Paris 1900: City of Entertainment
Educator Resource Guide
October 12, 2018–January 6, 2019

About This Resource

This Educator Resource Guide is designed to help educators and students prepare for gallery visits and follow-up discussions. It highlights works from Paris 1900: City of Entertainment and includes questions and activities to encourage your students to look closely and think critically. The activities are compatible with Tennessee curriculum standards for visual arts, language arts, and social studies.

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Curriculum Connections and Tennessee State Standards
Docent-guided school tours support Tennessee academic standards by introducing ideas relevant to the visual arts, language arts, and social studies curricula. Specific standards are addressed according to grade-appropriate levels. View connections for all grade levels (K–12) at tn.gov/education/topic/academic-standards.

Foundational Literacy Standards
FL.WC.4 Cornerstone: Know and apply grade-level phonics and word analysis skills when encoding words; write legibly.

6-12 Language Standards
L.CSE.1 Cornerstone: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.CSE.2 Cornerstone: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Writing Standards
W.TTP.3 Cornerstone: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

World History and Geography: The Industrial Revolution to the Contemporary World
W.4 Draw evidence from informational texts to explain how the ideology of the French Revolution led France to evolve from a constitutional monarchy to democratic despotism to the Napoleonic Empire. (Culture, History, Politics, Government and/or Civics)

State Fine Arts Standards
This educator resource guide supports Tennessee fine arts standards. Educators may address specific standards in their classrooms according to grade-appropriate levels. View connections for all grade levels (K–12) at tn.gov/education/article/arts-education.
Introduction to *Paris 1900: City of Entertainment*

For more than a hundred years, Paris has been celebrated as the City of Light, standing as a symbol of elegance, pleasure, and festivity, and drawing visitors from around the world. Although the French capital was quite different from its idealized representation in posters and advertisements, the turn of the century was indeed an exceptional time. The city was growing rapidly and had a population of nearly three million by 1914. Additionally, Paris attracted travelers for both business purposes and leisure activities: over fifty million visitors attended the International Exposition of 1900, which was held on the banks of the Seine.

This exhibition spans the Parisian Belle Époque (Beautiful Era). Encompassing the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the period was known for fantasy, excess, and boundless faith in progress through science and technology.

**Paris: Showcase of the World**

In 1900, thirty years had passed since war touched the city of Paris. France's Third Republic (1870–1940), established after the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, had won broad-based support despite dissent and political crises. The institutions of the republic were strong and allowed the capital city to prosper and progress in science and technology. Between 1872 and 1914, Paris experienced an unprecedented population increase of almost one million people. This growth profoundly transformed the layout of the city. The large-scale construction projects initiated by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussman during the Second Empire (1852–1870) continued to be built, providing Paris with mass transportation and modernizing its infrastructure. The wide avenues, green spaces, and public squares created during this period are among the most important structural elements of the Parisian landscape today. Many emblematic monuments also date to this era, like the Sacré-Cœur Basilica, at the peak of Montmartre, and the Eiffel Tower, constructed for the International Exposition of 1889. The International Exposition of 1900 was the culmination of these projects and showcased the French capital’s cultural prestige to the world.

This painting by Louise Abbéma (figure 1) is rich with symbolism and offers a “modern” interpretation of the city’s traditional emblems. An elegant young woman dressed in the fashion of 1900 represents the city of Paris as she sails proudly down the Seine, standing on the prow of a ship. A ship adorning her dress alludes to commerce along the river. The bodice of her dress is graced with several fleurs-de-lis—the stylized lilies that have appeared for centuries on the French royal coat of arms, symbolizing chastity and the Virgin Mary. The words painted at the top of the frame—Fluctuat nec mergitur—form a Latin phrase meaning “Tossed but not sunk,” which has been the motto of the city of Paris since at least
1358. In her right hand, the woman holds a laurel wreath, a traditional symbol of victory and honor—perhaps alluding to the “victory” of France over Germany in successfully petitioning to be the site of the exposition.

The International Exposition of 1889, planned to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the French Revolution, celebrated progress in science and technology. A tower that was nearly one thousand feet tall, built by the architect Gustave Eiffel, was the centerpiece of the exposition. In this picture (figure 2), the painter and illustrator George Roux shows a crowd assembled beneath the tower to view the illuminated fountains along the Champ-de-Mars. The central dome of the exposition and the roof of the Palais des Machines are clearly visible in the background.

Questions

• How does the woman in Louise Abbéma’s painting personify Paris and tell its story? How would you represent your city?

