of construction paper to students and ask them to experiment with the placement of their shapes. Ask students to determine the horizon line. Which shapes should go in back and which in front? (They should glue the background shapes down first, higher on the paper because they are farther away. The next closest shapes can be overlapped and placed lower on the paper. Finally they should glue down the shapes that are in front, close to the bottom edge of the paper.)



## EXTENSIONS AND CONNECTIONS

Lesson Plans: *The Story in Art*, Part I, p. 105, and Part II, p. 153; *Gesture*, p. 125; *Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective*, p. 131.

## LESSON PLAN: PERSPECTIVE AERIAL OR ATMOSPHERIC PERSPECTIVE



I saw above me the dark sky,  
and the sun as it fell on the  
mountain was far brighter  
here than in the plains below,  
because a smaller extent of  
the atmosphere lay between  
the summit of the mountain  
and the sun.

Leonardo da Vinci  
As quoted by A. Richard  
Turner in *The Vision of Landscape  
in Renaissance Italy*, Princeton,  
NJ, 1966.

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will look at paintings and discuss how aerial perspective is depicted.
- Students will observe and document the atmosphere of the sky during a particular time period and compare their findings with the paintings that use aerial perspective.
- Students will complete a writing activity.

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 2      *The Crucifixion* by Jan van Eyck  
SLIDE 5      *The Triumph of Fame* by Scheggia  
SLIDE 18     *The Judgment of Paris* by Lucas Cranach the Elder  
SLIDE 25     *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Read the entries for SLIDES 2 and 25 before planning your lesson.

Aerial perspective creates a sense of depth by imitating the effect of the atmosphere: objects look paler and sometimes bluer the farther away they are from the viewer. Scientific analysis shows us that the presence of dust and large moisture particles in the atmosphere causes some scattering of the light that passes through them. The amount of scattering depends on the wavelength of the light. Blue light can pass through the mist caused by dust and moisture particles, and this is why the sky appears to be blue and faraway mountains light gray, blue, or purplish in color.

Project SLIDE 25, *The Harvesters*. In a class discussion, ask students to describe what they see. (The background on the left side of the painting appears to be covered in a haze. The color is a mixture of yellow, white, and beige. The eye cannot decipher details, thus the atmosphere creates an illusion of distance or space.)

Project SLIDE 2, *The Crucifixion*. Ask students to look at and describe aerial or atmospheric perspective.

## OBSERVATION AND DOCUMENTATION ACTIVITIES

### MATERIALS

- Polaroid™ camera, colored pencils or Craypas™, paper

### VISUAL ACTIVITY I

TIME: At least one week, about 20 minutes per day.

Ask students to document the sky's appearance for one week. Each day at a set time they should look at the sky from the same place. Mornings and evenings are preferable to the middle of the day because the sky is usually clearer when the sun is not at its height. Pollution also will affect the color of the sky. If cameras are available, students can take photographs of the sky. They will see how the color and density of the sky change. Students can use colored pencils or Craypas™ to translate their photographs into drawings.

### VISUAL ACTIVITY II

TIME: At least one day, four different times during the day, at least five or ten minutes each time. Ask students to go outside and select an object in the distance. Throughout the day have them record the object, either with a camera (preferably a Polaroid™ camera) or with colored pencils or Craypas™. The students will notice how atmospheric conditions affect the object. Does it change color? Is its shape always distinct?

### WRITING ACTIVITY I

Link perspective in art to one's placement in a scene. How does placement affect what one sees? Ask students to write a story from the perspective of one of the figures in *The Harvesters* (SLIDE 25). Write from the perspective of someone in town, someone in the field, someone under a tree. Other slides that you might want to try are SLIDES 2, 6, 8, and 15.

### WRITING ACTIVITY II

Ask students to imagine their favorite place. Then ask them to imagine they are using a camera and describe the pictures they are taking at different distances. Ask them to write three paragraphs.

- Ask students to imagine taking a photograph of the place from a long distance. Can they see the whole place? What kinds of details can they see from far away?
- Then ask them to move closer, to midrange. What kinds of details can they see? How has the larger picture changed?
- Finally, ask the students to imagine taking a close-up of the place. What part do they see? Ask them to describe the details.

After either writing activity return to one of the paintings. For example, project SLIDE 2, *The Crucifixion* by Jan van Eyck. Ask students to identify where van Eyck placed himself. Then ask them to imagine that the perspective is different. What details would they change? How? What details would stay the same? Ask them to explain their decisions by writing a paragraph describing the painting from this new perspective.

## EXTENSIONS

SCIENCE: Students can use their photographs in environmental projects.

## RESOURCES

Cole, Alison. *Eyewitness Art: Perspective*. London: Dorling Kindersley in association with National Gallery Publications, 1992.

Cole, Alison. *Eyewitness Art: The Renaissance*. London: Dorling Kindersley in association with National Gallery Publications, 1994.

## LESSON PLAN: PERSPECTIVE LINEAR ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE



Mine eye hath played the  
painter and hath stelled,  
Thy beauty's form in  
table of my heart,  
My body is the frame  
wherein 'tis held,  
And perspective it is  
best painter's art.

From William Shakespeare,  
Sonnet 24

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about perspective through looking at works of art, discussion, and hands-on exercises.
- Students will observe a room and draw it using linear one-point perspective.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by  
Fra Filippo Lippi

SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin* by Fra Carnevale

### FOR COMPARISON:

SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus

SLIDE 10 *Annunciation* by Hans Memling

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

**FOR THE TEACHER:** Before starting the lesson, read the slide entries and select two or three of the paintings mentioned above.

A definition of linear one-point perspective states: "All converging lines meet at a single vanishing point in a drawing or painting that uses linear one-point perspective, and all shapes get smaller in all directions with increasing distance from the eye."

Project SLIDES 4 and 6. Ask students to brainstorm how each of the artists has created the illusion that the viewer is looking into a room. Ask students to identify the main point of focus. Have students compare SLIDES 4 and 6.

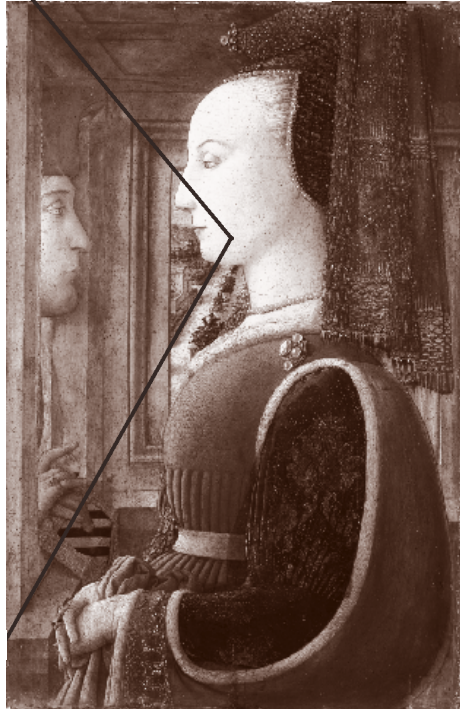


## PART I: FINDING THE VANISHING POINT

### MATERIALS

- paper, pencil, ruler
- photocopy of SLIDE 4, *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by Fra Filippo Lippi

Give each student a photocopy of the portrait, a ruler, and a pencil. Ask them to extend the diagonal lines created by the ceiling and the window elements, and find the point at which they converge. This is the **vanishing point**. Ask students to make up their own definition for linear one-point perspective.



## PART II: DEMONSTRATE HOW LINEAR ONE-POINT PERSPECTIVE WORKS

### MATERIALS

- Polaroid™ camera and a long hall

Stand at one end of a long hall or room and take a photograph of the space. Have the class look at the photograph and notice how the side walls appear to converge.

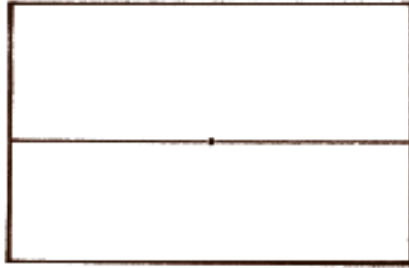
Ask students to stand in the middle of the front end of the classroom. Mark the center of the back wall. Then ask students to:

Look at where the back wall meets the ceiling and floor. Imagine a horizon line drawn at eye level across the back wall. Look at the doors and windows in relation to the horizon line.

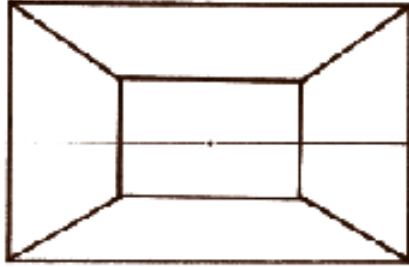
Back at their desks, give students paper and the worksheet.



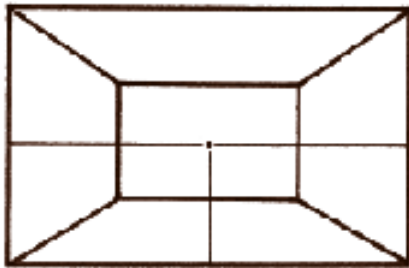
## WORKSHEET



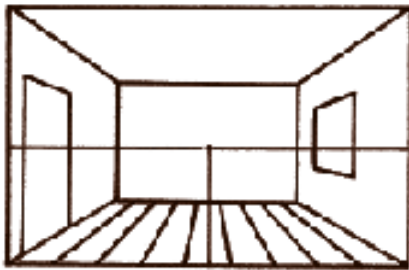
Ask students to draw a horizon line that divides the paper in half and to place the vanishing point at the center of the horizon line.



Draw the back wall of the room as a rectangle or square centered on the page. Draw the lines of the side walls to meet at the back wall and form the ceiling and floor.



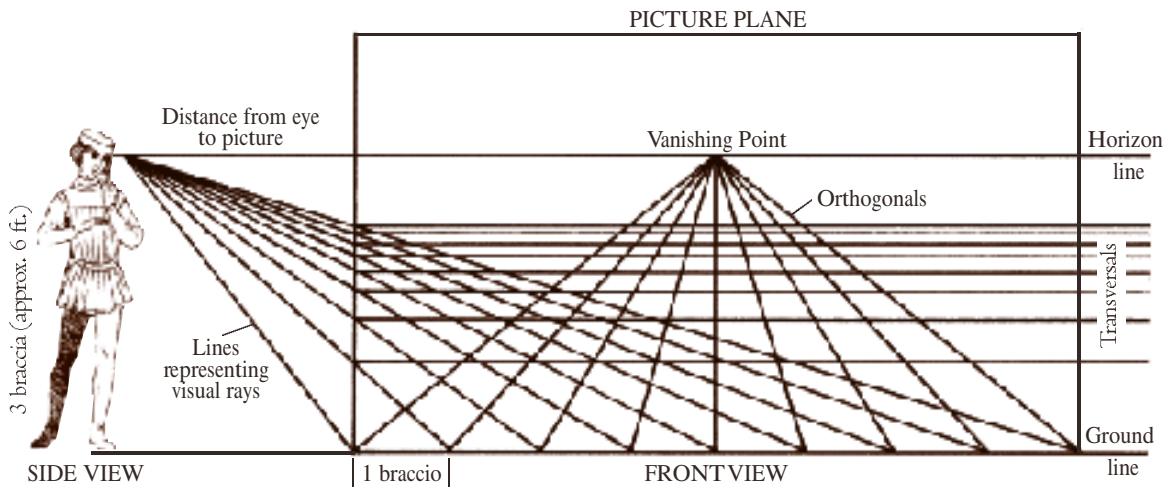
Drop a line at the vanishing point that is perpendicular to the top and bottom of the paper and parallel to the sides of the paper.



Ask students to draw a pattern of square tiles or slats on the floor. Add windows and doors. Make sure students follow the directional lines that join the walls to the floor and the ceiling to the walls.



Furniture and people can be added.



### ALBERTI'S PERSPECTIVE SYSTEM (see illustration above)

Alberti based his perspective system on the height of an average person (about 6 feet, or 3 *braccia*, using the Renaissance unit of measurement). He divided the ground line of the picture into equal segments, each equivalent to 1/3 of the height of an average person, or 1 *braccio*. He drew diagonal lines called *orthogonals* from each segment of the ground line to the vanishing point, which was placed at a height of 3 *braccia*. Then he projected a person standing outside the space, in this case to the left. Alberti drew lines called “visual rays” emanating from this viewer’s eye back to the divisions on the ground line. Next he drew horizontal lines (*transversals*) across the points where the *orthogonal* lines intersect the lines representing the *visual rays*. This provided a graph of the space and a harmonious system with which he could calculate the relative proportion of each figure and object on the picture plane.

### PART III

After this exercise, project SLIDE 8, *The Birth of the Virgin* by Fra Carnevale, and ask students to identify where the artist used linear one-point perspective in this painting. (A description of the use of linear one-point perspective in this painting is found in the slide entry.)

### CONNECTIONS

Lesson Plan: Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131.

### RESOURCES

Alberti, Leon Battista. John R. Spencer, trans. *On Painting*. Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1966.

Cole, Alison. *Eyewitness Art: Perspective*. London: Dorling Kindersley in association with National Gallery Publications, 1992.

### PAINTINGS

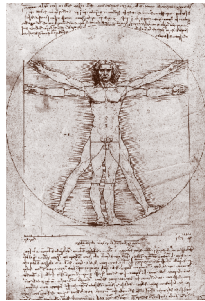
Leonardo da Vinci, *Last Supper*, fresco, ca. 1495–98, Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan.

Raphael, *The School of Athens*, fresco, 1509–11, Stanza della Segnatura, Vatican Palace, Rome.

# COMPOSITION CHECKLIST

Luca Pacioli, an Italian mathematician who often worked with Leonardo da Vinci, said that the ancient Greeks discovered the perfect circle and the square in the proportions of the human body, and that they used this harmonious system to design their temples. The Renaissance artists followed the ancients' system of harmony, proportion, and beauty in their architecture and in the composition of their sculptures and paintings.

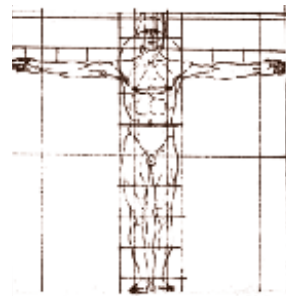
The *golden mean*, also known as the *golden section*, is a system of proportion developed by the ancient Greeks that establishes a harmonic ratio between two unequal parts.



*The Vitruvian Man*,  
Leonardo da Vinci  
Alinari/Art Resource,  
N.Y.



*Façade of Santa Maria Novella*, Leon  
Battista Alberti  
Foto Marburg/Art Resource, N.Y.



Measurement/the human  
figure, Albrecht Dürer

Symmetry and balance create a harmonic relationship between parts of a composition.



SLIDE 14 *Madonna and Child  
Enthroned by Saints*, Raphael



*Wall Fountain*, Simone Mosca



SLIDE 5 *The Triumph of Fame*, Scheggia



Composition is that rule of painting by which the parts of the things seen fit together in the painting.

From Leon Battista Alberti, *On Painting*

## LESSON PLAN: COMPOSITION CLASSICAL COMPOSITION

### GRADE LEVEL

High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will plot out a classical composition.
- Students will compare the same composition in architecture and painting.
- Students will see how one part relates to another part and how all the parts relate to the whole work.

### WORKS OF ART

PAGE I45 *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints* by Raphael (SLIDE I4)

PAGE I43 *Wall Fountain*, ca. 1528; Simone Mosca,  
Arezzo, gray sandstone, h. 16 ft. 3 in., w. 12 ft. 9 1/2 in.  
Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1971 (1971.158)

### MATERIALS

- a photocopy or printout of the two works of art for each student
- one sheet of acetate paper per student
- thin felt-tip marker
- ruler

### MOTIVATION, DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITY

#### STEP I:

- Distribute photocopies of the *Wall Fountain*, p. 143.
- Have students cut away the white border of the image and fold it in half lengthwise. The fold should start at the middle of the acanthus leaf at the top of the fountain, go through the center niche and middle of the spout and basin, and divide the fountain into two symmetrical halves.
- Ask students to fold the paper in half widthwise. The midpoint is described by the architectural ledge that crosses the bottom of the large niche and goes above the small niches in the wings.
- Ask the students to place the acetate sheet over the photocopy. With a ruler and a felt-tip pen have them trace both the vertical and horizontal fold lines.
- Ask students to trace the important vertical lines:
  - the edge of the concave wall
  - the columns



- Ask the students to trace the important horizontal lines:
  - the line formed at the top of the columns and the bottom of the entablature
  - the line that runs along the bottom of the central arch and under the grotesques
  - the architectural ridge that goes along the top of the basin and the bottom of the columns

Have students discuss and analyze why the composition of this fountain is harmonious.

