

HENRI MATISSE

LESSON 1

13. Henri Matisse – An introduction to his work

14. Biography

- a. Read a biography (Read "Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists" by Mike Venezia)
- b. Narrate a biography (Add Famous Artist of the Month)
- c. Add a timeline entry
- d. Add to Famous Artists Lapbook
- e. Complete an *Artist of Influence* Sheet

15. Introduce Terms:

- a. Fauvism
The style of **les Fauves** (French for "the wild beasts"), and is full of color
- b. Modernism
Modern thought, character, or practice.
- c. Impressionism
Painting characteristics include relatively small, thin, yet visible brush strokes, open composition, emphasis on accurate depiction of light in its changing qualities (often accentuating the effects of the passage of time), common, ordinary subject matter, inclusion of *movement* as a crucial element of human perception and experience, and unusual visual angles.

16. Read a few Matisse quotes

- a. *"The entire arrangement of my pictures is expressive; the place occupied by the figures, the empty spaces around them, the proportions, everything has its share."*
- b. *"What you have to do is look at what you wish to express long enough and with enough attention to discover and aspect of it that has never been seen or described by anyone before. There is something unexplored in everything, because we have grown used to letting our eyes be conditioned by the memory of what others have taught before us about what we are looking at ... To describe a blazing fire and that tree until for us they no longer resemble any other tree or any another fire. That is the way in which you will be original."*
- c. *"I have always tried to hide my efforts and wished my works to have a light joyousness of springtime which never lets anyone suspect the labors it has cost me."*
- d. *"I don't paint things. I only paint the difference between things."*
- e. *"I do not literally paint that table, but the emotion it produces upon me."*
- f. *"Cutting into color reminds me of the sculptor's direct carving."*
- g. *"Creativity takes courage."*

17. Look at and Discuss Henri Matisse's *Goldfish*

Look closely at the picture for a few minutes. Then try to describe the picture with as much detail as you can ...

- ... the tall cylindrical shape of the gold-fish bowl
- ... the number and color of the fish
- ... the reflection of the fish in the surface of the water
- ... the pink round table
- ... the blue railings on the balcony
- ... the leaves and flowers of the flower pots
- ... the black and grey background

18. Art Activity:

- a. Listen to Favourite Composer Music, and paint the *Goldfish* Outlined Pic

LESSON 2

1. Have different paintings available on the notice board for him to look at.
2. **Look at and Discuss** Henri Matisse's *The Red Studio*
Encouraged him to create a mental picture and then tell all he remembers in the painting.
Use *Looking at a work of art* Sheet to discuss.
3. **VIDS:** Henri Matisse, *The Red Studio*, 1911 (SD) (10min)
4. **Art Activity:**
Red Studio

LESSON 3

1. **Look at and Discuss** Henri Matisse's *Sorrow of the king*
Use *Looking at a work of art* Sheet to discuss.
2. **Art Activity:**
Sorrow of the king Lesson

LESSON 4

1. **Discuss**
Matisse cut sheets of brightly painted paper with scissors. He would “draw” with his scissors instead of with a pencil. He used his memory for shapes, and chose colors to match his feelings. After cutting his shapes he would pin his cut-outs up on a background in an arrangement he liked. Last, when he had created the feeling he was after, he would glue his colorful shapes down.
2. **Introduction** to Positive and Negative Space (Step 2 – Learning from Henri Matisse)
3. **Art Activity:**
Create a special Sea Shape

LESSON 5

1. **Review** Positive and Negative Space
2. **Art Activity:**
Positive & Negative Space

LESSON 6

1. Study:

Today we are going to study Luxe, Calme et Volupté (Pg 19).

2. Discuss:

Take a few minutes to discuss the piece today focus on the all the tiny dots that he appears to have painted with. Notice the bright colors, and how it almost looks like a rainbow. *Continue to lead discussion as you have done in previous lessons.*

Matisse painted this oil sketch in the summer of 1904, while working alongside fellow artist Paul Signac on the French Riviera, and he completed the final painting (now at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris) the following winter. Both Signac and Matisse were influenced by the elder painter Paul Cézanne, whose discrete strokes of color emphasized the materiality of the painted surface over naturalistic illusion. But Matisse went further, using a palette of pure, high-pitched colors (blue, green, yellow, and orange) to render the landscape, and outlining the figures in blue. The painting takes its title from a line by the nineteenth-century poet Charles Baudelaire and shares the poems subject of an escape to an imaginary, tranquil refuge.

3. VIDS:

Matisse, Luxe, calme et volupté, 1904 (SD)

4. Materials Needed:

Paper, paints, paintbrushes, water and paper towel to clean brushes, option-al: Mirror.

5. Study and Discuss:

Take a few minutes to look at some more of Matisse's collection of art today. Have students pick a favorite and discuss it using the *How to look at art* sheet. Make sure to discuss the style, medium, and technique used thoroughly so that your student is very familiar with it. Discuss colors, tones, moods, along with discussion points from previous lessons.

6. Create:

Since Matisse used bright colors, I suggest encouraging a very colorful palette. I encourage you to try a self-portrait today! Set up a mirror so students can paint themselves. (*Refer to Portrait of Mme (pg 24) for some inspiration if needed.*) Have your student create their own original artwork. One thing that made Matisse so unique was his use of fresh, vivid color. Encourage your student to create their own version of the art using lots of color. Remember, do not try to replicate his works. We want today's art to be a Matisse inspired "original".

7. Discussion:

- Compare your student's art to the originals. (*Not in a negative way, simply contrast and compare*)
- Discuss what is different between your student's work and the artists.
- Discuss which artwork they like better and why.
- Have your student tell you which techniques they chose to use and why.

