Grade One
Session One – Exploration of Different Genres in Art

First Grade Overview:

The first grade program will explore various genres in art history. Building upon the concept of portraiture examined in kindergarten, we will begin the first session by comparing traditional and contemporary examples of portraiture as an artistic genre. In subsequent sessions, we will examine the genres of landscape and still life through paintings and prints that embrace cultural, international and gender differences. In the fourth and final session, the subject will return to the idea of portraiture looking ahead to the thematic concepts of rituals and traditions examined in the second grade program.

To begin the session, you may briefly recall some of the works of art studied during the previous year and/or the concepts of portraiture. While not a requirement, it provides a nice introduction for the start of the program and gets the children back in the practice of looking at art.

Grade One
Session One
First Image

(NOTE: DO NOT SHARE IMAGE TITLE OR SOURCE YET)

Jacques-Louis David, **Napoleon Crossing the Alps**, 1801
Oil on canvas, 102 x 87 inches
Collection: Chateau du Malmaison, Rueil Malmaison, France (Napoleon and his wife Josephine lived here; it is now a museum)

Project the image onto the SMARTboard. Remind the students how a portrait sometimes reveals how an artist sees a person and is often a likeness of an individual. A portrait can also depict how someone would like to be seen. Both wealthy and important people often have portraits painted of them in a certain environment or centered around an important event. Artists often create large-scale (BIG) works to show important events or people that are important. A painting evokes more emotion when its size and figures are exaggerated.

What do you see in this image? What do you notice? What is going on in this picture? Make sure they support their comments with specific details from the composition.

You may now reveal the title of the painting and the artist though these details alone may not have much significance to the students. Explain to the children that Napoleon had recently become the leader of France this painting commemorates one his battles.

Art is a very useful tool in influencing people's ideas and perceptions about things and events. Napoleon is shown crossing the Alps in terrible weather conditions but with great strength. In reality the crossing had been made in fine weather and Napoleon rode a mule across the mountains and was led across by a guide a few days after the troops had crossed!

Helpful hints/discussion points:

Ask the students why the artist might have made these changes? How has the artist shown the ruler of France? What is he wearing?

Napoleon is shown pointing towards the summit of the mountain. It seems everything is pointing upward – Napoleon's hand, the mountains, the horse. What might this say about Napoleon?

It is also important to demonstrate the size of the painting (102 x 87 inches). Perhaps you can measure out the scale with a tape measure or use a comparable (like the size of the chalkboard) as an example. You may also tie in the elements of art and question how the artist uses such artistic techniques as line, color and shape to emphasize particular things and to tell us about Napoleon.

Both Napoleon and his horse take up much of the composition. Why might the artist have chosen to make them so big?

The children may notice his name inscribed on the rocks at the bottom of the painting, along with two other names (Karolus Magnus – i.e., Charlemagne and Hannibal – these are two of the greatest military rulers of all time!)

NOTES FOR PARENTS/FACILITATORS ONLY

About the Artist/Artwork

Background
Completed in four months, from October 1800 to January 1801, it signals the dawning of a new century. After a decade of terror and uncertainty following the Revolution, France was emerging as a great power once more. At the heart of this revival, of course, was General Napoleon Bonaparte who, in 1799, had staged an uprising against the revolutionary government (a coup d'état), installed himself as First Consul, and effectively become the most powerful man in France (a few years later he will declare himself emperor).

In May 1800 Napoleon led his troops across the Alps in a military campaign against the Austrians that ended in their defeat in June at the Battle of Marengo. It is this achievement the painting commemorates. The portrait was commissioned by Charles IV, then King of Spain and was to be hung in a gallery of paintings of other great military leaders housed in the Royal Palace in Madrid.

Famously, Napoleon offered David little support in executing the painting. Refusing to sit for it, he argued that: "Nobody knows if the portraits of the great men resemble them, it is enough that their genius lives there." All David had to work from was an earlier portrait and the uniform Napoleon had worn at Marengo. One of David's sons stood in for him, dressed up in the uniform and perched on top of a ladder. This probably accounts for the youthful physique of the figure.

Napoleon, however, was not entirely divorced from the process. He was the one who settled on the idea of an equestrian portrait: "calme sur un cheval fougueux" (calm on a fiery horse), were his instructions to the artist. And David duly obliged. What better way, after all, to demonstrate Napoleon's ability to wield power with sound judgment and composure. The fact that Napoleon did not actually lead his troops over the Alps but followed a couple of days after them, travelling on a narrow path on the back of a mule is not the point.

Like many equestrian portraits, a genre favored by royalty, *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* is a portrait of authority. Napoleon is pictured astride a rearing Arabian stallion. Before him to his left we see a mountain, while in the background, largely obscured by rocks, French troops haul along a large canon and further down the line fly the tricolore (the national flag of France).

Bonaparte's gloveless right hand points up towards the invisible summit, more for us to follow, one feels, than the soldiers in the distance. Raised arms are often found in David's work, though this one is physically connected with the setting, echoing the slope of the mountain ridge. Together with the line of his cloak, these create a series of diagonals that

are counterbalanced by the clouds to the right. The overall effect is to stabilize the figure of Napoleon.

The landscape is treated as a setting for the hero, not as a subject in itself. On the rock to the bottom left (below), for instance, the name of Napoleon is carved beside the names of Hannibal and Charlemagne—two other notable figures who led their troops over the Alps. David uses the landscape then to reinforce what he wishes to convey about his subject. In terms of scale alone, Napoleon and his horse dominate the pictorial plane. Taking the point further, if with that outstretched arm and billowing cloak, his body seems to echo the landscape, the reverse might equally hold true, that it is the landscape that echoes him, and is ultimately mastered by his will. David seems to suggest that this man, whose achievements will be celebrated for centuries to come, can do just about anything.

Napoleon was obviously flattered. He ordered three more versions to be painted; a fifth was also produced which stayed in David's studio. Reflecting the breadth of Napoleon's European conquests, one was hung in Madrid, two in Paris, and one in Milan.

