

Front image:

John Dunlap (1747 -1812)

The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

Letterpress, 48 x 38 cm

Courtesy of Chapin Rare Book Library, Williams College. Purchased through the generosity of friends and alumni of Williams College.

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OVERVIEW

We look forward to your visit to the Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA). We hope that this educational material will help you integrate your experience at the museum into your classroom teaching before and after your visit.

The Tour:

Your group will tour the exhibition, **Manifestos: American Dreams and Their Founding Documents**. The founding documents—the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and Articles of the Confederation—will be on view alongside exceptional examples of American art.

Tours of **Manifestos** will examine what it means to be an American and how artists represent fundamental American principles in their artwork. In viewing the Founding Documents firsthand, students will experience the power of the written word and the dedication with which the founding fathers wrote these manifestos. Writing these documents took courage and conviction; students will consider what it might mean to declare one's right to "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." As the Founding Documents illustrate the power of personal choice, the paintings in **American Dreams** highlight the importance of artistic choice; these luminaries and artists made deliberate choices as to how to describe and depict this emerging country. After the discussion, students will express their rights through artmaking activities that incorporate image and text.

Before and After Your Visit:

To help you use this material in your teaching, this guide contains:

- Introduction to what is on view in the exhibition
- Background Information on the founding documents and 18th and 19th Century American painting
- Making Connections - suggestions for using art to make connections to different disciplines, meet standards, and build literacy skills

- Pre- and Post-visit Activities with lesson plans for discussion, writing, and art-making activities
- Recommended Resources for further exploration

The **Manifestos** pre- and post-visit activities are designed to be integrated with **art, history, and English** curricula. Educators can adapt these project suggestions to their students' level. Activities are designed with the national and Massachusetts state standards in mind; educators who would like assistance in matching standards to their projects are invited to contact us.

Should you have any questions or wish to share any of the creative work your students complete using this education material, we would love to hear from you. **If you would like to focus on anything in particular during your visit, please let us know ahead of time.** Contact the Education Office at 413-597-2038 or by emailing Emily.Schreiner@Williams.edu.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITIONS

Manifestos: American Dreams and Their Founding Documents will showcase one of Williams College's greatest treasures: the founding documents of the United States of America, including the Declaration of Independence, the British Reply to the Declaration, the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist Papers. This exhibition presents these documents through the concept of manifesto; a manifesto is a public statement of a person's views or intentions. Although typically thought of as a written document, works of visual art often serve the same purpose. In this exhibition, selections from the American art collection of the Williams College Museum of Art have been juxtaposed with historically important documents from the Williams College's Chapin Rare Book Library. Thus, the exhibition shows how the views or intentions of artists, writers, politicians, and concerned citizens become manifestos when they are purposefully made public—whether in image or text.

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In American history, the founding documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution are the most important examples of views or intentions made manifest. The centerpiece of this exhibition is a display of rare early printings of these documents, which will be on view through 2011, during the renovation of the Chapin Library. Situating these documents in the context of the museum's collection, this exhibition provides a new lens through which we can re-examine the history of American dreams expressed in art and document.

— *Curator, Nancy Mowll Mathews*

Manifestos is organized by the Williams College Museum of Art in collaboration with the Chapin Rare Book Library, Williams College.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

HISTORY

The Founding Documents on view at WCMA were written between 1775 and 1787 and document the process of Revolution and Independence of the United States from Great Britain. Together they demonstrate a great range of ideas and intellectual influences as well as document the evolution of a collective ideology and mission for this new country.

By the mid 1760s, colonists were beginning to take umbrage at the restrictions placed upon them by Great Britain. Over the next decade they rallied against issues of taxation, representation, tariffs, and military involvement. These issues caused a great rift within the colonies; colonists divided between Loyalists, who wanted serve to the crown, and Patriots, who sought independence from Britain. By 1775, less than one fifth of the colonists identified as Loyalists. The Patriots began to mobilize a militia and drove the standing British soldiers out of the colonies.

In early 1776, individual colonies approved state constitutions and declared their collective independence from royal charters. These states then sent delegates to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia that following summer. There, these men collectively wrote and ratified what is now known as the Declaration of Independence. The American Revolution ensued and fighting continued for six years. In 1788 the Constitution of the United States was authorized; the Bill of Rights was signed into law three years later.

