

Learning to Look:

Introduce the painting to the students, guiding their looking and using open-ended questions to elicit their personal responses.

- ▶ *This is not the time to focus on the background information; save it until the students have shown interest in the information, generated some questions and tried to answer their questions through looking!*



“Take a few minutes to look quietly at the image.”

Older students could write down their thoughts while looking.

“What do you see?”

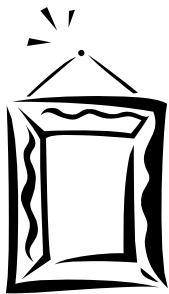
This is an opportunity for everyone to offer an idea, as each new thought enables everyone to see new things. Precise verbal descriptions help to clarify and identify details and usually allow for “correction” of any unsubstantiated ideas.

- ▶ *Teacher facilitates the discussion but should not be an expert on what “should” be seen, or how the painting “should” be interpreted!*

“How does the artist help us to see that?”

Colors used, placement of objects in the composition, use of light and shadow to highlight details, use of strong or dynamic lines, size of objects, and other decisions made by the artist can help us to “read” the painting.

“What questions do you wish you could ask the artist?”



Looking to Learn:

The suggested activities are strategies to enhance student observation and analysis skills while having fun looking and learning.

Make copies of the worksheets for use by individuals or groups of students.

Project the image and outline selected features on blackboard or large paper.

Students can then add appropriate details or “continue the story” in mural-form.

Create a museum-in-the-classroom (or hallway) so students can see each other's work and share their ideas.

Art Alive! – Lessons for the Primary Classroom

Back from the Orchard, 1876
Eastman Johnson, American, 1824-1906
Oil on canvas
75.138



LET'S LOOK: What do you see?
What in the painting makes you say that?
How does the artist help you to see that?
What questions do you have?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Five Senses

Ask students to imagine and describe textures, smells, sounds, and tastes they “see” in the artwork. What specific details are they “reading”?

Using the line drawing of the painting, students can fill in the missing details that they think are important.

Then What Happened?

Introduce the artwork as if it were a scene from a storyboard. Ask the students to imagine how the story might continue (group activity).

Using the storyboard worksheet, the students can draw additional or alternate scenes using details gleaned from the brainstorm session

Art in Action

Translate the painting into theater: students can take turns in the role of the character, creating a few moments of dialogue or action.

Add other characters that might fit the scene.

Photograph the students in their poses and compare with the painting.

TARGETED SKILLS:

description, details, vocabulary,
point of view

story structure, details, sequencing

description, inference, prediction,
point of view

Art Alive! – Lessons for the Elementary Classroom

Back from the Orchard, 1876
Eastman Johnson, American, 1824-1906
Oil on canvas
75.138



LET'S LOOK: What do you see?
What in the painting makes you say that?
How does the artist help you to see that?
What questions do you have?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

What's in a Name?

Introduce the name of the painting and ask students to find all the details that fit the title.

Ask students to rename the painting and explain their choice

Divide the class into groups and ask each to create a new title based on a different characteristic of the painting: color, location, action, time, etc.

Imaginary Interview

As a class imagine other possible characters in the boy's "life," such as his parents, the orchard owner, a teacher, a police officer, a school friend, a sibling, etc.

Ask questions of the boy through students playing the parts (either in pairs or as a group activity).

Write it Out

Think of the painting as being a single scene from a movie or play. Using the Story Starter worksheet as a guide, write the details that would tell the rest of the story.

TARGETED SKILLS:

inference, details,
prioritizing, description,

inference, prediction, point of view

description, inference, prediction,
context, story structure

***Back from the Orchard*, 1876**
Eastman Johnson, American, 1824-1906
Oil on canvas
75.138



About the Painting:

This tiny painting, smaller even than this piece of paper, is filled with the figure of the young boy, wearing old-fashioned overalls, heavy shoes, two shirts and a cap. His pockets bulge with ripe apples from the orchard as he eats another. He is standing in a grassy spot; and the background is in shadows although there is a faint suggestion of a tree behind him. Where is he, and what does he see as he looks off to the side?

About the Artist:

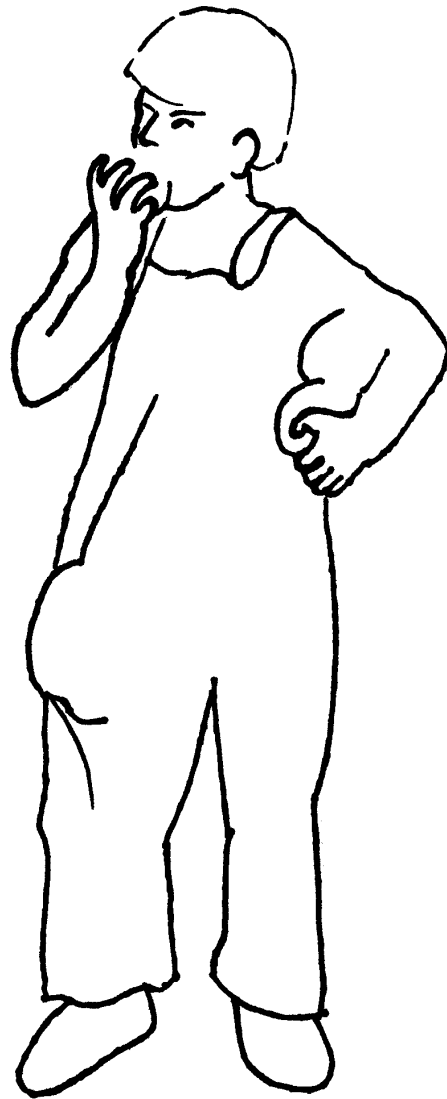
Born in Maine, Eastman Johnson set his career sights on drawing by the age of 18. In Boston he honed his drawing skills in a lithography shop, and for the next ten years in Boston and Washington D.C. he became known for his almost photographic pencil and crayon portraits of literary and political figures. From 1849 to 1856, in common with many mid 19th century American artists, he lived and studied in Europe. Fame arrived for Johnson shortly after his return to Washington D.C. at the National Academy exhibition of 1859, where out of 800 works, Johnson's sympathetic but sentimental "Negro Life at the South," familiarly known as *Old Kentucky Home*, won universal acclaim. He was elected to the National Academy of Design in 1860. Johnson continued to paint popular genre scenes of simple, everyday American life from his studio in New York and later from his summer home on Nantucket Island.

Additional Information:

Johnson was a close friend of artist Winslow Homer and they painted many of the same scenes and people.

Name _____

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Name _____

***Then What Happened?* A Storyboard Worksheet**

Sketch out your story scene by scene, just as movie makers do.

Develop your story idea by placing the painting in as a beginning, middle or ending scene, and then draw two other scenes that fill in the story.

EASTMAN JOHNSON

Back from the Orchard, 1876

Story Title: _____