In 1801, David was awarded the position of Premier Peintre (First Painter) to Napoleon. One may wonder how he felt about this new role. Certainly David idolized the man. *Voilà mon héros* (here is my hero), he said to his students when the general first visited him in his studio. And perhaps it was a source of pride for him to help secure Napoleon's public image. Significantly, he signs and dates *Napoleon Crossing the Alps* on the horse's breastplate, a device used to hold the saddle firmly in place. The breastplate also serves as a constraint, though, and given his later huge commissions, such as *The Coronation of Napoleon*, one wonders if David's creative genius was inhibited as a result of his hero's patronage. *

* https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/monarchy-enlightenment/neo-classicism/a/david-napoleon-crossing-the-alps

Grade One
Session One
Second Image

Kehinde Wiley, **Napoleon Leading the Army Over the Alps**, 2005
Oil on canvas, 108 x 108 inches
Collection: Brooklyn Museum, New York City

Project the second image on the Smartboard. Again ask the students to take a few moments to just look at the image and think about what they see.

Before you begin the discussion, the students are going to do a compare and contrast activity in groups. Divide the room in half with one volunteer leading half the class and the second parent leading the other. Progress to the next slide with the two paintings shown side by side.

One group of students will come up with at least three differences (though you may probably have a lot more) and the other group with three similarities that they noticed between this image and the David portrait of Napoleon. The children should be seated in small work groups and the volunteer can write down the responses for each group to share when the class reconvenes. (NOTE: please let the teacher know ahead of time that you will need to divide the class in two for a brief activity, as he/she may want to divide the groups him/herself).

Once you reconvene as a whole class, the volunteers can present the similarities/differences. You may further the conversation by asking questions (many of these may have already come up in the compare/contrast conversation)/

Does the sitter look like someone you might see today? Or someone from a long time ago? How can you tell?

You may now reveal the artist, title and date of the painting, as well as the size (it is roughly the same size as David's portrait of Napoleon). Explain to the children that this artist asked people he would see on the street to serve as his models and substitute them for the powerful historical figures depicted in famous paintings that are in some of the great museums of the world.

Why might have Kehinde Wiley chosen to do this?

What happens to these ordinary people when they are painted like these powerful rulers from the past?

How does this painting make you feel?

NOTES FOR PARENTS/FACILITATORS ONLY

About the Artist/Artwork

Historically, the role of portraiture has been not only to create a likeness but also to communicate ideas about the subject's status, wealth, and power. During the eighteenth century, for example, major patrons from the church and the aristocracy commissioned portraits in part to signify their importance in society. This portrait imitates the posture of the figure of Napoleon Bonaparte in Jacques-Louis David's painting *Bonaparte Crossing the Alps at Grand-Saint-Bernard*. Wiley transforms the traditional equestrian portrait by substituting an anonymous young African American man dressed in contemporary clothing for the figure of Napoleon. The artist thereby confronts and critiques historical traditions that do not acknowledge Black cultural experience. Wiley presents a new brand

of portraiture that redefines and affirms Black identity and simultaneously questions the history of Western painting.
(Excerpted from:
http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/169803/Napoleon_Leading_the_Army_over_the_Alps)

By applying the visual vocabulary and conventions of glorification, wealth, prestige, and history to subject matter drawn from the urban fabric, L.A. born and NY-based artist Kehinde Wiley engages the signs and visual rhetoric of the heroic, powerful, majestic, and sublime in his representation of urban black and brown men found throughout the world. Wiley's larger than life figures disturb and interrupt tropes of portrait painting, often blurring the boundaries between traditional and contemporary modes of representation and the critical portrayal of masculinity and physicality as it pertains to the view of black and brown young men.

Initially, Wiley's portraits were based on photographs taken of young men found on the streets of Harlem. As his practice grew, his eye led him toward an international view, including models found in urban landscapes throughout the world – such as Senegal, Dakar and Rio de Janeiro, among others – accumulating to a vast body of work called, "The World Stage." The models, dressed in their everyday clothing--most of which are based on the notion of far-reaching Western ideals of style--are asked to assume poses found in paintings or sculptures representative of the history of their surroundings. This juxtaposition of the "old" inherited by the "new" – who often have no visual inheritance of which to speak – immediately provides a discourse that is at once visceral and cerebral in scope.
http://www.skny.com/artists/kehinde-wiley

In early October 2017, it was announced that the Obamas selected Kehinde Wiley to paint Barack Obama's likeness for his official portrait in the collection of the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, shining a spotlight on the state of American art. Amy Sherald, a relatively unknown and possible rising art-world star, was selected to paint Michelle Obama's portrait. The artworks will be unveiled in early 2018, when they will go on view at the Gallery.

As reported by Roberta Smith in the New York Times (Oct. 16, 2017):

> Mr. Wiley, who was born in Los Angeles in 1977, is adept at heroicizing his subjects — some of whom he found through open calls or simply by approaching people on the street. He endows them with the poses and gestures of kings and nobles borrowed from portraits by Velázquez, Holbein, Manet and Titian and also sets them against bold, sometimes jarring patterns of rich brocades, Dutch wax fabrics or Liberty's wallpaper. One of his most reproduced works is an equestrian portrait of Michael Jackson that recycles Velazquez's portrait of King Philip II mounted on a white charger while a battle rages in the distance.
> Mr. Wiley's flamboyant portraits of men, in particular, give them a worldly power and often a gravitas that they don't necessarily possess in real life. That is part of his work's irreverent, perspective-altering force. It will be fascinating to see if Mr. Wiley rises to the occasion of painting a world leader like former President Obama, who already has a big place in history and plenty of dignity.

1st Grade – Session 1

Project: Self-Portrait and Linear Landscape

Materials:

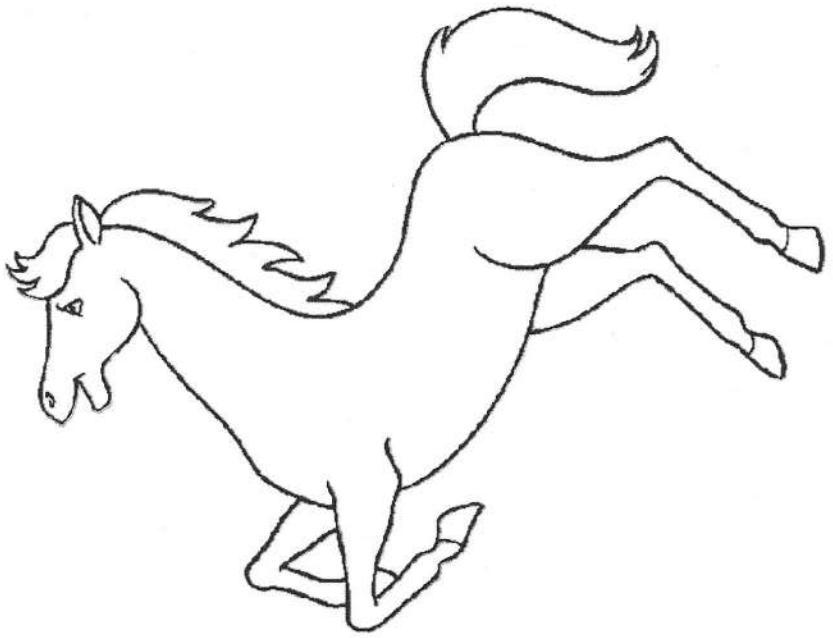
Paper with a horse image (see following page and make copies for each student)

