



Sheldon Statewide: *Meet Your Match* Lesson Plans

Introduction

The following lesson plans are not step-by-step directives, but rather broad ideas on using the exhibition *Meet Your Match* to attend to and achieve a variety of learning objectives, many of which are included in the Nebraska Academic Content Standards for visual arts, language arts, and social studies.

Sheldon Museum of Art education staff members have developed these plans to be flexible and adaptable. We encourage you to alter or add to these prompts in order to fit the needs of your learners and the environment of your classroom. We are certain you will be able to adapt the lessons to fit the different age groups and subject areas you teach. Our primary goals are for students to learn how to think, talk, and write about visual imagery and objects, and to understand how these same critical thinking skills and mental processes can apply to learning outside of the visual arts as well.

Digital files including articles and links for individual artists represented in *Meet Your Match* are available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>.

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Intended Age Group

Grades K–5

Length of Lesson

One 20-minute lesson + activity time

Materials

- William Wegman’s *Bride and Groom* projected on a classroom screen or given to students as a color copy
- A digital image of *Bride and Groom* is available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>
- If your classroom has internet access, use Sheldon Museum of Art’s online collection database to show a digital image of *Bride and Groom*. Search “William Wegman” at <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection>.

Standards Areas

Visual arts, language arts

Objectives

By practicing careful observation students will be able to:

- Identify and describe works of art in terms of elements of art and principles of design
- Communicate ideas in a clear and concise manner within a structured classroom discussion
- Explore how images are used to tell stories
- Compose short texts with age-appropriate vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure

Lesson

Establish a conversation about observation. Your strategy for this conversation can take a variety of directions, but the goal should be to establish a basic understanding of how to practice close looking.

Some ideas to augment the discussion include:

- Use images from *Meet Your Match* such as William Wegman’s photograph *Bride and Groom* to practice careful observation. Students may share out loud what they observe about the image, or free-write a list individually.
- Have students look at the image for 30 seconds, then remove the image. Have the students write down everything they remember about the image. Repeat for 30 more seconds. Ask students if they observed more the second time.
- Talk about the parallels between close looking at an image and close reading of a text. Use examples from your current curriculum. Consider how artists and writers draw our attention to details, convey emotion or ideas, and create meaning.

Language Arts

- Give students an opportunity to look carefully at *Bride and Groom*. Have the students write or draw a short story of what happened just before this “scene.” Encourage them to think about and include characters, setting, and plot.
- Read a version of the story “Cinderella” to your students. Then show them *Bride and Groom*. Talk about the artist William Wegman and how he uses dogs in his photographs to tell familiar stories. The following resources may be helpful:
 - Artist’s Series: William Wegman: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTbjGhG_2wU
 - Compiled documents on William Wegman: <https://unl.box.com/s/tazazieg3de1rn9uxuxt9h5esepgme1z>
- Ask students to think about how they would describe the bride and groom. Divide a whiteboard or chalkboard in half and have each student come to the board and write a word that describes the bride on one side. Then repeat the exercise for the groom on the other side of the board. Compare the responses for each side of the board.

Visual Arts

- Give students the opportunity to create a graphic novel version of a fairy tale or well-known story with animals as the main characters. Have them include speech bubbles or text blocks to accompany the images.
- Ask students to draw or paint another scene from “Cinderella” using an animal of their choice.
- Choose an image from *Meet Your Match* and have the entire class make a collaborative grid drawing. Superimpose a grid over the image, cut the image into squares, and assign one square to each student. Have them draw their square with as much detail as possible. For how-to instructions, see: <http://katiestruk.blogspot.com/2011/08/this-project-was-with-my-art-1-students.html>.

Assessment/Reflection

- Have students give peer-review feedback to one another during or after completing the assignment. Ask each student to offer a peer or partner verbal or written comments on the ideas, process, clarity, etc. of their project.
- Ask students to free write a reflection about the classroom conversation.
- Engage students in small group presentations with written feedback from each group.
- Pose a wrap-up question for discussion or free writing: Why is close looking or close reading important? How does it improve the way you understand an image or story?

