



Title: *History of the New World (Panel 5, Modern Life)* **Date:** 1938 **Artist:** Ralph Henricksen

Cecil Partee Academic Preparatory School

Title: *History of the New World—Modern Life*

Artist: Ralph Henricksen

Medium: Oil on canvas glued to the wall

School: Cecil Partee Academic Prep

Grade Levels: K-3

Correlations

- 5.A.4 Use language to inquire and research, organize and analyze and communicate information.
- 15.B.3 Identify the location and distribution of major economic activities in Illinois (that is, service industries, rail, air, and trucking facilities, agricultural activities and manufacturing).
- 25.A.1,2 Identify the elements in works of art (color, lines, space, size).
- 25.B.1 Identify concepts used in and/or shared by two or more art forms (line, color, sound, space locomotor and non-locomotor movement).

Materials

- Transparency of *History of the New World—Modern Life*
- Paper cutter
- Construction paper (9”, several colors)
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Journals or spiral notebooks
- Glue
- Scissors
- Miscellaneous supplies (buttons, stickers, glitter)
- Recorded sounds of cars, trains, planes, boats, etc.
- Tape recorder
- Dictionary and thesaurus

Vocabulary

- | | | |
|------------------|------------|----------------|
| Circles | Line | Shape |
| Composition | Movement | Squares |
| Curve | Overlap | Transportation |
| Diagonal | Patterns | Triangles |
| Geometric shapes | Rectangles | Vertical |
| Horizontal | Repetition | Zig-zag |



Educational Strategies

Background Information

This panel is one of seven panels by muralist Ralph Henricksen. It depicts the different mechanical modes of transportation that have impacted modern society. The artist uses basic overlapping shapes to develop the composition. He also incorporates real objects from the environment into his composition, such as the handrail along the stairs.

Talk with the students about the subject of *Modern Life* and the different forms of transportations in the 1930s. Review the term *composition* or the way a work of art is put together to tell a story or express an idea. Discuss artistic terms such as color, size, shapes, lines, and space that make up a composition.

Ask them to discover and identify the patterns in the mural. Tell students that *patterns* are created by the repetition of colors, shapes, and lines. *Repetition* in art stresses or implies rhythm and movement. Repetition also unifies disparate elements in works of art. *Movement* is a principle of design. The arrangement of design elements can control and force the eyes to follow a path through the composition.

Invite students to discuss travel. Ask them whether they have ever ridden on a bus, in a car, in a plane, or a train. Invite several students to tell about an exciting ride. Assist students as they write a sentence about their favorite or most unusual ride on the left page of their sketchpad and illustrate it on the opposite page. Ask volunteers to demonstrate their exciting ride and show how the motor vehicles moved and sounded. Coach students to discover vocabulary to accurately describe their experiences. Use a dictionary and thesaurus.

Prepare for this lesson by having students cut several freehand shapes of various sizes from several colors of construction paper. Invite students to use their imagination and choose shapes that remind them of cars, trains, or airplanes of the future. Tell students that they will create collages of new and exciting motor vehicles from the various shapes. Encourage them to embellish their vehicles. Allow students the opportunity to be creative. Remind them that these are transportation vehicles of the future. Encourage students to overlap shapes, as in the mural. Have them put smaller shapes on top of larger shapes and repeat shapes and colors to create movement. Tell students to glue the pieces in place.

Have students discuss their collage and have them write sentences that describe the vehicles visually and functionally.

Accommodations

Enrichment

Investigate the development of automobiles, trains, boats, airplanes, and helicopters and their impact in our society. Talk about the development of roads and cities as a result of increased transportation. Discuss the positive and negative aspect of increased transportation.

Set up a transportation corner with toys, e.g., cars, boats, tractors, and airplanes.

Have the students talk about the purpose of each vehicle. What type of material does each vehicle transport? Where can they travel? What kinds of sounds do the different vehicles make? Play prerecorded transportation sounds.

