

# THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

PUBLICATION

NO. 6518

SEPTEMBER 15, 1965

---

## PICTURE MEMORY CONTEST BULLETIN

FOR USE IN THE

Picture Memory Contest  
For Grades Four and Five

*The University Interscholastic League,  
1965-66 and 1966-67*



Price 30 Cents

BUREAU OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SERVICE

*DIVISION OF EXTENSION*

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS : AUSTIN

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS PUBLICATION

NUMBER 6518

SEPTEMBER 15, 1965

PUBLISHED TWICE A MONTH BY THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS, UNIVERSITY STATION,  
AUSTIN, TEXAS, 78712, SECOND-CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT AUSTIN, TEXAS.

## Official List For Picture Memory Contest 1965–66 and 1966–67

Names and spellings shall be used in the contest exactly as given in this list, regardless of variations between text and pictures. All pictures are available in both large and small prints.

<i>Name of Painting</i>	<i>Artist</i>	<i>Nationality</i>
1. <i>Annunciation</i>	Fra Angelico	Italian
2. <i>Winter</i> or <i>Winter</i> <i>(Hunters in the Snow)</i>	Brueghel	Flemish
3. <i>Chestnut Trees at</i> <i>Jas de Bouffan</i>	Cezanne	French
4. <i>The Cornfield</i>	Constable	English
5. <i>La Danseuse</i> or <i>La Danseuse</i> <i>(Dancer on Stage)</i>	Degas	French
6. <i>Praying Hands</i>	Durer	German
7. <i>Walk near the Sea</i> or <i>Promenade au Bord de la Mer</i>	Gauguin	French
8. <i>Flight into Egypt</i> or <i>The Flight into Egypt</i>	Giotto	Italian
9. <i>The Peasant</i>	Van Gogh	French-Dutch
10. <i>Starry Night</i> or <i>The Starry Night</i>	Van Gogh	French-Dutch
11. <i>Cypress Landscape</i>	Van Gogh	French-Dutch
12. <i>Don Manuel Osorio</i>	Goya	Spanish
13. <i>Russian Winter</i>	Igor Grabar	Russian
14. <i>Holy Family</i> or <i>The Holy Family</i>	El Greco or Domenico Theotocopuli	Spanish-Greek
15. <i>The Jester</i>	Frans Hals	Dutch
16. <i>Moonlight, Wood's</i> <i>Island Light</i>	Homer	American
17. <i>The Boy Lincoln</i>	Eastman Johnson	American
18. <i>Landscape with Yellow Birds</i>	Klee	Swiss-German
19. <i>Shoeing the Mare</i>	Landseer	English

20. <i>Madonna or Head of the Virgin</i>	Luini	Italian
21. <i>The Fifer</i>	Manet	French
22. <i>Red Horses</i>	Franz Marc	German
23. <i>Headed for Boston</i>	Marin	American
24. <i>Bouquet</i>	Matisse	French
25. <i>Boyhod of Raleigh</i>	Millais	English
26. <i>Regatta at Argenteuil</i>	Monet	French
27. <i>Zapatistas</i>	Orozco	Mexican
28. <i>The Three Musicians</i>	Picasso	Spanish-French
29. <i>The Night Watch</i>	Rembrandt	Dutch
30. <i>The Syndics</i>	Rembrandt	Dutch
31. <i>Little Margot Berard</i>	Renoir	French
32. <i>Flower Vendor or The Flower Vendor</i>	Rivera	Mexican
33. <i>Man and Machinery</i>	Rivera	Mexican
34. <i>The Mill at Wyk</i>	Van Ruisdael	Dutch
35. <i>George Washington</i>	Stuart	American
36. <i>Infanta Margarita Theresia</i>	Velasquez	Spanish
37. <i>Lady with Lute</i>	Vermeer	Dutch
38. <i>The Last Supper</i>	Leonardo da Vinci	Italian
39. <i>Battersea Bridge</i>	Whistler	American-English
40. <i>American Gothic</i>	Grant Wood	American



## Introduction

Art is not a thing apart. It is the pulsebeat of civilization. The creator and the culture may pass, but art remains. Archaeologist and historian recognize that creative expression is inherent in man and that art is as necessary to the primitive tribesman as to the metropolitan intellectual.

Every child should share this universal heritage and explore these riches and the beauties of the world about him. If artistry is discovered or talent is rescued from oblivion, teacher and student may consider this an additional reward.

Art should be an integral part of the curriculum. The cost is negligible. Many of the skills and much of the knowledge acquired in the art laboratory are invaluable. Art is a dynamic, moving force which enriches life, gives substance to the spiritual and aesthetic nature of man, and often increases his understanding.

The picture memory contest is designed to encourage the study of art in the elementary grades and to expand the visual perception of the student. The child possesses an inquiring mind and normally delights in learning, but having the children memorize certain data to be recalled during the actual contest is not the basic aim of the competition. Picture memory is to expose the student to pictures representing various ages and schools and to awaken his aesthetic instincts. Some of the technical aspects of painting and little sketches of history will be discussed in the booklet. Through experience and appreciation, the student should learn to project his own judgment in exploring the world of art and the natural beauties about him.

The scope of the contest and of the picture memory bulletin is necessarily limited. Paintings and artists are presented, not at random but as "samples." According to the needs and abilities of the students, the teacher should provide material from other sources, using perhaps film strips and slides, and should encourage students to visit local artists or galleries. Additional reproductions from master painters and engravers may be presented. For many children this contest will be the first step or the opening of the door.

We wish to thank Artext Prints, Inc., of Westport, Connecticut, for its invaluable assistance in assembling the pictures.

R. J. KIDD  
Director

## Rules for Picture Memory Contest

1. *Divisions.*—There is only one division in this contest and it is open to children in the fourth and fifth grades.

2. *Representation.*—Each member school in the League having two or more pupils in the fourth and fifth grades is permitted to enter a team in picture memory.

To the picture memory team of two shall be added one member for each 20 pupils (or fraction thereof) in excess of 10 enrolled in the eligible grades on the basis of total enrollment up to the opening of the spring semester. Thus, if the total enrollment in the eligible grades is 10 or fewer than 10, the team is composed of two pupils; 11 through 30 pupils, inclusive, the team is composed of three pupils; 31 through 40 pupils, the team is composed of four pupils, etc. (Pupils passing from an ineligible grade, third, or to an ineligible grade, sixth, at mid-term should not be counted in the total enrollment in the fourth and fifth grades.)

In no instance may a school enter more than five contestants.

3. *Eligibility.*—Only pupils in the fourth and fifth grades who are eligible under Article VIII of the Constitution may be entered in this contest.

4. *Conducting the Contest.*—The director of picture memory shall provide contestants with sheets of paper divided into three columns, headed "picture," "artist" and "nationality." Horizontal lines shall be numbered one through 33 (or, if 17 pictures are used, one through 17). Typing paper or notebook paper may be used.

Each contestant shall draw a number from the director of the picture memory contest and write that number in the upper right-hand corner of each sheet of his test paper. The director shall keep an accurate list of the names of the contestants and the number each has drawn. This list shall be used for identification of the test sheets after the contest.

The director shall appoint two monitors to supervise the contest, and they shall stay in the room while the contest is being held and report to the director any attempt on the part of any pupil to copy from any other or from any source during the contest. The director shall disqualify any pupil who attempts to copy from any source.

The director, or person designated by him, shall exhibit to the contestants either 33 pictures from the prescribed list, or 17, chosen at random, and shall keep an accurate list of the pictures, the artists, and

the nationality in the order in which they are exhibited. These sets of pictures are changed every two years in September of "odd years." [E.G. 1965, 1967].

*The district director is responsible for securing the pictures which are to be exhibited.*

Contestants shall be instructed to write down the name of the picture in the first column, name of the artist in the second column, and the nationality of the artist in the third column. Only the last name of the artist need be used. Either pen or pencil is permissible. Contestants should use only one side of the paper.

After the test has been given, the test sheets shall be collected by the director and the list of the pictures in the order in which they have been exhibited attached thereto, and test sheets and list turned over to a committee of graders who shall grade the sheets.

The director shall then identify each test sheet by contestant's name and school. A list of the 100 per cent contestants shall be made which shall be publicly announced during the elementary school meet. The team grades shall be computed (see next paragraph), and a first, second and third place winner declared.

The team grade shall be determined by adding together the scores made by all members of a given team and dividing the sum by the number of individuals composing the team.

5. *Grading the Test Sheets.*—A perfect paper is graded 100. From 100 deduct one point for each error made, if 33 pictures are used. Deduct two points for each error if 17 pictures are used.

In grading, the answers shall appear exactly as they are given in the official picture list available from the State Office. Misspellings shall be counted as errors.

6. *Judges.*—No teacher who has a contestant in the contest shall be permitted to serve either as a monitor or as a member of the grading committee.

7. *Available Aids.*—The Interscholastic League has issued this bulletin which treats appreciatively each of the pictures in the list and gives the official spelling and titles for the contest. It is titled "Picture Memory Bulletin" and sells for 25 cents a copy. Each pupil entering the contest should have a copy of this bulletin.

8. *Selected Pictures.*—The selections to be used as a basis for the contest in the current year are listed in this bulletin. Schools planning to participate in this contest should purchase copies of the listed pic-

tures from a reputable art printing company or dealer. Some of the companies are listed below). It is suggested that small prints of the selections be made available to each student. Publishers have these at a few cents per copy.

9. *Publishers.*—The following publishers and suppliers, listed in alphabetical order, supply prints included in this year's selection.

Artext Prints, Inc., Westport, Conn.

Hemphill's Book Store #3, 2244 Guadalupe, Austin, Texas.

Hoover Brothers, Temple, Texas.

Perry Picture Company, Malden, Mass.

Texas Book Store, Box 7577, University Station, Austin, Texas.

Note: The Texas Book Store, Hemphill's Book Store and Hoover Brothers have packets of the 40 pictures made up for immediate shipment. Write them for details on prices, etc. Pictures come in small sizes, for use by individual pupils, and larger (approximately 9 x 12) for use by contest director or for framing. Please specify which size you wish.

## How to 'Meet' a Painting

Meeting a picture or an artist for the first time is much like finding a new student in class. It is easier to "get acquainted" if you know something about him. This little booklet is to give you a few facts about the artist and the painting or etching he has produced.

Painters are often classified by "age," just as students in school are. Artists of medieval times all resemble one another in that most of their paintings present biblical themes, such as the birth of Christ, or the lives of the saints.

Sometimes painters are identified by nationality. For instance, we can look at a canvas and recognize it as "Dutch" before we can determine whether it was painted by Rembrandt or Ruisdael.

Often artists worked in groups, believing the same theories and using the same or similar techniques. These are called "schools," such as Cubists, Impressionists, Pre-Raphaelites. You can look up these schools in an art book or an encyclopedia. Perhaps your teacher can explain them to you.

Modern artists are often more difficult to classify. A French painting may be hung in a Chicago museum and the style copied by a painter from California. Or some one like Grandma Moses may paint with no schooling in art. Such artists are called Primitives. Perhaps a boy in Ohio may find Japanese art especially attractive and start doing brush drawings as Orientals do, or a Chinese boy born on an Arizona ranch may find himself painting cowboys. We are not limited by geography or time as much as the "Old Masters" were.

Sculptors, painters and woodcarvers have their problems, just as students do. When an artist paints a picture, he is doing his homework. He is trying to solve a problem. He is trying to convey a message. This is not, necessarily, a story, but he is trying to tell you something. Sometimes, like you, he gets the wrong answer and the piece of art does not arouse the effect he intended. Often we can understand a painting only when we know what problem the artist was working on. Was he interested in showing how sunlight fell across a little stream or in showing how many shades of blue were in the sky?

