

GALLUP NEW DEAL ART

Lesson Plan: *Different Points of View*

Primary Subject Area

Visual Art, Art History, Speaking & Listening, Language, Research

Grade Levels

4th—5th Grades

Estimated Length

One 40—45 minute lesson, with two 45-minute optional extension activities

Summary

Students will explore concepts of realism and abstraction in western art and art history through the careful study of 1930s landscape paintings by New Mexican artists.

Objectives

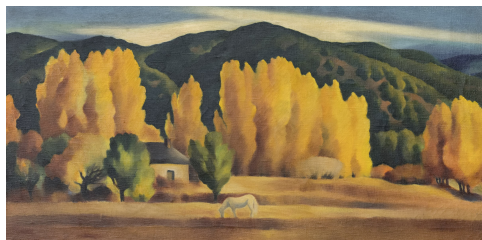
Students will be able to:

- 1) Define and identify concepts and features of realism and abstraction in western visual art.
- 2) Analyze a painting for form and style and describe and discuss what they see.

(Note: objectives for extension activities are listed by activity.)

Materials

- Listed by activity.



Gene Kloss
Aspens
About late 1930s
Oil on canvas
40" W x 20" H



Lloyd Moylan
Rural Rococo
1941
Tempera, pencil and ink on masonite
18 1/8" W x 23 1/8" H



Józef Bakoš
Cottonwoods
About 1935—1939
Watercolor on paper
16 3/4" W x 23 3/4" H



Albert Lorey Groll
Untitled (Red Rocks)
About 1904—1941
Oil on panel
23 1/2" W x 19 1/4" H



Brooks Willis
Desert
1938
Oil on canvas board
18 7/8" W x 20" H



Edgar Alwin Payne
Untitled (Grand Canyon)
About 1909—1942
Oil on canvas
24" W x 20" H



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Common Core Standards

ELA Speaking & Listening	
4th Grade	5th Grade
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1</u>

ELA Language	
4th Grade	5th Grade
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.5</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.5</u>
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.4.6</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.6</u>



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Pro—tip:

- Activities #1 and #2 can be combined to create a 40 to 45-minute stand-alone lesson focused on western art history and concepts of realism and abstraction. Activities #3 and #4 are optional extension activities, the first a mini artist research project and the second an art-making project.

Activity #1: Condensed Art History Lesson

Materials

- Teacher-prepared “Realism vs. Abstraction” digital slide or handout (see step #1 below)
- Chalk/dry erase marker or marker pen
- Timer
- Front board or chart paper
- Teacher-prepared digital art history slideshow (optional; see step #9 below)

Duration

15 minutes

Activity Steps

1) Create a “Realism vs. Abstraction” digital slide or printed handout displaying an image of a “realistic” painting and an image of an “abstract” painting side-by-side.

⇒ Suggestions for painting comparisons:

- Edward Hopper’s [“Nighthawks”](#) (1942) vs. Jacob Lawrence’s [“Bar-b-que”](#) (1942)
- Jan Davidsz de Heem’s [“Still Life with Ham, Lobster and Fruit”](#) (1653) vs. Lee Krasner’s [“Still Life”](#) (1938)
- Canaletto’s [“The Entrance to the Grand Canal, Venice”](#) (1730) vs. Joan Mitchell’s [“City Landscape”](#) (1955)

Pro—tip:

- Do not title the slide or handout. Only provide the artwork images with “tombstone” information (artwork title, artist name, date, materials, dimensions).

2) Project “Realism vs. Abstraction” digital slide on screen or wall, or have students share printed handouts in pairs.

3) Ask students to look closely at the artwork images for one minute. Set a timer.

4) When the time is up, ask students to vote by a show of hands for which of the two paintings they think looks more realistic.



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5) Ask students to explain their reasoning; pose the question, “What makes a painting realistic?”.

Pro—tip:

- Prompt students by asking them to point to specific features or aspects of the painting in question that make it “realistic.”

⇒ As students respond, write key ideas and terms on the front board or chart paper under the heading “Realism” (*e.g., representation, nature/naturalistic, life, accuracy, detail, photography, observation*).

6) Dig more deeply into the comparison by asking students, “What makes a painting abstract?” Take notes on their answers on the front board or chart paper under the heading “Abstraction.”