Intended Age Group

Grades K-5

Length of Lesson

One 30-minute lesson + activity time

Materials

- John Talleur's *Bird Song* and John James Audubon's *Whooping Crane* projected on a classroom screen or given to students as color copies
- Digital images of *Bird Song* and *Whooping Crane* are available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>
- If your classroom has internet access, use Sheldon Museum of Art's online collection database to show digital images of *Bird Song* and *Whooping Crane*. Search "Bird Song" and "Whooping Crane" at <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection>.

Standards Areas

Visual arts, language arts

Objectives

By comparing and contrasting images, texts, or other media, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast two pieces of visual art
- Understand the difference between "naturalistic" and "abstract" works of art
- Interpret the mood, feeling, or message communicated by a work of art
- Use precise word choice to write a simple poem based on their observations
- Compare and contrast similar themes, topics, and/or patterns of events in literary and informational texts
- Collaboratively converse with peers and adults to clearly express one's own views while respecting diverse perspectives

Lesson

Using images John Talleur's *Bird Song* and John James Audubon's *Whooping Crane*, this lesson supports the building of critical thinking skills, such as comparing and contrasting, that can be applied across disciplines.

- Establish a conversation about how and why comparing and contrasting can be a useful practice for learning about visual art or other media. You may direct this conversation in a variety of ways, but the goals should be for students to practice comparing and contrasting and creating interpretations based on their observations. Some suggestions include:
 - Talk about the difference between "naturalistic art" and "abstract art." (See glossary.) Use *Bird Song* and *Whooping Crane* as examples. Ask students to point to parts of the images that tell them whether the image is naturalistic or abstract.
 - Discuss how each artist creates a background and setting for their birds, and how their choices change the way we can interpret or use the images (i.e. precise rendering of environment v. ambivalent setting, scientific v. expressionistic)

- Compare and contrast two texts from your current curriculum.

Activities / Applications

Language Arts

- Draw a 2-circle Venn diagram on a piece of paper, labeling one circle with “Bird Song” and the other with “Whooping Crane.” Write words that describe how the images are different in the outer parts of the circles, and words that describe both of the images in the center of the diagram. Encourage students to think about words that describe color, shapes, subject matter, space, or mood. Then have students use words from their Venn diagrams to write a short story. (You can adopt the diagram technique for any kind of compare-and-contrast activity in your curriculum.)
- Ask students to compose a 4- or 8-line poem about the two birds and their similarities and differences. It may be useful to assign a rhyme scheme (e.g. ABAB, CDCD or AABB CCDD).

Visual Arts

- Go outside and sketch images of birds or other elements of nature (e.g. trees, flowers, landscape, etc). Create a classroom gallery of the finished images and have students compare and contrast their work with that of another student.
- As a class, search Sheldon’s collection online for other images of birds by visiting www.sheldonartmuseum.org/collection and searching “bird.” Pick one to inspire a drawing, painting, or sculpting project of your choice.

Assessment / Reflection

- Have students give peer-review feedback to one another during or after completing the assignment. Ask each student to offer a peer or partner verbal or written comments on the ideas, process, clarity, etc. of their project.
- Ask students to free write a reflection about the classroom conversation.
- Engage students in small group presentations with written feedback from each group.
- Pose a wrap-up question for discussion or free writing: Why might artists choose to depict the same subject matter in different ways? How do their choices change the way you think about their art or writing?

Intended Age Group

Grades 6–8

Length of Lesson

One 40-minute lesson + activity time

Materials

- Robert Rauschenberg's *Poster for CORE (Congress on Racial Equality)* projected on a classroom screen or given to students as a color copy
- A digital image of *Poster for CORE* is available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>.
- If your classroom has internet access, use Sheldon Museum of Art's online collection database to show a digital image of *Poster for CORE*. Search "Robert Rauschenberg" at <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection>.

