



# Visual Arts

## Teacher Guide



Monticello, designed by Thomas Jefferson



Antelope headdress

Student Creating Her Own Painting







# Core Knowledge Visual Arts Grade 4

Teacher Guide





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## Core Art in CKVA Grade 4

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Number	Title	Artist
1	<i>Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne</i>	
2	Chi Rho Page from the Book of Kells	
3	<i>The Unicorn in Captivity</i> (Tapestry)	
4	Notre Dame Cathedral	
5	Illumination of the Qur'an	
6	Court of the Lions	
7	Dome of the Rock	
8	Taj Mahal	
9	Benin Bronze Head	
10	Portrait Head of an Ife King	
11	Face Mask	
12	Bamana Antelope Headdress of Mali	
13	Calligraphy	
14	<i>Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley</i> (Silk Scroll)	Sheng Maoye
15	Ming Dynasty Vase	
16	<i>Paul Revere</i>	John Singleton Copley
17	<i>Washington Crossing the Delaware</i>	Emanuel Leutze
18	<i>George Washington</i>	Gilbert Stuart
19	<i>Profile Bust of Benjamin Franklin</i>	Patience Wright
20	Monticello	Thomas Jefferson





# Core Knowledge Visual Arts: Grade 4

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**Core Knowledge Visual Arts Grade 4™**  
**Teacher Guide**



# Introduction

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## Grade 4 Core Knowledge Visual Arts

This introduction provides the background information needed to teach the Grade 4 Core Knowledge Visual Arts (CKVA) program. Within, you will find guidance on how to use the program and its components, Pacing Guides and Core Vocabulary, and directions on how to make connections to other Core Knowledge Curriculum materials to enrich, enliven, and deepen student understanding of the visual arts and their context. Students will be introduced to work from around the world created at different times in history. In addition, this Teacher Guide also includes suggested activities to engage students in using their imagination to make their own works of art.

Of note are the connections between CKVA and Core Knowledge Music (CKMusic). While each of these programs may be used independently, the content in each program has been intentionally designed to complement the other. For example, students cover medieval Europe in both programs through a study of illuminated manuscripts and tapestries in CKVA and Gregorian chant in CKMusic. Use of both sets of materials may enhance student understanding and allow for greater depth of knowledge.

The CKVA materials are aligned to the grade-level art topics in the *2023 Core Knowledge Sequence*. These materials have also been informed by the National Core Arts Standards, available for download at [nationalartsstandards.org](http://nationalartsstandards.org).

Teachers should note that Grade 4 contains art related to various world religions. Because religion is a shaping force in the story of civilization, the *Core Knowledge Sequence* introduces students to major world religions as early as Grade 1, beginning with a focus on geography and major symbols and figures. The purpose is not to explore matters of theology but to provide a basic vocabulary for understanding many events and ideas in history. The goal is to familiarize, not proselytize; to be descriptive, not prescriptive.

## Program Components


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Core Knowledge Visual Arts (CKVA) consists of the following components designed to be used together:


- The CKVA Teacher Guide
- The CKVA Art Slide Deck
- The CKVA Student Activity Book
- The CKVA Online Resources

The **Teacher Guide** is divided into units, consisting of individual lessons that provide background information, instructional guidelines and notes, and suggested student activities. Refer to the units within this book for lesson plans and guidance.

The **Student Activity Book** is a consumable workbook used by students to complete activities as directed in the Teacher Guide. Note that the Student Activity Book cannot be used without the accompanying directions in the Teacher Guide. You will also find color reproductions of the works of art studied in Grade 4 at the back of the Student Activity Book

for students to view and use during instruction. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

The **Slide Deck** consists of PowerPoint slides showing images of each artwork for you to display to explore and discuss with students. The Teacher Guide will prompt you, lesson by lesson, as to which images to display and when. The images will be a powerful learning tool, enabling you and your students to see and explore the elements of art and exemplary pieces of art together. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

The **Online Resources** provides additional links to other instructional and professional learning resources accessible online. These resources include, but are not limited to, videos, recordings, and other web resources that support content, along with links to art that has been selected to supplement instruction in this Teacher Guide. These resources are indicated throughout the Teacher Guide by the icon .

## Art Supplies Needed in Each Unit

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The individual art materials used in each lesson, beyond the Teacher Guide, Slide Deck, and Student Activity Book, are clearly indicated at the beginning of each lesson.

Teachers may find the listing below of art supplies used in each unit helpful in planning and securing the necessary materials in advance.

### Unit 1 Art and Architecture: Middle Ages in Europe

black construction paper	disposable or washable surface	rulers
black ink pens	erasers	scissors
bowls of water	glue	tape
cardboard sheets	markers (including gold color)	white chalk
clay (at least 2 lb per student)	pencils	white paper, 8 ½ × 11 inches
colored pencils (including gold color)	plastic bowl, 7–8 inches across (teacher only)	yarn (at least 118 inches per student)
colored tissue paper or cellophane		
crayons (including gold color)	plastic knife, toothpicks, and other sculpting tools	

### Unit 2 Islamic Art and Architecture

colored pencils	graph paper	rulers
crayons	markers	sketch paper
erasers	pencils	

### Unit 3 The Art of Africa

acrylic paints	drawing paper, heavy-duty	palettes
brushes	erasers	paper towels
canvas panel	glue	pencils
clear tape	magazines and/or other printed media with images	pens
colored pencils	markers	scissors
construction paper		watercolor paints
craft sticks	natural decorative materials (feathers, beans, pasta, seeds, fabric scraps, natural fiber, string, yarn, etc.)	
crayons		
cups of water		





## Cross-Curricular Connections

Visual Arts is strongly related to other subjects students will encounter as part of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. Teachers are encouraged always to look for ways to engage students in appreciating art's place in the wider picture of human activity. Each unit introduction includes a chart of cross-curricular connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. Wherever possible, connections are noted to the following:

- CK History and Geography (CKHG)
- CK Language Arts (CKLA)
- CK Math (CKMath)
- CK Music (CKMusic)
- CK Science (CKSci)

Where a connection exists, it will be noted in the chart as a reference to a named unit and lesson, enabling you to quickly and easily find the material referenced.

## Vocabulary

Core Vocabulary, identified throughout the Teacher Guide, is the words that are important for students to know and understand and for teachers to use when teaching. An understanding of the vocabulary of art is critical for student success in understanding, interpreting, and expressing themselves. Definitions for these terms are provided, and teachers are encouraged to take time to reinforce the meanings and use of these words. Core Vocabulary is shown in **bold** the first time it appears within lesson instruction.

The Core Vocabulary words, by unit, are:

Unit	Core Vocabulary
1	cathedral, commission, flying buttress, gargoyle, illuminated manuscript, Madonna, patron, pointed arch, portal, rose window, spire, stained-glass window, statue, tapestry, vestment
2	Allah, aniconism, arabesque, calligraphy, dome, idolatry, mausoleum, minaret, mosque, muezzin, Muslim, Qur'an, secular
3	apprenticeship, bust, collage, ivory, oba, pigment
4	dynasty, porcelain, scroll, Taoism
5	Doric column, history painting, portico

**TEACHER NOTE:** The definitions for Core Vocabulary words are included in the unit in which they are introduced.

## Constructive Speaking and Listening

Constructive speaking and listening means that people engaged in conversation will share their own perspectives while also finding ways to understand each other. Students using CKVA are encouraged to share their own opinions and participate in discussions. Before teaching the lessons in this book, teachers are encouraged to establish some rules for speaking, listening, and reacting to the opinions of others in a respectful and constructive manner. Tips about talking with students about art, including their own art, are included in the back of this book. Some additional resources to support classroom discussions in a sensitive, safe, and respectful manner are provided in the Online Resources: <https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

# Art and Architecture: Middle Ages in Europe

**Big Idea** Medieval art and architecture of western Europe reflect the central role of the Christian Church in shaping beliefs, practices, and artistic expression during the Middle Ages.

## Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the background information needed to teach the *Art and Architecture: Middle Ages in Europe* unit. In this unit, you will teach students about medieval European art. The main idea throughout the unit is that, due to the political and social dominance of the Church, medieval art is mainly religious in nature. Because the Church was the central institution in medieval life, much of the art created during this period had religious subject matter, conveyed moral teachings, or served ceremonial functions. Students will learn about the artistic features, purposes, and patronage of images of the Madonna, tapestries, illuminated manuscripts, and Gothic architecture.

This unit contains seven lessons, split across eight class days. There will be a half-day Looking Back feature on Day 5 and a unit assessment on Day 8. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for art. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 Introduction to Art of the Middle Ages in Europe
2	Lesson 2 The Madonna and Child in Medieval Art
3	Lesson 3 Illuminated Manuscripts

Day	Lesson
4	Lesson 4 Tapestries
5	Lesson 5 Creating Art of the Middle Ages*
6–7	Lesson 6 Gothic Architecture
8	Lesson 7 Unit 1 Assessment

\* Looking Back review

## What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

Grade 1 CKHG


- Unit 4, *Three World Religions*, explores the history of Christianity and its symbols and figures, which prepares students for the study of religious artworks.

Grade 2 CKVA

- Unit 5, *Architecture*, discusses symmetry and asymmetry, line, shapes, and important building features such columns and domes. Students will now see the visual design concepts of line, shape, and symmetry applied in Gothic cathedrals.

## Grade 3 CKVA

- Unit 1, *Elements of Art: Light and Space*, covers light, space, and design in art.
- Unit 3, *Art and Architecture: Roman and Byzantine Empires*, provides background leading up to the Middle Ages in Europe.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources.  Use this link to download the Online Resources, where the links to the specific units can be found.

## What Students Need to Learn

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In this unit, students will:

- Identify characteristics common to European medieval art, such as the stylized paintings of the Madonna and Child;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of illuminated manuscripts and their artistic significance;
- Explain the importance of medieval tapestries and the Christian narrative stories they tell; and
- Identify the important artistic features of medieval Gothic architecture, including spires, pointed arches, flying buttresses, rose windows, gargoyles, and statues.

## What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

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In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about art from other cultures and time periods, further study the elements of art, and investigate more art masterpieces.

## Grade 5

- Unit 1: *Art and Architecture: The Renaissance*
- Unit 3: *Nineteenth-Century American Art*
- Unit 5: *Art of Japan*

## Vocabulary

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**cathedral, n.** a large and important church that serves as a headquarters for a diocese or larger group of churches **(10)**

*Example:* The cathedral holds Christian services every day.

**commission, v.** to order that something be made in exchange for payment **(10)**

*Example:* The king commissioned an artist to paint his portrait.

**flying buttress, n.** a supportive arch stemming from a column that presses against the upper side wall of a Gothic church for reinforcement to bear some of the outward pressure created by the weight of the roof **(11)**

*Example:* The Gothic building was supported by flying buttresses around its exterior.



**gargoyle, n.** a spout in the form of a grotesque human or animal figure projecting from a cathedral roof gutter to direct rainwater clear of the building (26)

*Example:* The stone gargoyle was perched menacingly on the roof of the church building.

**illuminated manuscript, n.** a manuscript with colored decorations drawn by monks or scribes who copied written documents by hand (10)

*Example:* Illuminated manuscripts are beautifully illustrated and often used in religious ceremonies.

**Madonna, n.** Italian for “my lady”; a term used to describe images of Mary, either alone or with the baby Jesus (12)

*Example:* Many medieval painters and artisans depicted the Madonna in their artwork.

**patron, n.** a person or organization that supports or sponsors artists, especially financially (10)

*Example:* The Church was the artist’s greatest patron.

**pointed arch, n.** an arch that comes to a point at its apex; characteristic of Gothic architecture (10)

*Example:* The use of the pointed arch enabled cathedrals to have thinner walls and more windows.

**portal, n.** a door or entrance, typically elaborate, in cathedrals and churches (26)

*Example:* The ornately carved stone portal provided a grand entrance into the church.

**rose window, n.** also called a round window; a circular stained-glass window, typically with a design radiating from the center (26)

*Example:* The panes of glass in a rose window look like the petals of a rose.

**spire, n.** the top part of a steeple that tapers to a point; an architectural element usually found on a church or temple (26)

*Example:* The tip of the temple’s spire reached up into the dark night sky.

**stained-glass window, n.** a window with designs made of clear and colored glass, consisting of either bits of glass held together with strips of lead or drawings made directly on larger pieces of colored glass (11)

*Example:* Stained-glass windows in the church depict different scenes from the Bible.

**statue, n.** a sculpture resembling a human or an animal (25)

*Example:* A stone statue of an angel stood peacefully in the garden.

**tapestry, n.** a fabric wall hanging, usually painted, embroidered (sewn with images), or woven with colorful designs and images (10)

*Example:* Fine woven tapestry was a luxury because materials such as silk were quite expensive.

**vestment, n.** clothing—often an elaborate, colorful robe—worn by a church official when performing religious duties or for special occasions; often denotes the wearer’s rank and visually relates to the ceremony being performed (10)

*Example:* Monks and nuns often wore vestments decorated with religious symbols, such as a cross.

## Cross-Curricular Connections

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This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance student understanding of the art content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

<b>CK History and Geography (CKHG)</b>
Grade 4 Unit 3: <i>Medieval Europe</i>
<b>CK Language Arts (CKLA)</b>
Grade 4 Unit 3: <i>King Arthur and the Round Table</i>
<b>CK Music</b>
Grade 4 Unit 3: <i>Master Composers</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson 4: Gregorian Chants</li></ul>

The Grade 4 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include an in-depth unit on medieval Europe, consisting of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resources.

## Most Important Ideas

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The most important ideas in Unit 1 are as follows:

- The Christian Church was the dominant political and social force in western Europe during the Middle Ages. Medieval art was predominantly religious in nature.
- Images of the Madonna—Jesus’s mother, Mary—were the subject of many paintings.
- Tapestries were designed and woven to both tell Christian narrative stories and add decoration to medieval rooms.
- Monks created illuminated manuscripts to help teach Christian ideas and Bible stories to people who could not read or were not part of the aristocracy.
- Flying buttresses, pointed arches, and stained-glass rose windows were important features of medieval architecture. Spires, gargoyles, towers, portals, statues, and other artwork further showed the Church’s desire to connect heaven and earth.

## What Teachers Need to Know

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The descriptions and activities in the main text below are intended to help you become familiar with the artworks before presenting them to students; keep in mind that some activities might be adapted for classroom use. Activities intended specifically for students can be found in the Teaching Idea sidebars. Provide students with time to carefully look at the reproductions in the back of the Student Activity Book before they answer questions about specific artworks. Encourage students to observe the use of line, symbolism, and religious imagery in each reproduction before answering questions.

# Unit 1 Lesson 1

## INTRODUCTION TO ART OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN EUROPE

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will explore and summarize the defining features of art in the European Middle Ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of the British Museum from Google Arts and Culture</li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 3–4<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Summarize Medieval Art</li><li>• Elements of Art</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 1 Family Letter</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Summarize defining features and themes related to the art of the European Middle Ages.

### What Students Have Learned

Students who used this program in Grade 3 learned about elements of art such as light, space, and design. They also learned about architecture and its role in the world of art.

## DAY 1: INTRODUCTION TO ART OF THE MIDDLE AGES IN EUROPE

Introduce the lesson by asking students what they know about the Middle Ages. Last year, students using the Grade 3 Visual Arts materials learned about art in the Byzantine Empire, which overlaps with the early Middle Ages in Europe.

Students using Grade 4 CKLA and/or CKHG materials will study units about the Middle Ages. Discuss examples of medieval themes, such as knights, chivalry, royalty, mythology, and religion.

Invite students to share examples of familiar literature or other media related to the Middle Ages.

Students using Grade 4 CKLA materials read about King Arthur and the Middle Ages. Some students may also be familiar with the story of Robin Hood.

Ask students to think about the relationship between art and the Middle Ages.

Ask the following questions: What types of people or subjects do you think artists painted in the Middle Ages? (*kings, dragons, religious figures, etc.*) Who do you think purchased artwork in the Middle Ages? (*wealthy people, the Church*)



## Introducing Art of the Middle Ages in Europe

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The Middle Ages, also known as the medieval period, spanned roughly from the fifth century CE to the early sixteenth century CE. This era was referred to as the Dark Ages by early scholars of the Renaissance who preferred the art and literature of the classical styles that came both before and after the Middle Ages. They considered medieval times to be the declining middle period between two great ages of art, and they found the medieval style to be overly religious, uncreative, and unrealistic. Modern historians, however, no longer use the term Dark Ages to refer to this period in history.

The Middle Ages produced art that was mainly religious in nature. This was largely due to the importance of the Christian Church to the people living at the time. The artwork and architecture produced during this time were often very detailed and beautiful. Although medieval artists rarely explored themes outside of religion, their artistic skills were impressive and inspiring.

The Church **commissioned**, or ordered and paid for, a variety of art, including paintings, architecture, sculptures, decorated holy texts, **tapestries**, ceremonial clothing called **vestments**, and more. People who support or sponsor others, especially financially, are called **patrons**. Wealthy patrons, such as royal families, also commissioned Christian-themed art. Monks and nuns were some of the only educated people during this time, so they were often the artists who produced these works of art.

## The Style of Medieval Art and Architecture

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The figures depicted in medieval art were often two-dimensional, flat, and stylized, meaning that they were depicted in an unrealistic manner. As you display the artwork in this lesson, point out these features to students. For example, people were drawn in unrealistic poses with elongated bodies. Because of this, proportions were unusual; some figures were illustrated with heads too large for their bodies and with lengthened torsos, necks, hands, and fingers. The rich colors used in these illustrations were often solid, with little variation in value.

Flat gold leaf was also skillfully employed for showy two-dimensional effects. In **illuminated manuscripts** and tapestries, figures were often surrounded with elaborate, intricate patterns. The medieval style was used to communicate certain Christian ideas or stories to audiences who were illiterate, or unable to read. These audiences were also referred to as “common” people. This style differed from the realism of the classical style, which gave medieval art a spiritual and otherworldly quality.

Artists used different symbols in their artwork to stand for religious ideas. For example, a lamb was often depicted as a symbol for Christ, and a lily was shown to represent the Virgin Mary. The figures’ faces often lacked emotion, with their eyes raised up toward heaven. The metaphors and symbolism used in medieval art helped communicate the messages taught by the Church.

Advancements in architecture were perhaps the greatest artistic achievements of the Middle Ages. Contact with the Islamic world during the Crusades introduced Europeans to architectural features such as the **pointed arch**. European architects adapted and integrated this element into what became known as Gothic style. The pointed arch provided added support and stability for the walls and ceilings of medieval **cathedrals**. This allowed architects

to create taller buildings with thinner walls. Additional reinforcements called **flying buttresses** added even more support to these elegant, towering religious buildings. Europeans also adopted the idea of **stained-glass windows** from Islamic architectural traditions. These delicate, beautiful works of art were made from colorful segments of glass, and they usually depicted religious scenes. They were yet another important tool the Church used to share Bible stories with the illiterate public.

**SUPPORT**—Ensure that students understand the concept of a figure drawn with proper proportions and perspective.

**TEACHER NOTE**—Point out to students that most people in medieval Europe were illiterate, or unable to read. Explain that describing people as “common” did not have the same negative connotations that it does today. Common simply meant that a person was not a member of the aristocracy. Common people were generally illiterate because there were no schools. Children of the aristocracy may have had tutors, but public schools did not exist, so the common folk did not have access to education.

### Teaching Idea



Connect to this museum tour and navigate through the room with medieval European artwork on display. Point out the religious themes and symbolism in much of the artwork. Note the stylized figures, intricate patterns, colors, and materials used.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### Activity



Page 3

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Summarize Medieval Art activity. Prompt students to reflect on what they learned in this lesson and then answer the questions on their own.



To help students understand the style of medieval art and architecture, review the elements of art studied in previous grades, such as line in stained-glass windows or shape and form in cathedral design.

### Activity



Page 4

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Elements of Art activity. Explain that there is more than one way to label the examples and that it is common for art to display more than one element of art. Have students provide their suggested labels, then discuss their results as a class.

### Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students discuss what defines the artwork and architecture of the European Middle Ages. They should focus on the key features of its religious themes and subject matter and its colorful, decorative, stylized, and two-dimensional nature.

# Unit 1 Lesson 2

## THE MADONNA AND CHILD IN MEDIEVAL ART

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will learn about the Madonna as a main subject in medieval artwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 1 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 37<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 1, <i>Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 5, <i>Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne</i></li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Analyze the style and symbolism of the subject of the Madonna in medieval artwork.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they reviewed elements of art such as color, line, and shape and were introduced to the key features of art and architecture of the European Middle Ages. They learned about the religious themes and stylized artwork that were abundant during this era.

## DAY 1: THE MADONNA AND CHILD IN MEDIEVAL ART

Introduce the lesson by reviewing the definition of *symbolism* and reminding students that art of the medieval era included a lot of religious symbolism. Remind students that in medieval art, Christ was often represented by a lamb, and the Virgin Mary was symbolized by a lily.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the relationship between this unit and CKHG Unit 3, *Medieval Europe*, specifically Lessons 2 and 3, which focus on the history of the Christian Church. It may be helpful to explain to students that they will be learning about the art surrounding different religions, not just Christianity. Explain also that the purpose is to understand the significance of the art, especially in relation to its period in history. Explain that students will explore religious art from different faith traditions throughout the year. The goal is not to promote one religion but to understand the historical significance and artistic features of religious art in context.

### History of the Madonna in Art

Inform students that **Madonna** is another name for the Virgin Mary, who is considered to be the mother of Jesus Christ. Depictions of the Madonna were very popular during the Middle Ages in Europe.

The Church placed importance on the traditional representation of the Madonna because they considered it sacred and timeless. The Church discouraged artists from straying from this style or showing originality in their work. Because many depictions of the Madonna looked so similar and were unsigned, it became difficult to determine which particular artist created each



piece. Religious art of this time period was often seen as being created for the glory of God rather than the artist.

Explain that medieval artists often showed Jesus as wise and powerful, even as a baby. Artists often used gold leaf, which is a very thin sheet of pure gold used to decorate artwork or architecture.

## Art in This Lesson

### *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*



This depiction of the Madonna and the Christ child was created in Constantinople during the thirteenth century, sometime around 1260–1280 CE. Earlier images of the Madonna were often painted directly onto church walls. Around the 1200s, artists in Italy began painting on wooden panels instead. These painted panels became popular as freestanding decorations behind church altars.

While the artist is unknown, this tempera painting imitates the common style of the Byzantine era.



This painting demonstrates stylized medieval art, meaning art that is depicted in a simplified or unrealistic way, often to emphasize an idea. The colors are flat, and the shapes of the figures' bodies, heads, and hands are unrealistic. The folds in the clothing are depicted as an abstract pattern of lines, and the edges and details of the throne are beautifully outlined in gold.

### Background for Teacher

At the top, the two figures in circles are depictions of angels. The angels symbolize the Roman Catholic teaching of Mary as the queen of heaven. Baby Jesus is raising his hand to perform the sign of the cross, a gesture that shows he is blessing the viewer.



Page 37

Display *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne* for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the painting and reflect on what elements of art they see. Tell students that this painting depicts a subject matter and artistic style that was popular for hundreds of years. Explain that images of biblical figures helped explain stories from the Bible.



Slide 1

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

Examine the clothing worn by the mother and child. Which two elements of art did the artist use to create the figures' garments?

- o Color and line are the main art elements used to create the clothing.

Why do you think the Madonna was such an important subject in medieval art?

- o Mary was a person, not a god, so she connected the Church here on earth with heaven.

## Activity

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Page 5

Tell students they will now answer the questions for *Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne* in their Student Activity Book. Prompt students to answer the Explore and Reflection questions independently.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by engaging students in a short discussion that summarizes the history and style of images of the Madonna in the Middle Ages. Invite students to offer their input first and record their ideas before offering your own summary of the day's learning.

# Unit 1 Lesson 3

## ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will explore the impact of illuminated manuscripts and create an original two-page illuminated manuscript based on their own initials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of illuminated manuscripts from Google Arts and Culture</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 2 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 39<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 2: Chi Rho Page from the Book of Kells</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 6, Decorated Initials</li><li>• Markers, crayons, colored pencils, and/or watercolor paint sets, including the color gold (1 set per group of students)</li><li>• White paper, 8½ × 11 inches (2 sheets per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Black ink pens (optional; 1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Describe the artistic features and purposes of illuminated manuscripts and apply this understanding through the creation of an original illuminated manuscript page.

### What Students Have Learned

In previous lessons in this unit, students learned about the characteristics of art in the Middle Ages and the tendency of artists to use stylized imagery and depict Christian subject matter such as the Madonna.

## DAY 1: ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

Introduce the lesson by asking students if they have ever written their name in a fancy or creative way. Discuss various writing methods, such as cursive, calligraphy, using colorful markers or crayons, or lettering with changes in the shape, size, and thickness of the letters.

Ask students to think about the relationship between art and writing. Then have students write their name twice: once using normal print with a pencil, and a second time using a creative lettering technique or style of their choice. Have them compare the two and decide which style they prefer and why. Ask students if the creative style communicates anything about their personality that the normal print style does not. Explain that this type of decorated writing is similar to what medieval artists did.

## Teaching About Illuminated Manuscripts

Inform students of the history and significance of illuminated manuscripts. In the European Middle Ages, the Christian Church held political, educational, and social power. As a result, most of the artwork of the time was religious in nature. Some holy texts, such as the Bible or prayer books, were beautifully illustrated with elaborate patterns and symbolic imagery. These books were called illuminated manuscripts. In general, they were created by skillful monks who were educated writers and illustrators. The impressive decorations in such books took an incredible amount of time and money to produce.

Illuminated manuscripts were not owned by ordinary, common people but rather used by the heads of Christian churches in religious ceremonies. The audiences of these ceremonies were often common people who were illiterate, meaning they were not able to read. These texts were usually read aloud by priests during religious ceremonies. The illustrations helped convey meaning to congregations who couldn't read Latin or lacked formal education. These beautiful, decorative, and impressive illustrations captured people's attention, helped tell Christian religious stories, and showcased the power of the patrons who commissioned them. Remind students that a patron is a wealthy or powerful person who provides financial support to artists such as musicians, painters, and sculptors.

### Art in This Lesson

Chi Rho Page from the Book of Kells



The Book of Kells is an illuminated manuscript that was started around 800 CE by an abbot named Connachtach on the Scottish island of Iona. After Connachtach's death in 802 CE, a group of monks brought the book to Kells, Ireland, to complete.



This illuminated manuscript includes a highly decorated page from the Book of Kells that features the Greek letters **chi** (/kai/) and **rho** (/roe/), which refer to Christ. These two letters symbolized faith and victory to Christians.

### Background for Teacher

The Book of Kells contains four Latin Gospels, and almost every page features intricate illustrations. A common artistic feature of illuminated manuscripts is the decorated initial, where the first letter that begins each new section of text is drawn in an elaborate style. These letters range in size from two lines tall to the height of an entire page. This particular page from the Book of Kells features two decorated initials: the Greek letters chi and rho.



Page 39

Display the Chi Rho page for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the image and think about what they see. Tell students that the Chi Rho page from the Book of Kells showcases two enormous, decorated initials. These elaborately designed letters illustrate the importance of the Christian religion, especially the Gospel and its message.



Slide 2



**After students have explored the artwork, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS**

What letters do you see in the illustration?

- o I see the letter *P* and the letter *X*.

**SUPPORT**—These letters may look like *P* and *X* from our alphabet, but they are part of the Greek alphabet. The letter that looks like an *X* is called *chi* (pronounced /kai/, which rhymes with pie), and the letter that looks like a *P* is called *rho* (pronounced /roe/). Chi and rho are the first two letters of the Greek word for Christ.

Encourage students to identify specific parts of the artwork, such as tiny spirals, interlaced lines, or miniature figures. Ask: What repeated colors and art patterns do you see in this illustration?

- o I see shades of red, orange, yellow, gold, and brown. I also see repeated circle and square patterns inside the letters.

What makes this page special, decorative, and impressive?

- o The intricate patterns on the page are very detailed, which makes the page fancy and decorative. This page is impressive because it probably took a lot of time and skill to create.

### **Teaching Idea**



Connect to a display of illuminated manuscripts with students to view additional examples of illuminated manuscripts. Digitally display or print some of the images to share with students as examples for their artworks.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the display may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### **Activity**



Page 6

Tell students that they will create their own two-page illuminated manuscript using the initials of their first and last names. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials they wish to work with for this project. Make sure each student has gold-colored materials to decorate their work. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have an example art piece handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. Remind students that these manuscripts are not just initials; they should also convey individuality and reflect personality. Point out to students who may finish quickly that the Chi Rho page does not contain a lot of negative space and is full of intricate details, fine lines, and a precise use of color that the students should emulate. Consider giving early finishers a challenge: add a border design, another initial, or a symbolic animal. If time is short, students can begin their design in pencil and complete coloring later. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

### **Check for Understanding**

Engage in a short discussion with students that summarizes the artistic purpose, intent, and significance of illuminated manuscripts in the Middle Ages. Encourage students to use sentence frames such as “Illuminated manuscripts were important because \_\_\_\_\_” or “Illuminated manuscripts helped people understand \_\_\_\_\_.”

# Unit 1 Lesson 4

## TAPESTRIES

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will learn about the design and function of medieval tapestries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of Warwick Castle, Queen Anne Bedroom, from Matterport Discover</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 3 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 41<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 3: <i>The Unicorn in Captivity</i> (Tapestry)</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 7, Creating a Loom</li><li>• Drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils and watercolor paint sets (1 set per group of students)</li><li>• Cardboard sheets, 8 × 12 inches (1 per student)</li><li>• Rulers (1 per student)</li><li>• Pens/pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Scissors (1 per student)</li><li>• Tape (1 roll per class)</li><li>• Yarn (at least 118 inches per student)</li></ul>

### Advance Preparation

Prepare cardboard sheets for students by cutting them to size if necessary.

### Lesson Objective

- Identify the artistic, decorative, and functional purposes of tapestries that were woven during the Middle Ages in Europe.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the significance of illuminated manuscripts. They learned how the Church used these highly decorated texts as a storytelling tool for illiterate audiences.

## DAY 1: TAPESTRIES

Introduce the lesson by asking students what they know about unicorns from written stories and visual media. Explain that a unicorn is a mythical creature often depicted as a white horse with a single horn growing from its forehead; also discuss how unicorns behave, such as being graceful, majestic, kind, powerful, magical, etc.

Distribute drawing paper and pencils, markers, crayons, or other art supplies, and ask students to take a few minutes to draw a unicorn. Tell them to imagine that they are making this drawing to illustrate the creature for someone who does not have the ability to read. Mention that by imagining that they are drawing a unicorn to explain what it is without words, students are doing what medieval artists did: using visual storytelling to share an idea with someone who cannot read. This sets up the purpose of tapestries as both art and communication. Students' drawings should be large and should clearly demonstrate how the unicorn looks and behaves without using words.

Ask the following questions: What does your unicorn image show about this mythical creature? What art elements did you use to draw it? (*Answers will vary.*) What does your drawing indicate about how unicorns behave? (*Answers will vary.*)

### Teaching About Medieval Tapestries

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Inform students that tapestries were another art form of the Middle Ages. Tapestries are heavy pieces of cloth with designs or pictures woven into them. In the Middle Ages, large tapestries were hung on castle and church walls as decorations. They also provided a functional use because they helped insulate the rooms where they were displayed. Introduce the phrase “functional art”—art that serves a practical purpose—so students understand that tapestries were both useful and beautiful.

Medieval tapestries were usually designed by an artist, who would draw an image of what the final work should look like. This drawing was then passed to a skilled artisan, who wove the artist's design into fabric. The original artist and the weaver were often different people, demonstrating the teamwork behind medieval art making. The pictures woven into tapestries often told a story about everyday events or supernatural beings.

Medieval tapestries were handwoven and produced on a special device called a loom. A loom is a frame used to weave threads together into fabric. Explain that *warp* threads are the pieces of fabric that run vertically along the loom. These threads are held taut while the weaver passes other threads, called *weft* threads, horizontally over and under the warp threads. Intricate designs required the artisan to change colors multiple times while weaving just a single horizontal thread in the tapestry.

Wool was the most common material used to create tapestries because it was durable, plentiful, and easy to dye. However, more luxurious tapestries included the use of silk, linen, cotton, and gold and silver threads. Because of the expensive materials and expertise needed to create tapestries, they were only woven for members of the aristocracy and the Church.

## Art in This Lesson

### *The Unicorn in Captivity* (Tapestry)



Unicorns have been popular in mythological stories since the days of ancient China and Greece. These creatures have always been symbolic of both purity and power. This particular tapestry was likely woven by medieval artisans from Flanders and the Loire Valley in France around 1495–1505 CE.



The artist fills the space around the main subject of a captured unicorn with a decorative plant design. The weaver uses color to show the vibrancy of nature surrounding the contrasting unicorn of solid white. This use of white symbolizes the creature's pure and spiritual nature. Some interpretations suggest the unicorn symbolizes Jesus Christ.

### Background for Teacher

The Unicorn Tapestries, also known collectively as *The Hunt of the Unicorn*, are a set of seven pieces, each depicting a scene from an overarching story. The tapestry shown here is the final one in the series. The unicorn is chased by hunters in the first four scenes, and they are shown engaged in a battle. The fifth scene shows a maiden luring and capturing the unicorn. The sixth scene shows that the unicorn is killed and brought to the castle. In the final scene, which is shown in this lesson, the unicorn is reborn and chained to a fence. Although the symbolism of this piece is debatable, it is possible that the unicorn represents Christ, who was also killed and resurrected. Some historians believe the unicorn's capture and rebirth symbolize the death and resurrection of Christ. Others interpret the unicorn as a symbol of love or purity. Let students know that multiple interpretations exist and that art can have layered meanings. Depicting the unicorn tethered to a fence possibly alludes to the Christian teaching that Christ will be forever linked to humanity.

**TEACHER NOTE**—The story told in *The Hunt of the Unicorn* involves violence and death. Be sure to prepare students before discussing these sensitive subjects.

**SUPPORT**—Point out that the background design used in this tapestry is referred to as *millefleurs*, which translates to “a thousand flowers” in French. This popular botanical pattern originated in thirteenth-century Flanders and Paris. The style often features many detailed flowering plants against a red or dark-blue background.



Page 41



Slide 3

Display *The Unicorn in Captivity* for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the tapestry and think about what they see. Tell students that in modern times, unicorns are often depicted in media as benevolent and graceful creatures. However, medieval depictions of unicorns also portrayed them as fierce and ferocious and as a rare and elusive trophy coveted by hunters. Explain that this tapestry is the final piece in a set of seven tapestries that show a unicorn being captured by hunters.



**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS**

What does this artist's unicorn look like? How is it different from a regular horse?

- o The artist made the unicorn white with a very long horn growing from its head. It has a beard growing from its chin and a tail that looks like a lion's. Horses do not have a horn, a long beard, or a lion's tail.

Where is the unicorn in this scene? What do you think happened to it?

- o The unicorn is in a field of flowers. It was captured by the hunters and enclosed in a circular fenced area in a field.

Compare and contrast the unicorn tapestry with the Chi Rho page from the Book of Kells. How are they similar, and how are they different?

- o They are similar because they both have intricate, decorative details that fill all the space around the subject. They are different because the subject of the Chi Rho page is letters, while the subject of the tapestry is a unicorn. They also differ because the medium of the Chi Rho page is an illuminated manuscript, while the unicorn artwork is a woven tapestry.

### **Teaching Idea**



Connect to a virtual tour of Warwick Castle in England and navigate through the Queen Anne Bedroom to view more examples of medieval tapestries with students. Note the intricate patterns created by the plants and flowers, which are similar to the plants that decorate the unicorn tapestry.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### **Activity**



Page 7

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Creating a Loom activity. Tell students that they will build their own loom from cardboard and learn to weave on it like artisans did in the Middle Ages. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials they wish to work with for this project, and reserve at least thirty minutes of class time for the activity. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand and review student work before moving on to the next step. If possible, show students a short video online so they can visualize the steps of weaving before they work. If time allows, you can instruct students to weave additional rows on their looms. After completing the loom activity, students can answer the Reflection question in their Student Activity Book.

### **Check for Understanding**

Conclude the session by having students summarize the artistic purpose, form, and function of medieval tapestries. Ask why tapestries were important in medieval castles and churches. Discuss with students what stories they would expect to see woven into a series of tapestries in the medieval style.

# Unit 1 Lesson 5

## CREATING ART OF THE MIDDLE AGES

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will review what they have learned about medieval art and create artwork that represents the Middle Ages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 8, Represent the Middle Ages</li><li>• Sketch paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Markers, crayons, colored pencils, and/or watercolor paint sets (1 set per group of students)</li><li>• Black ink pens (optional; 1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Represent the characteristics of medieval art by creating an original piece of artwork.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about medieval tapestries as a narrative device that tells a story, a functional object that helped keep castle and church walls warm, and a decorative art piece on display.

## DAY 1: CREATING ART OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Introduce the lesson by briefly reviewing what students have learned so far about art from the European Middle Ages. Ask students to think about which medieval artwork was their favorite so far.

Ask the following questions: What features of medieval art are you most impressed by? (*Answers will vary.*) If you lived in the Middle Ages, would you enjoy being an artist in Europe? Why or why not? (*Answers will vary.*)

**Looking Back** Remind students of the Big Idea statement for this unit: *Medieval art and architecture of western Europe reflect the central role of the Christian Church in shaping beliefs, practices, and artistic expression during the Middle Ages.* Discuss with them how their past lessons and activities added to their understanding of the Big Idea. Explain that because the powerful Church was one of the few institutions wealthy enough to commission artwork and buildings, the subject of most medieval art and architecture was religious in nature. Ask students to imagine and describe a “commoner’s” tapestry or illuminated manuscript. This could deepen understanding of how social class influenced art content and access.

## Activity



Page 8

Tell students that they will create a drawing that represents European art during the Middle Ages. Explain that they may choose to draw an image in a medieval style (such as stylized figures or illuminated manuscript lettering), or they may draw a picture in their own style that represents aspects of medieval art history (such as religious subject matter, symbolism, or narrative storytelling). Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials they wish to work with for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. Model for students how to label or identify elements of medieval style or aspects of medieval art history in their drawings. These labels might include “colorful window,” “decorative border,” or “inspired by tapestry style.” After they complete each step, review student work before moving on to the next step. As students draw their backgrounds, ask them to recall how backgrounds were used in illuminated manuscripts or tapestries. After finishing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection question in their Student Activity Book.

**SUPPORT**—Prompt students to use the Internet or books to research examples of medieval art to use as inspiration for their own artworks, or show examples from previous slides in the Slide Deck. Provide a curated set of books, links, or printouts in advance to guide research. Many students may need help locating age-appropriate visual references, especially with medieval religious art.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students present their medieval artwork. Have them explain how and why they chose their subject matter and theme. Suggest sentence starters such as “I chose this subject because \_\_\_\_\_” or “One way my drawing is like medieval art is \_\_\_\_\_.” Discuss how they used decorative details, patterns, background, space, style, color, and/or other elements of art to represent the Middle Ages.

# Unit 1 Lesson 6

## GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will learn about the various elements of Gothic architecture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Online Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Virtual tour of Notre Dame Cathedral from Friends of Notre-Dame de Paris</li> <li>• “Then and Now: Notre Dame Cathedral’s Rebirth from Fire” from the Associated Press</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 4 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 43 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art 4, Notre Dame Cathedral</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 9, Gothic Architectural Elements</li> <li>• Writing paper (1 sheet per student)</li> <li>• Pens/pencils (1 per student)</li> </ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will learn more about gargoyles and sculpt their own gargoyle out of clay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 10, Gargoyle Sculpture</li> <li>• Drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li> <li>• Pens/pencils (1 per student)</li> <li>• Clay (at least 2 lb. per student)</li> </ul> <p>Note: If clay is unavailable, consider using modeling compound, aluminum foil, or even paper sculpture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disposable or washable surface to work on (1 per group of students)</li> <li>• Plastic knives, toothpicks, and other sculpting tools (1 of each per student)</li> <li>• Bowls of water (1 per group of students)</li> <li>• Scissors (1 per group of students)</li> </ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Describe the different features of Gothic architecture and explain their purpose.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the characteristics of art in the European Middle Ages and created drawings using signature styles and themes.



## DAY 1: GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE

Introduce the lesson by explaining that Gothic architecture originated in medieval Europe. It developed in the twelfth century in France and later spread throughout Europe during the Middle Ages. Gothic architecture marked a shift from earlier Romanesque architecture and reflected changes in engineering, religious expression, and artistic style.

Ask students to write a list of types of buildings that they think existed during the Middle Ages.

Ask the following questions: Which types of buildings do you think were the most difficult to build? Why? (*Castles, churches, and cathedrals were probably the most difficult. They were large, required huge amounts of stone construction, were built with many decorative details and luxury materials, and sometimes took many years to complete.*)

### Gothic Cathedrals

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Inform students that a cathedral is a large church that was usually the most important church in a city or region during the Middle Ages. Cathedrals often contained holy relics, such as items owned by saints. In medieval times, people from all over Europe would travel to attend special services at cathedrals or make a pilgrimage to view specific relics or remains of saints.

Medieval European architects encountered new ideas, including the pointed arch, through increased contact with Islamic architecture via trade and the Crusades. These innovations were adapted into what became known as the Gothic style. Each one of these tremendous buildings required a staggering quantity of resources to construct and decorate.

When a decision was made to build a new cathedral in the Middle Ages, the first step would be to hire an architect. This architect would select master craftworkers and laborers to assist them. Quarriers, stonecutters, and masons were needed to mine, cut, and lay stone building blocks.

Sculptors were also hired to carve **statues**, or three-dimensional rounded sculptures of people and animals, and cut elaborate details into the stone. Carpenters built structures such as scaffolding and lifting equipment to aid construction. Blacksmiths forged tools and iron supports, and lead workers waterproofed the roofs with lead sheets or tiles. Tilers laid decorative tiles, and glassmakers crafted the windows.

Even more types of artisans and craftspeople were involved in this time-consuming and complex process. The chief architect would have as many as four hundred skilled craftworkers and laborers working five days a week from sunrise to sunset. Even so, it sometimes took more than a century to construct a single Gothic cathedral.

**SUPPORT**—Explain that buildings can be designed and constructed in a much shorter time today due to technology and that a medieval architect who designed a cathedral and those who first started building it would likely not live to see the finished monument.

### Elements of Gothic Architecture

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Several architectural features are associated with the Gothic style of architecture. First, the pointed arch, with curved sides and a pointed apex, acted as a sturdy support for the thin walls and tall ceilings found in Gothic architecture. Another structure that offered support to

the massive Gothic buildings is called the flying buttress. Flying buttresses were built on the outside of a building to stabilize, support, and reinforce its walls. They helped evenly distribute the weight that pushes down from the top of a massive structure. Because Gothic buildings were so sturdy and well reinforced, this allowed for the installation of enormous stained-glass windows—some as tall as sixty feet. These gorgeous windows were made by fusing segments of colored glass together with strips of lead. Sometimes, artists painted details over these glass pieces to add depth to the image. Their purpose was not only to add beauty to Gothic architecture and allow filtered light to enter but also to illustrate a religiously themed narrative.

Gothic architecture often included at least one tall tower topped with a **spire**, which was the tip of the tower that tapered to a sharp point. Spires were popular features of Gothic churches and cathedrals because they made it appear as though the buildings were reaching up to the heavens. **Gargoyles**, another popular feature of Gothic architecture, were statues that were carved into the sides or roofs of buildings. They were often made to look like monstrous creatures, and scholars interpret them as a reminder to medieval Europeans of their need for the Church's protection. Gargoyles also served as very ornate waterspouts, which helped redirect rainwater away from the building and prevent the erosion of the stonework.

## Art in This Lesson

### Notre Dame Cathedral



The Cathedral of Notre Dame was built on a small island in what is now the city of Paris. Historically, this island was the site of several religious structures built by Celts, Romans, and early Christians. The initial construction of Notre Dame took place between 1163 and 1345 CE, a time span of nearly two hundred years. Further modifications were made to the cathedral over the following centuries. A fire broke out in the cathedral in 2019, destroying its iconic spire. Services shut down for five years before reopening in 2024. During reconstruction, more than a thousand pieces of historic artwork were discovered hidden underneath the cathedral.



Every line created by the cathedral's form draws your attention upward. This was done intentionally to guide the viewer to look toward heaven. The cathedral has three special stained-glass windows called **rose windows**. Their round shape features a design that radiates from a central point. These rose windows create beautiful, colorful reflections of light inside the building.

### Background for Teacher

Inside Notre Dame Cathedral, the high vaulted ceilings are supported by intersecting pointed arches. This, combined with the support from flying buttresses outside, allowed the cathedral to have thin, towering walls and include 44 stained-glass windows that feature 220 religious narrative scenes. There are three gorgeous rose windows above the north, south, and west entrances. The entrances to the cathedral are also called **portals**, or elaborately decorated doorways. The portals of Notre Dame have tiered levels of carvings, with rows of sculptures of life-size figures standing at the bottom of each tier.



Page 43



Slide 4

Display Notre Dame Cathedral for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the building and think about what they see. Tell them to think about all the choices that went into the construction of this building. Tell students that this is an image of a cathedral in Paris, built in the Gothic style. Be sure students understand that thousands of tourists from around the world come to Paris and visit Notre Dame Cathedral each year.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS**

What are some features of Gothic architecture that you can see in this image?

- o I see flying buttresses, a spire, portals, elaborate statues, and a rose window.

Why do you think the round stained-glass windows are called *rose windows*?

- o The windows are circular or rounded like flower shapes, and the glass panes look like rose petals.

Why does this cathedral have flying buttresses?

- o They make the building sturdier by reinforcing the walls and supporting some of the building's weight.

### **Activity**



Page 9

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Gothic Architectural Elements activity. Prompt students to read the instructions and label the images using the word box.

### **Teaching Idea**



Connect to the virtual tour of Notre Dame Cathedral and navigate around the exterior and interior of the building to examine its architectural features. Note the towers, flying buttresses, gargoyles, and grand entranceway from the exterior view. Point out the tall ceilings, pointed arches, and stained-glass windows inside the cathedral. Then show students the Associated Press article “Then and Now: Notre Dame Cathedral’s Rebirth from Fire.” Show students the photos and move the slider on each photo from the April 2019 to December 2024 views of the cathedral.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific links to the tour and the article may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### **Check for Understanding**

Conclude the session by calling on students one at a time to name one distinguishing feature of Gothic architecture. Add each valid response to a list that is displayed where all students can see it.

## DAY 2: GARGOYLES

Introduce the lesson by reminding students that gargoyles are a prominent feature of Gothic architecture. They are stone waterspouts that work like today's gutters on modern homes. They were carved to look like frightening or monstrous humans or animals. Gargoyles often look as if they are protecting what they guard, such as a church.

Before showing students pictures of gargoyles, ask students to make a quick sketch of a gargoyle based on your description and using their imaginations.

Ask the following questions: What features did you give your gargoyle to make it look expressive, scary, or monstrous? (*Possible response: I gave it an ugly face or a scary expression.*) Why do you think the Church wanted their waterspouts to look animated, expressive, scary, or protective? (*Possible response: They may be meant to scare evil spirits from the church.*)

### Designing Gargoyles

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Remind students that medieval artists created gargoyles that were grotesque, monstrous, and disturbing. There are a few recurring portrayals among gargoyle designs that enhance the outside aesthetic of cathedrals. These themes include gaping mouths, disembodied heads, and combinations of different species of animals, including humans. Other gargoyles are religiously themed and illustrate cautionary tales from the Bible. Some monstrous gargoyles were based on local folklore or cultural beliefs, which also made some churchgoers think they could scare away evil spirits. They guarded and protected the outside of cathedrals to keep evil away from the sacred space inside. Thus, gargoyles held practical and symbolic roles. While they drained rainwater off the roof, they also portrayed creatures working to protect the church from evil spirits.

### Activity

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Page 10

Tell students that they will use the remaining lesson time to create their own gargoyle sculpture. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials for this project. Review the list of steps for the Gargoyle Sculpture activity in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand and review students' work before moving on to the next step. Follow the drying or firing instructions for the type of clay used for this project. If the clay is air-dry clay, set the sculpture somewhere safe to aerate and dry. After completing their sculptures, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

**SUPPORT**—You may want to help students research inspiration for their medieval gargoyle designs. Digitally display or print some images of gargoyles to share with students as examples for their artworks.

### Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students present their gargoyles. They should include a brief explanation describing the purpose of their gargoyle, its three-dimensional art features (form, shape, volume, line, etc.), and how they came up with their design. Ask students how Gothic cathedrals reflect what was important to people in medieval Europe.



# Unit 1 Lesson 7

## UNIT 1 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will make their own rose window and display their understanding of Unit 1 content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Online gallery of the medieval art collection from the Metropolitan Museum of Art</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slides 1–4 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 37–43<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne</i></li><li>• Chi Rho Page from the Book of Kells</li><li>• <i>The Unicorn in Captivity</i> (Tapestry)</li><li>• Notre Dame Cathedral</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 11, Rose Window</li><li>• White chalk (1 per student)</li><li>• Black construction paper with a circle drawn on it (1 per student)</li><li>• Plastic bowl, 7–8 inches across (teacher only)</li><li>• Scissors (1 per student)</li><li>• Colored tissue paper or cellophane (1 set of colors per student)</li><li>• Glue (1 stick or small bottle per student)</li></ul>

### Advance Preparation

To save classroom time, prepare each rose window outline ahead of time. Place a bowl face down on a sheet of construction paper for each student and trace around it to form a circle.

### Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 1. This is a performance-based assessment focused on creativity, use of elements of art, and conceptual understanding of medieval art themes.

### Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

## Review and Assessment

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Introduce the lesson by asking students to think about everything they have learned about art in the European Middle Ages. Discuss the defining features, themes, subject matter, styles, and religious purposes of various types of medieval art and architecture.

Ask students to describe characteristics of medieval art or architecture. Create a comprehensive list as students share their ideas, and display this list where all students can reference it during the rose window activity. This supports memory recall and provides visual support for emerging writers.

Ask the following questions: Why was most medieval artwork religiously themed? (*The Church commissioned most of the artwork and wanted to teach people about religion through art.*) Why did medieval artwork appear stylized or unrealistic rather than lifelike? (*Medieval art was intended to look supernatural, spiritual, and otherworldly.*)

## Review

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Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 1.

- The Christian Church was the dominant political and social force in western Europe during the Middle Ages. Medieval art was predominantly religious in nature.
- The Madonna, also known as Mary or Jesus's mother, was the subject of many paintings.
- Tapestries were designed and woven to both tell stories of Christianity and add decoration to medieval rooms.
- Monks created illuminated manuscripts to help educate people who were not members of the aristocracy, such as commoners or villagers, who often could not read, about Christian concepts and Bible stories.
- Flying buttresses, pointed arches, and stained-glass rose windows were important features of medieval architecture. Spires, gargoyles, towers, portals, statues, and other artwork further showed the Church's desire to connect heaven and earth.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Medieval art and architecture of western Europe reflect the central role of the Christian Church in shaping beliefs, practices, and artistic expression during the Middle Ages.* Review with students the activities they did in this unit, including creating decorated initials, weaving on a loom, drawing medieval art, and sculpting a gargoyle. Ask: Which activity best helped you understand how art reflected religious beliefs during the Middle Ages?

## Reviewing Medieval Art and Architecture

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Slides 1–4

Display the following pieces from earlier in the unit:

*Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne*

Chi Rho Page from the Book of Kells

*The Unicorn in Captivity* (Tapestry)

Notre Dame Cathedral

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS**

What do all these pieces have in common?

- o They are all examples of medieval art. They are all religiously themed. They are all created in an extraordinary, unrealistic, and highly decorative style.

How did the artists treat the empty space around or in the background of their artwork?

- o All the pieces are highly decorated with elaborate, intricate details. The empty space is completely filled with designs and patterns in the painting, manuscript, and tapestry. The cathedral is also covered with ornate details, including carvings in the stonework and highly decorative windows.

How were viewers in the European Middle Ages meant to feel when looking at this type of artwork or building?

- o Viewers were meant to feel amazed and inspired by looking at such beautiful and impressive artwork. This was meant to remind viewers of the Church's power and influence in their communities and inspire awe or reverence in a religious setting. It also served to connect heaven and earth as people entered and visited churches, centers of Christian worship.

### **Assessment**

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Page 11

Ask students to turn to page 11 in their Student Activity Book. Students will complete the assessment activity for this unit. Tell students that they will create their own rose window inside a circle on construction paper by using colored tissue paper or cellophane. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials necessary for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. Model how radial symmetry works in rose windows by sketching guiding lines from the center outward. Reinforce vocabulary like *symmetry*, *pattern*, and *repetition*. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a completed example of the finished project handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. Display the students' finished rose windows in a windowpane in front of sunlight or in a well-lit room so that light can shine through them. If cellophane or translucent tissue paper isn't available, white paper with vibrant coloring can be used. Displaying against a lit bulletin board also works as an alternative. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection question in their Student Activity Book.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding to encourage them to explore the artistic ideas they learned in the unit.

- o Students write a short essay in which they share their opinions about medieval art and architecture. For example, they could discuss specific features about a medieval style or facts about art creation during the Middle Ages that intrigued them.
- o Students choose one of the artworks they studied during the unit and give an oral presentation about what makes it characteristic of art of the Middle Ages.

## Teaching Idea



Display the online gallery of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's medieval art collection for students. If there is time, have students select one piece of art to research and present a short verbal or written report on. You might also consider assigning this task as homework. Students' reports should include an analysis of the work's defining characteristics that represent medieval art.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the gallery may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Additional Recommended Resources

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The following resources for students discuss medieval European art:

- Hunt, Jonathan. *Illuminations*. New York: Simon and Schuster's Children, 1989.
- Macaulay, David. *Castle*. New York: Clarion Books, 1982.
- Macaulay, David. *Cathedral: The Story of Its Construction*. New York: Clarion Books, 2014.
- Macaulay, David, et al. *Cathedral*. PBS Home Video, 1998. Videocassette (VHS).

Resources for teachers and parents:

- Freeman, Margaret. *The Unicorn Tapestries*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1976. Download a PDF of the book or read it online at <https://cdn.sanity.io/files/cctd4ker/production/6b57d3ba235db0b1faa95bab9162bbeda26abb11.pdf>.
- Grape, Wolfgang. *The Bayeux Tapestry: Monument to a Norman Triumph*. London: Prestel Publishing, 1994.
- King, Thomas H. *The Study-Book of Mediæval Architecture and Art*. 4 vols. London, 1868.
- Morgan, Margaret. *The Bible of Illuminated Letters: A Treasury of Decorative Calligraphy*. Hauppauge, NY: Barron's Educational Series, 2006.
- Norris, Michael. *Medieval Art: A Resource for Educators*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005. Download a PDF of the book or read it online at <https://www.metmuseum.org/met-publications/medieval-art-a-resource-for-educators>.



# Islamic Art and Architecture

**Big Idea** Islamic art and architecture are highly decorative and often emphasize abstract, geometric, and calligraphic design. Sacred Islamic art avoids the depiction of humans or animals, reflecting the principle of aniconism.

## Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Islamic Art and Architecture* unit. In this unit, you will teach students about religious and secular Islamic art. Sacred Islamic art includes works found in mosques and religious manuscripts, while secular Islamic art includes decorative objects, textiles, and palace architecture not tied directly to religious practice. The main idea throughout the unit is that Islamic design relies on the use of geometric, floral, and plant patterns as well as calligraphy. Students will also learn about fundamental Islamic architectural design features such as pointed arches, domes, and minarets.

This unit contains four lessons, split across six class days. There will be a unit assessment on Day 6. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for art. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 Characteristics of Islamic Art
2–3	Lesson 2 Patterns and Illumination

Day	Lesson
4–5	Lesson 3 Intersection of Art and Architecture
6	Lesson 4 Unit 2 Assessment

## What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2

- Elements of art: color, line, shape, texture
- Sculpture
- Kinds of pictures: portrait, still life, landscape

Grade 1

- Art from long ago: cave paintings, art of ancient Egypt

## Grade 2

- Abstract art
- Architecture

## Grade 3

- Elements of art: light, space, design
- Native American art
- Art of ancient Rome and the Byzantine civilization

## What Students Need to Learn

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In this unit, students will:

- Explore the stylistic features of different types of Islamic artwork, such as the use of geometric patterns;
- Identify and define characteristic features of Islamic architecture, such as pointed arches, domes, and minarets; and
- Identify and describe key architectural features of three important Islamic buildings: the Dome of the Rock (Mosque of Omar, Jerusalem), the Court of the Lions (the Alhambra Palace, Granada, Spain), and the Taj Mahal (Agra, India).

## What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

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In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about art from other cultures, explore cultures from new parts of the world, and study additional works of art.

## Grade 5

- Unit 1: *Art and Architecture: The Renaissance*
- Unit 3: *Nineteenth-Century American Art*
- Unit 5: *Art of Japan*

## Vocabulary

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**Allah, n.** the Arabic word for God **(38)**

*Example:* The Muslim people praised Allah when the drought finally ended.

**aniconism, n.** the practice of avoiding images of humans or animals in religious art; used in Islamic sacred art to focus attention on God's word and abstract beauty **(39)**

*Example:* Islamic illustrations in the Qur'an feature decorative geometric forms because aniconism does not allow God to be shown in human form.

**arabesque, n.** a term meaning "in the Arab style," referring to the complex, intertwined lines and shapes that make up typical Islamic design; a form of design using floral, plant, and curvilinear patterns **(39)**

*Example:* The tiles feature an ornate arabesque of intertwined flowers and leaves.

**calligraphy, n.** elegant, artistic handwritten script, usually made with a brush or flat-nib pen (38)

*Example:* The artist transcribed the Arabic words in beautiful calligraphy.

**dome, n.** a hemispheric vault or ceiling (45)

*Example:* A large, rounded dome sits on top of the building, its golden exterior glittering in the sunlight.

**idolatry, n.** the worship of a physical object as though it were a god (39)

*Example:* Sacred Islamic art avoids idolatry and focuses instead on God’s word and design.

**mausoleum, n.** a building that functions as a large tomb (47)

*Example:* The Taj Mahal is an example of a highly decorated mausoleum.

**minaret, n.** a prayer tower (45)

*Example:* The building is surrounded by four tall, slender, cylindrical minarets.

**mosque, n.** an Islamic place of worship (45)

*Example:* The mosque next to the Taj Mahal was built for Muslim prayer.

**muezzin, n.** a crier who calls the Muslim faithful to prayer (45)

*Example:* The muezzin alerted them that it was time to pray for the fifth and final time that day.

**Muslim, n.** Arabic word meaning “one who submits”; someone who follows the faith of Islam (38)

*Example:* The Muslim man prayed at a nearby mosque.

**Qur’an, n.** Arabic for “recitation”; the holy book of Islam, which Muslims believe consists of God’s revelations to the prophet Muhammad, and the cornerstone of Muslim faith, practice, and law (38)

*Example:* The side of the monument was inscribed with the holy words of the Qur’an.

**secular, adj.** not related to religion (39)

*Example:* Islamic art can have secular themes.

## Cross-Curricular Connections

This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students’ understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

### CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 4, Unit 4: *Medieval Islamic Empires*

Grade 4, Unit 5: *Early and Medieval African Kingdoms*

Grade 1, Unit 4, Chapter 5: “The History of Islam”

The Grade 4 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include an in-depth unit on medieval Islamic empires, consisting of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resources.

## Most Important Ideas

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The most important ideas in Unit 2 are as follows:

- Islamic art refers to both sacred (related to God) and secular (not related to God) works made in Islamic cultures or those they influenced. Public Islamic sacred art is aniconic and does not depict human figures or animals in godlike form.
- Islamic art is highly decorative and emphasizes the two-dimensional quality of its surfaces. Calligraphy and manuscript illustration are essential artistic expressions of Islamic culture.
- Domes, minarets, and pointed arches are important features of Islamic architecture.

## What Teachers Need to Know

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The study of Islamic art offers a perfect opportunity to examine Islam's contributions to global culture. For example, the pointed arch was a major architectural development in Islamic design that later influenced Gothic architecture in medieval Europe. Islamic art also provides a chance to explore the history surrounding it—for example, the translation and preservation of ancient Greek and Roman writings. You may want to begin the unit by asking: What kinds of art do you think we might find in cultures that avoid showing people or animals in their sacred spaces? Even mathematics is connected to Islamic art due to the use of Arabic numerals in calligraphy. As you move through this unit, help students understand how Islamic artworks embody and reflect information about Islamic ideas, beliefs, and society. Remind students that they are studying these works to learn about the Islamic culture's contributions to global art, not to judge or compare religions.

# Unit 2 Lesson 1

## CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC ART

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will match pictures to the Islamic art element they represent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 12, Identifying Elements of Islamic Art</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Recognize elements of both religious and secular Islamic art.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last unit, they learned about art in the European Middle Ages. Review how medieval art was often very ornate and extravagant, with decorative details and flat, stylized patterns.

## DAY 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC ART

Introduce the lesson by explaining that both Islamic and European medieval art are known for their elaborate decorative qualities, but they differ in their use of religious imagery and symbolism. Islamic art often avoids human or animal forms in religious contexts, while European art frequently depicts religious figures.

Ask students to think about art made in Islamic cultures and how its qualities might compare to those of European art.

Ask the following questions: What do you think were the main themes or subjects of Islamic art? (*Possible response: Religious texts may use plant designs, calligraphy, or geometric patterns; secular works may show people or animals.*) Do you think religious art will look different from nonreligious art? Why? (*Possible response: Yes; I think religious art will be highly decorated and show religious themes, and I think nonreligious art will show scenes of ordinary life with realistic details.*)

### Religious and Secular Islamic Art

Muhammad was the prophet who spread the religion of Islam in the early seventh century CE. **Muslims** believe that an angel shared divine wisdom with Muhammad. The angel claimed Muhammad was a messenger of **Allah**, which means “God” in Arabic. The **Qur’an** is the holy book of Islam, believed by Muslims to be the revelations of Allah shared with the prophet Muhammad. The religious text describes the faith, practice, and law of Islam. Because the book contained divine ideas, artists wrote the Qur’an using **calligraphy**, or elegant



handwritten script. Calligraphy became the primary artistic expression in religious Islamic art because the Qur'an's teachings forbid **idolatry**. This means that instead of using pictures of people or animals, artists used decorative writing and patterns to express religious devotion. Muslims considered this to be a suitable way to visually express the holy words of Allah.

**SUPPORT**—Inform students that Islamic art uses the Arabic alphabet or the alphabets derived from it. You may want to display the Arabic alphabet for students so they can recognize Islamic calligraphy and distinguish it from other decorative linear designs.

Islamic art can be separated into two categories: religious and **secular**. The word *secular* means not related to religion. Both religious and secular Islamic art place great importance on calligraphy. The Qur'an forbids idolatry, or the worship of images. Because of this, religious Islamic art demonstrates **aniconism** and is purely decorative in nature. Instead of human or animal figures, artists use **arabesques**, or decorative elements such as overlapping patterns, abstract shapes, and floral and other plant imagery. Such ornate designs can decorate the entire spaces of artworks.

Secular Islamic art sometimes includes human or animal figures, particularly in narrative or courtly scenes, depending on the region and time period. Arabesques and calligraphy are also commonly used in secular work, including stonework, woodwork, metalwork, pottery, glassware, textiles, and architecture. The surfaces of these objects are elegantly decorated using rich, lavish colors and gold leaf. Royal patrons often commissioned both sacred and secular art. They requested that the art be made of expensive materials because owning luxury artwork was a symbol of wealth, status, and importance.

Islamic artists focus on elements of pattern and linear design, emphasizing the flatness of the two-dimensional surfaces. *Linear design* refers to the use of lines, curves, and repeated shapes to form decorative patterns. You might show an example from an Islamic tile to help students visualize this. Historically, Islamic painters did not apply single-point perspective in their artwork but rather used multiple viewpoints or shifting perspective to tell a narrative story. To demonstrate shifting perspective, show students an Islamic painting in which objects appear stacked or layered in space instead of following a vanishing point. Ask them to find how different scenes or angles appear at once. For example, a figure's size does not accurately represent where it stands in the relative space in the scene. Also, the scene is often flattened, so it appears as though three-dimensional objects exist on one two-dimensional plane. Multiple events and perspectives are often depicted simultaneously to help tell stories or narrate events for viewers.

## Activity



Page 12

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Identifying Elements of Islamic Art activity. Prompt students to read the short passage and instructions before labeling the images with the terms in the word box.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by reviewing the artistic characteristics and history of Islamic art. Ask: What are three features that make Islamic religious art different from European medieval art? What do Islamic artists do instead of showing people in religious paintings? Discuss with students the defining features of both secular and religious works.

# Unit 2 Lesson 2

## PATTERNS AND ILLUMINATION

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will create artwork out of repeating geometric patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 5 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 45<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 5, Illumination of the Qur'an</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 13, Create a Geometric Pattern</li><li>• Graph paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Rulers (1 per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Colored pencils, colored pens, markers, or crayons (1 set per group of students)</li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will complete their artwork of repeating geometric patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 13, Create a Geometric Pattern</li><li>• Graph paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Rulers (1 per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Colored pencils, colored pens, markers, or crayons (1 set per group of students)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Analyze how and why geometric patterns were used in Islamic art and illuminated manuscripts.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the common characteristics of religious and secular Islamic art. They also learned about arabesques, which consist of geometric shapes and patterns.

## DAY 1: GEOMETRIC PATTERNS

Introduce the lesson by explaining that Islamic art often uses geometric patterns. Geometric patterns are made by repeating shapes like squares, circles, and triangles in a consistent and often symmetrical way.

Ask students if they can identify an item they own or have seen that features a geometric pattern.

Ask the following question: Why do Islamic artists use a lot of geometric patterns in their art? (Possible response: *It makes the art look beautiful, decorative, and ornate. Because their art is aniconic, they can't depict humans or animals in their religious art.*)

### The Illuminated Qur'an



Page 45



Slide 5

Display the illumination of the Qur'an for students. Explain that in Islamic culture, illuminated manuscripts were handwritten texts that included colorful decorations in and around the margins of books or texts on special paper. Such decorations often embellished the beautiful calligraphy of these handwritten artworks. Secular manuscripts were also decorated with royal figures, common people, and both real and mythological animals. Ask students to point out similarities and differences between Islamic illuminated manuscripts and the Christian ones they examined in the first unit. Ask: How do both traditions use borders and symmetry? What imagery appears in one but not the other? This supports recall of prior learning.

According to some interpretations of Islam, humans and animals are not allowed to be depicted in religious works due to aniconic beliefs. Because of this, artists creatively embellished and decorated holy artwork such as the Qur'an. The main way they achieved this was through ornate calligraphy and exquisite linear, floral, or geometric patterns. The beauty of Islamic artists' calligraphy and pattern work was the focal point of the illuminated Qur'an. The importance of the Qur'an led to the development of very decorative and ornate calligraphic styles. The letters were written in such an elaborate and flowing style that they often blended in with the surrounding decorative patterns. This type of calligraphy would continue to be used in both religious and secular art throughout the centuries.

**SUPPORT**—Point out the connection between geometric patterns in art and the properties of geometric shapes students have learned about in mathematics. Consider creating a chart of common shapes (square, hexagon, star) and where they appear in Islamic design. This helps bridge visual arts and math vocabulary.

## Art in This Lesson

### Illumination of the Qur'an



Muslims believe that Muhammad received revelations from the angel Gabriel between the years 610 and 632 CE. After Muhammad's death in 632 CE, his followers compiled the revelations into a standard version of the Qur'an. This version was created in 1519 CE and contained fourteen suras, or chapters, in total.



The artist uses color, shape, and line to fill the space with elaborate patterns and calligraphy.

### Background for Teacher

This spread from an illuminated Qur'an was produced in 1519, likely in Herat, a historic cultural center in present-day Afghanistan. The book was perhaps decorated by the famous Qur'an illuminator Yari Mudhahhib. Underneath the text, a Persian translation is included in red. The writing is in the center of the page with symmetrical decoration. Vertical, horizontal, and curving lines are used in the design, and geometric and organic shapes are employed for variety. You may wish to remind students of the meaning of *symmetrical* and review names of quadrilaterals before discussing the artwork they will see.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

What are the two main colors the artist used in the bordering circular geometric patterns?

- o The artist used blue and gold.

How would you describe the shapes and patterns that make up the blue and gold borders around the pages?

- o I see blue and gold diamond shapes, or quadrilaterals, that repeat to create a pattern. The shapes have patterns drawn within them.

Why were pages from the Qur'an decorated with complex patterns?

- o Illustrators were not allowed to depict humans or animals in religious art, so they drew abstract patterns instead. These designs help add beauty to the Qur'an to show the importance and magnificence of its holy words.

## Activity



Page 13

Tell students that they will create their own geometric pattern on grid paper. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. Inform students that they should take their time creating their designs and that it's OK if they don't finish their projects in one class period because this activity will continue into the next day's session.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by discussing with students why elaborate and decorative geometric patterns were important in Islamic art.

## DAY 2: CONTINUING THE PATTERNS

Introduce the lesson by reviewing the previous discussion about geometric patterns used in Qur'an illuminations.

Ask students to take out their geometric pattern project from the previous lesson. Have them reflect on the progress they have made on their project so far.

Ask the following questions: Do you feel like you are creating a successful pattern? What has been the most difficult part of this project? What strategies are helping you keep your pattern consistent? (*Answers will vary*).

## Activity

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Page 13

Tell students that they will finish their geometric pattern project. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work. Provide assistance to students as needed. Ensure that students are drawing each “building block” of the pattern clearly and consistently, using the same sizes, shapes, coloration, and spacing as the previous grouping of shapes in their pattern. As students finish drawing their patterns, encourage them to carefully fill in the shapes with colors that also form a pattern. You could also demonstrate a simple color sequence like ABAB or ABCABC to help students apply intentional patterning with color. Remind students that their finished artwork should look intentional and patterned, just like the illuminated manuscripts they studied.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students share their geometric pattern project. Prompt students to identify the geometric shapes they included in their patterns and explain the coloration of their artworks. Have them describe their artistic process.



# Unit 2 Lesson 3

## INTERSECTION OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will identify elements of Islamic architecture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slides 6–7 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 47–49<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 6, Court of the Lions</li><li>• Art 7, Dome of the Rock</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 14, Islamic Architecture</li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will design architectural plans for an Islamic building or monument.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of Taj Mahal from Google Arts and Culture</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 8 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 51<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 8, Taj Mahal</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 15, Architectural Plans</li><li>• Sketch paper (2 sheets per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Rulers (1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Identify the defining structural and decorative features of Islamic architecture.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about geometric patterns in Islamic artwork. In this lesson, students will be able to identify similar decorative elements of Islamic architecture.

## DAY 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF ISLAMIC ARCHITECTURE

Introduce the lesson by reminding students of the decorative elements of religious Islamic art. Discuss how it relies on abstract patterns, calligraphy, and rich colors.

Ask students how Islamic architectural design might reflect the same beliefs and artistic features seen in Islamic art, such as aniconism, use of symmetry, and geometric or floral decoration.

Ask the following question: What do you think holy Islamic buildings have in common with decorative Islamic artwork? (*They are both decorated with geometric and floral patterns, as*

well as rich colors and gold. They both are aniconic and don't depict humans or animals in their religious art.)

## Features of Islamic Architecture

Three of the most prominent features of Islamic architecture are pointed arches, **domes**, and **minarets**. Pointed arches are significant because of the structural integrity they add to buildings. They helped support taller buildings with thinner walls, which allowed more light and decoration.

**SUPPORT**—In the previous unit, students learned about the pointed arch and its significance in Gothic architecture. Remind students that Europeans adopted this architectural idea from the Muslims during the Crusades.

A **mosque** is an Islamic place of worship. One or more domes, or large hemispherical structures, are usually incorporated in the ceilings and roofs of mosques. They are usually positioned over the holiest prayer spaces within the mosque. Domes often symbolize the heavens or the universe in Islamic religious architecture, conveying a spiritual sense of awe and the presence of the divine above. Because of their importance, the domes' exteriors are often covered in gold, and the interiors are very elaborately decorated with geometric, linear, or floral designs in rich colors.

A minaret is a tall, slender prayer tower. A **muezzin** is a person who stands on the minaret's balcony to call Muslims to prayer five times a day. While these architectural features appear in both secular and religious buildings, only secular Islamic architecture includes human or animal figures, as religious works avoid figural imagery due to aniconism.

The Taj Mahal is an Islamic tomb that features all three of these architectural elements: pointed arches, domes, and minarets. Domes and pointed arches are often featured in secular Islamic structures such as palaces, inns, hospitals, and bazaars. Many types of Islamic buildings are also decorated with calligraphy, geometric designs, or floral patterns.

## Art in This Lesson

### Court of the Lions



The Court of the Lions was commissioned by the Nasrid sultan Muhammad V of the Emirate of Granada in Al-Andalus. Its construction started in the second period of his reign, between 1362 and 1391 CE.



The shape of the courtyard is a square that contains a series of both rounded and pointed arches. The courtyard also contains a dodecagonal platform and circular basin for a fountain. The fountain is inscribed with Arabic text and has sculptures of lions on each side.

### Background for Teacher

The courtyard is elegant and designed to showcase the wealth and grace of the Alhambra's rulers. This concept is reinforced by the calligraphy found around the fountain that claims the fierce lions behave tamely out of respect for the king.



**After students have viewed the Court of the Lions, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS**

Page 47

What type of animal statues are standing around the fountain?

- o Statues of lions surround the fountain.



Slide 6

What kinds of images are typically avoided in Islamic religious art?

- o Humans and animals are typically avoided in Islamic religious art.

Is this an example of religious or secular architecture? How do you know?

- o This is secular architecture, because lions would typically not be allowed to be depicted in religious Islamic art and architecture because it is aniconic.

## **Art in This Lesson**

### **Dome of the Rock**



The Dome of the Rock was commissioned by Abd al-Malik, a member of the first Muslim dynasty. The monument was built in Jerusalem between 688 and 691 CE as a shrine to the Muslim prophet Muhammad.



The form of the building was composed of a raised, octagon-shaped structure topped with an elliptical dome. The dome's golden color symbolizes the importance and magnificence of the building.

### **Background for Teacher**

Abd al-Malik chose Jerusalem as the building site because it had religious significance to Jewish, Christian, and Muslim worshippers. He wanted to mark Jerusalem as a Muslim holy place and assert the importance of Islam as a religion. He also sought to assert Islam's place among the Abrahamic religions and mark Jerusalem as a site of Islamic spiritual significance. Today, the Dome of the Rock serves as a shrine for pilgrims. It is a shrine, not a mosque, though it is part of a larger religious complex that includes the Al-Aqsa Mosque.



**After students have viewed the Dome of the Rock, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS—**

Page 49

What features of Islamic architecture do you notice?



Slide 7

- o The structure includes a large dome of gold, pointed arches, columns, and straight walls that form a geometric shape. There are also decorative tiles of blue and yellow that create elaborate geometric patterns.

What does the use of gold tell you about this building?

- o The person who commissioned it had lots of wealth and status. It also symbolized the shrine's importance and magnificence to pilgrims who visited it.

How do the windows of the Dome of the Rock compare to the stained-glass windows we learned about previously?

- o They are colorful. They contain geometric shapes. They do not contain images of humans or animals.

## Activity



Page 14

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Islamic Architecture activity. Prompt students to read the instructions and match the images to the vocabulary in the word box.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students discuss and summarize the defining features of Islamic architecture.

## DAY 2: EXPLORING THE TAJ MAHAL

Introduce Day 2 of the lesson by briefly reviewing Day 1.

Ask students to think about the most iconic and recognizable features of Islamic architecture. Distribute one sheet of sketch paper, a pencil, and an eraser to each student. Ask students to draw a quick sketch of a building that includes at least two features of Islamic architecture they've learned about. They can sketch a single building with multiple Islamic features or separate images that represent different architectural types, such as a shrine, a mosque, or a mausoleum.

Ask the following questions: What are some of the features you represented in your drawings? (*domes, pointed arches, minarets, mosaic tiles, animal statues, floral patterns, geometric patterns, golden materials, etc.*) What Islamic buildings did you sketch? (*Possible responses: a shrine, a mosque, a monument*) Which of the features of Islamic architecture do you find most eye-catching or beautiful? (*Answers will vary.*) Is your sketch of a religious or secular building? (*Answers will vary.*)

## Constructing the Taj Mahal

Explain to students that the Taj Mahal might look like a palace fit for royalty, but it actually functions as a **mausoleum**, or a large tomb. Shah Jahan and his wife Mumtaz Mahal shared a particularly close personal bond, which inspired the construction of a grand mausoleum in her honor—an extraordinary expression of love for a royal couple in that historical context. Most royal marriages were for political or economic purposes rather than an expression of true love between two people. After Mumtaz Mahal's passing, the emperor commissioned an extravagant mausoleum. The Taj Mahal was built between 1630 and 1653 CE as the final resting place for his beloved wife.

It is likely that the person who designed the Taj Mahal was Ustad Ahmad Lahori, an Indian architect of Persian descent. The architect hired skilled workers from Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Europe to help construct the grand mausoleum. It took about twenty thousand masons, craftworkers, sculptors, and calligraphers more than twenty years to complete the task.

The Taj Mahal contains four main features: the main gateway, the garden, the mosque, and the mausoleum. The exterior of the building is decorated with floral patterns and calligraphic text from the Qur'an. The monument was constructed and decorated with lavish materials such as marble, jade, crystal, turquoise, and sapphire, which would cost a large sum in today's money—possibly more than US\$800 million.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students of the connection between this lesson and “The Story of the Taj Mahal” in Core Knowledge Language Arts.

## Art in This Lesson

### Taj Mahal



Shah Jahan, a Muslim emperor during the Mughal reign in India, commissioned the Taj Mahal as a mausoleum for his beloved wife. The building was constructed around 1630–1653 CE.



The white marble of the Taj Mahal is a symbol of purity and spirituality. The main structure features a grand entrance in the shape of a pointed arch and two tiers of smaller pointed arches. From the front view, three domes can be seen on the roof of the mausoleum. It is also surrounded by four tall, slender, cylindrical minarets.

### Background for Teacher

The domes of other buildings can be seen on the left and right sides of the Taj Mahal. A guesthouse sits parallel to its eastern wall, and a mosque sits facing west, toward Mecca. These two buildings have very similar exteriors, which creates symmetry when viewing the Taj Mahal from the front.



**After students have viewed the Taj Mahal, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

Page 51

What attracts your attention to this building?



Slide 8

- o The gardens, trees, and water in front of the building may lead students' eyes to its architecture. The domes, minarets, pointed arches, and detailed stonework of the building also attract attention.

What do you think the building might be used for?

- o Answers may include a mosque, a royal palace, or a house for a wealthy Muslim.

What three examples of important Islamic architectural features do you see on the Taj Mahal?

- o Domes, minarets, and pointed arches are seen on the Taj Mahal.



## Activity

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Page 15

Tell students that they have been tasked with creating their own architectural plans for a monument or a building, such as a shrine or mosque, inspired by Islamic architecture. Tell students their design should include some of the Islamic art elements they have been learning about, such as domes, minarets, and pointed arches. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

### Teaching Idea



Connect to a virtual tour of the Taj Mahal and explore the details of its architecture with students.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students share their architectural plan sketches. Prompt each student to give a short presentation explaining the design and purpose of their mosque, shrine, or monument.

# Unit 2 Lesson 4

## UNIT 2 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will answer questions about the Taj Mahal as a review of Unit 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 16, Taj Mahal</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 2.

### Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

### Review and Assessment

Introduce the lesson by asking students to think about everything they have learned about the characteristics of Islamic art and architecture. Discuss the defining features, themes, styles, and religious purposes of various types of Islamic art and architecture.

### Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 2.

- Islamic art refers to both sacred and secular works made in Islamic cultures or those they influenced. Public Islamic sacred art is aniconic, which means it does not depict human figures or animals.
- Islamic art is highly decorative and emphasizes the two-dimensional quality of its surfaces. Calligraphy and manuscript illustration are essential artistic expressions of Islamic culture.
- Domes, minarets, and pointed arches are important features of Islamic architecture.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Islamic art and architecture are highly decorative and often emphasize abstract, geometric, and calligraphic design. Sacred Islamic art avoids the depiction of humans or animals, reflecting the principle of aniconism.* Ask students: How did the artwork we studied help you remember the Big Idea of this unit? Discuss with students the activities they did in this unit, such as creating an original geometric pattern and designing Islamic architectural designs and floor plans.

## Assessment

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Page 16

Ask students to turn to page 16 in their Student Activity Book. Students will complete the assessment activity for this unit. Prompt students to answer the Explore and Reflection questions independently.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the artistic ideas they learned in the unit.

- o Play a game in which you display photos of world artwork or architecture and have students name the piece.
- o Show various examples of art and architecture, both Islamic and non-Islamic, and ask students: "Is this Islamic art? Why or why not?" This can reinforce their understanding of the characteristics of Islamic art and architecture.
- o Have students write an opinion essay on the artistic importance of Islamic art and/or architecture in general.
- o Show the class pictures of three buildings: the Dome of the Rock, the Alhambra, and the Taj Mahal. Give each student a chart divided into three columns, and ask them to write down the distinguishing Islamic architectural characteristics of the three buildings. You may wish to complete the first row of the chart together as a class before students proceed independently. After students complete the three columns, have them write a paragraph saying which building is their favorite and why. Make sure that they use supporting details from their observations in their paragraphs.

## Additional Recommended Resources

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Consider using the following trade books that discuss Islamic art and architecture for students:

- Beardwood, Mary. *Discovering Islamic Art: A Children's Guide with Activity Sheets*. Cowes, U.K.: Medina Publishing, 2015.
- Dutemple, Lesley A. *The Taj Mahal*. Great Building Feats. Minneapolis: Lerner, 2003.
- Stierlin, Henri. *Art and Architecture: From Isfahan to the Taj Mahal*. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2005.

Consider using the following resources for teachers and parents:

- Ettinghausen, Richard, et al. *Islamic Art and Architecture, 650-1250*. 2nd ed. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001.
- Hillenbrand, Robert. *Islamic Art and Architecture*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1999.
- Irving, Washington. *Bracebridge Hall; Tales of a Traveller; The Alhambra*. Edited by Charles Neider. New York: Modern Library, 1952.
- The Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery compose the National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The museum's website, [www.asia.si.edu](http://www.asia.si.edu), is a source of images and other information on Islamic art.

# The Art of Africa

**Big Idea** African art can serve sacred, ceremonial, symbolic, aesthetic, and daily functions.

## Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Art of Africa* unit. In this unit, you will teach students about both traditional and contemporary African artwork. Most traditional African art objects, such as bronze busts, masks, and headdresses, served the purpose of honoring an important person or channeling spiritual energy. African art is very stylized, using abstracted shapes, forms, and patterns to portray real subjects such as humans or animals. Stylized means the artwork emphasizes design and symbolic shapes rather than lifelike accuracy. Traditional African designs have inspired contemporary artists from all over the world.

This unit contains five lessons, split across seven class days. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for art. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 Introduction to Art of Africa
2–3	Lesson 2 Portraying Leaders
4–5	Lesson 3 Masks: Carvings and Sculptures

Day	Lesson
6	Lesson 4 Contemporary and Ancient Connections
7	Lesson 5 Unit 3 Assessment

## What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2

- Elements of art: color, line, shape, texture
- Sculpture
- Kinds of pictures: portrait, still life, landscape

Grade 1

- Art from long ago: cave paintings, art of ancient Egypt

Grade 2

- Abstract art
- Architecture

### Grade 3

- Elements of art: light, space, design
- Native American art
- Art of ancient Rome and the Byzantine civilization

### What Students Need to Learn

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In this unit, students will:

- Understand the wide-ranging artistic styles and functions of African art;
- Understand the spiritual purposes and significance of African art;
- Compare African art purposes to the religious and ceremonial art of medieval Europe or Islamic architecture studied earlier in the year;
- Analyze how leaders are portrayed in traditional African art;
- Analyze the form and function of traditional African masks and headdresses; and
- Compare the artistic features of contemporary African artwork with those of traditional African art, examine African art's influence on other cultures, and explore the mediums of modern African art such as collage.

### What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

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In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about visual arts, explore other cultures and time periods, and study additional works of art.

### Grade 5

- Unit 1: *Art and Architecture: The Renaissance*
- Unit 3: *Nineteenth-Century American Art*
- Unit 5: *Art of Japan*

### Vocabulary

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**apprenticeship, n.** a period of a person's life spent learning a craft or trade from another person **(64)**

*Example:* The blacksmith required a seven-year apprenticeship from his students.

**bust, n.** a sculpture of the head and shoulders of a person **(59)**

*Example:* The museum has a bust of Aristotle on display.

**collage, n.** a piece of art made by adding materials such as photos, prints, or small objects to a backing of paper or wood **(69)**

*Example:* The collage was made from magazine prints and photographs.

**ivory, n.** a hard material from the teeth and tusks of animals, usually elephants, that is used in many forms of African art **(59)**

*Example:* The sale or trade of raw ivory is now considered illegal.



**oba, n.** a term used for a king in some African societies (59)

*Example:* In times of crisis, the villagers looked to their oba for help.

**pigment, n.** matter used to color something (59)

*Example:* Indigo dye is the most common pigment used to color denim cloth.

## Cross-Curricular Connections

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This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

### CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 4, Unit 5: *Early and Medieval African Kingdoms*

The Grade 4 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include an in-depth unit on medieval African kingdoms, consisting of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resources.

## Most Important Ideas

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The most important ideas in Unit 3 are as follows:

- There is no single, unifying African art style because different cultures of the continent exhibit wide-ranging styles.
- Art is integral to virtually all traditional African cultures and to every aspect of life.
- Some African art is exclusively decorative, but the vast majority serves a functional, ritual, ceremonial, and/or celebratory purpose, including items such as woven baskets, pottery, and stools, which were used in homes and everyday community life.
- African art is a part of ever-evolving, living traditions. Present-day artists in Africa may follow established traditions, link to contemporary trends, or work with no reference to traditional art.

## What Teachers Need to Know

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Africa is a vast continent made up of more than fifty countries and thousands of ethnic groups. Because of this, African art varies widely depending on the region, language, and cultural traditions of each society. Many African cultures historically did not have a single word for *art* as a separate category. Instead, artistic practices were embedded in daily life, rituals, and social customs. Historically, Africans made no distinction between art and everyday life. Explain that in many African cultures, art is a living tradition, often used in rituals, storytelling, or ceremonies, not created just for display like in many Western museums. The African art in Lessons 1–3 comes from the past, and Lesson 4 covers contemporary African art. Lessons 1–3 focus on traditional African art forms such as portrait busts, masks, and ceremonial objects, while Lesson 4 introduces students to contemporary African artists and the influence of traditional art on modern practices. Today, many people in African countries live in urban settings and may have limited daily contact with traditional customs. However, some modern African peoples draw inspiration from their past cultural traditions, beliefs, and heritage.

# Unit 3 Lesson 1

## INTRODUCTION TO ART OF AFRICA

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
DAY 1	Students will learn that African art has practical and traditional purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of the Sainsbury African Galleries from Google Arts and Culture</li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 17, Map of Africa</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Compare the purposes and functions of African art to art of other cultures.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about Islamic art and architecture. Explain that they will continue to look at artwork of other cultures and parts of the world.

## DAY 1: INTRODUCTION TO ART OF AFRICA

Introduce the lesson by discussing with students the vast variety of African cultures and countries, each with its own language, natural environment, history, traditions, beliefs, and art.

Ask students to name a country in Africa and an interesting fact they know about that country.

Ask the following questions: Do you think art from different countries in Africa looks similar or different? Why? (*I think the art will look different because the various African countries have unique cultures and traditions.*)

### Form and Function

The way many traditional African cultures view art differs greatly from Western perspectives. In Western societies, “art” is often separated from people’s daily lives. Modern Western people visit museums, galleries, or other public spaces to view artwork. The purpose of most modern artwork is primarily to be appreciated for its visual or conceptual qualities. For instance, much medieval European art was created to serve religious purposes, and it often also functioned as a decorative status symbol for wealthy or powerful patrons.

While traditional African art was also admired for its beauty, it mainly had practical and ceremonial purposes. As in other medieval cultures, African art pieces signified authority and power. They were also used to appease the spirits to bring fertility, health, or success to people’s lives. African art was also created to honor important people, such as royalty. Like traditional African art, Roman, Greek, and Native American artworks often served religious, ceremonial, or political functions in addition to being admired for their craftsmanship.

Many African art objects were functional and used as a part of ceremonies, rituals, festivals, and celebrations. Often, only certain people were allowed to be in charge of or use particular art objects. For instance, only royalty, chiefs, and other esteemed individuals commissioned and used carved staffs, thrones, or elaborately beaded crowns. When not in use, these special objects were usually stored out of sight of the public eye.

Wearable art pieces also communicated social information about individuals within an African community. For example, in the South African Ndebele (/un\*deh\*BELL\*ay/) tribe, females wore a different type of beaded garment depending on if they were young girls, going through puberty, married, giving birth, or participating in a son's initiation. These garments helped communicate a woman's role and stage in life, serving as wearable symbols of cultural identity, respect, and tradition. Anyone within the community would be able to tell what point in life a female was in just by looking at the style of ornate clothing she wore on such special occasions.

**SUPPORT**—To help students understand the purpose of wearable art pieces, compare the African custom of wearing particular garments with the idea that Western women may wear engagement rings and wedding rings to show their marriage status.

## Activity



Page 17

Have students view Student Activity Book page 17, Map of Africa. Explain that this is a map of the many countries located in the continent of Africa. Refer to this map throughout the unit whenever the name of a new African country is mentioned. As you go through the lessons in this unit, have students consult this page, locate the country of study, and circle it on the map. Have students answer the two geographic questions at the bottom of the page. Ask students how geography might influence the materials or styles of art created in a region.

## Teaching Idea



Connect to a virtual tour of the Sainsbury African Galleries and explore the exhibit together with students. Look at the different masks and objects and have students guess what each one was used for.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the purposes of African art. Then compare these functions to the artwork of other cultures. Ask students to think about the following questions: How was African art used in ceremonies? How was Islamic or European art used in religious or royal settings? What similarities and differences can you find?

# Unit 3 Lesson 2

## PORTRAYING LEADERS

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will examine sculptural portrait busts that represent African leaders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slides 9–10 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 53–55<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 9, Benin Bronze Head</li><li>• Art 10, Portrait Head of an Ife King</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 18, Benin Bronze Head and Portrait Head of an Ife King</li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will create a royal self-portrait to communicate a personal artistic message.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 19, Royal Self-Portrait</li><li>• Markers, crayons, pens, colored pencils, and/or watercolor paint sets (1 set per group of students)</li><li>• Drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Analyze how leaders are portrayed in traditional African art.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about the various functions of traditional African art. They examined how African art often has a purpose beyond its aesthetics, including how it was used to honor important people or as functional art for rituals or ceremonies.

## DAY 1: SCULPTURAL BUSTS

Introduce the lesson by explaining how cultures around the world often honor their leaders by immortalizing them with a portrait. Many cultures, past and present, have honored leaders through portraits, whether painted, photographed, or sculpted. These artworks help communicate power, leadership, and ideals to the viewer. Discuss the different mediums used to create portraits of leaders, such as paint on canvas, metal or stone sculptures, photography, and so on. Remind students of portraits they may already be familiar with, such as presidential portraits or the presidential carvings of Mount Rushmore.

Ask students to name a specific portrait of a leader that they have seen or studied before. Have them name the medium and describe how the leader was portrayed in the portrait.

Ask the following questions: What information does a portrait give viewers about the subject? *(It provides viewers with an image of how the person looked. It may also provide clues about their personality, character, and interests.)* Why might artists want to create portraits of their leaders? *(They might want to show respect or admiration for their leaders. Sometimes, people also want to immortalize leaders in artwork to inform future generations about their deeds.)*

## Portrait Heads

Inform students that West African sculptors created idealized portraits of royalty between 1400 and the 1700s CE, typically of the **oba**, the African king, or the queen mother. These stylized portrait busts included idealized features, such as wide-open oval eyes, pronounced facial features, perfectly smooth skin, a long neck, a tall conical hairstyle, and exquisite garments and accessories. *Idealized* means the person was shown in a perfect or improved way, not exactly how they looked in real life. Artists represented royal figures this way in order to convey their glory and power to viewers.

The rings worn around women’s (and sometimes men’s) necks also represented beauty and importance within the community. In some West African cultures, long necks symbolized beauty and refinement. Neck rings were worn to enhance this appearance and to signal the wearer’s wealth and social importance.

Traditional African artists worked with all sorts of materials, including wood, metal, clay, cloth, **pigments** (natural substances used to apply color), shells, skin, horns, **ivory** (the tusks of elephants), feathers, and bone. During this time, artists often immortalized their royal leaders with a portrait **bust**, or sculpture of the head and shoulders, which was cast in bronze or brass. These 3D artworks were quite popular in the country of Benin in West Africa, so this type of portrait is referred to as a “Benin head.” The artists who made them worked for the king and were highly esteemed. Before casting the heads, the sculptors prayed and prepared an offering to the gods. This ritual reflected the deep respect for the spiritual connection between the artist, the oba, and the ancestors.

**SUPPORT**—Encourage students to try to find Benin on their map of Africa. After providing them ample time, point out that it is located next to Togo. Ask: What kinds of ideas or materials do you think people might have shared with their neighbors? Have them circle Benin on their map.

**TEACHER NOTE**—Clarify for students that the modern use of ivory is illegal to protect endangered species of elephants.



Pages 53–55

Display the Benin bronze head and the portrait head of an Ife king for students, and have them turn to the corresponding pages in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the artworks and think about what they see.



