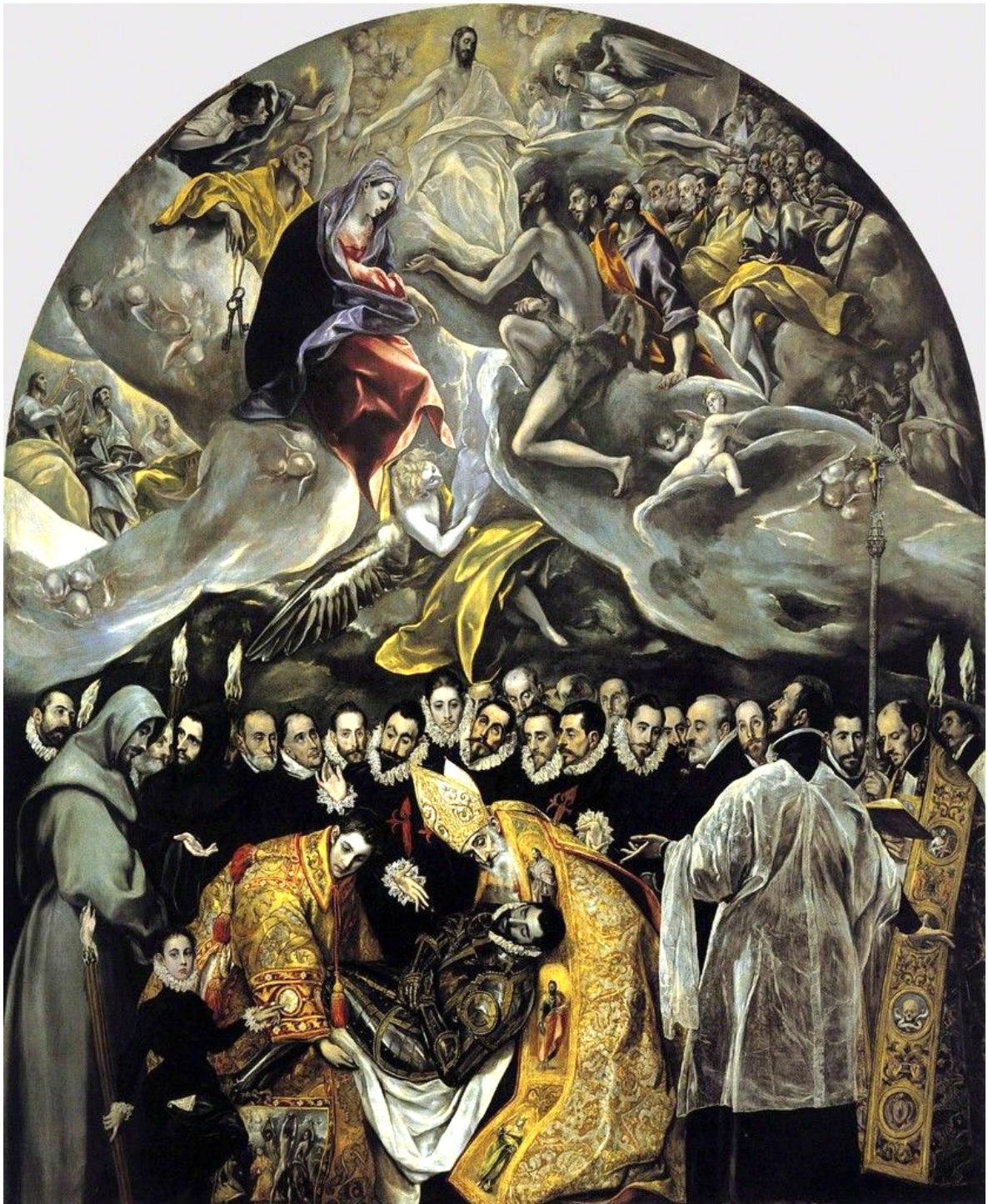


El Greco, *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz*, 1588, oil painting on canvas
Late Renaissance / Early Baroque



Key Facts:

Artist: El Greco was a Spanish painter and sculptor of the Renaissance/Baroque. He lived from 1541 to 1614.

Art period/style: Late Renaissance/Mannerism/Early Baroque

Late Renaissance: 1400-1520; Mannerism: 1520-1600; Baroque: 1600-1750

Key characteristics of that period: El Greco combined characteristics from the Renaissance, Mannerism, and Baroque era. Mannerism was a style of the Late Renaissance when artists started to distort and elongate figures. Mannerist art had awkward and stylized poses in the figures and the sense of space or perspective was ambiguous. This style departed from the calm, stable and balanced composition of the Renaissance. His artwork led into the Baroque style with his dramatic style and high contrasting colors and values.

Techniques: oil paint on canvas

His brushstrokes were thicker and broken, which departed from the smooth blending of the Renaissance.

Some Background:

His artwork bridged the Renaissance to the Baroque era. Creating mostly religious art, El Greco created elongated/distorted figures with dramatic colors and intense lighting. He had a very individual style that was expressionistic and dramatic – which led to the Baroque style. This was in much contrast to the calm, idealized, and balanced figures of the Renaissance style.

The Five Core Habits:

Practice the *Five Core Habits of Grammar* with art - NAMES (found on pgs. 18-19 in the Foundation Guide). Part of teaching is learning to ask a student good questions. This is a great activity for looking at art! Plus, you get to sneak in a little art history and technique along with.