• The Eiffel Tower has become a symbol of Paris. What other architectural symbols represent Paris? What represents your city? What are symbols of other cities or countries around the world?

Activity: Design and Construct a Model of a Building or a Monument

Looking at the Eiffel Tower, the Sacré-Cœur Basilica, and other Parisian monuments of the era for inspiration, draw a design for a building or monument for construction at a fair representing our era, using pencil and paper. Then, use available materials such as cardstock, chenille stems, straws, and tape to build three-dimensional models. The models should be sturdy and structurally sound. Share your creations—discuss what the buildings or monuments commemorate or celebrate. Build a city in your classroom by putting all the design models together on a table.
The 1900 International Exposition

What is an international exposition?

Large international expositions began in 1851 and were held in major cities such as London, New York, Philadelphia, Paris, and Chicago. Called world’s fairs, world expos, or universal expositions, these early events focused on trade and displays of technological inventions and advancements from around the world.

The International Exposition (World’s Fair) of 1900 had enormous appeal. In less than six months, the exposition received fifty-one million visitors from around the world. Like its predecessors in 1878 and 1889, the 1900 International Exposition celebrated scientific discoveries and progress, but it also offered a more festive aspect oriented toward popular culture. The fairgrounds were filled with such attractions as the Grande Roue Ferris wheel; the “Rue de Paris,” an area featuring theaters and restaurants; and the Palace of Optics, where visitors could see the moon through a telescope and dine at the gourmet Restaurant de la Lune.

The Palace of Optics was prominently featured in advertisements for the 1900 International Exposition and very popular with visitors. This poster design by Georges Leroux (figure 3) informed viewers of how the Palace of Optics building looked, and hinted at the wonders to be found there. The electric globe held by a female figure suggests the moon.

Central attractions at the Palace of Optics included La Grande Lunette, the largest refracting telescope ever built, which made the moon appear to be only forty-six miles away (as opposed to 240,000 miles)—a feat impressive enough that some described it as “capturing the moon,” as illustrated in this poster. Visitors could also learn about other recent scientific discoveries in astronomy, a field led by many French men and women.

Questions

• Imagine Leroux’s image without the text. How would you interpret its meaning? What text would you write to accompany the image?

• The late 19th century and early 20th century are known as an era of technological advancement. Think about today’s technological innovations and compile a list. What were earlier technologies and advancements? What innovations can you imagine in the future?
The exposition has a history of human exploitation that stands in contrast to its emphasis on innovation. Human zoos could be found in Paris, Hamburg, Antwerp, Barcelona, London, Milan, and New York City. Both the 1878 and the 1889 Parisian World’s Fairs presented a Negro Village. Visited by 28 million people, the 1889 World’s Fair displayed four hundred indigenous people as the major attraction.

**Nashville Connection: The 1897 Centennial Exposition**

In 1897, Nashville held an exposition at Centennial Park to commemorate Tennessee’s one hundredth year as a state. The Centennial Exposition was officially opened by President William McKinley and lasted for six months, during which approximately 1.8 million people attended.

Several structures were built for the exposition, including the Parthenon. This building acknowledges Nashville’s recognition as “The Athens of the South,” a nickname inspired by the city’s concentrated number of higher education institutions. The building is modeled after the Parthenon built in Athens, Greece, in 432 BCE. After the exposition, most of the buildings were destroyed, but the Parthenon remained the centerpiece of Centennial Park. It now functions as an art museum with a 42-foot-high statue of the Greek goddess Athena.

**Activity: Write a Letter**

Review the map layouts of the 1897 Centennial Exposition in Nashville (figure 4) and the 1900 International Exposition in Paris (figure 5). Select one of the expositions and research its landmarks and attractions. Use your research to write a letter in which you imagine yourself as a visitor. Consider the culture and climate of the city during this time. Share details about your experience. Describe the surroundings. Were there large crowds? What attractions were popular? Why?
The International Exposition of 1900 celebrated scientific discoveries and progress, but it also offered a more festive aspect, with fairgrounds filled with attractions like the tallest Ferris wheel in the world (at the time); the “Rue de Paris,” an area featuring theaters and restaurants; and the Palace of Optics, where visitors could see the moon through a telescope and dine at the gourmet Restaurant de la Lune.

Similar to the International Exposition in Paris was an exposition held in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1897 to commemorate Tennessee’s one hundredth year as a state. The Centennial Exposition was officially opened by President William McKinley and lasted for six months, during which approximately 1.8 million people attended.