Crayons, markers or colored pencils

Directions:

Have the children draw a self-portrait astride a horse incorporating a special symbol that tells a story about who they are. The symbol can be something that represents a favorite hobby, activity or talent or something else special that they would like people to know about themselves.

Also, have the children create and decorate the background of their self-portraits using lines and/or patterns. For example, the children may incorporate vertical, horizontal and diagonal lines to construct a landscape, like David, or they can use lines in a repetitive pattern to create a wallpaper-like effect, like Wiley, or both.



Grade One
Session Two
Image One

(NOTE: DO NOT SHARE IMAGE TITLE OR SOURCE YET)

Katsushika Hokusai, **The Great Wave** (from the series, "Thirty-Six Views of Mt. Fuji")
c. 1830-1832
Polychrome woodblock print; ink and color on paper
10 1/8 x 14 15/16 inches
Collection: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Project the image onto the SMARTboard. Allow the students to look for a minute or two then you can begin the dialogue.

Some helpful questions:
What do you see going on in this artwork?
How does this image make you feel?

Before turning attention to the artist's technique, you may reveal the name, title and date of the work (date relevance might be questionable due to the students' ages, however it's significant in that Hokusai's work preceded and greatly influenced Van Gogh's work – next image). You may also indicate that the mountain in the background is Mt. Fuji, the

tallest mountain in Japan. A fun fact is that Hokusai didn't create this, his most famous work of art, until he was in his 70's.

The students may have noticed that the subject of this painting is much different from the last session, as the focus is not on people but rather nature. Works of art that focus on nature are called landscapes. Paintings of nature can also focus on the sea, as Hokusai did here. This type of subject is called a "seascape". You may introduce three important words that relate to seascape and landscape paintings: foreground, middle ground and background.

Foreground: the part of the scene that is nearest to and in front of you, the viewer

Background: the part of a scene that appears most distant from you, the viewer

Middle ground: the area between the foreground and the background

Have the students consider the following:

How has this artist chosen to show the sea in this work of art?
What kind of lines does the artist use to create this print?
Why do you think the artist may have put the wave in the foreground (in the front) and the "tallest mountain in Japan" in the background?
What colors do you see?
The wave is so big and the fisherman are so small. Why might Hokusai have painted them in this way? (Nature is more powerful than we are).

Continue to conversation on the massive cresting wave in the foreground. The ends of the wave almost look like fingers getting ready to crash down on the three fishing boats below. The mountain, made tiny by the use of perspective, appears as if it too will be swallowed up by the wave. The spray from top of the crashing wave looks like snow falling on the mountain.

The writing in the upper left corner is where Hokusai signed his name (outside the box) and titled it (the text inside the box).

You may elaborate on the process by which this print was created:

This is a print made by a woodcut technique. The artist cuts into a block of wood with a sharp hand tool and he/she forms an image. Next, ink is applied with a roller onto the remaining wood surface. Finally, the painted wood block is pressed face down onto the paper. What makes this different from a painting is that many prints can be made from one woodcut, much like the same photograph can be printed again and again from the same negative or digital file. Before cameras were invented, printmaking was a very useful way to make the same picture many times and enable lots of people to see it. In fact, not only does the Met own one, but this print is also in the collections of museums in Chicago, Los Angeles, London and Australia. It is believed that there were between

5,000 - 8,000 prints made of this series. This concept – printmaking as a means of enabling many, many people to see the works of art before there were cameras…or computers! – is a nice segue into the next work of art.

NOTES FOR PARENTS/FACILIATORS ONLY

About the Artist/Artwork

Katsushika Hokusai was a Japanese artist and printmaker of the Edo period. Born in Edo (now Tokyo) in 1760, Hokusai is best known as the creator of the woodblock print series, "Thirty-six View of Mount Fuji" which includes the iconic and internationally recognized print, "The Great Wave off Kanagawa," created during the 1820's. Hokusai created the "Thirty Six Views…" both as a response to a domestic travel boom and as part of a personal obsession with Mount Fuji. It was this series, specifically "The Great Wave" print and "Fuji in Clear Weather" that secured Hokusai's fame both within Japan and overseas. As historian Richard Lane concludes, "Indeed if there is one work that made Hokusai's name, both in Japan and abroad, it must be this monumental print series…" While Hokusai's work prior to this series is certainly important, it was not until this series that he gained broad recognition and left a lasting impact on the art world. It was also "The Great Wave" print that initially received, and continues to receive, acclaim and popularity in the Western world.
(Excerpted from http://www.katsushikahokusai.org/)

Beginning in 1640, Japan was largely closed off to the world and only limited interaction with China and Holland was allowed. This changed in the 1850s, when trade was forced open by American naval commodore, Matthew C. Perry. After this, there was a flood of Japanese visual culture into the West. At the 1867 International Exposition in Paris, Hokusai's work was on view at the Japanese pavilion. This was the first introduction of Japanese culture to mass audiences in the West, and a craze for collecting art called Japonisme ensued. Additionally, Impressionist artists in Paris, such as Claude Monet, were great fans of Japanese prints. The flattening of space, an interest in atmospheric conditions, and the impermanence of modern city life—all visible in Hokusai's prints—both reaffirmed their own artistic interests and inspired many future works of art.

