

Art History/Painting
Impressionism Unit



by

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Art History/Painting

Impressionism

Target Age Level:

High School Juniors and Seniors—Art Major Concentration

Major Goals:

This program offers a foundation and context for art history while building on techniques in developing painting. Students view changes in painting styles and techniques over time. The program supports other academic subject areas while providing a framework for putting this area into “context”. Students improve their ability to “see”, draw, paint, and recognize various renowned pieces of artwork.

Advanced Preparation:

Both the teacher and student need excellent reference materials. The teacher needs an assortment of library books (with color illustrations) on individual artists. For this I use the school’s library or the local university. I make sure to color-print extra copies of references as a safeguard for the students; this way references are always available in the classroom. The teacher needs to be able to provide background information on the artist/style. I like to utilize “tidbits” and personal information to help keep it “upbeat” and interesting. Large poster-board reproductions will aid in the visual presentation of the artwork. A video about the artist is also nice, depending on the time allowed. Selected readings from text also help with class motivation. Various Internet sites provide terrific quick information on most artists.

Lesson Plans:

This group of learning objectives covers all of the paintings in this unit.

Time Frame:

The program will cover a semester based on three marking periods at the senior/junior level in high school. Classroom time is based on a forty-five minute session. Timeline: Per canvas, 15-20 class periods. Note: since understanding, technique, skill, and adaptation vary, some students may require additional time and support with studio space.

The Paintings:

First Painting: A still-life painting using a primary and secondary palette.

Second Painting: A landscape in perspective using various values in realistic color.

Third Painting: A figurative painting, either a portrait or composition of two to three figures in an interior space done in pastel colors in five various values.

ASSESSMENTS:

For art history-painting, the following types of assessment are used:

1. Teacher Assessment: See teacher questions (below)
2. Student Assessment: See sample student checklist
3. Portfolio Assessment: Essentially this is the student body of work from this class.

The portfolio includes:

- a. Reference materials used as visual comparison
- b. Drawings (finished)
- c. Thumb-nail sketches
- d. Paintings

Teacher Assessment:

The artist-teacher uses the following questions in determining grades in art history/painting:

1. Has the student prepared successfully through research, homework, reading materials, and necessary supplies?
2. Does he/she demonstrate a clear understanding of the stylistic period, e.g., Impressionism, etc.?
3. Has he/she followed the project requirements for style, size, composition, layout, color, subject, and technique?
4. Has he/she successfully absorbed the material?
5. Painting, handling, technique?
6. Areas for improvement?

7. Has the student unified this painting through the successful use of principals of design and technique?
8. Areas of strength
9. Student accountability: did he/she meet the course requirements?
 - Attendance, punctuality
 - Homework
 - Assignments timely?
 - Level of competence
 - Commitment
 - Growth, effort
10. Can (I) recommend the student?
11. How has this student improved over time?

Student Assessment:

Student Sample Checklist for still-life Impressionist painting:

Check List:	Yes	No
Did I complete the reading assignment?	___	___
Research completed? References/color	___	___
Sketches (3) finished?	___	___
Did I use an asymmetric layout?	___	___
Color-chart (gray-scale) primary?	___	___
Secondary color-chart?	___	___
Did I get approval?	___	___
Did I experiment enough to feel confident with my painting technique?	___	___
Have I duplicated the technique?	___	___
Does the finished painting look unified?	___	___
What can I improve upon for this painting or for the next time?	___	___

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will successfully complete three Impressionist paintings, demonstrating an understanding of the style through color, application, and technique in acrylic paint on canvas.
2. Students will be able to research using the Internet and reproduce color copies of reference materials on the artists of their choice.
3. Students will be able to utilize the library resources in order to have reference materials on the artists of their choice.
4. Students will be able to develop “strong” well-drawn compositions as the preliminary to painting.
5. Students will discover through the “process of painting”: how to mix and duplicate color, vary values, handle paint, and utilize various acrylic mediums.
6. Students will develop and engage in proper care and respect for studio materials.
7. Students will develop time-management skills in regard to canvas preparation, set-up, work time, and clean up of studio space.
8. Students will be able to verbally demonstrate an understanding of the application of the elements of art and the principals of design in the Impressionist painting style through critique and class discussions.
9. Students will utilize art vocabulary in class discussion and writing.

