

Masterpiece Society 🎨 **Leonardo da Vinci**



Art Appreciation & Enrichment

Masterpiece Society Art Appreciation:

Leonardo da Vinci

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FIGURE 1 - MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, PARIS, FRANCE

“We cannot measure the influence that one or another artist has upon the child’s sense of beauty, upon his power of seeing, as in a picture, the common sights of life; he is enriched more than we know in having really looked at a single picture.”

– Charlotte Mason

“Being an ‘agent of civilization’ is one of the many roles ascribed to teachers. If we are to have any expectations of producing a well-educated, well-prepared generation of deep-thinking, resourceful leaders, then it is essential to give students an opportunity to review, respond to, and ultimately revere the power of the human imagination—past and present. There may be no better way to promote this than to study, understand, and exult in masterpieces.”

– Joseph Matthew Piro

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About *Masterpiece Society* Art Appreciation

Masterpiece Society Art Appreciation is an “open-up & go” art enrichment curriculum created with the busy mom in mind. Although the lessons coordinate with my online art courses, you do **not** need to purchase the art course to get a well-rounded knowledge of:

- the master artist
- several of the artist’s famous works
- his or her artistic techniques
- the art movement in which he or she created

However, if you’d like to delve even further, the art lessons will be the “icing on the *artsy* cake” and will help your kids and teens form an invaluable relationship with the artist, as well as giving them a deeper understanding of the methods they used.¹

This eBook will be all you need for this study because I include:

- internet links to virtual museums, galleries and artwork
- internet links to other helpful websites†
- printable templates (which can also be used as coloring sheets for younger students)
- additional enrichment materials
- recommended books for further study†
- recommended videos/movies for further study†

†**Please Note:** *Although we love many of the works of the master artists, we may or may not agree with how they lived their lives. Some of the recommended videos, books, or webpages touch on certain facets of their lives that may be unsuitable for children. Please use your own discretion as a parent.*

My desire for this art appreciation curriculum is threefold:

- to ignite a love, even passion, for the old masters and their works
- to encourage kids and teens to actively engage in the art process and have FUN doing so
- to inspire them to utilize and further develop their own God-given creativity

¹ If you are interested in purchasing the art lessons to coordinate with this art appreciation curriculum, click [here](#). The lessons allow your student(s) to go much deeper than your typical artist study. Students will create three unique works of art per artist that will help them explore their creative talents.

How to Use This Curriculum

These lessons are written for elementary through middle school students, although they can be adapted for younger children and even teens. (See below.)

Use these lessons as:

- a stand-alone art appreciation curriculum – *great for morning time / morning basket or afternoon teatime!*
- a supplement to your family's Charlotte Mason art and artist study
- a "no mess" art course – simply use the templates as coloring pages for preschoolers and kindergarteners to "create" alongside older siblings (older students can use templates to transfer patterns for painting projects, or they may prefer to color in with pastels or colored pencils)
- part of a unit study
- part of your history studies
- as an accompaniment to [*Mixing with the Masters*](#) art course

General Art Appreciation Tips & Suggestions:

When studying an artist, it is important to look at several of their works in order to define his or her particular "style." Each volume of the ***Masterpiece Society Art Appreciation*** studies three different works of the artist with internet links to even more of his or her pieces.

Feel free to print out a copy of each work of art (included) and place it inside a page protector in a three-ring binder. This will become your "Art Appreciation" notebook. Various notebooking pages are also provided throughout each volume.

Let your student observe each work of art without you saying much (if anything). This allows the art to speak on its own. Simply encourage them to look closely and observe each piece. Does the work have a story to tell? You can encourage them to describe what they see, what they like or dislike. For a more in-depth study, please see below.

Move as slowly or as quickly as you feel is necessary for your student to form a connection with each artist and his or her work. This curriculum is yours to adapt and adjust as you see fit. Adjust it to your education style. Modify it to your student's specific needs or tastes. Make it fun!

The most important thing isn't to learn dull, dry facts about art and artists, but rather to instill and cultivate a love of beauty while helping to develop your student's ability to "see."

If you want to study one artist over the course of a few weeks, there is plenty more information under the "Recommended for Further Study" links at the end of the lessons.