Pro—tip:

- Prompt students by asking how the painting they see as abstract is different from the one they see as realistic.

7) Review the board/chart paper discussion notes. Ask students: “What elements of a painting make it either realistic or abstract?” Make a list on the board or chart paper.

⇒ *Example List:*

- | | | |
|---------|----------------------------|---------------|
| • Line | • Space/depth | • Perspective |
| • Color | • Subject | • Technique |
| • Shape | • Organization/composition | • Detail |

8) Ask students: “What do you think the goal(s) of realistic painting is? What do you think the goal(s) of abstract painting is?” Help students parse out ideas about documenting/recording the world and life, capturing and conveying emotions, creating unique viewing experiences, exploring technique and materials, challenging norms and pushing boundaries, etc.

9) Provide a brief oral history of realism and abstraction in western art or present students with a short visual timeline (in the form of a digital slide show; suggestions for example paintings to include are noted below):

⇒ 1400/1500s: Start by explaining to students that realism was the ideal in western art for hundreds of years. During the European Renaissance, artists experimented with creating the illusion of depth in paintings through one-point perspective. They also studied human anatomy to make accurate figure drawing. The Renaissance promoted the belief that the purpose of art was to explore and convey what were considered to be “high-minded” subjects, and artists mostly painted religious and historical scenes in an idealized manner.

- Example painting: [“The School of Athens”](#) by Raphael (1509-1511)



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⇒ 1800s: In the 1800s, western concepts of realism shifted away from Renaissance stylistic and subject matter conventions. Painters continued to use Renaissance inventions, such as perspective and figure drawing, but started to paint scenes of everyday people and life in more naturalistic ways.

- Example painting: Gustave Courbet's "[Young Ladies of the Village](#)" (1851-52)

⇒ In the late 1800s through the turn of the 20th century, the idea of realism as the ultimate aim of painting was challenged through several western "modern art" movements. First, the Impressionists stopped painting in studios from sketches and started painting landscapes and other scenes "on the spot" using loose brushstrokes to capture quickly changing light and colors. From there, artists experimented with reducing subjects to essential elements of shape, line and color. In the early 1900s, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque broke all of the "rules" with the invention of Cubism.

- Example paintings:
 - Claude Monet's "[Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lilies](#)" (1899)
 - Henri Matisse's "[Dance \(I\)](#)" (1909)
 - Pablo Picasso's "[Three Musicians](#)" (1921)

Pro—tip:

- For additional art historical background, content and images, refer to these helpful resources:
 - Tate Modern's "Art Terms" (search for "Renaissance," "realism," "modern art," "abstraction," etc.): <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms>
 - Google Arts & Culture "Modern Art" compilation: <https://artsandculture.google.com/entity/modern-art/m015r61?hl=en>

10) Wrap-up this portion of the lesson and prime the students for the next by cautioning that realism and abstraction are not entirely distinct, "black and white" categories, but, rather, are part of a continuum. If applicable, return to the example of the Impressionists and explain that Impressionist art has both abstract and realistic qualities (realistic colors and subjects; abstract forms, lines and surface textures created by invisible brushstrokes).



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Activity #2: Art Historical Analysis

Materials

- Map of New Mexico (see attachments)
- Prints of the following artwork images (see attachments)
 - *Desert* by Brooks Willis
 - *Rural Rococo* by Lloyd Moylan
 - *Aspens* by Gene Kloss
 - *Cottonwoods* by Józef Bakoś
 - *Untitled (Grand Canyon)* by Edgar Alwin Payne
 - *Untitled (Red Rocks)* by Albert Lorey Groll
- “Artwork Study” worksheet (see attachments)

Duration

25—30 minutes

Activity Steps

- 1) Introduce this portion of the lesson by informing students that the debate between values of realism and abstraction in art took place on a local or “micro” level in New Mexico in the early 1900s between two rival art groups: The Taos Society of Artists (in Taos, NM) and the Santa Fe art colony (in Santa Fe, NM). Use the map of New Mexico provided to orient students and explain that, generally speaking, the Taos Society of Artists observed academic standards in art and upheld the goal of realism. In contrast, artists working in the Santa Fe art colony were more experimental and modernist in their approaches.
2. Break students into six small groups.
- 3) Explain that each group will study a painting made by a New Mexico artist around the 1930s, some realist and some abstract.
- 4) Provide each group with prints of their assigned artwork image (preferably at least one copy for every two students), and one copy of the “Artwork Study” worksheet. Review the worksheet with the students and set expectations for group work.

