

HELEN FRANKENTHALER: THREE POSTERS



Solar Imp

LINCOLN CENTER SALUTES
NEW YORK CITY BALLET



Mary, Mary

THE SAMUEL B. & DAVID ROSE BUILDING
LINCOLN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS



Aerie

ELEMENTARY GRADES VISUAL ARTS STUDY

Dear Educator:

The design and content of these Imagination Lesson Plans represent LCI's inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning. This approach develops in the learner the Capacities for Imaginative Learning*, defined outcomes for your students' work that align with the national Common Core Standards. The Capacities and Common Core Standards listed at the beginning of each Lesson Plan are the ones addressed in the plan.

Imagination Lesson Plans are initially rooted in the study of works of art and employ four main concepts: art making, questioning, reflection, and contextual information and research. Each is based on a specific line of inquiry, which is a guiding question that gives the Lesson Plan its framework. Plans were developed for Elementary, Middle, and High School levels, and can easily be adapted for the specific grade you teach. They are intended for you to use as written or modified—used as a springboard for new ideas and further development, depending on your interest and curricular goals. You can complete the whole Lesson Plan in the course of several days, or spread it out over a number of weeks. As well, depending on the duration of your classroom period, any one lesson may be completed within a period or carried over to another day.

However you choose to adapt the lessons to your needs, we encourage you to conduct experiential lessons before you engage your students with the work of art; ask open-ended questions to guide students' noticings throughout the Lesson Plan; and teach further experiential lessons after you have viewed the work of art—the goal of these post-viewing lessons is to lead students to a synthesis that helps them acquire a deeper understanding. The Imagination Lesson Plans are designed to develop imaginative thinking abilities and creative actions that lead to innovative results for all students, and prepare students for greater in-depth learning in all subject areas.

We are eager to support imaginative learning in your classroom, and participate with you and your students in the joy of learning.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Noppe-Brandon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott Noppe-Brandon
Executive Director

**Please refer to the PDF of the Capacities that accompanies this lesson plan.*

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THESE LESSONS

NOTE: These connections to the Common Core Standards are based on the general K-5 Standards. Identify the grade-specific Standard that is appropriate for your class that also relates to the general Standard numbers below.

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Detail

Standard 2

Standard 3

Craft and Structure

Standard 4

Standard 6

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard 7

Writing Standards

Text Types and Purposes

Standard 3

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Standard 9

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

Standard 1

Standard 2

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard 4

CAPACITIES FOR IMAGINATIVE LEARNING ADDRESSED IN THESE LESSONS*

Noticing Deeply
Making Connections
Embodying
Identifying Patterns
Creating Meaning
Reflecting/Assessing

**For the definitions of the Capacities, refer to the PDF that accompanies this Lesson Plan.*

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Learn to work collaboratively.
- Deepen their skills of observation and description.
- Develop a descriptive vocabulary.
- Gain an understanding of how the marks of a painting can imply movement.
- Gain insight into how the relationship of shape and color in abstract painting can convey mood.
- Enhance their understanding of concepts found in other subject areas by connecting them to concepts that they will explore during the study of the three Frankenthaler paintings.

PREPARING FOR FRANKENTHALER POSTERS LESSONS

SUPPLIES AND CONTEXTUAL MATERIALS

Lesson One

Supplies:

Three sheets of plain (8.5 x 11) white paper (1 for each student)
Crayons (a selection for each student)

Lesson Two

Supplies:

Colored construction paper (1 for each student)
Pencils (1 for each student)
Scissors (can be shared)
Glue, glue stick or tape (can be shared)
1 piece of chart paper (1 for each group of four)

Lesson Three

Supplies:

11 x 17 white paper (1 for each student)
Crayons (a selection for each student)

Lesson Four

Contextual Information:

- Helen Frankenthaler—born 1928
- *Mary, Mary*—1990
- *Aerie*—2009
- *Solar Imp*—2001

Lesson Five

Supplies:

Crayons (a selection for each student)

Contextual Materials:

- Helen Frankenthaler—born 1928
- *Mary, Mary*—1990
- *Aerie*—2009
- *Solar Imp*—2001

NOTES TO TEACHERS

Wall Journaling

We encourage you to write on large paper posted on walls (vs. on a less permanent black board or smart board) when documenting during your study of the work of art. This way, wall journaling can be brought forward and referenced in subsequent lessons throughout the plan. As well, students can reflect on their past experiences, responses, connections, and questions as they enter each new experience.

