



## Robert West Heritage House and Group of Seven Lessons Primary Grades: Nature / Landscape Art

### Learning Goals :

- Demonstrate an understanding of the **elements and principles of design**.
  - **Elements:** line, shape and form, space, colour, texture, and value
  - **Principles:** contrast, repetition and rhythm, variety, emphasis, proportion, balance, unity and harmony, and movement
- respond knowledgeably and sensitively to their own and others' and visual art works;
- make connections between their own experiences and works in the arts,
- perceive and interpret how the elements of each art form contribute to meaning in visual art works;
- develop, share, and justify an informed personal point of view about works in the arts;
- demonstrate awareness of and appreciation for the importance of visual arts in society;

### Lesson A - Introduction

Introduction to the Robert West Heritage House, Tom Thomson and the Group of Seven

#### Materials:

- Copy of Tom Thomson's painting: Autumn Algonquin (see **Item A1**)
- Sticky notes (at least one for each student)

#### Before / Activate Prior Knowledge / Minds On:

**Teacher Talk:** The Robert West Heritage House in Thornhill was built more than 150 years ago. I imagine that life was different then. There are some paintings on display by famous Canadian painters who got together 100 years ago, explored the northern wilderness and painted landscapes. They were inspired by their friend Tom Thomson, who painted many landscapes. Many of the group worked together in Toronto where they met Thomson. Some of the artists lived nearby. Often they would travel to places like Algonquin Park to camp and paint. After Thomson died, these artists, his friends decided to form a group and continue to paint like Tom Thomson. They became known as The Group of Seven.

#### During / Action:

View together: Autumn Algonquin by Tom Thomson (**see attachment A1**)

#### Teacher Talk together with Student Input:

When I look at a painting, I think about:

- What does the painting remind me of?  
*(maybe a camping trip or a day in the fall going with family to view the colours of the trees out of the city...)*
- How does it make me feel?  
*(Note the bright, bold colours of the leaves and the dark lonely shadows. You can almost see the brush strokes but you can't see the detail of each individual leaf. It is as if the artist is showing us that the bright beautiful colours of fall will soon disappear and the drab grey of winter will arrive soon. Does the artist want us to feel the breeze? Oes he want us to focus on the whole idea or scene rather than individual details?)*
- What connections can I make to my own life or to other art?  
*(It reminds me of walking in the woods in October or November. The sky, although blue, has a grey tone to it and it reminds me of those days in the fall when it may be sunny but you need a jacket and a hat. There is a chill in the air and the days are getting shorter with longer shadows. You can almost feel the chill of the wind on your face. It's when you walk faster to stay warm. As the leaves crunch beneath your feet and you may just pick up those leaves and throw them up in the air.)*

**After / Consolidation:**

**Exit Slip:** Give each student a sticky note on which to formulate their response.

- What are some questions or things that puzzle me? ...about the painting ...about the artist .... about the location?

**In order to think of a question, start your thinking with:**

**"I wonder..."**

**Try to think of at least one question that needs an explanation, that cannot be answered with a yes or no.**

- Once students hand in their question, they may proceed to independent reading time or recess, snack time, etc.