Tip: Spend a few minutes complimenting each other's artwork, saying something you like about it.

Red Studio

1. Discuss:

Notice the scratch marks for all the furniture. On this painting Matisse did not paint anything in colour or detail except for the artworks in his studio.

2. Choose a theme to paint in Matisse-fashion

Example: Sketch your school supplies. Put out some items on the desk to draw.

3. Activity:

Color everything in red/ or any bold color.

- Scratch the furniture or other 'unimportant' details with a toothpick in the wet paint.

Note: Wet paint makes the paper soft and the toothpick can pierce a hole in the paper.

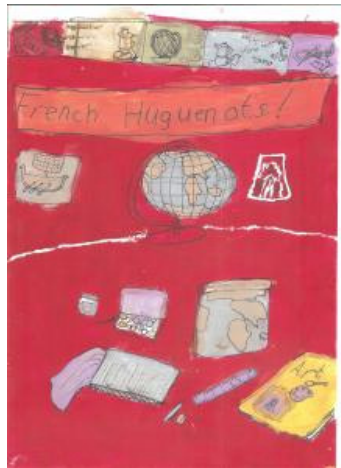
Also, for it to leave a clear white mark, let it dry and use a white pen to "draw" the scratch lines!

Of course, Matisse's method will work on canvas with acrylic or oil paints!

- Paint the important details in color.

- Outline in black pen when dry.

Examples:



RED STUDIO

(Background for Teacher)

Dismantling spatial illusion

Since Manet (and Degas, Monet, and Cezanne), artists have sought to undermine the illusion of space that had ruled painting since about 1425. Spatial illusion was increasingly seen as a defect that reduced the integrity of painting. But as the earlier painters of the avant-garde have shown, ridding a painting of illusion is almost impossible. The audience is trained to expect three-dimensional space and sees it given the opportunity. This is Matisse's challenge. He meets this challenge—the destruction of spatial illusion, in three stages.

The color red

Red is often thought of as the most aggressive color. It has the most punch, and that's what Matisse needed here. This canvas was a part of a series, there is, for instance, a Pink Studio too. But that canvas was concerned with different issues. Here, the red is an attempt to find a color that is forceful enough to resist the illusion of deep space by pushing to the surface. The red is, of course painted onto the flat canvas but actually fails to remain there visually. Instead, the red becomes the walls and furnishing of the room seen in space. Illusion triumphs—Matisse is thwarted.

Illusionism

This triumph of illusion is due in part to the linear perspective that defines the table, chairs, and the walls and floor of the studio. But look! Matisse has constructed some of the worst linear perspective ever seen. Receding lines should converge, but look at the chair on the lower right. The lines widen as they go back. And look to rear left corner of the room. The corner is defined by the edge of the pink canvas but above that painting, the line that must define the corner is missing! Matisse is literally dismantling the perspective of the room but it makes no difference, we still see the room as an inhabitable space. Illusion still triumphs.

Figure-Ground Relationship

Although it is very difficult to see in reproduction, if seen in person at MoMA, it is clear that the whitish lines that define form in the red field are not painted on top of the red. Instead, they are reserve lines. In other words, the white lines are actually the canvas below. Matisse painted the red planes up to the line on either side, leaving a narrow gap of white canvas in between. This is really IMPORTANT. Stay with me on this. The white line is actually emerging from below the red. It is beneath. The red is of course painted on top of the white canvas. Okay, now pay attention. Matisse has realized that illusion is almost certain to triumph no matter how aggressively he tries to undermine it. We, as the audience, will see space if given the slightest opportunity. So if we see illusion at such a basic level, what hope does Matisse have of destroying it? In fact, his reserve line are his really brilliant solution. The chairs, the dresser, the clock, each object, or figure in the Red Studio is constructed out of the canvas below. At the same time, the ground which supports those figures, is constructed out of a plane of red that is physically above the canvas. What Matisse has done then is reverse the figure ground relationship. He has made the figure out of the ground (the canvas) and made the ground out of the figure (the red paint on top). When seen in person, the recognition of this does finally destroy illusion, Matisse triumphs! Yeah!

SORROW OF THE KING

As a famous Fauvism artist, his modern art is full of bright colors and dramatic art. Fauvism was characterized by bold and often illogical colors.

1. **Look** carefully and describe what you see
For example:
 - a. the background is made up of colored blocks of paper
 - b. the "people" are not realistic
 - c. they could identify hands, body shapes, a guitar and a 'dancing' person
 - d. there were yellow leaf-shapes all over the picture
 - e. the picture did not really look sorrowful, nor could they find a "king"



Henri Matisse "Sorrow of the King"

2. **Art fun** with paper cut-outs!
 - a. Choose a theme for your picture – e.g. "**Camping**"
 - b. Cover the entire page with blocks of color. E.g. make it into a sunset, or land and sky with clouds.



- c. Now cut out shapes that express the idea of a thing. Not exact. No pre-drawing. Just freehand with your scissors!
- d. Paste the shapes on the page until it is full or tells a story. It can be illogical – like fish in the sky, shapes in the negative space to suggest an object, random colors ... "Matisse it!"



Positive & Negative

1. Matisse, became famous later in his life for his paper cut out paintings
2. Let him trace his hands over and over again on a piece of paper. (Let it overlap and even run off the page).
3. Use markers to fill each hand with a colorful and interesting design.



OR

4. Choose 3 colors of bright paper, and let him trace his hands and cut them out. Let him create a positive shape design:



and a negative shape design:

