

Through the Past, Lightly

Developed By	Stephen McQuaid
Suggested Length	Four 40 minute lessons
Suggested Grade Level(s)	Seven
Subject Areas	Social Studies, Language Arts, Visual Arts

Overview

Students will view and create sketches based upon the First Nations groups they study at this level. Also, discussion and writing related to this theme will be done.

Links to Curriculum Outcomes

Students will (be expected to)

- analyze how groups, institutions, and media influence people and society (Social Studies)
- analyze ways in which social, political, economic, and cultural systems develop in response to the physical environment (Social Studies)
- recognize that, and investigate how, art as a human activity emerges from human needs, values, beliefs, ideas, and experiences (Visual Arts)
- use a range of strategies in writing and other ways of representing to consider others' perspectives (Language Arts)

Links to Telling Stories: Themes / Key Words

- First Nations
- figurative painting
- realism

Art Works

- *Indian Woman*, Robert Harris, CAG H-180
- *Captain Vancouver*, Charles Comfort, CAG 73.12
- *Captain Vancouver Portrait Mask*, David Neel, CAG 98.6
- *Indians At Ringwood, Charlottetown In Distance*, Robert Harris, CAG H-181
- *Camp Near Blockhouse, Fort Amherst*, Robert Harris, CAG H-182
- *Indians Making Barrels Near Blockhouse, Fort Amherst*, Robert Harris, CAG H-179
- *Market Hall, Charlottetown, PEI*, William Critchlow Harris, CAG H-8203



Lesson #1: A Painter Passing Through

Objective Students will learn, through discussion and writing / representing, how visual art can influence people and society.

Related Art Work(s)

- *Indian Woman*, Robert Harris, CAG H-180
- *Captain Vancouver*, Charles Comfort, CAG 73.12
- *Captain Vancouver Portrait Mask*, David Neel, CAG 98.6

Materials

- pencils
- coloured pencils
- paints (tempera, acrylic, or whatever is available)
- brushes
- paper

Activities

1. Have students think silently about their opinions of First Nations people and of early explorers. In their scribblers, have them write down key words/ feelings / opinions about each.
2. Then, have each student pick one idea / theme from his or her list, and represent it, using pencil or paint, on paper that you provide.
3. Students then refer to the artworks listed above. For each piece, discuss what feeling is evoked, and from whose point of view the piece was made.
4. In whole-class discussion, discuss what the effect of these pieces of art on different people(s) might be. For example, ask them how the painting *Captain Vancouver* might make a person from the Haida group feel. Ask them how this painting might be perceived by someone of the same descent as the captain.
5. Now show the students the piece by Robert Harris. Ask them how the mood, topic, and presentation in this picture differ from the other two.
6. Have the students make a post-activity reflection about this, touching upon such ideas as bias and culture. This may be done as a group or individually.

Ideas for Assessment

Use a rubric to evaluate each student's writing, artwork, and participation.

Post the students' artwork on a wall or walls. Have students critique each other's work, using agreed upon criteria.



Lesson #2: A Sketchy Past

Objective Students will examine various representations of Mi'kmaq people from the past and record what they have observed.

Related Art Work(s)

- *Indians At Ringwood, Charlottetown In Distance*, Robert Harris, CAG H-181
- *Camp Near Blockhouse, Fort Amherst*, Robert Harris, CAG H-182

Materials

- pencils (4B or 6B if possible)
- paper
- Mi'kmaq encampment video(s) produced by CBC
- pictures / sketches of Mi'kmaq (from textbook or other source)

Activities

1. Invite the students to look carefully at Robert Harris' sketches. Ask them what they think the people in the scenes are doing and the reasons for their opinions. Guide them to arrive at the conclusion that they're using items in their environment.
2. Students may also look at Harris' technique. Ask the students to imagine what sources Harris had, how he may have observed them, and what materials and tools he used.
3. Show students the CBC Mi'kmaq encampment video(s), sketches, or pictures (as your resources allow). Provide guidance as they create their own sketches, using black and white or coloured pencils, of things that stand out for them in these resources.
4. Now students may do a brief write-up about what they drew / observed, stating who or what is pictured and explaining what is happening in their scene.
5. Students might present their sketches to the class or to another class. Their artwork might also be displayed in the classroom or within the school, along with copies of Harris' sketches.

Computer Option

- Students may turn their sketches and write-ups into a web project.



Lesson #3: Human (I) Nature

Objective Students will examine collected pictures and photos, and create images of their own to investigate how art as a human activity emerges from human needs, values, beliefs, ideas, and experiences.

Related Art Work(s)

- *Indians Making Barrels Near Blockhouse, Fort Amherst*, Robert Harris, CAG H-179
- *Market Hall, Charlottetown, PEI*, William Critchlow Harris, CAG H-8203

Materials

- paper
- pencil
- picture of “The Ascending Christ”, by Robert Harris, in All Souls’ Chapel, Charlottetown (<http://www.isn.net/friartuck/rharris.html>)
- picture(s) of All Souls’ Chapel, planned by William Critchlow Harris
- pictures or photos of people, objects, pets (anything valued by someone)

Activities

1. Show students the artwork by the Harris brothers, as well as a variety of other pictures/photographs. Have students respond about what they think art can be based upon (the underlying source rather than the subject) and write their responses on a board, flipchart, or overhead. Guide them to identify the following sources: belief, need, value, idea, or experience. Also guide them to realize that the Mi’kmaq people in the artwork are themselves making art. Their baskets are a form of art based partially upon physical human needs.
2. As a whole group, look again at each picture, inviting individual students to identify what aspect(s) of the artist’s intentions they see within it.
3. Have each student think of a need, value, belief, idea, or experience, and write that idea on a sheet of paper. On the back of the sheet, have them create a visual symbol that conveys that idea.
4. Have the students guess what ideas others’ representations are intended to depict. Perhaps the students could make their guesses

silently, so that you may make it a contest to see who can get the most correct (yes, you can play, too)!

Ideas for Assessment

Encourage students to write an interpretation of their own artwork. Have students explain the links between their own images and their meanings / ideas.



Lesson #4: Dynamic Duos

Objective Students will use a range of strategies in writing and other ways of representing to consider others' perspectives.

Materials

- paper
- pen or pencil

Activities

1. Write the names of each artwork used in Lessons #1- #3 on a small piece of paper, and place them in a container. Write down several styles/forms of writing (e.g., poetry, dialogue, songs, fact based writing) on pieces of paper and place them in a separate container.
2. Organize the students in groups of two or three. Have one student from each group pick an artwork, while another picks a style of writing. Challenge the students in each group to write about their artwork in the designated style. For example, if one group chose the artwork, *Indians Making Barrels Near Blockhouse, Fort Amherst*, and poetry, students in that group could write their poem from the point of view of Robert Harris as he made the sketch, or from the point of view of the Mi'kmaq people as they were being sketched.

Ideas for Assessment

Have the students read their works to each other (and perhaps the class) and write a response to their partners' work.

Wrapping up the Learning

Review the themes / outcomes covered with the students during these activities, basing the review on the students' new work, rather than the referenced artwork. Have the students set up (and perhaps host) an art exhibit, displaying the works they have created during these lessons. They may host present it for

schoolmates and / or caregivers. Their written works / explanations might effectively accompany their works of art.