The following founding documents will be featured in Manifestos:

Declaration of Independence:

The Declaration of Independence is the culminating document addressing the Colonists' long-standing grievances against King George III. The Declaration states that the people of the colonies refused to live under tyranny and subsequently formed the United States of America, independent from Great Britain. The copy of the Declaration on view was printed on the night of July 4, 1776 as a broadside and pre-dates the signed copy.

British Reply

The British Reply is King George III's initial reply to the British colonies' claim to independence from Great Britain. It was written by Lord North and was delivered to Parliament on October 31, 1776. The king expresses frustration with the colonies' rebelliousness, but does not believe that the colonies would actually revolt.

Articles of the Confederation

The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, the first formal Constitution of the United States, organized the new nation under a single legislative body: the Congress of Confederation. However, this Congress lacked executive and judicial power and proved incapable of collecting funds to pay off national debt. The exhibited copy of this document is one of the nine in existence and is notably the best preserved.

United States Constitution

The copy of United States Constitution on view is one of the sixty original copies of the second draft of the Constitution. The exhibited copy is one of the fourteen extant copies of this draft of the Constitution and was formerly the property of George Mason of Virginia. Mason, a renowned statesman and friend of George Washington, objected to aspects of the text of the soon-to-be ratified document and extensively annotated his copy. These grievances would later be addressed in amendments to the Constitution.

Federalist Papers

This document, written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, favored the use of a federal constitution to address the insufficiency of the Articles of Confederation. The two-volume copy on display was presented to George Washington by Hamilton and Madison and bears Washington's signature and bookplate in two places.

Emancipation Proclamation

The Emancipation Proclamation consists of two executive orders signed by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 during the Civil War. The first states his intention to free slaves within limited Union Territory, and the second, signed 100 days later, enacts this decree. The Emancipation Proclamation had limited immediate effect—it did not free any slaves in border states or in the southern

states under Union control—but it did free slaves in states that the Confederacy lost to the Union and gave free black men the right to enlist in the Union militia. Slavery continued in some states until December 18, 1865 when it was finally outlawed by the 13th Amendment.

ART HISTORY

Tours of **Manifestos** will showcase a range of portraits and landscape paintings that depict the Revolutionary era and 19th Century America.

Portraiture was the primary mode of painting in Colonial America and continued to hold precedence throughout the 18th Century. Scholars have noted the curiosity of this strong preference toward portraiture and posit a connection between investing in private portraits (which have little resale value) and securing inheritance rights and family lineage. There was a good amount of newfound wealth and open land in the Colonies, and early Americans used portraits as a means to prove family ties and insure that younger generations would inherit this wealth and property.¹

American portraits from the late 18th Century are a good illustration of Colonial values such as pragmatism, utilitarianism, materialism, and moderation.² Portraiture was a means to depict the sitter's physical character, rank in society, and moral values. For example, a woman of high standing might have her portrait painted in an elegant dress to show her rank and stature, but with a direct likeness to her facial features (even if she was plain looking) to demonstrate her simplicity and pragmatism. This combination of realistic faces with sti , idealized bodies often resulted in slightly awkward-looking portraits; this limitation was overcome by master painter, John Singleton Copley. Tours of **Manifestos** will include a portrait of Reverend Samuel Cooper by Copley that exemplifies his ability to capture a sitter's personality while still adhering to the conventions of portraiture: a torso in three-quarter pose against a dark background.

After the Revolution, portraits were also used as a way to celebrate war contributions—this is the case for the portrait of Col. Benjamin Simonds by William Jennys. Although the portrait was painted in 1796, more than thirteen years after the end of the war, Simonds has chosen to don his military hat for the painting. Simonds' tenacity and pride come across strongly in the painting: his gaze confronts the sitter and his expression is stern and determined. The

1 Margaretta Lovell, *Art in a Season of Revolution*, (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 2005), 8-11.

2 Wayne Craven, *American Art: History and Culture*, (Harry N. Abrams, New York: 1994), 95.

portrait of Simonds will be displayed alongside the Treaty of Paris, 1783, the proclamation that ended the Revolutionary War.

