

# STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

**Master Teacher:** Brenda Chapman

**Grade Level:** 4-8

**Time Allotment:** Three 45-minute class periods

**Overview:** The student will use Van Gogh's *Starry Night* to analyze his artistic style and artworks. During the lesson, students will create a wax-release drawing of *Starry Night*. In doing so, the students will view stars as spheres, learn about the phases of the moon, and ascertain that planets may indeed be mistaken for stars.

**Subject Matter:** Art, Art History, Science, and Social Studies

## **Learning Objectives:**

The student will be able to:

- View and analyze works of art
- Create a wax-release drawing of *Starry Night*
- Develop an understanding and be able to identify phases of the moon
- Understand that the moon and planets reflect light from the sun
- Identify stars as spheres that radiate light

## **Standards or TEKS:**

### **§117.14. Art, Grade 4-8**

(2) By analyzing artistic styles and historical periods students develop respect for the traditions and contributions of diverse cultures. Students respond to and analyze artworks, thus contributing to the development of lifelong skills of making informed judgments and evaluations

### **§126.3. Technology Applications, Grades 3-5.**

(4) **Information acquisition.** The student uses a variety of strategies to acquire information from electronic resources, with appropriate supervision.

(5) **Information acquisition.** The student acquires electronic information in a variety of formats, with appropriate supervision.

(8) **Solving problems.** The student uses research skills and electronic communication, with appropriate supervision, to create new knowledge.

**Science concepts** (4.6) The student knows that change can create recognizable patterns.

(5.5) The student knows that a system is a collection of cycles, structures, and processes that interact.

**Social Studies, Grade 5, 6, 7, and 8.**

(2) To support the teaching of the essential knowledge and skills, the use of a variety of rich primary and secondary source materials such as biographies and autobiographies; novels; speeches and letters; and poetry, songs, and artworks is encouraged.

**Geography.** The student uses geographic tools to collect, analyze, and interpret data.

**Culture.** The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created.

#### **Media Components:**

##### **Video-ETV series**

Reading Rainbow-#1001 "Follow the Drinking Gourd"

##### **CD-ROM- *Van Gogh-Starry Night*, The Voyager Company**

(The teacher will need computer projector or an adapter to use the classroom TV as a computer monitor. A computer with speakers is essential. This CD-ROM may be purchased from Voyager, 1Bridge St., Irvington, NY 10533-9919)

##### **Web Sites:**

**Museum of Modern Art**-audio clip, an explanation of *Van Gogh's Starry Night*

This site will be used if the CD-ROM, *Starry Night*, is not available.

<http://www.moma.org/docs/collection/paintsculpt/c58.htm>

##### **The Drinking Gourd**

<http://www.contemplator.com/folk2/gourd.html>

Music and the written lyrics to the song, Follow the Drinking Gourd, and other information

to decode the song are found at this site. Look at the other links found on the bottom of page.

### **Educator's Guide to... Follow the Drinking Gourd**

<http://www.madison.k12.wi.us/planetarium/ftdg1.htm>

This website gives the explanation of the coded song and route information some slaves used to escape to Canada.

### **Star Chart**

<http://www.earthvisions.net/bcp/instruments/chart/index.htm>

This site explains how to read a star chart.

### **Northern Sky Monthly Sky Chart**

<http://www.skypub.com/sights/northern/0012skyn.shtml>

This site will help to locate some constellations

### **Halley's Comet**

<http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/nineplanets/nineplanets/halley.html>

<http://www.onlineastronomy.com/ast161/lect/comets/halley.html>

These sites contain information about Halley's Comet

### **Voyager Company**

<http://www.voyagerco.com/cdrom/catalogpage.cgi?starrynight>

You may use this website to purchase the Starry Night, CD-ROM.

### **Materials:**

Teacher will need:

*Starry Night* poster (use yarn to divide it into quadrants) This may be purchased at a hobby shop or craft store. Another suggestion might be to use an overhead transparency of the painting made from a website.

Projector for the computer or an adapter that will convert your TV into a computer monitor. You will use this for the CD-ROM and the PowerPoint presentation.

Powered tempera paint-Black (Mix 3 tablespoons of the powered paint with one cup of water in a container. This should make a weak solution but test it on another sample before using it in class)

10-15 one-inch paint brushes

4-5 empty baby food jars or other small containers for paint

Old newspapers (to spread over tables when painting)

Large world map

Large U. S. map

**For each student:**

One sheet of standard printer paper

Pencil

Wax crayons

Blue construction paper (12 x 18) for mounting drawing when completed

**Prep for Teachers**

Step 1: Prior to the lesson, install the CD-ROM and become familiar with the various features. A Starry Night icon (Vincent's picture) will appear on the desktop of your computer. Test the volume settings on the computer for optimum performance.

Step 2: Bookmark all Web sites.

Step 3: Prepare the PowerPoint presentation

Step 4: Cue the videotape to the appropriate starting point on the video, *Follow the Drinking Gourd.*

Step 5: Have a large world map available to discuss geological points of interest during the lesson.

**Introductory Activity: Setting the Stage**

Introduction to Starry Night-Day One

(Remember if you are unable to locate this CD, the Museum of Modern Art website has a two minute video clip on this painting that may be used.)

Step 1. Turn on computer and TV.

Step 2. Insert Starry Night CD into computer.

Step 3. Double click on Starry Night icon, bottom row. (see Vincent's picture) This will automatically run the introduction scene accompanied by music.

Step 4. Click "OK" on Director Player.

