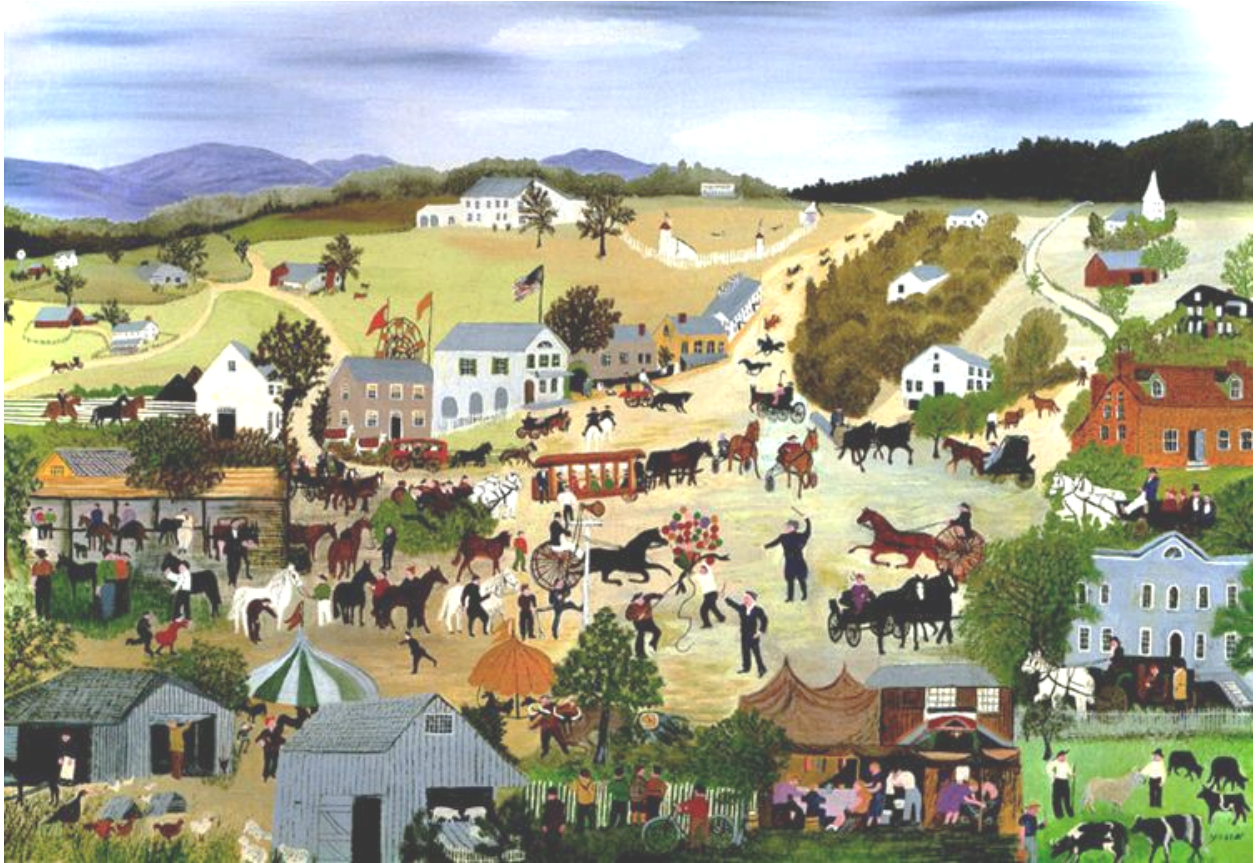


Grandma Moses, *Country Fair*, 1950  
Folk Art – painting



**Key Facts:**

**Artist:** Grandma Moses (Anna Mary Robertson Moses), 1860-1961

**Art period/style:** American Folk Art

**Key characteristics of that period:** Folk art is art created by self-taught artists. These are artists who have had no formal training or lessons in art. Folk art commonly includes painting, sculpture, pottery, and textiles, and it often portrays scenes of real, everyday life.

**Techniques:** Oil painting

**Some Background:** Anna Mary Robertson Moses, known as Grandma Moses, began painting at the age of 78. She is a great example of having a successful art career at an older age.