In this activity, participants will compare two city plans for the expositions (Paris and Nashville), and then use geometry to help draw and plan (and possibly build) their ideal festival map.

Materials
- graph paper, pencils, ruler, compass, markers, tape, scissors

Suggested Reading
M. Sasek's *This Is Paris* and Ashley Evanson’s *Paris: A Book of Shapes* may be helpful for introducing the project to younger participants.

Resources
- Crash Course Kids. “Let’s Build a City” (#48.1), 2016. Available at youtu.be/gnnUid8Hof0
- Joel Henriques. *Made by Joel: Paper City* posts. madebyjoel.com/paper-city
- KidsBuild! kidsbuild.org

Lesson Adaptations
Visit the “Lines in Architecture” video at FristKids.org for an activity suitable for young children.

Advanced participants may create 3-D models of their maps, using paper, clay, or recycled objects to build their city.
Art Nouveau
In 1900, Paris was one of the European capitals of art nouveau, an artistic trend that was then at the peak of its popularity. Art nouveau in Paris included figures from many countries and disciplines, such as the architect Hector Guimard, the glass artist Émile Gallé, and the painter and designer Alfons Mucha. These artists championed a style that broke with academic tradition. They glorified an aesthetic of curved lines and asymmetry and preferred ornamentation inspired by living forms. Art nouveau also reversed the hierarchy of the genres, moving the decorative arts and so-called minor arts—like printmaking, bookmaking and medal engraving—to center stage. Much of art nouveau’s success was due to wealthy, enlightened bourgeois patrons who were not afraid to buy works that might prove controversial. The dealer Siegfried Bing was one of the most important sponsors of the new style: his shop, which opened in 1895, was called L’Art Nouveau and gave the movement its name.

At the International Exposition of 1900, the famous jewelers Paul and Henri Vever exhibited twenty pieces designed by Eugène Grasset. These designs were exceptional because of their use of nontraditional materials and techniques: they combined horn, a material that the glass designer René Lalique had recently rediscovered, with precious stones like sapphires. The cloisonné enamel technique, which had been so important in the Middle Ages in France, was in vogue, making it possible to create jewelry with a sophisticated iconography. The “Assyrian” comb (figure 6) was inspired by ancient Middle Eastern art, which was also fashionable at the time.

Questions
• How is art nouveau different from art that was considered more traditional at the time?
• How did art nouveau change the view of what might be considered high art?
• Is there a difference between art and decoration? Present your opinion.
Paris, Capital of the Arts
The Petit Palais and the Grand Palais were built on the Champs-Élysées, for the International Exposition in 1900. Created as permanent sanctuaries for the fine arts, they suggest the important role that art played in Parisian cultural life at the turn of the century. The City of Light exerted a magnetic attraction on young artists like no other European capital, with Scandinavians, Italians, Czechs, Spaniards, and Americans among the many who came to Paris to study at the École des Beaux-Arts or train at one of numerous private academies, such as the Académie Julian.

While fellow impressionists Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Claude Monet eventually moved away from Paris, cityscapes of the French capital remained one of Camille Pissarro’s favorite subjects. Near the end of his life, he made several works featuring views of the Musée du Louvre and the Jardin des Tuileries. This one (figure 7), from the collection of the Petit Palais, was painted from the window of a hotel overlooking the Quai Voltaire. With a focus on the effects of light and water on subjects, Pissarro returned to his impressionist style of the 1870s.

Berthe Morisot was a close friend of the artist Édouard Manet and married to his brother Eugène. She also associated with impressionist painters and was the only woman to participate in the movement’s first exhibition in 1874. The girl in this portrait (figure 8), Marthe, was one of Morisot’s favorite models. Spirited brushstrokes give the painting a sketchlike, intimate quality, while the bright palette accentuates the subject’s youth and delicacy.

Questions
• Why was Paris such a magnet for the artists?
• How did Paris’s growth contribute to its reputation as the capital of the arts?
The Parisian Woman
A twenty-foot-tall sculpture of a stylish woman by Paul Moreau-Vauthier stood atop the main gate of the 1900 International Exposition. Wearing a blue ball gown from Paris’s Paquin fashion house, the larger-than-life figure proudly declared the French capital’s supremacy in fashion and luxury goods. Her presence also reminded visitors that the notion of La Parisienne— the iconic upper-class Parisian woman—was an essential part of the city’s appeal: she set the standard in the world of fashion, and her style was imitated across the globe. Parisiennes were particularly recognized for their sense of chic and for their inimitable gait as they moved gracefully through the city, long skirts skillfully raised above the dirty sidewalks. Their refined silhouettes inspired writers, artists, and fashion designers alike: images of La Parisienne can be found in many media, from mosaics to postcards.