To understand art, we should learn a few basic principles or elements, just as we need to have the "answers" to grade our own papers or another's. Some of the more important elements composing a picture are:

### A. Color

Scientifically, color results when light strikes a surface. The par-

ticular color that appears depends upon the kind of surface,—transparent or opaque, dull or shiny. Certain light rays are absorbed and others are reflected. “White” occurs when all of the light is reflected and none is absorbed. “Black” ensues when all the light is absorbed and none is reflected. Secure a prism, if you can, and see how the light is broken up into bands of color. Did you know the rainbow is formed by the moisture breaking up and reflecting light, much as the prism does?

The primary colors, red, yellow, and blue are called “primary,” because they “come first”; they can not be created by mixing any other colors together. Combining primary colors produces secondary or binary ones. For instance, red and yellow combine to make orange, yellow and blue will make green, red and blue will produce violet. Other colors are produced by mixing the primary with the secondary colors and by adding black or white. See if you can find a color wheel. It will help you to visualize the relationship of these colors to each other.

Color has three properties: hue, value, and intensity. Hue is the name of the color,—red, or white, or blue. Value refers to the amount of white in a color,—or black. Adding white lightens a color, adding black will darken it. Intensity refers to the brightness or dullness of a color. A color may be dulled by adding its opposite or complement. This is the color opposite it on the color wheel.

Colors have psychological as well as actual properties. Blue and white are the color of the sky and of snow and are “cool.” Green is the color of grass and most trees and is cool. Pale yellow can be cool but a darker yellow is warm. Red and orange are the color of fire and these are “warm.”

Another thing is that “warm” colors seem to advance, to come to meet you, while the “cool” colors seem to recede, to retreat. Next time you are out driving, watch the farms as you go by. The red barns always seem closer and bigger than the white houses, even when they are about the same size and distance. Or watch the billboards. Notice how many are printed in red. They demand attention.

Artists do not always use pleasing colors. Sometimes they intentionally use irritating ones. Complementary colors, side by side, seem to move, to vibrate; they are exciting. Other colors are tranquil, peaceful, soothing. Painters use colors which arouse the mood they wish to convey.

## **B. Space**

Space is “where something isn’t.” It is like the area of a room. It is

often determined by objects on either side of it,—as the space between two trees, the sky above the river. The artist must often make it appear that more space exists than is actually there. Often he would like to leave it blank, but can not. Space is a negative thing and must be made an integral part of the work of art. An artist may conquer his “space problem” by applying certain laws of perspective, which you will read about later.

### C. Mass

Mass is volume. It may be solid or hollow. It may be a globe or an egg. It may be a cube, a cone, a sphere, an oblong box or a pyramid. It may be a peninsula extending into the sea, or a human figure. Artists indicate mass by line and by color, giving an illusion of shape and weight and painting the highlights and shadows.

### D. Shape

Shape is very much akin to mass, but the term is of somewhat broader application. Shape may be completely drawn, as a ladder with each rung visible, or merely indicated, as a tree with branches obscured by leaves. Abstract painters sometimes paint canvases which depend upon the beauty of shape alone.

### E. Line

Mastery of line is of supreme importance in etchings, essential in woodcuts but perhaps slightly less important in painting. An artist using pigments may define shape without lines, since objects end where two colors meet. However, most painters find lines necessary to give shape and direction, to express patterns, to inclose masses and objects. Lines are not always continuous. A few wisps of grass, etched on a plate and properly arranged, can lead the eye across a picture just as surely as a pointing arrow. A line can be thin or thick, wavering and broken, or heavy and bold. Hence, line can convey a mood, just as color can.

Like color, lines have a certain psychic result and produce certain emotions. Vertical lines, like pillars in a church or tree trunks in a forest, seem dignified, safe and serene. Long, horizontal lines also seem peaceful, like flat prairie land or calm, sleepy lakes. Oblique lines are disturbing and dynamic. Perhaps we instinctively feel that the diagonal is about to fall. Curved lines are most beautiful. Had you ever noticed that most living things are rounded,—the head of a child, the petals of a flower, the flank of a horse?

## F. Perspective

Volumes could and have been written on perspective and its problems. The artist endeavors to put a mountain and stream, or the face of a child, or the church and its spire on a flat surface so that each appears to exist in space. This is hard to do. Early painters of many nations found it impossible. That is why their people, though charming, sometimes appear to have been cut out and pasted on the surface. Depth is lacking. After looking at these pictures, you will understand the artists' difficulties better.

## G. Pattern

It is not easy to say what pattern is, but nature has many patterns. The zebra has a pattern of stripes and the leopard of spots. Bare tree limbs against a winter sky make a pattern. The whorls of seashells upon the beach or the recurrent ripple of waves upon the shore form patterns. Matisse used lines to pattern many of his surfaces. Cubists and Abstractionists often used patterns in their compositions.

## H. Texture

Texture describes the surface of an object. A watercolor presents a different texture than an oil painting. Picasso's canvas in no way resembles Vermeer's. Texture is thing of touch,—the roughness of the bark on a tree, the softness of a kitten, the sharpness of a sandbur.

## I. Movement

Action within the painting may be secured by use of oblique lines, by placing conflicting colors beside each other, by the juxtaposition of warm and cool colors, in changing from light to dark hues.

Movement may also denote the way in which the eye of the observer wanders about the painting. Colors and shapes may be repeated, bright colors may summon attention, textures may be varied. Some of these ruses to direct the eye are obvious and some are subtle and must be sought to be found.

## J. Balance

Balance denotes the arrangement of mass and space, of cool and dark colors. These need not be identical in size but must satisfy the eye. A small accent of warm red will, for instance, balance a larger area of blue and green which are retreating colors and seem to "weigh" less.



**K. Proportion**

Each part of the picture should be well organized. Shapes should not appear to be crowded together nor lost within the area they occupy.

**L. Center of Interest**

Each picture should have one focal point, to which attention returns. This is usually the theme of the composition and the reason for the artist's endeavor.

**M. Rhythm and Repetition**

Like mass and shape, rhythm and repetition are closely related although not identical. Using of similar shapes and colors, of similar patterns is repetition. Rhythm may be secured by repetition, but also implies more. Rhythm may also involve contrast, abrupt or slow change from one color or line to another.

All of these elements are combined, in varying degrees, to form the "composition" or design of the picture. To appreciate and understand fully, one must contemplate its structure, its effect, and if possible, determine the intent of the artist. What is the painter trying to show you or say to you?

**Fra Angelico c. 1387–1455 Italian**

Il Beato Fra Giovanni Angelico da Fiesole (with the baptismal name of Guido) was born near Florence of unknown but well-to-do parents about 1387. He entered the convent of S. Domenico in 1407, took the vows in 1408, and was moved to Rome in 1446.

He sought nothing for himself but devoted his attention to living in a holy and self-denying manner, assisting the poor, and painting the glory of God.

Fra Angelico had no models. This was not customary. His people are all painted from memory, from persons seen on the streets. His palette was limited. Early painters had to prepare their own pigments and many colors were not available. It is said that no man ever saw Angelico angry, and that he never picked up his brush without a prayer. It is also a legend that he never found it necessary to re-touch or alter a work. His art reflects his gentleness, his devotion to God, and his sensitiveness to the beauties of the earth. His Annunciation is inspiring and his Transfiguration has never been surpassed.

***Annunciation: Fra Angelico***

In the painting, one arch lifts above the Madonna and another above the Angel. To counteract the intervening column, Angelico has posed each figure leaning toward the other. Do you find the arches distracting? Apparently the artist did, because he drew a black line below them, to "fence in" the attention and keep the eyes from wandering.

The Angel wears a robe of magnificent pink, with a golden trim. The pink of Mary's robe is only slightly less glowing. Haloes of saints and angels are usually gold, but Fra Angelico made these a magnificent chocolate. Do you see why? He did this so that their golden hair could be shown. See how meticulously Angelico has drawn the feathers in the Angel's wing, in gold, maroon and steely gray. Mary's mantle is midnight blue, lined with a cool, mossy green.

Notice the flowers on the lawn to the right, the shrubbery beyond the picket fence. They repeat the green of the mantle. Do the plants seem natural to you, or did Angelico simply use them to fill in the space?

See how the hands of both are folded in a neat and pious fashion. Doesn't it give them a gentle grace? The heavenly Visitor and the Virgin are posed much more naturally than similar figures in earlier Italian Primitives, yet a slight stiffness, a faint starchiness is still apparent, which adds to the quaintness and charm of the painting.

The serenity and the simplicity, the dignity and the reverence of the picture reflect the saintly nature of the devoted artist.

### Pieter Brueghel (the Elder) c. 1528–1569 Flemish

Pieter Brueghel came of peasant stock. He was born in Brueghel. He studied under Koek, whose daughter he married.

He spent some time studying in Italy and France and in 1551, he moved to Antwerp.

Brueghel painted with much strength and spirit. His brushwork is easy and fluent. His figures are delicate, but the whole effect is of solidity and of strength.

Most of his portraits are of the peasants of Flanders, engaged in their usual daily activities. This is called genre painting.

Brueghel was elected to the Academy in 1551 and died September 5, 1569.

### *Winter or Winter (Hunters in the Snow): Pieter Brueghel*

This picture was painted almost four hundred years ago. Country men and boys still like to go hunting in winter. Some still hunt with dogs.

Notice the different types of dogs. Some are greyhounds and were probably used for chasing animals. Others appear heavier and perhaps kept the animal from escaping after the long-legged hounds brought it to bay. Are the dogs tired? Or are they searching for scent? Some of them have their heads down.

See how the artist placed the hunters on the hill, with the houses and the village spread out below. Notice the heavy brick building, possibly an inn, which adds height to the hill. The stalwart and barren tree trunks also emphasize the vertical elements in the painting.

The white street between the two skating ponds and the street beyond run into the bank of snow which terminates at the hill and the hunters. If the eye wanders away following the little river, it encounters the cliffs at top right and is brought back by the line of the horizon.

Notice the delicate tracery of tree limbs against the graygreen winter sky, the gentle curves of the vine in the foreground.

This is a busy scene, bustling with activity. Beside the hunters and the skaters, a small group is working in front of the inn. Two ladies at lower right are crossing the

river, and one the arched bridge a bit further on. Beyond the pond is a carriage. Even the birds are out. Old Man Winter is not going to get the best of these hardy people, is he?

### Paul Cezanne 1839–1906 French

Paul Cezanne was born at Aix, the ancient capital of Provence. His father was a banker but Cezanne found he could not interest himself in commerce. He was a friend of Emile Zola, the writer. Both enjoyed the natural beauty of the country. He went to Paris in 1863 to study art.

Cezanne found “official art” to be dull and became associated with the Impressionists. Also, he admired Rubens and Tintoretto. He tried a series of portraits with broad strokes of the palette, using simple colors. The effect was striking and imaginative and expressed to some extent his inner feelings.

1872 Cezanne met Camille Pissaro and learned how important it was to discipline his art, to develop technique, method, precision. Cezanne’s work became stronger. He tried to put more into his work than the surface color, with which other Impressionists were preoccupied. He tried to paint *reality* enriched by Impression. He imagined a painting composed of “planes” which seemed to recede or advance toward the viewer according to the color which the artist had used. Sometimes he applied one layer of color after another, or innumerable slight changes of color side by side, to get the effect he wanted. Consequently, his surfaces seems to glow, to be alive. He experimented with intense and vivid colors.