English as a Second Language

Have students translate words for the various modes of transportation into their native language.



mural : History of the New World—Modern Life

Title: *History of the New World—Modern Life*

Artist: Ralph Henricksen

Medium: Oil on canvas glued to the wall

School: Cecil Partee Academic Prep

Grade Levels: 4–8

Correlations

- 13.A.2** Explain how changes in transportation, communication, and other technologies affect the location of economic activities (e.g., shift from trains and boats to trucks has moved population centers).
- 17.B.4** Explain why the movement of people and goods within, between, and among nations (e.g., rural to urban migration leads to urbanization) can become an instrument of change.
- 9. B.2** Describe and apply the relationship among the measures of the angles formed when parallel lines are cut by a transversal and apply them to fill in the missing measure of angles.
- 9.C.7** Define, describe, and draw quadrilaterals and triangles from given properties (e.g., a quadrilateral having equal sides but no right angles; a right triangle).
- 25.A.2b** Identify and describe the elements of two- and three-dimensional space, figure-ground, value, and form; the principles of rhythm, size, proportion and composition; and express qualities of symbol and story.
- 27.B.3** Know and describe how artists and their works shape culture and increase understanding of societies, past and present.

Materials

- Transparency of *History of the New World—Modern Life*
- Overhead projector
- Pencil (black lead)
- Oil pastels
- Ruler
- Paper towels
- Art tag paper (18" x 24")
- Gum eraser
- Newspaper
- Geometry set (ruler, protractor, right angle, triangle)

Vocabulary

Cubism
Intersect
Medium

Movement
Overlappings
Oil pastel

Parallel
Rhythm
Trapezoid

Educational Strategies

Ralph Henricksen (1907–1973), a Chicagoan, lived in the West Pullman neighborhood as a youth. He attended and graduated from the School of the Art Institute during the Great Depres-



sion. He worked for the Illinois Art Project (IAP), a division of the WPA. Henricksen was active as a painter and a muralist. His work was exhibited at the Art Institute and several galleries. His murals are displayed in several public schools and municipal buildings in Chicago.

Display mural on overhead projector. Tell the students that the title of this painting is *Modern Life*. Ask students: What message or mood is the artist communicating in this mural? Encourage students to volunteer to tell what is depicted in this mural. Give all students the opportunity to respond and participate.

Have students identify the different modes of transportation depicted in this picture. Point out how the different modes of transportation are arranged according to their speed potential. The painting is rendered on an odd-shaped canvas that contains a series of diagonal lines. Have students find and identify the many types of lines and angles used in this composition. Ask students what shapes are clearly defined.

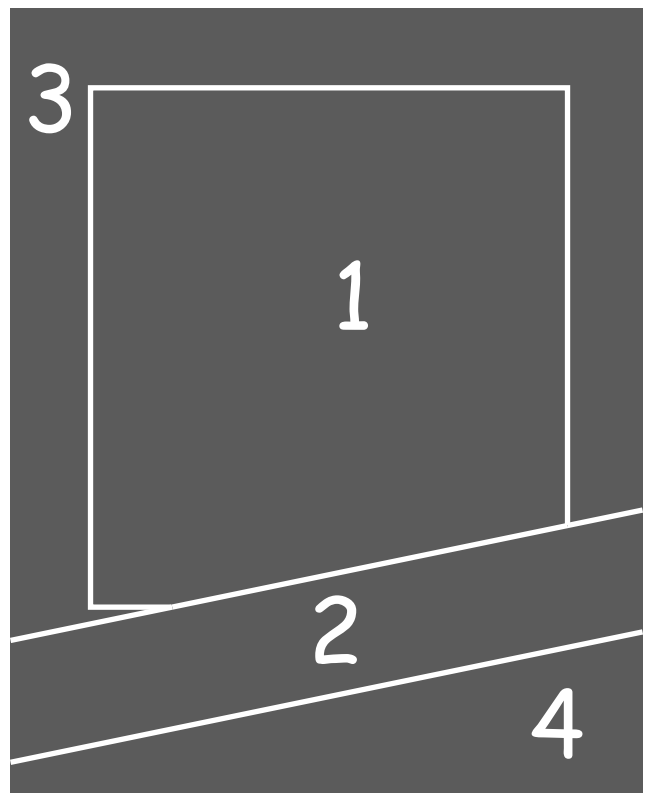
Draw the diagram (right) on the chalkboard.

