

SPEAKING OF WINTER

ART AND LANGUAGE ARTS

GRADES: 4–12

BASED ON

Aert van der Neer (1603/4-1677) Netherlands

Winter Landscape, 1640s

Oil on canvas

Gift of Audrey Emery, 1953.1

OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify the theme of a painting and interpret a painting, using descriptive language.
- Students will compare the environment and activities to their own experiences.
- Students will describe the universality of the theme and how people from vastly different eras participate in similar activities.
- Students will analyze the artist's approach to depicting the environment, giving visual clues to establish the theme.
- Students will read and write haiku that relates to the theme

CONCEPT

The purpose of this lesson is to create a thematic connection for students between the analysis of a work of art and the expression of personal experiences by writing a poem. Brainstorming with other students creates an opportunity to work collaboratively as they analyze ways in which Aert van der Neer's painting, *Winter Landscape*, depicts winter activities in a cold weather climate. Encouraging students to critically view and describe details they see in the art work will emphasize the universality of the theme in relation to their own lives, although separated by more than 300 years.

VOCABULARY

universal theme

haiku

MATERIALS/PROCEDURE

- 4'X6" reproductions of *Winter Landscape*
- Haiku examples

Analyzing & brainstorming:

- Display the artwork; distribute smaller reproductions for students to view.
- Lead discussion, asking students to describe setting, time of year, and theme, citing specific examples to back up answers.
- Students list similar activities they have experienced in winter.

CLASS EXPERIENCE

- Compare and contrast winter activities in the 1600's with present day.
- On the board write: noun, adjective, verb, adverb, prepositions.
- Students contribute words related to winter activities and the teacher writes them under the appropriate headings so each list contains 15 or more words.

Translating ideas to poetry:

- Read examples of haiku by traditional Japanese poets and contemporary writers, including other students, explaining that haiku is a simplified, descriptive poem.
 - Traditional format: Three lines with 5, 7, and 5 syllables
 - Uses descriptive words that significantly contribute to the meaning.
- Students work in small groups, brainstorming, and selecting favorite winter theme using the listed words to inspire them to verbally express their ideas through haiku.
- Share finished haiku with class and discuss the theme and how it relates to the painting as well as to the student.

Extension:

- Draw or paint a self-portrait of student participating in a winter environment to accompany haiku.

ASSESSMENT

The teacher will assess students by observing degree of participation in class discussion, cooperation, contribution in small group, and completion of haiku that describes a winter activity.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

VISUAL ARTS

Grades 5-8:

Standard 5. Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own work and the work of others.

LANGUAGE ARTS

Grades 6-8:

Standard 5. Uses the general skills and strategies of the reading process.

Standard 8. Uses listening and speaking strategies for different purposes.



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