He held an exhibit in Autumn in a salon in 1904 and died in 1906. He was almost unknown when he died. Most of his fame came later, when the public as well as other painters realized what he was trying to do. He has been called “the father of modern art.”

### *Chestnut Trees at Jas de Bouffon: Cezanne*

This is a picture of chestnut trees, probably in early spring. See how the grass is already green but the leaves have not yet appeared on the trees. Their “bones” are showing.

Notice how many lines are in the picture. The tree trunks run up and down, the gray wall and the slope of the hill cross behind them, and the mountain lifts a triangle of blue behind. Further, the grass seems to move in a series of swatches in the front foreground. Haven’t you seen fewer lines in a tic-tac-toe? How does Cezanne control them all?

The focal feature of the painting is, of course, the columned verticals of the tree trunks. All other lines run toward or terminate in the stone building in the left background. It sort of “holds them down,” so to speak. The pitch of the hill, the stone wall, and the far side of the mountain stop at this building.

Notice the “masses.” The tree trunks are dark and heavy and seem to be near to you. The wall of bluish stone is running away. The pale green grass and the blue of the hills also seem far off, to be receding. The bulk of the building on the right is retreating, too. It is just barely more creamy than the sky and almost melts into the blue haze.

But the stone building on the left, turned to light gold by the setting or rising sun, seems to come forward, to meet you. Did you notice the little puddles of sunlight under the trees, like spilled cream? They, too, are in a ragged line and lead

to the stone building, which balances the horizontal and diagonal lines in the picture.  
Can you see why the pattern of conflicting lines fascinated the artist?

### John Constable 1776–1837 English

John Constable was born in Suffolk in 1776, where his father owned some water-mills and windmills. At seventeen, he was working at one of the windmills and painting when he could. A friend, an amateur artist, encouraged him to go to London where he attended the Royal Academy and copied old masters. (This copying was a method many artists used to learn to paint.) He combined what he learned with what he had observed of the English countryside.

As a young man, he became attached to Miss Maria Blackwell, but her family was opposed to their marriage. So Constable took up painting portraits, which were more profitable than landscapes. They married and settled down. As he became better known and more popular, he returned to landscapes.

Constable was an artist whose gifts were slow in developing. Some of his best paintings were produced when he was between forty and fifty. He used the palette knife to apply pure splotches of color, anticipating the Impressionists. He won two prizes in France, but was not very influential there because most of his friends had bought his pictures and the French museums did not have any of his works.

Constable is an artist of unrivalled integrity. He was determined to see things with his own eyes. He learned his art from nature, not from other artists.

His wife died in 1827 and he never fully recovered from the loss. He was elected to the Academy. He died in 1837.

### *The Cornfield:* John Constable

One of the first questions an American child might ask is, "Where is the corn?" To Americans, corn comes on the cob. However, in England "corn" is a general term which can be applied to any grain. In this case, the "cornfield" is actually a wheatfield. Or it might possibly be millet or barley or rye.

What is the season of the year? Is it early summer, probably late in June or possibly in July. Do you know when the wheat is ripe in England?

What is the dog doing? Perhaps he wants the boy to hurry and finish drinking from the little stream. He needs help with the sheep. See where one of them, and the little donkey, have wandered from the lane to the water. They should be on the way to the barn.

What time of day is it? Can you tell? I think it must be clearly evening, or supertime. See how the long shadows of the trees fall across the road. Then, too, the boy is bringing the sheep home, and the man with the scythe has laid it across his shoulder. He has quit work for the day.

See how Constable's little brushstrokes suggest fallen leaves along the path, how the tiny strips of paint in the field behind the tree on the left depict heads of grain. The golden wheat almost sings with color.

The clouds are white, with just a blush of pink to warm them. A few weeds along the stream bank, and the stream itself, are cool and green. So is the far pasture across the wheat, and the trees are cool, where the setting sun has not turned them to golden-brown.

Doesn't this picture make you feel you would enjoy the work and the peace of living in the country?

## Edgar Degas 1834–1917 French

Hilaire Germain Edgar Degas was born in Paris July 19, 1834, and died there in 1917 on September 27. He studied under Lamothe and Ingres at the Ecole des Beaux Arts.

Although he experimented with many mediums, his "first and only love" seems to be pastels. These he used throughout his whole artistic career.

After the fashion of his time, he produced "War in the Middle Ages," a historical subject. Then he turned to contemporary life. He was influenced by the Impressionists but never wholly succumbed to their theories. Most of his works are portraits of dancers, or criminals, or of the sporting world.

He was independent and tried many new arrangements and compositions. Most of his portraits are lively and charming.

*La Danseuse or La Danseuse (Dancer on Stage): Degas*

The single dancer is the focal point, the center of interest for the whole picture. Degas could have painted her all by herself on the stage, but he would have lost some of the movement, the life of the theatre. How does he manage to keep the other figures on the stage from distracting from the primary figure? Can you tell?

In the first place he has painted her a little apart and to foreground, with the light focused on her and her full, frothy skirt. Notice how the flying heavy black ribbon makes the skirt look more light, more transparent.

See how Degas has massed his figures in the background, how the brush strokes suggest movement without depicting individual figures. Many of the white colors are influenced by adjoining colors which are reflected or mirrored in the whiteness. Notice the vigor and liveliness of the colors. They seem poised like the crest of an ocean wave, just before it tumbles over.

Degas has made a daring experiment of balancing the group of people, the line of performers, against the single dancer in the foreground. It is a tribute to his artistry that the glowing dancer retains the attention despite the action in the background.

## Albrecht Durer c. 1471–1528 German

Albrecht Durer was born in Nuremberg in 1471 or 1472, the second of eighteen children. His father, a goldsmith, apprenticed the boy to a painter when the lad was fifteen. Some of Durer's earliest drawings are still extant. In keeping with the temper of his time, most of them are religious, although he did a self portrait in 1493.

Durer married Agnes Frey, the daughter of a well-to-do merchant, and traveled for a while in Italy, copying old masters in the "German Style." They lived in Nuremberg for ten years. At this time, Germany was stepping from the Middle Ages and on the threshold of the Reformation. His printing, his woodcuts, and his engravings helped to educate the great number of common people.

In Italy, Durer learned the new rules of perspective, anatomy and proportion. German art tended to be twisted and cramped. Durer never abandoned realism, but he did manage to combine it with classic severity. He visited Italy again in 1505–07 and painted "Adoration of the Virgin" for the Germans to dedicate at the Church of St. Bartholomew in Venice. He was a friend of Raphael and other artists,

with statesmen, humanists, and reformers. His whole life seemed to escape the jealousies and little problems which beset some men. It may have been his character to ignore them. His health began to fail and he died in 1528.

He was one of Germany's greatest artists and like da Vinci had an imaginative and inquiring mind. One of the world's greatest graphic artists, he was also well versed with pen, chalk, engraving, etching, water color, oil and woodcut, but primarily his greatness rests upon his painting.

### *Praying Hands: Albrecht Durer*

Durer was both a master engraver and master painter. "Praying Hands" was one of his etchings. There is no color. The message comes from the lines only. See how much can be said with "black and white" alone.

The artist is portraying more than a pair of hands. He is expressing the power of prayer. The hands are a symbol.

The tips of the fingers are raised to heaven, like the spire of a church. It is no effort at all to imagine you are in church. Perhaps you can even hear the choir singing or the minister's "Amen."

### **Paul Gauguin 1848–1903 French**

Paul Gauguin was one artist who did not have to go to Paris. He was born there on June 6, 1848. His father was a French journalist and his mother was partly Peruvian. The boy spent his childhood in Peru and in Orleans.

In 1871, he took a job in a bank and in 1873 married a Danish girl. He was a friend of Pissaro, an artist, and also began to paint. Finally, he decided to devote himself to art. He gave up his job in the bank, separated from his wife and children, and returned from Copenhagen, the home of his wife's relatives, to Paris.

For a time he lived and painted on the Island of Martinique. Van Gogh was a friend of his and they lived together and painted for a while, but Gauguin left because Van Gogh suffered from periods of insanity. Though he painted and made lithographs and wood carvings, he sold few. He decided to move to the tropics where he could live with very little money. So in 1891, he went to Tahiti. In 1901, he built a house on the Marquesas, decorating it with carvings and paintings.

Gauguin exulted in the luminous colors and exotic plants. He lived with the natives and was accepted by them as "one of the family." During his later life, his health failed and he lived in want. He died May 9, 1903, and was buried in the Mission Cemetery.

His methods and paintings greatly influenced other artists. His intense emotions, fused in the depth of his being, surged forth like lava from a volcano. One of the Impressionist group, his later work approached Symbolism. His lithographs and woodcuts opened up new areas in art. Through his paintings, primitive wood carvings and terra cotta figurines became popular in Europe. Unfortunately, his work did not become popular until he had died, so he did not enjoy his fame.

### *Walk Near the Sea, or Promenade au Bord de la Mer: Gauguin*

The title on the larger print, *Promenade au Bord de La Mer*, is in French. The artist has painted the Tahitians walking along the shore. In the tropics, it is so hot little clothing is worn.

Notice how cool and blue the ocean looks, and how hot the brown grass, or sand,

near the tree on the left. Perhaps Gauguin painted the ground, where the woman and child are standing, such a bright color because it felt "pink-hot" to his feet. Also, the sun seems to be shining from both left and right. We know that is impossible. So did Gauguin. But the tropic sun is so inescapable the artist ignored logic and painted what the sun felt like, and he felt as if it was shining all over!

See the orange-colored flowers by the woman's elbow. Or perhaps they are red leaves. At any rate, they look like little flames and add to the torrid atmosphere.

Very little of the picture is cool. The goat in blue-white. Perhaps Gauguin thought the animal was insulated by his wool and was escaping some of the heat, as desert Arabs wear flowing robes which keep the sun OUT. The sea is blue and cool, but the reflected light is hot. Note the red streaks along the horizon. The blue is echoed in the random sprigs of blue grasses in the foreground, and the bit of green shrubbery in the middle right, and the dwindled shade among the trees in the background.

The whole picture is startling. One has to get accustomed to it. It is not surprising that Gauguin's work did not sell at first. After his death, his pictures became very popular. People liked his native scenes and many no doubt wished they could go to Tahiti too, and "get away from it all."

### Giotto c. 1267-1337 Italian

The boy who became known as Giotto di Bondone was born some seven hundred years ago in Mugello. The date given is usually 1266 or 1267. Not much is known of his childhood, but legend recounts that Cimabue, an artist, found Giotto in the field, drawing one of his father's sheep with a sharp stone on a piece of slate. Cimabue recognized the boy's talent and took him to nearby Florence. Whether this little story is true or not, Giotto became an apprentice in Florence when he was twelve.

In those days, the churches were decorated with wall paintings called frescoes. Since all the students helped paint them, we can not identify any of Giotto's work until he was twenty-four and well-trained enough to sign his work.

It seems natural for the beginning painter to portray objects and people as "flat." Most primitive paintings are like this. Sometimes the little figures look as if they had been cut out and pasted on. Giotto lived just as the Italian artists were learning how to give depth and dimension to figures. His wall pictures and altar pieces are not conventionally posed but appear more lifelike, more human than earlier ones. Problems of perspective and body-proportion were still troublesome. Giotto lived almost seventy years, devoting himself to his art. Painters used his style for the next hundred years. Giotto had three sons and three daughters.