Landscape paintings became increasingly popular as the country solidified following the American Revolution and then expanded after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Nationalism and patriotism were strong cultural themes at this time, and artists sought ways to imbue their work with style befitting these popular civic values. Artists were also concerned with forging a new, distinctly American style of painting that was not reliant on European, particularly British, traditions. This break from European tradition was difficult and not absolute—American artists could not fully ignore Europe’s famous art and architecture.

During this time, artists used landscape painting as a means to convey moral and civic values, nationalism, and the American Dream. When landscape painting gained rapid popularity in the 1820s, the country was largely unexplored and held the promise of exploration, discovery, and the potential rise of the common man. Artists depicted large open spaces to demonstrate the vastness of the land, and waterways and canals to show man’s skill at “taming” nature. They also portrayed great mountains and dramatic terrain to illustrate the power of and divine presence in Nature.

Two of the paintings that students will view at WCMA—*Lake George*, 1853 by John Kensett and *The Palisades*, 1877 by Sanford Giord—depict these popular conceptions of the United States through a Romantic style. Artists working in this style borrowed heavily from European traditions, particularly the style of Claude Lorraine. They “improved” landscapes by painting in rosy hues and diminishing some features and accentuating others for the sake of artistic composition. Landscapes painted in this style illustrate a perceived harmony between man and nature and a general optimism about America as a new nation.

Additionally, the physical terrain of the United States was one of clearest symbols of America’s separation from Europe and, therefore, was used as a strong visual reminder of the “newness” of the United States. Although the United States could not boast Roman ruins or Gothic cathedrals, artists could depict sites such as Niagara Falls and the Grand Canyon, whose physical power and magnitude were unparalleled in Europe. Tours will include a painting by William Morris Hunt of Niagara Falls in 1878 that illustrates the emotion with which American painters depicted their new country (see Close Looking: Niagara Falls in the pre-visit activities).

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Following are some guidelines for making curriculum connections between the exhibition and specific subjects. To illustrate how activities can meet standards, we have included examples from the Massachusetts State Standards. Educators who would like help working with standards for these or other activities are welcome to contact us.

History and Social Science

Tours of **Manifestos** will allow students the rare opportunity to experience the Revolutionary and Federalist periods in American history through primary source documents. The founding documents—from the Declaration of Independence through the Bill of Rights—chart the growth of the United States from an idealistic concept to a reality.

The founding documents and lessons in U.S. history and government feature prominently throughout K-12 state and national education standards (e.g., Massachusetts Standards 1.2-3; 3.5-6; 5.16-27; USI.1-9). In addition, tours will discuss the nature of citizenship and civic responsibility and how these values are expressed in the founding documents (PreK-K.5, 2.6-7, 4.4-5). By pairing these documents with American paintings, students will be able to make connections between the history of the American Revolution and the visual culture that helped to cultivate and sustain a new national identity (e.g., History and Social Science: Concepts and Skills 7)

Pre- and post-visit activities for each grade level will help students form an historical, artistic, and cultural context for the founding documents. The elementary level classroom activities *Vote for Me!*, uses civic responsibility and the role of the President as an entry point into this material. Middle school and high school classroom activities address more complex issues of identity and nation-building to help students see the continued relevance of the founding documents in contemporary America and their lives as citizens.

English Language Arts

Tours of **Manifestos** will use the founding documents to examine how writers use language to declare their rights and the significance of making one's

beliefs public. Students will have the unique opportunity to read the founding documents with their own eyes! On tours, groups will read selections of the documents aloud and discuss the word choice and tone utilized by the founding fathers. Students will gain an appreciation for the power of the written word—namely how this persuasive writing on simple pieces of paper formed the basis of this nation.

Pre- and post-visit activities build on this theme of persuasive writing and incorporate writing and language in the study of history and art history. All activities use writing and oral presentation to further process the rhetoric nature of the founding documents (Massachusetts General English/Language Arts Standard 3: Oral Presentation, Standard 8: Understanding a Text, Standard 9: Making Connections, Standard 15: Style and Language, and Standard 19: Writing). Middle school and high school activities ask students to conduct research and incorporate this knowledge in compositions (Standard 24: Research).

