

## Ekphrasis in the Green Guest Room

Inspired by Edward Degas and the Green Guest Room

**Teacher:** Rachael Wells  
**Grade Level or class:** 9  
**Timeframe:** N/A



### NCAS Standards:

**Artistic Process:** Responding

**Anchor Standard:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.

**Performance Indicators:** Hypothesize ways in which art influences perception and understanding of human experiences.

**Artistic Process:** Connecting

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

**Performance Indicators:** Describe how knowledge of culture, traditions and history may influence personal responses to art.

### Project Summary and Rationale:

An **ekphrastic poem** is a vivid description of a scene or, more commonly, a work of art. Through the imaginative act of narrating and reflecting on the “action” of a painting or sculpture, the **poet** may amplify and expand its meaning.

This lesson encourages the exploration of the connections between language arts and visual art. To write their own ekphrastic poem, students will be analyzing a piece of artwork closely, both visually and emotionally.

## Enduring Understandings

- Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments.
- People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art.

## Essential Questions

- How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures?
- How does art preserve aspects of life?
- What can we learn from our responses to art?

## Knowledge Objectives/Learning Targets-

### Students will know:

- What ekphrasis poetry is.
- How to analyse a piece of artwork to write an ekphrastic poem.

## Skills Objectives/Learning Targets

### Students will be able to:

- Express their ideas about a piece of artwork.
- Look critically at a piece of art.

**Materials:** Pencil and the lesson packet.

**Resources:** Degas, *Two Dancers* from the Shelburn Museum and <http://www.ekphrastic.net/the-ekphrastic-review/april-20th-2017>.

**Vocabulary:** ekphrastic, color, composition, meaning

### Motivation:

- Taking a trip to the museum and seeing many paintings including the one in their packet.
- Learning from the docent there about the family who built the house.
- Freedom to write what they see and think about a piece of art in the form of a poem.

## **Lesson Sequence:**

### **Introduction of the lesson:**

- Students will be brought to the Shelburne Museum to look at the paintings mainly in the Green Guest Room.
- Students will be walked through the museum to the painting, and be led in a discussion about the painting from part 2.

### **Implementation of the lesson-**

Students will write a poem

### **Closure of the Lesson**

- Students will gather and report out either at the museum or back at school with a photo of the artwork on their phone.

### **Differentiated Strategies:**

- Present instruction/resources verbally and visually.
- Modify tools and materials for use by students with disabilities.
- Adjust timelines to provide additional time for students with disabilities to complete work.
- Provide various means through which students with disabilities can communicate their ideas or questions.
- Encourage students with high ability to modify or interpret outcomes to capture greater levels of complexity or sophistication in interpretations of ideas or topics.
- Provide varying means through which students can express what they have learned.
- Encourage students to explore various subtopics of a larger topic or issue.
- Identify student readiness and learning differences and modify instruction to meet varying needs of students.
- Have students work in group with defined jobs, allowing for writing and verbal abilities to share thoughts/opinions.

### **Assessment:**

**Formative:** Students incorporated their own idea into a poem.

**Summative:** Students incorporated the suggested elements into their poem and a high level of interpretive creativity.