Standards Areas

Visual arts, language arts, social studies

Objectives

By thinking about how visual artists draw attention to a single or multiple focal points, students will be able to:

- Define and describe examples of focal points
- Investigate and apply relationships between elements of art and principles of design to brainstorm visual possibilities
- Explain how images are used to tell stories, share familiar experiences, or connect to the world
- Recognize personal voice and make stylistic choices to reflect personal identity
- Describe concepts of time and chronology, classify key events in chronological order, and evaluate the historical impact of events
- Create images and texts for various purposes, audiences, and disciplines

Lesson

Using Robert Rauschenberg's *Poster for CORE (Congress on Racial Equality)*, this lesson supports the development of critical thinking and communications skills that can be applied across disciplines.

- Set the stage for this lesson by showing students an image of *Poster for CORE*. Ask them to spend three minutes looking closely at the image. Have them write down a list of everything they see, reminding them that nothing is "too obvious" to add to their lists. Then ask students to report on their lists. Talk about the definition of a "focal point" (a visual element that pulls the viewer's attention and directs the eye). How does Rauschenberg create focal points? Think about the size of individual collaged elements, their color, placement within the composition, and relationships to other elements. Some works of art have a single, clear focal point that draws the viewer's attention immediately. Other are created to have multiple focal points that encourage the viewer to look all around the image. How many focal points are in *Poster for CORE*?

- Explain how artists in all media—writers, dancers, graphic designers, etc.—use different kinds of focal points to direct viewers’ attention.
- Talk about how Rauschenberg uses certain images to convey a message and to prompt the viewer to think about issues or make associations. You may lead the students to think about the juxtaposition of images in the work:
 - Why did Rauschenberg overlap two images of President Kennedy?
 - What does the Statue of Liberty symbolize and why would he place a picture of a Native American nearby?
 - What do the images of highways and road signs make you think of?
- If you are using this lesson for a language arts or social studies class, talk about how students can create focal points in their writing or presentations to emphasize an argument or main point. Use texts, multimedia resources, or other images from your curriculum and ask students to identify the focal point(s).

Activities/Applications

Visual Arts

- Have students make collages by cutting out words and images from magazines, newspapers, or other materials and gluing them to plain pieces of paper. Ask students what messages they want to communicate through their collages. Remind them to think carefully about their compositions and whether they will create one focal point or many. Encourage each student to find the most effective way to express their message.
- Ask students to write personal responses to a work of art, or use a piece of writing from another class, to make visual word clouds with multiple focal points. Students can create word clouds by hand or with an online tool such as www.wordclouds.com.

Language Arts

- Have students write argumentative or persuasive essays. Then have them switch papers with a peer and highlight the main points of their peer’s argument. As a class, discuss strategies that students used to focus their readers’ attention.
- Give students the opportunity to design a newspaper spread that includes articles, images, headlines, and captions. Ask them to include at least three articles and to consider how they will catch readers’ attention and divide the space among multiple stories.

Social Studies

- Ask students to analyze a news article that aligns with your current curriculum or responds to a current event. Have them identify the article’s key ideas and evaluate how the author draws attention to these points.
- Have students make timelines of events that correlate with an era/period being studied in your current curriculum. Encourage students to design the timeline so that the viewer can evaluate and understand the length and/or significance of each event they highlight.

Assessment/Reflection

- Have students give peer-review feedback to one another during or after completing the assignment. Ask each student to offer a peer or partner verbal or written comments on the ideas, process, clarity, etc. of their project.
- Ask students to free write a reflection about the classroom conversation.
- Engage students in small group presentations with written feedback from each group.
- Pose a wrap-up question for discussion or free writing: How do artists, writers, and presenters use focal points in different settings to establish and emphasize specific ideas or messages?

Intended Age Group

Grades 6–8

Length of Lesson

One 40-minute lesson + activity time

Materials

- Robert Arneson’s *Jackson* and Dwight Kirsch’s *Self Portrait* projected on a classroom screen or given to students as color copies
- Digital images of *Jackson* and *Self Portrait* are available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>.
- If your classroom has internet access, use Sheldon Museum of Art’s online collection database to show digital images of *Jackson* and *Self Portrait*. Search “Jackson” and “Dwight Kirsch Self Portrait” at <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection>.

Standards Areas

Visual arts, language arts

Objectives

By thinking about self and identity expressed through portraiture, students will be able to:

- Compare and contrast works of art in terms of elements of art and principles of design
- Explain how images are used to tell stories, share familiar experiences, or connect to the world
- Analyze and present reflections of personal growth
- Recognize personal voice and make stylistic choices to reflect personal identity
- Communicate information and ideas effectively in analytic, descriptive, narrative, or reflective modes
- Reflect upon their own interests and aspirations and express their hopes for the future while respecting diverse perspectives
- Build and practice skills for understanding difference, empathy, and social discourse

Lesson

Focusing on Robert Arneson’s *Jackson* and Dwight Kirsch’s *Self Portrait*, this lesson invites conversation about various themes related to self and identity.

- Establish a conversation about portraiture and personal identity. You may choose to use texts, images, or other resources that you are already teaching/implementing in your curriculum to aid in these conversations. Some conversational threads to pursue include:
 - What makes up a person’s identity and how that identity is shared with others (e.g. physical characteristics, heritage, hobbies, personality, talents, etc.)
 - How personal goals and aspirations contribute to identity
 - How artists use portraiture to describe a person physically, psychologically, or emotionally
 - How nonphysical characteristics (e.g. energetic, joyful, disappointed) can be visually depicted in art

- Other forms of portraiture or ways to express identity (e.g. autobiographies/journals, social media profiles, music playlists)
- Show students Robert Arneson’s *Jackson* and Dwight Kirsch’s *Self Portrait*. Have students describe each individual and write student responses on a classroom board. Some questions to augment the discussion include:
 - What can you learn about each of the subjects from his portrait?
 - How would you describe each individual’s character?
 - How do these portraits communicate something about the subject’s personality or interests? Consider things like facial expression, props, clothes, pose, or background.

Activities/Applications

Language Arts

- Have students free write on the following topic: One hundred years from now, what do you hope you’ll be remembered for? What accomplishments do you hope to achieve in your lifetime? What can you do now to work toward these goals? How might others influence your path?
- Ask each student to write a chapter of their autobiography, focusing on a significant event, period of life, or experience.

Visual Arts

- Give students the opportunity to draw their own self-portraits. Encourage them to include elements other than their own faces and bodies (e.g. background/setting, props, other people/animals, etc.)
- Show students how to search Sheldon’s collection online for other portraits by visiting <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection> and searching “portrait.” Ask each student to pick one that intrigues them and write a visual analysis about the image, referring to elements of art and principles of design as well as their own response to the image.

Assessment/Reflection

- Have students give peer-review feedback to one another during or after completing the assignment. Ask each student to offer a peer or partner verbal or written comments on the ideas, process, clarity, etc. of their project.
- Ask students to free write a reflection about the classroom conversation.
- Engage students in small group presentations with written feedback from each group.
- Pose a wrap-up question for discussion or free writing: How do you define and express your personal identity?

Resources

- Example of painting by Jackson Pollock (*Full Fathom Five*, oil on canvas, 1947) <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/79070>
- Photograph of Dwight Kirsch: http://dwrightkirsch.com/PaintingsAZ/index_Black_and_White_Photos135.htm
- Exploring Photography – Methods of Visual Analysis, from the J. Paul Getty Museum: http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/exploring_photographs/lesson01.html

Intended Age Group

Grades 9–12

Length of Lesson

One 50-minute lesson + activity time

Materials

- Andy Warhol’s *Jacqueline Kennedy II (Jackie II)* and *Marilyn Diptych* projected onto a classroom screen or given to students as color copies
 - A digital image of *Jackie II* is available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>
 - A digital image and information about *Marilyn Diptych* is available at <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/late-europe-and-americas/modernity-ap/a/warhol-marilyn-diptych>
- Images of other portraits in pop art and other artistic styles projected onto a classroom screen or given to students as color copies
- If your classroom has internet access, use Sheldon Museum of Art’s online collection database to show digital images of *Jacqueline Kennedy II (Jackie II)*. Search “Jackie II” at <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection>.