Pro—tip:

- For students who are unfamiliar with the landscape of New Mexico or the southwestern United States, have groups first explore photographs of the primary natural feature portrayed in their assigned painting by doing an online image search for the below-listed terms and/or visiting the suggested websites (if applicable):
 - *Desert* (Brooks Willis)
 - ◆ Search term: “New Mexico mesas”



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Pro –tip (continued):

- *Rural Rococo* (Lloyd Moylan)
 - ◆ Search term: “alligator juniper”
 - ◆ Suggested website: <https://friendsofbanwr.com/2022/02/27/among-friends-28-feb-2022-alligator-juniper/>
- *Aspens* (Gene Kloss)
 - ◆ Search term: “Taos aspens”
 - ◆ Suggested website: <http://taostyle.net/2018/09/day-tripping-to-the-aspen-groves/>
- *Cottonwoods* (Józef Bakoś)
 - ◆ Search term: “Rio Grande cottonwood”
 - ◆ Suggested website: <https://treenm.org/2022/07/27/rio-grande-cottonwood/>
- *Untitled (Grand Canyon)* (Edgar Alwin Payne)
 - ◆ Search term: “Grand Canyon”
 - ◆ Suggested website: <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/75/gallery/>
- *Red Rocks* (Albert Lorey Groll)
 - ◆ Search terms: “Chimney Rock, NM” or “New Mexico red rock formations”
- Alternatively, for a quick whole class overview of the New Mexico landscape, there are many relevant images here: <https://www.mikespieth.com/nmlandscapes/>

5) Provide students 15—20 minutes to complete their group work.

6) Bring students back together as a class and have each group present. Groups should show their assigned painting, explain if they determined it to be realistic or abstract, and give their reasons. Have groups respond to one or two questions from their peers.



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Activity #3: Art Historical Debate — Lesson Extension

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Conduct a short research project on an assigned artist.
- 2) Synthesize information gathered to summarize and present the artist’s point of view on an art historical debate.

Common Core Standards

Reading: Informational Text	
4th Grade	5th Grade
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.10	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.10

Writing	
4th Grade	5th Grade
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.7	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.9	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.9

Materials

- “What is Art? Even Experts Can’t Tell, So Art League Forum Discloses” 1938 newspaper article (see attachments)
- Tablets, laptops or computers + internet access
- Gallup New Deal Art Virtual Museum
 - Individual artist information pages:
 - [Lloyd Moylan](#)
 - [Brooks Willis](#)
 - [Gene Kloss](#)
 - [Józef Bakoś](#)
 - [Edgar Alwin Payne](#)
 - [Albert Lorey Groll](#)
 - [“Views on the Southwest” Special Exhibit](#)
- Additional online resources (see “Activity Steps” below)
- Artist Research Worksheet (see attachment)

Duration

40—45 minutes



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Activity #3: Art Historical Debate — Lesson Extension

Activity Steps

- 1) Introduce this lesson by explaining that on January 18, 1938, the New Mexico Art League hosted a public forum for discussion “pros and cons on the place of realism and abstraction in art.” Brooks Willis chaired the forum and many artists participated to express their points of view. Students are going to recreate this historical debate.
⇒ Optional: Engage the class in reading aloud the article “What is Art? Even Experts Can’t Tell, So Art League Forum Discloses” from the 1/19/38 issue of the *Albuquerque Journal*.
- 2) Break students into four small groups.
- 3) Explain that each group is going to research one of four different New Mexico artists, including Brooks Willis, and present their stance and ideas on the debate between realism and modernism.
- 4) Assign each group one of the following artists:
 - Brooks Willis
 - Józef Bakoś
 - Albert Lorey Groll
 - Edgar Alwin Payne
- 5) Review the research worksheet and questions with students.
- 6) Point students to online resources:
⇒ Start with the Gallup New Deal Art Virtual Museum:
 - Biographical information can be found on individual artis information pages (LINK).
 - Additional information can be found in the “Views on the Southwest” special exhibit (LINK) — “The Lure of the Landscape” exhibit section in particular.⇒ Select additional resources:
 - Taos Society of Artists / Albert Lorey Groll: <https://harwoodmuseum.org/art/collections/early-20th-century-taos-society-of-artists/>
 - Los Cinco Pintores / Józef Bakoś: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yuv62XwVgY>
- 7) Give students 15—20 minutes to complete their worksheets.
- 8) Divide groups into two teams for a quick debate on the merits of realism and abstraction in painting. Pair the Brooks Willis and Józef Bakoś research groups together, and the Albert Lorey Groll and Edgar Alwin Payne research groups together. Have teams gather on either side of the classroom. Explain that the debate will take place in two rounds: in round 1, they will present their artists’ views and in round 2 they will respond to each other.



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Activity #3: Art Historical Debate — Lesson Extension

⇒ Facilitate the debate:

- Round 1

- Give teams five-minutes to devise an answer to the following question based on their artist research—students should try to think like the artists they researched and present their views: “Which style best represents the landscape of New Mexico: realism or abstraction?”
- Encourage students to use artist quotes, if available.
- Ask teams to choose a “spokesperson.”
- Tell spokespeople they will each have one minutes to present their artists’ case for realism or abstraction as the best way to represent the landscape of New Mexico.
- Flip a coin to determine which side goes first.
- Give spokespeople one minute to present in turn at the front of the classroom.

- Round 2

- Give teams five minutes to consider what their opposition presented and develop a response/counter argument. Again, remind students to think like the artists they researched.
- Ask teams to choose new spokespeople.
- Tell spokespeople they will each have one minute to present their artists’ responses.
- Give spokespeople one minute to present in turn at the front of the classroom.

⇒ After the debate, close out the lesson by asking student their personal opinions on whether realism or abstraction better captures the landscape of New Mexico. Ask several students to share their reasoning.



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Activity #4: Stylistic Exploration — Lesson Extension

Objectives

Students will be able to apply art historical knowledge to create an artwork in either a realistic or abstract style.

National Arts Standards

<https://nationartsstandards.org/>

Creating

4th Grade	5th Grade
VA:Cr1.1.4a	VA:Cr1.1.5a
VA:Cr2.1.4a	VA:Cr2.1.5a

Responding

4th Grade	5th Grade
VA:Re8.1.4a	VA:Re7.1.5a
VA:Re9.1.4a	VA:Re8.1.5a

Connecting

4th Grade	5th Grade
N/A	VA:Cn10.1.5a

Materials

- Drawing/painting paper
- Drawing/painting tools (crayons, colored pencils, watercolor or acrylic paints + water and paint brushes)

Duration

45 minutes

Activity Steps

- 1) Tell students that now it is their turn to draw or paint a realistic or abstract landscape.
- 2) Start by having students decide what they would like to paint. Ask them to think of a landscape or geographical feature that they know well—something from their local area or a place they have visited.
- 3) Guide students through a visual brainstorm:
 - ⇒ Have them close their eyes and picture their selected landscape.
 - ⇒ Keeping their eyes closed, have them imagine the landscape as a realistic painting—imagine the lines, shapes, colors and textures.



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Activity #3: Stylistic Exploration — Lesson Extension

- ⇒ The, with eyes still closed, have them transform the realistic painting they are picturing into an abstract painting.
- 4) Have students open their eyes and ask them to decide which version of a landscape painting—realistic or abstract—they think best captures the experience of the place.
- 5) Set students up at individual stations with paper and drawing or painting supplies.
- 6) Give students about 30 minutes to create their landscape painting.
- Pro –tip:**
- If they finish early, encourage them to re-create the painting in the “opposite” style.
- 7) Have students share their work, either through show-and-tell style presentations or through a “gallery walk.”



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Artwork Study

Directions:

1. Spend at least one minute studying the artwork image.
2. As a group, discuss the following three artwork image questions in order.¹ Take at least one minute per question.
 - a. What do you **see**? (Name only things that everyone can see, like colors.)
 - b. What do you **think** about what you see?
 - c. What do you **wonder** about what you see?
3. Complete the following table together. Name five features of the painting (e.g., mesa, clouds, trees, horse) and brainstorm the most descriptive adjectives to describe each.

Image Feature	Adjective
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

4. As a group, discuss: is this painting realistic or abstract? Once you've reached a consensus, circle your determination and provide three reasons.

REALISTIC

ABSTRACT

a) First reason: _____

b) Second reason: _____

c) Third reason: _____

¹ The "See/Think/Wonder" Artful Thinking Routing was developed by Harvard University's Project Zero.



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Artist Research Worksheet

Artist Name: _____

Background:

1. What subjects did the artist paint? _____

2. In what style did the artist mainly paint? Is the artist a “realist” or an abstract “modernist”? _____

3. Was the artist known for a certain style or subject or manner? _____

Quotes:

Can you find any quotes by the artist—especially on the issue of style (did the artist have anything to say about the debate between realism and modernism)?

- _____

- _____

Discuss:

Do we know why the artist chose a realistic or abstract style? Can you hypothesize why they might have one style over the other?



Newspaper Article

WHAT IS ART? EVEN EXPERTS CAN'T TELL, SO ART LEAGUE PUBLIC FORUM DISCLOSES

Charles Berninghaus, Taos artist, listened to the discussions pro and con on the place of realism and abstraction in art at the Art League open forum Tuesday night and summarized the results, at the invitation of the chairman, as "a never-ending conflict of old and new ideas."

Before his remark he heard several revealing statements.

Loren Mozley, member of the art department faculty at the University of New Mexico arose and gave a learned dissertation on the topic being discussed. Brooks Willis, chairman, had previously given a studied description of types of art, including the educational, illustrative, propagandic and decorative.

Ted Schuyler, artist and business manager of the Albuquerque Little Theater, with flourishes gave his opinion on the matter and amazed his hearers by saying that in every painting is a world of abstraction. "Try painting three dimensions on a flat surface, canvas, and see if you can get away from it," he told them.

Finally Dr. W. A. Gekler, coaxed to speak, apparently had topped it all with saying, "to me art is a type of communication. I do not understand some speech. Certain types of music are good for me, others bother me.

"It is the effect on me, not the music that is to blame. It is the individual reaction to art that should be considered. Appeal changes with the time, too, and that must be considered," the doctor said.

But, Dr. George St. Clair, dean of the college of fine arts at the University of New Mexico, immediately arose after Dr. Gekler's short speech and made three statements.

"First," said St. Clair, "there is no such thing as realism.

"Second," the learned man of arts and letters continued, "There is no such thing as abstraction.

"And third," St. Clair finished, "I disagree with everything that Dr. Gekler had to say."

Of course, Ralph Douglass, head of the art department at the university, attempted to be soothing.

"There needn't be any quarrel between the honest realist and abstractionist," was his point. "Artists trying to create something must do something new. That in itself is disconcerting."

The meeting closed at 9:15 p. m. sharply, because the league president, Kenneth Wentworth said he learned that the best time to stop the playtime of children is when they are enjoying it the most. Mr. Wentworth is a grade school principal.

Probably much was missed from the discussion because Dr. T. M. Pearce Jr., inveterate and argumentative asker of questions (it was he who challenged Sinclair Lewis the night before) arrived promptly at 9:15 p. m., and the discussion had already ended.

DIES AT TRIAL

MANILA, Jan. 19 (Wednesday)
(P)—Pedro Guevara, 59, former Philippine resident commissioner at Washington, dropped dead Wednesday while appearing as a lawyer in a case before the Philippine Supreme Court. Death was attributed to a heart attack.

WEATHER

(TODAY'S REPORT)

Weather report for the 24 hours ending at 6 p. m. Tuesday, furnished by the U. S. Weather Bureau Station at the TWA Airport:

Pressure is relatively low over the Gulf Coast and Lower Rio Grande Valley and

Albuquerque Journal — January 19, 1938



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Map of New Mexico, USA



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Albert Lorey Groll
Untitled (Red Rocks)
About 1904–1941
Oil on panel
23 ½" W x 19 ¼" H





Józef Bakos
Cottonwoods
About 1935—1939
Watercolor on paper
16 7/8" W x 23 3/4" H



Lloyd Moylan

Rural Rococo

1941

Tempera, pencil and ink on masonite

18 1/8" W x 23 1/8" H

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Brooks Willis
Desert
1938
Oil on canvas board
18 7/8" W x 20" H



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Edgar Alwin Payne
Untitled (Grand Canyon)
About 1909—1942
Oil on canvas
24" W x 20" H



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Gene Kloss

Aspens

About late 1930s

Oil on canvas

40" W x 20" H