Shortly before he died, he planned a great cathedral at Florence, with a separate campanile (bell-tower). Most of his paintings, reflecting the religious spirit of his age, are of saints or biblical characters, only a few being of dukes or church officials. Unfortunately, many of the frescoes have been lost. Giotto was a great forerunner of the Renaissance.

### *The Flight into Egypt, or Flight into Egypt: Giotto*

This picture shows Joseph and Mary and the Child fleeing from Herod into Egypt. The angel who leads and the one in the sky each wears a halo. So do Mary

and the Child. These are bright yellow and attract the eye like an exclamation point.

Notice how Mary and the Christchild, sitting on the donkey, assume a roughly triangular shape. The first mountain repeats this pyramidal mass, and the background mountain echoes it. Do you think the mountains look natural? Or the trees?

Remember that Giotto lived when artists were just beginning to master many of the problems of paintings. Sometimes perspective and proportion gave them trouble. The little donkey is very lifelike and the people are almost completely natural. But some of the postures are just a little wooden and, like the mountain, appear to be a little artificial.

Giotto was a master of colors and tints. Notice the graceful folds of Mary's mantle and the draping of the robe of the leading Angel. The soft green and the dark, almost wine-red robes of the figures behind the donkey attest to this perfection of coloring. Why does Joseph have such a dark robe? It is because the artist wanted to emphasize, by using the brighter hues, the importance of Mary, the Child, and the Angel leading them? Notice how well done the faces are. These are not types, but individuals.

See how serene Mary is. Although she is going to an unknown land, she is trustingly following Joseph and the Angel. Giotto's portrayal is very tender. This feeling of dignity, this emotional content, attest the artistry of the painter.

### Vincent Van Gogh 1853–1890 French-Dutch

Van Gogh was born at Groot-Zundert in Brabant, Holland. His father was a Calvinist pastor and for a while, Van Gogh thought he would enter a religious vocation. In fact, he studied theology at Amsterdam where he decided he should be of service to the world. For a while he lived among the miners and spent his free time drawing. He began painting peasants near his father's house, and studied in Antwerp and Brussels. He joined his brother Theo in Paris, where he met the Impressionist artists. He abandoned the browns and umbers which he had been using and began to paint in clear, bright colors. He greatly admired Japanese prints.

In 1888, he settled at Arles in Provence, painting the fields and the sunlight, the cypresses and the sunflowers. During a spell of irresponsibility, he threatened to kill Gauguin and, in remorse, cut off his own ear. He was committed to an asylum. In 1890 he shot himself. During his long and poverty-stricken life, only his brother Theo believed in him and helped him.

His work is very popular today and many artists are copying his style and his technique. This style has been called Expressionism or Post-Impressionism.

### *The Peasant: Van Gogh*

Notice how the colors sing. Van Gogh was in a happy mood when he painted this. See how well the pale gold of the hat contrasts with the blue of the shirt, how the redgold background emphasizes the strength of the peasant's shoulders. The black lines at the shoulder further enhance the contrast between the two colors.

Notice how the gnarled hands speak of a life of toil, the stick speaks of the approach of age, as do the grayish whiskers. But the Peasant's eyes are still bright and intense. They say he still has a lot of living to do!

Do you like the old man?



### *The Starry Night, or Starry Night: Van Gogh*

Compare this landscape with the cypresses and the wheat field. Is it a happy scene?

Like the other picture, it is painted in great swirls of color, but it is more menacing. Perhaps it is only because it is night. Notice that the streaks of red on the roofs, with the blue between, make an effect of fretfulness, of restlessness. And what does the great swirling stump or bush on the left have to do? Is it only to emphasize the dark bluegreens of the rest of the landscape?

Can you find one thing that does not seem to be moving? That's right, it is the church. It's peaceful spire is blue in the moonlight and points quietly upward toward heaven.

Which one of these do you like better?

### *Cypress Landscape: Van Gogh*

This whole painting seems to be boiling. See how the clouds are painted in long, whirling strokes, and how the mountains raise many twisting blue corners to the sky. The cypresses have been blown by the wind far to the left of the spot where their trunks anchor them to the ground. The wheatfield ripples like a living lake of gold beneath the sun of Provence. In fact, the tall green trees on the right are just about as stable as any part of this landscape, and they seem to be moving upward like little green fires.

Notice how Van Gogh uses little strips of paint to produce movement. It looks as though everything in the picture wanted to escape, to run away with the wind.

Did you ever see a wheatfield in this much commotion?

### Francisco Goya 1746–1828 Spanish

Francisco Goya y Lucientes was born March 30, 1746, at Fuendetodos, near Saragossa in Aragon (Spain). As a young man, he lived a while in Madrid and then made his way along the coast with a troupe of travelling bullfighters, reaching Rome about 1771. Here he won a prize in the Parma academy competition and returned to Saragossa and then to Madrid in 1775. He had married the sister of Bayeu, a court painter. Madrid was the capital of Spain.

Goya became a court painter and painted four successive sovereigns. Some of these are searching and cruel character analyses. He became director of the Academy of Arts and was very popular. His portrayals were brilliant, dramatic, and often satirical. But he could present a simple and straightforward delineation, too.

Late in life, his health began to fail. He became almost totally deaf. He lived at Bordeaux with a colony of Spanish refugees and died there on April 16, 1828. He was reinterred in S. Antonio de la Florida in Madrid in 1919.

His pictures from the life of the fields, the village, the street opened a new chapter in art. They reflect his intensity of feeling, his sensitiveness to the world about him, and were not as scornful as his pictures of some of the aristocrats or decadent courtiers.

Goya did not establish a "school," but his work has influenced many individual artists. His etchings and lithographs were savage denunciations of the folly and futility of war.

*Don Manuel Osorio: Goya*

The bright red suit which the little boy is wearing demands so much attention that one has to look away from it deliberately to find out what else the artist has painted.

Do you think the three cats were the boy's pets, as well as the birds? Notice how the cats are watching the bird! Their hunting instincts have been aroused. See how the green cage makes the boy's suit look even more red. See the fine wisps of lace at the cuffs and the collar? And the wide sash, possibly of silk, which is also edged with lace? And the white shoes, with bows?

It is apparent that this little boy has a rich mother and father. He has been dressed very elegantly, perhaps by a mother who loves him and who wants him to look very splendid. See how dark his eyes are, in the delicate ivory face.

He can't possibly play in those clothes, but he does not seem unhappy. Perhaps he is accustomed to court-dress. And he has the animals and birds to amuse him.

All of the figures have been fitted into a triangle, with the boy's head at the apex, the birdcage on one side, the cats and the bird on the string on the other side. Notice how the light on the floor beneath the bird has been brightened. I wonder what is on that slip of paper he has in his bill. The golden light behind the boy's head makes his hair seem even darker, doesn't it?

Goya may not have liked some of the people whose portraits he made, but I think he liked the little boy. Do you like him?

**Igor Grabar 1871– Russian**

Grabar was the most famous Russian painter of the pre-war era. He was not only a painter, but also a scholar and writer in art. He was a pupil of Repin and was influenced by Impressionism. Some have called him the Russian Cezanne. His still lifes, done from 1900 to 1910, were strongly modeled on the work of the French artist and were regarded by the revolutionists as a typical symptom of bourgeois decadence.

After the October Revolution in Russia, Grabar turned his attention chiefly to portrait painting.

*Russian Winter: Igor Grabar*

A first look at this picture produces the feeling that it is both familiar and strange. The arrangement of the buildings, the trees and the central figure are much in the classic pattern of planning a landscape. But the colors! How vibrant they are.

Why does the artist leave the wide stretch of snow in the foreground? Is it because he feels the snow is more important than the old woman carrying water? Perhaps so. Perhaps that is why he also has turned her face away. She is not important as a person, but is placed there as a focal point, so that the very coldness of the landscape is emphasized the more.

Look closely at the snow. See how the whites were applied with a palette knife. And did you see the tiny specks of red hidden between the strokes which seem to make the snow bank alive, even though we are scarcely aware they are there?

Even the woman's black jacket has tiny specks of red, if you observe carefully, to increase the aliveness of the picture. Have you ever lived where it was this cold?

### El Greco S. 1541–1641 Spanish-Greek

El Greco means “The Greek”. His real name is Domenico (or Dominico) Theotocopuli, and he was born in Candia, Crete. When he was a young man, he spent some time in Italy, studying under Michelangelo and Titian and observing the works of Tintoretto and Bassanos.

From Italy he went to Spain, where he lived the rest of his life, at Toledo. When he died in 1614, all Toledo mourned, and he was interred like one of royal blood.

El Greco is noted for his daring and intense colors, his fervent religiosity. Some of his figures are elongated and distorted, indicating the agony and tumult of living. For centuries after his death he was forgotten, then he became popular again. He was greatly admired by Cezanne, Manet and the Expressionists.

***The Holy Family, or Holy Family: Domenico Theotocopuli (called El Greco)***

The first glance at this picture reveals at once why El Greco was noted for his colors. The robes are of sophisticated hues, and glowing, and exquisite.

Joseph’s robe is alive with light, and the modeling of his face is splendid. Hands are difficult to draw, yet his are both strong and delicate, as he offers the fruit to the Christchild.

See how El Greco painted the filmy mantilla that Mary is wearing. It looks absolutely weightless. What color would you call her robe? See how it shines in the light.

The dresses of both women are red. Do you think they were made from the same material? Isn’t there a difference of texture?

Mary is very pensive, almost sad. I wonder what she is thinking. So is her companion.

The Christ does not have the face of an infant. Is it that El Greco is saying that even as a child He was brooding over the sins of the world. Or could it be what we would call “the camera angle” that makes Him look sad?

What do you think of the background? Aren’t the unusual colors dramatic? It is easy to see why so many modern artists admire El Greco.

### Frans Hals c. 1581–1666 Dutch

Many things about Frans Hals are unknown. No document records exactly when he was born, but it was in Antwerp between the years 1581 and 1585. Hals died in September of 1666 in Haarlem.

We have some idea of what he looked like, because he painted two self-portraits, but no one knows what he did before he was 25 or 30 years old. He left no letters, so we do not know what he thought about events of his day. He left no sketches or “first drafts”, so we do not know how he planned his pictures. After his death, his works were not valued very highly for a couple of centuries. Then it was realized that he was a portraitist second only to Rembrandt.

Records show that he was married twice, that his first wife had two children and that his second wife had eight or more. Several of the children became artists too.

Hals was director of an art school, belonged to a local militia company and to a society of rhetoricians (scholars). He was also an officer in the Guild of St. Luke. Apparently, he was well liked and respected in the community, because important Dutch professors, artists and merchants came to him for portraits.

His life was not all happy. One of his children was retarded, and he often did not have enough money. The death of his first wife grieved him. But, if we can judge from his pictures, he enjoyed his life and his neighbors and his town.

### *The Jester: Frans Hals*

Hals' portraits range in size from tiny ones for engraving to lifesize portraits of nineteen militiamen. Hals was a master of portraiture, capturing the personality of the sitter. His people never looked as though they had dressed up to go to a costume ball. He revealed their character. The Jester has not been idealized or beautified. You might meet him on the street; this is what might be called a "speaking likeness."

Nothing in the background detracts from the Jester. Notice the smile on his face, the way he looks over his shoulder. Did some one just ask him to play a dance tune or has some one just told a joke? Perhaps the verse he just sang was a funny one.