(Excerpted from https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-asia/art-japan/edo-period/a/hokusai-under-the-wave-off-kanagawa-the-great-wave)

First Grade
Session Two
Image Two

Vincent Van Gogh, **The Starry Night**, 1889
Oil on canvas, 29 x 36 ¼ inches
Collection: Museum of Modern Art, New York

Put the image onto the SMARTboard. Ask the students to take a few moments to look at the image and think about what they see. What do you notice in this work of art? What is happening here? As the students speak, you may point to their observations. Some students may recognize the painting immediately and you may disclose the artist's name and title of the painting now.

Just as Hokusai's "Great Wave" was a seascape, Van Gogh's "The Starry Night" could be considered both a landscape or a cityscape painting. A landscape painting is a picture of natural scenery and a cityscape focuses on a city scene. Here we have both.

Artists paint outdoors at different times of the day, during different seasons and in many different locations around the world. Van Gogh painted this scene in the South of France in the town of St. Remy.

How has Van Gogh chosen to show the outdoors in this painting?
What type of mood has the artist created?

How does it make you feel?
What colors has the artist used to create the mood?
What type of lines has he used?
What is going on in the bottom half of the picture?

See if the students can count the number of stars they see. Discuss the brush strokes with the students. Brush strokes refer to the use of paint, specifically the amount and speed with which an artist applies it to the canvas. Ask the students to show you with their hands the manner in which the artist put the paint on the canvas. Discuss how the landscape is full of movement, energy and light. The swirling sky keeps the viewer's eye moving from one star to the next and also to other points of interest within the painting (the church steeple, the large cypress tree…)

Now you may refer back to the "Great Wave" and compare the "wave" to the sky in Van Gogh's painting. You can explain to the students that Van Gogh and many of his artist friends were great admirers of the Japanese printmakers, especially Hokusai who was among the most famous, and collected many of their prints themselves.

NOTES FOR PARENTS/FACILITATORS ONLY

About the Artist/Artwork

Largely self-taught, van Gogh produced more than 2,000 oil painting, watercolors, drawings and sketches, which became in demand only after his death.

It was nature, and the people living closely to it, that first stirred van Gogh's artistic inclinations. Landscapes remained a popular subject in late-nineteenth-century art. Driven in part by their dissatisfaction with the modern city, many artists sought out places resembling earthly paradises, where they could observe nature firsthand, feeding its psychological and spiritual resonances into their work. Van Gogh was particularly taken with the peasants he saw working the countryside; his early compositions featured portraits of Dutch peasants and rural landscapes, rendered in dark, moody tones.

In 1886, van Gogh moved to Paris, where he encountered the works of the Impressionists and Neo-Impressionists, and the Pointillist compositions of Georges Seurat. Inspired by these artists' harmonious matching of colors, shorter brushstrokes, and liberal use of paint, he brightened his own palette and loosened his brushwork, emphasizing the physical application of paint on the canvas. The style he developed in Paris and carried through to the end of his life became known as Post-Impressionism, a term encompassing works made by artists unified by their interest in expressing their emotional and psychological responses to the world through bold colors and expressive, often symbolic images.

Observation and Imagination in *The Starry Night* (1889)

"This morning I saw the countryside from my window a long time before sunrise, with nothing but the morning star, which looked very big," wrote van Gogh to his brother Theo, describing his inspiration for one of his best-known paintings, *The Starry Night* (1889). The window to which he refers was in the Saint-Paul asylum in Saint-Rémy, in southern France, where he sought respite from his emotional suffering while continuing to make art.

This mid-scale, oil-on-canvas painting is dominated by a moon- and star-filled night sky. It takes up three-quarters of the picture plane and appears turbulent, even agitated, with intensely swirling patterns that seem to roll across its surface like waves. It is pocked with bright orbs—including the crescent moon to the far right, and Venus, the morning star, to the left of center—surrounded by concentric circles of radiant white and yellow light.

Beneath this expressive sky sits a hushed village of humble houses surrounding a church, whose steeple rises sharply above the undulating blue-black mountains in the background. A cypress tree sits at the foreground of this night scene. Flame-like, it reaches almost to the top edge of the canvas, serving as a visual link between land and sky. Considered symbolically, the cypress could be seen as a bridge between life, as represented by the earth, and death, as represented by the sky, commonly associated with heaven. Cypresses were also regarded as trees of the graveyard and mourning. "But the sight of the stars always makes me dream," van Gogh once wrote. "Why, I say to myself, should the spots of light in the firmament be less accessible to us than the black spots on the map of France? Just as we take the train to go to Tarascon or Rouen, we take death to go to a star."

The Starry Night is based on van Gogh's direct observations as well as his imagination, memories, and emotions. The steeple of the church, for example, resembles those common in his native Holland, not in France. The whirling forms in the sky, on the other hand, match published astronomical observations of clouds of dust and gas known as nebulae. At once balanced and expressive, the composition is structured by his ordered placement of the cypress, steeple, and central nebulae, while his countless short brushstrokes and thickly applied paint set its surface in roiling motion. Such a combination of visual contrasts was generated by an artist who found beauty and interest in the night, which, for him, was "much more alive and richly colored than the day."

(Excerpted from https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/vincent-van-gogh-the-starry-night-1889)

1st Grade – Session 2

Project: Starry Night and City Silhouette

Materials:

Light colored construction paper (light blue or grey)

Black construction paper (volunteers: please cut into shapes – rectangles, triangles, squares, etc beforehand)

Pastels (white, yellow and gold, light blue and dark blue)

Glue

Directions:

Hand out the light colored construction paper to each child and pastels.

Discuss the crescent moon and show the children how to draw one (draw a capital C and a lowercase C inside it). Have the children draw their own crescent moon on an upper corner of thee paper using a yellow or gold pastel.

Next, discuss the stars, focusing on why they are blurry dots rather than pointy stars. Using one or more shades of yellow, have the children draw some stars on their paper. Explain how Van Gogh used lines around the stars to make them radiate out from the center. Have the children try using 4 broken lines around the star dot, then 4 more, then 4 more.

Next, turn to drawing the wind. Show the kids how they can wind around the paper in a pattern of different colors.

Finally, hand out several black construction paper shapes to each child. Have the kids glue the shapes along the bottom of their skyscape page to form their own cityscape, completing their own "Starry Night."