Art

Tours will explore the two prominent modes of painting in 18th and 19th Century America: landscape painting and portraiture. In addition to appreciating and identifying the formal aspects of these paintings, students will probe these works for layers of meaning and learn how painters can imbue their work with symbolic content. They will also identify conventions in portraiture and landscape and how artistic styles convey meaning (Massachusetts General Arts Standard 8: Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change). Students will discuss how an artist can illustrate a sitter's individuality and personal beliefs in a portrait, and how a landscape can express a point of view.

The art-making activity during the museum visit and the pre- and post-visit activities for each grade level explore the role of artistic choice and symbolism in art (Massachusetts General Arts Standard 3: Observation, Abstraction, Invention, and Expression). Students will learn how artists, like writers, express their personal opinions in their work and how these beliefs have played an important role in our cultural history (Standard 7: Roles of Artists in Communities, Standard 10: Interdisciplinary Connections). Elementary school activities will make self-portraits that depict their personalities. Middle school and high school activities delve deeper into the messaging of portraiture and how portraits can be used as a political tool.

STANDARDS

The following chart presents examples of standards that relate to the material and activities covered in the Manifestos tour. Pre- and Post-Visit Activities list the identification number of the standards outlined below.

Visual Art Standards

- 1 Methods, Materials, and Techniques. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the methods, materials, and techniques unique to the visual arts.
- 3 Observation, Abstraction, Invention, and Expression. Students will demonstrate their powers of observation, abstraction, invention, and expression in a variety of media, materials, and techniques.
- 4 Drafting, Revising, and Exhibiting. Students will demonstrate knowledge of the processes of creating and exhibiting artwork: drafts, critique, self-assessment, refinement, and exhibit preparation.
- 7 Roles of Artists in Communities. Students will describe the roles of artists, patrons, cultural organizations, and arts institutions in societies of the past and present.
- 8 Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change. Students will demonstrate their understanding of styles, stylistic influence, and stylistic change by identifying when and where art works were created, and by analyzing characteristic features of art works from various historical periods, cultures, and genres.
- 10 Interdisciplinary Connections. Students will apply their knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history and social science, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering.

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English Language Arts

- 3 Oral Presentation. Students will make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed.
- 8 Understanding a Text. Students will identify the basic facts and main ideas in a text and use them as the basis for interpretation.

- 9 Making Connections. Students will deepen their understanding of a literary or non-literary work by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.
- 15 Style and Language. Students will identify and analyze how an author's words appeal to the senses, create imagery, suggest mood, and set tone, and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.
- 19 Writing. Students will write with a clear focus, coherent organization, and sufficient detail.
- 24 Research. Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.

History and Social Science

PreK–K.5

Retell stories that illustrate honesty, courage, friendship, respect, responsibility, and the wise or judicious exercise of authority, and explain how the characters in the stories show these qualities. (C)

- 1.2 Identify the current President of the United States, describe what presidents do, and explain that they get their authority from a vote by the people. (H, C)
- 1.3 Identify and explain the meaning of American national symbols. (H, C)
- 1.8 Give examples that show the meaning of the following words: politeness, achievement, courage, honesty, and reliability. (C)
- 2.6 Define and give examples of some of the rights and responsibilities that students as citizens have in the school (e.g., students have the right to vote in a class election and have the responsibility to follow school rules). (C)
- 2.7 Give examples of fictional characters or real people in the school or community who were good leaders and good citizens, and explain the qualities that made them admirable (e.g., honesty, dependability, modesty, trustworthiness, courage). (C)
- 3.5 Explain important political, economic, and military developments leading to and during the American Revolution. (H, C)

- 3.6 Identify the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights as key American documents. (C)
- 4.4 Give examples of the major rights that immigrants have acquired as citizens of the United States (e.g., the right to vote, and freedom of religion, speech, assembly, and petition). (C)
- 4.5 Give examples of the different ways immigrants can become citizens of the United States. (C)
- 5.16 Explain the meaning of the key ideas on equality, natural rights, the rule of law, and the purpose of government contained in the Declaration of Independence. (H, C, E)
- 5.17 Describe the major battles of the Revolution and explain the factors leading to American victory and British defeat. (H)
- 5.18 Describe the life and achievements of important leaders during the Revolution and the early years of the United States. (H, C)
- 5.19 Identify the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, including its date, its primary author (John Adams), and the basic rights it gives to citizens of the Commonwealth. (C)
- 5.20 Explain the reasons for the adoption of the Articles of Confederation in 1781 and for its later failure. (H, C)
- 5.21 Describe Shays's Rebellion of 1786–1787 and explain why it was one of the crucial events leading to the Constitutional Convention. (H, E, C)
- 5.22 Identify the various leaders of the Constitutional Convention and describe the major issues they debated. (H, E, C)
- 5.23 Describe the responsibilities of government at the federal, state, and local levels (e.g., protection of individual rights and the provision of services such as law enforcement and the building and funding of schools). (C)
- 5.24 Describe the basic political principles of American democracy and explain how the Constitution and the Bill of Rights reflect and preserve these principles. (C)
- 5.25 Identify the three branches of the United States government as outlined by the Constitution, describe their functions and relationships, and