Notice the red trim on his black costume. The dark hair around his face emphasizes the importance of his expression. How many other colors are there? The neck of the instrument is almost black. The cap is almost the same color as the trim on the jacket and has gold braid on it. The shiny mandolin is also somewhat gold. Isn't it amazing how good a portrait can be made with so few major colors? Did you notice that the face is round, shaped somewhat like the mandolin, and that like the mandolin it is slightly less round at the top, where the hair obscures the Jester's forehead?

Do you like the Jester? Don't you think he made people happy? I am sure he did.

### Winslow Homer 1836-1910 American

Winslow Homer's father was a merchant and his mother painted pictures of flowers. Homer was born at Boston, Massachusetts on February 24, 1836. At nineteen, he was apprenticed to a lithographer and, having to work eight to six, mourned that he had no time for fishing.

During the American Civil War, he was at the front with the troops and sent sketches, mostly every day camp scenes rather than spectacular battles or engagements, to Harper's Weekly. These were oils and were very popular.

Homer's genius is revealed best by his water colors, especially the marines or seascapes. They are canvases of weight and clarity, reflecting the magnificence of nature. His portraits are warm and luminous, with an attention to human values peculiarly American.

At 39, Homer abandoned illustrating and retired to painting. He selected what he wanted and then copied it exactly. His last years were at Prout's Neck on the Maine coast. His summers were gay with nieces and nephews, clambakes and fishing. In winters he lived cheerfully aloof from the world. He even built an open shed on the shore, from which he could watch the sea in any weather. Most of his art he learned from nature, rather from others or from what was inside himself. Except for his trip to the Caribbean, the last part of his life was spent in Maine.

### *Moonlight, Wood's Island Light: Homer*

The sky is gray and the sea is the color of melted lead with touches of cold blue spray, except where the moon adds a flickering and fleeting gold to the chilly water. The rocky shore in the left foreground is filled with warm, chocolate-brown rocks. Rocks may be cruel but they are not so pitiless as the sea.

See how the surf spills over the rocks. Can you hear the sound? Perhaps Homer

saw a scene like this from his shed on the Main coast. Do you think this was painted in winter or in summer?

Do you see the pinprick of light on the Island along the right horizon? Would you like the solitude and grandeur of the coast, or do you like the city better, because it has lots of people and something is always happening?

Why did Homer obscure the moon with the small ruffled clouds? Perhaps it was because he wanted to emphasize to the oblivion of everything else the menace and majesty of the Atlantic.

### Eastman Johnson 1824–1906 American

Eastman Johnson was born in Lowell, Maine, on July 29, 1824, and died in New York City on April 5, 1906. He studied art in Dusseldorf in 1849–1851. He also traveled in France, Italy and Holland, and was considerably influenced by the Dutch school of painting.

When he came back to the United States and “set up shop” for himself, he was asked to paint many important people, such as Mrs. Alexander Hamilton, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, and John D. Rockefeller. He was the son of a politician and his father was helpful in getting him commissions. Johnson had a way of flattering the people he painted, making the likeness slightly more handsome than they were. One caustic critic judged that Johnson’s canvases ranged from “cute to nice.”

While Eastman Johnson was not one of the best known American artists and was perhaps not a great painter, he was competent and people liked his work. Beside the notables of his time, he is also recognized for his portraying of the common citizens, the fishermen and the farmers.

#### *The Boy Lincoln: Eastman Johnson*

The artist shows Lincoln as a boy, studying his lessons. Notice that Lincoln is holding his book and reading from the light thrown by the burning fire. Could you get your homework like this?

Because it is night, there are few bright colors but the fire makes the whole scene cheerful. Notice the “sad-iron” sitting on the hearth. Perhaps Lincoln’s mother kept it there and ironed his shirts before he went to work in the grocery store. I doubt if she ironed those he wore to chop wood or plow the field.

See the big dipper hanging by the fire. This was used to serve food from kettles hung over the fire, without burning the hands. The tongs are very long, too. I wonder if they used them to take up potatoes which had been baked in the ashes?

Lincoln is wearing simple, substantial clothes, the dark trousers, the tall boots, the butternut-colored jacket. See the bit of white shirt collar showing under the jacket. Notice the length of the leg, the hand extending beyond the cuff. Lincoln was a tall man, with long arms and legs. Even though most young men are nice-looking, you can tell how Johnson idealized Lincoln’s face. Lincoln was not quite *that* handsome. You might compare this with a photograph of Lincoln in your history book.

See how the floor planks, the table top, and the log across the side of the fireplace repeat the horizontal lines. One of Lincoln’s legs, the legs of the stool and of the table are perpendicular. So are those of the hanging chain, the tongs, the spoon, and the standing iron. The only oblique lines are the pole across the top of the fireplace, the logs lying on the floor, and Lincoln’s other leg, extending way beyond the hearth

into the room. Would you think that such a backwoods boy could ever become President?

### Paul Klee 1879–1940 Swiss-German

This artist was born near Berne, Switzerland, in 1897 of Bavarian and French parents. He studied art in Munich in 1898–1900.

He was an imaginative, dreamy man, and gave much thought to his philosophy of painting. He said he was trying to solve the problem of infinite movement and some of his art is based upon the whirling of a watermill, the swinging of a pendulum, and the tension of planes.

In an effort to escape from what he had been taught into what he felt was “natural” (not necessarily realistic), he also studied the drawings of prehistoric cave people and of children. He tried to transfer his emotions and fantasies to his canvas. He has been claimed by both the Dadaist and the Surrealist schools.

He spent most of his life living and painting in Germany but upon the accession of German National Socialists (Nazis) to power he returned to Switzerland, where he died at Lugano in 1940.

#### *Landscape with Yellow Birds: Paul Klee*

This painting shows the immediate effect of Klee’s theory that the art of children or of cavemen was the most “natural,” the most unaffected by the pressures of life. Do you see any influence of this theory in the painting? Perhaps that accounts for the bird “walking” on the bottom of the cloud.

Klee was a draftsman of traditional Teutonic thoroughness. Notice how even the fantastic plants are carefully drawn, with no blurred edges or woolly outlines. See how carefully and formally the colors are balanced, with a warm, variegated bush on both the right and left sides, mostly in warm red-violet tones, the silver segments like huge iris leaves which separate the picture into sections, and the green fringed plants in the next two segments, with the purple-tongued plant in the middle.

What do you feel about this picture? Was the artist happy or unhappy? With all the little yellow birds and the brightly incredible and fantastic flowers, the canvas sings with color. I think that Klee was very happy painting it.

If you were looking at this painting just before you went to sleep, do you think you might dream of peacocks and banana trees, of silver moons and scarlet spider-monkeys? Klee has painted, not an earthly landscape but one we might see in a dream. It is “real,” not like firetrucks and traffic lights, but real only in the sense that our dreams are real.

### Sir Edwin Landseer, 1802–1873 English

When Edwin Landseer was a young boy, he began his artistic education at five under his father, who was an artist. He could draw nicely at that age and was an excellent draftsman when he was eight. By the time he was thirteen, he drew a Saint Bernard dog so well that his brother Thomas had it engraved and sold the prints.

Landseer was good at drawing and it seemed easy for him. He was especially fond of animals. To master their anatomy, he dissected animals like a doctor, so that he could learn where all the muscles and bones were. Also, he studied the

Elgin marbles, which had been brought to England from Greece. You know, of course, that the Greeks were some of the world's greatest sculptors.

Landseer also painted some portraits of people, but most of his pictures were of animals. He shows these creatures at their very best. None of them seem to be unhappy, or sick, or injured, or tired. Landseer idealized them.

Some of their attitudes are almost human. Perhaps the was sentimental of the artist, but his work became very popular. In fact, he was knighted in 1850.

Landseer was a successful man, but he was always a bit sensitive and sometimes thought that he had been slighted or snubbed. But all of his animal "sitters" seem good-tempered and are shown in very appealing attitudes,—almost human.

### *Shoeing the Mare: Sir Edwin Landseer*

Those who live in cities do not learn much about animals, but the blacksmith knows animals. See how the horse, the dog, and the donkey are all watching the smith. He is bending over, with the mare's hoof between his knees, and he is putting on a shoe so that she will not fall on slick pavements or hurt her hoofs on the country rocks.

The donkey's ears are pitched forward, showing his interest. The dog is watching, too, but neither of them is excited or afraid. Did you see the plant growing in the cage hanging on the wall? The blacksmith likes flowers, too. Since he likes living things, the animals can sense it, even if they can not speak, so they are not afraid of him but trust him not to hurt them. See how calm they are.

Notice the beautiful, flowing lines of the horse's neck and muscles. The smith's bending shoulders are also strong and rounded. His arm muscles also tell how strong he is.

The vertical lines of the deep stone wall offer an emphatic contrast to the curving lines of the living things, the donkey, the dog, the horse, and the man.

Did you notice that the mare and the dog are painted mostly in shades of brown or red or black, while the little donkey is gray, almost blue, and black? What else in the picture is blue or gray? The shadowed wall and the corner of the shop have faintly blue tinges, but the sky outside is really blue and gray, like the little donkey. I wonder if he belongs to a little girl. Perhaps she put the poppy in the bridle by his ear.

### **Bernadino Luini, c. 1475–1532 Italian**

Since Bernadino Luini lived almost five hundred years ago, many things about him are unknown. He was one of the early Italian painters, a pupil of Borgognone. Some of his early works show the influence of Bramantino and Leonardo.

At one time, he had to flee his home and take refuge in Saronno, because he had killed a man in self defense.

Most of his paintings are in Milan cathedrals or other religious buildings. Since much of his painting was "fresco," many are now in bad condition. However, they are still exquisite and charming pieces.

Luini liked pastel colors and has been called a "faded Leonardo," since his colors are less bright than the ones the master painter used.

### *Madonna or Head of the Virgin: Bernadino Luini*

Because of the pale, ivory-pink background, the first impression of this painting is

of peace and tranquility. The Madonna's face is also pale, with a headress of pale green delicately emphasizing the curve of her cheek and chin. The small mouth, faintly pink, also add to the illusion of fragility.

The golden cowl and the dark blue robe shift the emphasis from spirituality of the face to the strength and nobility of the Madonna, because gold is a regal color and because the shoulders are strong and sturdy.

To Medieval Italians, the Madonna was beautiful. From Luini's portrayal, you can see how our ideas of beauty have changed. Can you see the dreamy simplicity and the gentle grace with which Luini has endowed his Madonna?

### Edouard Manet 1832–1883 French

Edouard Manet was one of the originators of the Impressionist movement. Many contemporary painters, several writers, and a sculptor or two joined him. Older artists and the public did not appreciate his art or understand what he was trying to do. He was severely criticized. He was independent and they often found him annoying. Consequently, he was excluded from most of the exhibitions. With characteristic vigor, he set up his own "show," aided by his friends and other Impressionists.

The son of a French magistrate, he began his adult life as a cabin boy, making one voyage to Rio de Janeiro. Returning to France, he spent much time in museums and galleries, copying the Old Masters, especially the Spanish ones. (This is an accepted method of learning to paint.) He also visited in Holland, Germany and Italy. His study was interrupted by the Franco-Prussian war, in which he served as gunner.

Much of Manet's art seems "normal and natural" now, since we have become accustomed to it. We find it difficult to understand why the older school of artists found it so objectionable. Public criticism is something any innovator often has to face. Manet was awarded the Legion of Honor in December of 1881 and died on April 20, 1883.

#### *The Fifer: Edouard Manet*

The single figure of the young musician stands out from the background. How does the artist make the boy appear so prominent? He has painted a retreating background of cool blue and white tones, with just enough red to keep it from being "cold," to make it alive.

