



BOLD STROKES

of the Keyboard

Gary Kohl

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- recognize shades of color.
- utilize computer drawing skills and mouse manipulation.
- examine the art of the Group of Seven.
- become more aware of fine-line delineations in their work.
- consider foreground, middle ground, and background in artworks.



Students experimented with the free drawing tools and mouse manipulation and quickly achieved good control of their “brushes.”



The Group of Seven painters, along with Tom Thomson, are some of Canada's most famous artists. They painted the Canadian landscape in a bold and unique way. They are popular with many teachers across this vast country, and their work is frequently used in both art and geography classes. My inspiration, however, did not come from either of these subject realms, but from the technology department.

Using Technology

Students were enjoying many aspects of the school computers,

but I wanted them to get away from the more structured computer programs and explore their creativity. To do this, I combined a focus on this popular group of artists and a computer drawing program.

I reviewed as many Group of Seven paintings as I could, using books, videos, overheads, the Art Gallery of Toronto, and the McMi-

After seeing the Group of Sevens' paintings, students were ready to try their hands at creating their computerized versions.

chael Gallery (a gallery dedicated to the Group of Seven and their contemporaries). After seeing the paintings in person and experiencing their bold colors and large brushstrokes on huge canvasses, the students were finally ready to try their hands at creating their computerized versions.

We reviewed the drawing program's tools and their uses. Students had each selected their favorite painting to use as inspiration. A

number chose Lawren Harris, as many of his paintings have smooth, clearly defined shapes that evoke emotional responses.

Making Art on the Computer

Students experimented with the free drawing tools and mouse manipulation and quickly achieved good control of their “brushes.” They worked through three, thirty-minute computer periods, as well as some personal computer time, to achieve their spectacular results. Lines could easily be added or deleted and, with the click of a

mouse, colors could be altered until the desired effect was achieved. Students could also easily differentiate between foreground, middle ground, and background in their digital artworks.

The resulting landscapes were beautiful, and visitors to the school commented often about the layers of color and details visible in these computerized “paintings.” Next year we may try to incorporate part of our mathematics geometry into the unit or just continue to be inspired by the bold strokes of our Canadian artists. ☺

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NATIONAL STANDARD

Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places.

WEB LINK

www.tomthomson.org/groupseven/