

People, Places, and Things

Artists often take inspiration from the people, places, and things around them. During this lesson, students explore portraits, still lifes, and landscapes while thinking about how artists express their ideas and feelings about the world around them.

Grade Level

Grades K–3

Common Core Academic State Standards

- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1](#)
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1](#)
- [CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6](#)

National Visual Arts Standards

- Responding: understanding and evaluating how the arts convey meaning
- Connecting: relating artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

Suggested Learning Goals

Students will be better able to:

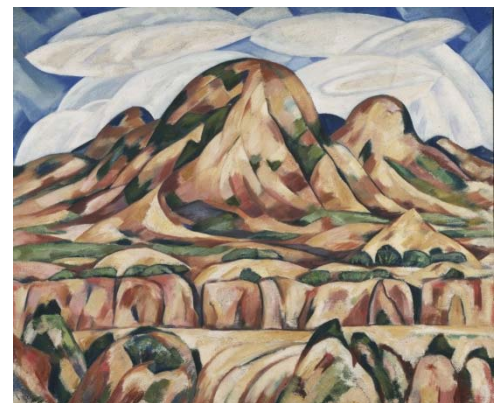
- Identify and describe the characteristics of portraits, landscapes, and still life paintings
- Describe ideas and feelings they see expressed in artwork
- Respond to works of art with their own ideas and feelings

Essential Questions

- What can we learn about art and artists from looking closely at different types of artwork?

Suggested Vocabulary

Drawing	Painting	Portrait
Landscape	Photograph	Still life



New Mexico Landscape, 1919–20
Marsden Hartley, American
Oil on canvas
30 x 36 inches (76.2 x 91.4 cm)
The Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949
1949-18-10

Lesson-Specific Activity

This activity is designed to prepare students for thinking and talking about artworks they may see during a “People, Places, and Things” lesson.

- Start the activity by asking students for ways they can share their experiences with others. For instance, how could they show someone at home what their classroom looks like? Or who they played with at recess today? Taking a photograph, drawing, or storytelling are possible prompts for discussion.
- Ask students to list aspects of their classroom they would choose to capture using their medium of choice. For example, students could pretend to take a photo of a scene or pretend to draw. Would you show the whole classroom or only your favorite spot? Would you capture the whole class or focus on one classmate?
- Go around the room and have students briefly act out taking a snapshot or drawing a scene of their choice. Ask them to think about what these snapshots would show about their classroom.
- Compare students’ choices and discuss how these express students’ feelings and ideas about the classroom and their classmates. What stories can they tell about their class?
- As an extension, repeat the activity for other shared spaces in the school, such as the playground. Use your discussions as an opportunity to introduce terms such as portrait, still life, and landscape.