Then he painted the boy with vibrant colors, the black jacket with silver buttons, the bright red pants. See how the black stripe down the side of the band uniform sets the figure forth further to the foreground. Notice how the white sash, worn like a bandolier and supporting the case for the fife, adds grace to the figure. The curving, falling line of the sash contrasts well with the angles of the elbows and the straight lines of the fife and its case.

Do you like the boy's uniform? Note the saucy tassel on the cap. Did you notice how his right foot is slightly raised? Perhaps he is marking time.

This boy is not an important prince, just a young man with a fife, perhaps just learning to play. Most artists of Manet's time began by painting allegorical figures or mythological scenes or historical events. Manet preferred real people. The simplicity of the background, as well as the dominance of the figure in the foreground, were also a novelty to painting. Do you like the way Manet has portrayed him?



**Franz Marc 1880–1916 German**

Franz Marc was a member of the German Expressionist School of painters, with some leaning toward Abstractionism. He was born in Germany, and was the son of a painter.

He was killed near Verdun in the first World War on March 4, 1916.

***Red Horses: Franz Marc***

Like Landseer, Marc painted mostly animals. But what a difference in technique!

Marc did not paint them realistically, but leaned toward Abstractionism. He used bold, dashing strokes and strong, solid colors. His work is singularly compact and vigorous.

Did you notice how the swirling lines of the arched necks of the animals, and the flowing curves of the back, contrast vigorously with the angularity of their legs? Where are the flowing lines repeated? In the rolling hills and the rounded bushes on the left. Where are more jagged, angular lines? In the rocks in the right foreground.

See how the complementary hues contrast with each other, the blue with the orange, the green with the red, the yellow with the purple. See how these colors set up vibration and movement.

Was Marc trying to make the horses express the joyousness of health and the happiness of freedom? What does the painting make you feel?

**John Marin 1870–1953 American**

Marin, like Homer, lived on the coast of Maine. He loved the great, elemental things in nature and maintained one could not understand a flower if one did not also love the mountain on which it grew.

He is one of America's greatest artists, perhaps the greatest in water colors, but his oil paintings are not quite excellent. He was not a proud man. He considered a painting good which "did not irritate the eye." Sometimes he painted with his canvases on their side or upside down, believing that art, like a squirrel, should be capable of hanging from any angle.

He lived a retiring, yet happy and fruitful life.

***Headed for Boston: Marin***

This is one of Marin's water colors. Marin's art shows the influence of Abstractionists. He attempted to paint not only what he saw but what the scene meant to him. You might say this is a semi-abstract painting.

See how the strong, dark colors seem to "lift" the ship forward. Diagonal lines are always unstable, moving. Do you suppose Marin used the dark, strong colors for strength, rather than painting the sea the color it actually is, either blue or green?

Compare these sails with the ones in Monet's Regatta. Can you describe the difference in how the artist presented what the sails and boats meant to him, and the difference in how the two different pictures of sailing craft make you feel?

**Henri Matisse 1869–1954 French**

Matisse had many bold and revolutionary ideas about painting. He depicted light by putting fairly large streaks of color side by side. From a distance, these

blend and the eye beholds one color. He felt these were stronger and more "alive."

Matisse was born at Cateau (Nord) on December 31, 1869. He studied art and then developed his own style of painting. He lived in Morocco for two years but spent most of his life in the south of France, at Collioure and Nice.

He also experimented with deliberately distorting figures, to achieve the pictorial effect he wanted. Because of his experimental techniques, some of his canvases appear "nervous" or "jumpy." This feeling is increased by the fact that he liked small pictures and painted them in brilliant colors. The darker values express depth in the picture.

Matisse liked still life or small feminine figures. However, he also did a few landscapes. He is one of the most eminent of the recent French painters.

### *Bouquet: Matisse*

This little picture almost sings with color. The blue is vibrant, the red flowers are gaudy as traffic lights and stop the eye. Try looking at the picture without seeing one of these bright blossoms. It is practically impossible. If some one asks you what color the OTHER flowers are, you have to look to be sure they were yellow. This is because the red flowers are to the eye what a shout would be to the ear.

Most of the picture shows flat surfaces, the folded screen, the floor, the table top. The vase does offer a little depth but that is not emphasized. The darker green where the leaves are crowded into the vase does give some illusion of dimension.

How many triangles can you find in the picture? Look at the floor. See where the folded screen makes a series of triangles of the floor. Then the little table is set with one corner toward the viewer. This makes it present a triangular appearance, since the vase hides the opposite corner. Notice the three red flowers. In moving from one to the other, the eyes, if they made a mark, would describe another triangle, wouldn't they?

These triangles are used to counteract or balance the three strong vertical lines established by the screen or wall in the background. The eye is also carried upward by the panel of flowers on the left, the muted stripes on the other light panel.

Did you notice how Matisse has laid the color in oblong patches? Stand a little distance from the picture and see how these merge into one color. Perhaps you also remember that he liked to paint small pictures. Wouldn't these bright colors cheer you up if you waked up feeling all grumpy some morning?

### *John Everett Millais 1829-1896 English*

John Everett Millais came of an old Norman family which had lived in Jersey for many generations. He was born at Southampton on June 8, 1829. The family moved to Brittany in 1836 but returned to London in 1838. The boy entered the Academy in 1840 when he was eleven. He had at this early age determined to be a painter. He won a silver medal from the Society of Arts and many prizes in 1839.

Later, he initiated, with Hunt and Rosetti, the Pre-Raphaelite movement, with the aim of "presenting on canvas what they saw in nature." With this goal, it is not surprising that Millais is noted for his careful study and minute execution. His brilliant colors make his paintings very attractive. He was a fine portraitist. All of his people are serious, dignified, and serene.

Millais devoted most of his talents to landscapes and portraits, and did few didactic or imaginary scenes.

He was elected to the Royal Academy and also served one year as its president. He was created a baronet in 1879, and died in 1896.

### *Boyhood of Raleigh: John Everett Millais*

The picture tells the story, practically by itself. An old seaman, with a big hat and floppy pantaloons, is telling the two fine young aristocrats about the sea. Notice that the pointing finger almost rests upon the far horizon. Is he telling them that the world is flat, and that if a ship goes too far it will fall over the edge? (Remember that we did not always know the world was round. A long time ago, many people thought it was flat.) Or perhaps he is describing a great storm at sea, or a school of huge whales they sailed past one day.

What fine clothes the boys have! They wear a ruff at the neck and lace at the wrist. Boys don't wear clothes like that any more, but don't you imagine they felt grand? Notice how the green of one suit sets off the boy's auburn hair and how the black of the other emphasizes his fair skin and lighter hair.

See what the old sailor is wearing, the red pantaloons and the shapeless shirt. Notice the strength in the shoulders and arms. Notice how dark he is, browned by the wind and the sun and the salt-sea spray. He sits on a worm-eaten, weather-worn log. Perhaps it was flung over the breakwater by a big storm one day. Notice the claws of the shrimp behind him. Or is it a lobster he has caught? The broken wheel obscures the creature so that one can hardly be sure.

The boys may have been playing with the model ship when the sailor came along. Why doesn't the artist show the face of the sailor? Is it because what he is telling the boys is more important than what he looks like? Perhaps an episode like this determined Raleigh on his career at sea.

### Claude Monet 1840–1926 French

Monet, with Sisley and Manet, was one of the founders of the Impressionist school. Be sure not to confuse Monet and Manet because the names are so similar.

Monet was born in Paris, but loved and understood nature. He was a soldier at twenty, serving two years in Africa. During the war of 1870, he went to England.

Perhaps it was in Africa he first became fascinated with the effect of sunlight and atmosphere. He painted a limited number of subjects and might paint the same scene early in the morning, at dusk, or at noon.

The experiments of Monet, as well as those of the other impressionists, greatly influenced many artists who lived later. Their painting is very important because it opened new paths to the artists.

Monet lived and painted near Giverny, observing the changing lights and seasons and trying to put them on canvas. He died there December 5, 1926.

### *Ragatta in Argenteuil: Monet*

In his picture of chestnut trees, Cezanne balanced line and mass as carefully as if he were building a house of cards. Monet has not done this. In "The Boyhood of Raleigh," the story-element was important. Monet has not arranged his sailing boats so we ask ourselves who will win the regatta. What is the artist trying to do?

He is exploring the effects of light and air upon the sea and the boats. Shall we see what he has done with the light? Look at the sky. It is carefully mottled, so it is

not dead or monotonous. Yet it is without cloud or bird, so no attention is attracted from the little boats.

Let us look, then, at them. The sails are light and lift upward into the sky. They are shaped like the fins of sharks, much enlarged of course, and much more airy. Perhaps they look more like butterfly wings, especially the first wing that is often pointed. See how the little craft float, almost weightless.

Look how their reflection is fragmented by the gentle wash of the water, how the colors are darkened slightly when reflected from the water as from a mirror. The tall pole at the edge appears, by the action of the waves, to wiggle like a snake. The reflection of the row of boats in the right corner wobble so they almost look like fish.

The whole effect is so cool and airy you almost take a deep breath, as though you were there too.

Perhaps the artist realized the little point was "heavier" than the boats. Could it be he added the white cattle to "lighten" the land mass? What do you think? The red plank house is square and the contrast emphasizes the fairy, fly-away quality of the boats, all pale and shining in the sun. Have you ever seen sailboats that looked like this?

### Jose Clemente Orozco 1883–1949 Mexican

Jose Orozco was born in Zapoltan in the state of Jalisco in 1883 and lived in Mexico City. He is, it has been said, the greatest painter the Americas have ever produced. He was a charming person, strong but retiring and modest, and dedicated to the welfare of humanity.

Orozco was averse to war, having lived through the Mexican Revolution. Orozco did not like the lack of discipline in modern art. He believed that artists, as well as ordinary people, should be educated.

#### *Zapatistas: Orozco*

Zapata was a reformer who sought to improve the conditions of the peasants and the workers of Mexico. The Zapatistas are the men and women who followed him.

Notice how the men march in a group, very little being shown of their individual faces. Orozco is presenting them as soldiers, as members of their group, not as individuals.

See the dramatic, falling lines of the serapes, continuing on down the legs, and repeated in the flowing curves of the women's mantles. The repetition of these lines achieves strength and rhythm. The tips of their sombreros, and the bayonets shining with menace, point upward. See how strong this contrast of line-movement is.

The colors in the picture are bright as jewels. Note the dramatic contrast between the bright crystal-tones and the dark colors. See how the mountain surges upward in the background and how elemental it seems. Is this significant?

The men on horseback appear to be officers. Do you think their faces are cruel? Do the women look sad? Why has the man in the foreground fallen? Is he tired or has he been injured?

This painting has a lot of emotion and is very dramatic. In it, Orozco says what he thought of war.

### Pablo Picasso 1881– Spanish-French

Born October 23, 1881, in Malaga (Spain), Picasso was given his first lessons in art by his father, who was also an artist. The family settled in Paris in 1903. Picasso developed his art, consequently, in France although he was a Catalan by birth.

He was a leader among the Post-Impressionists, painting often in cool tones and clear contours, mostly subjects from the more “seamy side” of Paris, the acrobats, the harlequins, and the circus people.

Then about 1906–10, he began with Braque an art which he named “Cubism.” His Cubist canvases present mostly bowls, fruits, bottles, glasses, musical instruments and people. He was trying to create an abstract art form, a sort of “visual music.”

