

***A Sporting Vision: The
Paul Mellon Collection
of British Sporting Art
from the Virginia
Museum of Fine Arts***

***Van Gogh, Monet,
Degas, and Their
Times: The Mellon
Collection of French
Art from the Virginia
Museum of Fine Arts***

Educator Resource Guide
February 2–May 5, 2019



Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917). *The Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen*, model executed ca. 1880 (cast after 1922). Bronze, cloth skirt with tutu, and satin hair ribbon, 38 1/2 x 14 1/2 x 14 1/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, State Operating Fund and the Art Lovers' Society, 45.22.1. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Travis Fullerton

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 *A Sporting Vision: The Paul Mellon Collection of British Sporting Art from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts* and *Van Gogh, Monet, Degas, and Their Times: The Mellon Collection of French Art from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*. Its questions and activities will 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

This guide supports Tennessee academic standards by introducing ideas relevant to the visual arts, language arts, and social studies curriculums. Specific standards are addressed according to grade-appropriate levels. View connections for all grade levels (K–12) at www.tn.gov/education/instruction/academic-standards.

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/instruction/academic-standards/arts-education.

6-12 Language Standards

L.CSE.1 Cornerstone: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking; use effective parallel structure and various types of phrases and clauses to convey specific meaning and add variety and interest to writing.

Writing Standards

W.TTP.2 Cornerstone: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

World History and Geography, Industrial Revolution 1750–1914

W.7 Explain the connections among natural resources, entrepreneurship, labor, and capital in an industrial economy including the reasons why the Industrial Revolution began in England.

World War I, The Roaring Twenties, and World War II

5.49 Analyze the events that caused the Great Depression and its impact on the nation and Tennessee, including mass unemployment, Hoovervilles, and soup kitchens. (C, E, H, TN)

*A Sporting Vision: The Paul Mellon Collection of
British Sporting Art from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts*

One of the leading American art patrons of the twentieth century, Paul Mellon was the son of industrialist, banker, and politician Andrew Mellon, himself an art collector and philanthropist of note. A dedicated Anglophile who had studied at the University of Cambridge in England, Paul developed a particular interest in British art. He funded the establishment of the Yale Center for British Art and, as a trustee at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, donated major collections of British, French, and American art to the people of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

This exhibition features masterpieces from the eighteenth through the twentieth century. These depictions of horse racing, hunting, fishing, and farming, charming in their own right, are also windows into the world of the rural English gentry—its class structures, customs, and diversions.

What does a collector do?

Collectors are people who like to own things related to a topic (such as music or sports) or a type of object (such as rocks or stamps) they love. For example, some basketball fans try to save everything they can find about their favorite player, including posters, T-shirts, and ticket stubs. Some art collectors focus on specific creators, mediums, and/or subjects: for instance, someone who adores both Elvis Presley and cats might choose to collect photographs of Elvis with cats.

Some collectors promote, market, or sponsor artists, sometimes by discussing works they have purchased or inviting guests to view objects they own. For example, Paul Mellon is credited with reviving the art world's interest with George Stubbs, long after the painter's death. If Mellon hadn't been so dedicated to sharing his enjoyment of Stubbs's work, we might not today know as much as we do about Stubbs's magnificent anatomical studies of horses.

Questions

- How do collectors help others learn more about their particular collection?
- Imagine that you are a collector. What would you be most interested in collecting and promoting? Why?
- As a collector, would you think it was important for the public to have access to your collection? Why or why not?

Activity: Practice Collecting and Curating

Preparation (for the teachers):

Option 1: Provide a variety of artwork images for students to consider. Have them look at the images and identify four objects for their art collection.

Option 2: Ask students to pick a subject they are passionate about. Have them find eight images of objects related to that subject. Tell them to identify the four things in that set they would most like to own.

Directions (to the students):

Pretend that you are a collector searching for new objects for your collection. Compose a statement about your collection, answering the following questions:

- Do your selections look similar or express a common idea?
- Are they all works by the same artist? If so, what is it that you like about their work?
- Is it about an activity (like sports or music)? If so, why is that activity significant to you?
- Does your collection represent an important time in history? If so, what interests you about that period?

Next, imagine that a local museum wants to showcase your collection, including the four objects you selected. They've asked you how to display these objects together. How would you position them in relation to one another? Which object do you want visitors to look at first? Does the arrangement tell a story?



