INTRODUCTION

This comprehensive resource and activity guide has been designed to accompany the special exhibition American Moderns 1910-1960: From O’Keeffe to Rockwell, on view at The Ringling during the summer of 2013. The wide array of standards-based activities presented here will help your students make connections between great works of modern American art and the broader cultural currents of twentieth-century America. We invite you to adapt this guide as necessary to suit your individual classroom needs.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

This exhibition, which presents fifty-seven artworks drawn from the collection of the Brooklyn Museum, explores the myriad ways in which American artists engaged with modernity. During the first half of the twentieth century, the United States experienced two world wars, widespread urbanization, technological advancements in all areas of life, and social diversification on an unprecedented scale. Witnessing these tumultuous changes, artists and writers sought out new approaches to grappling with the notion of American identity and human relationships in the modern world.

The paintings and sculptures in this exhibition represent a wide range of artists, styles, and subject matter. From Stuart Davis’s exuberant landscapes to Grandma Moses nostalgic scenes of country life, the works in American Moderns represent a fascinating period in the history of art and of our country.

SATURDAY FOR EDUCATORS PROGRAMS ARE FUNDED IN PART THROUGH THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE KOSKI FAMILY FOUNDATION.
**The Arts**

**1908:** Eight progressive artists host a landmark exhibition of their work at the Macbeth Galleries in New York City. Featuring realistic, gritty scenes of America's new urban landscape, the show is meant as an alternative to the juried exhibitions of the more conservative art academies.

**1913:** The Armory Show takes place in New York. The first exhibition of international modern art in the U.S., the show introduces Americans to works by Marcel Duchamp, Paul Gauguin, Wassily Kandinsky, Henri Matisse, and Pablo Picasso.

**1920s:** The Harlem Renaissance begins, bringing together African-American writers, artists, and musicians in a cultural movement that both celebrates black identity and paves the way for future civil rights efforts.

**1930:** The Chrysler Building, an exemplar of Art Deco architecture, opens as the tallest building in the world. Only four months later, it is eclipsed by the Empire State Building.

**1933:** The Federal Art Project, a branch of the Works Progress Administration, begins operation, employing artists to create murals and posters. Many artists who would go on to play a significant role in the formation of American modernism get their start in the WPA.

**1940s:** The New York School, an informal group of American painters, writers, dancers, and musicians, forms in Greenwich Village. Artists from this group go on to establish abstract expressionism as the dominant painting style of the mid-century.

**The Arts**

**U.S. & World Events**

**1908:** Henry Ford introduces the Model T, which makes automobile ownership widely available to the American middle class.

**1909:** The NAACP is founded with the goal of securing civil rights for African Americans.

**1914-1918:** World War I is fought, resulting in nearly 9 million casualties.

**1916:** Albert Einstein publishes his theory of general relativity, revolutionizing scientists' idea of how the universe works.

**1920:** The 19th Amendment is ratified, granting voting rights to women.

**1929:** The stock market crashes, giving rise to the decade-long Great Depression.

**1933:** President Franklin Roosevelt launches the New Deal, designed to alleviate the economic and social problems of the era.

**1939-45:** World War II is fought, drawing in over 100 million combatants from more than 30 countries. It remains the deadliest war in human history.

**1946:** The sentimental classic film *It's a Wonderful Life* is released.

**1950:** Kicking off a decade of unprecedented prosperity and consumerism, Diners Club International creates the first consumer credit card.

**1951:** Ike Turner's "Rocket 88," considered by many to be the first rock and roll record, is released.

**1957:** The Soviet Union's launch of Sputnik, the first artificial Earth satellite, ignites the Space Race.

**HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE**

The activities in this resource guide have been designed to address three unifying themes central to the work of twentieth-century American artists and thinkers:

**HOW WE LIVE** explores the reactions Americans had to the new social mores and lifestyles that accompanied mass industrialization and urbanization.

**WHO WE ARE** deals with the changing definition of American identity, which was brought about by immigration and the rising status of disenfranchised minorities.

**WHAT IT MEANS** delves into the philosophical underpinnings of modernism, examining the different strategies artists and writers used to make sense of the world around them.

For each theme, one primary work of art is presented for students to observe and analyze. Due to our focus on twentieth-century art and culture as a whole, one seminal work of literature is paired with each artwork. These pairings are meant to create opportunities for comparison, giving students a deeper understanding of the material.