As you study more and more artists and their bodies of work, it is important to allow your student(s) to compare and contrast their styles and pieces. What are their similarities? What are their differences?

This will ensure a "review" of each artist and their works, and will help your student form relationships with each one while providing a more comprehensive knowledge and appreciation of art.

Additionally, find ways to expose them to the great art masterpieces on a regular basis whether it's via coffee table books, wall calendars, posters or prints. If possible, visit local art museums, and at the very least, visit the official websites of famous art museums (several museum links are included at the end of lessons).

Our goal is simply to ignite a love for beautiful art in each student, and that will happen over the process of time.

Adapting for Different Ages:

The ***Masterpiece Society Art Appreciation*** curriculum is geared towards upper elementary and middle school students. But is easily adapted for all students. Below are a few suggestions:

Preschool/Early Elementary

- When studying the artist's works, simply let them observe the painting (you can tell them the name of the piece and the artist who painted it if you wish) and have them tell you what they see, what they like or dislike.
- Encourage them to create their own version of the piece (drawing, coloring, finger-painting, watercolor, etc.).
- Print out an art template (included) and let them color it while their older siblings are learning.

Upper Elementary/Middle School

- Have them read an age-appropriate biography of the artist's life.
- Encourage them to study each piece included in this volume, learning its name, the period in which it was painted, the mediums and techniques with which it was painted, etc.
- Print out copies of each piece, any notebooking pages (and fill in), any other relevant information to their study and place it in their "Art Appreciation" binder.
- Have them answer a few of the "Observation & Evaluation Questions" (pp. 10-11) about each piece.
- Print out the art template (included) and color in with pastels or colored pencils or use template to transfer a pattern to a canvas to paint.
- For students who would like more in-depth art lessons, purchase the corresponding [*Mixing with the Masters*](#) art course.

Older Teens/High School

- Assign an age-appropriate biography for them to read about the artist.
- Have them research each work of art to find out more interesting facts about it.
- Encourage them to compare and contrast the artist's various other works, as well as comparing and contrasting them with the works of other artists.
- Let them create their own "Art Appreciation" notebook, decorating and "curating" it as they desire.

- Have them answer several of the “Observation & Evaluation Questions” (pp. 10-11) about each piece.
- Print out the art template (included) and color in with pastels or colored pencils or use template to transfer a pattern to a canvas to paint.
- For students who would like more in-depth art lessons, purchase the corresponding [Mixing with the Masters](#) art course.


A Note about Viewing Art Pieces Online

I have endeavored to link artwork from the museums in which they are housed or Wikimedia Commons, which only uses public domain works when possible.

Whenever you click on a hyperlink within this curriculum and are taken to the artwork, remember to hover the cursor over the painting. If the cursor shows a plus symbol (+) on it, click again and the painting will be magnified so that you can view it in greater detail.

A Note about Pronunciations

After testing several different websites and videos for native pronunciation of proper nouns, I decided to go with “Google Translate.” This site is streamlined and easy to use, and doesn’t have unwanted pop-ups. Additionally, the pronunciations are made by native speakers from the countries of origin.

Whenever you see ([pronunciation](#)) after a name or place throughout this curriculum, simply click on the hyperlink and it will open up to Google Translate. Then click the “Listen” icon  in the lower left hand corner of the left box to hear the correct pronunciation.

****Preview sample is limited. Portions of this is copyrighted material have been intentionally left out.****



Masterpiece #1: Mona Lisa

Introduction

The *Mona Lisa* is hands-down the most widely recognized work of art in the world and subsequently, the most parodied (or imitated) work of art. Over 5 centuries old, “she” is shrouded in mystery and intrigue. Da Vinci carried the portrait with him everywhere he went, believing he had never finished it. Upon his death, the *Mona Lisa* was inherited by his assistant, Salai ([pronunciation](#)) and was later sold it to the King of France, Francois (or Francis) I.

Napoleon Bonaparte even hung the painting in his bedroom in the Tuileries Palace after the French Revolution.

