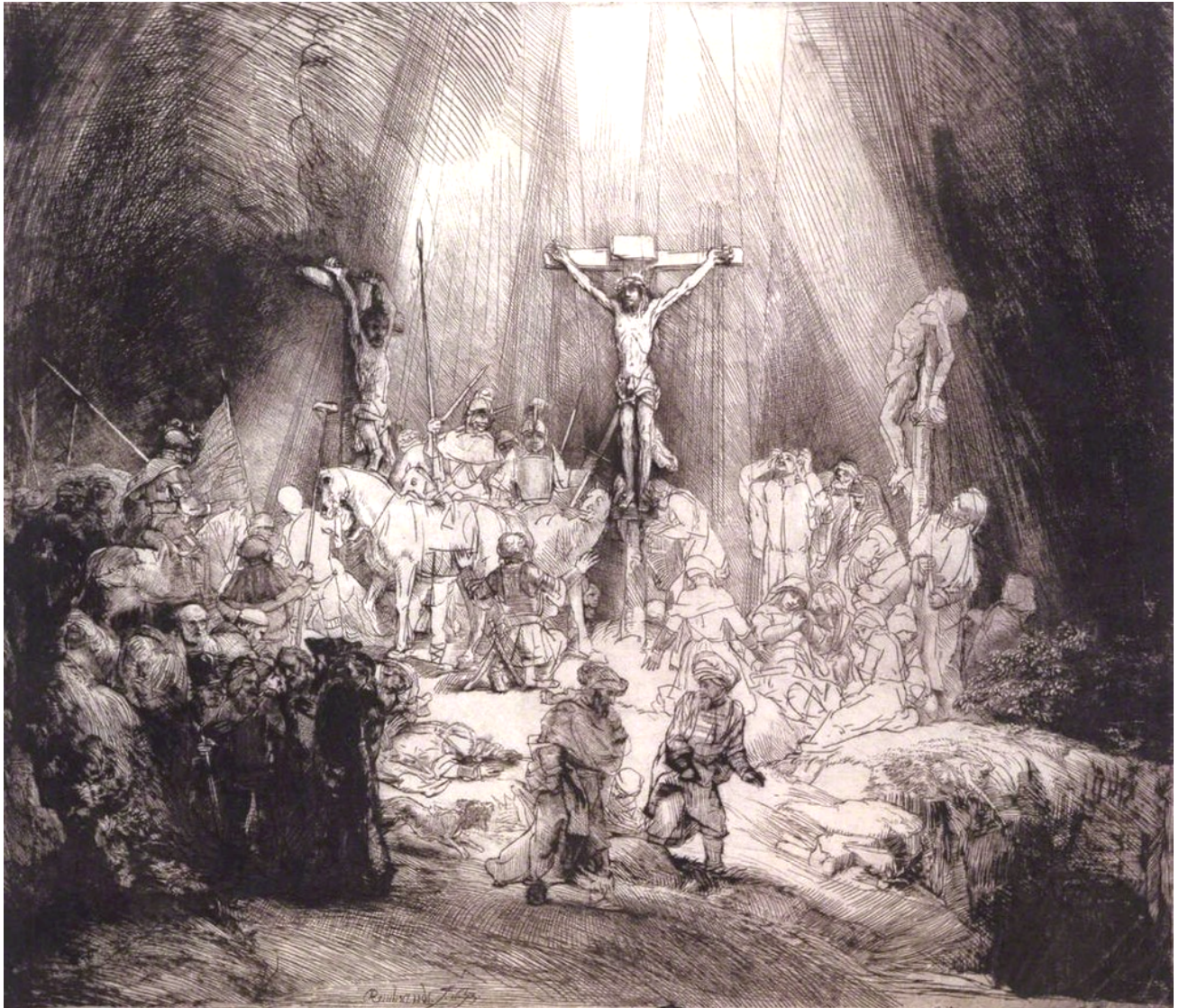


Rembrandt, *Christ Crucified Between Two Thieves: The Three Crosses*, 1653,
etching and drypoint print
Baroque – drawing, painting, printmaking



Key Facts:

Artist: Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669) was the leading artist of the Dutch Baroque. He was a skilled painter and printmaker. Known as the “Master of Light” – Rembrandt’s paintings and prints had beautiful ranges in tone. His skillful handling of light and shadow in his portraits added a deep emotional and spiritual quality.

Art period/style: Baroque, 1600-1750

Key characteristics of that period: The Baroque era throughout Europe had a variety of characteristics. Some of the key qualities were dramatic compositions and subject matter, high contrast with bright highlights and dark shadows, and asymmetrical compositions.

Techniques: Rembrandt’s favorite techniques were oil painting and etching. The print above is an etching and drypoint print. This technique is explained at the end under “story telling.”