Additional works of art and literature, appropriate for an array of age groups, are also suggested within each theme. Most of the activities can be adapted to work with different source material and different grade levels. Mix and match as you see fit, and don't be afraid to get creative!
As America’s population mass shifted from rural to urban areas, cities came to occupy an increasingly important place in our nation’s economic and cultural identity. The relative anonymity of city life loosened some of the strict social codes of earlier eras and provided more opportunities for freedom and leisure. On the other hand, many Americans sensed a weakening of our civic fabric as the close ties of family and village were broken. Alienation and empty materialism emerged as the dark side of urban prosperity and progress.
Warm-up activities are appropriate for younger grades or as introductory activities for older grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARM-UP 1</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td>To identify characteristics of an urban environment and determine their opposites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURATION</td>
<td>20-30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATERIALS</td>
<td>Large version of <em>The Emerald Tower</em> by Isabel Lydia Whitney; paper and drawing supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITY</td>
<td>Have students brainstorm adjectives that describe the location shown in <em>The Emerald Tower</em>, and list their responses on one side of the board. Discuss what it would be like to live in this environment. Then work as a class to find the antonym (opposite) for each listed adjective. How would life in such a location be different from what they see in the painting? Ask students to decide which environment they would prefer to live in, and what the advantages and disadvantages of each lifestyle would be.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLLOW-UP</td>
<td>Have students use the antonym list to draw or paint a complementary scene that shows the opposite of the setting in <em>The Emerald Tower</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARM-UP 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOAL</td>
<td>To use historical knowledge to imagine life in a different time period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURATION</td>
<td>45-60 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATERIALS</td>
<td>Resources for researching each decade between 1910 and 1960 (see For Further Learning section for recommendations); large version of <em>The Emerald Tower</em> by Isabel Lydia Whitney; “Walking Down This Street” worksheet (see appendix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITY</td>
<td>Divide students into pairs or groups, assigning a different decade to each grouping. Have students work together to complete the “Walking Down This Street” worksheet for their assigned decade, using whatever resources are available. Bring the class back together and have groups present their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLLOW-UP</td>
<td>Have students draw their own details into the Whitney painting to make the scene look like their assigned decade. For example, a pair working on the 1940s might add a yellow ribbon around the light post.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following activities are most appropriate for older grades and are designed to be used in conjunction with a class reading of The Great Gatsby, by F. Scott Fitzgerald.

**ACTIVITY 1**

**GOAL**
To compare a painter’s depiction of twentieth-century urban life with that of a writer.

**DURATION**
45-60 minutes

**MATERIALS**
Class copies of The Great Gatsby; a large image of The Emerald Tower by Isabel Lydia Whitney; Venn Diagram worksheet (see appendix)

**ACTIVITY**
Lead a class discussion about how modern urban life is portrayed in The Great Gatsby. What words or passages convey the mood of the book? Is the book’s outlook on life in 1920s New York City positive or negative? Then, show students The Emerald Tower and discuss how it portrays the city. Have students complete the Venn Diagram worksheet, comparing the two works.

**FOLLOW-UP**
Have students find passages in The Great Gatsby that convey different moods. Working in groups, they can look online for other works of modern art that are similar in mood to the passage they selected.

**STANDARDS**
LA.910-1112.1.6.2 / LA.910-1112.1.7.7 / VA.912.H.1.8

**ACTIVITY 2**

**GOAL**
To analyze works of art and literature in regard to their historical context.

**DURATION**
60-90 minutes

**MATERIALS**
Class copies of The Great Gatsby; a large image of The Emerald Tower by Isabel Lydia Whitney; copies of “Speaking of Pictures” article from the Oct. 13, 1947 issue of Life magazine; copies of excerpt from “Where Do We Go From Here?” article from the Jan. 27, 1947 issue of Life magazine

**ACTIVITY**
Have students examine four primary sources related to life in 20th-century America: The Great Gatsby, The Emerald Tower, and the two Life articles. Discuss students’ reactions to these documents. What surprised them about life in the first half of the 20th century? How did it compare to their lives today? Divide students into 4 groups and draw a line on the board with “Very positive” written at one end and “Very negative” at the other. Assign each group one of the documents you have analyzed. Groups take turns coming to the board and ranking their work in terms of how positive it is toward life in 20th-c. America.

**FOLLOW-UP**
Have students look online for 4 documents (books, artworks, etc.) that reflect life in 21st-century America, and rank them in the same way.