Figure 1
George Stubbs (British, 1724–1806). *Tiger*,
ca. 1769–71. Oil on canvas, 24 1/4 x 28 3/4 in.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul
Mellon Collection, 99.95. Image © Virginia
Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel

George Stubbs

George Stubbs is recognized as a great practitioner of British sporting art. His intensive studies of animal anatomy gave his works an unparalleled realism that appealed to patrons who, like Stubbs, were inspired by the Enlightenment's emphasis on scientific inquiry.

The first British work Paul Mellon bought, in 1936, was Stubbs's *Pumpkin with a Stable-lad*, now at the Yale Center for British Art. In his memoirs, Mellon reminisces about this first purchase:

It was during our hunting tour in the Cotswolds back in 1936 that I met Angus Menzies, one of the partners of Knoedler's in London.¹ He told me that the gallery had a beautiful Stubbs, and Mary and I agreed to go see it.² We both were bowled over by the charming horse, the young boy in a cherry-colored jacket, and the beautiful landscape background. The price was five thousand dollars, and I bought it immediately. It was my very first purchase of a painting and could be said to be the impetus toward my later, some might say gluttonous, forays into the sporting art field.

In the decades that followed, Stubbs remained a personal favorite of Mellon, whose interest did much to resuscitate Stubbs's reputation in the twentieth century. The examples in the exhibition span almost forty years of Stubbs's career. They highlight his ability to portray horses suited to different kinds of work, as well as the range of animals he was called upon to represent naturalistically.

With his unsurpassed knowledge of anatomy, Stubbs became the foremost Enlightenment painter of not only horses, but also other animals. This tiger (figure 1) was presumably kept in the private zoo of one of his patrons in England. Stubbs and others often portrayed tigers as fierce. Here, he deviates from expectation by presenting a well-fed tiger in a natural state of repose.

Activity: Study Animal Anatomy

George Stubbs spent much of his life studying and drawing animals so that he could paint them perfectly. What might you be able to do in just ten or twenty minutes?

Find a picture of an animal—a horse, a tiger, a bird, or some other creature that interests you. Set a timer for two minutes. Use the time to look closely at the image of your chosen animal and ask yourself questions about it: What color is it? Does it have long or short legs? What shape is its head?

1. Knoedler & Company was an art dealership with offices in London, New York, Paris, and Pittsburgh.

2. Mary Conover Brown Mellon was Paul's first wife.

Once the two minutes are up, turn the picture face down or away from you and, using your art supplies, do your best to draw the animal from memory.

Was it easy or hard to remember all the details? How might your drawing change if you had more time to study the animal's picture?

Flip or turn the picture around so that you can see the animal again. Make another drawing of it, this time looking at the picture for reference as needed. Which details do you feel confident drawing? Which would you like to spend more time on?

In Pursuit

Fox hunting was one of Mr. Mellon's favorite pastimes. He hunted for more than fifty years on both sides of the Atlantic. He explains his attraction to this sport in his memoirs:

Hunting is another example of the reaction which has set up inside me against business, the city, modern industrial drabness, the suppression of the natural emotions and feelings. . . . It involves the use of the horse, that instinctive animal, and man's mastery of the horse.

The fox hunting paintings in the exhibition illustrate the evolution of the hunt and its social impact over almost two hundred years, from the 1730s to the 1920s. Starting in the eighteenth century, as a series of laws called the **Enclosure Acts** gradually transformed open heaths and forests to a regular field system, the number of deer began to decrease and attention turned to foxes, the specialized breeding of foxhounds, and the opening of country sports beyond the aristocracy to the upper middle class.



Figure 2
Benjamin Marshall (British, 1768–1835).
Noble, a Hunter Well Known in Kent, 1810. Oil
on canvas, 40 1/8 x 50 in. Virginia Museum of
Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection,
99.80. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
Photo: Katherine Wetzel

Here (figure 2) Marshall depicts the grey horse Noble being ridden by a servant in a rough, primordial landscape. At this point in the history of fox hunting, hunters were normally three-quarters or seven-eighths thoroughbred to provide enough speed and endurance, as well as strength, to carry a rider over long distances.

Questions

- Looking at Marshall's painting, what do you think appealed to Paul Mellon's interests and artistic taste?
- What is the focal point—the most important part—of Marshall's painting? Why? List your reasons.
- Could all people easily participate in hunting? Who might have been able to enjoy it? What would have kept others from the sport?



