

**Exploring Rural Kentucky Through Documentary Art:
Irvin Store, 1920s - Documentary Art Interactive
Unit 2 - Lesson Set 1 - Saturday Social Life
- For the Teacher -**

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES – Visual Art, Visual Art and Theater, Social Studies

Visual Art

1. **Responding, Connecting:** Access the Powerpoint – [*Irvin Store, 1920s - Images for Projection*](#) and ask students to describe what is happening in it. What do they see that makes them think that? What else do they see?

Watch the short video [Rural Life](#). Then, project the vignette again and ask students how knowing more about the context of the painting helps them notice details they had not noticed before.

Visual Art Standards

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Visual Art and Theater

2. **Creating, Connecting, Performing:** Although artist Dennis Thrasher wants to tell stories through his documentary artwork, he also likes to leave part of the story to the viewer’s imagination. In [Directions to the Artist - Irvin Store](#), video producer/director Tom Law said that he wanted, “The focus [of the painting to be] on the people – their dress, activities and relationships during an important part of weekly life for this rural community.”

Ask students to speculate about the characters in this part of the painting. What is their relationship to one another? What are they discussing? Are either related to the farmer with the pumpkins? Encourage students to imagine diverse scenarios.

Ask students to work in small groups and imagine the exchange between the characters in the painting. Ask them to imagine what happened before and after the moment captured in the painting. They might want to speculate on what happened that morning and what will happen that evening.

Ask them to improvise three short scenes to develop their characters and story line with body language, voice inflection, dialogue, props, or background. The scenes should clearly take place in the 1920s in Creelsboro. Students can take different roles in creating the scene – director, script writers, prop and set designers.

Allow time for students to complete and rehearse their scenes and then ask each group to perform their scenes for their classmates.

Discuss how many different interpretations there were of this one vignette. Discuss why documentary artists might want to leave some things in their paintings open to the imagination of their viewers.

You can repeat or vary the activity by asking students to select other pairs or groups of people in the painting for their improvisation.

Visual Art and Theater Standards

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Social Studies

3. Explore the Impact of Technology on Culture through Compelling and Supporting

Questions: Lead students in developing compelling and supporting questions about how communication technology has influenced social interactions. Examples might include:

- How have the technological advances in communication impacted human interaction in positive and negative ways?
- How have the technological advances in communication changed dating and other social interactions?
- What was the impact of social distancing and virtual learning on social interactions among teens during the 2019 Coronavirus Pandemic? What was the role of social media and other methods of communication? How was the impact of the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918 on social interaction similar to or different from the impact the 2019 Coronavirus Pandemic had on social interaction?

Lead students in brainstorming how they might gather information related to their questions beyond Internet research, such as:

- Interviews
- A survey of people of different ages regarding the technology they used to communicate with their friends when they were sixteen. What would the

difference(s) be between information collected in interviews and information collected in surveys? Would there be an advantage to using both methods?

Questions might include:

- What year were you sixteen?
- Did you live in an urban, suburban, or rural community?
- How did you communicate with your friends?
- How do you communicate with your friends now?
- What is a positive impact of advances in communication technology?
- What is a negative impact of advances in communication technology?

Have students compile data and look for trends or patterns that might lead to additional questions.

Lead students in determining how they might construct explanations or public communications relevant to the questions they explore. What communication technology would they use to share their findings and with what audience?

Social Studies Standards

HS.UH.CH.5: Analyze the impact of technology and new ideas on American culture from 1877- present.

HS.UH.I.CC.1: Engage in meaningful discussions/democratic discourse and respect diverse opinions relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions in U.S. history.

HS.UH.I.CC.2: Engage in disciplinary thinking and construct arguments, explanations or public communications relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions in U.S. history.

HS.UH.I.CC.3: Engage in disciplinary thinking and apply appropriate evidence to propose a solution or design an action plan relevant to compelling and/or supporting questions in U.S. history.