Standards Areas

Visual arts, language arts, social studies

Objectives

By thinking about portraiture in the context of pop culture and pop art, students will be able to:

- Develop critical thinking and observational skills through compare-and-contrast strategies
- Discuss the role of pop culture in society and identify and evaluate current issues
- Explain the expressive qualities of pop art
- Develop historical research skills
- Converse collaboratively with peers on various topics, building on others’ ideas to clearly and persuasively express one’s own views while respecting diverse perspectives
- Use critical processes to develop and defend logical arguments supporting contextual responses to works of art

Lesson Plan

Focusing on a work of pop art presented in *Meet Your Match*, Andy Warhol’s *Jacqueline Kennedy II (Jackie II)* and a comparison image (not in the exhibition) by Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych*, this lesson supports the development of critical thinking skills that can be applied across disciplines.

- Set the stage for this lesson by introducing your students to pop art. Pop art, often thought of as the art of popular culture, was a visual arts movement that emerged during the post–World War II consumer boom of the late 1950s and 1960s. While pop art artists worked in a range of media and styles, they shared a common interest in mass media, mass production, and mass culture. Additional resources for exploring this topic include:

- <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/pop/a/pop-art>
- <http://www.theartstory.org/movement-pop-art.htm>
- <http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/pop-art.htm>
- The stage you set can take a variety of forms, but the goal should be to establish a basic understanding of the pop art style and its historical context. Some ideas to accomplish this include:
 - “Flip” your classroom and assign homework readings (text or multimedia) in advance of class discussion.
 - Briefly introduce the topic with a short illustrated presentation.
 - Pose questions and prompts that invite student contribution to the shared learning about pop art; for instance, “who can define pop culture?” or “what impact do media images of celebrities have on you?”
 - Compare/contrast pop art portraits with other types of portraits to highlight the unique qualities of the pop style and agenda.
- Some themes or topics ripe for exploration in a conversation about pop art and Warhol’s *Jackie II* and *Marilyn Diptych* include, but are not limited to:
 - Pop culture/media culture
 - Mass production/mass culture/consumerism
 - Postwar history
 - Representation/portraiture
 - Realism/abstraction
 - Subject/object
 - Art/life
 - Form/meaning
 - Screenprinting/other reproductive processes

Activities / Applications

Language Arts

- Have students choose a perspective: 1) pop art is “fine art” or 2) pop art is not “fine art”—and have them write a 3-page argumentative or persuasive essay discussing their point of view.
- Stage the same challenge, but divide your class into teams and debate the arguments using valid supporting evidence. Assign a third team to judge the debate.

Visual Arts

- Offer students the opportunity to create what they think today’s version of a “pop art” portrait might look like using any format. Ask them to be prepared to defend why the medium they selected best fits the idea of “pop art” in the twenty-first century.
- Ask students to write a visual analysis of a pop art portrait, connecting their interpretation of the artwork (*what* the artist communicates) with the elements of art and principles of design (*how* the artist communicates).

Social Studies

- Have students write an editorial essay on the influence of social media and/or the inundation of images and information on today’s society.
- Using any pop art image as a primary source, task students with investigating the democratic qualities of this art movement in a short research paper.

Assessment / Reflection

- Have students give peer-review feedback to one another during or after completing the assignment. Ask each student to offer a peer or partner verbal or written comments on the ideas, process, clarity, etc. of their project.
- Ask students to free write a reflection about the classroom conversation.
- Engage students in small group presentations with written feedback from each group.
- Pose a wrap-up question for discussion or free writing: How has pop culture influenced art? What effects does it have on contemporary society?