“The simple realism, nostalgic atmosphere and luminous color with which Grandma Moses portrayed simple farm life and rural countryside won her a wide following. She was able to capture the excitement of winter's first snow, Thanksgiving preparations and the new, young green of oncoming spring...” – The New York Times

## 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:

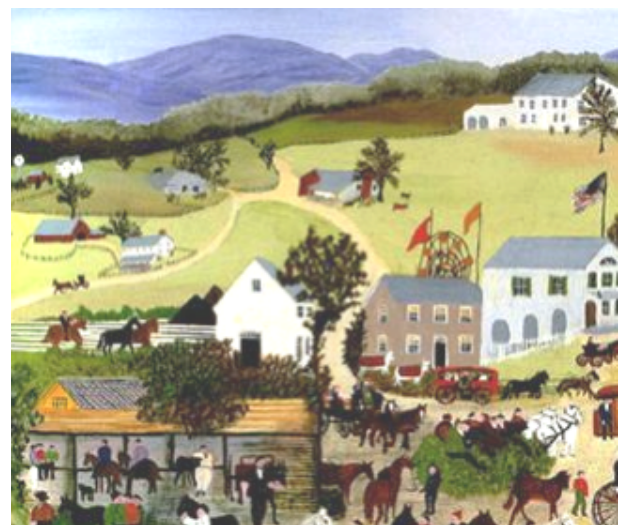
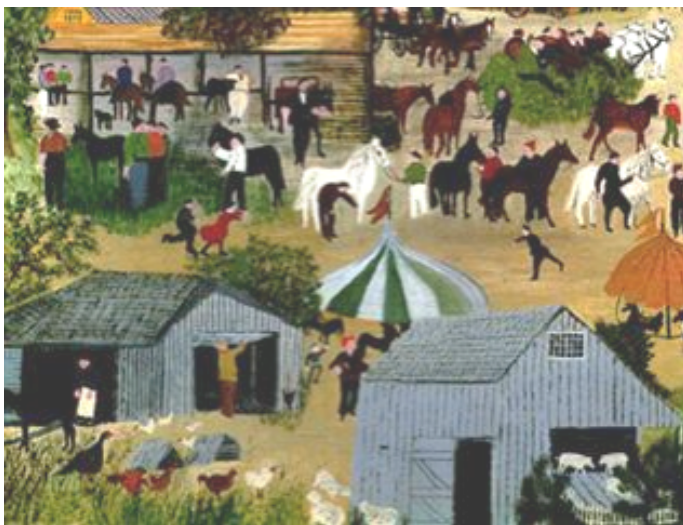
- Name the artist, era/art style, and technique
- What can you find? Name the things you see
- How many people are there?
- Who are the people? What are they doing?
- What do you see?
- What colors do you see?

#### A – Attending

- What do the people in the painting see?
- What do they hear? Smell? Taste? Feel/touch?
- What emotions might the people be feeling?
- How is color used?
- What is happening in the painting?
- Notice how the people are dressed. What does this tell you about them?
- How did she create a sense of space?



Attending to details – here are a few close-ups.  
What else do you notice now? What is going on in this image?  
What are the different groups of people doing?



**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.

Have your students create a busy, detailed scene.

First, have them brainstorm. What would their scene show? Maybe a celebration?  
Imagine all of the things that would be present. How many people? How would they be dressed?  
Where are they? What kind of buildings? Trees? How about the weather? Any animals? Cars?

Then, have them sketch out their scene. You could do this on a thick, multi-media paper or on canvases. Then they can draw or paint in the colors, textures, and details. They can also use collage to add elements. For example, they could use different colored papers to cut out buildings and glue them into their scenes.

Materials: pencils, crayons, watercolor paint or acrylic paint, watercolor paper or canvases, paint brushes, colored papers, scissors, glue

Here are some student examples:









And now a few more examples of Grandma Moses' paintings for inspiration:



*Thunderstorm, 1948*



*Grandma Moses Goes to the Big City, 1946*





*Out for Christmas Trees, 1946*

### **S – Story telling**

Tell the story about this work of art.

Grandma Moses had a colorful and lively style, which was inspired by her many decades as a farmwife. She loved to capture holidays and the spirit of various seasons and events in rural life. Grandma Moses grew up working on a family farm, and it wasn't until she was in her 80s that she found time to paint. She painted until she was almost 101 years old. Her paintings are busy and detailed, filled with happenings in her town: people, animals, buildings, seasons and weather. In her paintings she would omit features of modern life, such as tractors and telephone poles. Her early style has a lack of knowledge of perspective. So, the sense of space and perspective doesn't always make sense in her paintings.

She painted scenes of rural life from earlier days, which she called "old-timey" New England landscapes. She said "I get an inspiration and start painting; then I'll forget everything, everything except how things used to be and how to paint it so people will know how we used to live." She felt strongly that art should present only pleasant scenes and subjects, asking, "What's the use of painting a picture if it isn't something nice?"

In the painting "Grandma Moses Goes to the Big City," she commemorated a significant milestone in her own life. She depicts herself at age 80 amidst the bustle of a working farm, about to embark on her first trip, by automobile, to New York City to see her own paintings on view at Galerie St. Etienne.