SECTION I - OVERVIEW

SUBJECT
Wayne Thiebaud

GRADE RANGES
K-12 & Post-secondary

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS
Visual Arts & Language Arts

OBJECTIVES
➢ Understand the development of personal works of art and their relationship to broader social themes and ideas, abstract concepts, and the history of art.
➢ Develop basic observational drawing and/or painting skills.
➢ Develop visual, written, listening and speaking skills through looking at, creating and talking about visual artworks.
➢ Develop an expressive visual vocabulary with which to address personal and/or social themes and ideas.
➢ Develop observational and representational skills by looking at and reproducing images of people, places and things accurately and thoughtfully.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES
➢ Hands-on individual projects in which students work independently
➢ Hands-on group projects in which students assist and support one another
➢ Critical reflection on personal expressions and how they are seen and received by others

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES
• To introduce students to the life and career of world-renowned painter Wayne Thiebaud
• To provide context for the understanding of Pop Art and its connections to American Culture
• To inspire students to analyze and create their own works of art inspired by the Pop Art movement

EQUIPMENT NEEDED
Spark story about Wayne Thiebaud on VHS or a computer with Internet access, streaming capability, navigation software, video projector, speakers and a sound card.

MATERIALS NEEDED
• Access to libraries with up-to-date collections of periodicals, books, and research papers
• Pencils, pens, and paper
• Art materials such as paints, markers, etc.

INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED
Bodily-Kinesthetic - control of one's own body, control in handling objects
Interpersonal - awareness of others' feelings, emotions, goals, motivations
Intrapersonal - awareness of one's own feelings, emotions, goals, motivations
Spatial - ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems
Logical-Mathematical - ability to detect patterns, reason deductively, think logically

See more information on Multiple Intelligences at www.kqed.org/spark/education.
SECTION II – CONTENT/CONTEXT

Spark visits with Thiebaud in his studio as he prepares for a traveling retrospective of his work from the past 50 years, including more than a hundred paintings. Though many of the paintings were completed years before, Thiebaud tirelessly works and reworks aspects of images that he wants to change, often building up the surfaces of his backgrounds, resolving the image, then reopening it again.

Wayne Thiebaud’s work has been shown internationally and is represented in nearly every major collection of modern and contemporary art in North America, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the de Young Museum. He is currently a professor emeritus of art at the University of California, Davis, where he continues to give pro bono lectures to students.

THE BIG PICTURE

The work of Wayne Thiebaud is most closely associated with the Pop Art movement, which refers to a wide range of practices that emerged in Great Britain and the United States in the 1950s. In Britain, Pop Art was popularized by artists such as Richard Hamilton, Peter Blake, and David Hockney. In America, Pop Art’s best know practitioners include Claes Oldenburg, Roy Lichtenstein, and Andy Warhol.

Though in the United States Pop Art is popularly thought of as a uniquely American phenomenon, the movement actually began in post-war Great Britain with the work of the Independent Group, a collective of painters, sculptors, architects, and writers who were interested in the visual strategies of mostly American advertising practices. Richard Hamilton’s 1956 collage Just What Is It That Makes Today’s Homes So Different, So Appealing? is commonly heralded as the first important example of pop art. The work borrows from a variety of popular sources, including advertisements, comic books, fitness and “cheesecake” magazines.
The original line-up of the Independent Group testifies to the English manifestation of Pop Art’s ability to cross disciplines. The artist Peter Blake, for example, while being a widely recognized fine artist, is best known for his album cover of the Beatles’ seminal 1967 release *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band*. This indelible imprint of the Pop Art on pop music was felt in other, more fundamental ways as well. Several of the bands to emerge in Britain in the 1960s were deeply influenced by Pop Art, including The Who, whose 1967 album featured fake advertisements for consumer products interspersed across the record, creating a slippage between single and jingle.

American Pop Art is virtually synonymous with the work of Andy Warhol. Like Thiebaud, Warhol got his start as a commercial artist and designer, making advertisements for magazines. He eventually landed a job with RCA records, designing album covers. While Warhol came to be best known for his silkscreens of celebrities and consumer products (such as 1968’s *Campbell’s Soup*), he worked in a wide range of media, including happenings and films.

Though Wayne Thiebaud is closely associated with Pop Art due to his mass culture subject matter, many of his best known paintings were created just before the dawn of the Pop Art movement. Thiebaud’s brushwork tends to be heavier than other classic Pop artists’, and his focus seems to lean more towards the act of painting rather than his notions of consumerism and popular culture.