NOTE: some lessons may specifically reference past wall journaling.

Portfolios and Displayed Student Work

We recommend that all student-generated art, writing, and other evidence of their process and learning be posted in the classroom throughout the duration of the plan—or, if there is a lack of space in the classroom, that student work be saved in a portfolio or container (large folder or binder) to reflect on during the plan, and even after the Imagination Lesson Plan is completed, if you like. As with wall journaling, this is another way for students to reflect on their experiences and learning.

NOTE: Lessons may revisit prior art making. The Celebration and Self-Assessment lesson at the end of the plan, can involve a reflection on all wall journaling and student-generated materials as a way of honoring student work and reflecting on the learning and connection-making.

What You Will Need to View the Posters

For each Frankenthaler Imagination Lesson Plan (ILP), you will receive:

- A securely packed, heavy-duty mailing cylinder containing the three high-quality posters by Helen Frankenthaler (*Mary, Mary*; *Aerie*; and *Solar Imp*).
- One box of twelve (12) Display Clips and one box of twenty (20) Push Pins (mailed separately from the posters).

For detailed instructions regarding the use of display clips and push-pins, please see a second attachment to the email in which you received this ILP.

Poster Display

- **Begin by flattening the posters.**
- **It is recommended that you have the posters professionally framed.** Hang them in a place with sufficient indirect light to view the poster clearly without glare.
- **If professional framing is not available, a bulletin board with a minimum depth of 1/2 inch will be needed.** The Display Clips and Push Pins provided with the ILP will allow you to display the posters on a bulletin board in a classroom or hallway setting without damage to the posters. The bulletin board needs to be thick enough to allow for the push pins to enter it deeply enough to hold and secure the weight. Most bulletin boards will be just fine for this purpose; however, the slim types that are 1/8" to 1/4" narrow strips will not be sufficient as the point of the Push Pins is 1/2" long.

Please remove all other papers and objects from the bulletin board. The poster(s) should be the only thing hanging on the bulletin board.

- **Once the posters are ready, easels are another option for displaying them.**

THE THREE FRANKENTHALER POSTERS LESSONS

Line of Inquiry*: How does Helen Frankenthaler, in her abstract paintings *Mary, Mary, Space Imp*, and *Aerie*, use shape and color to suggest movement and mood?

* A line of inquiry is an open, yet focused question that incorporates elements and concepts found in a specific work of art, and is related to the concerns of students and teachers. It invites questioning, guides our exploration throughout, and serves as the framework for constructing experiential lessons.

LESSON ONE: Identifying Movement And Creating Movement Drawings

Activity #1: Identifying and Naming Movements

Ask class the following questions and document responses on chart paper on the wall:

- What are some different types of movements you do or see every day? (examples: jump, slide)
- What are some descriptive words for these movements? (such as “bumpy,” “swishy,” or “smooth”)

Students pair up and try doing one of the movements listed.

Ask pairs to show their different movements and ask:

- What do you notice?
- How would you describe the movement?
- What name would you give that movement? Why?

Activity #2: Movement Drawings

Hand out three separate (8.5 x 11) white sheets of paper and crayons for each student.

Choose three movements from the above list of different movements and ask students to make “movement drawings.” Ask them to create each of the three movements with their crayons on paper; one movement per paper.

To get students started, ask (for example):

- How can you make the crayon “jump” on the paper and leave a mark?
- How can you make the crayon “slide” along the paper?
- What would “swishy” look like drawn with your crayon on the paper?

When done, the students arrange their three drawings on their tables in the order of their choosing. Ask the class:

- What did you discover when you drew the movements?

Students walk around the room, viewing all the drawings.

After students have had a chance to look at everyone's drawings, choose one student's series of three drawings and ask:

- What do you notice?
- Looking at one drawing: Which of the three movements do you think this represents? Why?
- Describe the way the crayon moved on the paper.
- Can you move that way? What would it look like if we moved our bodies that way?