**STANDARDS**
LA.910-1112.2.2.3 / LA.910-1112.2.1.8 / VA.912.H.1.8 / SS.912.H.1.1 / SS.912.A.3.6

**ACTIVITY 3**

**GOAL**
To examine the writing style of an author and write a partial narrative in that style.

**DURATION**
60-90 minutes

**MATERIALS**
Class copies of The Great Gatsby; a large image of The Emerald Tower by Isabel Lydia Whitney

**ACTIVITY**
As a class, brainstorm a list of characteristics that characterize F. Scott Fitzgerald’s writing style in The Great Gatsby. Make sure students comment on word choice, sentence length, formality, and dialogue. Show students The Emerald Tower and have them describe what they see and how it might relate to the novel. Using the list they generated, students then create an additional scene for the novel that uses The Emerald Tower as its setting. Have students compose their scenes in the style of F. Scott Fitzgerald.

**FOLLOW-UP**
Have students switch their scenes with a partner. After reading one another’s scenes, students try to guess where their partner intended for his/her scene to go within the novel.

**STANDARDS**
LA.910-1112.2.1.7 / LA.910-1112.3.2.3 / LA.910-1112.4.1.2 / VA.912.H.3.1
Our nation’s racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity reflects the waves of change that occurred when groups of people moved into, out of, or within the United States. With each successive wave – the arrival of Europeans, the forced removal of native peoples, and the importation and eventual emancipation of African slaves, to name a few – Americans struggled to answer the question, “What makes someone an American?”

During the first half of the twentieth century, high rates of immigration and modestly improved opportunities for women and minorities led artists to explore the notion of American identity – of what defines us as a people.

There is here, what is not in the old country. In spite of hard, unfamiliar things, there is here – hope. [...] In the old country, a man is given to the past. Here he belongs to the future.

Betty Smith, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn
Warm-up activities are appropriate for younger grades or as introductory activities for older grades.

**Warm-up 1**

**GOAL**
To analyze American identity within a work of art and in the context of students’ own experiences.

**DURATION**
20-30 minutes

**MATERIALS**
Large version of *Shoe Shine* by Ernest Crichlow; paper and drawing supplies

**ACTIVITY**
Use Visual Thinking Strategies to help students analyze *Shoe Shine*. For detailed instructions on VTS, see [http://www.vtshome.org/](http://www.vtshome.org/). Ask: What can we figure out about this boy by looking at the painting? Would you say he is an American? Why or why not? What details in the painting suggest that we are looking at a scene in America? Does everyone in America look the same?

**FOLLOW-UP**
Write the phrase “Americans can be...” on the board, and have students brainstorm different ways to complete the sentence. Then, each student selects one of the sentence endings and draws a picture portraying that kind of American.

**STANDARDS**
LACC.1-2.SL.2 / LACC.1-2.SL.4 / LA.3-5.3.1.1 / SS.1-2.C.3.2 / VA.1-5.C.1.2

**Warm-up 2**

**GOAL**
To understand the concepts of inclusion and exclusion as they pertain to art and life in the 20th century.

**DURATION**
45-60 minutes

**MATERIALS**
Large version of *Shoe Shine* by Ernest Chrichlow; text of *I, Too, Sing America* by Langston Hughes

**ACTIVITY**
Discuss the painting *Shoe Shine* as a class. Ask: How might the boy in the image be feeling? What do you suppose his life is like? Do you think he feels included or excluded from the world around him? Why?

Have students read *I, Too, Sing America* and work in groups to determine which parts of the poem are about inclusion and which parts are about exclusion. Have students circle any words or images from the poem that remind them of *Shoe Shine*. Share everyone’s findings as a class. Ask students if they know of any other people or groups from American history who have been excluded, or who have not been considered “real” Americans.

**FOLLOW-UP**
Have students rewrite *I, Too, Sing America* as if the speaker were the boy in *Shoe Shine*. Or, have them rewrite the poem in the voice of someone else who has at one time been excluded from American identity.

**STANDARDS**
VA.5.O.2.1 / VA.68.C.3.3 / LA.6-8.4.1.2 / LA.7-8.2.1.3 / SS.8.A.1.7

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*I, Too, Sing America*  
*Langston Hughes*

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.  
They send me to eat in the kitchen  
When company comes,  
But I laugh,  
And eat well,  
And grow strong.

I, too, am America.