- It is symmetrical.
- The vertical elements define spaces that are in proportion to each other (the wings to the center and the center to the wings).
- The horizontal elements do the same thing.
- An alternating pattern of recessing and projecting elements is established from the outer wings to the columns to the concave wall.
- The vertical and horizontal elements form a square in the center of the fountain.

#### STEP 2:

- Give each student a photocopy of the painting by Raphael, p. 145
- Ask the students to place the acetate sheet with the lines from the wall fountain over the photocopy of this painting.
- Line up the vertical and horizontal midpoint lines. The vertical midpoint should run from God through the Madonna. The horizontal midpoint should line up with the top of the heads of the female saints.
- The male saints are placed in the same relation to the female saints as the columns and the edge of the concave wall on the fountain.
- The main focal elements of both the fountain and the altarpiece are contained in the center square. The square encloses the Madonna, Christ, and John the Baptist.

#### EXTENSIONS

LESSON PLANS: Draw the Golden Rectangle, p. 147, and A Form to Measure, p. 117.

Ask students to visit the Ancient Greek Galleries in The Metropolitan Museum of Art and look for the Calyx-krater, terracotta technique (potter: Euxitheos; painter: Euphronios), Attica, ca. 515 B.C. (1972.11.10) (Location: The Bothmer Gallery I). Ask them to look at the scene with *The Death of Sarpedon*. Have them compare the composition of the scene to the exercise above with the Raphael and the Mosca. They will see the similarity in the composition and understand how it was adopted in the Renaissance.

Fold

Fold

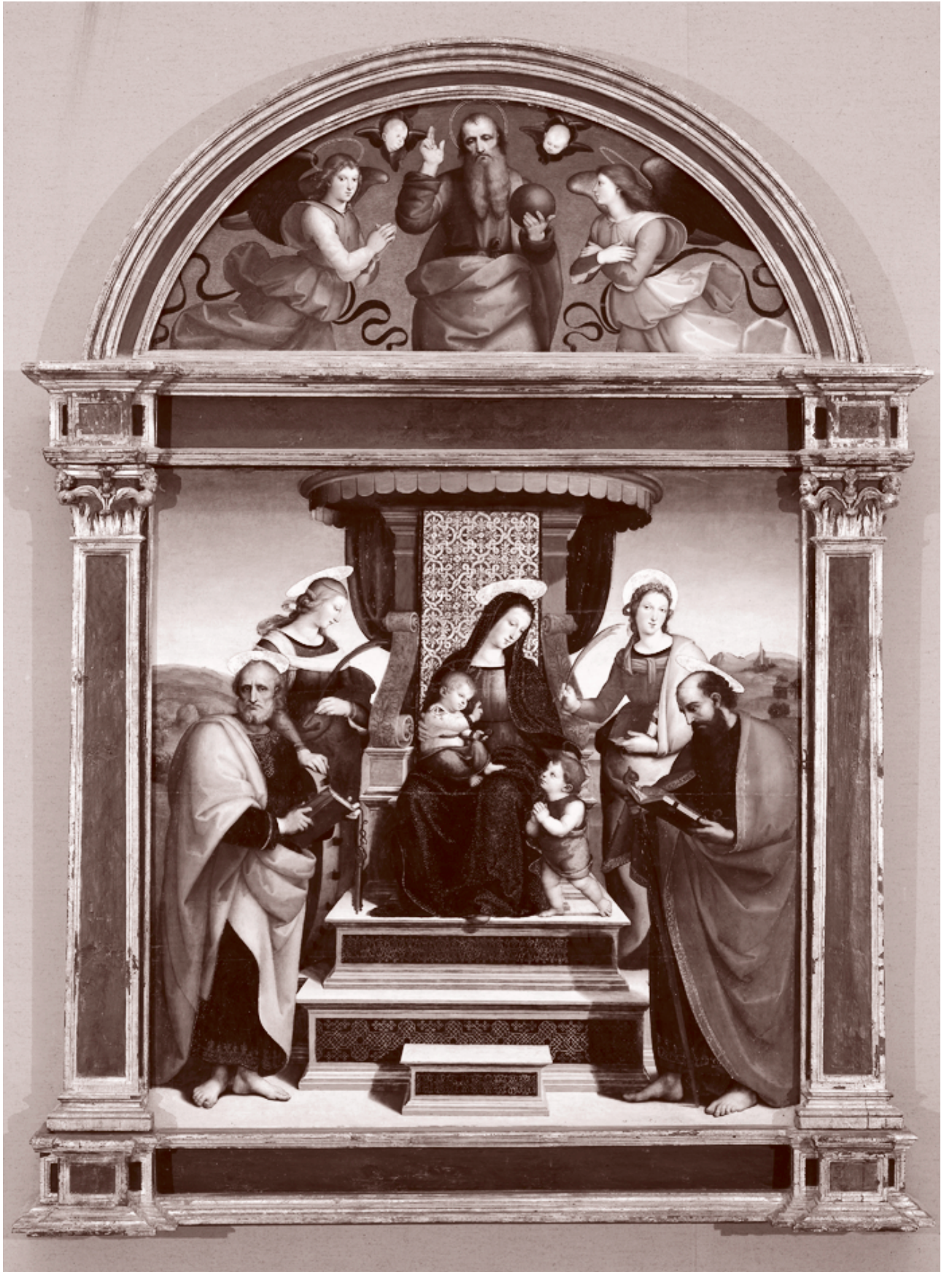
Fold

Fold













Geometry has two great treasures; one is the Theorem of Pythagorus; the other the division of a line into extreme and mean ratio. The first we may compare to a measure of gold; the second we may name a precious jewel.

From Johannes Kepler, 1571–1630

## LESSON PLAN: COMPOSITION DRAW THE GOLDEN RECTANGLE

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will construct a golden rectangle.
- Students will use the golden rectangle as a composition in a painting.

### MATERIALS

- paper, ruler, compass
- paint and brushes

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

The golden mean, or section, refers to a harmonious proportional relationship that has been known at least since the time of the fourth-century B.C. Greek geometer Euclid. Strictly, it is defined as a line divided in such a way that the smaller part is to the larger as the larger is to the whole.

### ACTIVITY I, CONSTRUCT A GOLDEN RECTANGLE

Distribute the worksheet and have students experiment with drawing the golden rectangle. Have students draw or paint a picture on a piece of paper they have cut in the proportions of a golden rectangle. They may include golden rectangles as part of their composition; for example, doorways, buildings, windows.

Students may use a computer drawing program to construct a golden rectangle. They may position it over scanned images of Renaissance paintings or use it to construct a composition of their own. When they resize the golden rectangle, they should be careful not to change its proportions.

## WORKSHEET I

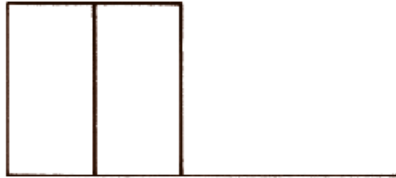
1. Draw a horizontal line approximately 7 or 8 inches long. This is called the baseline.



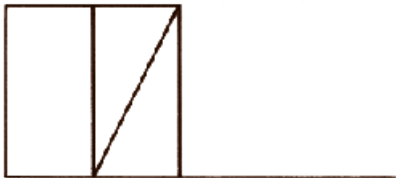
2. On the left edge of the baseline draw a 3-inch square.



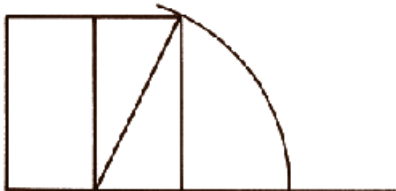
3. Divide the square in half vertically. You should have two vertical rectangles.



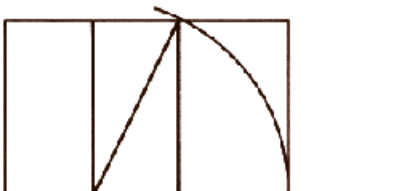
4. In the right rectangle draw a diagonal line that starts at the lower-left corner and goes to the upper-right corner.



5. Using the length of the diagonal as the radius, draw an arc that meets the baseline. In other words, place a compass point on the diagonal line where the line intersects the baseline. Place the pencil point of the compass at the other end of the diagonal where it intersects the upper-right corner of the square. Draw an arc from the top right corner to the baseline.



6. Draw a vertical line up from where the arc intersects the baseline and extend the horizontal line forming the top right of the square to intersect with the vertical line. This is a golden rectangle.



## ACTIVITY II, FIND EXAMPLES OF THE GOLDEN RECTANGLE

Distribute photocopies:

- *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Saints* by Raphael, p. 145.
- *Façade of Santa Maria Novella* designed by Leon Battista Alberti (find in reference book on architecture)
- *Wall Fountain* by Simone Mosca, p. 143.



*Madonna and Child with Saints,*  
Raphael



*Façade of Santa Maria Novella,*  
designed by Alberti  
Foto Marburg/Art Resource, N.Y.



*Wall Fountain,* Simon Mosca

Ask students to explore the symmetry in each design. Then ask students to find as many squares, rectangles, and circles in each. This exercise asks students to observe and intuitively find the golden rectangles that make up the design or composition of each of these works of art.

Also have students look at the works of modern artists, such as Georges Seurat and Piet Mondrian, who have used the golden rectangle in their paintings.

### RESOURCE

Heath, Sir Thomas L., trans. *The Thirteen Books of Euclid's Elements*, Volume I, Introduction and Books I and II. New York: Dover, 1956, Proposition 4, p. 379.



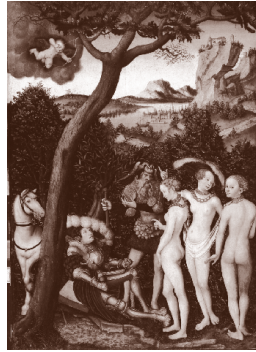
# NARRATIVE CHECKLIST

Both secular and religious narratives were used in painting and sculpture.

## ANCIENT MYTHS RETOLD



SLIDE 20 *Pyramus and Thisbe*,  
Broth Bowl



SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris*,  
Lucas Cranach the Elder

## RELIGIOUS NARRATIVES

- SLIDE 1 *The Epiphany*, Giotto
- SLIDE 2 *The Crucifixion*, Jan van Eyck
- SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther*, Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni
- SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*, Fra Carnevale
- SLIDE 10 *Annunciation*, Hans Memling
- SLIDE 24 *The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes*, Tintoretto

## CHRISTIAN ICONOGRAPHY

Objects in many Christian paintings are symbols connoting the perpetual presence and reality of the Passion of Christ. Thus, lilies in a jar (SLIDE 10) could represent the Virgin Mary's purity, a fireplace could stand for sinful, lustful passions, and realistically represented light (SLIDE 10) could be seen as Christ, the light of the world. Certain colors had symbolic meaning. Blue, the color of the sky, symbolized Heaven. Gold was a symbol of pure light, the heavenly element in which God lives. Red was a symbol of the blood of Christ or the Passion. Symbolism was probably a pervasive worldview, rather than a practice relegated exclusively to art.

## NARRATIVE FORMATS

In retelling a story the artist selects a moment or sequence of events. The paintings below illustrate the presentation of stories in three formats:

### SEQUENTIAL FORMAT:

#### SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther*

This is a rectangular panel, painted for a chest. The format for telling the story is like a comic strip, divided into three frames. The story begins on the left and progresses sequentially to the right.



SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther*, Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni



SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*,  
Fra Carnevale

### CONTINUOUS FORMAT:

#### SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*

In this painting the main event is integrated into the rituals of daily life. The viewer is invited to enjoy both the life inside and outside the palazzo. Even though the infant Mary is in the center of the panel the focus is not directly on her.



SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris*,  
Lucas Cranach the Elder

### SINGLE-MOMENT FORMAT:

#### SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris*

Paris awakes in a timeless setting, to see the three goddesses placed before him. In a single moment, the essence of the myth—Paris's judgment—is revealed.



## LESSON PLAN: NARRATIVE THE STORY IN ART, PART II



The greatest work of the painter is the *istoria* [narrative]...

From Leon Battista Alberti,  
*On Painting*

### GRADE LEVEL

Upper Elementary, Junior High, and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will look at Renaissance narrative paintings. They will study different formats used to present the narrative in painting.
- Students will be asked to freeze moments in stories. They will sketch and write the stories, working in groups or individually.
- Students may choose to design a narrative to fit onto a box or a plate.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 5	<i>The Triumph of Fame</i> by Scheggia (circular format)
SLIDE 6	<i>Saint Eligius</i> by Petrus Christus
SLIDE 7	<i>The Story of Esther</i> by del Buono and Apollonio
SLIDE 8	<i>The Birth of the Virgin</i> by Fra Carnevale
SLIDE 15	<i>A Hunting Scene</i> by Piero di Cosimo
SLIDE 18	<i>The Judgment of Paris</i> by Lucas Cranach the Elder
SLIDE 20	<i>Pyramus and Thisbe on the Broth Bowl</i> (circular format)
SLIDE 24	<i>The Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes</i> by Tintoretto
SLIDE 25	<i>The Harvesters</i> by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Look at all the slides and read the slide entries before planning the lessons and familiarize yourself with the stories in the paintings.

How does an artist decide what moments in a story he or she will depict? Ask students to think of a movie they have seen or a novel they have read. Tell them to freeze a moment in the movie or novel. Discuss the experience, noting the difficulties. Depending on the time and your goals, you can have the students sketch the moment.

If you wish to extend the lesson, have them also sketch the moment before and the moment after. They now have sketched a story that has a beginning, middle, and end, or three sequential moments. Once again discuss the experience and the difficulties.

Select two or three slides and project. As students look at an image, help them focus on the story. Ask students to identify the action and the most important characters, and to guess the story line. Ask students to analyze the composition of each painting and compare the format of the story line. See checklist, p. 152.

Ask students to identify the foreground, middle ground, and background of each artwork.

The stories in SLIDES 7 and 8 are represented as if they were taking place in fifteenth-century Italy. This is reflected in the architecture, customs, and costumes. Ask students to imagine one of these stories in a twentieth-century setting. What would be similar? What would be different? Or add a science-fiction element and ask the students to imagine the story in the future.

## ACTIVITY I, CREATE A STORY

### MATERIALS

- large sheets of paper
- PAINTING AND DRAWING: paints, brushes, markers, pencils, or chalk
- COLLAGE: colored and patterned paper, scissors, glue, rulers

Ask students to select a story or myth, or ask students to make up a story or retell an event, or use the exercise suggested in the “motivation.” Students will paint, draw, or make a collage in one of the suggested formats:

Structure the story line like a comic book, with at least three sequential sections—a beginning, a middle, and an end—with the central character appearing in each section.

Set the story in a composition that has a foreground, middle ground, and background to show the narrative in a continuous format.

## ACTIVITY II, RETELL A STORY

### MATERIALS

- paper, pencil

Select one painting for students to use as a reference for a sequential or continuous narrative, for example, SLIDE 6, *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus. Ask students to imagine what happened before the couple entered the goldsmith’s shop, what is happening in the present either in or out of the shop, and what might happen after the couple leaves the shop. Other possibilities are SLIDES 18 and 24.

Ask students to write or sketch the three episodes. If they choose to write, they can develop dialogue for the characters. Refer to Activity I if students wish to create an artwork.

## ACTIVITY III, GROUP PROJECT: DECORATE A TREASURE CHEST

### BACKGROUND

In the Renaissance a *cassone*, often a wedding chest, was an essential piece of furniture, a repository for the family’s most precious possessions. Often it held the bride’s trousseau. The sides and front panels were painted. The front panel was designed to give pleasure and, indirectly, to educate the small children who played on the floor and looked at the painted panels. The subjects of the panels are usually biblical, mythological, or historical and many feature female protagonists. The side panels usually had the family’s coat of arms or personal devices or symbols.

## MATERIALS

- paper, pencils, rulers
- white gesso, acrylic paint, brushes
- magic markers
- refrigerator box or a large box the size of an actual chest

## MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

**FOR THE TEACHER:** Read **SLIDE ENTRY 7**. Update the concept of a chest to a trunk, such as a college trunk, army trunk, or camp trunk. Ask students to brainstorm what materials this trunk might hold. Ask students to imagine what the next phase of their life will be like, what worries they would be leaving behind from this phase, and what they might need when entering this new phase of life. Use one of the previous writing activities.

Then show students a photograph of a Renaissance chest. Discuss their form in relation to their function. Why did owners or patrons want their chests decorated with narrative scenes?

Ask students to brainstorm how the refrigerator box could be turned into a chest or Renaissance *cassone*. When students have come to a decision, they should then paint the entire exposed surface with white acrylic gesso. This must dry before the next step.

Through class discussion the students and teacher can decide where and how each scene should be positioned on the box, as well as which colors to use. Students can be divided into smaller groups. Each group can concentrate on one of the scenes. Ask a few students to sketch the outline of the narrative, and let a few students at a time paint on their scene.

## ACTIVITY IV, INDIVIDUAL PROJECT: DECORATE A BOX

### MATERIALS

- shoe boxes or other small boxes
- magic markers, paper and pencils, scissors

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION (REFER TO ACTIVITY III)

Ask students to decorate the outside of their box with scenes that represent an aspect of their identity they want the outside world to see.

Ask students to think of items they would need or want for the next phase of their life. They can put these items into the box. Or, they may want to make a treasure box full of inner secret thoughts. Ask the students to sketch the items on separate sheets of paper, mold them from clay, clip them from magazines, etc., and then put them into the box.

Ask students when they have finished if they wish to share their boxes.

## ACTIVITY V, INDIVIDUAL PROJECT: DECORATE A PLATE

### MATERIALS

- paper plates or precut circles
- magic markers

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Read the slide entries for SLIDES 5 and 20 before the lesson. Both objects were made to celebrate the birth of a child.

Project the slides. Ask students to explore the narrative told within the format of a circle. Ask the students to notice the use of symmetry. Does it add to the narrative? How does the story fit into the circular shape? Refer to the first two activities in this lesson plan, to develop the story.

Distribute plates or paper cut in circles and ask students to draw a narrative allegorical picture within the circular shape. They may wish to write a sentence about their image around the edge of the plate or circle, or they may wish to place a personal symbol somewhere on the plate.

### EXTENSIONS

THEATER ARTS: Dramatize one of the paintings by presenting it either as a short skit or a play, with dialogue based on student observations; or stage a *tableau vivant* with students setting up a stage, then silently holding the poses of the figures in the painting (Lesson Plan: Gesture, p. 125).

## LESSON PLAN: NARRATIVE A WRITING ACTIVITY



On his journeys Bruegel did many views from nature so that it was said of him, when he traveled through the Alps, that he had swallowed all the mountains and rocks and spat them out again, after his return, onto his canvases and panels, so closely was he able to follow nature.

From Carel van Mander,  
*The Painter's Book*, 1604

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will explore the similarities and differences between written and visual language.
- Students will compose a written work using the skills of observation, description, and narration.
- Students will analyze the aesthetic and social content of one painting.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 15 *A Hunting Scene* by Piero di Cosimo

SLIDE 25 *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

SLIDE 29 *View of Toledo* by El Greco

### MATERIALS

Use color postcards or printouts from the enclosed CD-ROM of one or more of the works of art. Cut each image into three or four equal sections.

### ACTIVITY: WRITING EXERCISE, 20 MINUTES

1. Divide the class into three or four groups or into groups of three or four students. Give each group or each student in the group one of the thirds or quarters of the image. Each group or each person will look at their section and not show it to the other groups or to the other students in their group.
2. The students working in the larger group may wish to appoint a recorder to write down their observations and a spokesperson to share their description with the whole class.
3. Ask students to write a paragraph using the following skills:

**OBSERVATION** Ask students to look closely at their section of the image and list the details they observe. Suggested questions include: What do you see? Note colors, shapes, and sizes. Whom do you see? Individuals? Groups? What are they doing? Where are they located?

**DESCRIPTION** Ask the groups to notice the atmosphere in their section of the image. What feelings are suggested by the atmosphere? Which details dominate their section? What aspects or qualities of these details evoke particular feelings? Describe the activity, landscape, or motion in the section. See writing exercise in Lesson Plan: Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131.

**NARRATION** Encourage students to imagine dialogue between the people in their section of the image, if appropriate.

4. When the written work is finished, have the groups come together and ask the spokesperson for each group to read their paragraph aloud. Ask students to brainstorm and collaboratively combine the paragraphs into a unified composition. Which paragraph should come first, which last? Do any observations show up in all four paragraphs? In only one paragraph?
5. Place the three or four sections of the painting together or project the slide. Ask students to identify the ways the painter united the three or four sections of the work. How is this similar or dissimilar to the way the students connected their four paragraphs? How did the painter use the skills of observation, description, and narration?



## LESSON PLAN: LANGUAGE ARTS POETIC FORMS



Not marble nor the  
gilded monuments  
Of princes, shall outlive this  
powerful rhyme...

From William Shakespeare,  
Sonnet 55, 1609

### GRADE LEVEL

Elementary through High School

A number of Renaissance poetic forms lend themselves to exploring the imagery and meaning behind works of art. The following lesson plans suggest ways in which close looking can lead to a writing activity based on one of the poetic forms. In most cases, a simplified version for younger students is included, as well as an expanded, more comprehensive version for older students.

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will look at and discuss works of art from the Renaissance.
- Students will discuss a Renaissance literary form.
- Students will create an original written work based on one of the works of art.

### ACROSTIC

The word “acrostic” comes from the Greek *acros* (outermost) and *stichos* (line of poetry).

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 17 *Erasmus of Rotterdam* by Hans Holbein the Younger

SLIDE 21 *Portrait of a Young Man* by Bronzino

### BACKGROUND AND LITERARY SOURCES

The poetic form of the acrostic originated in ancient times and was used in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin literature. The English poets Geoffrey Chaucer (1342–1400) and Ben Jonson (1572–1637), and the Italian writer Giovanni Boccaccio (1312–1375) all wrote acrostics. In England especially, acrostics often were written on the name Eliza, referring to Queen Elizabeth I.

Following are a few quotes from Baldassare Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* on the behavior and appearance of elegant young men at court. These quotes may be read aloud or distributed to inspire questions and reactions for the class discussion.

A man should . . . always be a little more humble than his rank requires.

Another person replies, “For myself, I know none who have risen through modesty . . .”

“I am . . . always pleased when clothes tend to be sober and restrained rather than foppish; so it seems to me that the most agreeable color is black. . . I would add that [a young man] should decide for himself what appearance he wants to have and what sort of man he wants to seem . . .”

### MOTIVATION AND LITERARY SOURCES

FOR THE TEACHER: Select one portrait and read the slide entry. If you choose Erasmus, there is additional material in Lesson Plan: Erasmus of Rotterdam, p. 179.

Project SLIDE 2I, the Bronzino portrait of an unknown young man. (The young man is thought to have been a poet and perhaps a friend of the painter.) Give students five minutes to look and write down a one-word reaction to the person in the portrait. Ask students to share their one-word reactions. How many of these reactions are in response to the young man's attitude? Discuss attitude and how it is conveyed in the portrait through posture, facial expression, clothing, and other details.

Ask students what they think about the young man. Does he have many friends? Why or why not? Do we know what he likes to do? How would you describe his clothes? What about the colors? Why might Bronzino have placed the young man in such a narrow space? What do you think Bronzino's opinion of the young man might be? Why do you think so? A helpful clue is to have students compare the young man's face to the grotesques carved on the table and chair.

### WRITING ACTIVITY

Ask each student to write vertically on a piece of paper the word selected to define the young man. If they chose the word ALOOF, they would write it like this:

A  
L  
O  
O  
F

Explain the poetic form of the acrostic and read some examples. Writing a collaborative version on the board may help students visualize this form. The subject of the students' poems should be the young man, and each phrase or sentence of the poem should relate to him. For example, A is the first letter, so the first word and line of the poem must start with A; the second, L, and so on.

A quiet young man,  
L ooking at me, at my  
O rdinary clothes.  
O bviously he  
F inds me boring.

Older students may want to figure out an *abab* rhyme scheme, but younger students can just fill out the lines, using as many words as they like. When students have finished, ask them to read their poems to the class. Make sure the portrait is displayed so that students can compare their reactions to the visual image. Discuss how individual perceptions of the young man vary.

Two days after this lesson ask students to return to look at the portrait and see if their reactions or ideas have changed.



## EXTENSIONS

**VISUAL ARTS:** Students may wish to transfer their acrostics to special drawing paper, embellishing and enlarging the first letter of each line by adding color or decoration to make it stand out. This could be part of a calligraphy lesson. Students can type their acrostic into a word processing or paint program, then manipulate fonts, colors, and backgrounds to create an electronic version of their acrostic. Students may wish to import the portrait image from the CD-ROM into PhotoShop, then into HyperStudio, and create links to their electronic acrostics.

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** Additional acrostics, some from students around the country, are posted on the World Wide Web. Students may wish to read some of these acrostics, or perhaps submit their own acrostics on this site.

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** Students can use their one-word reaction to identify objects or features of the twentieth century that the person in the portrait might like to know about. For example, Erasmus might want *e-mail*, he would be surprised by a *radio*, an *airplane* ride, and *subways*. He wouldn't know that *Mazda* is a kind of car, he would find out about *uranium*, and he might be shocked by the *Spice Girls*.

## ECLOGUE AND PASTORAL

The word *eclogue* comes from an ancient Greek word meaning “select piece.” The word *pastoral* comes from *pastor*, the Latin word for “shepherd.”

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 25      *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

SLIDE 29      *View of Toledo* by El Greco

### BACKGROUND AND LITERARY SOURCES

An eclogue is a poem written in the style of a monologue or dialogue, and persuasive in character. Writers of eclogues set forth particular themes, explaining how they feel about the subject, why they feel the way they do, and why others should feel the same way. Usually the setting is pastoral, or rural.

Examples from classical antiquity may be used—Theocritus (Greek, ca. 310–250 B.C.) and Virgil (Roman, 70–19 B.C.). The English poet Edmund Spenser (1552/53–1599) wrote a calendar of twelve pastoral eclogues, one for each month of the year; when it was published, it was illustrated with the signs of the zodiac.

Pastoral poems depict an imaginary and ideal life in the country, sometimes filled with shepherds, shepherdesses, and nymphs. One of the most famous pastoral poems of the Renaissance is Christopher Marlowe's (1564–1593) *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*. Sir Walter Raleigh's (1554–1618) answer to this poem, *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*, takes the same form as Marlowe's poem, but mocks its romantic subject matter.

## MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Display one of the slides and ask students to describe what they see. Ask students to pretend to be one of the people in the painting, or a particular passerby—a townsman, a traveler, a visitor from another country, a wealthy patron or member of a court, or a peasant, a monk or nun, a child, etc. They may pretend to be an artist or Bruegel himself who was supposed to have dressed as a peasant in order to observe their festivities.

## WRITING ACTIVITY

**ELEMENTARY:** Ask students to write a description of the scene from a particular point of view; for example, their accounts can be written as if they were foreign travelers writing in a diary or journal. Refer to the Dürer journal entry in Source Material, p. 83, and to the Lesson Plan: Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131.

**JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL:** Introduce the literary forms of eclogue and pastoral, then ask students to write their own version of one of these poems based on their observations of one of the paintings. An eclogue can take the form of social commentary, a conversation between two people, or a satire. For example, one of the workers may boast about the year's harvest. A merchant or housewife might speculate about the price of grain. A churchman might praise the virtues of hard work in his parishioners. A wealthy man or woman who has servants might be amused or repelled by the hard physical life of the peasants. Read the following quote to illustrate how peasant life was viewed by two young courtiers.

From *The Book of the Courtier*:

Pallavicino: Many of our young gentlemen are to be found, on holidays, dancing all day in the open air with the peasants, and taking part with them in sports such as throwing the bar, wrestling, running and jumping. And I'm sure there is no harm in this, for the contest is not one of nobility but of strength and agility, regarding which ordinary villagers are often just as good as nobles; and I think this kind of familiar behaviour has a certain charming open-mindedness about it.

Federico: If anyone is anxious to wrestle, to run or to jump with peasants, then he ought, in my opinion, to do it casually, out of noblesse oblige, so to say, and certainly not in competition with them; and he should be almost certain of winning, or else not take part at all, for it is too sad and shocking, and quite undignified, when a gentleman is seen to be beaten by a peasant.

Copies of *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* by Christopher Marlowe and *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd* by Sir Walter Raleigh may be distributed to students as examples of persuasive writing and a rebuttal. Students may work in pairs to create opposing views in their eclogues.

## EXTENSIONS

**THEATER ARTS:** Paint a large mural or backdrop of one of the paintings, omitting the foreground figures. Actors representing these figures could perform dialogues, or they could read their eclogues or pastorals. Various other characters (Bruegel himself, the courtier, etc.) could pass the group and present their journal entries or poems, commenting on the scene.

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** Find the Netherlands on a globe or world map and look at a time line of major political events during the time of Bruegel. Discuss the significance of the harvest in general and especially during the Spanish embargo.

**MUSIC:** During the Renaissance, folk music was collected and arranged for the skilled amateur to perform. Listen to recordings of Michael Praetorius's *Terpsichore*, Thoinot Arbeau's *Orchesography*, or Tielman Susato's *Danseyre*, or music for the virginal or clavichord by William Byrd.

**WORLD LITERATURE:** In literature, the peasant was often a comic figure, especially in the work of François Rabelais, Miguel de Cervantes, and William Shakespeare. Students might wish to read these writers and identify similarities in the ways peasants were depicted. For example, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the peasant actors present an inadvertent parody, or a humorous version, of the tragic story of Pyramus and Thisbe.

**VISUAL ARTS/LITERATURE:** *The Harvesters* is part of a series of paintings by Pieter Bruegel depicting the seasons. Students may wish to research and identify the other paintings of this series, then create their own artworks of people in landscape settings engaging in seasonal activities. For literature extensions, younger students can read poems connected with the labors of the months. Older students can read Virgil's *Georgics*, which link the labors of the months with specific constellations and their rotations; this poem has been linked with the subject matter of *The Harvesters* as well as with El Greco's *View of Toledo*.

## EPITHALAMIUM

An *epithalamium* or *epithalamion* (plural: *epithalamia*), a Greek word meaning “upon the bridal chamber,” is a kind of poem originally performed at weddings in honor of the bride and groom.

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 4      *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by Fra Filippo Lippi
- SLIDE 6      *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus
- SLIDE 7      *The Story of Esther* by Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni

### BACKGROUND AND LITERARY SOURCE

Although marriage songs and poems exist in many cultures, the epithalamium as a literary form is identified with the Greek poet Sappho, who lived around 600 B.C. Catullus, a Roman poet, also wrote epithalamia, both in an elevated, ceremonial style and a private, lyrical style. The English poet Edward Spenser (1552–1599) wrote *Epithalamion*, a long poem that can be read as an example for students.

There is no fixed form for an epithalamium; it may have rhyme and meter, but not necessarily. In general, it is a long poem that describes a specific marriage. It details the events of the wedding day, including preparations, processions, and music; it may praise the bride and groom and tell about their individual virtues and the status of their families. It usually ends with good wishes and blessings for the couple.

## MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Project the three slides, one at a time, and ask students to describe what they see. After each slide has been discussed, ask students what these works of art have in common. Guide the observations to couples and marriage. (One interpretation of the two paintings of couples is that they were created to document and celebrate marriages. *The Story of Esther* not only depicts a wedding, but at one time it decorated a *cassone*, or chest, that was often a wedding gift in itself.)

What did marriage mean in the Renaissance? Despite all the poems and songs about love, important marriages between powerful families were largely business transactions, a merger of two dynasties. Dowries, gifts of money, commemorative gifts like musical instruments, *cassoni*, and jewelry, as well as elaborate and costly ceremonies celebrated such a wedding.

## WRITING ACTIVITY

**ELEMENTARY:** Project SLIDE 7, *The Story of Esther*, and ask for volunteers to pretend they are the people in the painting. Ask them to talk to each other, creating a dialogue that might be suggested by the narrative of the panel, the details of the painting, and the postures and facial expressions of the people. Other students may suggest dialogue to the “actors” based on their observations. After this exercise, either have students write short dialogues based on their observations, or project one of the other slides and ask students to create a written dialogue for it. What might the man and woman in the double portrait be saying to each other? What are the three people in *Saint Eligius* discussing? Rings and prices?

**JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL:** Introduce students to the literary form of the epithalamium, the wedding poem, using one of the examples listed in Background and Source.

Project the slides again and have students identify certain features of each that might be included in an epithalamium. Would they describe the rich clothes, the jewels, and the coats of arms in the *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*? Would they speculate on the personalities or identities of the couple? In *Saint Eligius*, how would they describe the bridal girdle and the ring, symbols of the couple’s relationship to each other? *The Story of Esther* provides a narrative of the arrival of the bride that can be elaborated on.

Have students write their own epithalamium based on one of the artworks. They should have access to the image for further study, and they may wish to work collaboratively in small groups. Specific features of the work of art should provide imagery for the epithalamium, but students can also use their imaginations.

## EXTENSIONS

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** To learn more about marriage and wedding customs in Renaissance Europe, read aloud or provide copies to students of the letter from Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi to her son in Source Material, p. 92.

**VISUAL ART:** Students may wish to create a *cassone* panel, a narrative composition, or a mural to accompany their epithalamium.

## SONNET

The word “sonnet” is from the Italian word *sonetto*, meaning “a little sound” or “a little song.” The Italian word derives from the Latin *sonus*, which means “a sound.”

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 15     *A Hunting Scene* by Piero di Cosimo  
SLIDE 18     *The Judgment of Paris* by Lucas Cranach the Elder  
SLIDE 20     *Broth Bowl and Cover* by Baldassare Manara  
SLIDE 26     *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*

### BACKGROUND AND LITERARY SOURCES

A sonnet is a structured poetic form in which a thought about a subject is developed thoroughly. There are many variations on the basic sixteen-line sonnet, and a number of Renaissance poets utilized this form. The Italian poet Petrarch is credited with the first sonnets, and Renaissance poets Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Philip Sidney, and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, translated his sonnets and used them as models for their own. William Shakespeare and Michelangelo wrote sonnets. Sonnets were created as entertainment, as presentation gifts, and to show off one’s ability to extemporize. In *The Book of the Courtier*, Aretino is represented as having done just that:

Aretino stayed silent for a little while, and then, when he was again asked to speak, he eventually recited a sonnet on the subject he had raised, describing what was the meaning of the letter ‘S’ (an ornament that the Duchess was wearing on her forehead), which many of those present thought he had made up on the spot but which others decided must have been composed beforehand since it was more ingenious and polished than seemed possible in the time.

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Choose one or more of the works above to display and to discuss with students, using the information in each entry to guide the discussion. What are the classical references in each of these works of art? Have students research the myths associated with these artworks independently or during class, then present their findings.

### WRITING ACTIVITY

**ELEMENTARY:** Ask students to write a poem based on their own version of a myth represented in one of the artworks, using imagery drawn from their own observation, research, and the class discussion.

**JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL:** Identify the metaphors in the myths represented in the artworks—Pegasus as the inspiration for poetry, fire as a cleansing or civilizing force, the attributes of the goddesses, or the Apple of Discord. Ask students to write sonnets based on a myth as represented in the works of art, using a metaphor to connect the myth with some event from their own experience. The final couplet should effectively provide a conclusion.

## LYRIC

The word “lyric” comes from *lyre*, an ancient Greek instrument used to provide musical accompaniment to sung or recited poems.

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 5        *Birth Tray: The Triumph of Fame* by Scheggia  
SLIDE 18      *The Judgment of Paris* by Lucas Cranach the Elder  
SLIDE 20      *Broth Bowl and Cover* by Baldassare Manara  
SLIDE 26      *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*

### BACKGROUND AND LITERARY SOURCES

In the Renaissance, poets looked to the ancient Greeks for inspiration. Although no examples of music survived from ancient times, they could read in classical literature that poems were recited to music and see depictions of this in ancient artworks.

Renaissance lyric poets substituted the lute or viol, popular stringed instruments, for the lyre of ancient Greece, and they created poems that could be read or sung to music. In Italy, this literary development led to the invention of the opera. Read the quote below from *The Book of the Courtier*:

But above all, singing poetry accompanied by the viola seems especially pleasurable, for the instrument gives the words a really marvellous charm and effectiveness.

Lorenzo de' Medici wrote lyric poems that were set to carnival and dance tunes. They were performed in Florence during the carnival, or pre-Lenten period, and also during the *Calendimaggio*, which began on May 1 and ended with the Feast of Saint John the Baptist on June 24. During the festivities, floats and wagons were decorated to represent particular trades or allegorical or mythological subjects. As the procession traveled through the streets masked musicians sang and enacted the songs. See Albrecht Dürer's journal entry in Source Material, p. 83.

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Discuss the word “lyric” and ask students for examples of lyrics from songs they listen to in recordings and on the radio. Many of these songs will be about love, but other themes such as fame, time, or beauty probably will be identified as well. Listen to some of these examples, if possible.

Introduce the history and concept of lyric poetry to the students, using the information in Background and Literary Sources.

**ELEMENTARY:** Choose one or more of the works of art above and project it for the class. Students should discuss what they see in the work of art and its possible meaning. Does each of these artworks have a central theme? Can it be identified? It might be love, fame, beauty, or time. What are some of the features of this theme? Ask students to make lists of words that reflect their observations of or responses to the work of art. Using these words, they should be able to compose a lyric poem about the work.

For example, lyric poems could

- tell a story (*Pyramus and Thisbe*, *Judgment of Paris*)
- describe feelings (how it feels to be famous, how it feels to be Juno or Minerva or Venus)
- describe the imagery of the clock

Students can work alone or in small groups to construct sentences and brainstorm rhyming words. These poems can be recited to the accompaniment of a guitar or other stringed instrument.

## EXTENSIONS

**MUSIC:** Students may compose a simple tune for their lyric poem, or they may choose a tune to play in the background as the poem is read. Invite a musician/songwriter to collaborate on this project, then have students perform their lyric poem for parents or at a school assembly.

**THEATER ARTS:** Following the example of Lorenzo, students can construct floats to represent the theme chosen for their lyric poem. For a school-wide Renaissance festival, each class may wish to design and construct a float and write a corresponding lyric poem. During a procession, the floats can parade by a center stage or area marked off for nobility, with each float stopping while the lyric poem is recited.

## MADRIGAL

The word “madrigal” comes from a Latin word meaning “something simple.”

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 4      *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by Fra Filippo Lippi  
SLIDE 5      *Birth Tray: The Triumph of Fame* by Scheggia  
SLIDE 18     *The Judgment of Paris* by Lucas Cranach the Elder  
SLIDE 20     *Broth Bowl and Cover* by Baldassare Manara  
SLIDE 25     *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder  
SLIDE 26     *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*

### BACKGROUND AND LITERARY SOURCES

Early madrigals followed a strict form. In northern Italy, they were composed of two or three tercets (three-line rhyming passages) followed by one or two rhyming couplets (two-line passages). All the lines were made up of seven or eight syllables. While this form became less rigid in the Renaissance, the madrigal kept the rhyming couplet at the end.

Madrigals are written to be sung, so the music must relate to the text. For example, when a question is asked in the text, the music might go up the scale in order to sound like a question. If the madrigal is sad, the music is slow, in a minor key, and the notes go down the scale. When references are made to birds singing or crickets chirping, the words and music imitate these sounds.

Madrigals may incorporate stories from legends like Robin Hood or from classical or biblical sources. A popular subject matter of the madrigal is love. Sometimes this theme is cleverly disguised with puns and plays on words.

Listen to madrigals by John Dowland, Thomas Weelkes, Thomas Morley in English, or Italian madrigalists like Claudio Monteverdi.

## MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Discuss familiar song lyrics from popular songs, Broadway musicals, or music that students are learning in choir or music classes. Have students read, sing, or play recorded examples and discuss how a song lyric must fit a particular tune or arrangement. How do words and music fit together to tell a story or convey an emotion?

Music, tunes, and lyrics were just as important in the Renaissance as they are today. Introduce the form of the Renaissance madrigal to students, playing recorded examples from Italian and English madrigalists. Read some of the texts and talk about how the tune and words fit together. When nonsense syllables or repeated words are sung, what could be their purpose? Can you really concentrate and hear two different lyrics at the same time?

Truly beautiful music consists, in my opinion, in fine singing, in reading accurately from the score and in an attractive personal style, and still more in singing to the accompaniment of the viola. I say this because the solo voice contains all the purity of music, and style and melody are studied and appreciated more carefully when our ears are not distracted by more than one voice, and every little fault, too, is more clearly apparent, something which does not happen when a group is singing, because then one singer covers up for the other.

From *The Book of the Courtier*

## WRITING ACTIVITY

**JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL:** Choose one or more of the artworks above. Have students write their own madrigal text using descriptive words derived from the discussion or study of the artwork. This can take one of the following forms:

- The joys or hardships of country life (Bruegel, *The Harvesters*).
- Love (from the perspective of one of the people in *Saint Eligius* or the *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*).
- A story from mythology (*Broth Bowl and Cover* with story of Pyramus and Thisbe, *The Judgment of Paris*).
- A theme, such as Time (*Celestial Globe with Clockwork*) or Fame (*The Triumph of Fame*), related to their own experiences.

While madrigal texts stand on their own as poetry, students might wish to set them to music, using a popular tune or round or a piece of their own composition. In the case of part-singing, nonsense words or syllables can be added to the text so that the parts can alternate words and sounds. A mechanical noise (“tick tock, tick tock”) for the *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*, shouts of “hurray” for *The Triumph of Fame* can provide accompaniment for the main lyric without interfering with its being heard and understood.

## EXTENSIONS

**MUSIC:** This activity may involve the whole class working together to write a single madrigal. In addition, this is a good project for collaborating with the music teacher, or bringing in a guest musician/songwriter to help students with the finer points of writing lyrics. Older students may adapt it as an independent study project in which they individually research a work of art to write their own madrigal.



## RESOURCES

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- Lass, Abraham H., David Kiremidjian, and Ruth M. Goldstein. *The Facts On File Dictionary of Classical, Biblical and Literary Allusions*. New York and Oxford: Facts on File Publications, 1987.
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## LESSON PLAN: LANGUAGE ARTS ALLEGORY—WRITE OR DRAW AN ALLEGORY



The word allegory comes from the Greek words *allos* (other) and *agoreuein* (to speak).

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVE

- Students will look at and decipher a visual allegory of fame.
- Students will discuss the concept of fame in the Renaissance and fame today.
- Students will write or draw a personal allegory relating to fame.

### WORK OF ART

SLIDE 5      Birth Tray, *The Triumph of Fame* by Scheggia

### DISCUSSION

Project the slide of the birth tray without identifying its subject. Ask the students to look at the image closely and describe what they see. Who are all the figures on horseback, and what are they doing? Ask students what they know about knights and knighthood. Can they name any famous knights? How do we remember these knights? Is it by their family name, their virtues, their deeds, their physical appearance? Why are the knights saluting the central figure?

Who is the focal point of the composition? Have students describe the figure's appearance and posture. What is she holding? The excerpted quote from *The Book of the Courtier* (below) may help to explain the presence of the cupid and the sword, the relationship between love and war. It also may explain why Fame is depicted as a woman.

Certainly, once the flame of love is burning in a man's heart, cowardice can never possess it. For a lover always wishes to make himself as lovable as possible, and he always fears lest some disgrace befall him which can make him less esteemed by the woman whose esteem he craves; neither does he flinch from risking his life a thousand times a day in order to deserve her love.

[In the army of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain] there were many noble knights who were in love, and who, before they came in sight of the enemy, would always go along conversing with their ladies; and then each one would take his leave and, before his lady's eyes, go to challenge the enemy with the proud courage that sprang from love and the ambition to let the women see that they were served by men of valour.

From the *Book of the Courtier*, on love and war.

Using the materials in the slide entry, discuss the significance of birth trays. To whom were birth trays given? Were they simply a gift on the birth of a baby, or did their imagery and subject matter convey a message? Explain the word **triumph** to the students, its double reference to victory and to ancient Roman processional floats. Why is there a coat of arms on the back?

## FURTHER DISCUSSION OF FAME

Ask students to name some famous people of today, including celebrities, politicians, sports figures, and rock stars. Why are these people famous, and how have they become famous? How do they ensure that their fame will survive? Do they give money to charities, donate their time, make commercials, let their name be associated with products or causes, or do they do other things that they know will put them in the spotlight? Most people want to be recognized in some way for their knowledge, service, or talents. Do we all pursue fame to a certain degree? Do we try to excel at sports, make good grades, or win scholarships or awards?

Ask students to think of some of the differences between the way fame was pursued and valued in the Renaissance and the way it is today. Does it carry a responsibility with it, or is it entirely personal? Some fame is long-lasting and far-reaching, and some fame is fleeting. Ask students to think of people who they think will be famous ten years from now, and who will not.

Following are some thoughts that will help further the discussion of fame. An ideal Renaissance man, according to Alberti,

. . . was assiduous in the science and skill of dealing with arms and horses and musical instruments, as well as in the pursuit of letters and the fine arts, he was devoted to the knowledge of the most strange and difficult things. And finally he embraced with zeal and forethought everything which pertained to fame. . .

The Duke Federico da Montefeltro's *studiolo* at Gubbio, represented in SLIDE 9, contains a number of references to fame. The intarsia panel showing a garter hanging in a cupboard draws our attention to the skillful use of *perspective*. It is the symbol of the English Order of the Garter to which Federico da Montefeltro had been named, and it represents the extent to which his name and prestige had traveled. Another intarsia panel depicts a lectern on which a volume of Virgil's *Aeneid* is opened to the passage:

Lifetimes are brief and not to be regained,  
For all mankind. But by their deeds to make  
Their fame last: that is labor for the brave.

Above the lectern is a mirror whose frame is decorated with one of Federico's symbols, tongues of fire, alternating with the initials of his son Guidobaldo and the title *dux*. This detail, along with the quote from Virgil, may refer to the fact that Federico died assisting the duke of Ferrara in battle before the *studiolo* was completed.

Erasmus (SLIDE 17), a northerner, takes a completely different view of fame. In *The Praise of Folly*, he satirizes those who wish to pursue fame:

Men who really are among the most foolish have thought that by nights without sleep, and by their sweat, they could purchase fame—I know not what sort of fame, but certainly nothing could be more empty. Yet at any rate you owe these choice blessings of life to Folly, and—what is the cream of the jest—you reap the fruits of a madness you need not share.

## WRITING AN ALLEGORY

In the birth tray, Fame is a woman in classical drapery. One way of explaining abstract concepts is to give them concrete form, for example, a human body with human characteristics and attributes. When ideas like Fame, Love, or Death are explained or elucidated in this way, it is called allegory. Allegories can be visual, as in paintings or works of art, or they can be written descriptions, in poetry, prose, or drama.

Students may wish to brainstorm a list of abstract concepts or write them on the board. The list may include religious principles, virtues and vices, ideals, values, or emotions; for example, Faith, Hope, Charity, Jealousy, Gluttony, Fame, Truth, Rage, Happiness, Patriotism, Revenge, or Folly.

What would be some of the attributes of a character based on one of these concepts? Think about facial or physical characteristics (smooth brow, piercing eyes), colors that might be associated with that character (for example, red for anger or passion), and appropriate speech and actions. Who might be a companion to this character? (Would Rage accompany Jealousy?) What personal property might the character own? (Patriotism may carry a flag.) Place-names represent obstacles, stages, or goals—*The Well of Life* or the *Slough of Despond*. Renaissance allegories drew their inspiration from a variety of sources: folk tales, mythology, biblical stories, paintings, pageants, classical writers, or even books of emblems. Keeping these guidelines in mind, students can write their own allegories. They may wish to portray themselves as a typical human or soul (Everyman) traveling through an invented country, searching for Fame, and meeting other allegorical figures who either help or hinder them.

## PAINTING AN ALLEGORY

Students may wish to draw or paint their allegory, giving their characters the facial characteristics, clothing, and attributes of a particular concept. Again, they may wish to include themselves pursuing Fame, whose visual appearance can vary according to their personal goals and aspirations. Books of symbols may help students choose appropriate iconography for their characters.

## EXTENSIONS

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** Students may wish to read more of the life of Lorenzo de' Medici after hearing about its auspicious start. *A Portrait of Lorenzo de' Medici* by Francesco Guicciardini in *Storie fiorentine* looks back on the life of Lorenzo after his death. Students can judge for themselves how accurately the birth tray was as a prediction of Fame.

**LANGUAGE ARTS/MUSIC/DRAMA:** As an alternative exercise, students may wish to write a lyric poem about fame, researching and reading some of Lorenzo's poetry that he wrote for carnival songs.

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** *The Faerie Queen* by Edmund Spenser (1552–1559), a poet of the English Renaissance, is both an allegory and a book of courtesy, like Castiglione's *The Courtier*. While comparing England to a fairyland inhabited by knights personifying various virtues, he also sets out a pattern of behavior for gentlemen. Students studying English literature may wish to explore this allegory in more detail.

VISUAL ARTS: Explore the allegorical prints by Pieter Bruegel on the virtues and vices or Albrecht Dürer's *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* in the collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Why might allegorical subjects be popular for mass-produced prints?

CONNECTION: Lesson Plan: Portrait, p. 177

## RESOURCES

Abrams, M. H., general editor, et al. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, 4th ed., Volume 1. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1979. (Books 1–3 of *The Faerie Queen* with notes on the author and the work itself.)

Castiglione, Baldassare, translated by George Bull. *The Book of the Courtier*. London and New York: Penguin Books, 1967. (Commentaries on love, warfare, and fame.)

Erasmus, Desiderius, trans. by Hoyt Hopewell. *The Praise of Folly*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974.

Klein, H. Arthur. *Graphic Worlds of Pieter Bruegel the Elder*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1963. (Allegorical prints of Pieter Bruegel; the vices and virtues.)

Padgett, Ron. *The Teachers and Writers Handbook of Poetic Forms*. New York: Teachers and Writers Collaborative, 1987.

Ross, James Bruce, and Mary Martin McLaughlin, eds. *The Portable Renaissance Reader*. New York: Penguin Books, 1981. (“A Portrait of Lorenzo de’ Medici,” p. 267; Alberti, “Self-Portrait of a Universal Man,” p. 480.)

# PORTRAIT CHECKLIST

The realistic portrait sculpture of the ancient Romans influenced the painted and sculptured portraits of the Renaissance. The exact function of the early Renaissance portrait is not known, though often the sitter's likeness was painted after he or she had died, sometimes from a death mask. Later, portraits were commissioned as gifts, or to commemorate a special event, like a marriage or birth. Sometimes they were exchanged when a marriage was being arranged, and couples could not meet before their wedding.



*Portrait of a Man*  
Marble, Roman, 1st c. A.D.  
Fletcher Fund, 1926  
(26.60.3)



SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*, Fra Filippo Lippi

The northern European painters rendered their portraits with great precision and detail. They portrayed the mood and psyche of the sitter (SLIDE 17). By contrast, the early Italian portraits represented ideal beauty and wealth (SLIDE 4). The features are recognizable and the family's status clearly was shown, but the sitter's mood or feeling remains unrecorded.

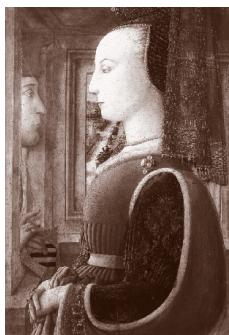


SLIDE 17 *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, Hans Holbein the Younger



SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*, Fra Filippo Lippi

The development of the portrait is like a dialogue between the sitter and the viewer. When the portrait is conceived in profile there is no direct interaction between the viewer and sitter; the three-quarter view allows some contact; and the full-face view meets the viewer directly.



SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*, Fra Filippo Lippi



SLIDE 17 *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, Hans Holbein the Younger



SLIDE 21 *Portrait of a Young Man*, Bronzino



SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius*, Petrus Christus



## LESSON PLAN: PORTRAIT THE RENAISSANCE PORTRAIT



Who could ever without the greatest study express faces in which mouth, chin, eyes, cheeks, forehead and eyebrow all were in harmony with laughter or weeping?

From Leon Battista Alberti,  
*On Painting*

### GRADE LEVEL

Upper Elementary through High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will look at and study Renaissance Portraits. They will be asked to think about the relationship of the artist to the patron.
- Students will be asked to write about one Renaissance portrait. Students will make a clay portrait or self-portrait.
- Students will construct a Renaissance headdress for the portrait.

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 4      *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* by Fra Filippo Lippi  
SLIDE 6      *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus  
SLIDE 17     *Erasmus of Rotterdam* by Hans Holbein the Younger  
SLIDE 21     *Portrait of a Young Man* by Bronzino

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

FOR THE TEACHER: Look at the images and read the slide entries before you plan your lesson.

Project SLIDE 21, *Portrait of a Young Man* by Bronzino. Why did people have portraits painted in the Renaissance? What does the portrait tell us about life in the Renaissance? Discuss the young man's attitude. What does his pose tell us? What does the environment in which he stands tell us? Ask students to look in art books that have Renaissance portraits. Have them take note of the poses and environments or backgrounds.

Ask students to compare and contrast the different poses: profile portrait; three-quarter portrait, and full-face portrait.

The following WRITING ACTIVITIES will further the discussion.

### ACTIVITY I: AN EXPLORATION OF A RENAISSANCE PORTRAIT

Project SLIDE 6 or 4. Ask students to write a diary entry or a letter that begins, "When I looked into the shop or the window of a house." Ask the students to concentrate on people's faces and write what they imagine the people are thinking. Perhaps they can write a dialogue between the people in the scene and describe the setting. (Refer to Lesson Plan: The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153.)

## ACTIVITY II: BRING THE ASSIGNMENT UP TO THE PRESENT

Ask students to interview each other and write a brief biography. Then ask them to write an unauthorized biography (not of a student but perhaps a celebrity; set limits for propriety). Ask the students to discuss the difference between the two biographies and make connections to authorized versus unauthorized biographies. Project the slides. Continue this discussion in the context of the relationship between artist and patron in the Renaissance.

## ACTIVITY III: MAKE A RENAISSANCE PORTRAIT IN CLAY

### WORKS OF ART

Choose from the above list

### MATERIALS

- clay or gray Celluclay™
- pencil and paper
- tissue paper of all colors
- scissors, stapler, paint, brushes
- wire or pipe cleaners
- art books

### MOTIVATION

Distribute clay. Warm-up exercises—have students work in pairs facing each other. Ask one student in each pair to make a face that expresses a mood or emotion. The other student must guess the emotion. Ask both students to notice and describe how the eyes, nose, and mouth are used in each expression. Do it again so that each student has a chance to make a face.

Ask students to make quick clay sketches of each other's faces, or to look in a mirror and make a self-portrait. When the students have finished the heads do not let them dry until the students have made their headdresses.

Project SLIDES 6, 8, 21, and 25, and ask students to look at the headdresses. They also may look in art books for examples. Ask them to choose one, make a sketch of it, and then make the form out of wire or pipe cleaners. Then they can cover it with tissue paper. They must make it so it can fit on their clay head. Ask students to describe how the face changes with the headdress or hat.

### CONNECTIONS

- SOCIAL STUDIES/LANGUAGE ARTS: Lesson Plan: Erasmus of Rotterdam, p. 179.

## LESSON PLAN: PORTRAIT ERASMUS OF ROTTERDAM— COMPARE TWO PORTRAITS



If it is not my destiny to find favor with everyone, I am consoled for the present by the reflection that almost universally I am well regarded by those who themselves are best regarded; and I hope that at some not distant time that which now pleases the best of men will come to please the majority of men.

Desiderius Erasmus

### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will use visual and written primary source materials to explore a portrait of Erasmus.
- Students will read and discuss examples of satirical writing, especially *The Praise of Folly* by Erasmus.
- Students will choose from a variety of independent-study projects related to their exploration of this portrait.

### WORK OF ART

SLIDE I7 *Erasmus of Rotterdam* by Hans Holbein the Younger

### DISCUSSION

Distribute photocopies of the quote on page 184 to students, and ask them to read it. Briefly discuss *The Praise of Folly*, Erasmus's satire on the condition of humanity, in which he reveals foolishness at all levels and occupations through the allegorical voice of a young woman, Dame Folly.

To Erasmus, foolishness was a state of the human condition. No one could escape being a fool of one kind or another, even the scholar. In the following quote, Dame Folly describes such a man. She has just argued that “half-wits,” or natural fools, are the happiest of all people because they are free “from tortures of conscience and from fear of death.” Comparing their brand of foolishness with that of the scholar, she makes the following statement:

Fancy some pattern of wisdom . . . a man who wore out his whole boyhood and youth in pursuing the learned disciplines. He wasted the best time of life in unintermitted watchings, cares, and studies; and through the remaining part of it he never tasted so much as a tittle of pleasure; always frugal, impecunious, sad, austere; unfair and strict toward himself, morose and unamiable to others; afflicted by pallor, leanness, invalidism, sore eyes, and premature old age and white hair; dying before his appointed day.

Some scholars believe that this is Erasmus's written self-portrait. Project the slide of *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, a portrait painted by his friend Hans Holbein, who also drew the illustrations for *The Praise of Folly*.

Ask a student to read the first sentence of the quote. Take a minute to explain unfamiliar words and their usage, then have the class look carefully at the projected portrait. How old does Erasmus seem to be in this painting? Is there evidence that he might be a scholar? What kinds of evidence? Does his clothing or demeanor suggest such a profession?

Ask another student to continue reading the quote up to the first semicolon. Again refer to the painting for evidence for or against this description. Have each student read a phrase of the description, discuss what it means, then ask how it relates to the painting. Look closely at Erasmus's face, his eyes, nose, and especially his mouth. What about his clothing and his hat? What may be suggested by the position of his hands? How has the artist portrayed his friend's personality?

Discuss Erasmus's evaluation of scholars. Does he seem to be bitter? regretful? resigned? Is he poking fun at himself or just admitting that a scholarly life has its drawbacks? Is he expressing the opinions and observations of others? If he is, he does not refute them. (Perhaps that would be taking them too seriously.) What words or phrases do the students find most meaningful? Why?

Despite the fact that Erasmus could be describing himself in this passage, we know that he had friends who enjoyed his company. A favorite word of his was *festivus*, a Latin word meaning "festive or companionable." He dedicated *The Praise of Folly* to his friend Thomas More (see Source Material, p. 80), and in the preface tells More that "The judicious reader will easily perceive that my end is pleasure rather than censure. . . . Still, if there is anyone whom the work cannot please, he should at least remember this, that it is a fine thing to be slandered by Folly."

Look again at the slide of Erasmus and identify ways in which this interpretation of Erasmus is shown. Does the face seem to be more sympathetic and less austere? Is the smile less grim, more ironic? Does it imply a recognition of and acceptance of human folly? How well has Holbein portrayed his friend's personality?

*The Praise of Folly* is a satire. Have students discuss the apparent paradox of the title. Discuss this form of humorous writing with the students, finding examples from newspaper columns, political cartoons, and everyday speech. Explain that satire is written for people who can understand the references—a prepared audience. A satirist may attack an existing state of affairs, a person, or an institution by poking fun or criticizing, but the writer is under no obligation to offer a solution or remedy.

Erasmus satirizes young and old, friends, lovers, writers, scientists, kings, clergy, and popes (although he does not name names). What is the purpose of satire? In the introduction to his translation of *The Praise of Folly*, Hoyt Hopewell Hudson writes, "The great satirist lifts the reader to his own plane of clear vision, and wins confidence by reposing in the reader confidence that this vision will be shared." Hudson states that Erasmus's vision is less a criticism of faults than a plea for tolerance and understanding.

Define "humanist" (see Introduction, p. 10) and discuss Erasmus's place in the intellectual currents of the time. He read and translated Greek, Roman, and early Christian authors. His own writings show the influence of the classics; for example, the Syrian writer Lucian inspired his interest in satire as a literary device for *The Praise of Folly*. In addition, Erasmus compiled a book, *Adages*,

from folk proverbs whose development he traced from classical sources. His books were enormously popular with the urbane and sophisticated middle class, who appreciated the humor and intelligence behind his criticisms. Finally, Erasmus believed in the “dignity of man.” His ideals of tolerance and humanitarianism led to his being called “the most civilized man of his age.”

## EXTENSIONS

### LANGUAGE ARTS

- Students may wish to read from *The Praise of Folly*, then write a satirical essay of their own.
- Students may choose to construct a time line around Erasmus and his influence based on satirical styles of writing or the treatment of fools and folly. They may research writers who influenced Erasmus, including Lucian, a second-century Syrian writer, and Sebastian Brant, a contemporary of Erasmus. Or they may compare satire as it appears in *The Praise of Folly* with examples from later writers, such as William Shakespeare, Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, or Dorothy Parker.
- Students may wish to identify and collect examples of contemporary satirical writings from newspapers, magazines, and other sources.

### VISUAL ARTS

- Netherlandish prints based on folly, fools, and *Elck*, or Everyman, were popular during the sixteenth century. Students may wish to research the engravings of Bosch, Bruegel, and other printmakers and identify ways in which the theme of folly is communicated—through crude or foolish actions, clothing, like fools’ caps or donkey ears, or through symbolic references in the prints themselves. Illustrations from *The Ship of Fools* by Sebastian Brant may be used as examples.
- Students can research the role of fools in history and literature, including contemporary references (the movie *Ship of Fools*, or popular songs like “Everybody Plays the Fool”). They may wish to make an imaginary portrait of a fool.

### MUSIC

- Students may wish to find and perform some of the music of the time that relates to fools or folly and discover where and why it was performed. Collections by Michael Praetorius (*Terpsichore*) or Tielman Susato (*Dansyere*) contain *Narrentanzen* (fools’ dances) or tunes connected with Shrove Tuesday, or *Fastnacht*, a day of feasting and jollity also known as Mardi Gras.

### SOCIAL STUDIES

- Thomas More of England was a friend of both Erasmus and Holbein. Students can research More’s life and writings, including *Utopia*, his own social satire.

- Humanists of the sixteenth century were interested in proverbs. Erasmus collected and researched them, compiling a book. Pieter Bruegel painted a collection of proverbs (*The Blue Cloak* or *Netherlandish Proverbs*). Proverbs were incorporated into other artworks, such as plates, platters, and mugs. Students might make a visual or written catalogue of modern proverbs, or trace or incorporate a single proverb into a work of art.
- Students may wish to explore what Erasmus has to say about Fame (see below for one example) and contrast it with the concept as presented in the birth tray of Lorenzo de' Medici (Lesson Plan: Allegory, page 171).
- Cultures other than that of Christian Europe also acknowledge folly through rituals or traditions. Students may enjoy finding contemporary or historical examples from other parts of the world.
- Students may wish to read *The Praise of Folly* or study humanism from a feminist perspective. Is Erasmus including women in his satire? Why or why not?

#### RESOURCES

Erasmus, Desiderius, trans. by Hoyt Hopewell Hudson. *The Praise of Folly*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974.

Mee, Charles L., Jr. *Erasmus: The Eye of the Hurricane*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1974. (Young Adult)

REPRODUCE FOR CLASSROOM USE:

What *The Book of the Courtier* has to say about foolishness:

Therefore I hold this for certain: that in each one of us there is some seed of folly which, once it is stirred, can grow indefinitely.

What “Dame Folly” has to say about fame in *The Praise of Folly*:

Men who really are among the most foolish have thought that by nights without sleep, and by their sweat, they could purchase fame—I know not what sort of fame, but certainly nothing could be more empty. Yet at any rate you owe these choice blessings of life to Folly, and—what is the cream of the jest—you reap the fruits of a madness you need not share.

From *The Praise of Folly* by Desiderius Erasmus. The speaker is Dame Folly, and she is telling us that no one is immune from her influence, even those who consider themselves to be wise.

Fancy some pattern of wisdom . . . a man who wore out his whole boyhood and youth in pursuing the learned disciplines. He wasted the best time of life in unintermitted watchings, cares, and studies; and through the remaining part of it he never tasted so much as a tittle of pleasure; always frugal, impecunious, sad, austere; unfair and strict toward himself, morose and unamiable to others; afflicted by pallor, leanness, invalidism, sore eyes, and premature old age and white hair; dying before his appointed day.



## LESSON PLAN: TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS

### TEMPERA



A painting, then, is a plane covered with patches of color on the surface of wood, wall or canvas . . .

From Giorgio Vasari,  
*Lives of the Artists*, 1550

#### GRADE LEVEL

Junior High and High School

#### OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about tempera and oil paints.
- Students will do a simple science experiment to distinguish one of the differences between the two types of paint.
- Students will discuss light and shade.
- Students will mix and use tempera paints to paint a simple three-dimensional form.

#### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 2      *The Crucifixion, The Last Judgment* by Jan van Eyck

SLIDE 8      *The Birth of the Virgin* by Fra Carnevale

#### VOCABULARY

SIZE: A weak solution of glue used to render canvas or wood panels less absorbent

GROUND: A painting surface prepared with gesso or a layer of paint of even tone

MEDIUM: The liquid in which painting pigment is suspended

FIXATIVE: A colorless solution sprayed onto designs made in impermanent materials (chalk, pastel, or charcoal) to fix them in space and prevent smudging

TINT: A color made by adding white to another color

SHADE: A color made by adding black to another color

PREPARING THE PANEL (illustration board, mat board, or wood):

CHALK AND GESSO

Whiting, gypsum, or chalk	one part
Zinc white, dry pigment	one part
Hide glue solution (1 part glue to 10 parts water)	one part

1. Prepare size by pouring 1 tablespoon of rabbitskin-glue crystals in one cup of water; soak overnight. When ready to mix gesso, heat the glue solution in a double boiler, being careful not to boil the mixture. Stir until all crystals are dissolved. Allow size to remain in heated water.
2. Mix zinc white with whiting, adding just enough water to make a thick, smooth paste. Cover and let stand for several hours.
3. Slowly add one part glue size to zinc white and whiting mixture, stirring constantly until mixture is smooth. Keep the mixture in hot water to prevent it from congealing. Apply to panel.

MIX EGG TEMPERA IN ADVANCE, USING THE FOLLOWING RECIPE:

EGG TEMPERA

1 egg yolk  
1 tablespoon water  
1 drop of vinegar  
pigment

1. Grind pigment with water to make a thick paste.
2. Mix egg yolk, water, and vinegar together.
3. Mix egg mixture and pigment to achieve a variety of shades and tints (depending on age and level of students).
4. Test to see if the paint is properly tempered by applying a few test strokes to a sheet of paper. The paint should dry with a slightly glossy surface. If it does not, add more egg to the mix and repeat.

NOTE: Appropriate precautions should be taken when working with raw eggs: use fresh eggs whose shells are not cracked, and wash tempera paint from hands before handling food.

OIL GLAZE

Mix linseed oil with a little burnt umber or raw umber oil paint. Apply carefully over selected areas of the tempera painting, using your finger or a rag to blend it darker in the dark areas and to remove it from the lighter areas.

## MATERIALS

### FOR TEACHER DEMONSTRATION:

- salad oil, water, eyedroppers, paper
- two prepared boards with simple geometric shapes underdrawn
- pre-mixed tempera paints
- oil paints

### FOR STUDENTS:

- squeeze bottles for storing and dispensing tempera
- palettes for holding tints and shades
- charcoal, chalk, or pen and ink for underdrawing brushes
- small pieces of cardboard, wood, or illustration board
- geometric forms (cones, spheres, eggs, boxes)
- other materials are discussed in detail on facing page

## DISCUSSION AND MOTIVATION

**FOR THE TEACHER:** Begin this project by explaining to students that they will do a short science experiment. Have students take out a clean sheet of notebook paper and place it on their desks. Ask for two volunteers to circulate among the students, placing a drop of water and a drop of oil on each sheet of paper. Have students set these aside while they view the slides.

Project the two slides and ask students to describe the colors and the appearance of the paint in each one of the paintings. Have them look for forms that have volume and for places where the artist painted areas of light and shade. Referring to the information in the slide entries, ask students if they believe that the two artists were using the same kind of paint. Why or why not?

Using premixed shades and tints of egg tempera, demonstrate how to apply it to a surface to create the illusion of light and shade. On a prepared panel with an underdrawing in charcoal of a three-dimensional form, apply one shade of tempera paint to an area of the form, then paint a lighter or darker shade in an area next to it, pointing out the line created where the two different shades meet. Use hatching lines to blend one shade into the other.

Repeat the demonstration using oil paints. Demonstrate how the paint can be mixed on the surface of the panel to create the illusion of light and shade.

Ask students to check the drop of water and the drop of oil placed on their desk earlier. Has the water evaporated? What has happened to the oil? Is it still there? How can you tell? If this experiment were repeated, dropping the water and oil onto glass, how long would it take the oil to harden from its liquid state?

Ask students to think back on the two painting demonstrations. How does the use of water or oil with pigment affect the way the artist painted and how the finished product looked?

Look at the two slides again. Do students have any other observations or comments?

### ACTIVITY

Explain that students will have a chance to experiment with egg tempera, but first they must prepare their panels and make an underdrawing.

Follow the gesso recipe in this lesson plan, and apply gesso to small cardboard panels. For younger students, the teacher may wish to prepare these in advance.

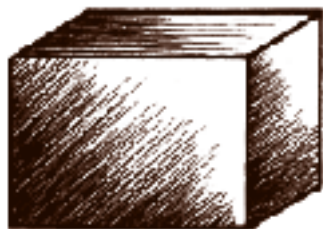
Have students set up one or two solid geometric forms in the middle of a table or desk. If desired, these forms can be lit with a lamp to provide more contrast of light and shadow. Point out how the form is divided into areas of lighter and darker shades. Have students use colored chalk, charcoal, or pen and ink to create a value drawing of a shaded three-dimensional form. Students may use their fingers or a rag to gently blend the values if they are using chalk or charcoal, but with pen and ink, they must use hatching and cross-hatching to create areas of different values.

Use a spray bottle containing skim milk to gently mist each drawing. The milk will act as a fixative and prevent the underdrawing from smearing or bleeding. Set aside until dry.

Depending on the age of the students, a more or less limited range of shades of tempera can be provided. Place each shade in a squeeze bottle where it can be dispensed easily.

Demonstrate how to apply tempera to the shaded underdrawing, lighter shades to the light areas of the forms, darker shades to the darker areas of the underdrawing. Students should first apply

Hatching a light  
color into a dark area



Hatching a dark color  
into a light area

the tempera to these discrete areas, then use hatching to blend the adjacent colors together. Depending on the age group and time limit, students may wish to use oil glazes (see recipe) to further heighten the effect of light and shade on their forms.

## EXTENSIONS

**VISUAL ART:** Older students may do a follow-up painting using tempera to create a landscape, still life, or figure study. They may wish to paint the same subject in oil paints, then compare the results.

**SOCIAL STUDIES/VISUAL ART:** Research the development of oil paints. Giorgio Vasari wrote in 1568 that

[a] most beautiful invention and a great convenience to the art of Painting, was the discovery of colouring in oil. The first inventor of it was John of Bruges [Jan Van Eyck] in Flanders, who sent a panel to Naples to King Alfonso, and to the Duke of Urbino, Federico II, the paintings for his bathroom.

Although Jan Van Eyck (SLIDE 2) is often credited with the invention of oil paints, they were actually developed centuries earlier but used only for outdoor paintings. Van Eyck's oil paintings were meant to be displayed indoors, and he also demonstrated how the luminosity and rich colors of oil paints could be exploited to create dazzling effects.

**SCIENCE/SOCIAL STUDIES:** Research some of the pigments used in paints. These range from the exotic ("mummy brown," made by grinding up the embalmed corpses of ancient Egyptian mummies), the precious ("ultramarine blue," made from grinding lapis lazuli to a powder), the mundane ("burnt sienna," made by roasting raw earth from near Siena in Italy), to the dangerous ("emerald green," made from arsenic and copper). As a class project, have students make their own pigments from safe materials.

## RESOURCES

Craig, Diana, ed. *A Miscellany of Artists' Wisdom*. Philadelphia: Running Press, 1993.

Massey, Bernard Stanford, and Robert Massey. *Formulas for Painters*. New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1988.

Stephenson, Jonathan. *The Materials and Techniques of Painting*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1989.

Thompson, Daniel V., Jr. *The Practice of Tempera Painting*. New York: Dover Publications, 1936, 1962.

## WEBSITE RESOURCES

The Egg Tempera home page, including a source for supplies and a newsgroup for exchanging information: <http://www.eggtempera.com>

Art Studio Chalkboard, Egg Tempera Painting:  
<http://www.herron.iupui.edu/faculty/larman/chalkboard/p-eggtemp.html>



## LESSON PLAN: TECHNIQUES AND MATERIALS PRINTMAKING



I also consecrate Marcantonio Raimondi, who follows in the footsteps of the masters of antiquity, and who is so skillful both in drawing and with the burin as is clear in the beautiful engraved plates he has made of me, as I'm writing, a portrait on copper, and I am now in doubt, which one is more alive.

From Giovanni Filoteo Achillini, poet, late 15th century

### GRADE LEVEL

Elementary, Junior High, and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will study and discuss two Renaissance prints.
- Students may explore a variety of options in deciding on an image to prepare for printing.
- Students will make their own print.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE I3 *Adam and Eve* by Albrecht Dürer

PAGE 93 *Battle of the Naked Men* by Antonio Pollaiuolo

### MATERIALS

- foam board for younger students; foam board or linoleum blocks for older students
- spoons
- paper cut the same size as the foam board or linoleum blocks
- printing ink
- brayers
- smooth surfaces to roll ink out (magazines, Formica™ or linoleum sheets)

### VOCABULARY

**PLATE:** The block of wood or metal (or foam board) whose surface is cut away to form the picture or design to be printed.

**BURNISHING TOOL:** A hard, smooth tool used to press down metal burrs and rough edges left by the burin.

**BAREN:** A flat, smooth tool used to press the ink from the plate onto a sheet of paper.

**BURIN:** A sharp, pointed engraving tool used to scrape lines into a metal plate.

**PROOF:** A print made at some point during the engraving process, allowing the artist to check the work.

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Discuss with students how the printing process makes it possible to reproduce many copies of a picture or text, using books and newspapers as examples. Students are probably familiar with rubber stamps, so these can be demonstrated to show how ink is applied to a surface, then pressed to paper to make an image. Just as the rubber stamp can make an image for every student in the classroom, prints could be made for many people. They were relatively inexpensive, so they made art accessible to a wider audience. In addition, they provided a means of disseminating information.

Distribute copies of the two prints listed above and ask students to look closely at the images. What makes these prints like drawings? How are they different? The human body was a popular subject for prints; how does this fit in with what students have learned about Renaissance interest in anatomy?

Both *Adam and Eve* and *The Battle of the Naked Men* are **engravings**, which means that the image was scratched into a metal plate with a pointed tool called a **burin**. Several times during the engraving process, the artist applied ink to the engraved surface, then wiped the excess away. A sheet of paper was laid over the metal surface, and the ink was forced out of the scratched areas by pressing (as in a press) or by rubbing with an instrument called a **baren**. The artist would inspect this image, called a **proof**, then continue to engrave the metal until he or she was satisfied with the results. When metal is cut away in this fashion, mistakes are very hard to correct, so the artist worked from a preliminary drawing. The lines were engraved carefully and deliberately, and rough edges, or burrs, were smoothed down with a burnishing tool.

One feature of prints is that the final image is the mirror opposite of the block used to print it. For this reason, words and letters must be engraved backward on the plate. When the image is printed, they appear so that we can read them. Ask students to look for the artists' signatures in the two engravings.

Have students look for dark and light areas on the two prints. Light areas would indicate a smooth plate, where the ink was wiped away. Where many lines are inscribed close together or cross-hatched, the ink would collect and transfer areas of shading and pattern. Different values are created by varying the density of lines.

#### ACTIVITY

Have students make preliminary drawings the size of their printing block or plate. See Extensions below for ideas on incorporating this activity into the other lesson plans.

When students are satisfied with their drawings, they may transfer them to the plate. If the plate is foam board, the drawing may be placed over the surface, then traced, pressing hard enough to make an impression. They should then deepen these lines by going over them with a sharp tool or pencil point. If students are using linoleum or wood blocks, their design must be transferred, then cut and gouged with sharpened tools designed for this purpose.

Students should use a brayer to roll out printing ink on a flat surface, such as a piece of linoleum or a glossy magazine. The ink should be rolled onto the plate with the brayer, then a fresh sheet of paper is pressed evenly over the inked surface. Students may use the back of a spoon as a baren, gently rubbing all over the back of the paper to transfer the ink evenly. The paper should be peeled away from the plate carefully. A press also can be used, if one is available.



## EXTENSIONS

**VISUAL ART:** Refer to Lesson Plan: Gesture, p. 125, and have students make preliminary drawings the size of their printing block, then transfer the best one to the block for printing.

**VISUAL ART:** Have students design a personal emblem that can be transferred to the printing block and printed on paper banners or T-shirts, using textile inks.

**VISUAL ART:** Students may wish to look at works of art in the packet that incorporate patterns. Some of these include the Sir George Clifford Armor (SLIDE 27), the Double Virginal (SLIDE 28), and the Pentagonal Spinet (SLIDE 22). Experimenting with arabesques, geometric, and plant designs, students can design their own all-over pattern, transfer it to the printing plate, then decorate a sheet of paper by printing the design all over its surface.

**SOCIAL STUDIES/VISUAL ARTS:** Students may wish to trace the influence of the printing press in Renaissance Europe, including its role in disseminating classical texts, writings by humanists like Erasmus, SLIDE 17, books of written music, playing cards, and maps, as well as prints by artists.

## RESOURCES

*The History of Printmaking.* Scholastic Voyages of Discovery: Visual Arts. New York: Scholastic Inc., 1996.



# DAILY LIFE CHECKLIST

The details in a Renaissance painting allow the student to observe and to explore the work of art as a primary source. These particulars let us know how people lived and what they believed and admired. They give us a perspective on a larger world than the world we know. In *Questioning Strategies for Teachers*, p. 95, we explain the themes we have selected: Individual, Family and Home, Society, and The Larger World.

## INDIVIDUAL, FAMILY, AND HOME

**WORKS OF ART FOR THE HOME:** Because people in cities and towns lived close to each other, they became more aware of styles. This created a desire for material objects that indicated status. Giovanni Rucellai, a wealthy Florentine, said, "I think I have done myself more honor by having spent money well than by having earned it. Spending gave me deeper satisfaction especially in the money I spent on my house in Florence."

### BIRTH

- SLIDE 1 *The Epiphany*, Giotto
- SLIDE 5 *The Birth Tray*
- SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*, Fra Carnevale
- SLIDE 20 *The Broth Bowl and Cover*

### MARRIAGE

- SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at Casement*, Fra Filippo Lippi
- SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius*, Petrus Christus
- SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther*, Marco del Buono and Giovanni di Apollonio di Giovanni

### DEATH

- SLIDE 2 *The Crucifixion and The Last Judgment*, Jan van Eyck
- SLIDE 12 *Adam*, Tullio Lombardo

### HOME

#### PORTRAITS

- SLIDE 4 *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement*, Fra Filippo Lippi
- SLIDE 17 *Erasmus of Rotterdam*, Hans Holbein the Younger
- SLIDE 21 *A Portrait of a Young Man*, Bronzino

#### HOUSEHOLD OBJECTS

- SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther* (part of a cassone)
- SLIDE 20 *Broth Bowl and Cover*
- SLIDE 22 *Pentagonal Spinet*
- SLIDE 26 *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*
- SLIDE 28 *Double Virginal*

#### ARCHITECTURE

- SLIDE 9 *Gubbio Studiolo*
- PAGE 143 *Wall fountain*



SLIDE 4



SLIDE 26

## SECULAR PAINTINGS

- SLIDE 15 *A Hunting Scene*, Piero di Cosimo  
SLIDE 18 *The Judgment of Paris*, Lucas Cranach the Elder  
SLIDE 25 *The Harvesters*, Pieter Bruegel the Elder  
SLIDE 29 *View of Toledo*, El Greco

## RELIGIOUS PAINTINGS

- SLIDE 10 *Annunciation*, Hans Memling  
SLIDE 19 *The Holy Family with the Infant Saint John*, Andrea del Sarto

## PRINTS

- SLIDE 13 *Adam and Eve*, Albrecht Dürer  
PAGE 93 *Battle of the Naked Men*, Antonio Pollaiuolo

## SOCIETY

Many Renaissance works of art describe the settings as well as the activities of political, economic, and communal daily life.

## COUNTRY AND TOWN LIFE

- SLIDE 3 *Apothecary Jar*  
SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius*, Petrus Christus  
SLIDE 7 *The Story of Esther*, Marco del Buono and Apollonio di Giovanni  
SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*, Fra Carnevale  
SLIDE 25 *The Harvesters*, Pieter Bruegel the Elder  
SLIDE 29 *View of Toledo*, El Greco

## CLASS STRUCTURE

- SLIDE 6 *Saint Eligius*, Petrus Christus  
SLIDE 8 *The Birth of the Virgin*, Fra Carnevale  
SLIDE 25 *The Harvesters*, Pieter Bruegel the Elder

## WARRIOR AND WAR

- SLIDE 5 *The Triumph of Fame*, Scheggia  
SLIDE 23 *Parade Helmet*, Filippo Negroli  
SLIDE 27 *Armor of Sir George Clifford*

## THE LARGER WORLD

In many of the paintings the larger world is indicated by a glimpse of the ocean and ships in the background (SLIDES 8, 25), and in others by objects from distant places. We know that coral was not found in northern Europe; it would have been imported from Africa, Spain, and Italy (SLIDE 6). Some of the patterns found on textiles (SLIDE 6) and ceramic objects (SLIDE 3) were inspired by the woven cloth of the Eastern world.



SLIDE 5



Sky, detail of SLIDE 25

## LESSON PLAN: DAILY LIFE DAILY LIFE IN THE RENAISSANCE



If whatsoever has come unto us by report of what is past were true, and known by any body, it would be less than nothing in respect to that which is unknown. And even of this image of the world, which while we live therein glides and passes away, how wretched, weak, and how short is the knowledge of the most curious?

Michel de Montaigne, 1588

### GRADE LEVEL

Upper Elementary, Junior High School, and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will look at paintings as illustrations of daily life.
- Students will document in writing what they see.
- Students will learn to use primary source materials as reference for details and facts about daily life.
- Students will write and design a newspaper, *The Renaissance Times*.
- Students will work in groups to create a mural illustrating daily life in the Renaissance.

### WORKS OF ART

- SLIDE 6      *Saint Eligius* by Petrus Christus  
SLIDE 8      *The Birth of the Virgin* by Fra Carnevale  
SLIDE 25     *The Harvesters* by Pieter Bruegel the Elder

### ACTIVITIES

**FORTHETEACHER:** Read the slide entries before you project the slides and keep in mind certain features of daily life that you want your students to notice. Refer to Daily Life checklist, p. 195, for objects.

Project the slides, one at a time. With each image, ask students to describe what they see, not what they might have read or heard. A few sample questions might include:

1. Where and how do people live? Describe the houses both in the country and in town.
2. How might the people in the paintings earn a living?
3. How do people dress?
4. What do they like to do?
5. How was daily life the same for men and women? How was it different?
6. Does the artist let us know by what means people traveled?  
Does the artist give us clues on how far people could travel during the sixteenth century?

As the students answer the questions, ask them to describe how the artist has made them believe what they see. For example: The atmosphere and the color of the sky tell us the time of day or the weather conditions. The relative size of objects creates a sense of great space and the beyond. Objects that came from far away imply that someone must have traveled long distances to obtain them.

Ask students to pretend that they are journalists or foreign travelers. Ask them to choose one of the artworks, then to write an article or a letter that reports what they have seen. Refer to the description of Albrecht Dürer's travels to Antwerp in Source Material, p. 83.

#### WRITING ACTIVITY

##### THE RENAISSANCE TIMES

Students can work in small groups and create an issue of a daily newspaper. Refer to the checklist on pp. 195 and 196 for ideas; for example, students can write articles announcing the birth of Lorenzo de Medici, SLIDE 5; a marriage, SLIDE 7; a jousting tournament, SLIDE 23 and SLIDE 27.

#### ART ACTIVITY

##### RENAISSANCE LIFE: A MURAL

##### MATERIALS

- roll of paper, paints, brushes

##### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

Ask students to brainstorm a list of ideas to be written on the board about daily life in the Renaissance. Which of these ideas would they include in a mural? Would they focus on the Renaissance town, the home, or the surrounding countryside?

Divide the class into groups of four students, with each group assigned to a different research task. Students may use the other images in the packet, art books, their social studies and science textbooks, movies, or other sources. For example:

GROUP 1: Will research town life. By looking at other paintings in the packet (for example, SLIDE 7, *The Story of Esther*) the students can make notes or small sketches of streets, homes, and churches.

GROUP 2: Country life

GROUP 3: Family life, children, and school

GROUP 4: Soldiers and knights

Documents and letters in Source Material will be helpful in researching these topics, especially the family letters of Alessandra Macinghi Strozzi, p. 92, and Friedrich Behaim, p. 91, the documents and letters on apprenticeships, and the information on manners.

Have students meet together to share their lists, drawings, and discussion of what they feel should be included in the mural. Select a size for the mural and set out a sheet of paper of that size and shape on the floor. Draw a grid on the paper, with at least five-inch squares. After preliminary sketches and drawings are produced, these can be positioned, then transferred and painted on the mural paper.

Again, within each large group, small groups can be assigned particular tasks in the layout and execution of the project.

- A group of students assigned to plan the layout of the mural can refer to specific ideas about composition (refer to Lesson Plans: Classical Composition, p. 141; Draw the Golden Rectangle, p. 147; and The Story in Art, Part II, p. 153).
- One group can be responsible for the buildings and architecture (refer to Lesson Plan: Linear One-Point Perspective, p. 135).
- Another group can position and rough out the figures (refer to Lesson Plans: Gesture, p. 125, and Drawing the Human Figure, p. 121).
- Other groups can add details to the faces, design the clothing, or paint the atmospheric perspective of the sky (refer to Lesson Plan: Aerial or Atmospheric Perspective, p. 131).

#### EXTENSIONS

**VISUAL ARTS:** Compare the student mural with *The Block* by Romare Bearden (1912–1988), a twentieth-century collage about daily life in New York City.





## LESSON PLAN: DAILY LIFE TIME



But at my back I always hear  
Time's wingèd chariot  
hurrying near;  
And yonder all before us lie  
Deserts of vast eternity.

From Andrew Marvell,  
"To His Coy Mistress"  
(1650–52)

### GRADE LEVEL

Elementary and Junior High

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will discuss time and its measurement in ancient, Renaissance, and modern times.
- Students will look at a timepiece from the Renaissance, discussing its significance, its symbolism (if any), and how it reflects Renaissance thought.
- Students will make their own timepieces or choose an activity for further study from Extensions.

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 26 *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*

### DISCUSSION

Discuss how people keep track of time, today and throughout history. What are some of the ways in which people marked the time before clocks? (The seasons change, night and day alternate, the sun and other stars appear to move across the sky, the moon changes phases—these are some of the things that occur with regularity.) Different cultures around the world developed different methods of measuring time by observation of natural phenomena. In addition, various devices like water clocks, candles marked with intervals, hourglasses, sundials, the Mayan and Aztec calendars, and Stonehenge were built to help keep track of the time. What were the advantages and disadvantages of each of these timekeepers? Do sundials work on cloudy days or at night? How often must hourglasses be turned? What if the hole of a water clock gets clogged?

Ask students to look closely at the *Celestial Globe with Clockwork*. It represents the night sky as a sphere, with the constellations of the zodiac engraved on its outer surface. The small golden Sun is located outside this orb, and students should imagine Earth inside the sphere, at its center but not visible. The sphere and the Sun were set in motion by a clockwork mechanism; therefore students should imagine that the Earth inside the globe would stay still. This is like being at a planetarium where the night sky is projected onto a large, curved screen, and time is speeded up to make the stars seem as if they are moving. We know today that it is the relatively rapid movement of the Earth and not the slow movement of the far-away stars that creates this effect. How does this idea fit in with the astronomical discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo?

Most people did not own their own clocks in the Renaissance; they relied on the apparent motion of the sun and seasonal changes, or perhaps town clocks or church bells. (The word "clock" comes from German and French words for bell—*glocke* and *cloche*.) Who most likely would have owned a clock? (The first recorded clock was owned by Pope Sylvester II in 996.) Would it be a status symbol or sign of prestige to have the

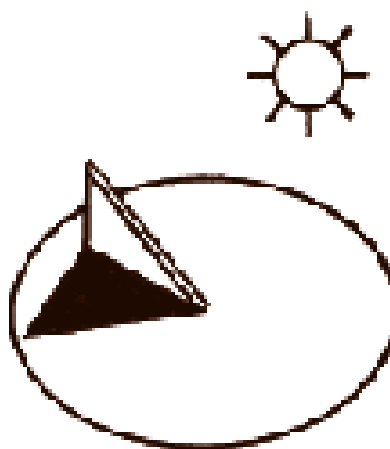
ability to measure time? Why or why not? Discuss the scientific interests of the age, the entertainment value of such an instrument, the materials and workmanship, and the references to mythology.

Students may wish to compare this timepiece to watches and clocks today that impart status or entertain the wearer. Do we prize timepieces for their extreme accuracy and utility in scientific measurement? For their beauty and decoration? For other reasons?

### SCIENCE ACTIVITY

The teacher may wish to schedule a field trip to a planetarium so students can see an ideal night sky and identify some of the constellations. Since nighttime activities are difficult to schedule, and city lights interfere with seeing the stars through telescopes, the teacher may choose to have students make a timepiece that operates by the sun rather than the stars.

The Resources section lists a number of books that give instructions for making simple timepieces like sundials. One simple way is to roll out a slab of clay to fit a disposable plate, find the center point of the circle, then position a triangle-shaped piece of cardboard, plastic, or balsa wood (called a gnomon) as pictured and press it into the clay.



Go outside at 12:00 noon on a sunny day (1:00 P.M. during Daylight Savings Time) and place the sundials so that no shadow is cast by the gnomon. Leave the sundials for an hour, and then mark the position of the shadow on the clay. Repeat every hour. If possible, leave the sundials until morning, then mark the position of the shadow every hour until noon.

### EXTENSIONS

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** The poem at the beginning of this lesson plan uses the metaphor of a “winged chariot” to represent time and “desert” to represent eternity. Have students identify some of the features of the *Celestial Globe* (gold, silver, circle, movement, Pegasus, wings) that might be metaphors for time. Is time precious? Is it related to a circle, with no beginning or end? Is it continually in motion? Does it gallop like a horse or have wings like Pegasus? What other metaphors or symbols of time can students identify? Make a list on the board, then have students choose one or two specific metaphors for time and write a short poem or a sentence. If self-hardening clay is used for the sundial activity above, students could incise their writings into the surface of the clay.

**LANGUAGE ARTS:** Read the myth of Pegasus and Bellerophon. When Pegasus kicked a mountain, a fountain called Hippocrene gushed forth. For this reason, Pegasus is invoked as a symbol of poetic inspiration. Ask students if they have ever spent a long time trying to write something like a poem or essay for a school assignment. Has a sudden thought ever occurred to

them, inspiration popping into their head like a kick from a horse, releasing a flood of ideas or words? The following segment of a longer poem by an English Renaissance author makes the connection between Pegasus and poetry:

Then who so will with vertuous deeds assay  
To mount to heaven, on Pegasus must ride,  
And with sweete Poets verse be glorified.  
From Edmund Spenser, *The Ruines of Time* (1591)

LANGUAGE ARTS: Students may wish to read the sonnets of Shakespeare or other poets who wrote about time, then create their own sonnet using the *Celestial Globe* as inspiration. (Lesson Plan: Poetic Forms, p. 159).

SCIENCE: There are many books on making various devices that measure time relative to the night sky and the movement of constellations. Research some of these methods, construct some simple timekeepers, and have students check their accuracy against a clock. How did the observation of the night sky lead to the discoveries of Copernicus and Galileo about the movement of the Earth, stars, comets, planets, and other heavenly bodies?

SOCIAL STUDIES: Have students research the different methods of telling time throughout the world. If possible, take them to a historic house or museum to see timepieces.

SOCIAL STUDIES/ART: Explore the significance of owning a timepiece in the Renaissance. Look at some of the other slides or prints and ask students to design a timepiece for an individual in one of the portraits. What kind of watch or clock would that person need or want? What decorations or symbols would be appropriate? In *The Harvesters* (SLIDE 25), what are important times for the workers to know? What would be a good timepiece—a bell, a wristwatch, the sun? Would Saint Eligius (SLIDE 6), being a goldsmith, make his own timepiece from some of the materials in his shop? Would he want people to see it as an example of his work? Would the woman in *Portrait of Man and Woman at a Casement* (SLIDE 4) have an elaborately jeweled pendant or brooch? Would Duke Federico da Montefeltro (SLIDE 9) and Erasmus (SLIDE 17), both humanists, have similar tastes in clocks or not? How would their tastes differ based on geographical location, personality, and possible materials?

#### RESOURCES

Branley, Franklyn M. *Keeping Time*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

Jobb, Jamie. *The Night Sky Book*. Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1977.

Marshall, Roy K. *Sundials*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963.





## LESSON PLAN: DAILY LIFE COMPARE AND CONTRAST TWO KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS

### GRADE LEVEL

Elementary, Junior High, and High School

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will look at two keyboard instruments, one from northern Europe and one from southern Europe.
- Students will create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the two instruments.
- Students will design a keyboard instrument case.

All keyboard instruments, indeed, are harmonious, because their consonances are perfect and they make possible many effects which fill the soul with sweetness and melody.

From Baldassare Castiglione,  
*The Book of the Courtier* (1528)

### WORKS OF ART

SLIDE 22 *Pentagonal Spinnet* by an unknown maker

SLIDE 28 *Double Virginal* by Hans Ruckers the Elder

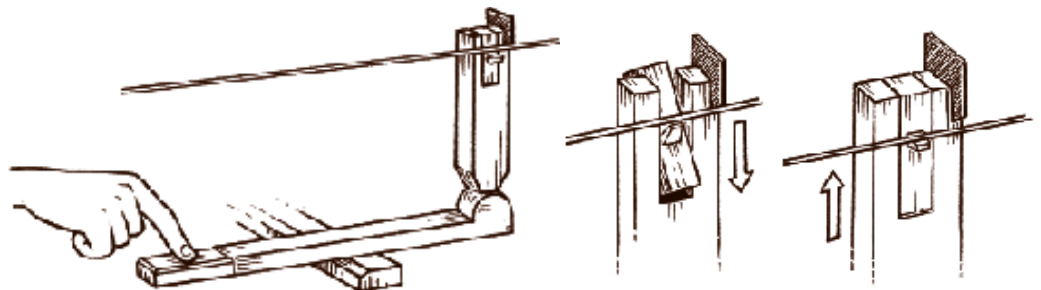
### MATERIALS

- a variety of cardboard boxes and pieces of cardboard in different sizes
- paints, markers, colored paper, glue, scissors

### MOTIVATION AND DISCUSSION

The teacher may wish to begin this lesson by having students look at the inside of a piano, if one is available. Students who take piano lessons can lead the exploration, pointing out the strings stretched horizontally (grand piano) or vertically (studio or upright piano). Students can depress a key to demonstrate how a hammer strikes a course of metal strings and makes them vibrate; dampers stop the vibration. The strings are attached to tuning pins, so that they can be adjusted in pitch, then they pass over a bridge, transferring the sound to the soundboard, where it is amplified. The foot pedals sustain or soften the sound, and loud and soft effects can be achieved as well by the pressure of the player's fingers. The case of the piano is made from wood with metal reinforcements.

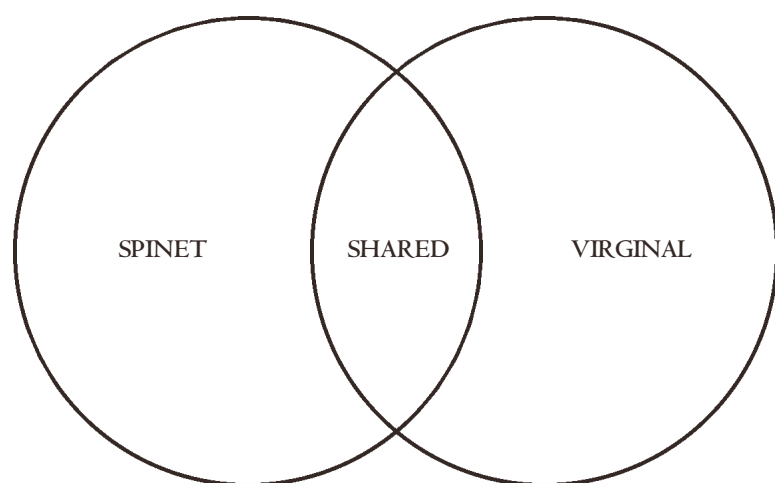
### SPINET AND HARPSICHORD PLUCKING MECHANISM



Students also may wish to play excerpts from different pieces of music on the piano, perhaps their recital solos. Ask students when these compositions were written; if they were written specifically for the piano or transcribed from orchestral works; or if they are harpsichord pieces, such as those written by Johann Sebastian Bach, Domenico Scarlatti, or another composer.

Introduce the slides of the spinet and the double virginal and ask students to compare these instruments to the piano. How are they alike and how are they different? Listen to examples of music played on harpsichords, spinets, or virginals.

Using the information included in the packet, compare and contrast the two instruments. A helpful method is to draw a Venn diagram on the board or provide a handout sheet to each student with two overlapping circles, as shown below. Label one circle “spinet” and write the unique characteristics of the spinet in that circle. Label the other circle “virginal” and write its unique characteristics in that circle. Write characteristics that the two instruments share in the overlapping section.