In this picture (figure 9), which depicts the wife of painter and illustrator René Préjelan, the successful portraitist Antonio de La Gandara focused on Madame Préjelan’s large feathered hat, a very fashionable accessory around 1900. The revealing neckline of her long ball gown shows off the curve of her shoulders, and her S-shaped silhouette exemplifies the style of the period: a corset attenuates her waist, rounds her hips, and emphasizes her bust.

Until 1910, buttoned or laced boots in beige or black (figure 10) were an essential element of any fashionable lady’s winter wardrobe. These boots allowed Parisian women to move comfortably through the streets of the city, and they also emphasized the elegant lines of ladies’ feet, which according to the era’s beauty standards should be small and well arched. In the summer, covered shoes replaced boots for outings. Open shoes with Louis XV heels and pointed toes, reserved for festive occasions, were expected to match a lady’s stockings and evening dress.

Questions
• Why was the image of the Parisian woman important to Paris?
• How do you think this view of Parisian women influenced the rest of the world?
• Do you think Portrait of Madame René Préjelan was representative of all Parisian women? Why or why not?
Paris by Night
Paris offered an infinitely varied spectacle during the day, but the City of Light was at its most seductive at night. Synonymous as it was with festivities, the dream-like Parisian evening attracted a coterie of night owls: bohemian aristocrats in search of forbidden pleasures and those who supplied them, hedonists and thrill seekers, and artists and actors in search of inspiration. Evenings were for attending performances at the opera or the theater, followed by entertainment late into the night at cafés and cabarets, where patrons could eat while watching shows in settings unconstrained by upper-class codes of behavior. The world of the theater, commanded by great figures like Sarah Bernhardt, was also extremely vibrant around 1900.

Léopold Mourrier, the owner of Le Pré Catelan, a famous restaurant that opened its doors in 1905, commissioned this monumental canvas (figure 11) from painter Henri Gervex in 1909. It offers a particularly seductive image of Parisian high society. Henri Gervex’s wife stands at the center of the composition with Duke Hélie de Talleyrand-Périgord and his wife, the American heiress Anna Gould.

Le Divan Japonais was one of many cafés-concerts in Montmartre at the turn of the century. This poster (figure 12), which Toulouse-Lautrec made for its manager in 1893, ensured the lasting reputation of the small and short-lived artistic venue. The dancer Jane Avril is seated in the foreground, recognizable by her flaming red hair. Accompanied by one of her many suitors, Avril had come to hear the singer Yvette Guibert, another celebrity of the Parisian cabaret scene. The top edge of the poster cuts off Guibert’s head, but the long black gloves that are clearly visible in the print were her signature accessory.

Questions
• The two artworks in this section depict different nightlife experiences: one at a famous restaurant, the other at a small café. How do you think the restaurant and café experiences differ? Consider how people would be expected to conduct themselves and who would be welcome in each space.

• How do you think these differences are expressed through the artists’ choices?
Activity: Kitchen Lithography

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, posters like Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec’s *Le Divan Japonais* were printed by a process called *lithography*, or printing on a flat surface treated to repel ink except where it is required for printing. The following kitchen lithography activity is a safer, less expensive way to do this process in a classroom or at home.

### Supplies

- aluminum foil
- baren (or another flat, smooth object)
- brayer
- etching ink
- gloves
- lithographic crayon or pencil
- paper
- plastic sheets (or similar hard surfaces)
- printing press (optional)
- tape
- trays
- vegetable oil
- water
- white vinegar

### Prepping

1. Use a pencil to make simple sketches on paper. Select one of the sketches for your print.
2. Smooth out the aluminum foil on a hard surface.
3. Draw your image with a lithographic crayon or pencil onto the aluminum foil.
4. Place the aluminum foil in tray and pour enough vinegar to submerge the foil leaving it for approximately seven minutes.
5. Remove the foil from the vinegar bath. Place it on the plastic sheet, or other hard surface.
6. Remove the litho crayon by using vegetable oil to “buff” the foil.