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:

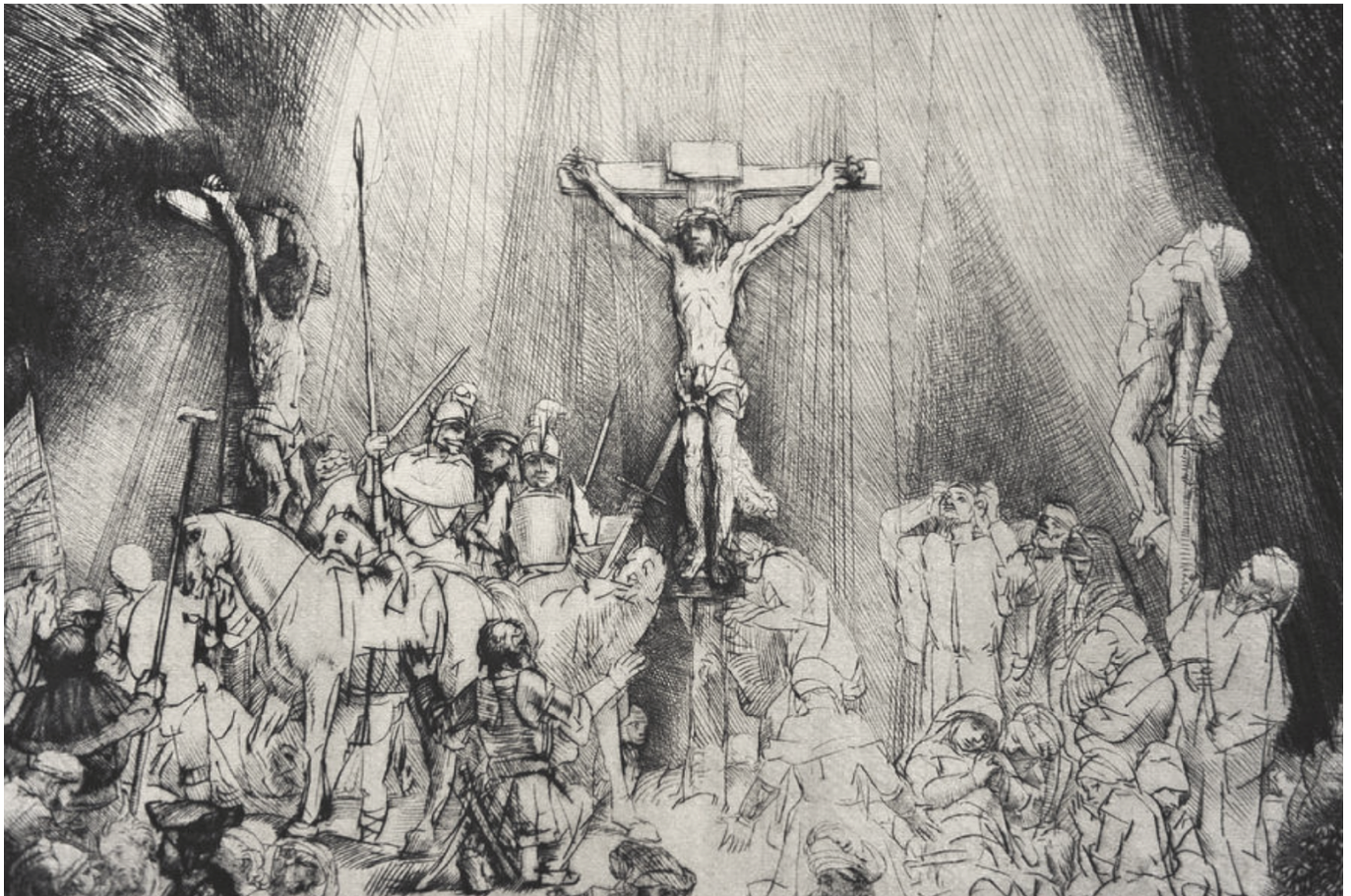
N – Names:

- 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 type of lines are used?

A – Attending

- What do the people in the print see?
- What do they hear? Smell? Taste?
- What might they feel/touch?
- What emotions might the people be feeling?
- Does this image give you any emotions?
- How is light and shadow used?
- What is happening in the print?

Attending to details – here is a close-up. What else do you notice now?
Do you see how fine and detailed the linework is? Each line is carefully considered and drawn.



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. Rather than painting, we had fun creating a portrait in the style of Rembrandt. And because printmaking is very technical and involved, we simply used pen on paper to create portraits using hatching. Through lines and hatching you can create the look of an etching or drypoint print.