Grade One
Session Three – Ways Of Seeing

You may begin with a short introduction about the ways we look at things. How do we look at/see things every day? Some examples of "ways of seeing" might be:

- looking at something up close
- looking at something from far away
- looking out the window during a car ride and looking at what whizzes past us
- reading a picture book and examining the illustrations
- looking at pictures/photographs on a phone, ipad, computer or photo album
- looking at artwork (a painting, drawing, photograph, sculpture and/or going to a museum to do these things)

Today we are going to look at two different paintings that at first glance seem very different but once we look closely, we see that they are not as different as they initially appear (not to reveal to the students now, but the ultimate similarity is that they are within the same genre of "still life painting."). Both artists had a similar intention but their processes and resulting artwork were quite unique from one another.

Materials:

Several magnifying glasses (available in the PTA closet)
Some fresh flowers, leaves or blades of grass (whatever can be found to illustrate O'Keeffe's "magnified" aesthetic)
Art supplies for project (see below)

Grade One
Session Three
First Image

(NOTE: DO NOT SHARE IMAGE TITLE OR SOURCE YET)

William Michael Harnett, **Violin and Music**, 1888
Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 inches. Collection: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Project the image onto the SMARTboard. As the students to take a few moments to look at the image and think about what they see. What do you notice in this work of art? As the students speak about particular items you may point to their observations.

It should quickly become apparent that there is no action going on in this painting – rather it is a collection of things. There are not people, animals or any sort of natural landscape environment in which things are moving or happening. You can tell the students that this type of painting, wherein objects (inanimate things) are arranged together in a specific way, is called a **still life** painting. The magic of still life paintings is that they can show us a new way of looking at the ordinary objects around us. Once they are placed into a specific arrangement and then captured in paint, ink, pastel, or any other medium, the objects take on a whole new meaning.

You may now reveal the artist, title and other details of the painting to the students. Hartnett was considered the most skillful still life painter in America of his time (late 19th century) and his mastery of the trompe-l'oeil* technique was what made his paintings so celebrated.

**Translated from the French, "trompe-l'oeil" means "to fool the eye" and this is precisely what Hartnett was doing in his paintings as the size, details, colors and textures of the objects in his paintings are so life-like. You may point out the cabinet door slightly ajar and the strong shadows cast by the nails and the violin. The old wooden cabinet door and frame gives the impression you could touch them and feel the rough surface (like you could almost get a splinter!).*

Some helpful discussion points:

Harnett was such a talented draughtsmen (or person who can makes very detailed drawings) that sometimes it was hard to tell whether the objects in his paintings were glued onto the surface or just painted. In fact, in his time, bets were made by saloon customers (his paintings were hung in saloons not museums, appealing less to the rarefied academic world) as to which of the objects were painted and which were real.

Make reference to and ask the children to point out the elements of art: line, shape, color and texture. (e.g., the wood on the cabinet looks so rough that it might give you a splinter but yet the brushstrokes are so smooth, unlike Van Gogh's brushstrokes in Starry Night).

Why might Harnett have chosen to paint the specific objects in the painting?

Why might he have chosen to depict them so realistically?

Are these types of things that everyone might be able to easily identify regardless of age, occupation, etc?

It is interesting to note how the artist chose to sign his name. Where do you see that?

The Irish sheet music hanging on the wall pays tribute to Hartnett's Irish-American heritage/identity.

A short **YouTube** clip that might interest the students:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgMgY2UYp2g

NOTES FOR PARENTS/FACILITATORS ONLY

About the Artist

William Michael Harnett is considered one of the premier 19th century trompe l'oeil still life painters. His work often depicted forms of paper including currency, sheet music, hand written notes as well as books, musical instruments and pipes arranged in shallow tableaus. His expertise as a painter elevated these simple objects to a higher level, inspiring many artists who came after him to master the technique as well.

Born in County Cork, Ireland, amidst the country's disastrous potato famine of the mid-1800s, Harnett's family emigrated to the United States and settled in Philadelphia. Hartnett became an American citizen in 1868, and began his career as an engraver working with steel, copper, silver and wood. He studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and, later, at the prestigious Cooper Union and the National Academy of Design.

Over the course of his seventeen year career, William Harnett produced 250 still life paintings of items so precisely drawn that upon his death in 1892, one obituary writer noted that the artist "copied in oil with the accuracy of a camera." Harnett once stated that he wanted his paintings to tell a story by touching upon the simplicity of everyday life and its images with clarity, warmth and realism.

(http://www.tamoneillfinearts.com/william-harnett-biography/)

About the Artwork

Harnett was the most imitated and skillful still-life painter in late nineteenth-century America, celebrated for his many arrangements that pushed the art of trompe l'oeil (French for "fool the eye") to its limits. While this complex composition may at first appear flat, it is full of depth and plasticity, emphasizing the tension between illusion and reality. The depicted hinged door is slightly ajar, and the humble objects hang on prominent nails, casting strong shadows. The instruments and torn sheet music for a

popular Irish reel underline Harnett's humorous sense of play as well as his Irish-American identity.
(http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/10997)

Grade One
Session Three
Image Two

(NOTE: DO NOT SHARE IMAGE TITLE OR SOURCE YET)

Georgia O'Keeffe (1887 – 1986), **Flower Abstraction**, 1924
Oil on canvas, 48 1/8 x 30 inches
Collection: Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Project the second image onto the SMARTboard. Again ask the students to take a few moments to just look at the image and think about what they see. You may begin to ask what they are observing.

Because the children may not grasp the flower imagery immediately, introducing the elements of art is a productive approach to the discussion. By discussing colors, shapes, lines and textures, the floral forms may begin to take shape and the delicate petals may become more apparent to the children.

You may now reveal the artist and painting's details to the class.

A biographical anecdote that may interest the class:

> When Georgia O'Keeffe was growing up, most girls learned embroidery and other sorts of artwork that help decorate a house. Some girls became art teachers. But very few girls were encouraged to try to make their livings as artists! O'Keeffe didn't see things that way at all. She started taking art lessons, and when she was twelve years old, she decided to become an artist.
>
> One day, in her high school art class, she experimented with a new way of looking at the world. Holding up a wildflower, her teacher showed how important it was for her to examine it carefully before drawing it. O'Keeffe did look at it closely, but she did a lot more than that. She turned it in different directions, drawing it over and over again. Then she tried drawing just a part of it, to see what that would look like. Every time she drew it, she made the shape of the flower look more simple.
>
> Someone looking at her drawing might not have recognized the flower at all. That didn't matter to Georgia O'Keeffe. To her, just to copy the flower was dull. In her drawings, a flower became a world to be explored.