(Students physically embody what they perceive as the movement of the crayon on the paper.)

- What else can we say about the movement we are doing?

Back to the drawings, ask:

- What colors do you see?
- What shapes do you see?
- Do you notice any patterns? Describe.
- How does the first drawing in the series look different from the second or the third?
- In what ways are they the same?

Look at another student's drawing series, and ask:

- Which of the three movements do we imagine each drawing represents? Why?
- What other type of movement might it be? Why?

LESSON TWO: Shapes, Combined Shapes, Composing a Shape Collage

Activity #1: Shapes and Combined Shapes

Ask students:

- What is a shape?
- What shapes do you see in the room around you?

For the following: list the name of each shape on chart paper on the wall, as it is noticed.

- Pick a shape you see in the classroom. What would you call that shape?
- Where else in the room do you see a similar shape?

Select a shape from the wall list above and ask:

- How would you describe a “square” (for example)?
- What makes a square, a square?
- How is it different from a circle?

Ask each student to select one shape from the list and make it with his or her body.

Then, each student joins with a partner, and they show each other their respective shapes. Pairs then decide how they would like to combine their individual shapes.

Next, pairs join another pair to form a group of four. Each duo shares its shape and then decides how to combine all the shapes to form one big shape as a group of four.

Each group shares its shape with the whole class. Ask:

- What do you notice about the shape as a whole?
- What do you notice about the various shapes that make up the larger shape?

Activity #2: Composing Shapes in a Collage

Give each student colored construction paper and a pencil.

Working individually, students are asked to take the shape they originally chose to embody from the list, to draw an outline of that shape, and then to tear or cut it out of the paper.

Organize the students in groups of four again, and ask them to arrange or combine their shapes on a big piece of chart paper in such a way as to represent the shape they had combined as a group earlier.

Then, have them tape or glue their shapes to the piece of paper.

Students leave their collages on their tables.

As a whole class, students walk around to the different tables and look closely at the different compositions. Ask students:

- What do you notice about these pictures/collages?
- What shapes do you see?
- Focusing on one collage: How are the shapes in the picture similar or different from each other?
- What are the different ways the shapes are combined or put together?
- How would you describe where any one shape is in relation to the others?
- In what ways are the shapes connected?
- Do you notice any patterns? Describe.
- Are there any shapes or parts of the picture that look as though they are moving? Describe.
- Looking at the types of movement list from Lesson One, choose one type of movement that you think you see in that picture. Describe. Explain.
- Are there any shapes or parts of the picture that look like they are standing still? Describe. Explain.

LESSON THREE: Color, Combined Color, and Mood

Activity #1: Color, Combined Color, and Mood

Students are sitting in their collage groups of four (from Lesson Two). Hand them back their collages and each student a sheet of 11 x 17 white paper and crayons.

Individually, students look at the collage and draw with crayon the outline of each of the four different shapes that make up the collage, except that each shape will now be in a new place on the paper—creating new relationships of shapes.

Then, ask students to fill in some or all of the shapes with single or combined colors of their choosing.

When done, they decide on the color or type of background they want for their shapes, and then color that in.

Post all of the drawings. Have students walk around silently noticing each other's work. After a while, focusing on different drawings, ask the whole group:

- What shapes do you see in this drawing
- Where are the shapes on the page?
- Where are they in relationship to other shapes?
- What colors do you see?
- How do the colors of the shapes compare to the color of the background?
- Are colors separate or combined in any part of the drawing?
- In what ways are the shapes or colors connected?
- What patterns do you notice?
- Does anyone see movement in the drawing? Describe. What makes it seem like it is moving?
- Does this drawing remind you of anything? Why? Describe.
- Does it remind someone else of something different?
- What kind of mood or feeling do you get from this drawing? Why?
- Does anyone get a different kind of feeling from the drawing? Why?

LESSON FOUR: Viewing the Works of Art

Framing:

Looking at each Frankenthaler painting individually, ask the questions below. Additionally, after viewing the first painting, you can compare and contrast the paintings. For example: What are some of the things we see in this painting that we did not see in the last one? How do the shapes and colors differ?

