



BOULEVARD

GRADES 6-12

A Few Key Points

- Édouard Manet's art was modern because it refused to cohere illusionistically or narratively.
- Impressionism defied the long-held tradition of the Academy based on timeless, heroic subjects and an adherence to a style of defined contours and perfected drawing.
- Impressionism was meant to render the world more objectively, as well as to capture the quickness of a fleeting glimpse and thereby match the way we see things.
- Not all Impressionists painted the same way.
- Post-Impressionism grew out of a desire to make something more solid, structured, or "primitive" than Impressionism.
- Modern art is often ambiguous.

Sparking Discussion

- How did Manet and the Impressionists suggest an idea of temporality in their work?
- Why did people in the 19th century continue to want paintings based on Greek and Roman story, mythological "Venuses," or biblical subjects?
- What technology/materials were necessary for outdoor painting in the mid-19th century?
- What about the Impressionist paintings makes us feel like we are there on site? Can something that is painted in the studio make us feel the same way?
- What does contemporary life look like in the present day?
- How can artists present a "modern view" today?
- Based on the paintings in the experience, which part of France would students like to visit?
- If you were a collector, would you purchase works by Monet, Manet, Renoir, or Gauguin? Explain your reasoning.

Activities

1. A Snapshot of Modern Life

(necessary materials: cameras and film)

Have students take 5-10 photos of contemporary life. They should be cognizant not just of their subjects, but also of their compositions and cropping. They should try to express the rapidity of 21st-century life as an analogue to 19th-century artists' desire to express a fleeting glimpse of modern life through their art.

2. Drawing Upon Your Imagination

Write a 3-5 page story from the point of view of one of the characters in Édouard Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*: the barmaid, the male customer, one of the spectators at the club, the trapeze artist, or the painter himself.

3. All Across France

Born in the village of Le Havre in the region of Normandy, Claude Monet painted in many spots around the country, including Argenteuil (a suburb near Paris), Brittany, and Antibes. Each of these locations in France has its own particular geography and climate. During the 19th century, the regional culture of each area was also quite distinct. Students can research these three sites and compare their findings.

4. Travelogue

During the early 1890s, artist Paul Gauguin wrote a travel journal called *Noa (Fragrant Scent)* based on his experiences in Tahiti. Like Gauguin's paintings, such as *Nevermore* and *Te Reroia*, this book is partly related to what he experienced, but mostly a poetic fabrication evoking the otherness of Tahitian culture. Have students research a place and construct a several-page travelogue based on actual facts. Assign reading excerpts from *Noa Noa* and have students discuss where they think Gauguin has stretched the truth and why.

5. Will The Real Vollard Please Stand Up?

Numerous artists portrayed the famous dealer, Ambroise Vollard. Compare and contrast portraits of Ambroise Vollard by various artists, including Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1908), Paul Cézanne (1899), and Pablo Picasso (1910). Have students discuss how each artist's portrait represents a particular art historical movement (Renoir: Impressionism; Cézanne: Post-Impressionism, and Picasso: Cubism). Which portrait does each student prefer and why?