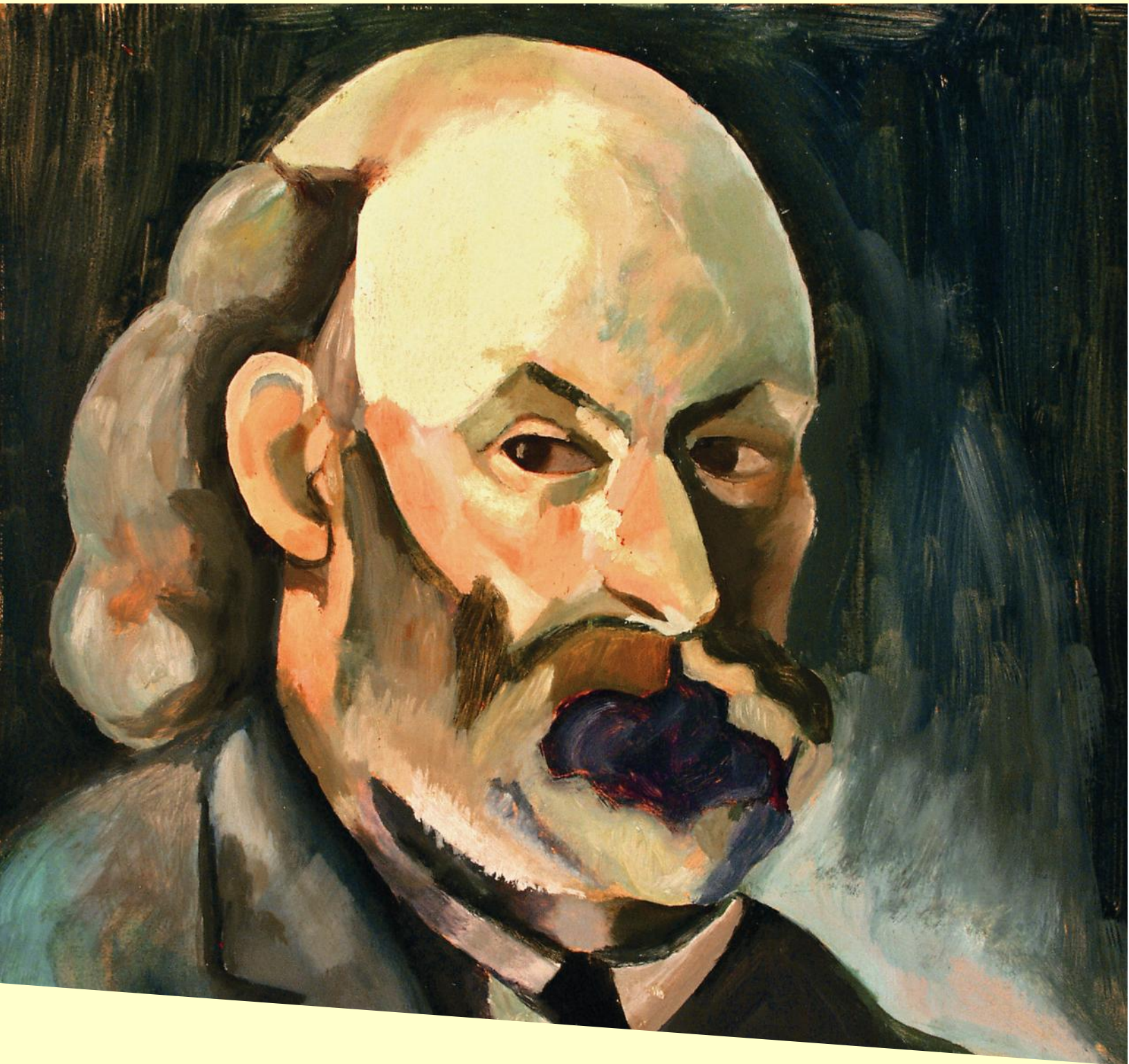


# Teacher Guide



*Picasso*  
AND AMERICAN MODERNISM  
July 1 - September 26, 2010

Phoenix Art Museum

## Why/how is this exhibition important?

*Cézanne and American Modernism* is the first exhibition to explore how American artists learned from the French painter Paul Cézanne (1839-1906). Many artists featured in the exhibition first learned of his work through reproductions, just like many students today. Some travelled to see his work firsthand in museums and galleries. Through the process of observation, artists examined his techniques up close.