Refer to the students' math textbook for vocabulary. Help students find and identify shapes, lines, and angles within the composition.

Ask students to tell what they think inspired Henricksen's painting about transportation. Explain that Chicago was nicknamed the "Hub of the Midwest." The city is a center of world trade and transportation. It was once called the "Hog Capital of the World," because it was famous for its stockyards and steel mills during the early 20th century. Chicago is home to one of the world's largest and busiest airports, and at one time it was the railroad center of the world. It was said that all trains stopped in Chicago before going anywhere else. In order to move all of the people about, many forms of transportation are needed.

Tell students that Chicago is always changing. Ask students to think of what Chicago will be like in the future. Ask them to imagine how Chicago will look in fifty years or one hundred years. Have students draw a picture of their version of Chicago in the future. Have them include in their drawings a new mode of transportation. Tell them to incorporate a futuristic cityscape or landscape as part of the background in the drawing.

Demonstrate how to use *overlapping shapes*, shapes that cover parts of other shapes, in their drawings. Show students how to use different kinds of lines to create *movement*, the path the viewer's eye follows throughout a work of art. Tell the students that artists use rhythm to make a painting come alive. *Rhythm* is the repetition of design elements within works of art.



Point to this diagram; explain to students that they are going to draw a picture which has a geometric design format similar to Ralph Henricksen's *Modern Life*. Direct the students to draw the design on the art tag in the center of the paper. Next draw diagonal parallel lines through the rectangle. Erase the lines that intersect the parallel lines. Have students fill in the geometric shapes and the entire paper with their version of a Chicago in the future.

Assign students to distribute materials and supplies.

Tell students to use their imagination as they work on their compositions but to stick to a geometric design format.

Have students add color to their compositions with oil pastels. Inform them that oil pastels are specially formulated combinations of oil, wax, and chalk used for very smooth drawing and a wide range of effects from bold, intense strokes to subtle shading. Demonstrate how to blend colors to create different shading and gradation of colors. Explain that a strong sense of movement is achieved through the use of bold colors and diagonal lines. Encourage students to show and demonstrate art processes or techniques that were used in developing their works of art. Display completed works on the classroom bulletin board.

Accommodations

Enrichment

Ask students to collect found objects such as tin cans, small boxes, clear acetate, spools, buttons, feathers, etc. Have students use these materials to create a three-dimensional form of futuristic transportation and display it near their artwork to give the appearance that the form is coming out of the picture.

English as a Second Language

Use peer tutoring, visual imagery, and allow more time to complete the task.

Students with Disabilities

Modify activity, break down instructional unit into smaller steps, allow individuals to work in small groups, and allow extra time to complete the task.

Evaluation/Assessment

- To what extent did the student show ability to use the elements and principles of arts?
- To what extent did the student master the use of the creative medium?
- How well did the student develop the theme and use appropriate symbols and images?
- How well did the student accept constructive criticism, work in a group, clean up his/her area, and complete the project within a reasonable length of time?



mural : History of the New World—Modern Life

Title: *History of the New World—Modern Life*

Artist: Ralph Henricksen

Medium: Oil on canvas glued to the wall

School: Cecil Partee Academic Prep

Grade Levels: 9-12

Correlations

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|---------|--|
| 1.A.2 | Distinguish between main ideas and supporting details. |
| 5.A.1 | Use coherent research methodology to elicit and present evidence to support claims and contentions. |
| 7.A | Use standard (metric and customary) and nonstandard units of measure in algebraic and geometric applications. |
| 7.A.1 | Know, use, and derive formulas for perimeter, circumference, and area of common geometric figures (e.g., triangles, circles, squares, rectangles, polygons, etc.). |
| 7.A.6 | Select and use appropriate instruments (e.g., rulers) to solve problems. |
| 9.A.3 | Make and use sketches, schematic diagrams, and precise scale drawings to find and describe a solution to a problem. |
| 16.C | Identify and describe current and historical examples of the interaction and interdependence of society in various cultural settings. |
| 25.A.4 | Analyze and evaluate the effective use of elements, principles and expressive qualities in a composition in visual arts. |
| 25.A.5 | Analyze and evaluate student and professional works for how aesthetic qualities are used to convey intent, expressive ideas and/or meaning. |
| 26.A.4e | Analyze and evaluate how tools/technologies and processes combine to convey meaning. |
| 26.B.4d | Demonstrate knowledge and skills that communicate clear and focused ideas based on planning, research and problem solving. |
| 26.B.5 | Create a complex work of art using a variety of techniques, technologies and resources and independent decision-making. |
| 27.A.4b | Analyze how the arts are used to inform and persuade through traditional and contemporary art forms. |
| 27.B.4b | Understand how the arts change in response to changes in society. |
| 27.B.5 | Analyze how the arts shape and reflect ideas, issues or themes in a particular culture or historical period. |

Materials

- Transparency of the Henricksen mural *Modern Life*
- Transparencies or reproductions of the artworks of Futurists
- Transparencies or reproductions of the artworks of Pablo Picasso
- Copy of *Popular Mechanics*, FEB 2000 article “Miracles of the Next 50 Years”



- Blank 8½” x 11” white paper (four or five sheets per student)
- Drawing paper (18” x 24” or larger)
- Pencils (lead, color, drawing)
- Oil pastels or wax crayons

Vocabulary

George Braque	Form	Pablo Picasso
Cubism	Fragmented	Parallel lines
Diagonal lines	Intersecting lines	Shape
Elements of art	Line	Space
Geometric shapes (e.g., circle, triangle, square, rectangle, polygon, trapezoid, etc.)		

Educational Strategies

Background Information

The goal of this lesson is to draw a futuristic rendition of transportation using basic geometric shapes to plot out the vehicle images. This lesson draws on the students’ understanding of the art elements of line, shape, form, space, color and value and also their knowledge of social studies and mathematics (geometry).

In the mural *History of the New World – Modern Life* at Cecil Partee Academic Preparatory School, the artist, Ralph Henricksen, painted an illustration of the importance of transportation in Chicago during the 1930s.

There are images of four types of transportation depicted in the mural. An airplane is flying across the top of the picture frame. Below the airplane, a diesel train is shown speeding across the canal. Beneath the train is a ship and below the ship is an image of an automobile. All four types of vehicles are painted traveling from right to left. On the left side of the picture is a stylized representation of the city of Chicago. Chicago is portrayed as a circular hub with lines radiating out from three sides, top, left and bottom. (The fourth side, the right side of the hub, is composed of wavy lines which represent Lake Michigan, which lies to the east of Chicago.) The word “Chicago” appears at the bottom of this hub. The airplane stands for air transportation, the train and automobile are both land-based transportation, and the ship represents travel over water. There are also train tracks, bridge-works, tall city buildings, and a set of traffic lights included in the mural. Henricksen makes use of geometric shapes, dramatic line, and direction to define the different types of transportation pictured in his mural. The form of a trapezoid holds the entire image together, along with diagonal lines that originate high on the right side of the mural and lead the viewer’s eye to the lower left.

The students will work together in small groups to design large drawings that mimic Henricksen’s mural. These large drawings will incorporate the elements of line, shape, and form to illustrate their ideas of the future modes of transportation. The students will put all these concepts together as part of their team’s large drawing. The students will be graded both individually based upon their participation and collectively as members of their team.

Have students reacquaint themselves with the concept of lines and geometric shapes. Lines can be straight, horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curved, zigzag, parallel, or intersecting. These main geometric shapes are the circle, the triangle, the square, the rectangle, the trapezoid, and polygons. Polygons are many-sided geometric shapes having more than four sides and angles. Some examples of polygons would be the pentagon (5 sides), the hexagon (6 sides), the octagon (8 sides), and the decagon (10 sides).



Have students view the transparency of the Henricksen mural in the classroom. Review how artists use geometric shapes and dramatic lines to hold a composition together. Have the students draw sketches of the Henricksen mural on sheets of blank 8 ½" x 11" white paper. Then instruct the students to look for any and all geometric shapes and also lines of direction used in the artwork. The students should indicate these geometric shapes and lines using heavy pencil lines or different colors drawn on top of their sketches. Encourage the students to compare their sketches with those of other students in the class. Remind them that different students see different things and that they should help each other out and learn from each other, too.

Again, encourage the students to compare their sketches with those of other students in the class. They should help each other with constructive criticism. This sense of cooperation is meant to bring every student in on the lesson and is important for the group work and team effort that follows.

Have the students join together in small teams of 3 or 4 students. Remind them that the goal of this lesson is to create an illustration about the future of transportation and for each team to create a large drawing incorporating many modes of transportation.

The first thing each student team must do is decide upon a "name" for their team. The initials of their name should spell out something or stand alone like "CTA," which stands for "Chicago Transit Authority" and METRA or "Metropolitan Rail," the commuter transportation provider for the greater Chicagoland area. There is also AMTRAK, the rail system for the United States, and NASA, which signifies the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. All these transportation agencies can be found on the Internet. If possible, have students look up these sites and other transportation sources like airlines and automobile manufacturers. This research may be accomplished on-line with the Internet, at home as homework, and at the school or local library.

After each team decides upon their name, the student's team will elect a team spokesperson. This spokesperson will meet occasionally with the teacher and the other team representatives to report their progress and to get additional information and guidance for their teams.

The teams will brainstorm about the future of transportation in Chicago.

This session should include all aspects of transportation (e.g., surface transportation—including automobiles, rapid transit, railroads and highways; water travel—both on the surface with ships and undersea or submarines; airborne flight—airplanes, helicopters, and dirigibles; and venturing into outer space—with rocket ships, the space shuttle, orbiting satellites, manned space stations and interplanetary travel).

Following the brainstorm session, there will be a class during which the team spokespersons report to the rest of the class about ideas that their teams have come up with for each team's mural. Encourage the students that all their ideas are viable, and that students should support, not discourage, each other. Students can question and discuss the other teams' ideas to some extent, but, ultimately, the individual teams will decide which modes of transportation to feature in their mural.

The importance of the city of Chicago should also be included in each team's drawings. Look back at how Henricksen included the word "Chicago" in his painting and showed the city as a hub of transportation on the western shores of Lake Michigan with streets and railroads radiating outward toward the west, north, and south.



Accommodations

English as a Second Language

Encourage the students to help each other out as members of a team. Note individual students with language or learning disabilities and make an effort to team these students up with one or more students who will assist them in understanding the assignments. The students may complete all work for this lesson in their native language to enable ideas to be rapidly recorded. The students will share their completed writings with the rest of the class.

Students with Disabilities

An individualized program will be prepared for students with disabilities that accommodates the students' abilities and may be adapted from the educational strategies incorporated in this lesson.

Evaluation/Assessment

The students will be able to work as parts of teams where they will brainstorm, carry out leadership roles and create large group drawings using geometric shapes and dynamic line directions as the foundations for their artworks. The students' large paintings should show, both visually and geometrically, a futuristic view of transportation. The students should work together and the large paintings should represent a well-thought-out consensus effort by all the members of each team. The students will be evaluated on their group participation, team leadership roles, and the completed final large drawings.

Home Connection/Homework

Students will spend time researching the artworks of Pablo Picasso and the Futurists and how these artists hold their compositions together using geometric shapes and dramatic line. They will use this time to work on preliminary sketches for their final group paintings.

Resources

The students can use their social studies textbook, the school library, and the Internet for research.

Pablo Picasso: 1881-1973, Carsten-Peter Warncke Pablo Picasso Ingo F. Walther, LLC Taschen America, 1998.

The Ultimate Picasso, Brigitte Leal Marie-Laure Bernadac Christine Piot Molly Stevens (Translator) Marjolijn De Jager (Translator), Harry N Abrams, Inc., 2000.

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Miracles of the Next 50 Years. Wilson, Jim. "Popular Mechanics" magazine article, Feb. 2000.

Also on Popular Mechanics Web site:

[http://popularmechanics.com/Miracles of the Next 50 Years/feb.2000/htp](http://popularmechanics.com/Miracles_of_the_Next_50_Years/feb.2000/htp)

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