Figure 3
John Frederick Herring, Sr. (British, 1795–1865). *The Final Lengths of the Race for the Doncaster Gold Cup*, 1826. Oil on canvas, 17 3/4 x 35 3/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection, 99.79. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel

In Motion

A horse's speed and stamina were often on display at the racecourse. Races gradually transformed from long, grueling heats to shorter sprints—to showcase their speed to its fullest extent. A number of classic races—the St. Leger (1776), the Oaks (1779), and the Derby (1780)—were created in the late eighteenth century and are still run to this day. The speed of the thoroughbred, however, would not be confined to “the Sport of Kings” for long.

Fast thoroughbreds, or predominantly thoroughbred horses, quickly appeared in the hunting field—and also on England's roads, pulling coaches such as those in the Royal Mail fleet. Along with the mending of deeply rutted roads—which, when wet, turned into muddy quagmires—and the creation of new ones, the use of faster horses significantly cut the transportation time of people and goods from place to place.

In recreating the final lengths of the Doncaster Gold Cup race of 1826, Herring has depicted the horses (from left to right) Fleur-de-Lis, Mulatto, Humphrey Clinker, Helenus, and Jerry (figure 3). They are shown moving at top speed in the conventional “flying gallop” manner, with their front and back legs raised like a rocking horse. More accurate depictions of a horse galloping would come after the publication of Eadweard Muybridge's studies of horses in motion in the 1880s through photography.

Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904) was an English photographer known for his pioneering work on capturing animal movement in 1877 and 1878. He used multiple cameras to produce stop-motion photographs, and his zoopraxiscope was a device for projecting motion pictures. It utilized glass discs that predated cinematography's flexible perforated film strips.

Questions

Look at the paintings by Marshall (figure 2) and Herring (figure 3) and compare the artists' approaches.

- How is the subject of each painting similar?
- How do they differ in their portrayals of horses?
- How would you describe the mood of each painting?

Activity: Thaumatrope—Animals in Motion

A thaumatrope is an object used to trick the eye by creating the illusion of motion. First, measure and cut out two squares (3 x 3 inches). Use a marker to draw an animal in the center of each square. The animals should be alike but doing something slightly different in each square. Tape a pencil or thin cylindrical stick to the back of one of the squares. Align the second square evenly with the first, and attach the two squares together. Holding the stick between the palms of your hands, roll the stick back and forth. The animal will look like it is moving. Investigate other early animation techniques and optical illusions.

At FristKids.org/activities-videos, click on “Creating a Thaumatrope” to view a video about this activity and find detailed lesson plans, with images.



Figure 4
John Collet (British, ca. 1725–1780).
*The Joys of the Chase or The Rising Woman
and the Falling Man*, 1780. Oil on canvas,
16 x 23 1/2 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts,
Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection, 99.62.
Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
Photo: Katherine Wetzel

The World Upside Down

These highly comic paintings do more than poke fun at those lacking sporting prowess. They encourage sportsmen, sportswomen, and non-participants alike to view sport as pure free play, where anything can happen with few consequences—except perhaps on the hunting field. As Paul Mellon cautioned, “Of course, people get maimed and killed by the way of broken necks while foxhunting, but I have never thought of it as a dangerous pastime, so interesting and healthful and exciting it has always seemed. And I had well-schooled horses, mostly thoroughbreds, so the jumping was always safe and my mounts had lots of stamina to carry me.”

This unusual scene (figure 4) depicts a woman dominating a stag hunt in the English countryside, suspended in mid-canter above a clergyman pinned under his horse. As he struggles to free himself, his wig and hat have fallen off his head and lie to his left. At right is a second pair of male riders, one who fell off his horse while attempting to jump over the hurdle. Through the authority of her pose and attitude, the central female figure ridicules the horsemen for their inability to traverse the rugged course. As she glances downward at the clergyman, she raises her stock whip to urge her horse forward. Showing a woman who transcends the boundaries of gender by excelling in a traditional male role, the painting provides an example of shifting views in England toward the end of the eighteenth century, as upper-class women challenged male-dominated culture, and the church began losing power and relevancy.



Figure 5
Philip Reinagle (British, 1749–1833). *Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*, 1805. Oil on canvas, 28 1/4 x 36 1/2 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Paul Mellon Collection, 85.465. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel

Here (figure 5), the artist Philip Reinagle has seemingly appropriated a pose from a portrait of Mozart to depict a spaniel playing a square piano. Many arguments have taken place over the meaning of this painting. It has been seen as an exemplar of successful spaniel breeding, as a satire on human infant prodigies, or as loyalist propaganda (the music is sometimes identified as “God Save the King/Queen”). Without a doubt, however, the artist must have had a strong general appreciation for the remarkable intelligence of dogs, if not a somewhat comic attitude toward this “extraordinary” specimen.