**RESOURCES – TEXTS**


RESOURCES – TEXTS (continued)


RESOURCES – WEB SITES

Interview with Wayne Thiebaud for the Smithsonian: http://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/oralhistories/transcripts/thieba01.htm

2002 interview with Wayne Thiebaud from CBS Sunday Morning:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v1_QJ5D9Qm8

Video interview with Roy Lichtenstein from New York’s WNET, circa 1962:
http://www.boingboing.net/2008/11/03/interview-with-roy-l.html

1966 video interview with Andy Warhol on WNET:
http://www.thirteen.org/artsandculture/happy-80th-birthday-andy-warhol

Wikipedia entry for Pop Art:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pop_art

Wikipedia entry on the Independent Group:

VIDEO RESOURCES
ANDY WARHOL: A DOCUMENTARY FILM.
www.PBS.org/AmericanMasters
Available in PBS online shop: www.shopPBS.org

The following KQED Spark videos may be used for compare/contrast purposes:

Spark video on Mel Ramos
http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=22452

Spark video on Christopher Brown
http://www.kqed.org/arts/programs/spark/profile.jsp?essid=7680
An Educator Guide accompanies this video

BAY AREA FIELD TRIPS

SFOMOA
151 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415 357 4000
Open: Thursday-Tuesday
http://www.sfmoma.org/pages/visit

de Young Museum
50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive
Golden Gate Park
San Francisco, CA 94103
http://www.famsf.org
*Thiebaud’s paintings are included in the de Young’s permanent collection and are currently on view.

Modernism Gallery
685 Market Street, Suite 290
San Francisco, CA 94105
415.541.0461
http://www.modernisminc.com/

John Berggruen Gallery
228 Grant Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94108
http://www.berggruen.com/
415.781.4629

San Jose Museum of Art
110 South Market Street
San Jose, CA 95113
http://www.sjmusart.org/
Explore the museum’s programs for students:
http://www.sjmusart.org/content/events/youth/gallery/event_list.phtml?typeID=gallery

Crocker Art Museum
216 O Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
http://www.crockerartmuseum.org/
Crocker Art Museum online space for students:
http://www.crockerartmuseum.org/yard/
DISCIPLINE-BASED VOCABULARY AND WORDS AND CONCEPTS IN THE SPARK STORY

Anthologize
To compile, publish or include in an anthology

Bemused
Confused, bewildered, mystified

Brute
Monstrous, like a beast or animal

Commercial
Profitable, business or money making

Conjure
Conjure up, summon or invoke

Critically Acclaimed
Praised by professional critics or people who are paid to give their opinion of art, music etc.

Eternal
Everlasting, timeless

Figurative
In relation to artwork, this refers to paintings and sculptures that are representational, that is derived from a realistic representation of objects or humans. “Figurative art” refers to art which represents the human form or animal figure.

Gleam
Sparkle, glisten, glimmer

Glint
Sparkle, shine, flash, twinkle

Horrendous
Awful, dreadful, terrible, horrific

Human Consciousness
The state of awareness of oneself and the environment, often distinguished from the unconscious mind which can obscure rational thought processes.

Majestic
Regal, imposing, magnificent

Organic
Natural, unrefined

Pigment
Color, dye, tint

Pop Art
This art movement became important in Britain in the 1950s and reached the United States in the late 1950s and 1960s. It drew on poplar culture, on advertising, comics and everyday objects found in supermarkets, and positioned itself as a challenge to elitist notions of art. Pop Art celebrated the mundane, the everyday of consumerist society, often utilizing irony to do so. Seen as a reaction to Abstract Expressionism, the prevailing orthodoxy after the war (World War II), Pop Art challenged the pretentions of “high art” and the ideas that informed this aesthetic movement.

Resolution
To make clearly visible

Retrospective
Exhibition of an artist’s work over a span of years

Spiritual
Holy or religious, mystical or divine, unworldly

Starkness
Plainness, harshness, austere, severe

Tactile
Tangible, palpable, concrete
STANDARDS-BASED ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION POINTS

Painting Cakes
Play the SPARK video about Wayne Thiebaud and ask students to focus on his paintings of pies and cakes, ice creams, hamburgers and hotdogs - ordinary everyday foods which are so much part of American culture. Replay the video and freeze the frame on the first image of *Cakes 1963*. Ask students to describe in as much detail as possible:

- What do they notice about Thiebaud’s use of paint?
- How are the cakes represented? Do they look real?
- How is space used in the painting?
- What does the use of light and shadow add to the composition?
- Is this subject matter symbolic in any way – of what?

Discuss student responses.

Ask students to close their eyes and think of foods they love or loved when they were younger. Can they conjure up the images in their minds? The colors, shapes, texture? Can they recall the taste? Suggest that they share these memories with their neighbor.