Slides 9–10

## Art in This Lesson

### Benin Bronze Head



In the kingdom of Benin, which existed between 1000 and 1897 CE, a new oba would commission a bronze head sculpture such as this one to honor the memory and spirit of his predecessor. These sculptures were called *uhunmwun elao* and were specifically sculpted using luxury materials like bronze and coral beads to convey great power.



The sculpture is cylindrical in shape and in the form of a human head. The top, bottom, and sides of the sculpture are heavily textured to represent elaborate ornamentation.

### Background for Teacher

This particular sculpted head was placed on a royal altar. It also served as a pedestal for a carved ivory tusk. The people of Benin believed that the head represented a person's well-being and spiritual destiny. It was used as a conduit for ritual communication with royal ancestors.

### Portrait Head of an Ife King



This sculpture is from Ife (/EE\*fay/), a city located in what is now the country of Nigeria. It was made by the Yoruba (/your\*OO\*ba/) people of the twelfth to fourteenth century CE. It is thought to be a portrait of an oni (king) or a god in the form of one.



The sculpture is crafted in the form of a human head with a neck that is cylindrical in shape. Linear striations or ridges appear on the face, and the headdress is heavily textured with intricate patterns.

### Background for Teacher

The ancient city of Ife was (and still is) the sacred city of the Yoruba people. This portrait head is unique because of its elaborate headdress or crown. The striations on the face represent ritual scarification.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

Look at the Benin bronze head. Who do you think this person might be?

- o This person might be an African king.

What is the Benin bronze head wearing?

- o The person is wearing many neck rings and an ornate headdress.

How would you describe how the artist used texture in the portrait head of an Ife king?

- o The artist carved even lines or ridges that follow the form of the king's face. The texture on the face complements the weave-like texture on the headdress.



## Activity



Page 18

Tell students they will now answer the activity questions in their Student Activity Book based on the two portraits. Prompt students to answer the Explore and Reflection questions independently.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing the artistic carved features of bronze African royal portrait heads.

## DAY 2: ROYAL SELF-PORTRAIT

Introduce the lesson by briefly reviewing the material from the previous day. Ask students to think about the concept of “idealized features” and why kings and queens wanted to be viewed in this fashion as opposed to realistically.

Ask the following question: Why did kings and queens want to be remembered as idealized or perfect? (*Kings and queens wanted people to remember the great things about them and not their imperfections.*)

## The Idealized Self

Tell students to imagine that they are a royal leader, and a portrait head will be made of them. Tell them that just like some of the sculptures they have been looking at, their sculpture will last for more than three hundred years. This day will be dedicated to the student creation of an imaginary royal self-portrait.

Encourage students to take a few minutes to think about how they would like to portray themselves and what clues they would like their portrait head to convey to people looking at it three hundred years from now. Students may include some realistic features to show how they look, but they should also use symbols and imaginative details to show their power and royal status.

Guide students as they think about the artistic message they want to communicate about the type of royal leader they see themselves as. Students may wish to idealize the portrait by beautifying or exaggerating certain features of their appearance or personality. Offer ideas such as wearing a large headdress or crown, fancy jewelry, or luxurious robes. They could also draw themselves with a serene expression or a fancy hairdo. Students should focus on communicating the meaning of their self-portrait through their use of design, color, shape, and space, all in a compositional background. Encourage students to think symbolically. What colors or shapes could represent wisdom, strength, or kindness? Just like the illumination of their initials from Unit 1, this sculpture should convey individuality and reflect the student’s personality.

## Activity

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Page 19

Tell students that they will create an imaginary royal self-portrait. Explain that they should use design, color, shape, adornment, and a compositional background to communicate their artistic meaning. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students present their self-portraits. They should discuss the message they chose to convey and how they used color, shape, and decorative details to communicate that message.

# Unit 3 Lesson 3

## MASKS: CARVINGS AND SCULPTURES

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will learn about the various carvings and sculptures of African cultures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Image of Ci Wara headdress from the Metropolitan Museum of Art</li><li>• Collection of African face masks from the Art Institute of Chicago</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slides 11–12 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 57–59<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 11, Face Mask</li><li>• Art 12, Bamana Antelope Headdress of Mali</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will create an animal mask inspired by traditional African artwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 20, Create an Animal Mask</li><li>• Construction paper</li><li>• Glue (1 stick or small bottle per student)</li><li>• Clear tape (1 per student)</li><li>• Scissors (1 per student)</li><li>• Craft sticks (1 per student)</li><li>• Natural decorative materials (feathers, beans, pasta, seeds, fabric scraps, natural fiber string, yarn, etc.)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Analyze the form and function of traditional African masks and headdresses.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about traditional portraits of African leaders such as Benin bronze heads. Students will continue to learn about the purposes of other forms of traditional African artwork.

## DAY 1: MASKS AND HEADDRESSES

Introduce the lesson by explaining that different cultures around the world have created and used masks for different reasons. For example, masks appear in Japanese Noh theater,

Venetian festivals, and Mexican celebrations like Día de los Muertos. Ask students to think about different types of masks and some of the different reasons people wear them.

Ask the following questions: When have you worn a mask? (*Sample response: I've worn masks on Halloween or when I played sports like hockey.*) What was the purpose of the different masks you wore? (*Sample response: I wore Halloween masks to dress up in a costume. I wore a hockey mask to protect my face while playing a game.*)

## Carved Masks and Headdresses

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A mask is a covering for all or part of the face. In Western cultures, masks are worn for a variety of reasons, such as protection, disguise, enjoyment, or performance. For example, some people wear masks to protect themselves from airborne particles or from injury when playing sports. Other types of masks can be worn for celebration or enjoyment, such as when people dress up in a costume for Halloween. Masks are also worn by dancers, musicians, and actors during special performances.

In traditional African cultures, masks often had spiritual or ceremonial roles. Some African tribal societies believed that masks and headdresses actually transformed the wearer, endowing them with special powers. The wearer was thought to gain the attributes of the spirit, animal, or being whom the art object represented. Essentially, owners of African masks and headdresses bridged humanity and the spiritual realm while using them. These functional art objects were often worn during ceremonies in which the wearers would perform dances or specific actions to channel the power of the spirits. They were also worn to encourage other members of the tribe while they worked or participated in competitions. These traditions, passed down over generations, reflected the belief that spiritual transformation and cooperation among community members were necessary for harmony and success.

African masks and ceremonial headdresses were commonly carved from wood and decorated with materials such as clay, textiles, metals, beads, and animal parts like feathers and horns. These materials were often chosen for their symbolic associations as well as their availability. Beads, feathers, and raffia had specific cultural meanings and were used to express identity, power, and connection to nature. Long raffia fibers were often attached to holes in the headpieces so they draped down over the wearer's body. To keep large wooden headdresses in place, they were usually joined to a woven cap worn by the performer.

**SUPPORT**—Students may want to know how different artists are trained. Explain that artists in some African societies learned through **apprenticeship**, or by training with expert craftspeople. The master would teach the apprentice both the necessary artistic skills and the associated prayers and rituals of objects that held special powers. This training emphasized that the artist's role was not only technical but also spiritual and communal. Other types of artists were believed to receive creative guidance through dreams and visions.



Pages 57–59

Display the face mask and the Bamana antelope headdress of Mali for students, and have them turn to the corresponding pages in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the artworks and think about what they see.



Slides 11–12

## Art in This Lesson

### Face Mask



This mask belongs to the Kifwebe society, who were the ruling elite of the Songye people. This particular mask dates from the nineteenth to twentieth century CE. The Songye people used such masks during rituals to provide the wearers with supernatural powers that linked them to the spirit world.



This mask, like others of its kind, is sculpted in abstract shapes and forms to give it an otherworldly look. The carved ridges create texture along the mask's surface.

### Background for Teacher

The strong linear patterns on masks like this one were made by the fur, skin, or quills of antelopes, snakes, and porcupines. Long raffia fibers were attached to the holes at the edge of this mask, creating the costume that covered the wearer's body. The wearers, the ruling elite of the Songye people, would call upon the spirit world to help them maintain their economic and political power and guide the community.

### Bamana Antelope Headdress of Mali



The Bamana people believe that in the past, they were taught how to become better farmers by a mythical creature called Ci Wara. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries CE, young Bamana people wore headdresses like this one during farming ceremonies.



This sculpture is a headdress in the form of an antelope. It is highly textured to represent the pattern of the real animal's neck fur and the grooves on its horns.

### Background for Teacher

The antelope headdress is a symbol of the Bamana belief that the antelope embodies the grace and strength needed by successful farmers. These headdresses were attached to a woven cap and worn on the head during planting ceremonies. The wearers danced to the beat of drums and bent low to the ground to imitate the action of hoeing the soil. There were both male and female versions of the headdress, which signified the important role that both men and women played in a successful harvest.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

What are both the mask and the headdress made from?

- o They are both made from wood.

What is functional art?

- o Functional art is art that serves a purpose and can be used in some way other than just observing it.

Are these masks considered functional art? Why?

- o Yes, because they are meant to be used in ceremonies.

What artistic features of the face mask inform you about its function and power?

- o The abstract, nonhuman, and decorative carved features of the mask suggest it is supernatural and otherworldly.

What kind of animal is depicted by the Bamana headdress?

- o An antelope is depicted by the headdress.

### Teaching Idea



Display the image of the Ci Wara headdress from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the online collection of African face masks from the Art Institute of Chicago for students. Compare the Met headdress to the one viewed in the lesson. Ask students how the artist made the Ci Wara headdress look like an antelope using abstract shapes and textured patterns. Then discuss the features of the face masks in the gallery and what qualities make them appear either supernatural or human.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific links to the images may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing some of the stylistic features of African carved face masks and headdresses. Then have students summarize the functional and spiritual purposes of these traditional objects.

## DAY 2: ANIMAL MASKS

Introduce the lesson by reviewing the previous day's discussion about masks and headdresses.

Ask students to think about the various types of animals that can be found in Africa. Have students consider what special attributes and qualities each animal has that a human might desire.

Ask the following questions: What are some other African animals that you think might have been represented by traditional headdresses? (*lion, cheetah, elephant, etc.*) What special power do you think each animal would give to the wearer of the headdress? (*A lion headdress would offer great strength to the wearer, a cheetah would give the power of speed, and an elephant might represent knowledge and wisdom.*)

Inform students that this day will be dedicated to the creation of animal masks inspired by African designs. With students, you can review examples of African carvings and artwork that feature animals from this unit. Focus on the abstract shapes, patterns, and textures the artists used to represent a specific animal. Tell students that their masks do not need to be extremely realistic but should focus on the abstract details that represent their chosen animal.



Provide an example of realistic vs. abstract representations by showing Art 12, Bamana Antelope Headdress of Mali, next to a photo of a real antelope. Explain that students can achieve abstract representations by experimenting with color, shape, pattern, and texture when making their masks. Students may also invent a new animal or combine features from multiple animals to express an idea such as courage, wisdom, or protection.

**TEACHER NOTE**—Be sure that students are mindful and respectful of the sacred traditions of other cultures when completing this assignment. Explain that they're not copying sacred objects but exploring the artistic techniques and symbolism that can inspire new, respectful designs. Ensure that they understand the difference between the secular role of masks in mainstream Western society and the sacred and ritualistic role of masks in tribal cultures. Explain that the masks they will create are for decorative purposes only but can be inspired by African beliefs about their power.

## Activity

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Page 20

Tell students they will make a mask based on an African animal using natural materials and abstract designs. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection question in their Student Activity Book.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students present their masks. They should explain what animal their mask represents, what powers or traits it symbolizes, and how they used design elements to reflect these ideas. Then they should explain the artistic process they used to create and decorate their animal mask.

# Unit 3 Lesson 4

## CONTEMPORARY AND ANCIENT CONNECTIONS

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will create a collage inspired by contemporary African collage artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gallery of contemporary Nigerian collage artists from Google Arts and Culture</li><li>• <i>Woman with Pears</i></li><li>• <i>Young Sailor II</i></li><li>• <i>Second Born</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 21, Contemporary Collage</li><li>• Glue (1 stick or small bottle per student)</li><li>• Scissors (1 per student)</li><li>• Heavy-duty drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Magazines and/or other printed media with images</li><li>• Paints, markers, or pens (optional; 1 set per group of students)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Compare features of contemporary African artwork with those of traditional African art.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about traditional African masks and headdresses. The creators of these art objects used elements of abstract design to give them a spiritual and otherworldly appearance.

## DAY 1: CONTEMPORARY AND ANCIENT CONNECTIONS

Introduce the lesson by explaining that throughout history, cultures have influenced one another by exchanging artistic ideas across time and place. In contemporary Africa, artists often blend traditional forms with new materials, techniques, and global influences. Some artists are inspired by the aesthetics and style used in other cultures. Also, cultures are influenced by new artistic materials and technology through global trade.

Ask students to think about what inspires contemporary African artists to create art today.

Ask the following questions: What aspects of their personal lives, local environment, or traditions might inspire contemporary African artists? How might they also draw on global influences such as technology or pop culture? What type of artwork do you think contemporary African artists create? (*painting, photography, drawings, digital art*) What features of traditional African artwork inspire modern artists? (*abstract design, the celebration of important people, the depiction of animals*)

## African Influence on Contemporary Art

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Cultures around the world have always borrowed artistic ideas and styles from one another. For example, contact with European traders led to African artists incorporating colorful Portuguese glass beads into their artwork. These replaced the indigenous shell, ivory, wood, and bone beads that Africans traditionally used to decorate their art. Today, some artists in Africa may continue age-old traditions while others work in contemporary media and styles, exploring new themes and techniques without direct reference to traditional art. Both traditional and modern African art serve a variety of purposes and reflect the wide range of art traditions borrowed from various sources of inspiration. While traditional African art was often ceremonial, symbolic, or sacred, modern African art may focus on personal expression, social issues, or experimentation with global materials.

Traditional African art also had a significant impact on modern European art during the early twentieth century. For example, Pablo Picasso, the famous Spanish cofounder of the Cubist movement, was heavily inspired by African artwork. As a collector of African artwork himself, he incorporated stylistic qualities he admired into his Cubist paintings, including highly abstracted representations of the human form. One example is Picasso's painting *Woman with Pears* (1909), which features angular, masklike faces inspired by African sculpture. Henri Matisse, a French artist of the early twentieth century, also incorporated African design into his own style. After visiting North Africa in 1906, Matisse began to integrate traditional African elements of art into his paintings. For example, he made a second version of his painting *Young Sailor* by brightening the color palette and altering the shapes and proportions of the subject's face. The man's features changed from realistic and natural-looking to more closely resembling the rigidly abstract appearance of a traditional African mask. Display both *Woman with Pears* and *Young Sailor II* for students through the Online Resources.



Display *Second Born* by Wangechi Mutu from the Online Resources, and explain to students that a **collage** is a piece of art made by adding materials such as photos, prints, or small objects to a backing of paper or wood. Invite students to point to the pieces of cut paper in the artwork, and explain that they will make their own collage out of various materials, such as magazines and other printed papers. Then encourage students to examine how Wangechi Mutu layered materials and arranged abstract forms. Ask: What textures or shapes do you notice? What feeling does the collage give?

## Teaching Idea



Explore an online gallery of contemporary Nigerian collage artists. Ask students which details of these artworks appear to be adopted from traditional African artwork. Discuss the abstraction of human features, the focus on patterns and geometric design, and the use of color, shape, line, and texture to create an otherworldly or supernatural appearance.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the collages may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Activity



Page 21

Tell students they will make a collage inspired by contemporary collage artists such as Wangechi Mutu. Encourage students to use abstract shapes, symbolic colors, or natural forms that reflect traditional African influences while using collage techniques to express a modern idea or story. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

**SUPPORT**—To inspire students for their collage, display images of work by contemporary African collage artists, such as Mutu’s *Second Born*. Remind students that their collage is a personal response, inspired by traditional or contemporary African art styles, rather than a re-creation of sacred or ceremonial works. Some other examples that represent this style are Chike Obeagu’s *Table for Two* and the collages featured in the Teaching Ideas box.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students present their collages. Have students explain how their collage reflects a theme or story. What traditional African features or modern ideas did they incorporate, and how did they use shape, color, and texture to communicate their message? Then students should describe the collage techniques they used to arrange and create their artworks.

# Unit 3 Lesson 5

## UNIT 3 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will create a painting to demonstrate characteristics of African art.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 22, African Painting</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Canvas panels (1 per student)</li><li>• Acrylic paints</li><li>• Palettes (1 per student)</li><li>• Cups of water (1 per student)</li><li>• Paintbrushes (1 set per student)</li><li>• Paper towels</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 3.

### Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your own students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

### Review and Assessment

Introduce the lesson by asking students to think about everything they have learned about the characteristics of both traditional and contemporary African art. Discuss the defining features, themes, styles, and purposes of various types of African art.

### Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 3.

- There is no single, unifying African art style. Rather, the different cultures of the continent demonstrate different styles and traditions.
- Art is integral to virtually all traditional African cultures and every aspect of their lives.
- Some traditional African art is exclusively decorative, but the vast majority serves a functional, ritual, ceremonial, and/or celebratory purpose.

- African art is a part of ever-evolving, living traditions. Present-day artists in Africa may follow established traditions, link to contemporary trends, or work with no reference to traditional art.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *African art can serve sacred, ceremonial, symbolic, aesthetic, and daily functions*. Discuss with students the activities they did in this unit, such as creating a royal self-portrait, crafting an animal mask, and making a collage inspired by contemporary African artists.

## Assessment



Page 22

Ask students to turn to page 22 in their Student Activity Book. Students will complete the assessment activity for this unit. Tell students that they will create a painting that showcases the elements of African art they learned about throughout the unit. Tell students their painting will demonstrate what they have learned about traditional and/or contemporary African art. Encourage them to incorporate stylized features, such as abstract shapes or symbolic imagery, or traditional functions like honoring leaders, storytelling, or spiritual meaning. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the artistic ideas they learned in the unit.

- o Provide students with a list of different African countries and cultures, and have them choose one to research. Students should find a picture of art from that culture, research the image, and share what they learned about that culture with the class.
- o Have students use the Internet and books to research traditional African artifacts. Then ask them to compile a list of artifacts that they discovered and write a short paper comparing and contrasting their artistic features and purposes.
- o Have students write their own story to go along with a contemporary African collage or other piece of African artwork. Invite them to display the art as they read their story aloud.
- o Show students a variety of African art and have them discuss the differences in style among various regions. For example, show Benin bronze masks and Maasai beadwork, and have students discuss the materials used for each and the influence of the region on the chosen materials.



## Additional Recommended Resources

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The following trade books for students discuss African art:

- Corwin, Judith. *African Crafts*. London: Franklin Watts, 1990.
- D'Amato, Janet. *African Animals Through African Eyes*. New York: J. Messner, 1971.
- Naylor, Penelope. *Black Images: The Art of West Africa*. New York: Doubleday, 1973.
- Noble, Marty. *African Designs Coloring Book*. Mineola: Dover Publications, 2003.
- Price, Christine. *Made in West Africa*. New York: Penguin Putnam Books for Young Children, 1975.
- Rea, William. *African Art*. New York: Facts on File, 1996.

Resources for teachers and parents include the following:

- Blier, Suzanne Preston. *The History of African Art*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2023.
- Evans, Joy, and Tanya Skelton. *How to Teach Art to Children*. Monterey, CA: Evan-Moor, 2001.
- Garlake, Peter. *Early Art and Architecture of Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

# The Art of China

**Big Idea** Traditional Chinese art forms, especially calligraphy, scroll painting, and porcelain, have ancient roots.

## Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This unit introduces students to traditional Chinese art forms, including calligraphy, scroll painting, and porcelain. You'll explore the cultural significance and artistic techniques of each form and how they reflect China's rich history. Students will discover the history and importance of Chinese calligraphy and its connection to painting. They will also learn about the development of new materials in China, like silk and paper, which led to decorative arts such as embroidered silk garments and painted artworks on paper scrolls. Finally, students will explore the elegantly decorated porcelain that has been produced in China throughout history.

This unit contains five lessons, split across six class days. There will be a short Looking Back feature on Day 5 and a unit assessment on Day 6. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for art. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 Introduction to Art of China
2	Lesson 2 Calligraphy
3–4	Lesson 3 Landscapes

Day	Lesson
5	Lesson 4 Pottery*
6	Lesson 5 Unit 4 Assessment

\* Looking Back

## What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2:

- Elements of art: color, line, shape, texture
- Sculpture
- Kinds of pictures: portrait, still life, landscape

Grade 1

- Art from long ago: cave paintings, art of ancient Egypt

Grade 2

- Abstract art
- Architecture

## Grade 3

- Elements of art: light, space, design
- Native American art
- Art of ancient Rome and the Byzantine civilization

## What Students Need to Learn

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In this unit, students will:

- Identify the artistic inventions of the Chinese people and the different types of artwork that Chinese artists excelled in creating;
- Identify the importance, purpose, and stylistic techniques of traditional Chinese calligraphy;
- Discuss how traditional Chinese artists depicted nature in landscape paintings; and
- Analyze examples of Chinese porcelain by explaining their stylistic features and the artistic process of their creation.

## What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

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In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about visual art, explore other cultures and time periods, and study additional works of art.

## Grade 5

- Unit 1: *Art and Architecture: The Renaissance*
- Unit 3: *Nineteenth-Century American Art*
- Unit 5: *Art of Japan*

## Vocabulary

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**dynasty, n.** a period of time when a certain family ruled **(80)**

*Example:* The Shang dynasty took place in the middle of the Bronze Age in China.

**porcelain, n.** ceramic ware made from fine white clay that, when fired, becomes hard, translucent, thin-walled, and waterproof and makes a ringing sound when struck **(77)**

*Example:* The porcelain vase was decorated with an ornate floral design.

**scroll, n.** a roll of illustrated paper or silk **(77)**

*Example:* The woman unrolled a long scroll that featured a beautiful painting of the mountainside.

**Taoism, n.** a belief system based on a philosophy that teaches natural simplicity and humility as a way to achieve peace and harmony in life **(84)**

*Example:* The principles of Taoism emphasize living in harmony with nature.

## Cross-Curricular Connections

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This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

### CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 4, Unit 6: *Dynasties of China*

The Grade 4 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include an in-depth unit on dynasties of China, consisting of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resources.

## Most Important Ideas

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The most important ideas in Unit 4 are as follows:

- Chinese art has ancient roots.
- The element of line is crucial in both calligraphy and landscape painting.
- Chinese art, particularly landscape painting, reflects the Taoist belief in humanity's need to exist in harmony with nature, using empty space and flowing brushwork to reflect Taoist ideals.
- Chinese potters perfected the technique of making fine porcelain more than eight centuries before European potters began producing similar ceramic wares, influencing global trade and luxury art.

## What Teachers Need to Know

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China's historical and technological advancements are tied very closely to major developments in the art world. China was the first culture to invent artistic materials such as paper and silk that would later become standard art surfaces utilized around the world. Chinese calligraphy is also tied to the country's ancient roots, its artist-scholar class, and the emergence of its first writing system. Chinese characters began as pictographs—visual symbols representing objects—and gradually evolved into the stylized characters used today. Because of this, Chinese characters retain an illustrative quality. Thus, Chinese artists treat calligraphy as an artistic expression fully integrated into their artwork.

# Unit 4 Lesson 1

## INTRODUCTION TO ART OF CHINA

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will read and answer questions about the Chinese invention of silk and paper.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of the China National Silk Museum from Google Arts and Culture</li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 23, The Invention of Silk and Paper</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Identify the artistic inventions of the Chinese people and the different types of artwork that Chinese artists excelled in creating.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about traditional and contemporary art in Africa. In this unit, students will continue to explore art from around the world by learning about traditional and influential forms of Chinese artwork.

## DAY 1: INTRODUCTION TO ART OF CHINA

Introduce the lesson by informing students that they will explore China's remarkable artistic accomplishments and inventions, many of which have had lasting influence around the world. Explain that one of the most important materials invented in ancient China was paper—a key innovation that greatly impacted art and daily life. Ask: Why do you think the invention of paper would be especially important for art and communication in ancient China? Ask students to think about all of the different uses we have for paper today.

Ask the following questions: How do you think the ancient Chinese people made paper? (*They turned plant material and natural fibers into a pulp by soaking them in water, then pressed them into sheets and let them dry.*) Do you know of any other things that were invented in China? (*The compass, silk cloth, gunpowder, movable type for printing, and porcelain were all invented in China.*)

### Traditional Chinese Art

Explain to students that throughout China's long history, natural barriers such as mountain ranges and the Pacific Ocean caused the civilization to develop in relative isolation from Western societies. Due to its geographic isolation, China independently developed many important inventions. China has many rich cultural traditions rooted in the visual arts, including a mastery of calligraphy, **porcelain** making, and **scroll** painting.

Students have previously encountered calligraphy in European illuminated manuscripts and Islamic religious texts. In this unit, they will explore how Chinese artists developed calligraphy into a deeply expressive and highly respected art form.

Chinese artists usually produced calligraphy with a brush or flat-nib pen. The Chinese also mastered the art of porcelain, which is ceramic ware made from heating fine white clay. After the clay is fired, it becomes hard, delicate, waterproof, and partially see-through.

Chinese artists also excelled in painting on two types of scrolls, or long rolls of paper or silk: hanging scrolls and hand scrolls. Hanging scrolls were displayed on the walls of public spaces, much like western European paintings or medieval tapestries. The scrolls were changed or rotated based on season, occasion, or personal preference. Traditional hand scrolls offered a more personal experience for viewers. The admirer slowly unrolled the scroll so they could view the painting one section at a time. Unlike Western artists, who often painted with oil on canvas, Chinese artists painted with ink on paper or silk, creating artworks that were flexible, transportable, and often meant for intimate, reflective viewing. Unlike paintings on stretched canvas, scrolls were easily rolled, transported, and stored.

Chinese artists produced many other types of art besides scrolls, calligraphy, and porcelain. They also excelled at block printing, sculpture, silk garment making, embroidery, paper cutting, and a distinctive architecture. Chinese artwork has been coveted and admired by art collectors worldwide throughout history.

**SUPPORT**—Emphasize to students the importance of brushwork in traditional Chinese paintings. Chinese artists painted to express their beliefs and feelings, treating each brushstroke as an extension of themselves. This approach to brushwork reflected the Taoist value of harmony between self and nature. Every stroke of the brush was equally important and reflected the artist’s character. Traditional Chinese paintings were judged by the quality of their brushwork.

### Teaching Idea



Connect to a virtual tour of the China National Silk Museum and explore the exquisite silk garments together with students. Ask: What do you think this garment was made for? How might the colors or patterns reflect the wearer’s status, beliefs, or identity?

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### Activity



Prompt students to read the passage about the Chinese inventions of paper and silk. Then have them answer the questions independently.

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### Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing with students the artistic inventions created by traditional Chinese people. Have them discuss which invention they think would have been the most significant and how it might have changed people’s daily lives in ancient China.



# Unit 4 Lesson 2

## CALLIGRAPHY

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will practice writing Chinese calligraphy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Chinese calligraphy virtual tour from Asian Civilisations Museum</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 13 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 61<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 13, Calligraphy</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 24, Practice Calligraphy</li><li>• Heavy-duty drawing paper or watercolor paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Black calligraphy pen, black marker, or paintbrush with pointed tip and black paint/ink (1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Identify the significance, purpose, and artistic techniques of traditional Chinese calligraphy.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about three of the main forms of Chinese art: scroll painting, calligraphy, and porcelain. In this lesson, they will focus on the historical significance and techniques of Chinese calligraphy. Like the calligraphy in Islamic art and illuminated initials in medieval Europe, Chinese calligraphy blends writing with visual beauty.

### DAY 1: CALLIGRAPHY

Introduce the lesson by reminding students of the connection between written words and art, such as the decorated initials of medieval illuminated manuscripts or the elegant calligraphy that Islamic artists incorporated into their paintings and architecture.

Ask students to think about how and why the ancient Chinese people included calligraphy in their artwork.

Ask the following questions: Why do you think Chinese artists treated writing as a visual art form? What effect do beautiful words have when added to a painting? (*Calligraphy looks more artistically pleasing and fits the style and brushwork of the painting.*)

## The Purpose of Calligraphy

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Chinese writing developed from images inscribed on ancient pottery during the Neolithic period, between 5000 and 2000 BCE. The motifs depicted by early artists evolved into written characters. A **dynasty** is a period of time in China during which a certain family ruled the country. During the Shang dynasty, between the seventeenth and eleventh centuries BCE, artists carved these characters into bone and bronze. It was not until the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) that calligraphers started writing on newly invented paper and silk.

Calligraphy is the art of writing using stylized brushstrokes and special techniques to create ornate and painterly characters. In China and many other parts of the world, calligraphy is considered a form of art. In China, calligraphy and painting were often intertwined, and the stylized writing was frequently paired with an illustration. Chinese artists often wrote poems directly onto their paintings, making the brushstrokes of their words look as beautiful and stylized as the paintings they accompanied. This meant that the writing and the image were seamlessly unified as one cohesive and beautiful art piece.

Ancient Chinese artists practiced for many years to perfect their calligraphy skills. It took practice and patience to master the technique of applying fluid brushstrokes. Traditionally, Chinese artists who practiced during the Tang dynasty (618–907 CE) and beyond were also well-educated scholars. These artistic and intellectual elites were trained in music, poetry, painting, and calligraphy. In traditional Chinese culture, artists were often scholars—educated individuals who believed that painting, poetry, and calligraphy were connected and reflected personal wisdom and moral character.

**SUPPORT**—Ensure that students understand the most notable differences between the English alphabet and the Chinese writing system. The English alphabet is phonetic, meaning it uses combinations of individual letters to form words. In Chinese, each character stands for a word or idea all by itself. Chinese calligraphy is a way to turn those characters into visual art.



Page 61

Display the example of calligraphy for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the brushstrokes and describe what they see. Ask: What do the brushstrokes make you feel? Can you imagine the speed or rhythm of the artist's hand while painting this character?



Slide 13

## Art in This Lesson

### Calligraphy



Chinese calligraphers first began brushing ink on silk during the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE). After 105 CE, they also began applying calligraphy to paper.



The most important element of art involved in calligraphy is the shape and movement of the lines of each character. Every line is judged for its quality and flow and is considered to be a personal expression of the artist.

### Background for Teacher

Calligraphy takes on unique and painterly qualities that are not achieved by writing with a pencil or observed in digital text. The lines of Chinese calligraphy include varying thicknesses and shapes, with some lines tapering off at one or both ends. Many factors affect the quality and shape of a line, such as the amount of ink or paint left on the brush and the speed, angle, and pressure of the calligrapher's strokes. By looking at the shape and translucency of a particular brushstroke, viewers can imagine the movement and energy behind the artist's hand.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

What art materials do you see the calligrapher using?

- o The calligrapher is using a brush, black ink, and paper.

Compare the larger finished characters toward the right of the image with the characters the calligrapher is currently creating at the left. Observe how each line curves, tapers, or varies in weight. What might that tell you about the artist's technique or emotional expression?

- o On the left, the lines the calligrapher is painting with the brush are a lot thinner. On the right, the lines are thicker.

How do you think the calligrapher's technique changed to produce the lines of the smaller characters?

- o The calligrapher used less ink on the brush, applied less pressure, or only used the pointed part of the brush to paint each stroke.

### Teaching Idea



Connect to a virtual tour of a Chinese calligraphy exhibit and explore it together with students. Have students compare and contrast the different styles of the various calligraphers. Ask: How do the brushstrokes change from one artist to another? What do you think that tells us about the mood or message of each calligrapher's work?

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Activity

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Page 24

Tell students that they will now practice writing Chinese calligraphy. Ensure that each student has the materials needed for this activity. Have students read the instructions in the Student Activity Book. After students practice writing individual characters, invite them to compose a date or short phrase using Chinese calligraphy strokes. Offer models or guide them through constructing a symbolic piece. You may want to model a proper technique for writing the characters in a calligraphic style for students. Monitor students' progress as they practice, and offer additional assistance or extra sheets of paper as necessary.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students discuss their experience writing calligraphy. Ask students what was different about painting letters with a brush instead of writing with a pencil. What made it feel more like art?

# Unit 4 Lesson 3

## LANDSCAPES

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will reflect on the artistic qualities of a silk scroll.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Chinese hand scrolls from the Metropolitan Museum of Art</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 14 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 63<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 14, <i>Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley</i> (Silk Scroll)</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 25, <i>Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley</i></li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will paint a landscape inspired by traditional Chinese artwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 26, Landscape Painting</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Watercolor paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Watercolor paints (1 set per student)</li><li>• Paintbrushes (1 set per student)</li><li>• Cups of water (1 per student)</li><li>• Paper towels (1 roll per class)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Describe how traditional Chinese artists depicted landscapes in scroll paintings.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about Chinese calligraphy and its connection to painting. Students will now learn about landscape scrolls, which are often paired with calligraphy.

## DAY 1: CHINESE LANDSCAPE PAINTING

Introduce the lesson by explaining to students that a landscape painting depicts natural scenery such as forests, lakes, rivers, mountains, hills, or meadows.

Ask students why an artist might choose nature as their subject and how nature can reflect peace, emotion, or spiritual balance, especially in Chinese Taoist art.

Ask the following questions: Nature was very important in Chinese art. How do you feel when you look at natural places? Why might ancient artists have chosen to paint these peaceful scenes? (*Responses may include that nature is a way for people to feel united, and it is a way to celebrate the beauty of nature.*) How does looking at nature make you feel? (*Responses may include that looking at nature makes students feel relaxed and peaceful.*)

## Activity

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Pages 63  
and 25



Slide 14

Display *Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley* for students, and have them turn to page 63 in their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the scroll painting and reflect on today's lesson and the related artwork. Ask: What's the first thing your eye notices? What do you see next? What mood do the misty mountains create?

Prompt students to answer the Explore and Reflection questions on page 25.

## Rooted in Nature

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Explain to students that since the Song dynasty (960–1279 CE), landscapes have been a significant theme of Chinese artwork. The connection between belief systems and visual style continues themes from earlier units—just as African art reflects spirituality, Chinese landscapes reflect Taoist values of nature and harmony. **Taoism** is a philosophical and religious belief system that emphasizes living simply, modestly, and in harmony with nature to keep one's life balanced and peaceful. Because the natural world is so highly revered in Taoist philosophy, Taoism began to influence the subject matter of Chinese paintings as early as the sixth century BCE. By the eleventh century CE, nature had become the primary focus of Chinese scroll paintings.

In Western societies, landscapes were not popular until after the Reformation during the sixteenth century in northern Europe. Unlike the rich, thick oil paint on canvas used by Western painters, Chinese artists used ink and water on paper or silk. By diluting the ink with water to create ink washes, artists were able to achieve a delicate transition from a sharply detailed foreground to a faded and hazy landscape in the distance.

Traditional Chinese landscape painters incorporated some level of realism in their landscapes, but their paintings also contained stylized and expressive qualities. Just like in calligraphy, great importance was placed on the artist's brushwork. In this landscape, the artist has painted a mountain with a retreat home in linear fashion with some green coloration in the foreground. Point out the rough rock textures in the foreground and background. In the middle ground, the mountain forms are nearly equal in size but fainter.

Then, in the distance, a tall mountain peak appears high in the right corner to indicate the background, but it is not rendered in traditional one-point Western perspective where objects appear smaller as they go back in space. Rather than drawing objects with point perspective, Chinese artists indicated depth in a scene by painting objects in the distance with lighter ink washes, making them look fainter, transparent, and blurred. This technique creates the illusion that a fine mist is partially shrouding objects in the background, which gives the painting a dreamlike quality.



Traditionally, Chinese artists first perfected their technique and skills by copying the work of expert artists. Only after their training was complete was it appropriate for artist-scholars to experiment and develop their own style and compositions.

**SUPPORT**—Explain to students that in ancient China, societal constraints limited women’s access to formal educational and artistic training. Ask: What opportunities did women artists have in other cultures we’ve studied, such as Islamic or African cultures? Occasionally, Chinese women would travel throughout the countryside accompanied by their husbands. However, they usually stayed at home with their families and rarely went outdoors to study landscapes. Although women had limited access to artistic training, some became renowned painters. Their ability to express emotion and atmosphere through brushwork helped shape the tradition, even though they had fewer opportunities.

## Art in This Lesson

*Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley* (Silk Scroll), Sheng Maoye



Because of the Taoist philosophy of appreciating the natural world, nature was the most popular subject of scroll paintings in ancient China. This one, a later example, was produced around 1630 CE.



In the top-left corner are Chinese characters painted by the artist, which serve as his signature and inscription, as well as two red seals. These seals are like collector’s marks and were used to document the painting’s ownership history, similar to signatures or notations in European illuminated manuscripts. The colors in this scroll are limited and subtle, with a focus on the use of black ink. The mountains in the background fade into the empty space to create depth in the scene.

### Background for Teacher

This scroll showcases several key features of traditional Chinese scroll painting. Calligraphy is integrated into the piece. The subject matter depicts a person living secluded within the natural mountain setting, which reflects the principles of Taoism. The ink on silk and fluid brushwork are prime examples of the dominant style used in traditional Chinese landscape paintings.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST’S QUESTIONS

What do you see in the upper-left corner?

- o I see Chinese calligraphy indicating the artist’s signature and inscription.

What is illustrated in the painting?

- o The painting shows a landscape with steep mountains, jagged rocks, and a small home that is built into a cliff.

## Teaching Idea



Connect to an online gallery of Chinese hand scrolls at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and explore the examples together with students, identifying the features that are indicative of the traditional Chinese landscape style.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the gallery may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by reviewing the style and techniques used in traditional Chinese landscape painting. Prompt students to begin to think about a landscape they can paint on the next day of the lesson. They can also do online research to gather reference photos to use for this project.

## DAY 2: PAINT A LANDSCAPE

Introduce Day 2 of the lesson by reviewing what students learned during the previous day.

Ask students to think about a specific place in nature that they consider to be personally meaningful and peaceful. It can actually exist, or it can exist in their imagination.

Ask the following questions: Why is the place you chose meaningful to you? (*Answers will vary.*) How might you express this place in a traditional Chinese-style painting? (*I could paint the scene using light colors and soft brushstrokes; I could include a poem in the painting that tells the viewer how I feel about the place.*)

## Preparing to Paint a Chinese Landscape

Explain that today, students will depict a meaningful place using Chinese landscape techniques. Their goal is to create a peaceful, dreamlike mood through brushwork, composition, and ink washes. With students, review examples of Chinese landscape paintings from the unit and from the external resources. Point out the contrasting use of sharply defined and detailed brushwork in the foreground and delicate strokes and ink washes to create a misty and ethereal background. Point out the use of negative space. Encourage students to leave parts of their painting empty to suggest mist, sky, or air. In Chinese painting, negative space is part of the composition—it's where the spirit of nature breathes. Tell students that their landscape paintings should not be extremely realistic but rather should focus on replicating the style and techniques used in Chinese paintings to depict a serene and dreamlike scene. The medium of watercolor will allow students to achieve both detailed and graceful effects with traditional Chinese ink washes.

## Activity

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Page 26

Tell students they will paint a watercolor landscape inspired by the traditional Chinese style. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Help each student gather photos of their chosen landscape, either digital or printed, to use as a reference. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. Designate an area for the artworks to dry during cleanup time. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students present their Chinese landscape paintings. They should explain the nature scene they painted and how their artwork reveals the traditional Chinese landscape style.

# Unit 4 Lesson 4

## POTTERY

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will sculpt a vase or bowl from clay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 15 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 65<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 15, Ming Dynasty Vase</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 27, Using Porcelain Clay</li><li>• Disposable or washable work surface (1 per group of students)</li><li>• Air-dry porcelain clay (3–5 lb per student)</li><li>• Plastic knives, toothpicks, and other sculpting tools (1 of each per student)</li><li>• Rolling pins (1 per group of students)</li><li>• Wire clay cutters or scissors (1 per student)</li><li>• Cups of water (1 per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Identify the key features of traditional Chinese porcelain pottery.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about traditional Chinese landscape paintings and why nature was a popular subject matter. Now, they will learn about the production of porcelain in ancient China.

### DAY 1: POTTERY

Introduce the lesson by describing the type of dishware used in modern times that is referred to as *china*. Explain that today we call fine dishware *china* because the tradition of creating beautiful, high-quality porcelain originated in ancient China. This art form became so admired worldwide that the name of the country became synonymous with this elegant ceramic.

Ask students if they have ever seen china dishware in a store or in someone's home.

### Chinese Porcelain

Inform students that porcelain is made from kaolin, a soft, fine white clay. Kaolin turns to porcelain when it is fired at high temperatures and is a rare material only found in some parts

of China, Europe, and North America. Chinese artists first worked with porcelain during the Tang dynasty, between 618 and 906 CE. Remarkably, this was eight centuries before Europe began producing porcelain in the 1700s. Porcelain was one of China's most important international trade exports from the eleventh to the nineteenth century. Chinese porcelain was highly sought after by other Asian countries, as well as countries in the Near East, Africa, and Europe.

Chinese artists showcased the original color of the pure white clay by applying a clear liquid glaze over a finished piece. The glaze turned glassy and translucent when fired, allowing the natural clay beneath to show. Artists also added decorative details to their pottery. The most popular design of Chinese porcelain was blue-and-white ware. To achieve this, artists added a cobalt blue pigment either under or over the glaze. The high contrast of the deep blue against the white background caused the details of the designs to stand out from far away. A wide range of themes were featured in these designs, including mythology, narratives, symbols, landscapes, and floral motifs.

## Art in This Lesson

### Ming Dynasty Vase



This vase originated from the Ming dynasty (1368–1644 CE) in China. During this period, Chinese artists perfected their techniques for porcelain making and produced luxury pieces decorated with elegant designs for the emperor. This vase was created around 1426–1435 CE.



This pottery artwork is in the form of a vase decorated with linear designs. The pure white of the porcelain and the rich blue color of the designs are typical of traditional Chinese porcelain.

### Background for Teacher

This vase was likely owned by the emperor of China. During the Ming dynasty, the powerful image of a dragon was connected to the emperor. Explain that dragons in Chinese culture are powerful symbols of strength, wisdom, and the emperor's authority. Only the emperor had dragon images with five claws on each foot, as lower-ranked individuals had fewer claws.



Page 65

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

#### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

What type of artwork do you see?

- o This is a porcelain vase.



Slide 15

How is this vase decorated?

- o The vase has blue designs. I see stylized clouds and a dragon.

What are some important elements of art in this work?

- o Color, form, shape, and line are the most important art elements.

## Activity



Page 27

Tell students that they will sculpt a vase or bowl using white clay. Inform them that they will decorate their pottery with traditional Chinese-inspired designs in the next lesson. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand and review student work before moving on to the next step. Set students' finished work somewhere safe to dry for a day. After completing their sculptures, students can answer the Reflection question in their Student Activity Book.

### Looking Back

Review with students the various types of art they have learned about so far in this unit. Have them discuss and compare the calligraphy, scroll painting, and porcelain mediums they explored, as well as the designs and subject matter that were common in traditional Chinese art. Challenge students to compare Chinese art with what they learned about African art and Islamic art, and even the art and architecture of the Middle Ages in Europe. Ask students the following questions: Which culture used abstract patterns instead of figures? Which used art in ceremonies? How does the purpose of Chinese porcelain compare with that of Islamic architectural decoration or African ceremonial masks?

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students discuss the highlights of Chinese porcelain. Then tell them to think about their sculpting process and how they wish to decorate their Chinese-inspired pottery in the next lesson.



# Unit 4 Lesson 5

## UNIT 4 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will paint pottery to show their understanding of traditional Chinese imagery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 28, Painting Pottery</li><li>• Students' pottery from the previous lesson</li><li>• Blue ceramic paint</li><li>• Paintbrushes (1 per student)</li><li>• Cups of water (1 per student)</li><li>• Paper towels (1 roll per class)</li><li>• Pencils (optional; 1 per student)</li><li>• Butcher paper (optional; 1 long piece per student or 1 roll per group)</li><li>• Black paint (optional)</li><li>• Paints, pens, or markers (optional; 1 set per group of students)</li><li>• Home and architecture magazines (optional)</li><li>• Poster board (optional; 1 per student)</li><li>• Scissors (optional; 1 per student)</li><li>• Glue (optional; 1 stick or small bottle per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 4.

### Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

### Review and Assessment

Introduce the lesson by asking students to think about everything they have learned about the characteristics of traditional Chinese art. Discuss the defining features, themes, styles, and purposes of various types of Chinese art.

## Review

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Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 4.

- Chinese art has ancient roots.
- The element of line is crucial in both calligraphy and landscape painting.
- Chinese art, particularly landscape painting, reflects the Taoist belief in humanity's need to coexist in harmony with nature.
- Chinese potters began to excel in porcelain production eight centuries before Europeans began to produce it.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Traditional Chinese art forms, especially calligraphy, scroll painting, and porcelain, have ancient roots.* Have students reflect on the key art forms explored—calligraphy, landscape painting, and ceramics—and how each connects to the unit's Big Idea: the ancient roots and lasting influence of traditional Chinese art.

## Assessment

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Page 28

Ask students to turn to page 28 in their Student Activity Book. Students will complete the assessment activity for this unit. Tell students that they will paint the vase or bowl that they sculpted in the previous lesson. Inform them that they will decorate their pottery with traditional Chinese-inspired designs. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. Remind students that they should be decorating their clay with traditional Chinese designs. These could include landscapes or geometric or floral patterns. Some students may choose figures common to Chinese designs, such as dragons or birds. After completing their sculptures, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

You may also choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the artistic ideas they learned in the unit.

- o Have students create scrolls inspired by nature or poems. They should illustrate their chosen scene or poem using black paint, pens, or markers on long pieces of butcher paper rolled up at each end. They can also put the ends of the paper on sticks to roll them up.
- o Have students research a Chinese dynasty—such as Tang, Song, or Ming—and write about its art forms. Encourage them to explore how the artwork reflected cultural beliefs, values, and innovations of the time. Then have them share their research aloud with the class.
- o Provide students with a collection of home and architecture magazines. Instruct them to look through the magazines to see if they can find examples of how the art of China affects today's designs. Have them look for examples of porcelain, silk, scrolls, or calligraphy in current homes and architecture. As they work, they can cut images from the magazines and glue them to a poster board. This will enable them to create a collage with a title such as *Chinese Influences on Today's Pottery*. Then students can also write a paragraph explaining the influences they have discovered.

## Additional Recommended Resources

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The following trade books discuss Chinese art for students:

- Self, Caroline, and Susan Self. *Chinese Brush Painting: A Hands-On Introduction to the Traditional Art*. North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2007.
- Shuter, Jane. *Ancient Chinese Art*. Art in History. Portsmouth: Heinemann Library, 2003.

Here are some resources for teachers and parents:

- Evans, Joy, and Tanya Skelton. *How to Teach Art to Children*. Monterey, CA: Evan-Moor, 2001.
- Li, Zhiyan. *Chinese Pottery and Porcelain*. Traditional Chinese Arts and Culture. San Francisco: China Books & Periodicals, 1984.
- Zhen, Lian Quan. *Chinese Landscape Painting Techniques for Watercolor*. Oakland, CA: North Light Books, 2013.
- The Freer Gallery of Art and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery comprise the National Museum of Asian Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The museum's website, [www.asia.si.edu](http://www.asia.si.edu), is a source of images and other information on Chinese art.

