

Wiggles & Giggles

A Creative Pastime Played by the Artists of the Lyme Art Colony

Grades: K-4

Time: over the course of a few days

Grouping: whole class, pairs, small groups

Materials: access to Museum's website, examples of historic wiggles (downloadable as PDFs), paper, colored pencils, pencils, construction paper

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. After a busy day of painting outdoors, or *en plein air*, they would relax in the Griswold parlor making music and playing games. One of their favorite pastimes was to play a drawing game called the wiggle game.

This lesson introduces students to the Lyme Art Colony by having them organize a small exhibition of wiggle drawings. The lesson involves the students playing the wiggle game and using the Museum's on-line resources to view historic examples of the game. Students also use the Museum's on-line resources to gather information (both in words and pictures) about the daily life of artists at the boardinghouse before writing a label explaining one specific wiggle drawing.

Objectives

- To learn about the Lyme Art Colony
- To use the Museum's website as a source of information
- To view historic photographs and paintings of people
- To write a label about a work of art
- To learn the history and instructions of the wiggle game that was played by the artists who were part of the Lyme Art Colony
- To experience playing the wiggle game
- To create a drawing collaboratively
- To think about indoor entertainment before the age of television

Curriculum Connections

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

- Gather historical data from multiple sources
- Engage in reading challenging primary and secondary historical source materials, some of which is contradictory and requires questioning of validity
- Describe sources of historical information
- 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
- Identify possible improvements in the process of creating their own work
- 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 is your favorite indoor rainy day activity or game?
- What is the difference between a drawing and a cartoon?
- What did people do for fun before television was invented?

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 putting together a small classroom exhibit of wiggle drawings with explanatory labels. To get ready for the exhibition, the students will play the game themselves and use the Museum’s website to learn more about the game and see many examples of historic wiggle drawings in the collection. Tell the students that they can learn more about the Lyme Art Colony and the wiggle game via their computer by going to *The Fox Chase* section of the

Museum's on-line learning site. They will surf the pages looking for information they will want to include in their wiggle drawing label.

3. Divide the class into even working groups of two or four and give each one a small stack of blank paper, colored pencils, and regular pencils. Describe how the wiggle game is played: working in teams of two, each person should draw three random lines (or wiggles) using colored pencil on the paper, and trade with their partner. The object of the game is for the recipient of the wiggles to connect them into a finished drawing. When all group members are done with their first wiggle drawing they should share it with the group. Ask the groups to discuss the process and finished drawings. What questions do they have now? What more would they like to know? Were some wiggles more difficult than others to make into a drawing? What did the drawings make them think about? How would they change the wiggles they make next time? Have the groups report out their discussion. Allow your students time to do one or two more additional rounds of drawings with different group members.

4. Have the students select one of the wiggle drawings from the portfolios on the website to be included in the classroom exhibition. Each student should write a label about why they chose the drawing and include interesting facts from the website. Labels should be about 100 words each. To view the wiggle drawings students should go to *Resources for Educators*. The *Wiggle Drawings* portfolios are located in the *Educators' Toolbox* section. The wiggle drawings can be easily printed out for classroom display. Have students use a computer to explore *The Fox Chase* and *In Situ: The Painted Panels* to discover information about the Lyme Art Colony, the wiggle game, and their particular artist (please note that not all wiggle drawing artists are represented on the website). They should surf the pages looking for interesting facts that can be incorporated into their wiggle drawing label.

Where to start on *The Fox Chase* to find information: *School of Lyme Icon*

5. Gather the learning groups together after the students have printed out their wiggle drawing. Have the groups brainstorm about the kinds of things they might write about each drawing. Allow them time to work independently on their wiggle drawing label and return to the website to gather more information.

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

7. For the final presentation, encourage students to prepare a final copy of their label and perhaps frame the wiggle drawing with construction paper. Let the students share their final products with their learning group. Designate certain students as curators to arrange the wiggle drawings around the room. Hold an opening and invite other students in to see the finished exhibition.

A Time for Reflection

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

Content/Thinking:

- Why did the artists play the wiggle game?
- What would make one wiggle drawing better than another?

Social:

- How did you decide what to draw?
- How did your partners react to the wiggles you gave them?

Personal:

- What title would you give your favorite wiggle drawing? Explain why you chose that title?
- What does the wiggle drawing you picked for the exhibition 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.