identify what features of the Constitution were unique at the time (e.g., the presidency and the independent judiciary). (H, C)

5.26 Identify the rights in the Bill of Rights and explain the reasons for its inclusion in the Constitution in 1791. (H, C)

5.27 Explain how American citizens were expected to participate in, monitor, and bring about changes in their government over time, and give examples of how they continue to do so today. (H, C)

Concepts and Skills 7

Show connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and ideas and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments.

USI.1-9

The Political and Intellectual Origins of the American Nation:
The Revolution and the Constitution, 1763–1789

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Goals

- to prepare students for the museum visit and any curriculum connections
- to define and explore the use of symbols in landscape painting

Age/Class Level

This section includes activities for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Preparing for the Museum Visit

Tours will focus on what these rare documents and examples of American art tell us about what it means to be an American and how artists represent fundamental American principles in their artwork. **Please let us know ahead of time about any other topics you'd like us to address in the tour.**

Objectives

- To prepare students for the museum visit and any curriculum connections
- To begin discussing American History and U.S. government

Standards

English Language Arts: 9

History and Social Sciences: 1.3, Concepts and Skills 7

Preparation and Discussion

- Review the description of the exhibition and background material related to your areas of interest.
- Consider the possible curriculum connections and provide your students with relevant background before your visit.
- Inform students what they will see and do at the museum.

General Questions

- What is a government?
What is the basis of the United States government?
- What are the founding documents?
What kinds of rules do they present?
- What is a citizen?
What are a citizen's rights and responsibilities?
- What is a manifesto?
- What was going on in the world in the late 18th Century?
What was happening in America?
What was happening in Great Britain?

Close Looking: Niagara Falls

In this exercise, you will show an image and pose questions to engage students in a discussion about the elements of visual art. This discussion will familiarize students with the close looking and visual thinking strategies they will use during the museum visit.

Objectives

- To introduce students to one of the paintings they will see on the museum tour
- To familiarize students with landscape painting

Standards

Visual Arts: 1, 3, 8, 10

English Language Arts: 9

History and Social Sciences: 1.3, Concepts and Skills 7

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Materials

An image of Niagara Falls that students can see well, e.g., on PowerPoint, computer stations, slide projection, poster, printouts from the Internet for each student. You can access a high quality digital image of this painting by searching our collection at WCMA ContentDM: <http://contentdm.williams.edu/wcma/> (Some images do have copyright restrictions. If you would like to use the images in any way beyond normal classroom use, please contact us.)



William Morris Hunt (American, 1824-1879)

Niagara Falls, 1878

Oil on canvas.

Gift of the Estate of J. Malcolm Forbes. Museum purchase, Kathryn Hurd Fund

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Procedure

1. Present the image *Niagara Falls* by William Morris Hunt.
2. Engage students in a discussion about the image using the suggested questions.

Suggested Questions:

Allow a process of discovery to take place in your discussion. Try posing the following questions (adapted from the Visual Thinking Strategies method). Paraphrase students' responses, and pose more follow-up questions.

Subject:

- What do you see in this picture?
- Can you describe it more?

- What else do you see?
- What is going on in this picture?
- What information in the picture makes you say that?

Artistic Style:

- How has the waterfall been painted?
- Does this look like a real waterfall?
- What part of the waterfall was most important to the artist?
How does he show this?
What choices has he made?

Meaning:

- What is the artist's point of view?
How does he feel about Niagara Falls?
- Why do you think that he chose to paint Niagara Falls?
What could Niagara Falls symbolize?
- Do you think that Niagara Falls would look different today than it did in 1878?
What would be different?
- If you were to paint a landscape painting, what subject would you choose?

