

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

Title: Art Tells a Story

Teacher in Residence: Abigail Pekelnicky

Grades: K–5

Subjects: Visual Arts, Social Studies, Music

Goals:

- Create an artwork that tells a story
- Look at various artworks and compare/contrast using art vocabulary
- Learn about different time periods using a timeline
- Listen to music that corresponds to each time period/artwork on the timeline
- Reflect on how knowing when and where an artwork is made effects how viewers respond to it

Objectives:

- **I can...** investigate and observe while planning to create art.
- **I can...** create various forms of art that reflect the world around me.
- **I can...** recognize how knowing when and where an artwork is made effects how viewers respond to it.
- **I can...** use art to tell a story with visual communication.
- **I can...** use history and music to help me create art.

Standards:

National Core Visual Arts Standards:

- [Anchor Standard 1](#): Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- [Anchor Standard 2](#): Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- [Anchor Standard 3](#): Refine and complete artistic work.
- [Anchor Standard 8](#): Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

National Core Arts Music Standards:

- [Anchor Standard 11](#): Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

PA Standards:

- [Standard - 8.1.1.A](#) Demonstrate an understanding of chronology.

Vocabulary:

K-5

- history
- timeline
- current events
- music

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

- influence
- story
- sculpture

3-5

- visual Communication
- mixed Media
- photograph
- assemblage
- context
- social justice
- civil rights

Artworks Used:

- *Hoing* Robert Gwathmey, 1943
<https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/cbcc2c21-9867-4198-b9f3-fc929590014b>
- *Alberta Jordan Reaves and Willa Mae James were photographed protesting discriminatory practices in front of Isaly's Dairy Store, Homewood, in August 1953.* Charles "Teenie" Harris, 1953
<https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/cd905cf4-31b3-4278-957f-36ef922d164b?page=1&perPage=10>
- *Toaster* Vanessa German, 2011
<https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/476b28a2-83f8-4da0-a011-37799c6fd9e3>

Materials:

- timeline ***Adapt to age-appropriate/ student-relevant content as needed
- music / speakers
- paper
- pencil
- permanent marker
- watercolor paints
- paintbrush
- water cup
- mixed media
- glue/adhesives
- camera

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

Lesson Steps:

Day 1:

- Look at the three artworks from the museum and observe them closely. Which one do you think was created most recently and the longest ago? What makes you say that? Can you tell what art materials the artist used to create each artwork? What story is the artist telling?
- After a discussion, look at a timeline and learn about what was happening in the world when each artwork was created. Think about how each artist is using their work to tell a story about the world around them and reflect on how learning about history changes your understanding of the artwork. How does what is happening in the world effect the story that the artist is telling?
- As a class or independently (depending on age level), make a short list of things that are happening in your world and/or current events that you are aware of. Begin brainstorming how you can use something from your world to tell a story with art.

Day 2:

- Review from previous class and look at the artworks again. When reviewing each piece, listen to music that was popular during the time period and/or place where the artwork was created. Think about if the addition of music effects the understanding, interpretation and context of the artwork.
- Choose one brainstormed idea from last class to illustrate your own memory or story. Think about: what story are you telling? How can you tell it with art? Think about what art materials you would use to tell your story.
- Begin creating your story artwork using your choice of materials.

Day 3:

- Review.
- Finish creating an artwork based on your story. What story are you telling? What materials are you using? How can you use visual communication to tell your story through art? What music would accompany your artwork? How does your artwork fit into the timeline? If you were to create a timeline of your own life, where would your artwork story be located?

Day 4:

- **K-2:** Place students into small groups and have each group present their artworks to the teacher (while the rest of the groups continue to work.) Observe each artwork and everyone can guess the story that is being told. Then, the student artist can tell the actual story to the group. Explain when it takes place (date) and if you chose a song to accompany it.
- **3-5:** With a partner or small group, have them observe your artwork and guess the story that you are telling. Then, tell the actual story and give information to your partner that is important to help them understand your piece. Explain when it takes place (date) and what song you chose to accompany it and why.
- Reflect on how knowing when and where an artwork is made effects how viewers respond to it.

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

- **Additional:** Create an information card and artist statement explaining your piece that includes a title, artist name, date, medium and song/music choice.
- **Additional:** Hand out sticky notes to each student and do a “gallery walk”. Students can write anonymous comments on the sticky notes and leave feedback/guess the story that the artwork is telling.

Questions:

- What might artwork tell us about the world around us?
- How does learning about art impact how we see the world?
- Why might artists choose particular tools, techniques, and materials to express their ideas?
- Why is it important to look closely at art?
- How is art connected to our everyday lives?
- Why might it be important to think about history when learning about art?
- Why might people use art to tell stories and record history?
- How might we learn about others through art?
- How does making art connect people to their surroundings?