# Art and Architecture: Early United States

**Big Idea** Early American artists reflected the spirit of the new nation and how it wished to see itself portrayed.

## Unit Introduction and Pacing Guide

This introduction includes the necessary background information to teach the *Art and Architecture: Early United States* unit. In this unit, you will teach students the role that art played leading up to the American Revolution, in particular the way it was used to inspire patriotism. Then you will discuss the way art helped keep patriotism strong and relevant during the American Revolution. Next, you will show how artists of a new revolutionary nation portrayed their heroes, used art to inspire other countries, and defined their new nation to the world by adapting European art influences. Finally, you will discuss the neoclassical architecture that formed a new nation’s building legacy.

This unit contains five lessons, split across six class days. There will be a quarter-day Looking Back feature on Day 3 and a unit assessment on Day 6. Each day will require a total of forty-five minutes. The teaching days can occur at a cadence that makes sense for your classroom. Many teachers may have one time per week set aside for art. In that case, you may teach the Day 1 lesson in the first week and then continue on to Day 2 the following week.

Day	Lesson
1	Lesson 1 Introduction to Art and Architecture of a New Nation
2	Lesson 2 History Through an Artist’s Lens

Day	Lesson
3–4	Lesson 3 Portrait of a Leader*
5	Lesson 4 Architecture to Represent Us
6	Lesson 5 Unit 5 Assessment

\* Looking Back

## What Students Should Already Know

Students in Core Knowledge schools should be familiar with the following:

Kindergarten, Grades 1 and 2

- Elements of art: color, line, shape, texture
- Sculpture
- Kinds of pictures: portrait, still life, landscape

## Grade 1

- Art from long ago: cave paintings, art of ancient Egypt

## Grade 2

- Abstract art
- Architecture

## Grade 3

- Elements of art: light, space, design
- Native American art
- Art of ancient Rome and the Byzantine civilization

## What Students Need to Learn

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In this unit, students will:

- Become familiar with famous portraits, paintings, and architectural works, including:
  - o John Singleton Copley, *Paul Revere*;
  - o Gilbert Stuart, *George Washington*;
  - o Emanuel Leutze, *Washington Crossing the Delaware*; and
  - o Thomas Jefferson's Monticello.

## A Special Note to Teachers—Talking About Slavery

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Discussing slavery with younger students is a challenging task. Slavery, which has existed for thousands of years in many cultures, is by definition an inhumane practice—people are reduced to property, to be bought and sold, and often treated with brutality and violence.

Classroom discussion of slavery should acknowledge the cruel realities while remaining mindful of the age of the students. In CKHG materials, we have attempted to convey the inhumane practices of slavery without overly graphic depictions.

Recently, some historians have questioned the language used to talk about slavery. Some contemporary historians urge that we refer not to slaves but instead to enslaved persons or enslaved workers. The term *slave*, these historians argue, implies a commodity, a thing, while *enslaved person* or *enslaved worker* reminds us of the humanity of people forced into bondage and deprived of their freedom. Other historians, however, argue that by avoiding the term *slave*, we may unintentionally minimize the horror of humans being treated as though they were someone else's property.

Throughout Core Knowledge programs, we acknowledge the logic of both perspectives and sometimes refer to slaves while at other times referring to enslaved persons or enslaved workers.

## What Students Will Learn in Future Grades

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In future grades, students will review and extend their learning about early America, explore nineteenth-century United States, and study additional works of art.

## Grade 5

- Hudson River school of landscape painting
- Genre painting
- Art related to the Civil War

## Vocabulary

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**Doric column, n.** one of the three types of Greek columns, characterized by a capital made of a circle topped by a square, a plain shaft with twenty sides, and no base **(109)**

*Example:* The visitors hid from the cold wind behind the building's Doric columns.

**history painting, n.** a depiction of an important historical event and/or deed of a great hero **(100)**

*Example:* George Washington was the subject of many history paintings in early America.

**portico, n.** a covered row of columns from classical times, often at the entranceway of a building **(109)**

*Example:* The colonial fort featured a broad decorative portico at its entrance.

## Cross-Curricular Connections

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This unit contains the following connections to other strands of the Core Knowledge Curriculum. To enhance your students' understanding of the content and its context and enrich their understanding of these related subjects, please consult the following Core Knowledge materials:

### CK History and Geography (CKHG)

Grade 4, Unit 7: *The American Revolution*

- Paul Revere's ride
- Declaration of Independence

Grade 4, Unit 9: *Early Presidents*

- George Washington
- Thomas Jefferson

### CK Language Arts (CKLA)

Writing, Grammar, and Usage

Writing and Research

- Produce a variety of types of writing.
- Know how to gather information from different sources.

The Grade 4 Core Knowledge History and Geography (CKHG) materials include an in-depth unit, *The American Revolution*, and the unit *Early Presidents*, consisting of a Teacher Guide, an illustrated Student Reader, and Timeline Cards.

See the Core Knowledge website at <https://www.coreknowledge.org/download-free-curriculum/> to download these free resources, or find direct links to the units in the Online Resources.

## Most Important Ideas

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The most important ideas in Unit 5 are as follows:

- History paintings, portraits, and architecture were important forms of nineteenth-century American art.
- History paintings and portraits in the United States reflected European artistic styles but depicted American subject matter in a unique manner.
- American history paintings largely served to foster patriotic feelings rather than to document events accurately.
- Nineteenth-century portraits in the United States represented heroes tied to the country's history rather than the royals, nobles, or religious figures or officials who had previously dominated European portraiture.

## What Teachers Need to Know

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The United States was a new nation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and had few prominent professional artists. As a country of immigrants from many nations, it had no single characteristic style. Many American artists trained either entirely or partially in Europe. Unlike their European counterparts, artists from the colonial and revolutionary periods turned to distinctly American subjects, such as portraits of national heroes and historical events. American art was created not just to be admired but also to inspire and incite patriotic sentiment both locally and in Europe.



# Unit 5 Lesson 1

## INTRODUCTION TO ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF A NEW NATION

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will read and answer questions about art and architecture in the United States.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 16 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 67<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 16, <i>Paul Revere</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 29, Portraiture of Pre-Revolutionary Colonial America</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Analyze the function and importance of portraiture in pre-revolutionary colonial America.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last unit, they learned about traditional art from China. In this unit, students will continue to learn about art from different time periods by exploring early American artwork. Unlike the art of China, which may be more than one or two thousand years old, early non-Native American artwork is much more contemporary, given the age of the United States of America.

## DAY 1: INTRODUCTION TO ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF A NEW NATION

Introduce the lesson by explaining to students the significance and influence of historical colonial figures in the United States. Explain how these figures inspired confidence and patriotism in the general public and how portraits helped spread awareness of a figure's image in a time before modern technology.

Ask students to recall portraits from colonial America.

Ask the following questions: What types of people may have been painted during this time period? Who do you think could afford to have their portrait painted during colonial times? (*Possible response: colonial American leaders and heroes*)

How do you think the artists want you to feel when looking at portraits of American leaders? (*Possible response: inspired, proud, and patriotic*)

Why do you think it was important to inspire the public with feelings of patriotism prior to the American Revolution? (*Possible response: If people felt patriotic, they would have felt inspired to participate in the revolution.*)

## Portraiture Artists in Pre-Revolutionary Colonial America

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Inform students that unlike European artists, who were mainly classically trained in prestigious schools, most of the early portrait artists of the United States were self-taught painters who roamed the colonies. Some traveling painters brought along portraits with bodies already painted and added each customer's face later. This saved time and helped artists work quickly in many towns.

American professional artists were trained in Europe, but only elites could afford to have their portraits painted by them. Such artists made money painting for the top societal tiers of American society. These artists employed classical European traditions such as including personal items that signified the person's position or authority. However, in the American colonies, the subjects were not royalty or church officials, but rather wealthy American citizens and influential statesmen.

**SUPPORT**—It was important to spread awareness of patriotic ideas not only to the population of the colonies but to people in Europe as well. Portraits and printed images helped counter the stereotype of American colonists as uncultured, showing them as thoughtful, capable, and worthy of international support. This was because most European citizens viewed the American colonies as inferior and uncultured when compared to British subjects. Those in power in Britain took this view even further, believing the American colonists to be second-class citizens whose role was to provide wealth, revenue, and trade for the English empire.



Page 67

Display *Paul Revere* for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look at the portrait and share what they know about the historical figure Paul Revere.



Slide 16

## Art in This Lesson

*Paul Revere, John Singleton Copley*



This portrait was painted by John Singleton Copley (July 3, 1738–September 9, 1815) in 1768. This time period is considered pre-revolutionary colonial America (1760–69).



The artist uses light and dark colors to create high contrast in this portrait. The bright white shirt and pale skin of Paul Revere greatly stand out against the dark background.

### Background for Teacher

This neoclassical portrait, which was painted before Paul Revere's famous ride in 1775, depicts him as an ordinary man who labored as a skilled silversmith. Copley's informal image shows the patriot without a wig and with his waistcoat unbuttoned. Revere's direct gaze at the viewer indicates that he is deep in thought. It is conjectured that the teapot depicted in his hand refers not only to his trade as a silversmith but also to the much-hated 1767 Townshend Act, in which the British imposed heavy taxes on imported tea and other goods. While this painting was painted prior to the Boston Tea Party (1773), it is interesting that Revere is holding a teapot in the painting, as he was a ringleader of the Boston Tea Party.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

What is Paul Revere holding in this painting?

- o He is holding a silver teapot.

What do you think the tools on the table were used for?

- o The tools were used for carving or engraving silver.

Why do you think Copley painted Paul Revere with a silver teapot and engraving tools? What does the teapot in this painting suggest about the time period? How might it hint at Revere's future role in the American Revolution?

- o Paul Revere was a silversmith before he became an American hero. This depiction shows him as a hardworking man living in the colonies who later became a key figure in the American Revolution.

## Activity



Page 29

Review the directions in the Student Activity Book for the Portraiture of Pre-Revolutionary Colonial America activity. Prompt students to read the passage and answer the three questions. For item 4, have students draw a self-portrait or a portrait of a classmate.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by having students discuss and summarize the significance of portraiture in pre-revolutionary colonial America.

# Unit 5 Lesson 2

## HISTORY THROUGH AN ARTIST'S LENS

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will analyze the painting <i>Washington Crossing the Delaware</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 17 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 69<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 17, <i>Washington Crossing the Delaware</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 30, <i>Washington Crossing the Delaware</i></li><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Interactive of <i>Washington Crossing the Delaware</i> from the Mount Vernon website</li><li>• Colored Pencils</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

Analyze the function and importance of history painting in post-revolutionary America.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about portraiture in pre-revolutionary America and its use as a status symbol. Students will continue to learn the patriotic function that art played in the foundation of the new nation of the United States.

## DAY 1: HISTORY THROUGH AN ARTIST'S LENS

Introduce the lesson by asking students if they have ever seen a **history painting**. Explain that history paintings are often used to inspire the general public. Tell students that history painting is a specific genre of art that depicts important historical events, often with heroic, idealized imagery meant to inspire viewers. Remind students that in the previous lesson, they learned how art inspired patriotism for the upcoming American Revolution. After the revolution, art continued to play a patriotic role in reminding future generations of the inspirational and heroic ideas of the past.

Ask students to reflect on an inspirational or patriotic painting or photo they have seen in their life.

Ask the following questions: What is an example of patriotic artwork you have seen? (*Answers will vary.*) What features of that artwork were inspiring to you? (*Answers will vary.*)

## History Painting

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The new nation of the United States was proud of winning independence from Great Britain. It served as an example to Europe that the ideals of truth, justice, and liberty were achievable for everyone. Unlike European countries, however, this new nation did not have a long-standing history. Artists and painters helped build U.S. history and spread its values to the general public by choosing artistic themes that celebrated ideals of patriotism and heroism.

Artistic scenes and images that portrayed the struggle for independence and the determination of the young nation were particularly poignant. Artists played a crucial role in shaping national identity—by emphasizing heroism, unity, and sacrifice, they created emotionally powerful images that helped define American ideals. George Washington, in particular, was a very popular subject. The iconic landowner-turned-general-turned-president was and still is a shining example of American ideals and values. Artists often used their creativity to alter the historic record to increase the impact of their work. By changing details such as the exact location, chronology, or people involved in particular events, artists could mold a scene into an extremely inspiring masterpiece.

**SUPPORT**—Make sure it is clear to students that George Washington was America’s first president and one of the most iconic Americans to ever live. He was the son of a public servant, a plantation owner, and a prolific writer. He later went on to serve in the Continental Army and became one of the most revered generals in the nation’s history. He is the subject of many famous American paintings and portraits. Inform students that the painting is a romanticized or exaggerated depiction of what actually happened. The painting was used to foster patriotism and American values.

## Activity

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Pages  
69 and 30

Display *Washington Crossing the Delaware* for students, and have them turn to the corresponding page 69 in the back of their Student Activity Book. Invite students to look carefully at the painting and reflect on what they see. Tell students that after they discuss the painting and its history, they will answer questions on page 30 in their Student Activity Book. Prompt students to answer the Explore and Reflection questions independently.



Slide 17

## After the Crossing

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Tell students that the painting they saw today represents only one moment in a story. Encourage students to think of what happened immediately after the crossing: Did they arrive safely? What was the battle like? What might Washington have said to his troops? Distribute colored pencils and invite each student to create their own artwork of something that might have happened after the crossing. Help students with ideas such as “maybe they got off the boat and walked on land.” Any interpretation of “after the scene” is fine. For example, students may choose to depict what happened immediately after or something much later, perhaps after the war.

## Art in This Lesson

### *Washington Crossing the Delaware*, Emanuel Leutze



The painting was painted by Emanuel Leutze in 1851 CE. He conceived the idea for the image during the European Revolutions of 1848 while living in Germany. The painting commemorates Washington's victory at the Battle of Trenton. It depicts Christmas Eve, when the British did not expect an army to cross the freezing Delaware River. When Washington and his men crossed the river, they were weary and tired. But Leutze's image shows an idealized scene. As an example, General Washington's standing-up posture would have capsized the boat. This departure from reality emphasizes Washington as a hero instrumental to the American victory in the revolution. Moreover, his tenacious troops bravely paddle the icy river, signifying their resilience in the war. Washington is portrayed as the future American president leading his men in a surprise attack. The luminous rising sun symbolizes the dawning of victory and a new day.



The artist included rich color in the figure's garments to symbolize the different colonies the soldiers came from. The figures are painted in a realistic style, but the image is highly concocted, having been painted seventy-five years after the event. The men are depicted in high contrast with strong lights and shadows.

### Background for Teacher

Emanuel Leutze was an American-born man of German descent. He began the painting in 1849 while living in Germany. The artist's intent was to inspire Europeans to follow Americans' ideals for the democratic reform of the monarchies during and after the Revolutions of 1848.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

Who is the man standing nearest the bow of the boat?

- o The man is George Washington.

What is happening in the foreground and background of this scene?

- o Soldiers are rowing boats full of supplies and preparing for an attack on a frozen river.

What about this scene is dramatic but not true to real life?

- o Washington is standing up in a small boat, which would be very dangerous in real life. Also, the soldiers are portrayed as strong and heroic when in reality, Washington's troops were tired from battle at this point in the war.

### Teaching Idea



Connect to an interactive image of the painting *Washington Crossing the Delaware*. Hover over each point and review the text with students. Have students imitate the poses of the subjects in the painting as you read each point.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the interactive image may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by reviewing with students the important inspirational role that paintings like *Washington Crossing the Delaware* played in instilling patriotism in citizens of both the newly formed United States and the revolution-torn nations of Europe.



# Unit 5 Lesson 3

## PORTRAIT OF A LEADER

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will analyze portraits of national heroes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slides 18–19 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> pages 71–73<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 18, <i>George Washington</i></li><li>• Art 19, <i>Profile Bust of Benjamin Franklin</i></li></ul></li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will draw a portrait of an inspirational early American leader.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 31, Inspirational Portrait</li><li>• Drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Colored pencils (1 set per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Analyze examples of portraits of national heroes created by notable artists of the American colonial and revolutionary periods.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about how artists played a role in the inspiration of American and European citizens during the American Revolution. Connect this to earlier lessons on expressive portraiture in African and Chinese art to support cross-cultural synthesis and reinforce visual storytelling as a universal art form.

## DAY 1: PORTRAITS OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS

Introduce the lesson by reminding students that artists sometimes exaggerate the details of historical events to make them seem more impressive.

Ask students to reflect on the message they think artists of the colonial time period were trying to share.

Ask the following questions: What famous artwork have you seen that might have been exaggerated for dramatic effect? (*Answers will vary.*) Why do you think it was important for artists to exaggerate scenes of patriotism after the American Revolution was over? (*It was important for early Americans to continue to be patriotic because the young country wanted to prove to the world that it was strong and worthy of the independence it had won.*)

## Portraits of Patriotism

Inform students that early American artists continued to inspire the world after the American Revolution. While many American artists trained either entirely or partially in Europe's esteemed art schools with a focus on history painting, these artists continued to make art about American subjects. They still painted portraits to capture the essence, or spirit, of great American leaders. Moreover, American artists drew upon the country's short but important history, filled with heroes and heroic events.

Gilbert Stuart was the best-known and most renowned American portrait painter of the early nineteenth century. He is most famous for his depictions of George Washington. Of the 104 portraits he painted of the general, only three were painted while observing his subject in real life. Due to their popularity and high demand, Stuart produced many identical copies of these three life portraits.

Explain to students that Stuart painted three different types of portraits of Washington. The waist-length "Vaughan" version displays just the right side of Washington's face. The "Athenaeum" variant shows Washington's head turned more to his left side. The "Landsdowne" style shows Washington's full-length figure.

**SUPPORT**—Remind students that the time of Stuart's paintings was before photography, so his artistic interpretations are some of the only visual impressions we have of George Washington.



Pages 71–73



Slides 18–19

Display *George Washington* and *Profile Bust of Benjamin Franklin* for students, and have them turn to the corresponding pages in the back of their Student Activity Book. Ask: What is similar and different between how Washington and Franklin are portrayed? One is a painting, the other a sculpture—how does that affect the mood or message? Invite students to look carefully at each artwork and discuss what they know about each historic figure.

### Art in This Lesson

*George Washington*, Gilbert Stuart



The painting was created in 1796 by Gilbert Stuart and features George Washington at age sixty-four. The artwork depicts Washington after all his major accomplishments as a military general and during his tenure as the first president of the United States.



The artist painted a strong frontal light source and a dark background to show the subject in high contrast. Washington's facial features are well lit to showcase his face and to highlight his direct gaze at the viewer as a revolutionary hero.

### Background for Teacher

This painting is an example of one of Stuart's Athenaeum-style portraits. This is evident because of the half-length figure and the manner in which Washington is turned to face toward the left side of the canvas.

## Art in This Lesson

### *Profile Bust of Benjamin Franklin, Patience Wright*



*Profile Bust of Benjamin Franklin* by Patience Wright is a wax-relief portrait created from 1772 to 1775. Active during the American Revolution and supportive of its cause, Franklin was one of the American Founding Fathers as well as a drafter and signer of the Declaration of Independence.



This relief sculptural artwork, set in a frame, has both two-dimensional and three-dimensional qualities.

### Background for Teacher

Wright was a renowned wax modeler known for her fine detail work. The profile bust is considered to be a fine example of American neoclassical portraiture and is currently housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS

Who is the subject of the portrait painted by Gilbert Stuart in 1796?

- o George Washington is the subject of Stuart's 1796 portrait.

How does Stuart use lighting in this portrait?

- o Stuart uses a dark background to contrast with Washington's well-lit face and hair.

What famous figure is depicted in the profile bust by Patience Wright?

- o The figure is Benjamin Franklin.

What do you think the bust of Benjamin Franklin is sculpted from?

- o I think the profile bust is sculpted from wax.

## Check for Understanding

Conclude the session by discussing why prominent American artists of the revolutionary period chose to make art about national leaders and heroes rather than the more traditional European subjects of monarchs and religious icons.

## DAY 2: HEROIC INSPIRATION

Introduce Day 2 of the lesson by reviewing the material from the previous day. Ask students to think about the concept of "inspirational patriotic art" and why artists wanted to portray the country in this light.

Ask the following questions: Why did so many artists think George Washington was an excellent subject for a history painting or a portrait? (*George Washington was an inspirational leader, both as a famous general who fought during the American Revolution and as the first president of the United States.*)

## Show Me a Hero

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Inform students that this class day will be dedicated to a project in which students will sketch a portrait of an inspirational early American leader or hero. Based on the artworks of this unit, students should think about how they can create an image with similar inspirational meanings as the artists of the colonial and revolutionary periods. Students should use elements of realism so that their chosen subject is recognizable, but they may also be creative in their artistic choices. For example, students may wish to dramatize the portrait by embellishing or exaggerating certain features of the subject's appearance or actions. Students can also focus on communicating their artistic meaning through the use of background, pose, or props.

## Activity

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Page 31

Tell students that they will create a portrait of a famous early American leader or hero. Explain that they should use color, pose, personal items (props), background, symbolism, and/or other dramatized details to communicate an inspirational patriotic meaning for their artwork. Review the students' selected subjects to ensure they have chosen a subject from early American history. Help students research online digital images or print reference photos or portraits as inspiration. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials they need for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students present their American colonial and revolutionary portraits. They should discuss the artistic meaning they chose to convey and how they used color, pose, props, background, and/or decorative details to communicate patriotic ideals. Ask: What does the background tell us about this person's role in history?

# Unit 5 Lesson 4

## ARCHITECTURE TO REPRESENT US

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will design their own neoclassical building after learning about Monticello.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Online Resources</b> Virtual tour of Monticello from the Monticello website</li><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slide 20 and <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 75<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 20, Monticello</li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 32, Design Your Own Residence</li><li>• Sketch paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Drawing paper (1 sheet per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li><li>• Colored pencils (1 set per student)</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Recognize the features of American neoclassical architecture.

### What Students Have Learned

Remind students that in the last lesson, they learned about portraits of heroic leaders and other inspirational history paintings from the Revolutionary War. They will now examine the architecture of the home of one American leader.

## DAY 1: ARCHITECTURE TO REPRESENT US

Introduce the lesson by explaining that architecture from early America was done in the neoclassical style. Inform students that they will learn about the features of this type of architecture during this lesson.

Ask students to think about the types of houses in which early American leaders might have lived. Invite students to quickly sketch what they imagine George Washington's house looked like. This can be rough and imaginative—the goal is to get them thinking about architecture in early America.

Ask the following questions: Can you name a historical building in the United States that was built in the neoclassical style? (*Answers will vary but may include the White House or Monticello.*) In modern times, which building does the president of the United States live in? (*the White House*)

## Neoclassical Architecture in America

Like early American painters, American architects were also inspired by European styles, especially the neoclassical architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. A popular style in Europe at the time was known as neoclassical. Neoclassical buildings drew inspiration from elements of ancient Greek and Roman architecture such as columns, triangular pediments, and **porticos**. A portico is a covered row of columns that is often found at the entranceway of a building.

Many European public buildings and private homes of wealthy citizens were built in the traditional neoclassical style. American artists traveling in Europe often drew inspiration from these buildings, incorporating stylistic elements into their own designs. These new works of architecture both physically and metaphorically established an impressive presence in the new nation. Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson in Charlottesville, Virginia, is an example of neoclassical architecture.

**SUPPORT**—Neoclassical architecture is easily recognizable by its building forms. Neoclassical buildings usually have a grand scale, simple geometric forms, dramatic use of columns, a preference for blank walls, and a clear inspiration from Greek or Roman building forms.

### Art in This Lesson

Monticello, Thomas Jefferson



Monticello was the primary residence and plantation of Thomas Jefferson. The second president began designing Monticello at the age of fourteen after inheriting the estate from his father. It is located just outside Charlottesville, Virginia. The construction spanned from 1768 to 1809.



The shapes that make up the building's columns imitate ancient Greek **Doric columns**, which have a capital made of a circle topped by a square, a plain shaft with twenty sides, and no base. The home is capped by a white dome, also drawn from Greek and Roman architecture.

### Background for Teacher

*Monticello* means “little mountain” in Italian. Jefferson was impressed with the style of architecture from the Italian Renaissance and ancient Rome. These art periods were obvious inspirations for the design of Monticello. The house includes two key features of neoclassical design: a white portico and Greek Doric columns, echoing those made of marble that were commonly used in buildings in ancient Greece. Monticello's style was admired by American architects and became the basis for state capitals, civic centers, and many government buildings in Washington, D.C.



Page 75

**After students have viewed the art, ask the following questions:**

### **AN ARTIST'S QUESTIONS**

What two colors did Jefferson use in this architectural work?

- o Jefferson used red and white in this architectural work.



Slide 20

What red building material did Jefferson use for much of the home?

- o Jefferson used red bricks.

What white building material did Jefferson use for the portico and dome?

- o Jefferson used painted wood for the portico and dome.

### **Teaching Idea**



Connect to a virtual tour of Monticello to explore the rooms together with students. Point out the neoclassical design of the architecture as well as other forms of American art covered in previous lessons, such as busts and portraits.

Use this link to download the Core Knowledge Visual Arts Online Resources, where the specific link to the tour may be found:

<https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

**TEACHER NOTE**—The virtual tour of Monticello includes information regarding the fact that Thomas Jefferson was a slaveholder. Be sure to approach this topic with sensitivity when presenting this information to students.

### **Activity**



Page 32

Tell students that they will sketch a neoclassical architectural front view design for a residence of their creation. Explain that they should include elements of neoclassical design such as a grand scale, simple geometric forms, columns, porticos, triangular pediments, domes, and uniformly single-colored walls. Remind students that architects of the time took inspiration from Greek or Roman structures. Ensure that each student has the appropriate materials needed for this project. Review the list of steps in the Student Activity Book. You may want to model each step for the class beforehand, have a finished example handy, and review student work before moving on to the next step. After completing their artwork, students can answer the Reflection questions in their Student Activity Book.

### **Check for Understanding**

Conclude the session by discussing how neoclassical architecture was a common artistic style in the years that followed the American Revolution. Have students present their building design sketches and explain how they included features of neoclassical architecture.



# Unit 5 Lesson 5

## UNIT 5 ASSESSMENT

TIME: 1 DAY

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will reflect on the architectural designs of classmates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 33, Reflect on Student Architectural Plans</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Other supplies as needed</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Assess student mastery of content presented in Unit 5.

#### Preparation for Assessment

Prior to teaching this lesson, you should take time to review student work in the Student Activity Books as well as your own notes regarding student understanding and achievement of the lesson objectives. Focus on the needs of your students and choose those objectives and activities that best meet their needs.

### Review and Assessment

Introduce the lesson by asking students to reflect on how art and architecture expressed the identity and ideals of the new United States. Discuss the defining features, themes, styles, and purposes of art and architecture of this time period.

### Review

Review with students the main ideas from each lesson in Unit 5.

- History paintings, portraits, and architecture were important forms of nineteenth-century American art.
- History paintings and portraits of the colonial and revolutionary periods of the United States reflected European artistic styles but uniquely depicted American subject matter.
- American history paintings largely served to foster patriotic feelings rather than to document events accurately.
- Nineteenth-century portraits in the United States represented American heroes tied to the country's history rather than the royalty, nobility, or religious figures or officials who had previously dominated European portraiture.

Revisit the Big Idea of this unit: *Early American artists reflected the spirit of the new nation and how it wished to see itself portrayed.* Discuss with students the activities they did in this unit, including drawing an American portrait and creating a sketch of a neoclassical estate. Invite students to share what they found most meaningful about these projects and how their work reflected themes from the unit.

## Assessment

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Page 33

Ask students to turn to page 33 in their Student Activity Book. Students will trade architectural drawings and provide feedback based on neoclassical features. For example: Does the building include a portico or dome? How effectively is symmetry used? They will be asked to consider neoclassical design elements such as porticos, columns, triangular pediments, and use of color and identify where the student used those features in their drawing.

You may choose to use one or more of the following activities to assess students' understanding and encourage them to explore the artistic ideas they learned about in the unit.

- o Have students use a photograph of their face to draw an inspirational self-portrait. Ask them to imagine what they will accomplish in the future and write a description of their accomplishments under their portraits or on separate paper. Then students can share their self-portraits. After the presentations, ask the class what they learned about each student from their inspirational self-portraits.
- o Find other portraits that were painted by John Singleton Copley or Gilbert Stuart and compare them to the ones in this unit. Have a class discussion to compare and contrast these works.
- o Assign groups of students an element of art to find in the portraits from this section, such as shape, line, color, design, texture, light, or space. Each group should find an example of how this technique is used in the portraits and share it with the class.
- o Review the architectural features of the neoclassical style and have students name each feature as you point it out.

## Additional Recommended Resources

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Consider using the following trade books that discuss art in the United States for students:

- Burgan, Michael. *Monticello (We the People)*. Mankato, MN: Compass Point, 2004.
- Fisher, Leonard Everett. *Monticello*. New York: Holiday House, 1998.
- Osofsky, Randy. *Come Look with Me: Art in Early America*. Palm Beach, FL: Lickle Publishing, 2002.
- Richards, Norman. *Monticello (Cornerstones of Freedom)*. Danbury, CT: Children's Press, 1995.
- Young, Robert. *A Personal Tour of Monticello (How It Looked)*. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications, 1999.

Here are some resources for teachers and parents:

- *Art to the Core*. Davis Publications. Accessed at [www.davisart.com](http://www.davisart.com). A kit of materials that includes slides of artworks, lesson plans, assessment masters, and vocabulary masters, all keyed to the *Core Knowledge Sequence* for this grade.
- Gilbert Stuart Online, at [www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/stuart\\_gilbert.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/stuart_gilbert.html), has links to several museums that own Stuart's paintings.
- Monticello, at [www.monticello.org](http://www.monticello.org), includes an online house tour (with virtual reality panoramas) of the first floor of Jefferson's former home and "A Day in the Life of Jefferson."

# Culminating Activity

## GRADE 4 CULMINATING ACTIVITY

TIME: 2 DAYS

### AT A GLANCE CHART

Lesson	Activity	Materials
<b>DAY 1</b>	Students will do one or more activities that assess their cumulative knowledge of the art learned throughout the course.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Slide Deck</b> slides 1, 5, 10, 14, 17<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Art 1, <i>Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne</i></li><li>• Art 5, Illumination of the Qur'an</li><li>• Art 10, Portrait Head of an Ife King</li><li>• Art 14, <i>Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley</i> (Silk Scroll)</li><li>• Art 17, <i>Washington Crossing the Delaware</i></li></ul></li><li>• <b>Student Activity Book</b> page 34, A Year in Review</li><li>• Markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils (1 set per group of students)</li><li>• Blank booklets (1 per student)</li><li>• Pencils (1 per student)</li><li>• Erasers (1 per student)</li></ul>
<b>DAY 2</b>	Students will display a gallery of their original artwork and present it to an audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student artwork from throughout the year</li><li>• Materials to display student artwork</li></ul>

### Lesson Objective

- Summarize the artistic features and purposes of the artworks studied in this course.

## DAY 1: ART OF ANOTHER PLACE AND TIME

Introduce the lesson by explaining the student objectives or activities selected from the three options below. Then use the provided rubric to assess student work or performance.

### Review of the Year

Provide students with a brief summary of the material they covered during the course. Ask the following questions as you redisplay artwork from previous units:



Slide 1

Unit 1: Why were paintings of the Madonna and other biblical figures in medieval Europe depicted in an unrealistic style? (*Artists wanted religious artwork to look*

*otherworldly and supernatural so that all viewers could understand stories from the Bible or faith concepts about Christianity even if they were unable to read.)*



Slide 5

Unit 2: Why did religious Islamic art often feature calligraphy and geometric designs? *(The Qur'an forbids idolatry, so religious Islamic art was aniconic, and artists did not depict humans or animals as gods. Instead, they used intricate designs with arabesques, geometric patterns, and calligraphy to decorate their religious art.)*



Slide 10

Unit 3: Why did early African artists create bronze heads? What was the purpose of these sculptures? *(Early African artists wanted to honor royal figures and other important people. These objects were displayed on special occasions and hidden from the public eye when not in use due to their honorary function.)*



Slide 14

Unit 4: Why did ancient Chinese artists mainly paint scenes of nature? *(The philosophy of Taoism promoted an interest in being harmonious and balanced with nature and living a modest life.)*



Slide 17

Unit 5: Why was it important to inspire people in early colonial and revolutionary America with patriotic artwork? *(The country was young and fighting for independence from Great Britain. Artists wanted to present patriotic artwork to the colonists to keep them unified and to prove to the world that they were strong and deserving of their own government.)*

## Options for Assessing

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Choose one or more of the following activities to assess your students. The main activity should be assessed with the Culminating Activity Scoring Rubric on page 124 to assess your students' learning.

- Students create a booklet titled *What I Learned This Year in Art*. Beforehand, create a blank booklet for each student by folding two sheets of white drawing paper and stapling them together along the fold. Tell students to design a cover as well as one page to represent each of the five units in this course. On each page, they should write one or two sentences describing what they learned from the unit, then provide an illustration of an artwork or artistic concept. Encourage students to use complete sentences and label their illustrations. You might also provide a sentence starter on each page to help them summarize key learning.
- Students research five examples of art to represent each unit in the course. Students can either show printed images of the artwork or display their selections digitally, identifying the artwork and the artist. Then have each student briefly explain the works and why they chose them. Encourage students to discuss the specific features of the artworks that represent each corresponding culture and time period.
- Students reflect on what they learned throughout the course by completing the A Year in Review activity in their Student Activity Book.

## Activity

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Page 34

Have students turn to page 34 of their Student Activity Book to complete the A Year in Review activity. Prompt students to answer the Explore and Reflection questions independently.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having students discuss what they consider to be the most interesting qualities of the diverse cultural artworks they studied.

## DAY 2: GALLERY WALK

Introduce the lesson by explaining that students will display a gallery of their own artwork from the course and present it to an audience.

## A Year in Review

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Students should display all of the artworks they have created throughout this course. If there is adequate wall space, paintings and drawings can be displayed on walls, and sculptures can be presented on tables or desks. Then have students walk around the room to observe each collection of student artwork. Invite each student to stand beside their displayed work and briefly explain what they created and what they learned about the associated culture. After each presentation, you can give the rest of the group an opportunity to ask the student artist questions about their original artworks.

## Check for Understanding

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Conclude the session by having each student choose one of the artworks created by their classmates and discuss it with the class. They should explain why they think the piece is successful, both in terms of the elements of art and in the way it represents a particular culture or time. Provide sentence starters such as “This artwork stood out to me because \_\_\_\_\_” and “It shows an important element of art by \_\_\_\_\_.”

### A

**Allah, n.** the Arabic word for God.

**aniconism, n.** the practice of avoiding images of humans or animals in religious art; used in Islamic sacred art to focus attention on God's word and abstract beauty

**apprenticeship, n.** a period of a person's life spent learning a craft or trade from another person

**arabesque, n.** a term meaning "in the Arab style," referring to the complex, intertwined lines and shapes that make up typical Islamic design; a form of design using floral, plant, and curvilinear patterns

### B

**bust, n.** a sculpture of the head and shoulders of a person

### C

**calligraphy, n.** elegant, artistic handwritten script usually made with a brush or flat nib pen

**cathedral, n.** a large and important church that serves as a headquarters for a diocese or larger group of churches

**collage, n.** a piece of art made by adding materials such as photos, prints, or small objects to a backing of paper or wood

**commission, v.** to order that something be made in exchange for payment

### D

**dome, n.** a hemispheric vault or ceiling

**Doric column, n.** one of the three types of Greek columns, characterized by a capital made of a circle topped by a square, a plain shaft with twenty sides, and no base

**dynasty, n.** a period of time when a certain family ruled

### F

**flying buttress, n.** a supportive arch stemming from a column that presses against the upper side wall of a Gothic church for reinforcement to bear some of the outward pressure created by the weight of the roof

### G

**gargoyle, n.** a spout in the form of a grotesque human or animal figure projecting from a cathedral roof gutter to direct rainwater clear of the building

### H

**history painting, n.** a depiction of an important historical event and/or deed of a great hero

### I

**idolatry, n.** the worship of a physical object as though it were a god

**illuminated manuscript, n.** a manuscript with colored decorations drawn by monks or scribes who copied written documents by hand

**ivory, n.** a hard material from the teeth and tusks of animals, usually elephants, that is used in many forms of African art

### M

**Madonna, n.** Italian for "my lady"; a term used to describe images of Mary, either alone or with the baby Jesus

**mausoleum, n.** a building that functions as a large tomb

**minaret, n.** a prayer tower

**mosque, n.** an Islamic place of worship

**muezzin, n.** a crier who calls the Muslim faithful to prayer

**Muslim, n.** Arabic word meaning "one who submits"; someone who follows the faith of Islam



## O

**oba, n.** a term used for a king in some African societies

## P

**patron, n.** a person or organization that supports or sponsors artists, especially financially

**pigment, n.** matter used to color something

**pointed arch, n.** an arch that comes to a point at its apex; characteristic of Gothic architecture

**porcelain, n.** ceramic ware made from fine white clay that, when fired, becomes hard, translucent, thin-walled, and waterproof and makes a ringing sound when struck

**portal, n.** a door or entrance, typically elaborate, in cathedrals and churches

**portico, n.** a covered row of columns from classical times, often at the entranceway of a building

## Q

**Qur'an, n.** Arabic for "recitation"; the holy book of Islam, which Muslims believe consists of God's revelations to the prophet Muhammad, and the cornerstone of Muslim faith, practice, and law

## R

**rose window, n.** also called a round window; a circular stained-glass window, typically with a design radiating from the center

## S

**scroll, n.** a roll of illustrated paper or silk

**secular, adj.** not related to religion

**spire, n.** the top part of a steeple that tapers to a point; an architectural element usually found on a church or temple

**stained-glass window, n.** a window with designs made of clear and colored glass, consisting of either bits of glass held together with strips of lead or drawings made directly on larger pieces of colored glass

**statue, n.** a sculpture resembling a human or an animal

## T

**Taoism, n.** a belief system based on a philosophy that teaches natural simplicity and humility as a way to achieve peace and harmony in life

**tapestry, n.** a fabric wall hanging, usually painted, embroidered (sewn with images), or woven with colorful designs and images

## V

**vestment, n.** clothing—often an elaborate, colorful robe—worn by a church official when performing religious duties or for special occasions; often denotes the wearer's rank and visually relates to the ceremony being performed

## Talking to Students About Works of Art

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Talking to students about works of art is a vital part of building their knowledge and confidence about the subject. Structured discussions will help students become comfortable talking about art and encourage them to develop and share their own interpretations.

When talking to students about works of art, it is important to bear in mind the following:

- Use descriptive, appropriate vocabulary in context. Explain terms and give examples.
- Refer to works of art by the title of the piece and the artist's name to build familiarity.
- Ask questions that will encourage critical thinking about art. The best time to ask these questions is while viewing a piece of art together.

You can find supporting resources, including a list of vocabulary to use, in the Online Resources for this book: <https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

## Talking to Students About Their Own Art

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The aim of talking to students about their own art is to encourage reflection about the creative process and build their confidence in expressing themselves.

When talking to students about their own art, it is important to bear in mind the following:

- Encourage them to use their own words and express their own opinions about what they have made and how they made it.
- Encourage reflection with supporting questions and prompts, bearing in mind that students may not remember exactly what they did. Older students can be guided to recount a process in chronological steps.
- Encourage students to think about the type of art they have created.
- Provide descriptive feedback about the basic elements of art. For example, instead of saying “That’s pretty,” you could say “I noticed you used warm colors to create contrast—tell me more about that choice.”
- Avoid making judgmental comments.

You can find supporting resources to help guide these discussions in the Online Resources for this book: <https://www.coreknowledge.org/visual-arts/>

### Student Activity Book Answer Key

**Note:** Some questions in the Student Activity Book are created to encourage student creativity and reflection and therefore have no correct answers. Below are those pages and questions that do have correct answers or expected responses.

### Unit 1 Art and Architecture: Middle Ages in Europe

#### Lesson 1 Introduction to Art of the Middle Ages in Europe

##### Summarize Medieval Art p. 3

1. Possible response: Medieval artwork was often religiously themed. This was because the Church commissioned most of the art.
2. Pointed arches and flying buttresses allowed cathedral buildings to have tall, thin walls. Stained-glass windows were also popular in medieval architecture.

##### Elements of Art p. 4

1. color and value
2. line and shape
3. shape and color
4. texture and value
5. form and texture
6. space and form

#### Lesson 2 The Madonna and Child in Medieval Art

***Madonna and Child on a Curved Throne***  
p. 5

##### Explore

1. Possible response: The artist depicts figures seated on an elaborate throne with rich colors and flat gold leaf. Christian symbols such as halos behind Mary and

Jesus, the cross behind the child, and the two angels at the top also show that this artwork is religious in nature. Stylized features of the bodies of the figures with elongated heads, arms, fingers, and necks further demonstrate that the portrait is religious in purpose.

2. Possible response: The artist wanted to show that the baby Jesus was the son of God, not a regular baby.

##### Reflection

Possible response: It has a religious theme and uses flat, stylized figures.

#### Lesson 6 Gothic Architecture

##### Gothic Architectural Elements p. 9

1. pointed arch
2. statue
3. flying buttress
4. gargoyle
5. stained-glass window
6. spire

### Unit 2 Islamic Art and Architecture

#### Lesson 1 Characteristics of Islamic Art

##### Identifying Elements of Islamic Art p. 12

1. calligraphy
2. secular art
3. religious art
4. arabesque

#### Lesson 3 Intersection of Art and Architecture

##### Islamic Architecture p. 14

1. minaret
2. calligraphy

3. dome
4. pointed arch

## **Lesson 4 Unit 2 Assessment**

### **Taj Mahal p. 16**

#### **Explore**

1. Possible response: The architecture and decorative details are beautiful and extravagant. The building is also made from rich materials like marble. Because lots of time and money was involved in the construction of this building, it must mean it is dedicated to someone very special.
2. Possible response: I feel inspired and impressed by the Taj Mahal's beauty, magnificence, and structure with domes, towers, and minarets. I feel peaceful and calm when looking at the pure white marble, the reflection of the building in the water, the gardens, and the perfect symmetry of the architecture.

#### **Reflection**

Possible response: I would construct a large mosque with towers and minarets dedicated to my grandmother. The mosque would have a circular floor plan, and the towers would be decorated with rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. I would inscribe her favorite quotes around the outside of the mosque.

## **Unit 3 The Art of Africa**

### **Lesson 1 Introduction to Art of Africa**

#### **Map of Africa p. 17**

1. Algeria, Sudan, and Democratic Republic of Congo
2. Madagascar

## **Lesson 2 Portraying Leaders**

### **Benin Bronze Head and Portrait Head of an Ife King p. 18**

#### **Explore**

1. Possible responses: serious, decorated, strong
2. Possible response: The elaborate headdresses and the choice of bronze as a material show that the subjects were important people in their respective cultures.
3. Possible response: I think the artists wanted viewers to be impressed with the beauty and wealth of the rulers. I also think the headdresses and the carving of the 3D art pieces make the rulers look powerful.

#### **Reflection**

Possible response: Bronze was a luxury material that few African people could access or afford. Royal portrait heads were made from bronze to show the wealth and status of the subject.

## **Unit 4 The Art of China**

### **Lesson 1 Introduction to Art of China**

#### **The Invention of Silk and Paper p. 23**

1. Possible response: His new method would make it easier to dry the paper and shape it into sheets so it could be used.
2. Possible response: It became widely popular and a huge source of income for China, and it led to the creation of the worldwide trade network known as the Silk Road.
3. Possible response: Artists could now write, paint, and draw on paper, which was

lightweight and portable. The creation of silk led to new types of garments and coverings for furniture and walls.

### **Lesson 3 Landscapes**

***Lonely Retreat Overlooking a Misty Valley***  
p. 25

#### **Explore**

1. Possible response: calm, peaceful, misty
2. Possible response: The artist painted the natural objects in the foreground with more intense colors, details, and defined brushwork. Then he used ink washes to make the background mountains and rocks lighter in color and less sharply detailed than the those in the foreground.
3. Possible response: The landscape creates a sense of peace, harmony, and calm.

#### **Reflection**

Possible response: The calligraphy in the corner might be the artist's signature. A poem that could be paired with this image is: In the valley I live alone, resting in my peaceful home.

### **Unit 5 Art and Architecture: Early United States**

#### **Lesson 1 Introduction to Art and Architecture of a New Nation**

**Portraiture of Pre-Revolutionary Colonial America** p. 29

1. An American colonial portrait provided information about the subject's wealth or power.
2. A portrait was often hung in the entry room to announce the subject's social status and wealth to visitors.

3. Expensive personal items of the subject were often included in the portrait.

### **Lesson 2 History Through an Artist's Lens**

***Washington Crossing the Delaware*** p. 30

#### **Explore**

1. Possible response: This painted scene makes me feel inspired and patriotic.
2. Possible response: The rising sun symbolizes hope about the birth of a new nation with a bright future.

#### **Reflection**

Possible response: The artist felt that Europeans could understand and relate to the colonists' struggle. He may have felt that the image would give Europeans hope about their future despite war.

### **Lesson 5 Unit 5 Assessment**

**Reflect on Student Architectural Plans**  
p. 33

#### **Explore**

1. Possible responses: portico, columns, triangular pediment, limited use of color
2. Possible responses: portico, columns, triangular pediment, limited use of color

#### **Grade 4 Culminating Activity**

**A Year in Review** p. 34

1. Possible response: Artists in medieval Europe and Islamic cultures both used rich colors and ornate lines to create decorative details. Chinese artists used lines in their calligraphy and scroll landscape paintings. African artists carved lines in sculptures and masks to create texture.

2. Possible response: Medieval European artists idealized the features of religious figures to show that they were heavenly and supernatural. Traditional African artists sculpted kings and leaders with

idealized features to honor them and their importance. Early American artists dramatized historical scenes to make leaders seem impressive and patriotic.



## Culminating Activity Scoring Rubric

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### Note:

Students should be evaluated on both their participation in class discussions and how their culminating artwork demonstrates the knowledge and skills they gained throughout the year. Use the scoring rubric below to assess student understanding of artistic concepts and cultural themes and their ability to reflect thoughtfully on their creative process and the artworks they studied.

Exemplary	Response is accurate and detailed. Student demonstrates strong understanding of art from other cultures and times by including three correct details, which may include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Masterful uses of the elements of art to represent a particular time and culture</li><li>• Accurate verbal descriptions of how and why various cultures created particular types of artwork</li><li>• Answers to written questions that are thoughtful, accurate, and indicative of critical thinking</li></ul>
Accomplished	Response is mostly accurate and somewhat detailed. Student demonstrates solid understanding of art from other cultures, noting two correct details.
Developing	Response is mostly accurate but lacks detail. Student demonstrates a very basic understanding of art from other cultures, noting one correct detail.
Limited	Response is incomplete and demonstrates a minimal understanding of the content.



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