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Further exploration

Educators are encouraged to continue this discussion activity with other images by artists from this time period such as Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, Frederic Church, and Thomas Moran. Suggested internet sources for images by these painters include the collection database at www.metmuseum.org and images.google.com. Additional information and images can be found in textbooks on American Art listed in the Recommended Resources section of this guide.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Goals

- to reinforce concepts introduced during the tour through hands-on art activities
- to use art activities to make curriculum connections

Age/Class Level

This section includes activities for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Elementary School Level: Vote for Me!

In these two lessons, students will focus on the concept of a President as an entry point to the founding documents and classroom curricula.

Lesson 1: Presidential Storytime

Objectives

- To use stories as a way to engage students in U.S. Government and the role of the President

Standards

Visual Arts: 3

English Language Arts: 8, 9

History and Social Science: PreK-K.5 1.2, 1.3, 2.6, 4.4, 5.16, 5.27

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Materials

Select a book appropriate to your class level. Suggestions are:

Duck for President by Doreen Cronin, Grades K-2

America the Beautiful by Robert Sabuda, Grades K-2

Max for President by Jarrett J. Krosoczka, Grades 1-3

Vote! by Eileen Christelow, Grades 2-5

Procedure

1. Begin this activity with a discussion about the museum visit. What did we see at the museum? What was your favorite thing? Why? What are the founding documents? Why are they special?
2. In this exercise, students will practice the close looking skills that they used during their museum visit. While reading the book, encourage students to

make visual and thematic connections. We suggest adapting the “Whole Book Approach,” pioneered by the Education Department at the Eric Carle Picture Book Museum. Ask questions as you move through the book, starting with the cover illustration: What do you think this book is about? What do you see in this picture? What do you think will happen next? What do you see that makes you say that?

3. After reading the book, discuss themes of American Government. What is a President? What are the President’s responsibilities? Does it seem like being the President is a tough job? Would you like to be a President? Why or why not?

For more information on the Whole Book Approach visit:

<http://www.picturebookart.org/downloads/Whole%20Book%20Approach%20Final.PDF>

Lesson 2: Vote _____ for President!

Objectives

- To have each student express themselves and their individuality by launching their own presidential campaign
- To build on and reinforce concepts introduced during the museum visit: portraiture and the power of language

Standards

Visual Arts: 3, 4

English Language Arts: 3, 15, 19

History and Social Science: 1.2, 2.6, 3.6, 5.24, 5.27

Materials

Poster board, markers

Procedure

1. Begin this activity with a discussion about portraiture. What is a portrait? What can an artist express in a portrait? What kinds of choices can the artist make? What were some of the things we learned about portraiture at the museum? How were the sitters posed? Where were they looking? What were they wearing?
2. Explain that each student is going to create a self-portrait to advertise that they are running for president of their town (alt: school, family, classroom, or an imaginary domain). Help students brainstorm what kinds of choices they are going to make. What will they do as President? How is that special? What about the student will make him/her a good President? How will they show these qualities in their self-portrait? Think about the portraits seen at the museum.
3. Have students make a list of five characteristics and initiatives that they will include in their poster. What images will they use to illustrate these qualities? Will they be seated in their portrait or doing something active? What words will they choose to use in their poster? How will they combine the images and text to best express their personality?
4. Draw a sloppy copy to flesh out the idea.
5. Make the final poster.
6. Have each student write a short "campaign speech." Start with the words selected for the poster and flesh these ideas out into sentences. Use persuasive language to express your point of view.
7. Display the posters around the classroom. Have each "candidate" stand in front of their poster and give their campaign speech!

Middle School Level: We the People

In these two lessons, students will focus on citizenship as an entry point into the founding documents and classroom curricula. They will integrate their knowledge of citizenship with the artistic convention of portraiture, and explore how images and text can express historic information as well as personal meaning.

Lesson 1: What is Citizenship?