5 CORE HABITS



NAMING

1. What do you call this?
2. Where does this name come from?
3. Are there any other names for this?



ATTENDING

1. What are the parts of this?
2. Where do you usually see this?
3. What makes this special?



MEMORIZING

1. What would help you memorize this? An acronym, a song, a chant, a picture, etc.
2. What did you already know about this?



EXPRESSING

1. Could you draw a picture of this or write a song about it? Could you act it out?
2. How does this make you feel?



STORYTELLING

1. Can you tell me a story about this?
2. Can I tell you a story about this?

N names (name things specifically)

A attending (look and listen carefully. Also- taste, smell, touch. Compare things.)

M memorizing (soak up facts and ideas. Memorize facts and relations of things to recall, connect, and expand new ideas to older ones from past memorizations.)

E expressing (express ideas creatively- reciting, drawing, singing, dancing)

S storytelling (hear and tell stories)

This helps us grasp the basic elements, vocabulary, and rules of any subject, and helps us progress more quickly toward comprehension and creativity in future studies.

Using the image on the first page, go through these questions:

N – Names:

- Name the artist, era/art style, and technique
- What can you find? Name the things you see
- How many people are there?
- Who are the people? What are they doing?
- What do you see?
- Who do you think is at the very top of the painting?
- What colors do you see?

A – Attending

- What do you see?
- What do the people in the painting see?
- What do they hear? Smell? Taste?
- What might they feel/touch?
- What emotions might the people be feeling?
- How is color used?
- The painting is divided in half – there is a group of people on the bottom half, and another group in the top half. Why might there be a division of people? What do these two groups symbolize? Did he paint the people in these sections differently?
- What is happening in the painting?
- Notice how the people are dressed. What does this tell you about them?

Attending to details – here are a few close-ups of this painting. What else do you notice now?





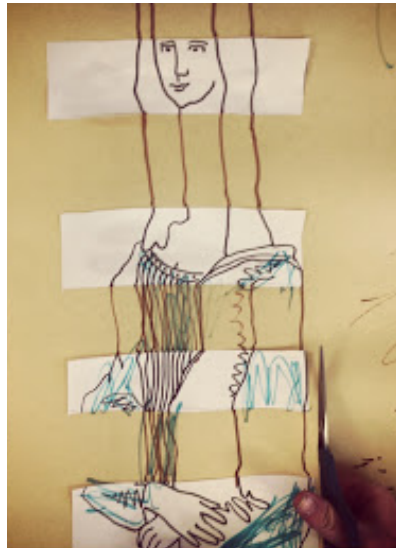
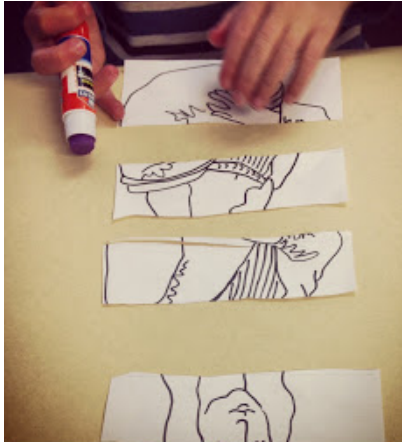
M – Memorize

Memorize the artist, time period, and facts about the artwork/technique.

E – Express

Express your thoughts and ideas about the art.

You can also express by trying the technique on your own. One idea for working in the style of El Greco is to create your own elongated figures. Get a simple outline drawing of a figure and cut it into strips. (Google – “Renaissance portrait coloring page” and you will find tons of images to choose from.) Then, have the kids glue the strips spaced out as seen here. They can then use pencils or markers to connect the parts of the image, creating their own elongated figure. Then, they can use tracing paper to trace their elongated figure and then paint or color them.



S – Story telling

Tell the story about this work of art. El Greco's, *The Burial of the Count of Orgaz*
Refer to image on first page

The Burial of the Count of Orgaz is El Greco's best-known painting. It consists of two sections, the heavenly above and the terrestrial or earthly below.

The painting is based on a legend dating from the beginning of the 14th century. In 1312, Don Gonzalo Ruiz de Toledo, Señor of the town of Orgaz died. He was wealthy and had donated quite a sum for the renovation of the church of Santo Tomé and wanted to be buried there. The legend suggests that at the time the Count was buried, Saint Stephen and Saint Augustine appeared in person from the heavens and buried him with their own hands in front of the eyes of the living.

- An angel in the center lifts Orgaz's soul while a miraculous burial takes place below.
- Local figures fill the background.
- The composition is divided into 2 sections: Heaven above opens to the earthly scene below
- The celestial, heavenly scene is rendered with his personal style. Figures are elongated and undulating with fluttering draperies, and a visionary swirling cloud. The figures are in undefined spaces, linking this style with Mannerism (a style of the late Renaissance). The abstractions and distortions show the immaterial nature of the heavenly realm (characteristic of his later style). His strong sense of movement and intense, dramatic light foreshadowed the coming Baroque style.
- The earthly scene below is rendered with realism. The realistic presentation of the earthly sphere has strong roots in Venetian Renaissance art.
- Two saints lower the count's armor-clad body into a tomb. The armor and heavy robes are painted with the richly. The figures have carefully individualized features, showing that he was also a great portraitist.
- The upward glance of some of the figures below and the flight of an angel above link the lower and upper sections of the painting.
- His primary concerns were emotions and conveying his religious passion.

Here are a few more paintings to show his elongated style:

