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# Art History in Art Education

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**BOSTON UNIVERSITY**  
**COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS**  
**Final Research Project**

**ART HISTORY IN ART EDUCATION**

*An investigation of how elementary art students respond to various teaching methods*

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study is representative of an exploration which investigated innovative ways of teaching art history to elementary students. The researcher incorporated singing, games, word puzzles, and take-home activity bags while introducing an art history focused unit with a family theme, to a class of third grade art students. The same unit was presented to a similarly paired third grade class, sans supplementary embellishments of songs, games or activities, yet assessments for art history content were measured in both classes. The data collected from these assessments revealed that students were able to demonstrate a stronger recognition of artists, their works, and genres, and present a familiarity with the related terms. As a result of having the additional exposure to the various teaching tools and methods, students seemed to engage more confidently in class discussions, and be able to relate their own works with those of the art history exemplars. The outcomes achieved by this particular investigation allude to a promising future of fostering an appreciation for art history.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

It is with great honor that acknowledgements be made to my supportive husband, caring parents, and dear sweet children. Their unwavering love, encouragement, and confidence in me have been my beacons of hope throughout this arduous yet rewarding graduate experience. I have strived to do my best that I may make my family proud of this achievement which is a result of a collective journey which has tested our strength, imposed great sacrifice, and yielded many a sleepless night. While taking part in this program has been one of the most challenging endeavors of my life, earning this degree is one of my most tremendous accomplishments.

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While this marks the end of something that has been seemingly endless, it is with great amazement and joy that I will reflect upon this epoch, as a life-changing experience that will not only serve to help me embrace my own future more fully, but will hopefully allow me to inspire our young future artists to do the same.

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## **Chapter One**

### **Art History in Art Education**

*An investigation of how elementary art students respond to various teaching methods*

#### **Background to the Study**

This study was an exploration for the purpose of finding out which methods of instruction are most beneficial for delivering art history content to elementary art students. While this was an important investigation for the cultivation of art appreciation among students, the results may assist in the creation of a new and improved art history curriculum. In addition, the connections established between home and school might be a positive and multifaceted component for promoting the art program and raising the awareness of art education in the community. Educators realize that students learn in many different ways. One method of delivering or introducing information may be sufficient for the learning styles of some students, however, most students may benefit from a variety of methods that offer several opportunities for students to hear, see, and experience an immersion in the information. The researcher focused on the instructional methods associated with imparting components of art history to elementary students. The aim of the study was to determine what methods are most successful for: 1) yielding student mastery of artist recognition; 2) cultivating a familiarity with various genres and media; and 3) exhibiting the ability to incorporate vocabulary terms into class discussions.

### **Research Goals**

The research goals for this thesis project included the development of an art history curriculum that coincides with the researcher's existing media survey, while strengthening one's own background knowledge of famous works, artists, genres, and the art history timeline. By following the achievements of a test group of students, measured comparatively against the assessments of a control group of students, the researcher hoped to discern the best teaching methods for imparting an authentic understanding of art history to elementary art students. A great deal of growing and changing and learning takes place in these formative years of a student's academic career. Especially at the beginning of this journey, art educators have the opportunity to establish a content rich foundation of knowledge and experiences that serve to inspire all future learning, and foster a love of art. Familiarizing students with components of art history not only heightens their artistic consciousness, but also provides a cultural backdrop to relate to, and build upon, throughout their lives.

### **Research Questions**

This study posed the question, "Which methods of presenting and introducing art history information will elementary students be most receptive to?" While displayed examples of famous works, labeled with the artist's name, have maintained a strong presence throughout the art studio classroom, and each unit of study is often introduced with these exemplars, it does not seem as though this has been an adequate way of ensuring that students actually retain an understanding of art history. The research may shed some light on how much students know about art history, at the beginning of the study, how much students have learned about art history

as a result of the study, and which instructional methods seem most successful for achieving student mastery of art history content.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The way in which this study was conducted was through the establishment of a control group, and a test group. Two third grade classes were chosen to take on the roles of each group, and various modes of assessment generated the data necessary for determining an end result. While both classes were exposed to the researcher's current teaching style, in which examples of art history are used to introduce the units and lessons using Feldman and VTS questioning methods, one class of students experienced a number of supplemental educational tools, and received additional opportunities outside of class, to master art history content. Whether or not these embellishments would yield a greater percentage of art history proficiency in elementary students was yet to be determined. "Collecting information using a variety of sources and methods is one aspect of what is called *triangulation* (Fielding & Fielding, 1986)" (Maxwell, p. 93) which is a way of "reducing the risk that your conclusions will reflect only systemic biases" (Maxwell, p.93). As the art educator is an embedded component of this research design, one is aware of the need to be cognizant of maintaining a "broader and more secure understanding of the issues" (Maxwell, p. 94), under investigation, by collecting data from several sources. The data has acted "as a bridge between" (McNiff & Whitehead, p. 62) the questions of "'How do I improve what I am doing?' and [my claim which states], 'I have improved what I am doing'".

### **Theoretical Framework**

The data for this study was collected from assessments given to both the control group and the test group, and compared to find key differences in student performance. In addition to experiencing alterations in teaching methods, the test group also had access to art history stations, games, worksheets, songs, and take-home activity bags to use with their families. The idea which this study was based on was that with the increased exposure to these art history activities, and the resulting conversations that occur in and out of class, students had developed a better grasp of knowledge and content.

### **Significance of the Study**

A search for similar studies of art history education in which the instructional methods for teaching art history are the focus, continue to be examined. While the ongoing quest for corroborative research continues, one has yet to uncover sufficient substantiating evidence that a study of this nature has been thusly investigated. The researcher realizes that scholarly writing is that which is done on the foundations of past discoveries, practices revelations and informed experiential knowledge. A vacuum of one's thoughts and surmises does not equate to authentic analysis of data and resulting discoveries of credibility. As imparted by Joseph Maxwell, "In qualitative research, both existing theory and grounded theory are legitimate and valuable" (Maxwell, p. 43). Many articles have been found, offering suggestions for art history lesson plans; however, when considering and comparing actual differentiated teaching methods, with a direct link to art history, the research has yet to be conducted. However, further investigations

into the texts relaying the research conducted by Project Zero, are impending. Eagerly continued, is the pursuit of this research question, with the hope of reinforcing the validity of the topic, and spurring collegial interest in the field of art education. To this end, the potential contributions of this study's results may serve to fill a current void within not only the art field, but the broader milieu of education.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Time may be the main limitation of this study. Ideally, one might want to spend a much greater length of time devoted to the implementation of the research plan, giving each group a strong dose of art history exposure, in the differentiated ways. More time could possibly equate to a more thorough analysis of the data, as well. Yet, the study is designed to look at the results of both groups within a set window of the same duration. Despite the researcher's preference for more time, the study conducted as is, may still offer some conclusive results.

Another limitation may be the study's dependence on students and their families to participate willingly and actively. If students bring home the activity bags, but do not use them, or lose pieces and return an incomplete kit, this aspect of the study may become costly to replace, frustrating, and inconsistent. However, these are the exact reasons why a test of this nature is being executed in the first place. The ultimate aim of the research is to test student learning, yet it is also of interest to find out how best to deliver art history content.

Conceptually, the activity bags are an exciting component, and serve to form a beneficial link between home and school, and even better, between families and the art studio classroom. This

study may help to pilot the actual validity of these art history kits, which are currently a mere vision.

### **Conclusion**

As common practices in culture, society, our student's life experiences and backgrounds, technological influences, and educational propensities continue to evolve, it seems almost impossible to imagine how long the effects of our investigations will hold true. The research we conduct, and the questions we attempt to answer at this point in time may be very different from those of our future counterparts. "Fortunately, the arts have the ability to shift and adjust to change, a great strength that ensures art practice, appreciation, and education will always be a service to society" (Daichendt, G. J., p. 21). As art educators it is important to relate to our students and remain in touch with how the world is perceived through their eyes. Yet, it is also within our power to help instill the observational skills required to decode "the language of visual images in order to develop critical awareness of the world around them"(Taylor, R. & Taylor, D. 1990)., "to help create communities of reflective, independent learners; to enhance deep understanding within and across disciplines; and to promote critical and creative thinking"(Project Zero, 2011). Art history is a rich and integral part of our lineage as a species, and links all of humanity in a unique and beautiful commemoration of lives past lived, while maintaining a connectedness of emotions. Themes that we can very much still relate to, embody the ideals of what is elegant in nature, and honors the artistic genius of the great masters, as well as what may be attained by igniting the inspirations of our own aspiring art students. It is important that we continue to pass on this history, and it will be very exciting to find out the best

ways to do so. The following chapter will delve into the existing literature, current practices, and comparable studies that relate to art history in art education, as well as findings that explain the ways in which children think and synthesize information.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Art History in Art Education**

*An investigation of how elementary art students respond to various teaching methods*

#### **A Review of the Literature**

This study has been an exploration for the purpose of finding out which methods of instruction are most beneficial for delivering art history content to elementary art students. While this is an important investigation for the cultivation of art appreciation among students, the results may assist in the creation of a new and improved art history curriculum. The researcher has focused on the instructional methods associated with imparting components of art history to elementary students. The aim of the study was to determine which methods are most successful for: 1) yielding student mastery of artist recognition; 2) cultivating a familiarity with various genres and media; and 3) exhibiting the ability to incorporate vocabulary terms into class discussions. As Arthur Wesley Dow reminds us in his text, *Composition*, “The artist is not teaching successfully unless he points the way to appreciation.”(pp. 100).

#### **Conceptual Framework**

This study posed the question, “Which methods of presenting and introducing art history information will elementary students be most receptive to?” The research may shed some light



on how much students know about art history, at the beginning of the study, how much students have learned about art history as a result of the study, and which instructional methods seem most successful for achieving student mastery of art history content. There has been “convincing evidence that students learn effectively when they are engaged by rich and meaningful projects; when their artistic learning is anchored in artistic production; when there is an easy commerce among the various forms of knowing, including intuitive, craft, symbolic, and notational forms; and when students have ample opportunity to reflect on their progress”(Gardner, p. 49). To that end, a unit with an art history focus had been developed. This unit introduced the works of several artists, and encompassed the theme of Family. The series of five lessons served to drive the study, with the intent to engage students in studio production, and simultaneously immerse students in a learning environment of unit initiatives which were supported by art history exemplars.

As an elementary art educator of eleven years, past personal practice has been to introduce units of study with related art history exemplars which illustrate connections between each lesson’s content, and the art world, with the intent of heightening student cultural awareness. It continues to be the researcher’s strong belief that even the youngest of art students, our 3 year old Preschoolers, benefit greatly from the formal examination of fine art, and how the observations made may reflect the similarities and disparities of their own lives. Not only does the incorporation of art history in the elementary art curriculum become an important vehicle for generating a personal connectedness to the life experiences of students, but it also presents a prime opportunity for the development of a critical eye. It is “the looking we do [that] should be thought through, and thoughtful looking is a way to make thinking better” (Perkins, p. 3).

Figure 1 visually portrays the nuances of this study's intent, which was to go beyond a student's mere exposure to historical exemplars, as previously stated, and explore some alternative ways an art educator may instill a deeper understanding and mastery of art history knowledge.

Figure 1



## **Review of the Literature**

### **Methods of Engaging Students**

Sandra L.H. Alger, an art educator inspired “to present activities for teaching comprehensive art content while maintaining student interest” (Alger, S.L.H., p. viii), authored the educational resource, “Games for Teaching Art”, which is a guide for incorporating art history, criticism, and aesthetics, into the art education curriculum. No longer can or should an art educator simply offer studio experiences to students and expect that this is enough. The continuous pressures placed by parents, administrators, policy makers, not to mention one’s self, call for “the increased demand for high quality lesson content in the areas of art.” (Alger, S. L. H., p. vii). Just as employing “strategies that are planned with developmental principles in mind, and that value the lived experiences each learner brings to the art class, make the kinds of connections that promote understanding, reach learners, and foster the creation of meaning” (Delany, J. M., p. vii) becomes a priority which equates to excellence in art education, and signifies the imperative nature of strong teaching practices, it was the hope of this study to test the idea that involving “students in the active consideration and discussion of art works”(Alger, S.L.H., p. viii), using differentiated modalities, might heighten the overall student knowledge of art history. “Art activities also need to be multisensory, particularly including the sense of touch”(Katter, 1988).

As imparted by Joseph Maxwell, “In qualitative research, both existing theory and grounded theory are legitimate and valuable” (Maxwell, p. 43). Many articles have been found,

offering suggestions for art history lesson plans; however, when considering and comparing actual differentiated teaching methods, with a direct link to art history, the research has yet to be fruitful. One such article by art educator, Pam Carlson, entitled “From”Ugh” to “Ahh”: The Power of Sketchbooks”, describes her method of employing the use of sketchbooks which “helps her students in comfortably digesting prehistoric to present-day art history...while meeting the historical objectives of the National Art Education Standards”(Carlson, 2010). Ms. Carlson goes on to explain how the sketchbook assignments she has created for her high school art students require that they research specific artists, and then choose a work by that artist to reproduce in their sketchbooks. Over the course of a year, a student may have reviewed as many as 14 artists. In agreement with the article, that “finding an educationally sound means by which to comply with the National Standards, as well as successfully getting art history into the hearts and minds of our students” (Carlson, 2010). is something for which art educators strive, the researcher’s interests in this topic originate from a slightly different angle.

### **Related Research Projects**

Howard Gardner and his colleagues at Project Zero created a Developmentally Based Educational Experiment known as Arts PROPEL, during the late 1980’s. This generally new effort for its time represented “an attempt to go beyond ‘sheer production’ in arts education, and to expose students to formal and conceptual knowledge about the arts as well” (Gardner, p. 44). The fact that this initiative was established proves that there was a definite desire to impart art history content to art education students almost twenty-five years ago, and one would reason to believe this notion

continues to percolate amidst art educators today. Therefore the research maintains a focus of importance, in the quest for how best to communicate an understanding of art history to our students.

“Performances of understanding are perhaps the most fundamental element of the Teaching for Understanding framework” (Wiske, p. 72), which was a project developed and investigated by a collaborative research team of teachers in association with the Harvard Graduate School of Education. The aim of the Teaching for Understanding project, as well as the text which reveals the study’s results, is quite similar to the study posed here. Though based on education in general, rather than specifically art education, the findings seem to be applicable to the practices of all teachers, and address how to “foster students’ learning by engaging them in performances of understanding that require them to apply, extend, and synthesize what they know” (Wiske, p. 62). The findings of both Project Zero and Teaching for Understanding provided a promising foundation which has served as a springboard of encouragement as this study set forth.

### **Conclusion**

While the literature seems to equivocally be in favor of incorporating art history into the elementary art education curriculum, no universal agreement as to how contemporary art educators should go about doing so is readily apparent at this time. However, after conducting a more comprehensive evaluation of the existing literature, there seems to be a sufficient like-minded propensity to this study’s current inclination that student understanding may be best achieved through a complete immersion of performance modalities that afford students the opportunity to practice and apply what is being introduced, so as to solidify understanding. “Teaching students not only what art historians have concluded but how art historical conclusions have been reached

actively engages students in a range of thinking processes” (Carroll, p. 92) essential for developing an understanding of art.

It is for these reasons that the methodologies of this investigation proceeded with the aim of enveloping our test group in an art history-rich environment intended to stimulate and engage students in a multisensory smorgasbord of experiential luster. Soaring on the wings of anticipation, it was with great elation that the researcher embarked upon this exciting mission of discovery to ultimately reveal what it means to be meaningful, and how we understand understanding.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Art History in Art Education**

*An investigation of how elementary art students respond to various teaching methods*

#### **Methodologies**

In an effort to diminish the discrepancy between “how children think, and how schools should teach” (Gardner, 1995), a trial of several methodologies had been established for the elementary art studio classroom, to discern the best ways to incorporate art history content into the elementary art curriculum. This chapter will delineate the ways in which the researcher prepared for carrying out this classroom-based study with actual students, collected data, and organized results for analysis.

#### **Design of the Study**

This study has been conducted was through the establishment of a control group, and a test group. Two third grade classes were chosen to take on the roles of each group, and various modes of assessment were used to generate the data necessary for determining an end result “that encompasses the forms of knowing important in the arts”(Gardner, p. 48). While both classes



were exposed to the researcher's current teaching style, in which examples of art history are used to introduce the units and lessons using Feldman and VTS (Visual Teaching Strategies) questioning methods, one class of students experienced a number of supplemental educational tools, and received additional opportunities outside of class, to master art history content. Whether or not these embellishments would yield a greater percentage of art history proficiency in elementary students was yet to be determined. The data for this study has been collected from assessments given to both the control group and the test group, and compared to find key differences in student performance.

In addition to experiencing alterations in teaching methods, the test group also had access to art history stations, games, worksheets, songs, and take-home activity bags to use with their families. This study was predicated on the idea that through increased exposure to varied art history activities, and the resulting conversations that occur in and out of class, students might develop a better grasp of knowledge and content, with which to relate to their own works of art. Guided by the premise that "in order for students to learn, they must be intrinsically motivated or interested in the subject at hand" (Eisner, 1988), the use of games by the test group, became a focus of the data collected.

### **Research Methods**

The research methods employed by this study include myriad ways of generating and gathering data. The chosen methods reflect the incorporation of participant observations, identifying patterns, questionnaires and surveys, student narratives, and art as data. The collection of data has been conducted in the art studio classroom throughout the duration of the study unit, primarily by

maintaining an organized clip-board of lists and charts that could be used to make quick tallies and memos during class. At the end of each school day, the notes were then translated into an even more carefully organized set of charts and lists.

Data had also been simultaneously streaming in, daily, in the form of Activity Bag responses. At the end of each week, the data was compiled even further, into weekly criteria tables, so as to remain ahead of the analytical tasks. The following is an example of the Weekly Research Criteria Chart developed for this study:

## Weekly Research Study Data Collection Criteria Table

<i>Week</i>	Class Discussions (number of students who participated)	Quizzes (number of students who got 80-100%)	Artist Recognition (number of students who exhibited familiarity)	Genre Recognition (number of students who knew the genres)	Vocabulary Knowledge (number of students who knew the terms)	Studio Production (number of students who were engaged in the studio project)	Number of Absent Students
-------------	--	---	--	---	---	--	---------------------------

Control Class							
Test Class							

Upon the completion of the entire unit, the collective weeks’ data entries became a single matrix of results, excitedly awaiting a conclusive review!

As previously mentioned, an accompanying unit with the theme of Family, was created to correspond with this study, in order to provide students with an art production experience, and to utilize studio practices as a vehicle for introducing art history. Students were invited to create a Family Portrait Tunnel Book of their family sharing a moment, or taking part in a special activity together. To introduce this unit, students were shown works by Mary Cassatt, Pierre Auguste Renoir, Georges Seurat, Henri Matisse, Norman Rockwell, and Johannes Vermeer. All of these

artists have paintings which portray families taking part in activities together, or sharing special moments. In several instances, it is the artist's own family being depicted. The researcher also chose these particular artists so as to offer a range of styles, genres and periods for the students to survey.

The unit, which is broken into four lessons, commenced with introducing students to three of the artists. During subsequent lessons, two additional supporting artists and their related works were woven into the study. By the fourth week, students in the test group had “met” all seven artists, and had even taken several home to dinner. The concluding lesson consisted of a sharing of the students' completed Family Portrait Tunnel Books, and a look at how the students' works compared with the fine art exemplars.

### **Data Collection**

The data collection for this study took place primarily in the art studio classroom. In-process memos had been made note of as they occurred, when observing students during the studio production of their Family Portrait Tunnel Books. The choices they made, the conversations they had with peers, and their contributions to class discussions all factored into the aspects of data collected in class. Formative and summative assessments also yielded additional sources of data, as did the written reflections of students, and the Activity Bag journal responses, and Family Questionnaires. All of the data collected was then compiled into chart form, by student, and meticulously maintained on a daily basis.

### **Data Analysis**

The data collected from this study has ultimately become a comparison of results between the achievements of the control group, and those of the test group. The researcher was looking to see if test and quiz scores differentiated in any way, from those of the test group, as a result of the various additional teaching approaches. The researcher was also very interested in the comparative properties of student artwork and reflections, in relation to results gleaned from assessments measuring specifically, art history content knowledge. While data collection had been charted by individual student progress, a look at how the two groups as whole entities measured against each other was to be a strong determinant factor when interpreting the information collected.

As the control group had been subjected to the researcher's standard teaching style, analytic induction may also be of great value when considering how to discern the final results of the study. Certainly, one's previous personal experiences will matter a great deal as it is these very practices, and the continuation or alteration thereof, that have initially fueled this investigation.

### **Conclusion**

It is the hope that the design of this study has been clearly demarcated, and the methodological intentions of the researcher have been orchestrated in such a way as to systematically arrive at a destination of enlightenment. While this chapter has served to reveal

the study's plotted course of action, the following chapter shall aim to dispel all wonderment of the study's findings upon the arrival at the opposite end of this investigatory experience.



## Chapter Four

### Art History in Art Education

*An investigation of how elementary art students respond to various teaching methods*

#### Data Analysis

The intent of this investigation was to discover a better way of teaching elementary students art history content, so as to yield a higher level of mastery in recognition, art appreciation, and increased student engagement. By implementing a series of enhanced learning strategies a Tunnel Book unit with an art history focus, was employed as the vehicle for

discerning the proposed theory's success. Prior to the execution of this classroom-based study, it had been hypothesized that the test class which was to receive numerous supplemental learning tools would incur a greater mastery of art history information, than the control class which did not receive any additional materials or learning aids.

### **The Design of the Study**

The design of the study was based on establishing a Control Class, and a Test Class. Two third grade classes of identical size were chosen to fill the roles of each group. Each class received the identical introduction to a Tunnel Book Unit with a family theme, and an art history focus. To introduce Lesson 1, the researcher began by inviting students to examine three famous works, "Children Playing at the Beach" by Mary Cassatt, "Sunday Afternoon in the Park" by Georges Seurat, and "Le Moulin de la Galette" by Pierre Auguste Renoir. Feldman and VTS (Visual Teaching Strategies) questioning methods were used to encourage students to look deeper into the meanings of each painting and begin to make connections between not only the three works, but also their own life experiences.

The theme of Family was then introduced, and a discussion about artists and their own families and friends as subjects of their work engaged the students, further. The Tunnel Book assignment was then revealed in which students would be asked to create a family portrait of their own family doing something together, or sharing an enjoyable moment, similar to the scenes in the famous works which had just been observed.



### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study are useful for the intended purpose of conveying art history content to elementary art students, in a manner that solidifies a mastery of recognition and establishes a foundation for the development of further art appreciation. The results have discerned that students benefit from an environmental immersion in art history through increased visual and audio logical stimuli in the art studio classroom, in addition to familial reinforcements of the chosen art history material at home.

The findings deepen and increase the understanding of art history education in that the tested methods of integrating songs, games, and activities into art lessons have shown to improve student learning, promote student engagement and motivate students to further pursue art history initiatives. Art educators may find the results useful for the possible incorporation of these teaching methodologies in their own practice, specifically when teaching art history related content, or developing an art history curriculum.

The results of this study are a solid, coherent, and consistent confirmation that the evidence supports the findings which were tested during this class-based investigation. Through a series of criteria charts, tally sheets, and graphs, the data from assessments, student reflections, and class discussions have been collected, organized, and analyzed to depict a considerable differentiation which favors the proficiency of students in the Test class.

The findings are also supportive of the existing knowledge that suggests that higher student engagement yields a greater acquisition of educational mastery. Students are more likely to learn and internalize new information when the educator is able achieve greater levels of

interest in the subject matter. The specific methods of songs, games, and activities which were tested, however, give rise to personal revelations for improving one's own teaching style, and creating a new elementary art history curriculum.

### **Bias**

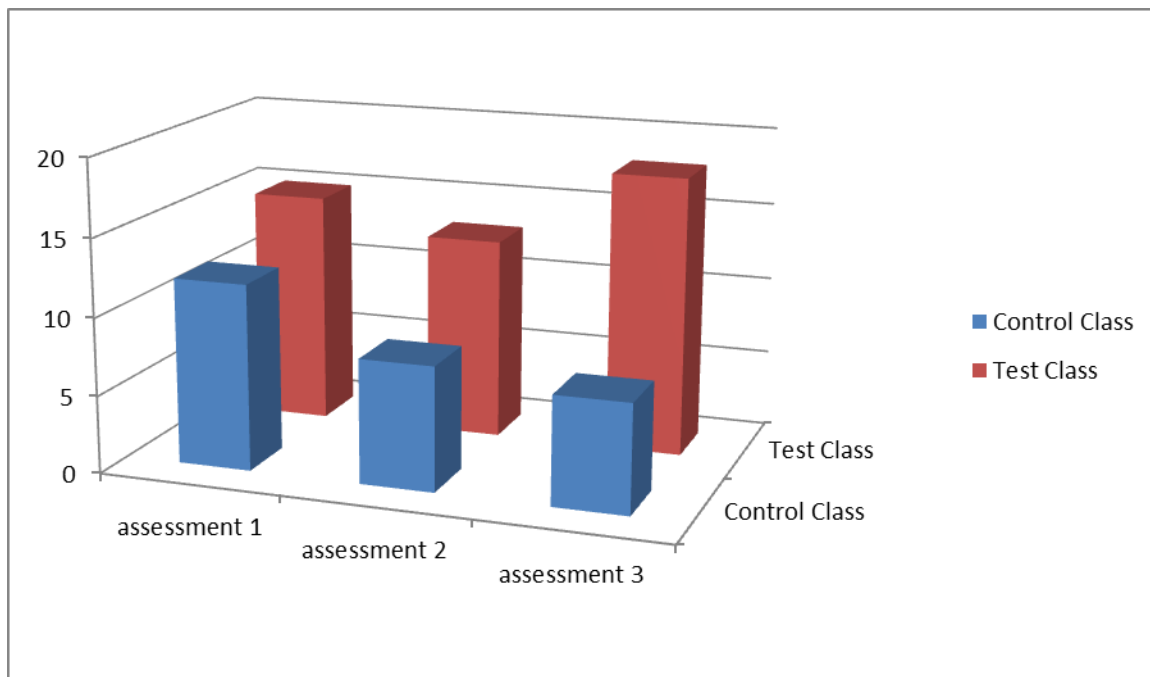
The researcher had initial bias, in that it was speculated as to how the study might ensue. While this was merely a hypothesis of conjecture, hinging on hope for the discovery of a new teaching style, the researcher did not realize just how cohesively the tested methodologies would yield a successful outcome. Met with excitement at every increment of this research experience, the researcher found each task, from the planning, to the preparation, to the implementation, to the analysis and digestion of the results, to be rewarding, reciprocating with insightful clarity and promise.

### **Validity**

Validity was maintained throughout this study by ensuring that both the Control Class and the Test Class received identical presentations, assessments, and art problems. Each class was also measured against the same set of criteria. In this way, consistency was preserved so as to pinpoint the areas or factors that could be attributed for the increasing differences in student performance.

### Analysis of the Data

The data for this study was carefully collected during each class period using a tally method on a clip board, to keep track of the predetermined criteria. The data was further organized into a Criteria Analysis Table which measured the achievements of the Control Class against those of the Test Class. The results from each quiz were similarly compiled into accumulative tables, and finally a graph chart which clearly shows the Test Class results gaining significant distance over the results of the Control Class. The following graph and tables were used weekly to organize the data that had been collected:



**Figure 2. An Assessments Results Bar Graph**

<b><i>Week</i></b> <b><i>1</i></b>	Class Discussions (number of students who participated)	Quizzes (number of students who got 80-100%)	Artist Recognition (number of students who exhibited familiarity)	Genre Recognition (number of students who knew the genres)	Vocabulary Knowledge (number of students who knew the terms)	Studio Production (number of students who were engaged in the studio project)	Number of Absent Students
Control Class	15	N/A	1	0	0	18	2
Test Class	18	N/A	0	2	0	18	1

**Table 2. Week 1 Research Study Data Collection Criteria Table**

<b><i>Week</i></b> <b><i>2</i></b>	Class Discussions (number of students who participated)	Quizzes (number of students who got 80-100%)	Artist Recognition (number of students who exhibited familiarity)	Genre Recognition (number of students who knew the genres)	Vocabulary Knowledge (number of students who knew the terms)	Studio Production (number of students who were engaged in the studio project)	Number of Absent Students
Control Class	7	12	13	5	3	16	0
Test Class	11	15	17	16	8	19	1

**Table 3. Week 2 Research Study Data Collection Criteria Table**

<b>Week 3</b>	Class Discussions (number of students who participated)	Quizzes (number of students who got 80-100%)	Artist Recognition (number of students who exhibited familiarity)	Genre Recognition (number of students who knew the genres)	Vocabulary Knowledge (number of students who knew the terms)	Studio Production (number of students who were engaged in the studio project)	Number of Absent Students
Control Class	8	11	9	6	4	15	0
Test Class	13	17	15	17	12	19	2

**Table 4. Week 3 Research Study Data Collection Criteria Table**

<b>Week 4</b>	Class Discussions (number of students who participated)	Quizzes (number of students who got 80-100%)	Artist Recognition (number of students who exhibited familiarity)	Genre Recognition (number of students who knew the genres)	Vocabulary Knowledge (number of students who knew the terms)	Studio Production (number of students who were engaged in the studio project)	Number of Absent Students
Control Class	11	7	8	6	4	13	1
Test Class	17	18	17	18	15	20	0

**Table 5. Week 4 Research Study Data Collection Criteria Table**

## **Results of the Analysis**

### **The Control Class vs. the Test Class**

The Control Class proceeded in the same manner, completing the Family Portrait, first in pencil, tracing in Sharpie, and then filling in with color using oil pastels. Aside from the initial introductory discussion of the artists and their famous works, there was little further mention of the art history aspect. The Test Class, however, was subjected to songs sung by the researcher about each artist, while the students worked on the studio components of the Family Portraits. In addition, they were offered Artist Word Search Puzzles to complete if they finished early, and were each assigned an Artist Activity Bag to take home and share with their families. The Artist Activity Bags included a biography booklet of the artist, a puppet of the artist, five enlarged color prints by the artist, a word search containing artist related facts and vocabulary, a time-line to show where the artist falls in art history, a memory/concentration type of card game about the artist for families to play, a refrigerator magnet of the work studied in class for the student to keep, a journal to enter thoughts and observations about the artist and their works, and a Family Questionnaire of survey questions for parents to complete answering whether or not they enjoyed the Activity Bag experience. An instruction sheet and check-list accompanied each bag, as well as a contents list which was demarcated with stars to show which activities students could accomplish alone, should their parents or other family members not be available to take part in the experience. Finally, an iridescent flyer listing all of the local art museums in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, and the dates and times they are open, as well as the times when admission is free, was included for families to keep.

The entire Tunnel Book unit was designed to incorporate a total of seven artists and their works, and genres. With each class having 22 students, 25 bags were created for the study, with the intention of rotating them from student to student each week. This equates to three bags for each artist, with two extra bags for Mary Cassatt. This decision of the two extra bags was made to account for unforeseen events such as the arrival of new students (which did happen half way through), or the loss of a bag. Despite that only three of the seven artists were introduced in the first lesson, all of the bags were passed out, so as to get the rotations going. The students were instructed to return the bags the following week, at which time, they would be issued a new artist to bring home. Not knowing how the borrowing of the bags would play out, it was quite an exciting prospect. Anticipating that some of the students would forget to return their bags, the researcher planned to simply extend the loan of one additional week for those bags, and rotate all the others that were returned on time. For this particular study, students were given three opportunities to take home a new Activity Bag. This meant that while students were not able to experience each artist's bag, they were able to keep the bags they did receive for a longer period of time, which included a weekend in the middle of the loan duration. This decision was made to provide ample time for families to complete the activities, and return the bags on schedule.



**Figure 3. A display of the Activity Bags, “From Cassatt to Van Gogh”**



**Figure 4. A display of the Mary Cassatt Activity Bag contents**

### **Lesson Two**

Lesson Two began the same for both the Control Class and the Test Class. A quiz was administered at the opening of the period with questions pertaining to the three artists and related vocabulary that had been introduced the previous week. At first, students were very surprised to have been given a quiz in Art! This first quiz was very simple. It asked the students to look at the three works from last week (“Children Playing at the Beach” by Mary Cassatt, “Le Moulin de la Galette” by Renoir, and “Sunday Afternoon in the Park” by Seurat), which were posted at



the front of the room, this time without labels, and 1. Name one of the three artists you remember, 2. Name one of the three titles you remember, and 3. Name one style you remember. The actual data will be further relayed in clearly organized charts in the Appendix, however, at this time let it be known that the Test Class scored higher than the Control Class on every question.

Following the quiz, the researcher introduced two more artists and showed works that pertained to the family theme of the unit. These included “The Artist’s Family” by Henri Matisse, and “Freedom from Want” by Norman Rockwell. In the Test Class, the two new artist songs were also presented. The researcher then presented a demonstration of tunnel books, showed some examples of tunnel books made by the researcher, and explained how the students were going to convert their family portraits from the previous class, into 3D Family Portrait tunnel books.

As students began to cut apart their family portraits and layer them into three-frame tunnel book constructions, using the foreground middle ground and background details as guides, it seemed that engagement was high in each group. However, for the Test Class, the art studio classroom environment had been embellished with extra art history signs and labels posted on the walls and hung from the ceiling. A mystery art history game had been set up throughout the work space inviting students to casually test their own knowledge as they went about their work, and the researcher managed to keep up with the related art history ditties, while some precious students even sang along. The session for the Control Class was concluded with every student turning in their works in progress, and taking part in a brief closing discussion of the steps to come, and a review of the artists and terms we had covered thus far. The session for the Test

Class concluded in the same way, with the addition of reissuing a new Artist Activity Bag to each student.

### **Lesson Three**

Lesson Three welcomed the students of both groups with a second quiz. While not so shocking this time, the prospects of another quiz were met with a fair amount of groans. Despite being assured that the intent of the quiz was purely for the researcher's own personal teaching improvements, it was apparent that students do not care for assessments of this nature. None the less, the quiz was administered. This time, twice as many questions, for a total of 6, asked students to provide answers to questions such as "Write the name of one artist you know." To this particular question, over half of the students wrote "Mrs. Connolly" (a.k.a. the researcher of this study). This not only caused the researcher to consider more careful wording of questions in subsequent assessment tools, but also added a bit of levity/dismay to the overall conquest at hand. The results from the second quiz showed scores from the Test Class to be once again, higher than those of the Control Class, though not as closely as in the first quiz.

Following the second quiz, the final two artists, Johannes Vermeer and Vincent Van Gogh, and their family related works were introduced. For sessions with the Control Class, all extra labels, signs, songs, and games were removed or concealed. For the Test Class, these embellishments were reinstated. In-production work continued as students completed their family portrait tunnel books. The construction aspect of the tunnel books proved to be slightly challenging for some students, so while there were those who finished early, others were still several steps behind. Students who finished ahead of others were encouraged to assist their peers with the folding or gluing stages. This was the same for both the Control Class and the Test

Class. Lesson Three was concluded with a majority of both groups having fully assembled their tunnel books. In the Test Class, the Activity Bags were shuffled once again, and redistributed.

*\*Each time the bags were returned, they had to be logged in, reorganized, and replenished with new worksheets, new Family Questionnaire surveys, new Instructions/Contents checklist sheets, and new refrigerator magnets which the students keep each time (and hopefully post at home). This task could not be successfully completed during a class period. Therefore, the bags were due back to the art room by every Tuesday, to prepare them for reissuing every Thursday. In many instances, the bags would be returned on the Wednesday, which still allowed for enough time. Those bags that made it back on the Thursday, however, had to be refilled that day. The fresh bags always made it to the Test Class students by the end of the day, as the researcher could quickly sort them all out during a Prep period, though this was not ideal.*

#### **Lesson Four**

Lesson Four was the concluding lesson for this study. The researcher welcomed the students of each group with yet a final assessment task, though this time it was a matching worksheet where all of the answers were provided. The students had to match each artist with the name of the corresponding artwork. The results of the matching quiz similarly yielded higher scores with the Test Class, than those of the Control Class, yet displayed the greatest discrepancy of the three assessments. It would seem, then, that the explanation for this crescendo of improvement observed in the Test Class, compared to the static achievements of the Control Class may be in part due to the additional supplementations.

The remainder of the class was devoted to working towards completing the family portrait tunnel books, and sharing the final works. Once students had finished constructing the books, they were asked to fill out reflection tickets which encompassed writing a narrative piece to accompany the artwork. Students were particularly requested to include a description of the family activity portrayed, the names of the family members, a feeling or emotion they associate with the family outing chosen, and the artist that most closely resembles the style or scene they chose to depict. While not every student was able to complete the full construction of the tunnel book and the reflection ticket, additional time will be allotted to those students, beyond the parameters of this particular study. Towards the end of the period, students were invited to share their tunnel books and reflection tickets with the class.

The following are some examples of the student's completed family portrait tunnel books:



**Figure 5. A Student Tunnel Book, “A Day at the Beach”**



Figure 6. A Student Tunnel Book, “My Family Cruise”



Figure 7. A Student Tunnel Book, “Family Fun in the Sun”



Figure 8. A Student Tunnel Book, “My Family and Me”



Figure 9. A Student Tunnel Book, “My Family Campout”

## Conclusion

Prior to launching the practical applications of this investigation, the researcher had questioned whether or not the implementation of additional teaching tools, namely songs, games, a content-rich art studio atmosphere, and take-home Activity Bags would increase the art history awareness of elementary students, while cultivating a stronger home/family-art studio classroom relationship. After analyzing all of the data, the results seem to suggest that student learning of art history content does improve with the incorporation of supplemental teaching tools and methods. The results from the Test Class consistently scored higher in each assessment, when compared to the results from the Control Class. While data has implicated that the initial differentiation was rather slight, a larger disparity was observed in the subsequent assessments, with the Test Class Scoring much higher than the Control Class by the final quiz results. Interestingly, the reflection tickets of the Test Class were also completed with a more thorough quality, and able to incorporate unit vocabulary and artist content with greater fluidity.

The findings of this investigation are particularly intriguing; as the researcher may now apply these results to the composition of a completely new elementary art history curriculum, in which the incorporated Activity Bags and additional tools may potentially become available to every class in every grade from Pre-K – 4, and tailored to suit each particular unit design. In addition, the researcher is pleased to discover the overall enthusiasm from the parents and families that took part in this study. While the task was overwhelming to some, as any working, busy parent can relate to, most found the Activity Bags provided a fun, healthy, no-cost, technology-free, and educational way to spend time with their child. Many parents added that they found it to be equally educational for themselves, as well.



In Chapter 5, a conclusive overview of this exciting study will be presented, during which the practical applications for future elementary art students will be discussed. Beyond the development of techniques with which art educators may successfully teach art history to elementary students, the findings of this research open the door to a potential versatility for introducing additional art education subjects.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Art History in Art Education**

*An investigation of how elementary art students respond to various teaching methods*

#### **Conclusion of the Study**

This chapter concludes the evolution of this investigation's promotion of art history in elementary art education. At the commencement of this study, it was of great interest, to examine the ways in which students could benefit from a richer art history experience during art class. To follow are the summary of these findings in respect to how the results correlate with one's own practice initiatives, as well as those of the art education field, and the overall impact of importance this study has generated for our future generations of young artists.

#### **Discussion**

##### **Personal Impact of the Study**

The researcher has found the traverses of this investigation to be quite exciting. At each juncture, from theorizing a concept, to developing new learning materials, to actually launching into the classroom-based extravaganza, to analyzing all of the data that streamed in, it has been a kaleidoscope of exhilaration, anticipation, and wonderment. Due to the deep personal interest in

the topic at hand, the researcher was exuberant about the possibilities of this study, and its implementation. However, one knows that when working with actual students, there may be innumerable factors which can, and do, present themselves at will. Fortunately, this has proved to be a positive research experience, affording results that will improve one's personal teaching practices, and offer potentially useful ideas to others in the art education field.

### **Impact on Practice**

While the researcher has always had an affinity for art history, and recognized the importance of cultivating this appreciation in elementary art students, past methods of doing so lacked the ability to engage students in a way that achieved a true and meaningful understanding of art history and how it relates to their present lives. The impact of this study on practice, however, have been multifaceted, and go beyond the initially posed research questions. It is true that the results have gestured toward the advocacy of incorporating the tested supplemental teaching methods of singing, games, puzzles, and activity bags. Yet, what all of these incentives have in common is the way they gain the students' attention, use multisensory teaching tools to reach a greater number of learning styles, and engage students in a way that captivates the imagination, rather than alienates the spark for creation. The positive feedback from incorporating parental involvement, reinforced art concepts that had been introduced in class, as well as developed a vital home-school connection which values the arts. The broader concept of designing art lessons that resonate with students on a personal level, and account for the multiple intelligences of any given population, may now be applied throughout the entire art education curriculum, and not limited solely to the area of art history. The various methods presented in

this study could easily be adapted to universally compliment any number of art education related content areas.

A common thread that ran throughout this study was that while all of these methods were practiced as a group in class, and as a family at home, they could also be accomplished alone. In this way, the intrinsic behaviors of art were modeled for students. During class, the energized art studio classroom environment was focused on promoting the instructional songs, games, and ideas. The social climate in the Test Class was markedly positive and energetic, as we sang together, quizzed each other, and cultivated a milieu of camaraderie, comfort, and acceptance. Yet, these were all things that could be accomplished by oneself once given the tools to do so. A catchy tune, for instance, that replays the useful information about Van Gogh, could remind a student of the pleasant time they experienced in art class, and reaffirm a successful learning event which promotes a receptive response towards future art history encounters.

This is much like art itself and the act of creation. An artist often needs to spend a period of time being stimulated or inspired by the company of others and the outside world, and then experiences moments when one is alone developing ideas and carrying them out, only to rejoin a society of one's peers and present one's artistic accomplishments. Creating art is a personal experience that also beckons the appreciation of others. The human spirit is awakened by the visual interpretations of life and how an artist is able to portray the themes that relate to our everyday experiences. By postulating these concepts within the arena of art history, students were able to identify with artists from the past and take away much more than just a name or a title that may or may not be remembered. These are all considered to be invaluable revelations which the researcher is not only grateful for, but will excitedly put into practice.

## **Recommendations**

### **Implications for further research**

The encouraging nature of the results of this study allude to the possibility of equally promising outcomes among students in other grade levels, as well. Implications for further research, therefore, could potentially encompass the creation of an entire art history curriculum for students in Pre-K through 4, which mirrors the same learning methodologies and tests for similar success in student achievement. A similar procedure of singling out two chosen classes in each grade level to pilot the new curricula would be advantageous for developing a differentiated program appropriate for each age group. While it is suspected that several aspects may carry over from one grade to the next, ensuring a positive comfort level will be imperative for establishing a continuity that encourages students to build upon their previous art history foundations.

## **Conclusion to the Research**

### **Advice to the field of art education**

As art educators, we believe in the importance of keeping the Arts alive in our schools. Aside from the multitude of ways in which art education supports the academic achievements of several other disciplines, the value of an enriching artistic experience comes as second nature to those of us who have chosen this field. This study has shown that developing an appreciation for

art, and a receptiveness to learning art history, especially among our youngest artists, is not only well within the realm of what is possible for art educators, but could bring about a revitalization of how the arts are perceived by our students, their families, and the communities in which we all live.

### **Advice to art teachers**

For some, change is not always easy to embrace. As teachers, we learn to love what has worked in the past, and grow to depend on these consistencies for ensuring classroom management, stability, and order. As artists, however, we can appreciate that there are always an infinite number of solutions to any given problem, even teaching. This study has presented an array of educational strategies which have been tested and been shown to yield positive results. Though it may seem daunting to adopt every single learning tool at once, one could certainly employ a gradual sampling of the various ideas, and in doing so may discover a good fit for one's students, among them. A large part of this study's success was engaging the students' interest when introducing art history, and maintaining a high level of enthusiasm for the historical content throughout the duration of the unit (See Appendix A.). "Research shows that learners can reach higher levels of achievement through their engagement with the arts" (Eger, pp. 16)., and " 'provide young people with authentic learning experiences that engage their minds, hearts, and souls' " (Eger, pp. 17). Incorporating fresh tactics could be just what is required to excite both teacher and students alike.

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## **Appendix A**

### **BOSTON UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS IN EDUCATION**

#### **UNIT PLAN** Art Education Program

**NAME:** Erica B. Connolly

**THEME:** Family, with an Art History focus

**UNIT RATIONALE:** A Tunnel Book Unit with a family theme, and an art history focus, this unit designed for third grade invites students to look closely at the works of seven famous artists, and relate the artworks to their own lives and creations of their family portraits. "Art education is an enterprise that encompasses teaching and learning to make and understand art, as well as finding out about the world and ourselves through art." (Feldman, p.2).

In addition to presenting the art history content, this unit incorporates the use of several piloted learning modalities to increase student understanding and engagement, including songs, games, word puzzles, and take-home activity bags which further expound upon the family theme.

**DESCRIPTIVE TITLE:** “My Family and Me in 3D”

**GOALS:** To use the works of famous artists as a way of presenting students with the idea that a family theme is timeless and reoccurs throughout art history as a reflection of human nature, in addition to developing a propensity for art appreciation while allowing students to recognize the ways these works intrinsically relate to their own lives and familial relationships.

**Understand:** How to create a family portrait that incorporates a fore ground, middle ground, and background, using oil pastels.

**Know:** How to convert a 2D family portrait into a three-frame tunnel book construction.

**Be able to:** Engage in a discussion which encompasses the similarities between their works, and the artist exemplars introduced in the unit, with confident recognition, as well as incorporates the correct use of the terms and concepts of the unit.

**INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPTS:** The instructional concepts of this unit include family portraits, creating a composition that achieves depth and perspective as a result of including a fore ground, middle ground, and background, how to construct a tunnel book, and developing a recognition of famous artists and their works and genres, while relating these concepts to the aspects of their own lives.

**LESSONS:**

**Lesson 1** – Students will be introduced to the first three of seven artists and their works. The teacher will lead the class in a discussion that elaborates on the theme of family, how artists create a sense of depth using fore ground middle ground, and background, using Feldman and VTS observational techniques. The students will then be invited to begin creating their family portraits using pencil, permanent marker, and oil pastel.

**Lesson 2** – Students will finalize family portraits, and begin converting them into a three-frame tunnel book construction. Two additional artists and their works will also be introduced.

**Lesson 3** – Students will complete the tunnel book construction and make final compositional adjustments. The final two artists will also be introduced to the class.

**Lesson 4** – Students will complete a reflection ticket to accompany the family portrait tunnel books, and participate in a group sharing of the tunnel books created by their peers.

\*Assessments to test for understanding and art history recognition may be given in Lessons 2, 3, and 4.

**INSTRUCTOR VISUALS:**

- Enlarged prints of the featured works by the seven artists
- Tunnel book examples created by the art teacher
- A demonstration model created by the art teacher

## **Lesson Plan 1**

**LESSON PLAN FORMAT:** Boston University College of Fine Arts/Art Education Department

**TEACHER’S NAME:** Erica B. Connolly

**SCHOOL:** Mary R. Fisher Elementary School      **DATE(S) OF LESSON:** Early Fall

**GRADE:** Third Grade      **LENGTH OF LESSON:** 1 Class Session

**TITLE OF LESSON:** “Mary Cassatt and Friends”

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIT:** Introductory Lesson

**RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE:** This lesson introduces students to the art of Mary Cassatt, Pierre Auguste Renoir, and Georges Seurat. Students examine the works by each individual artist, and then collectively as a group of related paintings that all share the theme of groups of people, or families in a setting that establishes depth. Students are then asked to visualize a time they have spent with their own family, sharing a pleasant moment or taking part in a fun activity together, and to then use that memory as the basis of their own family portrait.

### **I. PROBLEM/ACTIVITY**

This lesson challenges students to synthesize what they have learned about group portraiture and establishing depth within a composition, in order to generate their own family portraits which will latter become tunnel books.

## II. GOALS

Students should...

Understand:

- The techniques and materials used in portraiture and compositional drawing. (MACF Standards: 1)
- The steps required to create a tunnel book structure. (MACF Standards: 1 and 9)

Know:

- How to develop a composition by working through a series of sketches and ideas. (MACF Standards: 4)
- How to use oil pastels to blend colors and create a complete portrait of rich tones. (MACF Standards: 1)

Be able to:

- Make connections between art and human nature in their daily lives and describe the art history exemplars and observed prints using art vocabulary. (MACF Standard: 5 and 10)



### **III. OBJECTIVES**

- Demonstrate an understanding of how to create a sketch that incorporates the members of their family taking part in an activity or sharing in a special moment while establishing depth with a fore ground, middle ground, and background.
- Use pencils and permanent markers to draw the family portrait composition.
- Use oil pastels to add color to their family portraits.

### **IV. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**

#### **Materials**

- Sketch paper
- #2 Pencils and erasers
- 12 x 18 white poster board
- Permanent markers
- Oil pastels
- Prints of works by Mary Cassatt, Renoir, and Seurat
- Teacher’s demonstration family portrait in oil pastel
- Teacher’s tunnel book demonstration model
- Vocabulary poster of related unit terms
- Songs about Mary Cassatt, Renoir, and Seurat
- “We are Family” Sister Sledge song version

- Art history time-line
- Art History Activity Bags

### **Exemplars**

- *Cildren Playing at the Beach*, 1884 , Mary Cassatt – oil painting
- *Le Moulin de la Gallette* , 1876, Pierre Auguste Renoir – oil painting
- *Sunday Afternoon in the Park*, 1884, Georges Seurat – oil painting
- Teacher made portrait and tunnel book models

## **V. MOTIVATION**

### Topic Questions:

- When was a time that you can visualize, of you and your family spending a moment together, or taking part in a fun activity?

### Association Questions:

- What is setting?
- How can artists use size and scale to create perspective and depth?
- What are some key aspects that would indicate where your family portrait is taking place?

#### Visualization Questions:

- Could properties of the rainforest environment provide ideas for incorporating textures and patterns in your plate designs?
- Could patterns from examples of African culture be used in your own animal designs?

#### Transition Questions:

- How will you choose which family memory to depict?
- How will you decide which figures and objects to place in the fore ground, middle ground, and back ground?

## VI. PROCEDURES

**Demonstration/discussion of techniques** - The teacher will engage the class in a discussion introducing the artworks of Marry Cassatt, Pierre Auguste Renoir, and Georges Seurat, and the concepts of portraiture and composition. The teacher will also discuss book arts, with a particular focus on the tunnel book structure, and explain the steps of creating a tunnel book. Vocabulary terms for each aspect of the lesson will be introduced both verbally and visually on a displayed poster.

**Distribution** – The teacher will distribute sketch paper, pencils, and erasers to each student, for the development of their family portrait compositions. The teacher will also pass out Expectations check-lists to each student, with the intention that they will individually be responsible for keeping track of their progress throughout the unit.

**Work Period** – Students will work individually on the development of their sketches which will include a fore ground, a middle ground, and a background, as well as their family members and themselves. As students finalize their sketch ideas, they may begin drawing the final compositions onto the white poster board. As the students are working, the teacher may play the musical recording of “We are Family” to set the thematic tone for this unit.

**Clean-up** – With ten minutes remaining in the class period, the teacher will request that students begin to put away materials, and turn in the family portraits. The teacher will appoint two students to collect all materials, another student to collect the expectation check-lists. The family portraits and expectation check-lists will be placed in a class folder and stored until the following lesson.

**Closure** – With five minutes remaining in the class period, the teacher will review the terms, vocabulary, and concepts introduced throughout the class. The teacher’s expectations will be reviewed, and our class goals for the next lesson will be discussed. At this time the teacher will distribute an Art History Activity Bag to each student. A container of popsicle sticks with each student’s name on it may be used to determine which artist each student takes home this week. The teacher will explain the contents of each bag, and remind students that additional instruction sheets are included in each bag. The students may have the Activity Bags for the rest of the week and the weekend, but they will be due back at the beginning of the following week. Students will be issued a new artist bag at the end of next art class.

## **VII. EVALUATIONS**

- Participation in class discussions
- Individual in-process interactions
- Expectations Check-lists
- Lesson Rubric

## **Lesson Plan 2**

**LESSON PLAN FORMAT:** Boston University College of Fine Arts/Art Education Department

**TEACHER’S NAME:** Erica B. Connolly

**SCHOOL:** Mary R. Fisher Elementary School      **DATE(S) OF LESSON:** Early Fall

**GRADE:** Third Grade      **LENGTH OF LESSON:** 1 Class Session

**TITLE OF LESSON:** “We are Family”

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIT:** Second Lesson

**RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE:** This lesson introduces students to the next two artists of the unit, Henri Matisse, and Norman Rockwell. In a class discussion, students examine paintings by both of these artists and realize the repeated themes of family that reoccur throughout their works. Each artist uses their own or another’s family members as subjects for their art to reflect familial relationships, and people spending time together. As third graders are immersed in the concepts of portraiture and depth of composition, they may relate their own family portraits to the works of these artists, while simultaneously delving into the new art form of tunnel books.

### **VIII. PROBLEM/ACTIVITY**

This lesson challenges students to convert their family portraits into three-frame tunnel books. A short quiz to assess the retention of information introduced in the previous lesson, will also be administered.

## **IX. GOALS**

Students should...

Understand:

- The techniques and materials used in bookmaking. (MACF Standards: 1)
- The steps required to create a tunnel book structure. (MACF Standards: 1 and 9)

Know:

- How to develop a family portrait design by working through a series of sketches and ideas. (MACF Standards: 4)

Be able to:

- Make connections between art and relationships in their daily lives and describe tunnel book exemplars and observed prints using art vocabulary. (MACF Standard: 5 and 10)

## **X. OBJECTIVES**

- Demonstrate an understanding of how to create a composition with depth of field.
- Use the three-frame construction to splice apart and reconfigure their family pastel family portraits.

- Use glue sticks, frames, and accordion sides to build their tunnel books.

## **XI. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**

### **Materials**

- 12 x 18 white poster board (1 per student)
- 12 x 18 white poster board frames (2 per student)
- 12 x 9 white poster board pre-folded accordion sides (2 per student)
- Glue sticks
- Oil pastels
- Scissors
- Art history songs about Mary Cassatt, Renoir, Seurat, Matisse, and Norman Rockwell
- “We are Family” Sesame Street DVD version
- Art history time-line
- Vocabulary poster of related unit terms
- Artist Activity Bags

### **Exemplars**

- *Children Playing at the Beach*, 1884 , Mary Cassatt – oil painting
- *Le Moulin de la Gallette* ,1876, Pierre Auguste Renoir – oil painting



- *Sunday Afternoon in the Park*, 1884, Georges Seurat – oil painting
- *The Family of the Artist*, 1911, Henri Matisse – oil painting
- *Freedom from Want...*, 1943, Norman Rockwell – oil painting
- Teacher made family portrait and tunnel book models

## **XII. MOTIVATION**

Topic Questions:

- Where in your composition can you find the divisions between the foreground, the middle ground, and the back ground?

Association Questions:

- Which of the artists that we have studied in this unit, most closely relate to your own family portrait composition?
- How could you describe your family portrait using at least two of the vocabulary terms we have been studying?

Visualization Questions:

- What is a tunnel book?
- What event or events are taking place in your family portrait?
- How are you going to make your family portrait look three-dimensional?
- Which layer will your focal point be a part of?

## Transition Questions:

- How will you choose where to make the division cuts on your family portrait?
- How could you use oil pastel to bring similar colors from the background forward to establish unity and continuity within the piece?

**XIII. PROCEDURES**

**Demonstration/discussion of techniques** - The teacher will begin this lesson by administering a three question quiz. This quiz will assess what information students have retained from Lesson One regarding recognition of the works by Mary Cassatt, Renoir, and Seurat. While looking at the three works, Students will be asked to write down 1. the name of any of the three artists, 2. the title of any of the three works, and 3. the name of either of the two styles. The quizzes will then be collected, and the answers revealed in a discussion which engages the class. The teacher will then introduce two new artists, Henri Matisse, and Norman Rockwell, display works by each artist, and relay the way these artists also used family members, and family scenes as subjects for their work. The teacher will also discuss book arts, with a particular focus on the tunnel book structure, and explain the steps of creating a three-frame tunnel book. Vocabulary terms for each aspect of the lesson will be introduced both verbally and visually on a displayed poster. The teacher will also lead the class in singing the songs about each of the five artists.

**Distribution** – The teacher will distribute the in-process family portraits, each student’s expectations check-list, and oil pastels. Students will be invited to help themselves to frames, backings, pre-folded accordion sides, scissors, and glue sticks from the front supplies table as they become ready for the next steps in the tunnel book constructions. The teacher will circulate throughout the art studio classroom offering individual assistance as needed, while signing the artist songs.

**Work Period** – Students will work individually on the development of their family portrait tunnel books. The teacher will circulate throughout the art studio classroom offering individual assistance as needed, while signing the artist songs. As the students are working, the teacher may also play the Sesame Street DVD musical recording, “We are Family” to set the thematic tone for this unit.

**Clean-up** – With ten minutes remaining in the class period, the teacher will request that students begin to put away materials, and turn in their works in progress, as well as their expectations check-lists which will be placed in a class folder and stored until the following lesson.

**Closure** – With five minutes remaining in the class period, the teacher will review the terms, vocabulary, and concepts introduced throughout the class. The teacher’s expectations will be reviewed, and our class goals for the next lesson will be discussed. Students will then be issued a new Artist Activity Bag to take home.

## **EVALUATIONS**

- Participation in class discussions

- Art history quiz
- Individual in-process interactions
- Expectations Check-lists
- Lesson Rubric

### **Lesson Plan 3**

**LESSON PLAN FORMAT:** Boston University College of Fine Arts/Art Education Department

**TEACHER'S NAME:** Erica B. Connolly

**SCHOOL:** Mary R. Fisher Elementary School      **DATE(S) OF LESSON:** Early Fall

**GRADE:** Third Grade      **LENGTH OF LESSON:** 1 Class Session

**TITLE OF LESSON:** “1, 2, 3, Standing Free”

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIT:** Third Lesson

**RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE:** This lesson introduces students to the final two artists of the unit, Vincent Van Gogh, and Johannes Vermeer, as further examples of artists who have drawn on the themes of portraiture to inspire their artwork. Though these last two artists do not offer many examples of family or groups of people, they present good examples for finding similarities and differences within contrasting subjects, in addition to introducing two more famous art history figures. In this unit students have been able to scaffold their art history knowledge while being asked to relate the observed themes to their own family portraits, thus solidifying a foundation for further art appreciation.

#### **PROBLEM/ACTIVITY**

This lesson challenges students to synthesize what they have learned about portraiture, compositional depth and perspective, art history and tunnel books arts, and apply these tenants to

the tasks of completing their artworks. A second assessment quiz will also be given to reevaluate the students' art history mastery.

#### **XIV. GOALS**

Students should...

Understand:

- The techniques and materials used in creating a dynamic composition with oil pastel. (MACF Standards: 1)
- The steps required to create a tunnel book structure. (MACF Standards: 1 and 9)

Know:

- How to develop a tunnel book through to the final phases of construction. (MACF Standards: 4)

Be able to:

- Make connections between art and humanity in their daily lives and describe art history exemplars and observed prints using art vocabulary. (MACF Standard: 5 and 10)

#### **XV. OBJECTIVES**

- Demonstrate an understanding of how to complete their tunnel books using good craftsmanship and showing attention to detail.

- Write a reflection statement that portrays knowledge of the tunnel book and portraiture processes, as well as the ability to relate the completed works to examples in art history.

## **XVI. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**

### **Materials**

- 12 x 18 white poster board (1 per student)
- 12 x 18 white poster board frames (2 per student)
- 12 x 9 white poster board pre-folded accordion sides (2 per student)
- #2 Pencils and erasers
- Glue sticks
- Oil pastels
- Scissors
- Art history songs about Mary Cassatt, Renoir, Seurat, Matisse, Norman Rockwell, Vincent Van Gogh, and Johannes Vermeer
- “We are Family” Jordan Pruitt version
- Art history time-line
- Vocabulary poster of related unit terms
- Artist Activity Bags

### **Exemplars**

- *Children Playing at the Beach*, 1884 , Mary Cassatt – oil painting

- *Le Moulin de la Gallette*, 1876, Pierre Auguste Renoir – oil painting
- *Sunday Afternoon in the Park*, 1884, Georges Seurat – oil painting
- *The Family of the Artist*, 1911, Henri Matisse – oil painting
- *Freedom from Want...*, 1943, Norman Rockwell – oil painting
- *Sunflowers*, 1888, Vincent Van Gogh – oil painting
- *The Milkmaid*, 1660, Johannes Vermeer – oil painting
- Teacher made family portrait and tunnel book models

## **XVII. MOTIVATION**

Topic Questions:

- Which of the artists we have studied do you most relate to in terms of the composition of your own family portrait?

Association Questions:

- What tone or mood does your family portrait convey?
- Does the mood of your family portrait match the feelings you have of your memory of the time you chose to depict?
- Do you think people of long ago, portrayed by the artists we have been studying, experienced the same feelings as we do today?



## Visualization Questions:

- What steps do you need to take to complete your tunnel book construction so that it is free standing?
- Once your tunnel book is fully assembled and successfully free standing, how will you decide whether or not to add more oil pastel to the outer frame, or additional 3D elements to finish the artwork?

## Transition Questions:

- Which two vocabulary terms could you use to describe your tunnel book to a classmate?
- Which two vocabulary terms could you use to describe the work of someone else in the class?

**XVIII. PROCEDURES**

**Demonstration/discussion of techniques** – The teacher will welcome the students to art, and begin by giving a second quiz which asks students to fill in six blanks with the correct artists, titles, and terms. Following the quiz, a discussion will ensue, revealing the answers to the quiz and further discussing the art history exemplars. The final two artists of Vincent Van Gogh and Johannes Vermeer will be introduced as well. While the works of these last two artists do not quite fit into the family portrait theme as the previous artists have, they offer famous examples from art

history and present the possibilities for observing clear similarities and differences between the collections of studied works.

**Distribution** – Following the class discussion which compares and contrast all of the art history exemplars, the teacher will distribute the in-process student works, and invite the class to help themselves to any additional materials they may need to complete their works, form the front table. Students who finish their tunnel books before class is over may either choose to do an art history word puzzle sheet, play an art history matching/concentration game at the Games Station, or assist peers with the completion of their tunnel books. As students work, the teacher will resume the spirited renditions of the art history ditties, and encourage students to sing along.

**Clean-up** – With ten minutes remaining in the class period, the teacher will ask students to start putting away all of the art materials, updating their unit expectations check-lists, and turning in their tunnel books to the front table.

**Closure** – With five minutes remaining in the class period, the teacher will review all of the artists, their works, and the related terms in a playful call and response exchange. The Activity Bags will also be distributed for a third time, using the popsicle stick method to reshuffle the artists, and choose new students.

## EVALUATIONS

- Participation in class discussions
- Individual in-process interactions
- Art history Quiz # 2

- Participation in class sing-alongs
- Expectations Check-lists
- Lesson Rubric

## **Lesson Plan 4**

**LESSON PLAN FORMAT:** Boston University College of Fine Arts/Art Education Department

**TEACHER’S NAME:** Erica B. Connolly

**SCHOOL:** Mary R. Fisher Elementary School      **DATE(S) OF LESSON:** Early Fall

**GRADE:** Third Grade      **LENGTH OF LESSON:** 1 Class Session

**TITLE OF LESSON:** “We are Family in 3D”

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIT:** Final Lesson

**RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE:** This lesson concludes this art history unit

### **PROBLEM/ACTIVITY**

Students will be asked to complete their family portrait tunnel books during this lesson, if they have not already done so. Students will also be asked to fill out a reflection ticket to accompany their finished artwork, and take part in a group sharing of their peers tunnels books and reflections. A final matching quiz will also be administered.

### **XIX. GOALS**

Students should...

Understand:

- How to compare and contrast the art history exemplars, and observe the similarities and differences they present. (MACF Standard: 8 )

Know:

- How to incorporate the vocabulary terms of the unit when discussing the art history exemplars, as well as their own works and the works of their peers. (MACF Standards: 4 and 8 )

Be able to:

- Successfully execute all of the steps necessary for completing their family portrait tunnel books. (MACF Standard: 1)
- Satisfactorily complete a reflection ticket that portrays the mastery of specific art history information, and describes their artwork in a way that exhibits and understanding for the content of the unit. (MACF Standard: 5)
- Participate in a group sharing session of their peers' completed tunnel books. (MACF Standard: 5 )

## **XX. OBJECTIVES**

- .To allow students an opportunity to complete t heir family portrait tunnel books, and reflect on their accomplishments, using the art history background they have received over the course of the unit.
- To give students the opportunity to present their completed works to their peers, as well as view the accomplishments of peers against a backdrop of the unit's art history influences.

## XXI. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

### Materials

- 12 x 18 white poster board (1 per student)
- 12 x 18 white poster board frames (2 per student)
- 12 x 9 white poster board pre-folded accordion sides (2 per student)
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Oil pastels
- Art history songs about Mary Cassatt, Renoir, Seurat, Matisse, Norman Rockwell, Vincent Van Gogh, and Johannes Vermeer
- Reflection Tickets
- Art history time-line
- Vocabulary poster of related unit terms
- “We Are Family” music recording
- Artist Activity Bags

### Exemplars

- *Children Playing at the Beach*, 1884 , Mary Cassatt – oil painting
- *Le Moulin de la Gallette* ,1876, Pierre Auguste Renoir – oil painting
- *Sunday Afternoon in the Park*, 1884, Georges Seurat – oil painting
- *The Family of the Artist*, 1911, Henri Matisse – oil painting
- *Freedom from Want ...*,1943, Norman Rockwell – oil painting

- *Sunflowers*, 1888, Vincent Van Gogh – oil painting
- *The Milkmaid*, 1660, Johannes Vermeer – oil painting
- Teacher made family portrait and tunnel book models

## XXII. MOTIVATION

### Topic Questions:

- As a result of studying these artists and their paintings, do you think there are any differences between families of the past, and families today?

### Association Questions:

- Which of the art history exemplars have influenced the choices you have made about your own family portraits, most?

### Visualization Questions:

- What are some of the remaining steps you would like to carry out in order to complete your tunnel book and present your best artwork?
- How do you feel when you imagine presenting your completed tunnel book to your family members?

### Transition Questions:

- What is your favorite part, or the most important fact about your family portrait tunnel book that you want to share with your peers?

- What is one way you will be able to identify success in a peer's tunnel book?

### **XXIII. PROCEDURES**

**Demonstration/discussion of techniques** – The teacher will welcome students to Art and begin the class by administering the final quiz of the unit, in which students will be asked to match the artists in the first column, to the titles of famous works in the second column. Once the quizzes have been collected, the teacher will review the correct answers, and explain that this will be a class for completing the tunnel books, reflection tickets, and sharing with peers.

**Work Period** – The students will be given the next fifteen minutes to complete their tunnel books, fill out a reflection ticket, and clean up their materials. If students should finish early, they may either work on an art history word puzzle, play an art history game at the Games station or assist peers with completing their tunnel books. The remaining fifteen minutes of class will be for students to present their artworks to their peers. Students, who are still working, may continue to do so. However, those students who have finished will be asked to stand their tunnel books up at their seats, facing the class, and take turns presenting. The teacher will encourage the incorporation of unit vocabulary in the presentations and discussions, as well as relaying which of the exemplar artists' works most resemble each student's artwork.



**Clean-up** – With five minutes remaining, the final students who have yet to put their materials away may do so. Completed tunnel books will be turned in at the front table so the teacher may have them to create a display in the school’s foyer.

**Closure** – To conclude this unit, the teacher will ask the students for their reactions to taking home the Activity Bags. The teacher will also ask the students to keep their eyes open for times when they may encounter examples of famous artworks, or mention of the artists they have been introduced to, throughout their reading, television viewing, or times spent out in society. In closing, the teacher will play the “We Are Family” music recording one final time as the class exits the art studio classroom.

## **EVALUATIONS**

- Participation in class discussions
- Participation in peer sharing
- Individual in-process interactions
- Quiz # 3
- Expectations Check-lists
- Reflection tickets
- Lesson Rubric

## Appendix A.2

### **Art History Song Lyrics**

Written by Erica B. Connolly

#### **Mary Cassatt**

*(To the tune of Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star)*

Mary Cassatt, Mary Cassatt

She loved to paint children

and families a lot.

#### **Pierre Auguste Renoir**

*(To the tune of Hickory Dickory Dock)*

Pierre Auguste Renoir, Pierre Auguste Renoir

He helped to invent Impressionism

Pierre Auguste Renoir.

**Georges Seurat**

*(To the tune of Baa, Baa, Black Sheep)*

Georges Seurat, Georges Seurat

Invented Pointillism

and painted with dots.

**Henri Matisse**

*(To the tune of If You're Happy and You Know it)*

If you're happy and you know it, say Matisse

If you're happy and you know it, say Matisse

If you're happy using shapes in colorful designs,

cutting paper or with paint, say Matisse.

**Norman Rockwell**

*(To the tune of Frere Jacques)*

Norman Rockwell, Norman Rockwell,  
An American painter, an American painter,  
Painted people doing everyday things,  
Very well, very well.

**Vincent Van Gogh**

*(To the tune of Happy Birthday)*

Vincent Van Gogh  
Loved Flowers, you know,  
And Starry Nights  
Oh, Vincent Van Gogh.

**Johannes Vermeer**

*(To the tune of Jack and Jill)*

Johannes Vermeer painted very clearly,

People all together.

A famous Dutch artist from long ago,

He also painted people quietly alone.

## Appendix B

Figure B.1 Photograph of Song Posters



Figure B. 2 Photograph of Art History Mystery game



Figure B. 3 Photograph of Art History Mystery game



Figure B. 4 Photograph of Pierre Auguste Renoir Activity Bag display



Figure B. 5 Photograph of Georges Seurat Activity Bag display





Figure B. 6 Photograph of Henri Matisse Activity Bag display



Figure B. 7 Photograph of Norman Rockwell Activity Bag display



Figure B.8 Photograph of Vincent Van Gogh Activity Bag display



Figure B. 9 Photograph of Johannes Vermeer Activity Bag display



Figure B. 10 Photograph of teacher made tunnel book exemplar



Figure B. 11 Photograph of student family portrait tunnel book, “Walking in the Park”



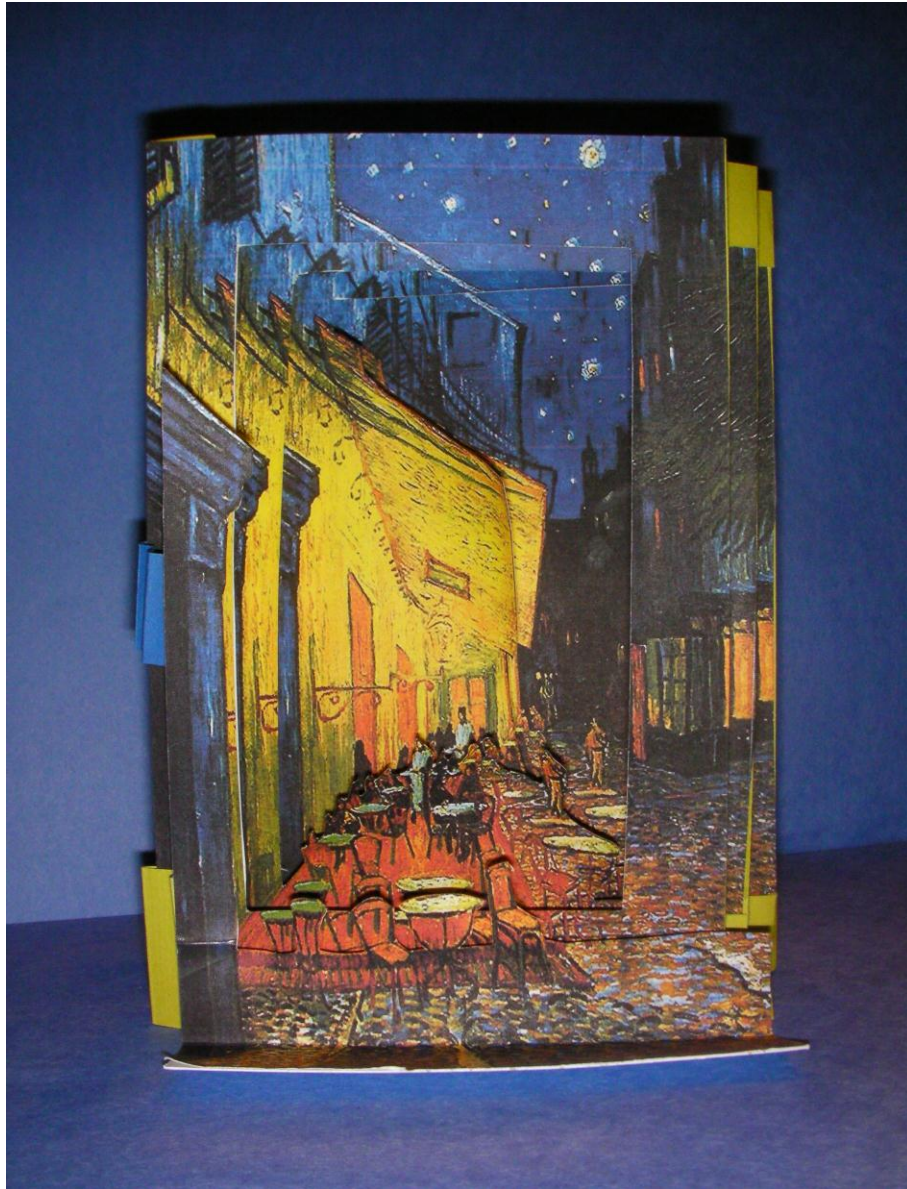
Figure B. 12 Photograph of student family portrait tunnel book, “Day at the Park”



Figure B. 13 Photograph of student family portrait tunnel book, “Saturday with Family”



Figure B. 14 Photograph of teacher made tunnel book exemplar



“The Night Café”, 1888, Vincent Van Gogh

Figure B. 15 Photograph of teacher made tunnel book exemplar



“Sunflowers”, 1888, Vincent Van Gogh

Figure B. 16 Photograph of teacher made tunnel book exemplar



“Starry Night”, Vincent Van Gogh

Figure B. 17 Photograph of teacher made tunnel book exemplar



“The Piano Lesson”, Pierre Auguste Renoir