Sometimes he painted with delicate points of color (Pointillism), with contrasting light and dark. He tried to make images convey clearly the idea, not just the appearance, of life and reality. He discarded the “natural” form in his search for the inner meaning or being of things and people.

Braque introduced bits of paper to one of his paintings, making a melange of painting and printing. Picasso tried adding bits of wood, combining sculpture and painting.

Paul Cezanne once remarked that everything in nature may be reduced to three basic forms, the cone, the cylinder, and the cube. It was in exploring the possibilities of this theory that Cubism was born. He took objects apart and placed them at random. He ignored the rules of perspective. This gives the works an abstract appearance. Critics often complain this results in a canvas that is too “intellectual” and has no emotion or feeling.

#### *The Three Musicians: Picasso*

This is certainly a strange canvas, isn't it? Let us see what we can find in it. Perhaps then we will understand it.

Remember that Cubism attempts to reduce things to geometric shapes, to cones and squares and circles, to abstract shapes.

First, the eyes enable us to identify the faces of the three figures. And aren't those faces weird! Each wears a mask across the eyes. Is Picasso trying to tell us that we all hide from each other, as though we were wearing masks?

Then, we can find the musical instruments. The man on the left has a horn, the man in the middle a guitar, the one on the right is holding the music, and possibly is singing. Or perhaps the first man has a clarinet or an ocarina and perhaps the one on the right has a zither or an accordion, or a harp? Possibly the actual instrument is not important. Picasso simply wants us to feel that music is being produced and to consider the IDEA of music.

See how the shadows produce a wolf's head in the corner. Note the little crescent under the central chair. This just might be the tail of the wolf? Are these shapes accidents, or do they have meaning? Is Picasso saying that the sadness of music (as in some folk songs) is like the cry of a wolf at night? If he were a humorous man, we might imagine he is saying the one on the right, who is possibly singing, can't carry a tune!

Some elements of composition we can still observe: For instance, the rich dark background (almost the color of an eggplant) does much to heighten the drama of the mysterious figures; the red and yellow triangles are apparently the center of interest in the composition.

Now we know why critics thought Cubism was too intellectual. This is an artistic puzzle. How much of it do you understand?

### Rembrandt van Rijn 1606–1669 Dutch

Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn was born in Leyden in a house overlooking the Rhine, the fourth son of a well-to-do miller. He was sent to Latin school and enrolled in the University of Leyden in 1620. Determining to be a painter, he was apprenticed and studied in Amsterdam, returning to Leyden and devoting himself entirely to painting. He painted every picturesque face he encountered, exploring the qualities of light and the intricacies of human character. His mother, his father, and sometimes his sister, were his models. He produced many portraits of himself. In 1631, he moved to Amsterdam, where he spent the remainder of his life.

In 1634, he married a beautiful blonde girl; only one of their four children lived. Then his wife, Saskia, died, leaving a motherless boy, Titus, in Rembrandt's care. Paintings done at this time reflect Rembrandt's sadness and grief.

Rembrandt had developed a smooth style, with transparent shadows, with subtle blendings of light and shade. He had many friends and commissions as time went on. His selfportraits show a powerful head, a stubborn chin, heavy eyebrows and keen eyes.

As time went on, the country was worn out by long wars and civil troubles; money became scarce. No one could afford portraits. Rembrandt was declared bankrupt in 1656 and lost his house. He took a modest lodging and, strangely, produced some of his greatest pictures in these years. When the artist finally died in 1669, his style of painting was no longer popular and he had outlived most of his friends and patrons.

### *The Night Watch*: Rembrandt

This is a monumental painting, done in 1642, of 29 lifesize civic guards. To get some action into the scene, the artist portrayed them coming out of their clubhouse, with weapons, drums and uniforms. See how their gestures add to this sense of movement.

The yellow uniform of the lieutenant lightens the painting, as does the red velvet worn by the musketeer on the left and the bright dress of the little girl beside him. The captain in black has a perky white ruff and a gay red bandolier. The drummer on the far right has a shiny green coat. The dog in the right foreground is apparently excited by all the noise. To avoid making him too important, Rembrandt has sketched him in very "thin" colors. He is balanced by the barely visible running figure on the left.

The patrons were not happy with this picture. If you think a moment you will know why. Some of them could not see their own faces! Only those in the front row or those who are standing apparently on steps at the back are plainly visible.

### *The Syndics*: Rembrandt

This canvas was done toward the end of Rembrandt's life, about 1661. The six men are seated behind a table with a crimson and gold cloth. To enliven the portraits, Rembrandt has painted them as they had all just looked up. Possibly some one had just entered the room. Don't you think it is odd that only one is hatless? Perhaps

it is his room and the others have just arrived and seated themselves for the business conference.

This group portrait shows Rembrandt's absolute mastery. He was one of the greatest artists of his time. His etchings are equally unrivalled.

### Auguste Renoir 1841–1919 French

Renoir was born February 25, 1841, at Limoges, a town famous for generations for its china and pottery. Renoir's father, a tailor, apprenticed the boy to a porcelain manufacturer. Working here, Renoir learned to admire the shining transparencies and subtle brushwork on the china. Sometimes his paintings have that same delicacy and translucency.

Renoir liked people and was a friend of most of the artists of his time, particularly Sisley and Monet. He admired the work of Delacroix and Ingres.

Especialy fond of rich, vibrant color, he spent his life studying the effect of light falling on objects, of shapes so curving you felt you must touch them. He constructed his paintings more with color than with line drawings. Late in life, still experimenting, he began making models of his subjects before he made their portraits. Each of his paintings has a joyousness, a visual exuberance, and a lyric intensity.

In Provence where he had lived since 1900, Renoir died on December 17, 1919. He is one of France's greatest modern painters. Many of his canvases have been brought to America.

#### *Little Margot Berard: Renoir*

This is a beautiful painting. The figure is vivacious and vital. One can enjoy looking at it without probing or analyzing. But to understand how the artist has produced this charming and deceptively simple portrait, we should peer more closely at the canvas.

See how Renoir has emphasized the youth, the immaturity of the body by allowing the black dress to melt into the background. The background itself is almost black, enlivened with reddish tones, to enhance the fairness of the child's face. The gold, flyaway hair, brushed outward from the face on the right, adds to the impression of fragility.

The face is composed of warm, flesh tones, deepening into rose on the cheeks and red on the lips. Only the shadows under the eyes, the nose and the lower lips are touched with cool, very faint blue tints to indicate the shadows. This blue, warmed with bits of pink or red pigment, is repeated in the little pinafore. The little round collar emphasizes the curve of the chin.

The eyes, which poets have called "windows of the soul," definitely dominate the picture. They are large and alert. Don't you think this child is a treasure to her family? As she grows up, her little chin will advance a little, and her eyes will not look quite so large. Charming as she is now, won't she be beautiful when she grows up?

### Diego Rivera 1886–1957 Mexican

Diego Rivera was born in Guanajuato, Mexico, in 1886, and lived in Mexico City

most of his life. He was a man of phenomenal energy, and transformed the art of his country. It has been said that he launched the "Mexican Renaissance."

Mexico has not always had a happy political history, and for a time Rivera was very much interested in communism. He defied presidents, dictators and millionaires and was occasionally forced to "hide out" because of his impetuosity.

His paintings reflect many of his political theories and his feeling that the Mexican people were being exploited.

Rivera died in 1957.

### *Flower Vendor, or The Flower Vendor: Rivera*

This is a strong and vibrant painting. The figure of the man who has the basket on his back and of the woman behind him are not individualized. They might be any peasants.

Note how meticulously the basket is drawn, how formally the folds of the woman's skirts fall about her. See how the light blue of her shawl enhances the dark color of her face and of her skirt. Why did Rivera paint the figure of the man wearing such a light shirt and trousers? Perhaps it is simply that he is wearing light clothing, but could it be he wanted the dark basket to appear even heavier? See how the man bends under the weight. Do you think flowers would be this heavy?

What is Rivera trying to say? Is he saying that the work imposed upon the peasants is "forcing them to the ground"? Notice how large and strong Rivera has made the man's hands. Perhaps some of Rivera's social theories are "showing through" his painting.

### *Man and Machinery: Rivera*

Very few painters have used industry as the theme. Rivera was one who did. See how meticulously the machines have been rendered. Did you see the man near the top, apparently tending the fires of a kind of blast furnace? See how the machinery towers over the men. Notice the muscles of the men in front of the picture. Do you think the men are happy, or only busy? How many different types of workers can you find? Can that be a Negro in the left foreground? Some of them look like Indians, and some like Spaniards, and some like Anglos. The people of Mexico, like those of United States, have a many-faceted heritage.

## **Jacob Van Ruisdael 1628–1682 Dutch**

Jacob Van Ruisdael was born in Haarlem in 1628 and was a master painter in the guild of his native city by 1648. He settled in Amsterdam in 1657 where he practiced painting, and perhaps medicine.

In 1682 he returned to Haarlem, ailing and impoverished. There he died.

Van Ruisdael had a strong original technique and sad, earnest and heroic concept of nature. His large landscapes usually have one or more small human figures to make the landscapes look larger. His painting communicates the immensity and dignity of nature.

He used strong and monotonous color schemes of greens and browns in his many works. More than 600 of his paintings, engravings and crayon drawings still exist.

### *The Mill at Wyk: Van Ruisdael*

This picture reflects Ruisdael's delight in and love of the countryside. We do not



have to guess what he meant before we can understand and enjoy the painting. Isn't that a comfort?

Almost three hundred years ago, when Ruysdael lived, few landscapes had been done because artists felt nature was not profound or substantial enough for serious painting. Ruysdael does not have the dramatic handlings of light of Rembrandt or Vermeer, but his canvas is very satisfying.

The scene is pleasant, with a few friendly, cottonball clouds in the sky. The willows in the foreground are so carefully drawn they give a beautiful illusion of nearness. See how the artist has depicted the little whitecaps on the cool green waves. Notice the repetition of long, sweeping curves, from the point in the foreground, the second one upon which the mill stands, to the further point clad only in greenery and the distant low grassy hill along the horizon. How restful these are!

To avoid monotony, Ruysdael has added verticals. How many can you find? One is the mast of the ship hidden by the first point, another is the mast of the ship with the sail on the left, and then there is the up-and-down bulk of the mill and the other buildings. Notice how the short vertical pilings are "echoed" by the short women in bonnets.

The platform around the mill forms a complete circle. Where is another round object? Look in the lower lefthand corner. I wonder if those big round things are millstones that have been used and worn out, or whether they are new ones which the miller will install later?

Would you like to have this painting in your home? Doesn't it make you want to go sailing or fishing?

### Gilbert Stuart 1755-1828 American

Gilbert Stuart was born in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, December 3, 1755, of Scotch parents, and as a boy roamed about the Newport docks. At fourteen, he was apprenticed to Cosmo Alexander, an artist, and went to Scotland with him. When Alexander died, he found himself penniless and "shipped home before the mast," a trip so brutal he refused to talk about it.

During the American Revolution, he was a pupil of Benjamin West in London and after four years set up his own studio, painting portraits of George III and the future George IV and of Louis XVI of France.

He had learned much from West and from studying the works of Reynolds, Romney and Gainsborough. Always careless about money, he found it expedient to leave his creditors in London and return to America.

His painstaking likeness of citizens of Newport delighted them. In 1805, he settled in Boston. He was a proud, sinful fellow and an untidy, self-centered man but he was one of the greatest portraitists of all time. His ability to capture the likeness of his sitter was near-magic.

