

# Even More Awesome Stories

## Grade Cluster – 6-8

### NETS-S - 3 - Research and Information Fluency

#### Quick Look:

Students use primary sources to examine the life and work of a famous artist and create interactive reports that connect the information they have gathered with the primary and secondary resources from which it was taken.

#### Scenario:

Mrs. McCormack's seventh grade art students begin every class with a short, "Meet the Artists" activity. Students are given a brief overview of an artist's life, a look at some of their most notable work and an explanation of the influence the artist has had on their field. After they have been introduced to twenty artists in this way, students choose the artist they find the most interesting to investigate more deeply.

Students are shown examples, from a Web site called [Awesome Stories](#), of stories about famous people and events that include links to the primary sources the story was drawn from. They see how a report can be made richer by providing the reader with direct connections to images, maps, audio, video and primary documents that directly relate to the story being told. Mrs. McCormack leads a discussion about the ways in which the students will incorporate the "Awesome Stories" presentation style into their own research reports.

Mrs. McCormack introduces students to effective search strategies with *YouTube videos* such as [Web Search Strategies in Plain English](#) and [Google's Web Search lessons and slideshows](#). She shows them how to use [NoodleQuest](#) to develop a customized search strategy for their specific topic and together they try a variety of searches with [Boolify](#), which allows them to easily modify [Boolean operators](#) and see how it impacts on their search results. (3a, 6a, 6d) She also uses a variety of legitimate and [fake Web sites](#) to reinforce the message that students need to look critically at every site they plan to use and make sure the information is from a credible source. Together they build a list of criteria to use to determine the quality of any Web site. (3b, 3c, 6a, 6d)

Only one student within each class conducts research on a specific artist but, after they have had several opportunities to research their artist, students from her four classes meet and compare results with others who have been researching the same artist. (3a, 6a, 6b, 6c, 6d) They compare the information they have gathered and discuss the results they received using various search strategies and discuss how they determined the quality of the sites they have decided to use. (3b, 3c) They use [Delicious](#) to swap primary and secondary resources.

They create their artist reports in a Word document with active links to the primary and secondary sources from which they pull their information. Students use the online tool, [Son of Citation Machine](#), to create the necessary citations to add to their projects. (3b, 3d) The documents are uploaded to [EtherPad](#) and the students researching the same artist read each others' reports and give suggestions for improvements, both within the document and in the Etherpad chat window. (6c, 6d) They also meet in groups to discuss the discrepancies they have found in their research and use their links to primary sources to determine which facts to include and which to discard. (6b, 6c) After their teacher has reviewed the final drafts, and after both she and the students have used a rubric to score the report, they are converted into PDF files and posted online as links from the Mrs. McCormack's art page. (6a, 6b, 6c, 6d)

The students who researched the same artist go to the [Wikipedia](#) entry about their artist and read it carefully for errors and omissions. They edit the entry, if appropriate, and include links to the resources they used to locate their information. (3b, 6a, 6d) Student also attach a [Creative Commons](#) license to their reports and, with their teacher's assistance, send out invitations to art museums throughout the U.S., encouraging them to incorporate the reports into the museums' online educational programs for children. (3b) They start with UVM's Fleming Museum and extend the invitations out to more and more museums until they receive a positive response. The students promote the idea of "Students Teaching Students about Art" with "testimonials" from other children who have read the reports, used the online connections, and have positive things to say about their increased understanding of our greatest artists.

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**Student Standards** – The following NETS-S are noted in the scenario:

3. Research and Information Fluency - A, B, C, D
6. Technology Operations and Concepts – A, B, C, D

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**Teacher Standards** – Teachers who teach this unit address the following NETS-T:

1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity – A, C, D
2. Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments – A, B
3. Model Digital-Age Work and Learning – A, B, C, D
5. Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership – A, D

## **Content Grade Expectations**

The scenario writer has identified the following content grade expectations that s/he felt might be assessed in this scenario. In most of these scenarios, there may well be opportunities to assess other or additional content grade expectations across a variety of disciplines. If you are interested in developing a unit or lessons based on the following scenario, and you don't see any grade expectations in your content area, we encourage you to capture the ideas presented in the scenario and make it your own by adding components that address the grade expectations you are most interested in assessing.

**A7-8:12 - Students show understanding of visual arts CONCEPTS and VOCABULARY by...**

- Identifying and describing different motivations and purposes of artists and their art work, demonstrating an understanding of their context in time and place.

**A7-8:18 - Students show understanding of how the arts shape and reflect various cultures and times by...**

- Identifying significant artists and their works from various times and places.

**W7:8 In reports, students organize information/concepts by...**

- Obtaining information from multiple locations or sources when appropriate
- Listing and citing sources, using accepted form, if appropriate

**W7:10 In reports, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by...**

- Including facts and details relevant to focus/controlling idea, and excluding extraneous information
- Including sufficient details or facts for appropriate depth of information: naming, describing, explaining, comparing, use of visual images