Intended Age Group

Grades 9–12

Length of Lesson

One 40-minute lesson + activity time

Materials

- Gordon Parks's *Outside Looking In, Mobile, Alabama, 1956* and Enrico Sarsini's *Untitled (Woman and Store Window)* projected on a classroom screen or given to students as color copies
- Digital images of these photographs are available at <https://unl.box.com/s/45k2vr9sd9ujho4bc4mfxubsff462wxr>
- If your classroom has internet access, use Sheldon Museum of Art's online collection database to show digital images of *Outside Looking In* and *Untitled (Woman and Store Window)*. Search "Gordon Parks" and "Enrico Sarsini" at <http://sheldonartmuseum.org/collection>.

Standards Areas

Visual arts, language arts, social studies

Objectives

By using photography to study society, students will be able to:

- Develop critical thinking and observational skills through compare-and-contrast strategies
- Understand and discuss the purposes of documentary photography and its ability to promote social change, empathy, solidarity, and citizenship
- Analyze the impact of artists and art on history in the United States
- Evaluate how multiple perspectives facilitate a more complete understanding of United States history

Lesson

- Focusing on two works from *Meet Your Match*, Gordon Parks' *Outside Looking In, Mobile, Alabama, 1956* and Enrico Sarsini's *Untitled (Woman and Store Window)*, this lesson invites conversation about various themes including segregation, civil rights, social justice, the uses of documentary photography and street photography, and photography's power to help us navigate and explore our world.
- Establish a conversation about documentary photography, society, and history. You may choose to use texts, images, or other resources that you are already teaching/implementing in your curriculum to aid in these conversations. Some topics to augment the discussion include:
 - The roles, purposes, and influences of documentary photography
 - How media and images can affect social change
 - The differences between documentary photography and street photography
 - Truth and photography
 - Civil rights in the United States and other historical or current social justice issues
 - How to empathize with those who are different or see things from a different point of view
 - Recognizing instances of inequality and what students can do to fight injustice

Activities / Applications

Language Arts

- Have students write a compare-and-contrast essay analyzing Gordon Parks's and Enrico Sarsini's photographs, or a pair of photographs of their choice.
- Ask students to analyze one of the photographs and develop a narrative, writing a creative story about what's happening in the image.
- Ask students to compose a poem about feeling isolated, left out, or separated.

Visual Arts

- Give students the opportunity to create a photo book using methods of documentary photography, selecting a theme or subject that has meaning to them.
- Divide students into groups and ask them to choose a social issue or cultural topic of interest. Have them take photos that express a point of view about that topic, uploading the photos to a classroom blog or photo-sharing website (e.g. Flickr, Google Photos).

Social Studies

- Guide students through the process of researching historical photographs as primary sources for a research project.
- Task students with finding a photojournalistic story about a social justice issue and writing a persuasive essay about which image best illustrates the article's argument.

Assessment / Reflection

- Have students give peer-review feedback to one another during or after completing the assignment. Ask each student to offer a peer or partner verbal or written comments on the ideas, process, clarity, etc. of their project.
- Ask students to free write a reflection about the classroom conversation.
- Engage students in small group presentations with written feedback from each group.
- Pose a wrap-up question for discussion or free writing: How does photography give us new ways to understand the people and world around us, both looking back on history and in contemporary society?

Resources

- CBS News clip about Gordon Parks's series "The Restraints: Open and Hidden," which includes the photograph *Outside Looking In*: <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/inside-the-lost-photos-of-gordon-parks/>
- Enrico Sarsini website: <http://www.enricosarsini.it/grey/indexE.html>
- *Life* magazine archives: https://books.google.com/books?id=70cEAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA98&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=2#v=onepage&q&f=false
- "Essential Lens: Analyzing Photographs Across the Curriculum" from Annenberg Learner: <http://www.learner.org/courses/lens/>
- "Analyzing Photographs" from the J. Paul Getty Museum: http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/exploring_photographs/background1.html
- Analyzing Primary Sources: Photographs and Prints from The Library of Congress: <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/selfdirected/photographsandprints.html>

- “Engaging Students with Primary Sources” from the Smithsonian:
<https://historyexplorer.si.edu/sites/default/files/PrimarySources.pdf>