Lesson Extensions/Modifications:

- Write a short story describing what is happening in each of the three artworks. Finish by writing your own story describing the artwork you created.
- Create an artwork that tells a story using each one of the mediums that the artists used (painting, photograph, mixed media assemblage/sculpture). Can you tell one story using different materials? How does using different materials effect the presentation of your story?
- Choose a theme from one of the artworks (social justice, emotional response, etc.) and create a response artwork and/or written response explaining your thoughts and reactions.
- Create a timeline that highlights events from your life. What would it look like? What would you tell about your life story?
- As a class or independently, fill in important events from the current year on a timeline.
- Interview your family members and ask them what their personal history was during the timeline dates (or pick your own!) What happened in their lives in 1943, 1953, 2011 and now?

Resources:

- **Robert Gwathmey**
 1. CMOA Artwork Link: <https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/cbcc2c21-9867-4198-b9f3-fc929590014b>
 2. Other artworks: <http://www.artnet.com/artists/robert-gwathmey/>
 3. K-2 Toolkit “Migration”: <https://cmoa.org/learning/learning-tool-kit-grades-k-2-migration/>
 4. 3-5 Toolkit “Migration”: <https://cmoa.org/learning/learning-tool-kit-grades-3-5-migration/>
 5. Storytelling Activity: <https://cmoa.org/education-resource/activity-tell-a-story-based-on-gwathmeys-hoeing/>

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

- **Charles “Teenie” Harris**
 1. CMOA Artwork Link: <https://cmoa.org/art/teenie-harris-archive/>
 2. K-2 Toolkit “Black Life in Pittsburgh”: <https://cmoa.org/learning/learning-tool-kit-grades-k-2-black-life-in-pittsburgh/>
 3. 3-5 Toolkit “Black Life in Pittsburgh”: <https://cmoa.org/learning/learning-tool-kit-grades-3-5-black-life-in-pittsburgh/>
 4. NPR Article: <https://www.npr.org/sections/pictureshow/2011/12/23/144093524/the-big-legacy-of-charles-teenie-harris-photographer>
- **Vanessa German**
 1. CMOA Artwork Link: <https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/476b28a2-83f8-4da0-a011-37799c6fd9e3>
 2. 3-5 Toolkit “Art & Literacy” - Video about “Toaster”:
<https://vimeo.com/486467946/be0b570677>
 3. PBS Under a Minute Interview: <https://www.pbs.org/video/vanessa-german-bmte6g/>
 4. Artsy page: <https://www.artsy.net/artist/vanessa-german>
- **Art & Literacy Toolkit, “Storytelling”:** <https://cmoa.org/learning/learning-tool-kit-grades-3-5-art-literacy/>

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC



Title: Hoeing

Artist: Robert Gwathmey

Date: 1943

Medium: Oil on canvas Painting

Link: <https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/cbcc2c21-9867-4198-b9f3-fc929590014b>

Timeline highlights for 1943:

- Franklin D. Roosevelt is President and served 3 terms
- World War II, 1939-1945
- The Great Migration: relocation of more than 6 million African Americans from the rural South to the cities of the North, Midwest and West from about 1916 to 1970
- Americans were still recovering from the effects of the Great Depression, when many people had little to no money
- Popular music styles: Jazz, country, western swing, blues and R&B

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC



Title: Alberta Jordan Reaves and Willa Mae James were photographed protesting discriminatory practices in front of Isaly's Dairy Store, Homewood, in August 1953.

Artist: Charles "Teenie" Harris

Date: 1953

Medium: Photograph

Link: <https://cmoa.org/art/teenie-harris-archive/>

Timeline highlights for 1953:

- Dwight D. Eisenhower is president
- The Korean War ends
- First Polio Vaccine is developed

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

- The Civil Rights Movement is about to begin in 1954
- World War II is over and many women began working in jobs that had been considered “men’s work”
- [Pittsburgh Photographic Library](#) is created
- Popular music styles: rock and roll, doo-wop, pop, swing, rhythm and blues, blues



Title: Toaster

Artist: Vanessa German

Date: 2011

Medium: Mixed Media Assemblage Sculpture

Link: <https://collection.cmoa.org/objects/476b28a2-83f8-4da0-a011-37799c6fd9e3>

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

VISUAL ARTS,
SOCIAL STUDIES,
MUSIC

Timeline highlights for 2011:

- Barack Obama is president in his 1st term
- Osama bin Laden dies
- Occupy Wall Street: protest meant to highlight income inequality in the United States and rest of the world, comes to Pittsburgh
- Wiz Khalifa releases the song “Black and Yellow”
- “The Dark Knight” is filmed in Pittsburgh
- Popular music styles: Rap, hip hop, pop, country, rock

CARNEGIE
MUSEUM OF ART

MUSEUM
AS→LEARNING
RESOURCE

SARAH ROBBINS
English Language Arts
1-4