

Illinois State Museum – MuseumLink Art

Making Connections Activity: Seeing Connections Among Works of Art

Purpose: to help the student learn to make connections in theme, mood, or emotional expression among works of art. (The three examples illustrated here all have Classical Revival motifs.)



Objectives: While viewing the works of art in the six Web galleries of the Illinois State Museum’s Museumlink Illinois (<http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/>), students will practice the skill of looking at art works with an interpretive eye in order to make connections among them regarding theme, mood, or emotional expression by choosing three works of art in which they can see or make a connection and communicating that connection to others.

Grade levels: 5-10

Time Required: one class period



Illinois State Museum Web site used: Museumlink Illinois Art Web site
<http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/>

Materials: computer
printer, preferably color
paper
pencil or pen
writing paper



Motivation: The class will view and discuss the four themes and their art works in the Making Connections Galleries of the Museum’s Museumlink Illinois Web site (<http://www.museum.state.il.us/muslink/art/htmls/mc.html>). The main discussion point is that the viewers, not the artists, makes the connections. The viewers do this by bringing their own experiences and feelings to the art works they see. Each person sees something different in each work of art. That said, there are some universal ideas that artists sometimes address in their work — hope, patriotism, love, war, power. Have the students name some other universal ideas and write them on the board. Do an example search with them: one can make connections about rural life in Illinois by comparing work by photographer Frank Sadorus to the WPA paintings.

Procedure: Students will

- divide into pairs or small groups (to save time on the computer).
- browse through images from the various fine- and decorative-art galleries in the Museumlink Illinois Web site.
- look for similarities in ideas or emotions among works of art.
- find three images that make a connection and then print out those images.
- compose a written description of their connection and how each image relates to the connections or chosen theme.

Publication and Closure: Students will present their findings to the class orally and display their images. Audience members might be asked to guess the connection and name the theme, and certainly to elaborate with their own ideas.

Assessment: the students should be able to present a rational argument for how their three choices are connected to the theme or for the connection seen by the students.

Illinois State Board of Education Goals and Standards addressed:

Visual Art: 25.A.3d: Identify and describe ...the expressive qualities of thematic development and sequence.

25.B.3: Compare and contrast the elements and principles in two or more art works that share similar themes.