NOTES: Bring the “movement drawings” from Lesson One to this viewing.

Activity #2 can be used once with any of the three works.

Activity #1: What Do You Notice?

Ask the whole class:

- What do you notice?
- How would you describe this painting?
- What are some shapes that you see? Describe the shapes.
- How are the shapes similar or different from each other?
- What are the different ways the shapes are put together?
- What colors do you see? Describe the colors.
- In what ways are the color choices the same or different than the colors you chose for your drawings in our last class?
- What patterns do you see? Describe.
- In what ways are you connecting these paintings to any of the art you made in class?
- Let's take a look at your "movement drawings." What were some of the types of movements you remember drawing with your crayon? Point them out in your drawing.

Returning to the Frankenthaler posters, ask:

- What movement words come to mind when you look at this painting?
- What kinds of movement do you see?
- Can you recreate that movement with your arms? (Whole class embodies the movement they interpret).
- Do you notice anything new about movement in this painting?

Share the following contextual information with students: The name of the artist, titles and dates of the paintings (see Lesson Four Supplies and Materials page).

Activity #2: Embodying the Movement of the Artist and Interpreting Mood

Ask students to stand up, focus on one of the paintings, and imagine that they are the artist with a paintbrush in her hand. Ask them to move their arms and bodies as if they were painting the picture.

Ask one student to repeat his/her movement as the rest of the class observes. Ask the class:

- What do you notice about their movement?
- What would you call this kind of movement?
- What would you call this kind of painting?

Looking back at the Helen Frankenthaler paintings, ask the students:

- Do any of the paintings remind you of anything?
- What kind of mood or feeling do they give you? Why? Is it the colors or combined colors? Individual or combined shapes? Or, something else?

- What would you title any of the paintings? Why?
- What are some of the questions that you have when you look at these paintings?

LESSON FIVE: Final Art Making and Reflection

Helen Frankenthaler posters are exhibited in the room

Activity #1: Connect Shapes, Create New Shapes, Create a Background

Share again with students and write on chart paper on the wall the artist's name and the titles and dates of the paintings. Lead a brief discussion about the time period in which the works were created, and the possible meanings of their titles.

In collage groups from Lesson Two: Hand out collages that belong to each group, as well as crayons.

Students are asked to take a moment to look at their collage and compare with the three Frankenthaler posters. Ask students:

- In what ways are your collage and the paintings similar or different?

Write on the chart paper on the wall:

- Connect shapes
- Create new shapes
- Create a background

Ask students to share aloud ways in which they notice the artist has done each of the above three ideas in her paintings.

Each student chooses one idea from the above list to try out on their group collage and then draws that action with crayon onto the collage.

Individual students talk about their work, explaining the action they chose and how they drew it onto their group's collage.

Ask students:

- How did these additional ideas change the way your collage looks?
- If you were to title your group's collage, what would you call it? Why?

Activity #2: Final Reflection

Lead a whole group discussion prompted by the following question:

- What is one thing you particularly liked about your experience with the Frankenthaler paintings?

For the below, write responses on chart paper on the wall:

- What are the different things we studied with the Frankenthaler posters?

Ask students to review their above list and then ask:

- What are some ways in which you are connecting what we have been studying to other subjects you have in school?

Students individually write a response to the following question:

- What is one thing you will always remember about your study of the Frankenthaler posters?

LESSON SIX: Celebration and Self-Assessment

Celebration

Display all student art and wall documentation from the plan.

Lead a walk-through, and

at each area, have students speak about their memory of that moment and/or the different things learned, explored, and experienced.

NOTE: You may want to invite parents for this celebration and self-assessment.. During this event, students can ask their parents “noticing” questions about the artwork, as well as speak to their own work and describe for the parents what they were exploring. Students’ responses during the Final Reflection from Lesson 5 can also be referenced here.

Self-Assessment

Ask students to write three “What I learned...” statements and share them with the class.

Lead a discussion about the different things learned.



Helen Frankenthaler

Photo of Helen Frankenthaler by Marabeth Tyler-Cohen

Special thanks to Karen Davidson, Director of List Print and Poster at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, for all her help.