Tomorrow,  
I'll be at the table  
When company comes.  
Nobody'll dare  
Say to me,  
"Eat in the kitchen,"  
Then.

Besides,  
They'll see how beautiful I am  
And be ashamed—
The following activities are most appropriate for older grades and are designed to be used in conjunction with a class reading of A Tree Grows in Brooklyn by Betty Smith.

### Activity 1

**GOAL** To analyze the characterization of a literary figure and compare it to the characterization of an individual portrayed in a work of art.

**DURATION** 30 minutes

**MATERIALS** Class copies of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*; large version of *Shoe Shine* by Ernest Crichlow; Venn Diagram worksheet (see appendix)

**ACTIVITY** Have students complete the worksheet comparing the boy pictured in *Shoe Shine* and the character of Francie Nolan described in *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*.

**FOLLOW-UP** Have students research what life was like for immigrants and African Americans during the first half of the twentieth century. How were their experiences similar and different? How do those similarities and differences fit with what students saw in the case of the Nolans and the boy from *Shoe Shine*?

**STANDARDS** LA.910-1112.1.7.7 / LA.910.2.1.5 / LA.910.6.2.2 / LA.1112.2.1.6 / SS.912.A.5.10 / SS.912.A.1.4

### Activity 2

**GOAL** To read and write about different strategies that individuals use to achieve a successful future.

**DURATION** 60-90 minutes

**MATERIALS** Class copies of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*; a large written or electronic copy of Mary Rommely’s speech from *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (printed at the beginning of this section); a large version of *Shoe Shine* by Ernest Crichlow; writing materials

**ACTIVITY** As a class, discuss the Mary Rommely passage from *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*. (*There is here, what is not in the old country. In spite of hard, unfamiliar things, there is here – hope. […] In the old country, a man is given to the past. Here he belongs to the future.*) What is Mary saying here? What does it mean to belong to the future versus belonging to the past? What does Mary believe the key to the family’s future is? Examine *Shoe Shine* as a class. What might this boy see as his key to a successful future? Have students write a letter from grown-up Francie to her grandmother Mary, commenting on how Mary’s hopes for the family have turned out. Was Mary right in relying on education as the key to Francie’s future? Or, students can choose to write a letter as if they were one of the *Shoe Shine* boy’s descendants. Using their imagination, students can comment on the successes or failures of the boy’s struggle for success. Was he right to rely on hard work as the key to a successful future?

**FOLLOW-UP** Have students choose personal keys to success for their own lives, and then instruct them to write letters from their imaginary future offspring describing how those keys helped them achieve success.

**STANDARDS** LA.910-1112.1.7.3 / LA.910-1112.4.1.1 / VA.912.C.3.1
The transformative social, economic, and geopolitical developments of the early twentieth century had longstanding consequences for how artists and thinkers conceived of the world. Finding that artistic conventions and traditional value systems were insufficient for understanding the complex, often chaotic realities of modern American life, these modernists strove to push art forward by breaking with the past. New and experimental forms of creative expression became the norm as modernists sought an authentic response to their times.

They all talked at once, their voices insistent and contradictory and impatient, making of unreality a possibility, then a probability, then an incontrovertible fact, as people will when their desires become words.

William Faulkner, *The Sound and the Fury*
**Warm-up activities** are appropriate for younger grades or as introductory activities for older grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARM-UP 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL</strong></td>
<td>To understand <em>point of view</em> as it is used in literature and art.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DURATION</strong></td>
<td>15-20 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MATERIALS</strong></td>
<td>Assorted objects of interesting shapes and sizes; blank clear plastic sheets (overhead transparency sheets); overhead projector (optional); wipe-off markers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **ACTIVITY** | Ask students to think of personal definitions for the term *point of view*. Discuss the term as it applies to visual perception (pictures) and personal expression (words). Have students sit in groups of 4-6, with one object placed in the center of each group. Groups then do drawings of their objects, with each student drawing it from his/her individual vantage point. Have students do their drawings using wipe-off markers on clear transparency sheets. When students finish their drawings, have the whole group layer their individual pictures, so that all the outlines are visible at once. Ask: Is your object still recognizable? What parts did your fellow group members include in their drawings that aren’t visible in yours? Which version do you think is “better”?
| **FOLLOW-UP** | Have students read a story or poem that utilizes multiple points of view (try Paul Fleischman’s *Joyful Noise* or *Big Talk*, for example). How is the written work similar to what they experienced in viewing their combined drawings? Would the poem/story be better or worse if told with only one voice?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WARM-UP 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>GOAL</strong></td>
<td>To identify some of the visual characteristics that distinguish modernism, and how those characteristics relate to larger cultural trends of the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DURATION</strong></td>
<td>30-45 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MATERIALS</strong></td>
<td>Large copy of <em>The Cellist</em> by Max Weber; large copy of <em>Fiddler in a Tavern</em> by David Teniers II (see appendix); Pick a Side game list (see appendix)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ACTIVITY</strong></td>
<td>Show students the two paintings, and briefly discuss the question, “What do you see?” for each of them. Then, clear a large space in the classroom, and hang the pictures on opposite sides of the room. Have students stand in the center. As you read statements from the Pick a Side game list, have students move toward the painting that they feel best fits with each statement. Choose volunteers from each side to explain why they chose the way they did.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FOLLOW-UP</strong></td>
<td>Bring students back together and discuss what Max Weber might have been trying to do in his painting <em>The Cellist</em>. How might his motivations fit in with the larger events and trends of the time period?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**GOAL**  
To analyze the effect of writing style on a piece of literature.

**DURATION**  
30-45 minutes

**MATERIALS**  
Class copies of *The Sound and The Fury*; large version of *The Cellist* by Max Weber

**ACTIVITY**  
As your class begins reading *The Sound and the Fury*, ask students to come up with personal definitions for the term *fragmentation*. Discuss: Where do we see fragmentation in *The Sound and the Fury*? What effect does it have on the story and on our view of the characters? Do you think Faulkner intended for his writing style to have this effect? Then, show students *The Cellist* and discuss how fragmentation is used here in a visual sense. How does it compare with the novel?

**FOLLOW-UP**  
As a class, brainstorm other instances of fragmentation in art, music, literature, film, etc. Have students choose one example from the list (or any other example they can come up with) and write a short comparative essay discussing the use of fragmentation in their selection versus in *The Sound and the Fury*.

**STANDARDS**  
LA.910-1112.1.6.2 / LA.910-1112.1.6.3 / LA.910-1112.1.7.2 / VA.912.C.1.4 / VA.912.C.3.1

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**GOAL**  
To understand how writers and artists use imagery to capture sensations and experiences.

**DURATION**  
45-60 minutes

**MATERIALS**  
Class copies of *The Sound and the Fury*; large version of *The Cellist* by Max Weber; cello and bow (optional)

**ACTIVITY**  
Have students work in small groups to identify passages in *The Sound and the Fury* where Faulkner makes the reader feel like he/she is actually inside the experience being described. Share the examples as a class and discuss what kind of language or imagery he uses to do that.

Then, show students *The Cellist*. Ask: What kinds of sensations are involved in playing a cello? (If you have access to a real cello, now’s the time to have students actually try it out and describe what they’re doing and feeling.) Discuss what techniques the artist uses to capture the experience of playing a cello.

**FOLLOW-UP**  
Have students write or draw to recount a sensory experience they have had, using language or imagery that will communicate those sensations to the reader/viewer.

**STANDARDS**  
VA.912.S.2.3 / VA.912.C.1.6 / LA.910-1112.2.1.7 / LA.910-1112.4.1.1

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**GOAL**  
To analyze artistic and literary conventions of the past and of contemporary culture.

**DURATION**  
20-30 minutes

**MATERIALS**  
Class copies of *The Sound and the Fury*; large version of *The Cellist* by Max Weber

**ACTIVITY**  
As a class, make a list of "rules" for writing a story or making a painting. (For example: "Must have a beginning, middle, and end" or "Must use shading to suggest three-dimensionality.") Then, have students cross off any rules broken by *The Sound and the Fury* or *The Cellist*. Ask: What do think the reaction was to these works that went against so many conventions?

**FOLLOW-UP**  
Ask students to think about who the "rule breakers" are in today’s world. What artists, musicians, etc. go against convention in their work? Have students create a work of art or literature that "breaks the rules."

**STANDARDS**  
LA.910-1112.5.2.1 / VA.912.F.1.1 / VA.912.F.1.2
APPENDIX

WORKSHEETS
RESOURCES
IMAGES
WALKING DOWN THIS STREET

What was it like to live in America in the first half of the twentieth century?

Imagine that you were walking down this street during a decade from the last century. Use books and other resources to gather information about the past to fill in the chart. Then, answer the questions below.

