



SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

ART IMAGE EARLY YEARS PORTRAITS ARE IMAGES OF PEOPLE

**Teacher's Guide by
Christine Thompson**

Activity one: CURRIER AND IVES, *The Little Pets*

ARTWORK:
CURRIER AND IVES, *The Little Pets* (*Catalog #1.6*)

OBJECTIVES

Children will:

- Attend to visual clues as they explore the importance of proportions, settings, props, and pose in this portrait.
- Develop empathetic responses as they take the pose of the child in the portrait imaginatively and physically.

CONCEPTS

- Pose, model, setting

MATERIALS

- Reproduction of Currier and Ives, *The Little Pets*
- A favorite object selected by each child
- A large stuffed animal
- Camera and film

PREPARATION

Locate a spot in a nearby park or garden with a park bench and surrounding foliage that provides a backdrop similar to the one in this portrait. Ask children to choose favorite toys from home or the classroom. Load a camera with film.

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THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

Share the reproduction with children, in the classroom or at the spot you've chosen in the park:

- Is this a little girl or a grownup?
- How can you tell? (Draw attention to the size of the larger cat and the bench as important clues.)
- Where is she sitting?
- Does it look like a nice place to be?
- What is she holding in her arms?
- Does the kitten look like it wants to squirm away, or does it seem happy to be where it is?
- What do you think this big cat is thinking?
- If this little girl could talk to us, what do you think she would say?

THINGS TO DO

Using the reproduction as a reference, ask one child to sit on the park bench, holding the favorite object he or she selected. With the other children's help, direct the child to replicate as closely as possible the pose and expression of the girl in the painting. Add a large stuffed animal to the scene as a stand-in for the larger cat. Photograph the child in this pose. If possible, repeat the process with other children in the group. Display these photographs alongside the reproduction.

MORE THINGS TO DO

EXPLORE MEDIA

Provide crayons, markers, and tempera paints in the colors used in this reproduction: black, white, brown, gold, red and green. Invite children to draw or paint first in black, adding additional colors later, or withhold black in the initial stages and offer it when children are ready to add final touches to their drawings or paintings. Older children might draw or paint animals or faces.

DRAW SELF-PORTRAITS WITH TREASURED OBJECTS

Encourage children to examine their images in full-length mirrors as they hold, cradle, or display favorite toys. Call attention to the position of their arms, to the parts of their bodies that are visible and to details of hair, clothing, etc. Provide long, thin sheets of paper - 9" x 18" (23 x 45.7 cm) is a good size – and ask children to draw themselves with their toys.

Dictate Stories

Invite the children to imagine what happened in the moments following the artists' session with the little girl and her pets.

MAKE MEMORABLE IMAGES

Tell children that before cameras were invented, a little more than 150 years ago, people asked artists to paint portraits of all kinds of things that they loved and wanted to remember: themselves, their families, their pets, their homes, and special places in their communities. Ask children to think about the people, animals, places, and things that are most important to them. Invite them to record these special people and objects in words and/or drawings.

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RESOURCES

Books to share with children

Broger, Achim (1982). *Francie's Paper Puppy*. Illustrated by Michele Sambin. Natick, MA: Picture Book Studio.

QUESTIONS ?

Call Rachel Ross, Art Education Consultant, at 1 800 361-2598 or write to rachel.ross@artimagepublications.com.

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