MATERIALS:

Pre-primed canvases: (3) 24"x36"

OR Wood stretcher frames: (6) 24" and (6) 36"

Magazines: (Class) *Architectural Digest*, *W*, and *Elle*

Cotton duck canvas: (#10) unprimed

Gesso for acrylic paint (1 128oz. per class)

Stretcher pulls: 4 for class use

Staple guns (4-6) and staples for class use

Water containers: 2 per student (plastic or coffee can)

Brillo: 2 boxes per class

Paper towels: 1 roll per student, and 1 soft soap

Butcher trays: 1 per student

Palette knives (assorted sizes)

Kneaded erasers: 2 per student

Rags, newspaper

Pencils: (2) #2 (2) HB

Scissors (1)

White drawing paper pad 12"x18" per student

Acrylic gel medium-matte medium

Acrylic paint retarder

Acrylic gel gloss

1 Tube-Naples yellow

1 Tube or jar of cobalt blue or ultramarine

1 Tube or jar of yellow ochre

Colors on an as need basis (optional)

Aqua, cobalt turquoise

Red Qlide, dioxazine purple, Quinacridone magenta

Cadmium orange medium

Iridescent: silver, gold or copper, iridescent white

Chromium oxide and phtalo green

1 Sunday *New York Times* (large newspaper) for covering surfaces

PAINT: Acrylic-water based paint (clean up with soap and water)

Note: Student quality brands such as: Basics (Liquitex) or Galleria (Windsor-Newton) and are less expensive (*My choice: Pearl Discount Center, NYC or Long Island, NY, or Utrecht, NYC)

Each student needs:

2 Large tubes or jar of Titanium White

1 Large tube or jar of Paynes Gray

1 Medium tube or jar of:

Cadmium Red Medium

Cadmium Yellow Medium

Cadmium Green Medium

Cadmium Alizarian crimson

BRUSHES: (NOTE: As with paint, “student quality” is a good choice as a cost-effective method, especially since acrylic-based paints tend to turn into plastic thereby causing hardness and damage to brushes.)

Each Student needs a variety of size and shape (4-6) brushes per student.

Pearl brand (white taklon)

Filbert (and angular brush) #8

Flats #4, #8, #10

Rounds #8, #10, #12

1.1/2" Flat brush (from a hardware store)--good for large background areas

Color shaper-angle chisel #10, soft tip class set

Brush cleaner (optional)

PALETTE KNIVES (student quality is okay)

Pearl palette knives:

#96 – 4 1/4", class set

#112 – 4 5/16", class set

REFERENCES:

This includes color reproductions, Internet information (copy and pictorial), magazines (*Architectural Digest*, *House Beautiful*, *W*) and books on individual artists. Each classroom needs to contain its own library section with reproductions in color. A classroom computer with color printer (funds permitting) is useful.

VOCABULARY:

impression, impressionism, impressionist

pointillism

expressionist

broken color

optical mixing

values

series

subject matter

still life

figurative, figuration

landscape

portrait

realistic

thumbnail sketch

grayscale

texture, textural

color field

unification

asymmetrical

layout

ARTISTS: Impressionist and Post-Impressionist

Mary Cassatt

Paul Cezanne

Edgar Degas

Paul Gauguin

Toulouse-Lautrec

Edouard Manet

Claude Monet

Berthe Morisot

Georges Seurat

Pierre Auguste Renoir

Vincent van Gogh

References for Still-Life

Note: Students choose and observe, then adapt from these artists for composition and layout (not style).