Questions

- What is your first reaction to *Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*?
- How do you think the artist wanted the viewer to respond?
- Why do you think that Reinagle painted this portrait?



Figure 6
Pierre-Auguste Renoir (French, 1841–1919).
Pensive (La Songeuse), 1875. Oil on paper on
canvas, 18 1/8 x 15 in. Virginia Museum of Fine
Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul
Mellon, 83.47. Image © Virginia Museum of
Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel

Van Gogh, Monet, Degas, and Their Times: The Mellon Collection of French Art from the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

While its primary focus is on Impressionism, this exhibition traces broad developments in French art from Romanticism to Cubism. Among the highlights are works by seminal figures in this historical transformation: Edgar Degas, Eugène Delacroix, Claude Monet, Pablo Picasso, and Vincent van Gogh. Beyond featuring these giants of modern art, the exhibition offers a view of the tastes and **connoisseurship** of one of the great American collecting couples of the twentieth century, Paul Mellon and his second wife, Rachel “Bunny” Lambert Mellon. The Mellons were philanthropists as well as collectors, giving gifts of art to the National Gallery of Art, the Yale Center for British Art, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, where Paul Mellon served as a trustee for four decades.

People

Portraits in the Mellons’ collection consist of **sitters** whose personalities are conveyed through a variety of styles. Male and female, young and old, formal and informal, working class and **bourgeois**—many types are portrayed in these psychologically revealing works of art. While these paintings were created by some of the most renowned masters of French art, Mr. Mellon was more interested in their expressive qualities than the fame of the artists: “Perhaps it is the sitter’s character, air of intelligence, or hint of humor. Would I *like* her or him?”

In *Pensive* (figure 6), Pierre-Auguste Renoir challenges traditional expectations of portraiture by depicting his model, Nini Lopez, with her back to the viewer. This perspective functions as a formal device to juxtapose the rich range of blacks in the lower half of the painting with an explosion of color above. His build-up of translucent layer upon layer, especially apparent in the reds and yellows of Lopez’s hair, gives the painting a scintillating effect. Created around the time of the First Impressionist Exhibition, *Pensive* is a classic example of Renoir’s daring approach to subject matter and free brushwork in the mid-1870s.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919) was born in the central western region of France and started his career as a porcelain painter before his ambitions led him to seek a professional art career. He is considered one of the key artists who helped bring about the Impressionist movement. In 1886, he spent two months painting alongside Monet, during which the two recognized the similarities in their painting styles and palettes. After having experienced multiple rejections from the **French Salon** early in his career, Renoir joined Monet in establishing a new form of painting. The human and detailed elements of his work, however, set him apart from his Impressionist friends. He questioned the stability of the movement and ceased to exhibit his work with the group after 1877.

Questions

- Look at Pierre-Auguste Renoir’s portrait. What does “pensive” mean? How has the artist captured this idea in his portrayal of the sitter?
- How do the color palettes, brush strokes, themes, and other aspects of the Impressionist works differ from the realistic style of the British sporting art?



The only sculpture Degas exhibited in his lifetime, *The Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen* (figure 7) was shown during the Sixth Impressionist Exhibition in 1881. Modeled in colored wax, the sculpture had real human hair tied with a satin ribbon, a cloth bodice and tutu, and pink silk ballet slippers. It was also enclosed in a glass case like a display in an ethnographic museum. The figure was modeled on young Belgian dancer Marie Geneviève van Goethem, who was fourteen when Degas first began working on this sculpture. *The Little Dancer* stands in ballet’s fourth position, thrusting her chest and chin forward in a manner that is seemingly at odds with the elegance and glamour usually associated with the ballet.

Questions

- Look closely at *The Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen*. How would you describe her appearance? What might she be thinking and feeling?
- Degas here turned away from art’s frequent representation of women as symbols of purity, alluring seductresses, or sublime goddesses; rather, he wanted to sculpt something from modern life. How does this portrait represent modern life in Paris?