### *George Washington: Stuart*

It is reported that Stuart had a very personal method of beginning a portrait. He put a large blob of color on the canvas that, as nearly as possible, represented the skin-tones of his sitter. Then he added ears, eyes, and drew the shoulders below it. For Stuart, this may have worked well, for he did more than a thousand portraits. But no one else found it helpful.

Washington and Stuart did not "get on well." Washington felt Stuart was impu-

dent and Stuart thought Washington was too reserved. Stuart painted several pictures of Washington, then sold copies of them. He did not flatter Washington. One portrait even shows a slight clumsiness about the lips. This is not because Stuart was careless but showed that Washington's teeth did not fit properly!

Stuart complained that Washington's shoulders were too narrow, but he has captured the personality of the first president, showing him to be a man of dignity, judgment, and command. Notice how the green curtain behind Washington emphasize the ruddiness of his skin, the blueness of his eye. See how intent and intelligent these eyes are, how stern and self-possessed his pose. To be president of a new nation and keep its untried governmental machinery operating took a man of judgment and decision, don't you think?

### Diego Velasquez 1599–1660 Spanish

Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velasquez was one of the world's greatest painters. He was born in Seville and baptized June 6, 1599. His father was descended from a noble Portuguese family but, after the custom of the country, he adopted his mother's name, Velasquez. He was trained in language and philosophy but, showing an aptitude for painting, placed with painters of his day to study. One of these was Pacheto, whose daughter Juana he married.

He painted many common things, earthenware jars, fruit and flowers, birds and fish and people in the streets. His brushwork is strong, his colors bold. He had no philosophy but presented what he saw.

In 1624 he moved to Madrid and was painter in the court of Philip for 36 years. He knew Rubens and, visiting Italy, copied some of the works of Michelangelo and Raphael and Tintoretto.

He has become more famous since 1825 for his masterpieces than he was during his lifetime. He died of fever on August 6, 1660 and his wife died eight days later.

#### *Infanta Margarita Theresia: Velasquez*

To portray the little girl, Velasquez has used soft colors. Notice the green background, the green-draped furniture on the left. The green is cool and is enlivened with warm brown brush strokes. The green emphasizes the delicate reddish-gold of the child's hair. Did you notice how the glass vase also reflects the browns of the trim of her dress and of her eyes, while the highlights are almost exactly the color of her hair?

After the fashion of her time, the child is dressed like a miniature adult. How does Velasquez emphasize her littleness? He makes her seem smaller by leaving a great deal of space behind her.

What of the colors in the little girl's dress? Notice the skillful combination of warm colors in the cool background. Where are these colors repeated? In the flowers in the vase.

Compare the whole "emotion" of this picture with one of El Greco's. Velasquez has impersonally presented the child, just as a camera might. It does not have the drama, the intensity of El Greco's painting. Yet it is delightful and effective.

### Jan Vermeer 1632–1675 Dutch

Jan van Delft Vermeer was born at Delft on October 31, 1632. In 1653, he married Catherine Bolens; when he died in 1675, he left her a widow with eight

children. She sold the pictures which he had not yet promised to pay her debts.

Vermeer is especially noted for scenes of everyday life and for his landscapes. Most of the genre paintings have only one or two figures. His interiors are built around square or rectangular lines, relieved by curving objects.

He liked rich tones of green and blue and was especially fond of yellow. His later paintings have pale, soft colors, delicately and subtly combined and perfectly in harmony.

He was especially adept in handling light.

### *Lady with Lute: Vermeer*

This is an ordinary scene (genre painting), showing a young lady tuning her lute. She is looking out the window. Is she expecting her music teacher perhaps, and getting ready for her lesson?

Notice how light the picture is. Light from the window falls across her face, the table, and then spills on the floor. See how the cloth on the table droops at the corner, leading the eye to the little pool of sunlight on the floor.

In an interior scene, such as this, many objects are square—the table, the wall map, the chair. So much angularity is unpleasing. What objects in the picture have curves?

The falling folds of the cloth on the table, the hanging window curtain are soft, and the head and shoulders of the girl, curving gently, are very pleasing. The shape of the instrument, too, is round, except for the “neck.” See how the artist has painted books, apparently at random on the table, to distract from the angularity at the corner.

Do you like the muted tones? The pale green and the pastel yellow produce a feeling of quiet, of tranquility and of happiness.

## Leonardo da Vinci 1452–1519 Italian

Leonardo da Vinci was one of the most amazing men of all time. He was a great painter, sculptor, architect, musician, mechanic, engineer, and natural philosopher. He was born at Vinci, a fortified hill village near Empoli. He was handsome, charming, well-mannered and even tempered.

He studied art under contemporary painters and painted almost exclusively from nature, not copying the “antiquities” as some others did. His lines were accurate and yet free, strong and precise. He studied the shapes of hills and rocks and leaves. He observed rare plants and animals and was haunted by the many expressions upon the face of men. He studied to discover the rules of optics and perspective and pondered human and animal anatomy.

His scientific studies were amazing. He might have invented the “flying machine,” as early airplanes were called, if petroleum had been available for power and if metallurgy had been advanced enough to make the engines. His drawings indicate he understood the basic principles of flight. He was far ahead of his time and people simply thought he was odd. It is only recently that many of his ideas have been evaluated.

His bent for experiment often interfered with his painting. He did not have time to satisfy both the urge to paint and the desire to explore the world. He painted in many mediums, experimenting with new pigments and colors. Sometimes these new

pigments betrayed him and simply "ran off the wall" or canvas where he had placed them.

### *The Last Supper: Leonardo da Vinci*

This picture is done in tempera, not oil. It took four years to paint and is in the Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. It began to decay shortly after it was finished. This is one of the greatest paintings in the world. Let us see if we can understand why.

The twelve disciples are seated at the table with Christ. There is much agitation, for the Lord has just told them that "one of you will betray me." They are discussing his statement with each other. Notice how the arrangement of the hands carries the eye to the central figure of Jesus. The large window behind Him also serves to focus the attention. Then, too, the eyes of many of the disciples are upon Him.

The lines of the ceiling of the long room also serve to draw the eyes to the middle, to the central figure. So, too, does the dramatic contrast between the red of His robe and the blue of His cloak. None of the others at the table have been painted in those vibrant complementary colors.

The picture has recently been restored, as well as possible, so that many people may see and enjoy it.

### James McNeil Whistler 1834-1903 American-English

James McNeil Whistler was born in Lowell, Massachusetts. His father was an engineer and they spent a year in St. Petersburg when he was quite a young man. The boy then entered West Point but his studies were unsatisfactory. For a while, he was draftsman for the Coast Guard and then he studied art in England and France.

He opened a studio in England and spent the remainder of his life in England or in France. The English were not too impressed by his works and he was exasperated by their stodginess.

Whistler admired the French Impressionists and Japanese paintings. Some of his colors are exquisite, delicate in tone and subtly arranged. He did not like realistic but "romantic" or "idealistic" painting. He thought painting was much like music and called some of his works "tone poems," or "nocturnes," or "harmonies."

He helped many struggling American artists who came to his studio.

### *Battersea Bridge: Whistler*

Whistler was not an excellent draftsman but he did appreciate "atmosphere." He used a restricted range of hues. If light did not fall naturally to suit him, he simply re-arranged it in the painting.

The solid vertical of the pier of the bridge is relieved only by the slight curve of the bridge itself, and the faint line of the houses across the far sweep of the river.

It is night, and the only brightness comes from the few stars and the lights along the shore. The colors are all muted blues and greens but notice how carefully they have been applied to the canvas, to give an illusion of wave motion.

The man and the boat balance or fill in the vast space between the river and the bridge itself. If Whistler had not called this "Battersea Bridge," do you think he could have named it "Nocturne" or "Dusk on the River"?

## Grant Wood 1892–1942 American

Grant Wood is an American artist, representative of the Middle West. He studied in the Art Institute at Chicago in 1912–1914 and in Paris in 1920–1922. In Paris, he grew a sandy beard and bought a Basque beret and tried to look like a “Left Bank” artist, but this did not seem to improve his painting. He decided that his “best ideas always came while milking a cow,” so he returned to the United States.

Born at Anamosa, Iowa, Wood grew up in Cedar Rapids, experiencing extreme poverty after his father died when the boy was ten. The boy sold vegetables, going from door to door. At that time, Midwestern America could boast few graces and fewer luxuries.

Wood was commissioned by the American Legion to do a stained glass window. Since he knew nothing about glass, he went to Munich to learn how to design the window. There he saw some early Flemish paintings. These reminded him of the people back in the Midwest, with the same earnest, severe faces. These were common people, plain or even almost homely, who became beautiful when seen with the love and intensity of some one who understood them—Grant Wood, for instance.

When he returned to America, the artist began painting his people as he now thought they should be painted. He paid meticulous attention to detail and his style is easily recognized. Most of his pictures are of faces or of people. He made a few landscapes but did not like them. He spent the rest of his life portraying the men and women he knew as he thought they should be drawn, stern, honest, uncompromising but friendly.

*American Gothic: Grant Wood*

This is the picture of an older couple, painted as a photographer might have arranged them, standing in front of their prim and uncompromising white house. Actually, they are the artist's sister and his dentist.

Wood manages to make even the curves austere, reflecting the hard but not unrewarding lives of people in the Midwest. The woman's hair is a beautiful wheaten-gold color, but she has pulled it back severely over her ears. The little white collar and the old-fashioned brooch indicate some attempt at adornment, but the brown apron speaks of the ever present necessity for work, of the urgency of tasks that never seem to get done.

The stance of the man reveals his firmness. The pitchfork speaks of his daily farm chores. Notice how firmly his hand grips the handle, how much strength is displayed in the business-like grasp. Did you note that the shape of the pitchfork and of the overalls pocket is about the same, —three tines pointing upward on the fork and three seams going up the front of the overalls? Do you think he slipped into his Sunday coat hastily to have his portrait made? But where is the collar of his shirt? Most boys know that collars and cuffs are the first part of a shirt to become soiled. Long ago, shirts were made with detachable collars so that a new clean collar could be buttoned on. This meant it was not necessary to wash the shirt so often, or iron it, and it saved considerable work. I do not know if shirts like this are still made. Do you?

The people Grant Wood painted may be slow to laugh but quick to lend a hand if you need a barn repaired after a storm. They were and still are the backbone of America. Their toil made it possible for us to work less. This picture won the artist a bronze medal at the Chicago Art Institute in 1930.

## Pronunciation of Artists' Names

*(accent the capitalized syllable)*

Angelico—ahn-JELL-i-ko

Brueghel—BROOG-el

Cezanne—say-ZANN

Constable—KUN-stabl

Degas—day-GAH

Durer—DEW-rer

Gauguin—go-GAN

Giotto—JOT-tow

Van Gogh—Van-GO

Goya—GO-yuh

Grabar—GRAY-bar

El Greco—GRAY-ko

Hals—HALLS

Homer—HO-mer

Johnson—JOHN-son

Klee—CLAY

Landseer—LAND-seer

Luini—LOO-i-ni

Manet—MAN-ay

Marc—MARK

Marin—MA-rin

Matisse—mat-TEASE

Millais—MILL-ay

Monet—mo-NAY

Orozco—o-ROSE-ko

Picasso—pe-KAH-so

Rembrandt—REM-brandt

Renoire—re-NWAR

Rivera—ri-VERE-ah

Ruisdael—ROYs-del

Stuart—STEW-art

Velasquez—ve-LOHS-keys

Vermeer—ver-MERE

Vinci—VIN-chee

Whistler—WHIST-ler

Wood—WOOD



