

Arts Enrichment in Teaching ESL

Lane Igoudin

ESL Instructor, Los Angeles City College
igoudial@lacitycollege.edu <> <http://faculty.lacitycollege.edu/igoudial>

I. Art as part of the English learner's culture and identity

- Adult learners
 - Part of their existing L1 heritage
 - Classroom recognition -> validation of one's identity
- K-12: developing identity in L2 society
- ESL instructors
 - Better knowledge of their student communities -> deeper connection with them

II. Opportunities for learning about non-North American visual arts and other art forms

- Art museums:

Museum of Latin American Art	Contemporary Latin American visual arts	Long Beach	www.molaa.org
Pacific Asia Museum	Arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands	Pasadena	www.pacificasiamuseum.org
Bowers Museum	Pre-Columbian, Asian, African, and South American art	Santa Ana	www.bowers.org
Los Angeles County Museum of Art	Japanese collection	Los Angeles (Mid-Wilshire)	www.lacma.org
Norton Simon Museum	Indian and Cambodian sculpture; Japanese woodprints	Pasadena	www.nortonsimon.org
Craft and Folk Art Museum	Traditional folk arts from around the world	Los Angeles (Mid-Wilshire)	www.cafam.org

- Traditional music or dance performances: ballet folklorico, Korean dance, Chinese opera, kodo drumming, bhangra competition, classical Arabic music
- Community celebrations of native holidays open to general public: Cambodian New Year, Carnaval (Brazil), Cinco de Mayo (Mexico), Guatemalan Festival, Lunar New Year festivals celebrations (China, Vietnam), Songkran (Thailand; Laos)

III. Ideas for the classroom (see more in part V, p. 3)

- Field trip
- Writing assignment
- Speech presentation (individual or group)
- Internet research related to the topic
- On-site workshop at the museum

IV. Developing a lesson plan

Tips for Teaching about Narrative Art¹

Narrative works allow students to act as detectives and figure out what's happening in the pictures. Many images tell a specific story, be it a myth, a religious parable, or a well-known fable or tale. Others tell stories that may not be so obvious, leaving the viewer to use his or her own imagination to decipher them. Listed below are some general questions that you may ask when looking at narrative art.

- *What do you think is happening in this work of art?*
- *What do you see that makes you say that?*
- *Who do you think is the main character of this story?*
- *Do you recognize any of the characters? If so, how?*
- *What can we say about these characters?*
- *Describe the relationship between the different characters.*
- *Describe the setting.*
- *What time of day is it?*
- *What season is it?*
- *Where does this scene take place?*
- *What do you think happened ten minutes before this scene?*
- *What do you think will happen ten minutes later?*

Looking at Narrative Art Lesson 1: What Are Stories, and How Do We Learn Them?

Grades/Level: Adult Learners

Subjects: Visual Arts, English–Language Arts, ESL

Time Required: Single Class Lesson; 30–45 minutes

Lesson Overview: Students discover how visual artists represent a story by depicting a single moment from it.

Learning Objectives: Students explain how visual artists and writers represent the same story in different ways and use narrative art vocabulary to describe an image and the moment it represents in the story.

Materials: Two narrative images (*Venus and Adonis* and *Pluto Abducting Proserpine*)

Lesson Steps

- Begin with the following questions: Why do we tell stories? How do we learn about stories? Are they always truthful?
- Explain to students that they are going to look at an image that illustrates an ancient Greek myth. Ask students if they can name any myth they may have heard. Review the *Narrative Art Vocabulary*.
- If the students are going to look at *Venus...*, ask them to imagine what the goddess of love and beauty would look like. For *Pluto...*, ask how students would imagine the god of the underworld, ruler of the dead.
- Write down the words they use to describe the goddess or god.
- Explain to students that they will look at how the artist imagined gods in the year the image was made.
- Before displaying the image, read students the related story. Ask them which moment in the story they would choose to portray in a picture.

¹ Adapted from The Getty Center's *Language through Art: An ESL Enrichment Curriculum* (see p. 3).

- Display the image.

Discussion Questions

- What moment in the story has this artist chosen to portray?
- What is happening at this moment?
- How does the artist help us understand this moment in the story?

V. Examples of ESL assignments based on L1 arts

The following **writing** topics could be used in description, division, narration, process, or contrast/comparison paragraph or essay assignments.

- *Using narrative art vocabulary, describe the story contained in the [title] painting and the visual details which support it.*
- *Describe the relationship between the different characters in the [title] painting.*
- *Describe the life of [artist's name] as seen through his/her self-portrait.*
- *Describe the life of [...] as seen through his/her portrait by [artist's name].*
- *Using a chronological order, describe the life of a famous artist, musician, or writer from your country.*
- *Describe traditional arts or music in three different parts of your country.*
- *Describe the process of making a piece of art original to your country.*
- *Compare or contrast two artists from your native country (or region).*
- *Using appropriate art vocabulary, compare or contrast the following two works of art: [titles].*

Some of these topics can be also used for individual or group presentation assignments in **oral skills** classes. Addition of visual aids would enliven such presentations and make them more interesting and accessible to the audience.

VI. Resources for enriching ESL curriculum through the use of L1 arts and cultures

- Language through art: An ESL enrichment curriculum. Tips for teaching ESL using art (narrative works, portraits, and landscapes) and the related lesson plan database for K-12 through adult levels. (www.getty.edu/education/for_teachers/curricula/esl/index.html)
- Latin American art. A list of links to online resources and lesson plans.
- (www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/mexico.htm)
- Of rage and redemption: The art of Oswaldo Guayasamín.* A set of 3 complete, full-color lesson plans on the art of this artist. (www.vanderbilt.edu/clas/k12_outreach/resources)
- Sample lessons: Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, Tarsila do Amaral, Ayon Belkis. Lesson plans collected by MOLAA Education Department.*
- Szeto-Chiu, D. (2009). Culture in the Classroom: An Asset or Liability? Presented at CATESOL 2009. Pasadena. April 16-19, 2009. A review of cultural issues which arise in the ESL classroom including communication rules, holidays, and histories, as well as various activities to engage them.*
- CATESOL Intercultural Communication Interest Group (ICIG). A CATESOL interest group which promotes intercultural communication awareness and skills both in classroom instruction and professional development for TESL teachers in all types of TESL programs. (www.catesol.org/icig/index.html)
- Teacher Art Exchange. An online community of teachers and learners interested in enhancing education through art. (www.getty.edu/education/teacherartexchange)

* This source is also available from <http://languagearts.cypresscollege.edu/~aigoudin/Research.htm>

VII. References

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* Also available in .pdf from my website: <http://languagearts.cypresscollege.edu/~aigoudin/Research.htm>