(http://americanart.si.edu/education/insights/cappy/9aokeeffebio.html)

Some helpful talking points:

Why might Georgia O'Keeffe have chosen to paint these flowers so close up?

Do you think she wanted us to be able to recognize what we were looking at or not?

You may then elaborate a bit more on her biography to help answer the above questions:

Georgia O'Keeffe moved to New York City when she was 20 years old and began to exhibit her paintings alongside well-established artists, many of whom were men. Much of her focus was on painting large-scale, close up views of flowers. She famously said, "If I could paint the flower exactly as I see it no one would see what I see because I would paint it small like the flower is small," O'Keeffe explained. "So I said to myself – I'll paint what I see - what the flower is to me but I'll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it - I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers."

At this point in the discussion, you can introduce the magnifying glasses and divide the children into several groups. One volunteer should oversee each group and present the children with the objects to be examined magnification. The volunteer can discuss with the children what they see under the glass versus what they see without it.

FOR PARENTS/FACILITORS ONLY

About the Artist

Georgia O'Keeffe was born on November 15, 1887, in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin and studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Art Students League in New York. Photographer and art dealer Alfred Stieglitz gave O'Keeffe her first gallery show in 1916 and the couple married in 1924. Considered the "mother of American modernism," O'Keeffe moved to New Mexico after her husband's death and was inspired by the landscape to create numerous well-known paintings. Georgia O'Keeffe died on March 6, 1986 at the age of 98.

As an artist, Stieglitz, who was 23 years older than O'Keeffe, found in her a muse, taking over 300 photographs of her, including both portraits and nudes. As an art dealer, he championed her work and promoted her career. She joined Stieglitz's circle of artist friends including Edward Steichen, Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, Arthur Dove, John Marin, and Paul Strand. Inspired by the vibrancy of the modern art movement, she began to experiment with perspective, painting larger-scale close-ups of flowers, the first of which was *Petunia No. 2*, which was exhibited in 1925, followed by works such as *Black Iris* (1926) and *Oriental Poppies* (1928). "If I could paint the flower exactly as I see it no one would see what I see because I would paint it small like the flower is small," O'Keeffe explained. "So I said to myself – I'll paint what I see - what the flower is to me but I'll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it - I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers."

O'Keeffe also turned her artist's eye to New York City skyscrapers, the symbol of modernity, in paintings including *City Night* (1926), *Shelton Hotel, New York No. 1* (1926) and *Radiator Bldg—Night, New York* (1927). Following numerous solo exhibitions, O'Keeffe had her first retrospective, *Paintings by Georgia O'Keeffe*, which opened at the Brooklyn Museum in 1927*. By this time, she had become one of the most important and successful American artists, which was a major achievement for a female

artist in the male-dominated art world. Her pioneering success would make her a feminist icon for later generations.

*To note, the Brooklyn Museum currently has "Georgia O'Keeffe: Living Modern" on view from March 3 – July 23, 2017.

About the Artwork

Flower Abstraction is among the earliest of Georgia O'Keeffe's large-scale flower paintings, which she continued to produce through the 1950s. In these paintings, O'Keeffe harnessed the technique of close cropping that she had learned from modernist photography, especially the work of Paul Strand, with her own pictorial vocabulary of undulating forms and soft gradations of tone. In this way, she transformed her botanical subjects into compositions that oscillate between abstraction and representation. The magnified flower in Flower Abstraction seems to extend beyond its frames, as if without measurable boundaries. By utilizing a small, ordinary flower to suggest the immensity of nature, O'Keeffe sought to undermine her viewers' habitual ways of looking. As she remarked, "Paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it—I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers." (http://collection.whitney.org/object/984)

1st Grade – Session 3

Project: Magnified Nature**

Materials:

White paper (smaller than 8x11 is easier for kids to fill in entirely – use paper cutter in school office to cut white paper from PTA closet into smaller size)

Pastels and/or colored pencils

Flowers/leaves (please note: it is best to limit the variety of flowers you bring in so children all have the same item. Gerbera daisies and orchids work very well but feel free to choose flowers or leaves you think will magnify well)

Magnifying glasses

Directions:

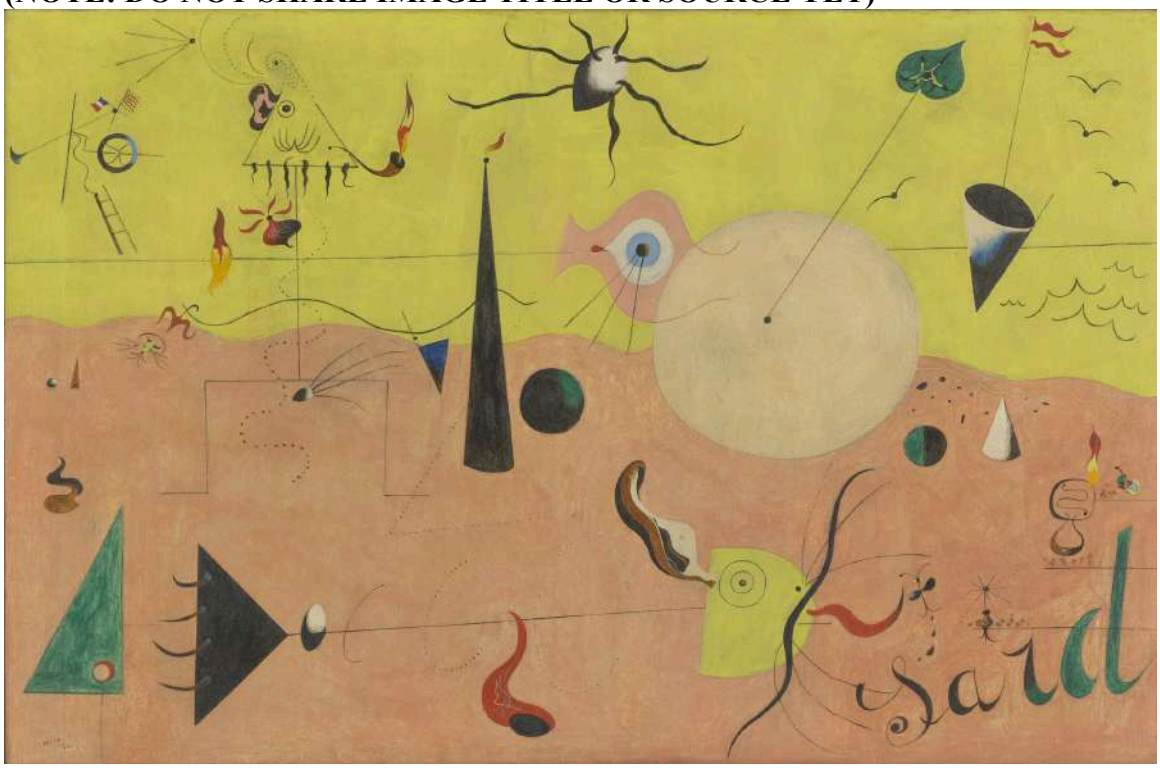
Provide each child (or two children) with an element of nature (flower, leaf, etc) and a magnifying glass to examine it up close.