Artists often began their practice copying elements of Cézanne's works. They explored his style through imitation of his brushstroke, color, composition, form and subject matter in their own works. Many artists repeated these elements over and over again in order to understand and absorb his techniques. After a while, these artists transformed his work methods into their own unique styles and techniques.

Throughout the exhibition, visual comparisons allow us to observe the progress of American artists' learning from Cézanne, moving from observation to practice to transformation.

## Who is Paul Cézanne?

Cézanne (say-ZAHN) grew up in Aix-en-Provence, a small town in the south of France. In school, he performed well in math, Greek and Latin but did not excel in drawing or painting. His father disapproved of his desire to become an artist and instead encouraged him to study law. To make his father happy, Cézanne enrolled in law school while studying art on the side.

Cézanne studied art in Paris. While in the city, he became familiar with the Impressionists' style of painting. Impressionism was an influential art movement that started in France and flourished from the late 1800s until the early 1900s. Impressionist artists focused their attention on the temporary effects of light and color. At the time, artists who trained in official academies rejected Impressionism because it did not accurately and objectively represent reality. Rebelling against the traditional Salon that refused to display their artworks, Impressionists organized their own shows.

Cézanne, a contemporary of the Impressionists, adopted elements of their style and showed his work with them in 1874 and 1877. He befriended Impressionist painter Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), who introduced him to working *en plein air* (painting outdoors), a method he used for the rest of his life.

Cézanne, however, did not completely embrace the Impressionists' style. He preferred to challenge any conventional values in painting, insisting on personal expression and the integrity of painting itself. Throughout his work, he uniquely blended form with color and explored ways to use brushstrokes and color to suggest the solidity or weight of an object. He came to focus on four main subjects: still lifes, portraits, landscapes and bathers.

## How did Paul Cézanne influence modern art?

Within the field of art history, Cézanne provides the bridge between 19th-century Impressionism and early 20th-century art. Widely known as the "father of modern art," he profoundly influenced many well known artists who claimed that his work inspired them; Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), one of his greatest admirers, stated, "Cézanne was my one and only master."

Cézanne's style of building images with patches of vivid color rather than distinct realism (traditional perspective, shading and color) was completely novel. He simplified what he saw in the world, breaking down objects and scenes into their essential, geometric shapes: spheres, cones and cubes.

*(Continued on page 3)*



# Background

(Continued from page 2)

Throughout most of Cézanne's life, Europe's artistic establishment did not recognize his work. Critics considered him an outsider for the majority of his career. Only toward the end of his life did his work gain wider recognition and acceptance. Today, art historians and critics herald his use of color and structure as a major contribution to 20th-century art.

### How did Paul Cézanne influence American artists?

At the turn of the 20th century, the U.S. was not considered a leader of the art world. American artists often looked to Europe for inspiration, traveling there to study at academies and explore contemporary styles and techniques. During these trips, many American artists encountered Cézanne's work.

Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946), an American photographer and art promoter, displayed photographs of Cézanne's work at 291, his New York City gallery, in 1910. This exhibition provided the first opportunity for many Americans to view and draw inspiration from his unique work. The gallery was also the first venue to display an original Cézanne painting in the U.S. in a 1910 group exhibition.

