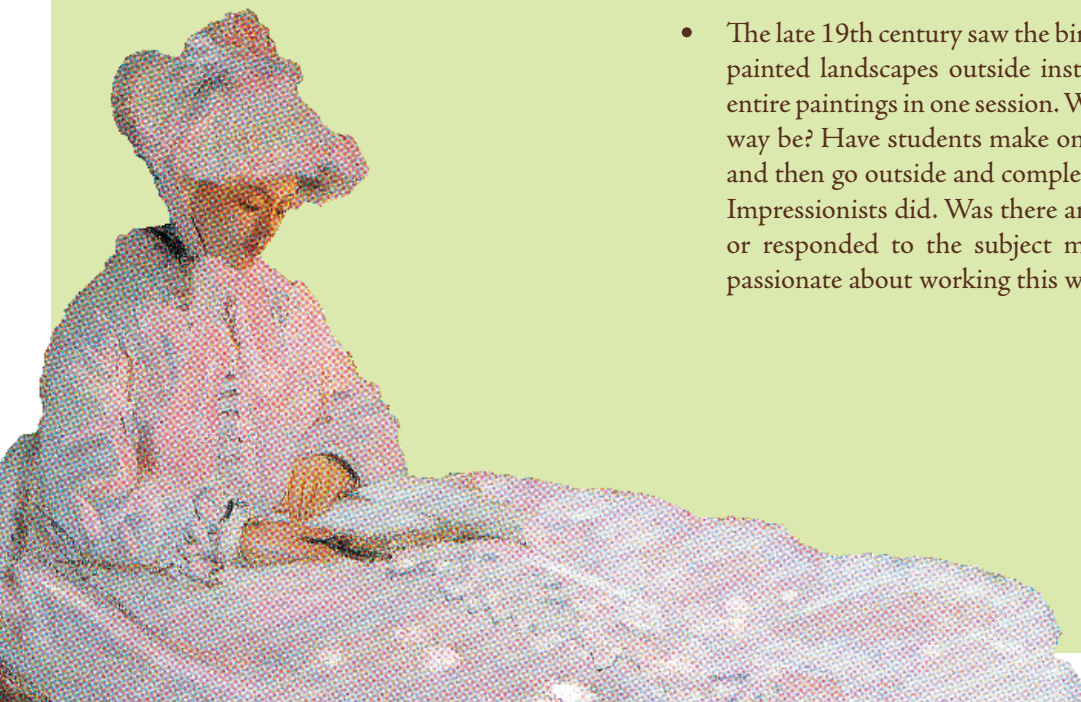


Participants in the 19th-century Art tour will be introduced to the styles, techniques, and subjects of American and European works of art of this era. Use the suggestions below either before or after your museum visit to encourage further inquiry in the classroom.

ACTIVITIES:

- Have students write a letter, monologue, or journal entry from the point of view of the subject of a 19th-century portrait, describing their lives. To choose a subject, encourage them to explore the range of portraits and genre paintings in the Walters' online 19th-century collections. Note that in making their selection, they will probably be choosing between a very famous or wealthy person, or a peasant. Tell students to draw on the details of the portrait in their writing – where they are, what other people or objects are in the room – but also to research the historical context of this piece, and talk in a broader way about what's going on in the world at the time.
- Explain to students that the paintings by Impressionists, which we don't think of as controversial today, were considered scandalous when the artists submitted them for consideration at the Salon, the most reputable exhibition of their era. Salon officials rejected the Impressionists' loose brushwork and their choices of everyday subject matter instead of heroic or allegorical scenes. Ask students to consider these attitudes, and have half of the students write a commentary from the point of view of a Salon official explaining why you wouldn't accept Monet's *Springtime*, or Manet's *Café Concert* (see attached). The other half should write a rebuttal from the point of view of the artist, explaining why his work deserved to be exhibited there. Encourage students to do further research into art of the era to back up their opinions.
- Update a 19th-century painting. What would a modern version of *The Accident*, or *Springtime*, or *Duel after the Masquerade* look like? Choose a favorite image from the 19th-century section on the Collections portion of the Walters' website, or find one on your museum visit (make sure to get a postcard or other reproduction of it). Have students find out as much as they can about their selected piece from books or label text, to help them to understand why the artist made the decisions he did when creating it – this will help in deciding which elements they might want to keep and which ones will change. Will they use the same figures, or palette, or communicate the same moral message in a different way? Tell students to be sure to consider all the possibilities before beginning.

- The late 19th century saw the birth of *en plein air* painting, in which artists painted landscapes outside instead of in a studio, and often completed entire paintings in one session. What might the advantages of working this way be? Have students make one landscape painting from a photograph, and then go outside and complete another landscape from life, just as the Impressionists did. Was there any difference in the way that they worked or responded to the subject matter? Why were the impressionists so passionate about working this way?



VOCABULARY:

Academy - The Academy in Paris was the official, state-sponsored, professional association of artists that trained young artists and exhibited artworks by members. It was founded by Louis XIV in 1648. By the 19th century, the Academy was very hierarchical and both artists and the public held the prizes it awarded in high regard.

Barbizon - A group of French artists who painted in the forests of Barbizon outside Paris, focused on landscape painting, and resisted the increasingly modern city in favor of the open countryside.

Color Palette - The range of colors an artist used for a particular object.

Ecole des Beaux Arts - The Academy's school. Young artists learned drawing and sculpture within the Ecole's rigid structure. The school's approach focused on the traditions of classical art, and included study of anatomy, geometry, and perspective as well.

En Plein Air - Literally means "outdoors." The impressionists were great advocates of en plein air painting, often completing entire paintings from start to finish outside.

Genre - From the French, meaning "type." There are two meanings. The first is a general term meaning a category of painting. The second meaning is a specific category, a genre scene, which shows scenes from everyday life.

Impressionism - The name given to a late 19th-century art movement, which began in France. Impressionist painters typically used short, broken brush strokes to show the effects of light on objects. When an art critic saw a painting by Monet in an exhibition, he criticized it, saying that it was an "impression" of a painting.

Landscape - A work of art that depicts a scene from nature.

Naturalism - Refers to artworks where the artist faithfully observes and records what he or she sees in the natural or human world.

Portrait - A picture that represents a specific person. Usually, a portrait represents both that person's physical characteristics and some aspects of his or her personality.

Salon - An exhibition of artworks. The most important of these were sponsored by the Academy in Paris on a yearly or biennial basis. Work at the Salon was judged and prizes were awarded. Because the Academy often turned away a large number of artworks for exhibition, alternative exhibition spaces were created, notably by the Impressionists.

Self-portrait - A portrait that the artist makes of him- or herself.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Nineteenth Century Art, Robert Rosenblum, H.W. Janson

Nineteenth-Century Art: From Romanticism to Art Nouveau, William R. Johnston

The Impressionists, Gilles Neret

<http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/>

www.impressionism.org/teachimpress

www.biography.com/impressionists/index.html

Use the Walters' 19th-century Art Teacher Resource Kit for more ideas, resources, and images of objects!

Email schoolprograms@thewalters.org for more information.