If you were to visit the Louvre Museum in Paris, you would only be allowed approximately 17 seconds to look at the famous painting as you are herded through with the crowds of people who want to see her. But fortunately, you can view an extreme close-up of the *Mona Lisa*, by clicking this link: [Musee du Louvre](#). Give it a moment to load, then you'll be able to enlarge it even more to see the intricate detailing that Da Vinci painted.

Look closely at the painting (NOTE: The Louvre link is preferable to the image on the previous page). Observe all the intricacies of her face, her dress, the background.

Do you see the amazing details that Da Vinci used in capturing this mysterious beauty?

Background

Da Vinci began painting the *Mona Lisa* in 1503, and she is believed to be a portrait of Lisa Gherardini, the wife of Francesco del Giocondo, a wealthy Florentine silk merchant.

“Mona” is short for *Mia Donna* or *Madonna*, which translates to “My Lady” in English. We might say, “Madam” or “Ma’am” today.

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Mediums and Techniques

Leonardo da Vinci was a ground-breaking portrait painter. Previous portraits had been painted in profile (from the side) or straight on. However, he used a new style called “three-quarter portraits” in which the sitter’s body faces one direction and turns his or her head in another. The *Mona Lisa* is painted in this manner, as well as other portraits he painted: *Ginevra de’ Benci* ([click here to view](#)) and *Lady with an Ermine* ([click here to view](#)).

How do these paintings compare to the *Mona Lisa*? How do they differ?

The *Mona Lisa* was painted with oils on a poplar wood panel. Da Vinci used an innovative painting technique called, *sfumato* ([pronunciation](#)), which comes from the Italian word *fumo*, meaning “smoke” or “fume.” In painting, *sfumato* softens,

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Mona Lisa’s X-rays

X-rays of the *Mona Lisa* have revealed three earlier versions beneath the top layer. In one, she’s even said to be wearing a bonnet!

Want to see her in X-ray, ultraviolet and infrared? [Click here](#).

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Mona Lisa

Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple horizontal lines for writing. A large, diagonal 'SAMPLE' watermark is overlaid across the center of the page.

Mona Lisa Enrichment Activity

If you would like to enrich your study of the *Mona Lisa* with a “no fuss” art activity, simply print out the template on the following page.

Older students can use it as transfer pattern for painting projects, or they may prefer to color in with pastels, charcoals, or colored pencils.

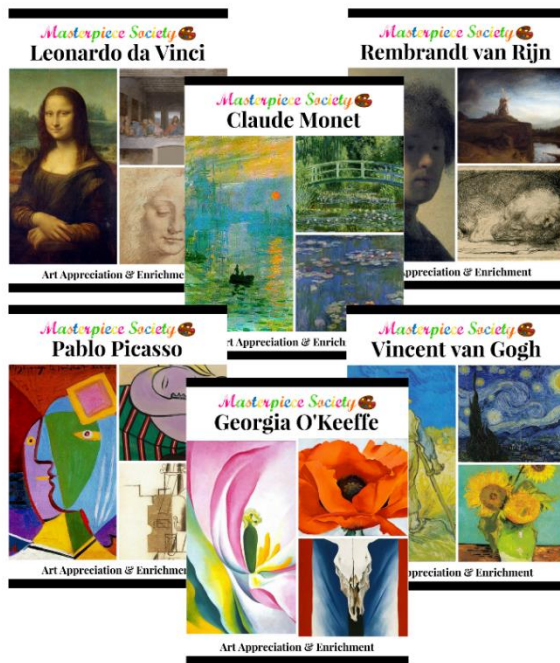
Younger students can use it as a coloring page to “create” alongside older siblings.

For in-depth art lessons on each of the masterpieces we study in this volume, check out my [Mixing with the Masters](#) art course.



****This is the end of the sample pages. Actual eBook is 52 pages and jampacked with information on the artist and works of art.****

To purchase this or other volumes, click [here](#).



Set One Artists:

- Leonardo da Vinci
- Rembrandt van Rijn
- Claude Monet
- Vincent van Gogh
- Pablo Picasso
- Georgia O'Keeffe

Set Two Artists:

- Albrecht Dürer
- Jan Vermeer
- Edgar Degas
- Mary Cassatt
- Paul Cézanne
- Henri Matisse