Ask each child to create a drawing of their element of nature, close-up, in the style of O'Keeffe. Explain that the entire page should be filled with the element of nature but that the whole leaf/flower/etc may not be visible as the focus is so close.

** Please prepare an example in advance of the classroom session to show the children before they begin as they may have trouble understanding how to create a close-up image like O'Keeffe

Grade One
Session Four – Movement and Abstraction
First Image

(NOTE: DO NOT SHARE IMAGE TITLE OR SOURCE YET)



Joan Miro, **The Hunter (Catalan Landscape)**, 1923-24
Oil on canvas, 25 ½ x 39 ½ inches
Collection: Museum of Modern Art, New York

Project the image onto the SMARTboard. Ask the students to become art detectives and take a few moments to notice all of the things in the painting that might help identify who these two people might be. You can ask the usual questions: What do you notice in this work of art? What is happening in this picture? Are there any sounds you might hear if you were a part of this painting?

Discuss the choices artists make in terms of what to draw, paint or sculpt (in terms of subject matter) and how they decide to do it. You may gently explain and explore the differences between "figuration" and "abstraction". So far, we have looked mostly at figurative works of art – mostly paintings that had a subject that we recognized quite easily. You can ask them for examples from memory (Napoleon and Kehinde Wiley's contemporary counterpart; the landscapes of Van Gogh, Hokusai; the still life of Hartnett).

When a work of art is described as abstract, usually the artist is creating an image that does not necessarily look like something you might recognize in the world around you. Just like in a figurative or more realistic work of art, the artist uses colors, shapes, lines and texture to create a painting, print or drawing, but the finished product is very different. There may be hints of something there but it's not a realistic or easily recognizable thing. There may not even be a subject to the work of art, but rather the artist is just trying to express an emotion using the elements of art.

Some questions to spark further conversation:
What parts of this image are more realistic?
What parts of this image are more abstract?
Might you think of a title for this painting?
What tools or elements of art did the artist use to make this painting?

As the children elaborate on the composition, you may disclose the title and name of the artist. If you haven't already, you may point out the semblance of a hunter (the stick figure on the left wears a beret and is smoking a pipe), and the fish that the hunter was trying to catch to possibly cook on his grill later (the grill and flame appear just above the "d" in "Sard"…).

You may elaborate on Miro's background as a native Catalonian and his pride in this region which lies between France and Spain. While Catalonia remains a part of Spain, Catalonians have always identified themselves as independent and separate from it. Miro has chosen to depict the flags of Spain, France and Catalonia in the painting.

FOR PARENTS/FACILITATORS ONLY

About the Artwork

At first glance this painting may look abstract, but it is a landscape filled with rich iconography and suggestions of political strife. The large beige circle is a cross-section of the trunk of a carob tree that sprouts a leaf and a giant, all-seeing eye bisected by the horizon line. The stick-figured hunter, with a lit pipe protruding from his mouth, holds a freshly killed rabbit in one hand and a smoking rifle in the other.

The scene is set in countryside of Catalonia, a politically autonomous region of Spain near the French border, with its own parliament, language, history, and culture. Catalan nationalism has been a subject of debate for over a century. Perhaps hinting at this contentious history, the Catalan-born Joan Miró depicts the French, Catalan, and Spanish flags in the background. The word "SARD," short for "Sardana," the national dance of Catalonia, is painted in the foreground. This word is also a reference to the fragmented letters and words found in Dadaist and Surrealist poetry. (excerpted from https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/joan-miro-the-hunter-catalan-landscape-montroig-july-1923-winter1924-2)

About the Artist

Joan Miro was born in Spain in 1893. In 1912, he began studying art in Barcelona (Catalonia) and moved to Paris in 1919 to continue his artistic development. Miró was drawn to the Dada and Surrealist movements. The Surrealists were most active in Paris during the 1920s, having formally joined forces in 1924 with the publication of their Surrealist Manifesto. While the Surrealists experimented with the irrational in art and writing, Miró's art manifested these dream-like qualities, becoming increasingly biomorphic, enigmatic, and innovative.

To his utter disappointment, Miró's first solo show in Paris in 1921 was a complete disaster; he did not sell a single work. However, a determined Miró went on to participate in the first Surrealist exhibition in 1925. He collaborated with the group's members in the creation of larger commissions, working with Max Ernst in 1926 on the creation of Sergei Diaghilev's ballet set designs. In his own work at the time, Miró painted fantastic and bizarre interpretations of his dreams.

Miró married Pilar Juncosa in 1929, and their only child, Dolores, was born in 1931. His career flourished during this time. In 1934, Miró's art began to be exhibited in both France and the United States. He was still residing in Paris when war broke out in Europe, and by 1941 Miró was forced to flee to Mallorca with his family. Perhaps not surprisingly, warfare and political tension were prominent themes in his art during this period; his canvases became increasingly grotesque and brutal. Concurrently, Miró's first retrospective was held at the MoMA in New York City to great acclaim. His renown continued to grow both in America and Europe, culminating in a large-scale mural commission in Cincinnati in 1947. Miró's simplified forms and his life-long impulse toward experimentation inspired a generation of American artists, the Abstract Expressionists, whose emphasis on non-representational art signaled a major shift in artistic production in the U.S.