Write down 1-2 relevant facts for your decade under each heading.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRANSPORTATION</th>
<th>CLOTHING</th>
<th>POPULATION</th>
<th>ECONOMY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did people get around?</td>
<td>What did men and women wear?</td>
<td>What kinds of people lived in American cities?</td>
<td>Were there enough jobs to go around?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT EVENTS</th>
<th>ENTERTAINMENT</th>
<th>SOCIETY</th>
<th>TECHNOLOGY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What was happening in the US and the world?</td>
<td>What did people do for fun?</td>
<td>What rules and customs did people observe in public?</td>
<td>What new inventions were changing how people lived?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1) What kinds of SOUNDS would you hear if you were walking down this street in the 19_______s? *(fill in your decade)*

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2) What might you SEE that’s not already in the painting if you were walking down this street in the 19_______s?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3) What PEOPLE might you pass if you were walking down this street in the 19_______s?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

4) Where might you be going if you were walking down this street in the 19_______s?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5) How would you FEEL if you were walking down this street in the 19_______s?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

6) How might the other people around you be feeling as you were walking down this street in the 19_______s?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

7) What kinds of things would you be THINKING about if you were walking down this street in the 19_______s?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
List similarities and differences between the depiction of modern urban life in these two works. Be sure to address the following issues:

- How appealing city life seems to be from its depiction in the work
- The type of place described/described in the work
- The presence or absence of crowds
- The importance of light and/or darkness
- Overall mood
- Techniques used in the work to convey mood
- How colors are used symbolically
- The point of view that you are given by the work's author/artist
- The type of place described/described in the work
- The presence or absence of crowds
- The importance of light and/or darkness
- Overall mood
- Techniques used in the work to convey mood
- How colors are used symbolically
- The point of view that you are given by the work's author/artist
PICK A SIDE

*A game for comparing works of art*

Clear a large space in your classroom, and hang each of the works of art you will be using on opposite sides of the room. Have students stand in the center of the room. When you read each of the statements below, instruct students to stand near the work of art that they feel best fits that statement. Make sure you ask why students selected the side they did!

This work of art is easy to understand.

This artist had a clear message (s)he wanted to get across.

This work of art is interesting to look at.

This work of art is beautiful.

This work of art tells a story.

This work of art makes me feel like I am inside the scene.

When I look at this work of art, I can imagine what type of music might be playing.

This work of art is full of energy.

This artist wanted to shock people.

I would hang this work of art in my home.

I like this work of art.

This work of art shows me multiple points of view.

This artist liked quiet, calm scenes of daily life.

This work of art communicates feeling.

This work of art shows three-dimensional space in a realistic way.
List similarities and differences between these two characters. You can use your imagination to fill in information that isn't stated explicitly, but base your characterizations on what is shown in the text or in the painting. Be prepared to share your reasoning. Be sure to:

- Type of work they do
- Whether they are often with others or alone
- What they are doing to achieve success
- Where they live
- Whether they are dreamers or realists
- What opportunities are and are not available to them in life
- What time period they represent
- Gender and age
- Whether they live in the past or present
- Whether they are portrayed sympathetically or unsympathetically

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Francie Nolan in A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

The Boy in Shoe Shine

Both
IMAGE CREDITS

Cover & Pg. 13: Georgia O’Keeffe (American, 1887-1986). 2 Yellow Leaves (Yellow Leaves), 1928. Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 1/8 in. Brooklyn Museum, Bequest of Georgia O’Keeffe, 87.136.6

FURTHER LEARNING


Gale Cengage Learning, American Decades, 2006.


www.schmoop.com (student-friendly lessons on art, history, and literature)

GLOSSARY

URBANIZATION The process of becoming more industrialized, with rural dwellers moving to urban areas

DEPRESSION A period of sustained economic downturn, with high unemployment and poverty

ALIENATION The state of being withdrawn or isolated from others

CONSUMERISM A pattern of increasing consumption of and emphasis on material goods

IMMIGRATION The movement of non-native people into a country with the intention of settling there

MELTING POT A metaphor expressing the view that immigrants to the United States fuse into a single people

CIVIL RIGHTS Rights to full legal, social, and economic opportunities afforded to all citizens

CUBISM An art style in which forms are broken down and rearranged without regard to representation

FRAGMENTATION The disintegration or collapse of normal modes of thought and communication

AVANT-GARDE The cutting edge; characterized by experimentation in art, music, or literature