

## What Time of Day Is It?

**Overview:** Explore how to make inferences about the time of day in landscape paintings.

**Goals:** This lesson will

Support concepts and skills: making observations and inferences

Fulfill Learning Standards: ELA 23; Earth and Space Science (for grades 3-5) 14

Practice: putting information into a chart

Familiarize students with: landscape paintings



*The Pinafore, Isles of Shoals, Moonlight*  
Frederick Childe Hassam

**Objectives for Students:** Students will

Be able to: make inferences based on aesthetic observations

Understand: how shadow experiments in the classroom model outdoor shadows

**Key Questions** (to be answered by students):

1. How do artists imply what time of day it is in their painted landscapes?
2. What are the similarities and differences (if any) between shadows created in the classroom and shadows in paintings of outdoor landscapes?

**Materials Needed:** An example of one possible chart format

**Museum Objects:**

- *Evening Honfleur* by George H. Bogart (in landscape gallery)
- Object shown is *The Pinafore, Isles of Shoals, Moonlight* by Frederick Childe Hassam, oil on canvas, 1890, Gift of Carl and Rosamund Pickhardt (1994.4)
- *Evening* by William Coffin (in landscape gallery)

**Pre-Museum Visit** -- Begin by revisiting the **Still Life with Shadows** lesson. Review how shadows are created. Ask students if they have noticed similar relationships with outdoor shadows. Review vocabulary words: shadow, observation, inference, and evidence.

**At the Museum** -- Tell students that they will use their knowledge of shadows to infer the time of day in three of the landscape paintings (listed below). To do this, students should ask themselves: Where are the shadows? What do they relate about the time of day? What do the colors indicate about the time of day? What other contextual clues can I use to help me draw a conclusion? Students should organize their data—observational evidence and inferences—into a chart. Show an example of a possible format.

Divide students into three groups. When students have had enough time to draw a conclusion about the time of day their work of art captures, discuss findings as a large group. Check to see if others agree and/or disagree, and discuss how different conclusions were reached. Stress that there is not one right answer; since only the artist knows the actual time of day he/she painted the image. If students are ready, encourage one to lead the discussion in the manner the teacher typically does.

**Documentation and Assessment Options:** Discussion responses and written chart

**Links to Other Curriculum:**FOSS Planetary Science Investigation 2 and 3

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