Giorgio Morandi (Italian)*

Henri Matisse (French)*

Paul Cezanne (French impressionist)

Vincent van Gogh (Dutch impressionist)

Then select (1) artist from large list for technique.

References for Figurative Painting:

Any one or two of the Impressionist artists (see preceding list)

References for Landscape Paintings:

Any of the Impressionist artists and/or any other suitable picture from magazine publications: *Architectural Digest*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *House Beautiful*, or *Town and Country*

PROCEDURES:**Still-Life Painting Learning Objective:**

Students will complete an Impressionistic still-life painting in an adapted, unified asymmetric composition using primary colors in (3) different values.

STEPS: Project #1 – Still Life Impressionist Painting

1. Research and bring to class (4-6) color reproductions of Giorgio Morandi or Paul Cezanne still life (use Internet and library books).
2. Re-draw (3) sketches in pencil @ 4"x6", use asymmetric layout, choose objects of your choice, * Make it you own.
3. Get approval on one sketch.
4. Enlarge approved sketch onto 24"x36" canvas in HB pencil.

5. Make a color chart in (3) various values of secondary and primary colors; use (1) light, (1) medium, and (1) dark value. *Experiment with mixing color: 2"x5"
6. Practice technique on paper: 2"x2". Get approval on #5 and 6. Enjoy painting!

Date Due:

Time Line: 15- 20

PROCEEDURES:

Impressionist Painting- Landscape Learning Objectives:

Students will complete a landscape painting showing perspective in realistic color (4 various values) using the technique of van Gogh or Cezanne.

PROJECT #2- Impressionist Landscape with Perspective

STEPS:

1. Research on the Internet (2) Impressionist artists, your choice, bring to class (4) color reproductions.
2. Select a landscape picture from classroom supply – magazines. (It must show perspective.)
3. Do (2) small (4"x6) thumbnail sketches of a landscape, using perspective.
4. Do a color gray scale (4 various values) in acrylic.
5. Get approval on #'s 3 & 4.
6. Experiment on technique in paint, e.g., Manet, Seurat, or van Gogh.

7. Get approval on #6.

Paint, paint, paint, size 24"x36"--have fun!

Due Date:

Time Line: 15-20 class sessions

PROCEEDURES: IMPRESSIONISM

Figurative Impressionist Painting:

Students will complete a figurative interior Impressionist painting in pastel color in the technique of an Impressionist artist.

PROJECT #3 – Figurative Interior Painting

1. Research the Impressionist artist of your choice, bring in (4) color reproductions--use the Internet.
2. Find a family photo, a portrait in interior space, use photos or magazines.
3. Draw (1) thumbnail sketch (4"x6").
4. Do a pastel gray-scale; vary values.
5. Experiment in paint on technique on paper in acrylic (2"x5") use flat and textural areas.
6. Get approval on #'s 3, 4 & 5.

Have a great time painting!

Date Due:

Time Line: 15-20 class sessions

Note: In art it is very important to allow for individual differences in absorption of coursework material, artistic abilities, and maturation level. Since students work at their own pace, I accommodate this by building in these “allowances”:

1. Students who require more concentrated time may come to the classroom for their free period.
2. Come to the Painting Club (an after school activity meeting 1-2x per week for two hours depending on yearly budget).

HOMEWORK:

Students will read *Discovering Art History* by Gerald F. Brommer (Third Edition, Davis Publications), pages 416-439 (Chapter 13 – Impressionism and Post Impressionism).

From the list of artists, students research online examples of their work in color. They are required to make their own selections of various work based upon individual preferences. These preferences become ways to begin entering into the canvas through drawing. Students work at borrowing some “structure” from the reproduction while making alterations and adaptations in layout, composition, and size. (For students without computers, class time is provided.) It’s been my experience that doing “the research” and having visual preferences assists students in understanding “the painterly process” while diminishing the “intimidation factor”.

Websites (search engines): Enter artist’s name: Excite.com, Yahoo.com,
Artcyclopedia.com