Cézanne did not enter into the greater American imagination until New York City's so-called "Armory Show" in 1913. The show exhibited a group of recent works from the best European avant-garde artists, including Cézanne. For the first time, many Americans experienced contemporary European art. Though the show received criticism for some of its more controversial artworks, it was deemed a huge success. Cézanne's *Woman with a Rosary* was acknowledged as a highlight; various reviews reproduced it, and it circulated widely on a souvenir postcard. The Metropolitan Museum of Art purchased one of Cézanne's paintings, thus integrating modern art into the U.S.'s preeminent traditional art museum.

### What does "influence" look like?

Cézanne's style was unlike any that the art world had ever seen. He broke away from traditional modes of painting and explored innovative ways to represent the world. He used wide brushstrokes of pure, bold colors to break down objects into their fundamental shapes. Creating highlights and shadows not only with traditional cool colors (blues, purples) but also in unconventional warm colors (reds, oranges, golds), he suggested depth in a novel fashion. He emphasized variation in depth with broad, thick contour lines. These stylistic elements fascinated artists, leading them to experiment with his techniques in their work.

Cézanne's subject matter also interested artists. Throughout his career, he focused on four main subjects: still lifes, portraits, landscapes and bathers. Multiple depictions and intensive observation became hallmarks of his style. He repeatedly explored these subjects in an effort to fully understand them. Artists who followed him delved into these same subjects in their own works.

American artists who did not travel to Europe to see Cézanne's original works were still exposed to them in other ways. The first time many saw his work was through photographic reproductions. Even though black-and-white photos lacked his bold color, artists understood his unique treatment of form. Artists also read about his work in books and articles, or learned from teachers who observed his work firsthand.

Cézanne's style inspired many artists to integrate elements of his work into their own. Manipulating similar subjects, colors and structure allowed them to learn and understand his ideas. Ultimately, artists furthered his ideas to create new art movements.



## Background

(continued)

## Lesson plan: *Imitation is the Best Form of Flattery*

**Grades:** 4-12

**Related subjects:** Geography, writing elements, visual arts

**Time requirement:** 45-55 minutes

**Author:** Morgan Schrader with Andrew Westover, Phoenix Art Museum education interns

### Featured Phoenix Art Museum artworks:

- *Untitled (Santa Fe Landscape)*. Willard Nash, c. 1925. Oil on canvas. Phoenix Art Museum collection, Museum purchase with funds provided by Betty Van Denburgh and Western Art Associates in honor of its 40th Anniversary, 2007.198.
- *Still Life by a Window*. Konrad Cramer, 1920. Oil on panel. Phoenix Art Museum collection, gift of Pinnacle West Capital Corporation, 1991.5.

### Suggested works by Paul Cézanne\*:

- *View of the Domaine Saint-Joseph*, 1888-90 (R612). The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 1913 (13.66). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.
- *Fruit and Jug on a Table*, about 1890-94. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bequest of John T. Spaulding.

### Overview:

Students compare and contrast American Modernist artworks with related works by Paul Cézanne. They identify Cézanne's influence on the artists and analyze later artists' interpretations of Cézanne's ideas and practice. This lesson is designed as an introduction to the concept of artistic influence over time.

### Learning objectives

Students are able to:

- Observe artworks closely
- Compare and contrast artworks
- Interpret artist's intent

### Materials:

Images of two featured Phoenix Art Museum artworks, and two by Cézanne (suggested works found on pages 7 and 8 of this teacher guide), either printed or enlarged onscreen.

### Lesson steps:

1. Pass out or project Nash's *Untitled (Santa Fe Landscape)* and Cézanne's *View of the Domaine Saint-Joseph*. Ask the students to quietly observe the images side-by-side for about two minutes.
2. To compare and contrast the works, ask students the following questions and record their observations on the board, perhaps in a Venn diagram.
  - What do you see?
  - What colors and shapes do you see?
3. Record students' interpretations on the board.