Figure 7
Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917). *The Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen*, model executed ca. 1880 (cast after 1922). Bronze, cloth skirt with tutu, and satin hair ribbon, 38 1/2 x 14 1/2 x 14 1/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, State Operating Fund and the Art Lovers’ Society, 45.22.1. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Travis Fullerton

Views of Paris

Paris—the city so prominently featured in late nineteenth-century and twentieth-century French art—also figured largely in the lives of Mr. and Mrs. Mellon. Mr. Mellon had been visiting Paris since he was two years old. He was later stationed there for a brief time during World War II. After the couple married, they were drawn to the city, as it allowed them to move within circles that catered to their own interests, especially horses, fashion, and art.

Just as the political and artistic landscape of Paris changed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, so did its physical skyline. The capital had three modern monuments commissioned during the reign of Louis XV (1715–1774), and the monarchy ordered the transitioning of Parisian suburbs into sites for modern homes for the wealthy and elite. The French Revolution (1789–1799) not only uprooted the monarchy but drastically changed the economic and social aspects of the city. The city truly began to modernize after Napoleon’s dethronement (1814). The Eiffel Tower was constructed for the 1889 **International Exposition**. Paris held five expositions in the last half of the nineteenth century, and during each one a new monument was conceived. Most of these structures lasted only through the length of the exhibition; a few, however—including the Eiffel Tower—still stand today.



Figure 8
Pierre Bonnard (French, 1867–1947). *The Pont de Grenelle and the Eiffel Tower*, ca. 1912. Oil on canvas, 21 1/2 x 27 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 2006.44. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel

In the *Pont de Grenelle and the Eiffel Tower* (figure 8), Pierre Bonnard flattened, elongated, and separated forms as much as possible, producing a striking and novel view of the single most familiar feature of the Parisian cityscape—the Eiffel Tower. Yellows and twilight mauves dissociate the work from the naturalist tones and hues popular with landscape painters during the previous century—a style called **divisionism**.

Pierre Bonnard (1867–1947) was a French painter and printmaker, as well as a founding member of Les Nabis (Hebrew for “the prophets”), a Post-Impressionist group of avant-garde painters. They were like-minded artists who explored the symbolic and psychological effects of color. Bonnard preferred to work from memory, using drawings as a reference, and his paintings are often characterized by a dreamlike quality.

Questions

- Have you noticed the view of your city changing over time? What differences have you noted?
- If you were to create a work of art in your city, what landmarks would you capture?



Figure 9
Vincent van Gogh (Dutch, 1853–1890),
*The Wheat Field behind St. Paul's Hospital,
St. Rémy*, 1889. Oil on canvas, 9 1/2 x 13 1/4 in.
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond,
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 83.26.
Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.
Photo: Katherine Wetzel

The French Countryside

The French countryside was an oasis for the Mellons, offering the natural beauty they so appreciated. Mr. Mellon developed his fondness for nature early on, attributing a great deal of his love of the countryside to his English mother. He also relished the respite it provided from the environs of Pittsburgh, his hometown. Mrs. Mellon grew up in Princeton, New Jersey, roaming the grounds of her family home, which were managed by the renowned Olmsted Brothers (whose father designed New York City's Central Park). Together, they accumulated more than two hundred works. Their interest in art correlated with their favorite pastimes. Mrs. Mellon's lifelong love of horticulture and gardening gave her a special affinity for the colorful and vibrant landscapes painted by the likes of Monet and Van Gogh.

Located in Provence, Saint Rémy is approximately 430 miles south of Paris, on the edge of the Alpilles mountain range in southern France. Today, Saint Rémy is also known as the site of Vincent van Gogh's self-imposed exile. Van Gogh's lifelong struggles with "attacks of mania" are well known; the artist had himself admitted to the clinic of Saint-Paul-de-Mausolé in 1889. Unable to leave the hospital to paint for the first few weeks, Van Gogh turned to this view from his window for inspiration (figure 9). The bright but naturalistic palette and rhythmic brushwork are characteristic of the artist's style during this period.

Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) is now regarded as one of the most admired and popular artists ever to have lived. Van Gogh knew and trained with many artists during his time in Paris, including Émile Bernard, to whom he would write elaborate and eccentric letters. Van Gogh left Paris in 1888 and moved to Arles, a small town in southern France. Despite mental, emotional, and social difficulties, Van Gogh painted relentlessly during that year, creating some of his finest work. He lived and worked in Arles until his suicide in 1890.