Step 5. The program should run into the "Table of Contents." (It is very important to be familiar with the features on this CD-ROM)

Step 6. Click on "Index." These are some suggestions.

- a. click on first self-portrait, see "go to" on right hand side of screen.

Black square will let you view the picture without the narration. Click on the square to make it solid (with narration).

- b. Listen to narrator for 3 pictures. When finished, click on Index to exit.
- c. Click on the Index-then click on the bottom row, 3<sup>rd</sup> picture. Listen for a couple of minutes.
- d. Return to Index, go to the 2<sup>nd</sup> page, 2<sup>nd</sup> row, the last picture explains illness and cutting of ear lobe.
- e. Return to Index, go to the 4th page, top row, and 3rd picture. Click. Let it "run" through 6 pictures, until after he talks about the phases of the moon. Discuss phases of the moon. Click "Quit" on the lower right hand corner of Table of Contents. Now you are back to the desktop
- f. This will probably take a whole class period if your class asks questions or there is discussion.

## Learning Activity: Day Two

Step 1:

Begin PowerPoint presentation, reviewing information from CD. (This presentation is found at the end of this lesson. Use the information provided to create your own.) Discuss Van Gogh's life, where he was born, (use the map), emphasize that he had to **study** to develop his own style. His talent evolved by working with Renoir and other artists of that time.

Step 2:

Ask students to name famous people that have had to work hard to develop their talents. (Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods, etc.) Stress that successful people in all walks of life must work constantly to attain their level of aptitude.

Step 3:

Discuss the effects of mercury poisoning.

Step 4:

Discuss the unique techniques of Van Gogh.

Step 5:

Distribute paper. Students have pencils for sketching. Display large poster that has been sectioned into quadrants. Refer to this poster or overhead transparency while drawing.

Step 6:

Continue presentation. When students begin to work on details, you might consider using the CD again. Just **minimize** the PowerPoint and click on the Vincent icon again. This time go to "Starry Night in Detail." Use the little hand at the right to focus on one spot of interest. This should help the students to decide which crayon to use. Remind student not to color the inside of the stump as this will be colored by the tempera paint later.

Step 7:

Point out important science details as the students are drawing

- a. phases of the moon
- b. orbit of Halley's Comet
- c. Venus, the glowing planet to the right of the stump
- d. Emphasize that the above mentioned are **reflecting** light from our sun
- e. Other stars in the night sky are burning **spheres** of gas (not 5 pointed figures) that radiate light.
- f. Discuss the Milky Way galaxy.(refer to CD for short lecture)

Step 8:

When crayon drawing is completed, have students go over it again with a heavy hand! The wax must be thick for the wash to be effective.

### Step 9:

Have students slip on an old T-shirt or apron before painting. Line tables with old newspaper. Pour prepared paint mixture into small containers. Have students use brushes to apply a black wash lightly over the drawing. Advise students to use only one coating of the wash, do not use 2 strokes over the same area. After wash, find a corner or shelf for your students' artwork to dry. Mount on large blue construction paper for display.

## Culminating Activity:

### Day Three

View video: *Follow the Drinking Gourd*. **Focus for Media Interaction:** Tell students that people have used the stars as maps for hundreds of years. During the 1800s, the slaves and abolitionists used the Big Dipper to guide the slaves to freedom. Listen to the song in this story very carefully. Would you be able to follow the helpful clues to find your way in a strange land?

**Cue** the video to a point after the cabin in the woods is shown and Levar is saying, "The best way to escape is the Follow the Drinking Gourd...that group of stars in the sky.

**Pause**-Ask students to listen to the song through out the story and to take notes as to the directions they would have to follow if they were trying to find their way North.

**Resume**- Allow the video to continue until "The End" is displayed.

**Stop**-Have students compare notes with information found on the website:

**Educator's Guide to ...:Follow the Drinking Gourd"**. Using the U. S. map, have the students trace a probable route that the escaped slaves might have used.

### Cross-Curricular Extensions:

**Science and Reading**-Use these resources for subject content and reinforcing reading skills:

*Van Gogh*, Bruce Bernard

*Explore Science through Literature Level C*, Even-Moor Corp.

Telling Time with the Big Dipper Clock, p.21-22

The Big Dipper Star Field, p23-24

*The Big Dipper and You*, E. C. Krupp

*The Constellations Coloring Book*, Jean Waricha

*The Magic School Bus and the Solar System*, Joanna Cole  
*The Glow-in-the-Dark Night Sky Book*, Clint Hatchett  
*The Young Astronomer*, Harry Ford

**Social Studies-** Have the students research the Underground Railroad and Harriet Tubman to learn how the stars guided the slaves to freedom. Students might also research how early explorers traveled using the stars as guides

### **Math**

Have students calculate distances to heavenly bodies.

**Space Math worksheet**, Multiplying fractions or decimals, from *THE MAILBOX* Intermediate, Feb/Mar 1991

### **Literature**

Students will listen to the poems, *Space Songs*, by Myra Cohn Livingston.

### **Music Appreciation**

Have the class sing the song, *The Drinking Gourd*. The lyrics are found on the website, *The Drinking Gourd*.

### **Community Connections:**

Invite local artists and astronomers to visit your class as guest speakers. Students may visit the local art galleries and planetarium.

Have a family night star gazing event where students and their families gather after dark to view the constellations. **Amateur telescopes would be a big plus.**

### **Student Materials:**

For each student:

One sheet of standard printer paper

Pencil

Wax crayons

Blue construction paper (12 x 18) for mounting drawing when completed