(Continued on page 5)

\* These two Cézanne artworks are featured in *Cézanne and American Modernism*, on view at Phoenix Art Museum July 1 - September 26, 2010. After that date, teachers may find comparable Cézanne artworks through a Google image search.

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- What kind of painting is it? A portrait, landscape, still life or one that tells a story?
  - What are the similarities between the two works?
  - What are the differences?
4. Ask the students to analyze the artworks, and record their interpretations on the board.
    - What do you think the artist is trying to express? What is he trying to tell the viewer about the **subject matter** (what the artwork shows)?
    - Is it realistic? Why or why not?
    - Why might the artist have chosen these colors and shapes?
  5. Lastly, address the style of the works and discuss the word “influence.” Record the students’ analyses on the board.
    - What does the word “influence” mean? What does “influence” mean in an artistic sense? [Explain that, in terms of art, **influence** may refer to subject matter, **style** (the artist’s choice of how to show the subject matter), **technique** (how an artwork is physically made) or any combination of these elements.]
    - Do you think one of these artists influenced the other? Which one? Why do you think so?
  6. Instruct your students to use this same process (observe, compare, connect, analyze) on their visit to the Museum. Use similar questions in the galleries to spark conversation.
  7. Repeat steps 1-4 with Cramer’s *Still Life by a Window* and Cézanne’s *Fruit and a Jug on a Table*.

#### Visit:

Experience *Cézanne and American Modernism* between July 1 and September 26, 2010. Visiting provides students the opportunity to learn about Cézanne’s works through direct observation, in a fashion similar to the American Modernists. This tangible experience also invests students with real objects, as opposed to solely virtual observation.

#### Post-visit:

Debrief after the Museum visit. Ask students to describe what they saw in *Cézanne and American Modernism*. Lead a discussion regarding what stood out to them during the visit. What did students like about the exhibition? What did they dislike? Ask students why the Museum might be a tool for learning. How have they used the Museum for learning? How might others use the Museum? Ask each student to write a paragraph about their trip to the Museum and their visit to the exhibition. The paragraph should explicitly compare and contrast the difference between their experience viewing the actual works and viewing virtual reproductions of them.

#### About Marsden Hartley:

Hartley (1877-1943) painted in the Post-Impressionist and Cubist styles. Originally from Maine, he spent significant portions of his career in both Europe and America. He persistently revisited Cézanne’s style throughout his life.

In April 1912, Hartley sailed to Europe and settled in Paris. There, he was introduced to Cézanne’s work as well as that of other modern art pioneers. This exposure inspired him to explore Cézanne’s still life imagery more deeply. After spending time in Germany and New Mexico, Hartley moved to Aix-en-Provence, Cézanne’s hometown in the south of France. He revisited many of the landscapes that Cézanne painted. Hartley eventually moved back to the U.S., settling in Maine.

(Continued on page 6)



## Lesson plan

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(Continued from page 5)

### About Willard Nash:

Originally from Philadelphia, Nash (1898-1943) attended art school in Detroit. He later traveled to Santa Fe, New Mexico, and decided to relocate there. His body of work highlights New Mexico's landscapes and the lifestyle and people of the Southwest.

Nash was a young teen at the time of the so-called "Armory Show," the influential 1913 exhibition that introduced Cézanne's work to a broad American audience. One of the youngest direct followers of the master, Nash never traveled to Europe, so his knowledge of Cézanne's work came primarily from reproductions. Nash's paintings explore Cézanne's manipulation of color and treatment of space. Local and national critics frequently referred to him as the "American Cézanne." He gained the admiration of Diego Rivera (1886-1957), an iconic Mexican contemporary also highly influenced by Cézanne. Rivera stated that he considered Nash one of the best American artists.

**This lesson plan meets the following Arizona State Standards:**

### Social Studies:

#### Strand 4: Geography

- Concept 2, Places and Regions: Places and regions have distinct physical and cultural characteristics.
- Concept 4, Human Systems: Human culture, their nature, and distribution affect societies and the Earth.