Figure 10
Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926). *Field of Poppies, Giverny*, 1885. Oil on canvas, 23 5/8 x 28 3/4 in. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 85.499. Image © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo: Katherine Wetzel

Giverny lies approximately fifty miles from Paris, along the southern edge of the French region of Normandy. Moving to Giverny in April 1883, Claude Monet first rented the pink stucco house, Le Pressoir, that he later purchased in 1890. *Field of Poppies, Giverny* (figure 10) is one of four paintings of poppy fields that Monet completed during the summer of 1885. Monet quite likely set up his easel in a field near his house to capture the scene. The home appears in the middle distance, and to the right of these buildings is the future site of the artist's studio, where he would paint his famous water lily canvases.

Claude Monet (1840–1926) is a key figure in art history. Often considered the founding father of Impressionism, he transformed French painting in the second half of the nineteenth century. Born in Normandy, it was there that Monet developed his love of landscapes after learning **plein air painting** from Eugène Boudin. He later studied in Paris alongside fellow Impressionist artist Pierre-Auguste Renoir, but experienced little success. Only a few of his paintings were accepted for exhibition in the French Salon. His more ambitious works were rejected, but that didn't deter him from continuing to veer away from traditional French compositions. His quest was to accurately capture nature and the essence of light, which he did over the next six years. Monet continued to protest the strict policies of the French Salon, and in 1874 he and his fellow Impressionist painters held the First Impressionist Exhibition.

Questions

What kinds of landscapes and environments do you observe in your everyday life? Are you in an urban environment surrounded by buildings, or in a suburban or rural environment with plenty of trees, fields, and grass?

Activity: Create a Landscape

The paintings by Bonnard, Van Gogh, and Monet represent different locations and unique points of view. Use paper and crayons (or colored pencil, markers, etc.) to create your own landscape. To find your own interesting scene, start by creating a viewfinder. Using a piece of white paper, cut out two identical "L" shapes. Then, tape the L-shaped pieces together so that you have a square with a hole in the middle (like a square donut). Everyone's squares do not have to be the same—they can be big, small, wide, narrow, etc. Hold your viewfinder up a few inches away from your face or tape it to a window. What do you see inside the square hole of your viewfinder? Is it a playground and some trees? A parking lot? A teacher's desk? Using your supplies, draw what you see through your viewfinder.

Glossary

Anglophile	A person who greatly admires or favors England and English things. (merriam-webster.com)
bourgeois	Belonging to or characteristic of the middle class, typically with reference to its perceived materialistic values or conventional attitudes.
connoisseurship	A person who is especially competent to pass critical judgments in an art, particularly one of the fine arts, or in matters of taste. (dictionary.com)
divisionism	A painting practice in which color is separated into individual dots or strokes of pigment. When seen up close, the side-by-side colors contrast, but when seen from a distance, these dots blend together and can be perceived as blended and compatible. (Britannica.com)
fox hunting	A sophisticated pastime favored by aristocratic families in which participants on horseback ride over the countryside following a pack of hounds on the trail of a fox. (Britannica.com)
Enclosure Acts	The division or consolidation of communal fields, meadows, pastures, and other arable lands in western Europe into the carefully delineated and individually owned and managed farm plots of modern times. (Britannica.com)
Enlightenment	A European intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th centuries, emphasizing reason and individualism rather than tradition. It was heavily influenced by 17th-century philosophers such as Descartes, Locke, and Newton, and its prominent exponents include Kant, Goethe, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Adam Smith. (en.oxforddictionaries.com)
French Salon	An official art exhibition sponsored by the French government. The name salon is derived from the original location of the exhibition, the Salon d'Apollon of the Louvre Palace in Paris. (Britannica.com)
Industrial Revolution	A period during the 18th century when agricultural societies became more industrialized and urban. The railroad, the cotton gin, electricity, and other inventions permanently changed society, and people began to leave their quiet, slow-paced country lives for the new opportunities that cities, factories, and industry had to offer. (History.com)
International Exposition	A large international event designed to showcase the industrial, cultural, and scientific achievements of a nation. A world's fair would often be accompanied by the building of a large monument. While most of the monuments were destroyed, some, such as the Eiffel Tower, survived. (Britannica.com)

philanthropist	An individual who makes an active effort to promote human welfare. (merriam-webster.com)
plein air painting	The practice of painting entire finished pictures outside. <i>Plein air</i> means “outdoors” in French. (Tate.org.uk)
satire	The use of irony, sarcasm, ridicule, or the like, in exposing, denouncing, or deriding vice, folly, etc. (dictionary.com)
sitter	One who poses or models, as for a portrait. (thefreedictionary.com)

Definitions quoted or adapted from the sources credited. Sources were accessed during December 2018.

Resources

Books

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