In the 1950s, Miró began dividing his time between Spain and France. A large exhibition of 60 of Miró's works was held at the Gallerie Maeght in Paris and subsequently at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York in 1953. By the mid-1950s, Miró had begun working on a much larger scale, both on canvas and in ceramics.

Miró explored the possibility of creating an entirely new visual vocabulary for art that, while not divorced from the objective world, could exist outside of it. Rather than transitioning to complete abstraction, Miró's biomorphic forms remained within the bounds of objectivity. However, they were forms of pure invention and were made expressive and imbued with meaning through their juxtaposition with other forms and the artist's use of color. Miró died at his home in 1983.

(excerpted from http://www.theartstory.org/artist-miro-joan.htm)

Grade One
Session Four
Second Image

Alexander Calder, **Red Lily Pads**, 1956
Painted sheet metal and metal rods, 3 feet 6 inches x 16 feet 9 inches x 9 feet 1 inch
Collection: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Project the image onto the SMARTboard. Ask the students what they are looking at. This exercise will be different from prior opening queries because 1) they're looking at a three-dimensional object rather than a painting 2) the perspective is unique 3) it's taken from inside the Guggenheim (which some children may recognize). It might be helpful to alert them they're looking at a photograph of something rather than a photograph of a two-dimensional painting or work on paper as we have always in the past.

You may continue the dialogue by presenting variations of these questions:

What kind of artwork is this?
Generally, how is a sculpture different from a painting?
How are sculpture and paintings similar?

A segue question would be to ask if the children ever remember having a mobile in their crib (they won't but will say they will!) or in that of a younger sibling's crib. You may explain that it was this artist – Alexander Calder – took the idea of a traditional sculpture and set it into motion. Calder painted flat metal shapes and joined them together in such a way that they were in perfect balance when suspended from the ceiling and moved naturally in the air.

Introduce the name of the artist and the title of the artwork to the students. Inquire as to why Calder may have titled the work this way.

Are lily pads ever red?
Why might Calder have chosen to paint the mobile red?

Now you may compare both artworks side by side and discuss the similarities and differences between Miro's painting and Calder's sculpture. Be sure to show them the subsequent slide of Calder (the more portly man on the left) planting a big kiss on his friend Joan Miro! You may explain to the students that Miro and Calder met in Paris in 1928 and were very close friends and supporters of each other's work for the rest of their lives. Further discuss how the two may have influenced one another by comparing the two works of art.

FOR PARENTS/FACILITATORS ONLY

About the Artwork

Living between Paris and New York, Alexander Calder had increasing contact with the major proponents of the European avant-garde of the 1930s. He moved among the various art-world factions without aligning himself and with little concern for their rivalries. Upon seeing Calder's motorized sculptures in fall 1931, Marcel Duchamp dubbed them mobile, as he had his own motorized work decades earlier. Calder embraced the meanings implied by the French term, both referring to a motive and something movable, even quick and unstable, and used it for those works where elements moved by currents of air. When Jean Arp saw Calder's moveable work in 1932, he coined the term stabile to refer to Calder's static constructions.
In the late 1930s, Calder began to favor forms that suggested plants and animals over galactic subjects. Like the Surrealist artists he often exhibited alongside, Calder held an affinity for biomorphic forms and accidental relationships. Calder's mobiles—with individual elements that combine and recombine at random—create a poetry of the unexpected similar to that of Many Ray's "encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissecting table" or Arp's chance collages, as well as mimic the unpredictable and passing movements of nature. Calder continued to reference the natural world in his nonfigurative work throughout his life, as in the monumental mobile Red Lily Pads. Its ovoid disks float parallel to the earth in fleeting arrangements, like leaves skimming the surface of water.
(exerpted from https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/750)

About the Artist

Alexander Calder was born on July or August 22, 1898, in Lawnton, Pennsylvania, into a family of artists. In 1919, he received an engineering degree from Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, New Jersey. Calder attended the Art Students League, New York, from 1923 to 1925. As a freelance artist for the National Police Gazette in 1925, he spent two weeks sketching at the circus; his fascination with the subject dates from this time. He also made his first wire sculpture in 1925, and the following year he made several constructions of animals and figures with wire and wood. Calder's first exhibition of paintings took place in 1926 at the Artist's Gallery, New York.

Later that year, he went to Paris and attended the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. In Paris, he met Stanley William Hayter, created his famous Cirque Calder, which he began performing in the fall of 1926, and exhibited at the 1927 Salon des Indépendants. The first show of his wire animals and caricature portraits was held at the Weyhe Gallery, New York, in 1928. That same year, he met Joan Miró, who became a lifelong friend. Subsequently, Calder divided his time between France and the United States. In 1929, the Galerie Billiet gave him his first solo show in Paris. Around this time, he also encountered James Johnson Sweeney, future director of the Guggenheim Museum, who would become a close friend and supporter.

Calder began to experiment with abstract sculpture and in 1931–32 introduced moving parts into his work. These moving sculptures were called "mobiles"; the stationary constructions were to be named "stabiles." He exhibited with the group Abstraction-Création (Abstraction Creation, 1931–36) in Paris in 1933. In 1943, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, gave him a retrospective.

During the 1950s, Calder traveled widely and executed "gongs" (sound mobiles developed in the 1940s) and "towers" (wall mobiles developed around 1951). He won the Grand Prize for sculpture at the 1952 Venice Biennale. In 1964–65, the Guggenheim Museum presented a Calder retrospective. A Calder exhibition was held at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1976), and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao (2003). Calder died on November 11, 1976, in New York. (excerpted from https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/artist/alexander-calder)

1st Grade – Session 4

Project: Make your own Calder mobile

Materials:

Pipe cleaners (cut into halves, thirds or quarters in advance)

Foam sheets (please cut sheets in halves, thirds, or quarters in advance)

Scissors (in the classroom, for cutting shapes)

**Please prepare sets of materials in advance for each child. Plan to give each child a set of pipe cleaners (cut as noted above) and a few foam sheets (also precut). You can put each set in a Ziploc bag so children will have their materials and know they are designated for them

Directions:

Give each child 5-10 pipe cleaners and a few foam sheets. The children should use the scissors to cut the foam sheets into small shapes (circles, ovals, triangles, diamonds, etc). Demonstrate how to build a mobile by starting with a single pipe cleaner and adding pieces and shapes along the way (see example below, and example available in PTA closet).