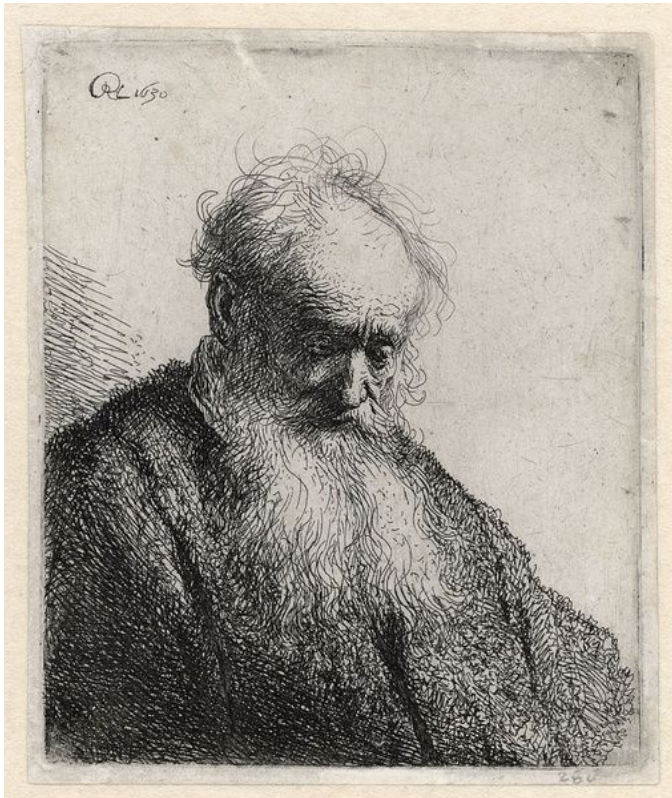
First, here are a few more prints by Rembrandt:



Self-Portrait in a Cap, 1630, etching



A Woman Reading, 1634, etching



Old Man with Flowing Beard, 1630, etching

And a few of his oil paintings:



Self-Portrait, 1659



Self-Portrait, 1632 (at age 26)



Head of an Old Man with a Cap, 1630

Here is one of his etchings we copied. We handed out a line drawing of the portrait, and then the students added their own hatching to build up the shadows.

For this project, find a Rembrandt portrait to copy, do a tracing of the main shapes, and then photocopy it for all of your students. Have them use black pens to build up hatching onto the copied line image. Make sure they can see Rembrandt's version to know where to make the shadows.

This is the Rembrandt etching we copied:

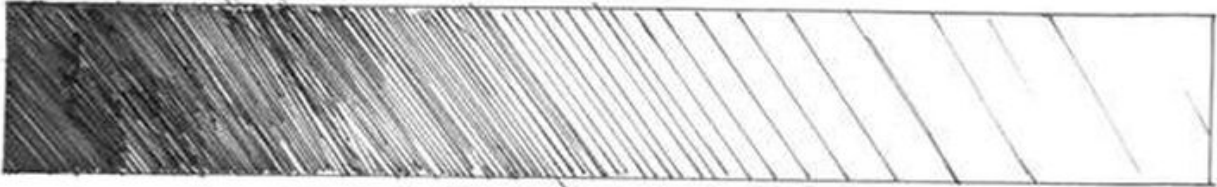


Self Portrait in a Soft Hat and a Patterned Cloak, 1631, etching

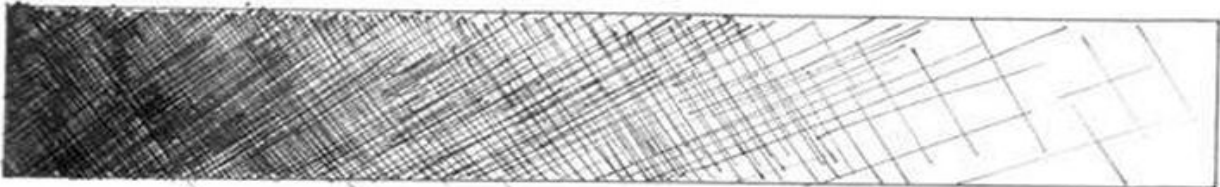
My quick hatching demonstration example:



It's also a good idea to show the students how to create various grays through hatching. The more lines you put together, the darker gray tone you will get.



Hatching



Cross Hatching

S – Story telling

Tell the story about this work of art.

Refer to image on first page.

Rembrandt's *Christ Crucified Between Two Thieves: The Three Crosses* is a print created by etching and drypoint. In this print, Rembrandt created his own depiction of the crucifixion. This print is one of his most well-known prints. Through his hatching and linework, Rembrandt created a dramatic, high-contrast image.

In this print, Rembrandt depicted the exact moment of Christ's death – when the sky darkens and light shines down from heaven onto Jesus. In this busy and chaotic scene, you can see a variety of figures. There are figures in the foreground running away, armed Roman soldiers on horseback, figures standing around the cross crying out in grief, and people kneeling at the foot of the cross. To the bottom right of the cross, Mary has fainted.

Etchings were common during the Baroque era. This form of printmaking allowed artists to create images fairly quickly, and reproduce them. The lines in etchings are crisp and clean, just like engraving prints. The figures in the center of this image are created by etching as you can see by the crisp, clean lines. Toward the corners and sides of the composition are thick, velvety, dark lines – these are drypoint lines.

Drypoint is created by drawing directly into a copperplate with a sharp needle tool. The tool scratches lines into the plate and also raises burs that hold ink- making drypoint a darker and blurrier technique compared to the clean lines seen in etchings. Once the lines are drawn into the copper plate, then plate is then inked and printed through a printing press onto paper or vellum.