Provide students with art materials such as art paper, pencils, markers or poster paint, and ask them to pick a dessert or cake that they’ve enjoyed. What did they like especially – cream, chocolate, frosting, cherries? Encourage them to sketch the outline of the dessert or cake, and then paint the rich, creamy colors to convey sweetness, texture and pleasure. Advise them to use vibrant, strong colors and to layer the paint extravagantly in the way Thiebaud demonstrates in the SPARK segment.

Post the paintings on the wall in the classroom and, as a group, choose a title for the collection.

SPARKLER*
For elementary and middle school students, see the lessons listed here:
http://www.nga.gov/education/classroom/counting_on_art/lesson_s_thiebaud_int.shtm
For Grades 2 – 5, try the Cake Maker interactive activity:
http://www.nga.gov/education/classroom/interactive/cake.htm

Pop Art
Wayne Thiebaud’s work is associated with the Pop Art movement because he paints ordinary things such as household items, cakes and pies. Thiebaud discusses his inspiration and real-life experience working in a restaurant:

“Most of [the objects] are fragments of actual experience. For instance, I would really think of the bakery counter, of the way the counter was lit, where the pies were placed, but I wanted just a piece of the experience. From when I worked in restaurants, I can remember seeing rows of pies, or a tin of pie with one piece out of it and one pie sitting beside it. Those… fragmented circumstances were always poetic to me.”
-Wayne Thiebaud

Introduce students to paintings and sculptures of the Pop Art movement of the 1950s and 1960’s by projecting selected images onto a screen in the classroom. To find images, search “Pop Art” into a search engine like Google, or visit the “Artchive” Web site:
http://www.artchive.com/artchive/pop_art.html

Discuss the images as a group. What were these artists trying to do or say? What do you notice about their work?

After exploring responses, ask students to work in small groups to research the Pop Art movement of the 1950s and 1960s, addressing the following questions:
• What was Pop Art aiming to do?
• Why did these artists choose ordinary everyday subjects?
• What was happening in England and America at the time?
• How did this movement reflect social and cultural changes?
• What impact did it have both in America and more widely on the Western world?

Ask students to choose one well-known Pop artist and write a short essay on the work and ideas of that artist. They should choose one of the following artists: Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Roy Lichtenstein, Andy Warhol, Tom Wesselmann, or another artist of their choice.

Cityscapes, Landscapes & Art Criticism
Thiebaud is known for his paintings of cityscapes and landscapes - the vertiginous hills of San Francisco and the rich colorful landscapes of the Sacramento Valley in California. Play the SPARK video and freeze the frame on the cityscapes and delta scenes.

Introduce students to art criticism by challenging them to look closely at this work, and to analyze and interpret what they see. They should take clear and organized notes as they proceed.

Begin by asking students to describe what they see in the artwork as objectively as possible. Guide them to think about formal properties such as the elements and principles of painting. How is the subject matter arranged and presented? Look at the composition and visual organization of the canvases. Ask students to comment on elements, such as the use of line, shape, light, color, texture, and space and then look for principles such as the scale, proportion, rhythm, and balance in the paintings. Allow time for them to note down their responses to each element and principle as they examine the canvas. Finally, talk about interpretation and invite students to share their thoughts. What is the artwork about? How would you support this interpretation? Is the artwork successful in your view? Share out students’ ideas and discuss their thoughts and reasoning.

Light and Shadow
Begin by talking about Thiebaud’s reflections on light – his notion of gradations of light or different kinds of light. Can students describe the difference between glint, gleam and glow?

Play the clip from the SPARK video that focuses on Thiebaud’s use of light and shadow in his cityscapes. Freeze the frame on each painting. Ask students to describe where they see light and shadow in the paintings. Would the mood or atmosphere evoked by the paintings change if the light changed? If it was dark or overcast how would that impact the mood?

Arrange for students to visit a local art gallery (see field trips suggestions listed on page 5 of this guide) and explain to them that they will be looking for contemporary (Post-World War II, 1945 - present) paintings that depict street scenes or cityscapes and utilize light and shadow.

In small groups of three, students should choose ONE painting and take photographs of the piece (always ask for permission first). Alternatively, suggest they try to find a digital image on the internet to show the class. In their groups, ask them to take notes in response to the following questions, adding their own reflections at the end.

• Where is the light and shadow in this painting?
• Can they tell what is producing the shadow – people, buildings, sunlight, rain etc?
• How is mood evoked by the use of light and shadow?
• Comment on your responses to the work.

Allow time for students to write up their notes in a reflective paragraph, and then share their thoughts with the class. Conclude by comparing these reports on the use of shadow and light in the paintings they have studied to the techniques employed by Wayne Thiebaud.
For more information about SPARK and its educational content, including the Visual & Performing Arts Standards, visit the Web site at [http://www.kqed.org/spark/education](http://www.kqed.org/spark/education).

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