

Paintings & Poems

Describing a Griswold House Painted Panel in Haiku

Grades: K-4

Time: over the course of a few days

Grouping: whole class, pairs, small groups

Materials: access to Museum's website, paper, pencils

Description

The Lyme Art Colony was a group of artists who were drawn to Old Lyme, Connecticut, as early as 1900. They stayed at the Griswold boardinghouse that was owned and operated by Florence Griswold. During that first summer, one of the artists painted a scene on the door leading to his bedroom. The idea of painting on doors was common in the European country inns and hotels frequented by artists. Soon, this became a tradition as other artists painted on Miss Florence's doors too. When they ran out of doors, one painter suggested that the artists paint on panels to be hung on the walls of the dining room. Today, seeing the many painted doors and panels is the highlight of a visit to the Griswold House.

This lesson introduces students to the Lyme Art Colony by having them write a haiku poem about one of the painted panels. The lesson involves the students viewing the painted panels on the Museum's on-line site *In Situ: The Painted Panels* before creating their haiku. Students can use the Museum's on-line resources to gather information (both in words and pictures) about the Lyme Art Colony and the tradition of painting on the doors and panels.

Objectives

- To learn about the painted panels created by the Lyme Art Colony
- To use the Museum's website as a source of information
- To use the Museum's *In Situ* site to view the historic painted panels
- To view historic photographs and paintings of people
- To learn about the elements of haiku poetry
- To write a haiku about a work of art
- To read haikus about a work of art written by other students

Curriculum Connections

Social Studies educational experiences in grades K-4 will ensure that students:

- Gather historical data from multiple sources
- Write short narratives and statements of historical ideas and create other appropriate presentations from investigations of source materials
- Exhibit curiosity and pose questions about the past when presented with artifacts, records or other evidence of the past
- Seek historical background when confronted with problems and issues of the past, as well as of today's world and their own lives
- Be active learners at cultural institutions, such as museums and historical exhibitions
- Display empathy for people who have lived in the past
- Recognize relationships between events and people of the past and present circumstances, concerns, and developments

Visual Art educational experiences in Grades K-4 will ensure that students:

- Identify various purposes for creating works of art
- Describe visual characteristics of works of art using visual art terminology
- Recognize that there are different responses to specific works of art
- Describe their personal responses to specific works of art using visual art terminology
- Recognize that the visual arts have a history and a variety of cultural purposes and meanings
- Identify specific works of art as belonging to particular styles, cultures, times and places
- Demonstrate understanding of how the visual arts are used in the world around us

Language Arts educational experiences in Grades K-4 will ensure that students:

- Will speak, write, or draw in a variety of modes (narrative, "all-about" nonfiction pieces, poetry) to tell stories that their audience understands
- Will generate questions for gathering data from appropriate first-hand, visual and print sources, and categorize the data to produce a product
- Will compose a piece of writing based on ideas generated through any of a variety of ways (writing, drawing, talking, webbing, listing, brainstorming), revise and proofread it, and present it to an audience

The above goals align with this lesson and were selected from *The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards* (adopted in March 1998, published

by the Connecticut State Department of Education, Division of Teaching and Learning). Go to: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/site/default.asp> to download a copy of the entire publication *The Connecticut Framework: K-12 Curricular Goals and Standards*.

Inclusion Activity (Engaging Prior Knowledge)

Begin the lesson with a Student Grouping Activity that places students into unique pairs or trios to discuss a question designed to stimulate their prior knowledge on a subject or idea related to the lesson. Several activities that will help organize students into unexpected groups are listed below. Of course, other methods of pairing up students may be substituted for these activities.

Student Grouping Activities

Musical Pairs

Use a portable CD player or simple instrument to play music/sound. Explain to the students that when the music/sound starts they are to walk around the room silently in a safe but random pattern (nodding friendly hellos to their fellow students). When the music stops, the students should pair up with the nearest person to discuss the question read aloud. After each question is discussed, start the music again. Repeat until all three questions have been discussed.

A Circle of Friends

Ask your students to get into a circle facing the center. Ask every other student to step into the circle facing out. Have the inner circle rotate to the right until they are face to face with a partner. Ask the first question. After the question is discussed, have the outer circle move three or four people to the right to line up with a new partner. After the question is discussed, have both the inner circle and outer circle move three to four people to the right to line up with a final partner.

Enjoying a Little Tete-A-Tete

The term “tete-a-tete” refers to a private conversation between two people (as well as a short sofa intended to accommodate two persons). Ask your students to put their chairs into pairs (side by side, but facing in opposite directions) and take a seat. After each question is discussed, have students move to another seat and partner up with a new person.

Find Two Like You

Ask your students to find two other students who match a certain criterion like: *Find two other students with your hair color*; or *Find two other students with birthdays close to yours*; or *Find two other students who have same kinds of pets*; or *Find two other students who like your favorite ice cream flavor*. Students usually begin to call out their answers and cluster with those whose answers match. Once they have three people, their group is complete. Teachers may have to make a cluster of non-matching students.

Once the students are in their pairs or trios, have them discuss one of the following questions read aloud by the teacher. After a minute of discussion passes, remix the groups and continue with next question. Repeat until all questions have been discussed.

Discussion Questions

- What does your favorite season of the year smell like?
- What is the difference between a painting and a poem?
- What one-word would you use to describe your smile? Can you explain why?

Instructions

1. Begin by reading aloud *The Story of Miss Florence and the Lyme Art Colony* to introduce students to the Lyme Art Colony.
2. Introduce the assignment of writing a haiku about one of the painted doors or panels in the Griswold boardinghouse. Explain that a haiku is a Japanese poem made up of three lines of 17 syllables (5-7-5) and often makes reference to the beauty or mystery of the seasons or weather. Because the poems are so short, each word has to be carefully chosen. [Note to teacher: there are many resources for teaching haiku on the web. Go to: www.worddance.com or

www.kidzone.ws/poetry/haiku] Tell the students that they can learn more about the Lyme Art Colony and the painted doors and panels via their computer by going to *The Fox Chase* and *In Situ: The Painted Panels* section of the Museum's on-line learning site.

3. Divide the class into even working groups of three or four and give each one blank paper and regular pencils. Give each group an inspiration theme and have them brainstorm as many words that relate to the theme as possible. Inspiration themes should be full of images such as: a child's birthday party, an evening of fireworks, going sledding, the first day of school, a day at the beach, or a late-night thunderstorm. Have each group write out their words on the paper. When the brainstorming is over, remind the groups about the components of a traditional Japanese haiku and ask each student to create their own poem about the theme using the brainstorming words. When all group members are done with their first haiku they should share it with the group. What questions do they have now? What more would they like to know? Were some haikus better at capturing the emotions of the themes? What did the haikus make them think about? How would they change their own haiku? Have the groups report out their discussion.
4. Have the students select one of the painted doors or painted panels from the *In Situ: The Painted Panels* section of the website. There are 54 separate panels to choose from (some of these are one half of a double-panel scene). They should also surf the pages looking for interesting facts about the Lyme Art Colony and the tradition of painted doors and panels for words and ideas that might become part of their haiku.

Where to start on *The Fox Chase* to find information: *The Painted Panels*
from *The Griswold House Icon*

5. Suggest that the students begin by describing their panel in various ways (by subject matter, by weather, by time of day, by choice of colors, by overall mood, by biography of the artist, etc.) and make a word list for each. This list will be helpful when producing their final haiku. Gather the learning groups together after the students have chosen their panels. Have the groups brainstorm about the kinds of things they might address in their panels.
6. Each student should write a haiku about their panel. Explain that their haiku should encourage the reader to see the content of the painting in a new way. Remind students that haiku often focuses on natural elements and stresses weather

and mood. Allow them time to work independently on their haiku and return to the website to gather more information.

7. During the draft stages, have students get together to compare ideas and approaches to their haiku. Encourage students to make suggestions to enhance each other's thinking and writing.

8. For the final presentation, encourage students to prepare a final copy of their haiku. Let the students share their final products with their learning group. Compile the collection of haikus in a format that can be enjoyed while on the computer looking at the painted panels.



Sample Haiku:

Sheepishly the flock
amble up the twilight hill
home to sleep, to dream.

A Time for Reflection

Have students reflect on the following questions in their own journals.

Content/Thinking:

- Do you think the artist would see their panel in your haiku?
- What did you not include in your haiku?

Social:

- How did your working group react to your haiku?
- How did your partners help you with your haiku?

Personal:

- What was your favorite word in your haiku and why?
- What does the painted panel you picked say about you?

Appreciations

Before concluding the lesson, be sure to invite appreciations from the group (i.e. thank group partners for good brainstorming or suggestions for better writing). To help students begin making statements of appreciation, use such sentence starters as these:

- I liked it when ... (describe the situation)
- I was amazed when ...
- It was fun when we ...

Follow-Up Activity

Consider planning a field trip to the Museum in Old Lyme with your students. Information about a visit can be found on the [Planning A Visit](#) page.

Feedback

Please share your suggestions for making the lesson better. Let the Museum know how this lesson worked for you and your students by sending your comments and suggestions to david@flogris.org. Educators are encouraged to submit copies of final products and/or digital images to be shared on our website.