Objective

- To use the concept of citizenship to introduce the founding documents, particularly the Declaration of Independence

Standards

Visual Arts 8, 10

English Language Arts: 8, 9

History and Social Science: Concepts and Skills 7

Materials

Blackboard, writing paper, Xerox copies of the Declaration of Independence (See links to PDF versions in the Resources section of this guide)

Procedure

1. Begin by discussing the museum visit. What was it like to see the founding documents in person? What did they look like? How could you tell that they were special? Do you perceive the Declaration of Independence differently now that you've seen it in this context? Why was it important in the 18th Century? Why is it important today?
2. Discuss the portraiture that you saw during the museum visit. How did the artists represent the sitters' (Samuel Cooper and Benjamin Simonds)

beliefs in their portraits? What could you tell about the men from how they were dressed? From their facial expressions? From the colors that the artist used? What did we learn about these men as citizens?

3. Focus the discussion on the theme of citizenship. What is citizenship? What are the rights of citizens? What are the responsibilities? What kinds of things should a government provide to its citizens? How do you personally benefit from citizenship? Brainstorm these ideas as a class.
4. Read the preamble to the Declaration of Independence aloud and diagram the founding fathers' ideas about citizenship on the board. What reasons do they give for wanting to break with the British government? In what ways was the British government not protecting them as citizens? What are they hoping to establish in their new American government? What rights do they ascribe to American citizens?
5. How do these ideas fit into your daily life? What are your "inalienable rights"? Discuss. Have each student make a list of things that they do in their daily life that are protected by their rights as citizens.
6. How do you express your citizenship on a daily basis? How are your rights reflected in the way you dress and the way you act?

Lesson 2: My Rights, My Image

Objective

- Continue exploring the subject of citizenship and "inalienable rights" begun in the pre-visit activity and explore self-portraiture as a means to express rights and values

Standards

Visual Arts: 1, 3, 8, 10

English Language Arts: 3, 9, 15, 19

History and Social Science: Concepts and Skills 7

Materials

Magazines, scissors, 11x14 paper as background for collage, drawing materials, gluesticks, access to Xerox machine

Procedure

1. Imagine that you, as a class, are in a similar position as the founding fathers and wish to form your own country. Write your own Declaration of Independence that reflects your position as 21st-Century citizens. Have the founding father's goals been accomplished? Are all of them still relevant? How will your declaration be different? Develop the ideas in small groups.
2. The founding fathers wrote their manifesto on thick paper with calligraphy. Will you copy their style or invent a more modern look? Each group should choose a style that most aptly fits their declaration.
3. Then individually, choose some of the ideas from your group declaration that are most important to you. Think about how to express these values in a self-portrait. What kind of facial expression should you show? What should you be wearing? What colors will you use? Will you look straight ahead or use a three-quarter view? Consider what you learned about portraiture at the museum and what these artistic and stylistic choices signaled to you as a viewer.
4. Present the declarations and portraits to the class. Have the groups read their manifestos aloud and explain why they made the choices that they did. Then have the individual "citizens" present their self-portraits and explain how their artistic choices conveyed the values expressed in their group declarations.
5. Reflect on these new declarations and portraits as a class. How does it feel to make your personal values public?

High School Level: Spin Doctors

In these two lessons, students will investigate concepts of rhetoric and image-making and see how written and visual messaging play out in Revolutionary and modern day America.

Lesson 1: What Does Politics Sound Like?

Objective

- To learn about the role of language in politics.

Standards

English Language Arts: 8, 9, 15

History and Social Science: USI.1-9

Materials

Xeroxed copies of a selected passage from the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution, and copies of a selected passage from a speech by a contemporary politician (See links to PDF versions of the founding documents in the Resources section of this guide. Visit the websites of presidential candidates for current political speeches.)

Procedure

1. Begin this lesson with an introduction to relevant vocabulary words. Write the following terms on the board: political platform, ideology, rhetoric. Brainstorm working definitions as a class.
2. Hand out Xeroxed copies of a selection from the Declaration of Independence or the Constitution and have a student read the selection out loud. As a class, identify the founding fathers' political platform and ideology. How did they express these beliefs? How did they use language? How does the language make you feel? Would you describe any of their

language choices as rhetoric? Make a short outline on the board of the political platform, ideology, and rhetoric used in the document.