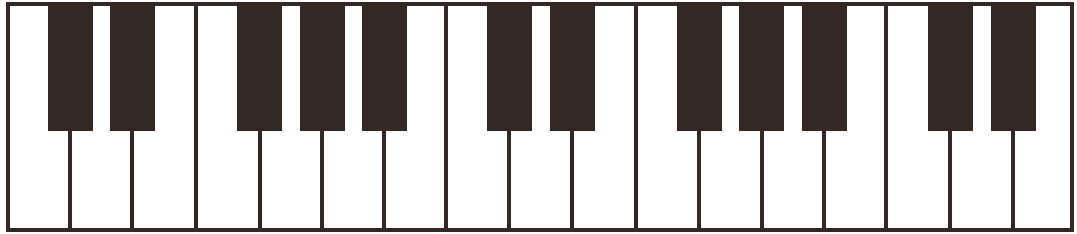


- Compare the shape and size of the two instruments.
- What materials are they made of?
- How are they decorated? What techniques, motifs, designs, or images are evident?
- Compare the two inscriptions, where they are located, the size of the lettering, and the text's message
- Who made the instruments? Who commissioned them? What names or geographical locations are associated with each instrument?
- How is sound produced in each instrument?

#### ACTIVITY

Ask students to design a case for a keyboard instrument. Their ideas may be sketched on paper, then transferred to a shoebox or other lightweight box that can be modified by cutting it or gluing on additional cardboard shapes. The box may be covered with black paint, painted to resemble wood, or marbled. Students may apply cut-paper designs; strips of paper on which patterns have been printed or stamped; paintings of dancers, musicians, or landscape scenes;

inscriptions about music; or whatever they wish. They should indicate the placement of the keyboard and the strings by painting or drawing them on, as well. The following drawing may be photocopied and distributed to the students.



### EXTENSIONS

**MUSIC/SOCIAL STUDIES/ART:** Visit a musical instrument gallery or collection to see additional examples of keyboard instruments. What technological features differentiate these instruments? What is the relationship of the instrument to the decorative art or furniture of the time? Which composers wrote music for this kind of keyboard? What were the social implications of playing or owning a keyboard instrument during this particular time? Compare the spinet and virginal with keyboard instruments used today: pianos, electronic keyboards, synthesizers.

**MUSIC/SCIENCE:** Construct a simple stringed instrument like a monochord or a dulcimer to demonstrate the scientific principles of sound and string length.

**MUSIC:** Listen to examples of sixteenth-century music played on the spinet, harpsichord, or virginal. If possible, attend a concert where one of these instruments is being played, or invite a guest musician to speak to the class about early keyboards.

### RESOURCES

Ardley, Neil, with music by Poul Ruders. *A Young Person's Guide to Music*. New York: DK Publishing, Inc., 1995. (Book and CD)

Lehman, Bradley P. *Sounds of harpsichords and related instruments*.  
<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~bpl/hpsi.html>  
Last accessed January 12, 1999.

Sachs, Curt. *The History of Musical Instruments*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1940.

### DISCOGRAPHY

*The Harpsichord in the Netherlands (1580–1712)*. Bob van Asperen on original Ruckers Harpsichord. Vivarte compact disk, SK 46349 DDD.





# GLOSSARY

ACANTHUS	A prickly plant with large leaves; used as ornament in ancient Greece and the Renaissance.
ALTARPIECE	A religious painting composed of one or several compartments or panels; intended to stand on or hang above an altar.
APOCRYPHA	Literally, things that are “hidden.” The Apocrypha are not universally accepted as official scripture and are excluded from the old and new Testaments.
BLUE	The color of the sky. In Christian painting it symbolizes Heaven. Mary, known as the Queen of Heaven, wears a blue mantle. Blue pigment was derived from either the mineral azurite, a copper carbonate mineral, or ultramarine, made from lapis lazuli. The latter was very costly.
BURIN	A pointed tool used to engrave lines into a metal plate that is used for printmaking. Ink applied to the plate will sink into the engraved lines and transfer to the paper.
CARTOUCHE	An ornament in the shape of a scroll with ends folded back.
COFFERED	“Divided in squares,” usually refers to a popular Renaissance ceiling treatment that used recessed squares.
COAT OF ARMS	A heraldic device identifying a person, family, or institution of the nobility.
CONFRATERNITY	An assembly of lay persons dedicated to strict religious observances.
CORNICE	A horizontal band that crowns the top of a building.
CUIRASS	A piece of close-fitting armor for protecting the chest and back.
DAMASCENED	Metalwork ornamented with an inlaid design.
DIPTYCH	A painting, usually an altarpiece, made up of two hinged panels. A triptych has three hinged panels.
<i>DOGE</i>	The chief justice in the republics of Venice and Genoa.
EMBOSSSED	Metal that is hammered, molded, or carved so as to create a bulge or an image in relief.

ENGRAVING	A process used by printmakers who cut grooves or pits into a wood block or metal plate with a sharp tool called a <b>burin</b> . When the plate is inked, the printer's ink sinks into the grooves; then the plate is wiped, to remove the ink from the smooth areas. The inked plate is pressed against damp paper by running both between two heavy rollers. The pressure forces the softened paper into the grooves to pull out the ink, which we see as lines.
ENTABLATURE	The part of the building that is above the columns, encompassing the architrave, the frieze, and the cornice. This element was first found in Greek architecture.
FOREGROUND	The part of the painted image that appears closest to the viewer, usually the lower area of the painting or other composition. The <b>background</b> , usually the upper area of the painting, appears to be farther back. The <b>middle ground</b> is everything in between.
GOLD	A symbol of pure light, the heavenly element in which God lives.
GROTESQUE	A type of decoration found on Roman wall paintings that were excavated in the sixteenth century, especially in Nero's Golden House. The wall paintings were found in underground caves called "grottoes," thus, the newly discovered ornamentation was called "grotesque." These wall decorations featured motifs characterized by imaginative, organic connections between disparate elements, including human figures, animals, insects, and birds, mythological and other fantastic beasts, architectural and plant elements.
HALO	The gold circle or disk placed behind the heads of Christ and saints, a symbol of their sanctity or the light of God.
HATCHING	The drawing or engraving of fine parallel lines to show shading. When the lines intersect each other, it is called <b>cross-hatching</b> .
HORIZON LINE	The line where the sky and earth appear to meet. The horizon line is drawn across the picture at the artist's eye level.
HUE	A particular variety of a color, shade, or tint.
LUNETTE	<i>Luna</i> means "moon" in Latin and Italian. A <b>lunette</b> is a semicircular shape, in this case above the main panel of the Raphael altarpiece.
MAGUS	A member of the ancient Persian priestly caste, skilled in Eastern magic and astrology. In the New Testament, the <b>Magi</b> are the three wise men who came from the East to pay homage to the newborn Christ Child.
MAJOLICA	Tin-glazed earthenware.

<i>PALAZZO</i>	An Italian word used to describe a large building. It may be a mansion or palace, or an official government building like a town hall, court, or embassy.
PASSION OR THE PASSION OF CHRIST	The events surrounding the Crucifixion of Christ; a popular subject for religious drama, painting, and sculpture.
PERSPECTIVE	A technique that artists use to represent the three-dimensional world on a two-dimensional surface, such as a piece of paper, canvas, or wood panel. Using perspective, an artist can create the illusion of depth or space and show the proper proportion between objects. Without perspective a painting or drawing will appear flat.
PICTORIAL SPACE	The illusion of three-dimensional space created on a two-dimensional surface.
<i>PREDELLA</i>	An Italian word for the series of small paintings that form the lower section of large altarpieces. The predella usually has narrative scenes from the lives of the saints who are represented on the main and side panels of the altarpiece.
<i>PUTTO</i>	From the Latin word meaning “male child.” In fifteenth- and sixteenth-century poetry and painting, <i>putti</i> are depicted with wings and connected with the god of love, Eros, also known as Cupid.
RED	In Christian paintings, a symbol of the blood of Christ or the Passion.
RELIEF	A raised surface; for example, sculpture that is carved or modeled and which projects from a background.
STAR	In Christian paintings, a symbol of divine guidance or favor. The Star of the East guided the three Magi to Bethlehem.
TRIUMPH	An ancient Roman tradition honoring the return of a victorious general, who paraded his soldiers, prisoners, and spoils through the city streets.
TROMPE L’OEIL	French for “fool the eye”; a style of painting intended to trick the viewer into believing that the minutely observed objects shown are part of the viewer’s three-dimensional world.
VANISHING POINT	The point where parallel lines appear to meet on the horizon line.



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## 9. VIDEOGRAPHY

We advise all educators to preview these videos before integrating them into lesson plans. Only you can be the judge of what materials are best for your needs. Sometimes, biographies of individual artists contain sensitive information. You may elect to show all or parts of a given tape.

Biography (A&E Home Video):

*Michelangelo: Artist and Man* (1994) (50 min.)

*Leonardo da Vinci: Renaissance Master* (50 min.)

*Civilisation: A Personal View by Kenneth Clark* (BBC-TV/Home Vision, 1967) (each program approximately 50 min.):

Vol. 4: *Man, the Measure of all Things*

Vol. 5: *Hero as Artist*

*Donatello: The First Modern Sculptor, 1386–1466 (Portrait of an Artist)* (RM Arts/BBC-TV, 1986) (60 min.)

*Feast of the Gods [Bellini]* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1990) (27 min.)

*Giotto and the Pre-Renaissance* (Kartes Video Communications, 1986) (47 min.)

*Legend of the True Cross by Piero della Francesca* (available from Britannica Films) (32 min.)

*Life of Leonardo da Vinci*, 3 vol. (Questar Video, 1972) (Each vol. 90 min.)

*Lorenzo Ghiberti: The Gates of Paradise* (Treccani Video Library, 1989) (30 min.)

*Making of Renaissance Bronzes* (J. Paul Getty Museum, 1992) (14 min.)

*Masaccio: A View of Mankind. (Portrait of an Artist)* (RM Arts/BBC-TV, 1983) (58 min.)

Masterpieces of Italian Art (VPI-AC Video Inc., 1990):

Vol. 2: *Birth of the Renaissance: Giotto to Masaccio* (58 min.)

Vol. 3: *Renaissance in Full Bloom* (58 min.)

Vol. 4: *Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael and Titian* (58 min.)

*Masters of Illusion* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., 1991) (30 min.)

*Medici and the Palazzo Vecchio* (Treccani Video Library, 1989) (50 min.)

National Gallery: A Private View (available from the Roland Collection)

No. 3: *Early Renaissance in Italy* (26 min.)

No. 4: *Northern Renaissance* (26 min.)

No. 5: *Age of Titian* (26 min.)

No. 6: *Age of Leonardo and Raphael* (26 min.)

Palettes (Musée du Louvre) (available through Britannica Films):

*The Virgin, St. Anne and the Infant Jesus, c. 1500–1515: Leonardo Da Vinci* (1452–1519)

*The Madonna and Chancellor Rolin: Van Eyck* (26 min.)

Program for Art on Film (The Metropolitan Museum of Art/J. Paul Getty Trust, 1992):  
Program 3, Film 1: *Leonardo's Deluge* (14 min.)  
Program 4, Film 1: *De Artificiali Perspectiva or Anamorphosis* (15 min.)  
Program 5, Film 2: *A Day on the Grand Canal with the Emperor of China or Surface Is Illusion but So Is Depth* [compares Chinese art and Western perspective] (46 min.)

Raphael (RM Arts/BBC-TV, 1982) (each part is 58 min.):  
Part 1: *The Apprentice Years*  
Part 2: *The Prince of Painters*  
Part 3: *Legend and Legacy*

*Renaissance Stage* (available through Films for the Humanities and Sciences) (30 min.)

*Return to Glory: Michelangelo Revealed: The Restoration in the Sistine Chapel* (Nippon Television, 1986) (52 min.)

*Siena: Chronicles of a Medieval Commune* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988) (28 min.)

*Titian (Portrait of an Artist)* (RM Arts, 1989) (57 min.)

*Titian: Venus and Adonis* (J. Paul Getty Museum, 1994) (11 min.)

*Tradesmen and Treasures: Gothic and Renaissance Nuremberg* (Bayerischer Rundfunk/The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1986) (55 min.)

*Verrocchio's Christ and St. Thomas: A Masterpiece of Sculpture from Renaissance Florence* (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1993)

Western Tradition (WGBH in association with the MMA, 1989) (each program 30 min)  
Program 25 & 26: *The Renaissance and the Age of Discovery, The Renaissance and the New World*

#### VIDEO SUPPLIERS

A&E Home Video: 800-344-6336

ArtsAmerica: 203-869-4693

Britannica Films: 800-554-9862 (310 S. Michigan Ave., 6th fl., Chicago, IL 60604)

Enap/Treccani: 212-986-3180 (12 E. 46th St., New York, NY 10017)

Films for the Humanities: 800-257-5126 (P.O. Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543)

Donnell Library Center, The New York Public Library: 212-621-0642 (20 W. 53rd St., New York, NY 10018)

Home Vision: 800-826-3456 x 211 (5547 No. Ravenswood, Chicago, IL 60640)

RMI Video Productions: 800-745-5480

Roland Collection: 201-251-8200 (22-D Hollywood Ave., Ho-ho-kus, NJ 07423)

VPI-A.C. Video: 212-685-5522

## IO. CD-ROMS

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*Leonardo, Inventor*. Interactive Electronic Publishing (Windows/Mac), 1994.

*The Renaissance*. History through Art series, Clearvue/eav (Windows/Mac), 1995.

*The Sistine Chapel*. Clearvue/eav (Windows only) 1996.

## II. WORLD WIDE WEB RESOURCES

We encourage you to explore the World Wide Web for additional information on the era and artists covered in this resource. Most major museums have Web sites that provide information and supplementary links. The Metropolitan Museums of Art's Web site address is <http://www.metmuseum.org>. Some other sites are:

Art of Renaissance Science

[www.crs4.it/Ars/arshtml/arstitle.html](http://www.crs4.it/Ars/arshtml/arstitle.html)

Examines science, art, perspective, and mathematics. Includes many images.

Artist of the Renaissance

[library.advanced.org/15962](http://library.advanced.org/15962)

Includes biographies of major artists as well as images of some of their works.

Leonardo da Vinci: Scientist, Inventor, Artist

[www.mos.org/Leonardo](http://www.mos.org/Leonardo)

Written by the Museum of Science in Boston, this site is intended for teachers and students. Includes activities.

A New Perspective on Science and Art

[library.advanced.org/3257](http://library.advanced.org/3257)

Explores perspective and scientific principles of the Renaissance. Includes a guided tour, quiz, artists' biographies, and activities.

Renaissance: What Inspired this Age of Reason and Reform?

[www.learner.org/exhibits/renaissance](http://www.learner.org/exhibits/renaissance)

Inspired by the Western Traditions series from Annenberg/CPB. Includes activities.

## MUSEUMS WITH COLLECTIONS OF EUROPEAN RENAISSANCE ART IN NORTH AMERICA

Many museums in North America have collections of European Renaissance Art. We encourage you to contact museums in your area for information on their holdings.

Listed here are some of the collections listed alphabetically by state or province.

### CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art

Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum

San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco,  
California Palace of the Legion of Honor

### CONNECTICUT

Hartford: Wadsworth Atheneum

### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (WASHINGTON)

National Gallery of Art

### FLORIDA

West Palm Beach: Norton Gallery of Art

### GEORGIA

Atlanta: High Museum of Art

### HAWAII

Honolulu: Honolulu Academy of Arts

### ILLINOIS

Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago

### INDIANA

Muncie: Ball State University Museum of Art

### LOUISIANA

New Orleans: New Orleans Museum of Art

### MARYLAND

Baltimore: Walters Art Gallery

Baltimore: Baltimore Museum of Art

### MASSACHUSETTS

Boston: Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

Boston: Museum of Fine Arts

Cambridge: Harvard University Art Museums

Williamstown: Sterling and Francine Clark Institute

Worcester: Worcester Art Museum

NEW YORK

New York (Brooklyn): The Brooklyn Museum of Art

New York (Manhattan): The Frick Collection

New York (Manhattan): The Metropolitan Museum of Art

New York (Manhattan): The Pierpont Morgan Library

NORTH CAROLINA

Chapel Hill: The Ackland Art Museum, University of North Carolina

OHIO

Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art

Columbus: Columbus Museum of Art

OKLAHOMA

Tulsa: The Philbrook Museum of Art, Inc.

ONTARIO

Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada

OREGON

Portland: Portland Art Museum

PENNSYLVANIA

Lewisburg: The Center Gallery, Bucknell University

Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art

Pittsburgh: The Frick Art Museum

QUEBEC

Montréal: The Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

SOUTH CAROLINA

Columbia: Columbia Museum of Art & Gibbes Planetarium

TENNESSEE

Nashville: Vanderbilt Fine Arts Gallery

TEXAS

Austin: Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery, University of Texas at Austin

Fort Worth: Kimbell Art Museum

WASHINGTON (STATE)

Seattle: Seattle Art Museum

WISCONSIN

Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum

Milwaukee: The Patrick & Beatrice Haggerty Museum of Art