### Inking

1. Apply a small dab of ink (about half the size of a dime) to a clean, smooth surface and roll out with a brayer.
2. Use a clean sponge to dampen the foil and wipe away excess oil.
3. Apply ink to the foil. The ink will stick to the areas where the litho crayon was buffed away. (The ink will not completely cover the surface in one pass; alternately ink and wipe the surface of the foil until ink evenly covers the appropriate areas.)

### Printing

1. Place paper (slightly dampened) on the face-up image.
2. Run the two layers through a printing press, or use a baren or another flat, smooth object to push the paper into the foil image.

Watch these videos for demonstrations of the kitchen lithography process:
jjewelart. “How to Etch with White Vinegar (Kitchen Lithography Variation,” 2012. youtu.be/tXaimUkCVU0
Glossary

**Académie Julian**
A major alternative school to the official École des Beaux-Arts, especially for women who were not admitted to the Beaux-Arts until 1897. (Tate)

**Art Nouveau**
An international style in architecture and design that emerged in the 1890s and is characterized by sinuous lines and flowing organic shapes based on plant forms. (Tate)

**Belle Époque**
(French for “Beautiful Era.”) A period characterized by optimism, regional peace, economic prosperity, an apex of colonial empires and technological, scientific, and cultural innovations. It is conventionally dated from the end of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 to the outbreak of World War I in 1914. (En.wikipedia.org)

**Bernhardt, Sarah**
The greatest French actress of the later 19th century and one of the best-known figures in (1844–1923) the history of the stage. (Britannica.com)

**Centennial Exposition**
A six-month celebration to mark the one-hundredth anniversary of Tennessee’s statehood. The Tennessee Centennial Exposition was held in Nashville from May 1 until October 30, 1897, although the state’s actual centennial occurred in 1896. (TeVA)

**Champ-de-Mars**
Opened in 1780, the Parc du Champ-de-Mars is a public greenspace on which the Eiffel Tower stands. (Bureau)

**Champs-Élysées**
Landmark avenue in Paris and the location of the Grand Palais and the Petit Palais. (Bureau)

**École des Beaux-Arts**
(French for “school of fine arts.”) The original École des Beaux-Arts emerged from the teaching function of the French Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture, established in Paris in 1648. In 1816 the Académie Royale school moved to a separate building and in 1863 was renamed the École des Beaux-Arts. (Tate)

**Eiffel Tower**
A wrought iron lattice tower on the Champ-de-Mars in Paris, France. It is named after the engineer Gustave Eiffel, whose company designed and built the tower. (En.wikipedia.org)

**Franco-Prussian War**
A conflict in which a coalition of German states led by Prussia defeated France. The war marked the end of French dominance in continental Europe and resulted in the creation of a unified Germany. (Britannica.com)

**Grand Palais**
A large historic site, exhibition hall, and museum complex located at the Champs-Élysées. (En.wikipedia.org)
International Exposition of 1900

A world’s fair held in Paris, France, from April 14 to November 12, 1900, to celebrate the achievements of the past century and accelerate development into the next. (En.wikipedia.org, under “Exposition Universelle (1900)”) 

lithography

A printing process that uses a flat stone or metal plate on which the image areas are worked using a greasy substance so that the ink will adhere to them, while the non-image areas are made ink-repellent. (Tate)

Petit Palais

Built for the 1900 Exposition Universelle (International Exposition), it now houses the City of Paris Museum of Fine Arts. (En.wikipedia.org)

Sacré-Cœur Basilica

A Roman Catholic church. A popular landmark and the second most visited monument in Paris, the basilica is located at the highest point in the city. Construction began in 1875 and was completed in 1914. (En.wikipedia.org)

Second Empire

The period in France (1852–70) under the rule of Emperor Napoleon III (the original empire having been that of Napoleon I). In its early years (1852–59), the empire was authoritarian but enjoyed economic growth and pursued a favorable foreign policy. (Britannica.com)

Third Republic

French government from 1870 to 1940. After the fall of the Second Empire the new Constitutional Laws of 1875 were adopted. Despite its series of short-lived governments, the Third Republic was marked by social stability, industrialization, and establishment of a professional civil service. It ended with the fall of France to the Germans in 1940. (Britannica.com)

Definitions quoted or adapted from the sources credited. Sources were accessed on August 22 and/or September 18, 2018.
Resources

Books


Children's books


Digital resources


PARIS 1900
City of Entertainment

Exhibition organized by the Petit Palais Museum of Fine Arts with exceptional loans from the Musée Carnavalet – History of Paris and the Palais Galliera Museum of Fashion, Paris Musées

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