### Writing:

#### Strand 2: Writing Elements

- Concept 1, Ideas and Content: Writing is clear and focused, holding the reader's attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details. Purpose is accomplished.
- Concept 3, Voice: Voice will vary according to the type of writing, but should be appropriating formal or casual, distant or personal, depending on the audience and purpose.

#### Strand 3: Writing Applications

- Concept 2, Expository: Expository writing includes non-fiction writing that describes, explains, informs, or summarizes ideas and content. The writing supports a thesis based on research, observation, and/or experience.

### Visual Arts:

Strand 2, Relate: Students will analyze and interpret contextual ideas, meanings and purposes of art from diverse cultures and time periods.

- Concept 2, Artworlds: Describe the role that art plays in culture and how it reflects, records, and interacts with history in various times, places, and traditions.
- Concept 5, Quality: The student will investigate and /or speculate about what characteristics in artworks are valued by various cultures.

Strand 3, Evaluate: Students will draw thoughtful conclusions about the significance of art.

- Concept 2, Art Issues and Values: Justify general conclusions about the nature and value of art.
- Concept 3, Elements and Principles: The student will judge the effectiveness of the artist's use of elements of art and principles of design in communicating meanings and/or purposes, in artworks.
- Concept 4, Meanings and Purposes: The student will judge an artist's success in communicating meaning or purpose in their artwork.
- Concept 5, Quality: The student will apply criteria for judging the quality of specific artwork.





**Top:** *View of the Domaine Saint-Joseph*. Paul Cézanne, 1888-90 (R612). The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Catharine Lorillard Wolfe Collection, Wolfe Fund, 1913 (13.66). Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**Bottom:** *Untitled (Santa Fe Landscape)*. Willard Nash, c. 1925. Oil on canvas. Phoenix Art Museum collection, Museum purchase with funds provided by Betty Van Denburgh and Western Art Associates in honor of its 40th Anniversary, 2007.198.

# Lesson plan

(continued)



**Top:** *Fruit and Jug on a Table*. Paul Cézanne, about 1890-94. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, bequest of John T. Spaulding.

**Bottom:** *Still Life by a Window*. Konrad Cramer, 1920. Oil on panel. Phoenix Art Museum collection, gift of Pinnacle West Capital Corporation, 1991.5.

# Lesson plan

(continued)

## Vocabulary

**Abstract:** Use of form, color and line to create a composition; generally independent from realistic, objective depictions of world.

**Armory Show:** 1913 New York City exhibition that showcased modern European artists.

**En plein air:** French expression meaning “in the open air”; used to describe painting outdoors.

**Impressionism:** Late 19th-century art movement based in France that focused on accurately and objectively recording visual reality, particularly the transient effects of light and color.

**Landscape:** Depiction of natural scenery such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers or forests.

**Modern art:** Artistic works generally produced between 1860 and 1970, their style and philosophy.

**Pablo Picasso (1881-1973):** Modern Spanish artist whose work exemplifies Cubism.

**Portrait:** Artistic representation of a person in which the face and its expression predominate.

**Alfred Stieglitz (1864-1946):** American photographer and modern art promoter who was instrumental in encouraging photography’s acceptance as an art form.

**Still life:** Work of art depicting commonplace natural (e.g. food, flowers, plants, rocks, shells) or manmade (e.g. drinking glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, pipes) objects in an artificial setting.

**Style:** Artist’s unique way of using materials to create an artwork.

**Subject matter:** Focus of a composition.

**291 gallery:** Art gallery located at 291 Fifth Avenue in New York City from 1905 to 1917. Alfred Stieglitz created and managed 291, and it was the first to exhibit many modern artists.

## Bibliography

Visit Phoenix Art Museum’s Lemon Art Research Library for further reading, including:

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- Mankin Kornhauser, Elizabeth. *Marsden Hartley*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.
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