3. Hand out the selection of a speech by a contemporary politician. Have the students work in small groups and repeat the same sequence of questioning and outlining as you just did as a class: read the speech, identify the political platform and ideology, discuss the use of language, and make an outline of their findings. After a few minutes, discuss the speech as a class.
4. Finish with a discussion of why politicians use these tools. What does it accomplish? Is it necessary? How were the devices used by the founding fathers and the contemporary politician similar? How were they different?

Lesson 2: What Does Politics Look Like?

Objective

- To learn about the role of image-making in politics

Standards

Visual Arts: 1, 3, 8, 10

English Language Arts: 3, 8, 9, 15, 19, 24

History and Social Science: USI.1-9

Materials

Library facilities and/or web access, color printer or copy machine, poster board or large paper, markers, tape or glue, and scissors

Procedure

1. Discuss the portraiture that you saw during the museum visit. How did the artists represent the sitters' (Samuel Cooper and Benjamin Simonds) beliefs in their portraits? How did the artists employ conventions of 18th Century portraiture? How were the men sitting? What were they wearing? Where were they looking? What colors did the artist use?

2. Consider what these conventions signify in a political portrait. What do these characteristics tell the viewer about the sitter's social status? Political beliefs? Position of power?
3. How do visual signifiers and language devices work together to form a complete message?
4. Explain that students will do independent research to map the visual signifiers and language devices used by a Revolutionary-era politician and a contemporary politician. They will:
 - Select a Revolutionary-era politician and a contemporary politician. Conduct some preliminary research on the people and write a short paragraph explaining their importance.
 - Read and analyze speeches or written text by these public figures as done in the pre-visit activity.
 - Find painted portraits of the Revolutionary-era politician and photographs of the contemporary politician. (See the National Portrait Gallery link in the Recommended Resources section for Revolutionary-era portraits.) Identify the conventions of portraiture in the image. Analyze the significance of the convention, i.e.: what is the importance of the person's stance, gaze, dress, manner, etc.
 - Make connections between the language devices and visual markers.
 - Display your findings on a piece of poster board or large paper.
 - Assign each of the politicians a half of the poster. At the top of each half, state the politician's name, dates, and the short paragraph describing their importance.
 - Below the text, paste a large color image of each portrait. Map the connections between visual markers in the portrait and the language devices utilized in the politician's speeches. Draw a bold line from the relevant part of the portrait to a text blurb. Explain the nature of the visual signifier and how that signifier relates to political platform, ideology, and rhetoric in the text passage.
5. Have students write a short essay detailing their findings.
6. Present the posters to the class.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Books

American Dreams: American Art to 1950 in the Williams College Museum of Art. Nancy Matthews. Hudson Hills Press, New York, 2001.

American Art: History and Culture. Wayne Craven. Harry N. Abrams, New York, 1994.

Art in a Season of Revolution: Painters, Artisans, and Patrons in Early America. Margaretta M. Lovell. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2005.

Nature and Culture: American Landscape and Painting 1825-1875. Oxford University Press, New York, 1980.

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Websites

Williams College Museum of Art

<http://www.wcma.org>

The Chapin Library

<http://www.williams.edu/resources/chapin/exhibits/founding.html>

Official Transcripts of the Declaration of Independence.

the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights:

<http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/charters.html>

Whole Book Approach

<http://www.picturebookart.org/downloads/Whole%20Book%20Approach%20Final.PDF>

National Portrait Gallery: Portraits of the American Revolution

<http://www.npg.si.edu/collect/signers.htm#>

National Gallery of Art: Exploring Themes in American Art

<http://www.nga.gov/education/american/aasplash.shtm>

Metropolitan Museum of Art: Timeline of Art History

<http://www.metmuseum.org/toah>

NewsHour Extra: Teachers Resources

<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/index.html>

Education Programs

At the Williams College Museum of Art, our Education Programs strive to instill in visitors a love of art and an appreciation for all that a museum can offer.

As a teaching museum, we are committed to finding innovative approaches to teaching and learning through art—making connections across disciplines, building literacy skills, and encouraging the exchange of ideas.

Our programs engage participants in active experiences with art and investigate art history, artistic practices, and the issues that artwork raises. We are always available to discuss ways to tailor our programs and provide support to help you make the most out of your experience with us.

Education programs at the Williams College Museum of Art are made possible by the Eugénie Prendergast Trust.

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The Museum is open:
Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-5 pm;
Sunday 1-5pm. Free Admission