In the vertical art storage rack you will find the following reproductions and posters:

Large reproductions:
- From the Water Lily Series
- From the Haystack Series
- Women in the Garden (1866-67)

Posters:
- The Art Elements & Principles posters to use in the discussion

In the black cabinet you will find a white binder with a copy of this presentation and small reproduction prints
In the plastic bin you will find the book Once Upon a Lily Pad, Philippe in Monet’s Garden or A Blue Butterfly
Personal Information

**Name:** Oscar Claude Monet (Moe-nay)  
**Nickname:** Dandy  
**Born:** November 14, 1840 in Paris, France  
**Died:** December 5, 1926 at 86 years old  
**Lived:** France  
**Family:** Claude was the second child of Claude and Louise Monet. His father was a grocer. Claude married Camille Doncieux in 1870. Then had two sons. After Camille’s death, Claude marries a lifelong friend, Alice Hoschede. He becomes a stepfather to six children.

Elements of Art

Note to Presenters: When looking at the artist’s work, keep in mind the Elements of Art: the line, shape, color, form, and texture. This laminated print is available to bring into the classroom, it shows and describes all the things that go into making a work of art and can be shown to the children so that they may keep these things in mind as they look at the paintings.

Artist Background

Oscar-Claude Monet was born in Paris, France in 1840. When he was five, his family moved to Le Havre on the northern coast of France. Here is where Claude’s love of water began.

Claude Monet had a good sense of humor, but he didn’t do very well in school. And so, he spent most of his time drawing. In grade school, he started doing funny drawings of his teachers—today they are called caricatures—and selling them to his classmates. When he was 14, an art shop owner displayed and sold some of his drawings.

Early in Monet’s career, most art painted was very realistic and the style was appropriately called Realism. Artists painted indoors while looking at their drawings. Even Monet painted realistically. His art presented a very true picture of what the artist saw or the way he thought things should look.
Claude Monet

Show: *Corner of The Studio* (1861)
Ask: What makes this painting look real?

In 1856, another artist named Eugene Boudin saw Monet’s work. He was impressed by Monet’s drawings and invited him to paint with him outdoors. Claude spent one day painting with Boudin. He then knew he wanted to be an artist.

Monet became one of the first artists to paint outdoors. In the 1840s, artists could buy lightweight painting equipment for the first time. Also, good-quality paint in tubes became available. Artists no longer needed to make their own paints by grinding colored pigments into oils.

Event though his paintings were very good, Monet sold few of them and often had to borrow money from friends for food and art supplies.

Money and his Impressionist friends put together an art show to display their work to the people of France. It was difficult for most people to accept because they expected realistic paintings like the most popular painters did. Because of that people made fun of the show. In 1874, they tried again. Monet presented a painting entitled “Impression: Sunrise and a ‘penny-a-liner’” dubbed it “Impressionistic.” A new era was born. People called Monet’s work “Impressionism.”

Show: *Impression: Sunrise* (1873)
Ask: How is this different from his earlier work?

Happily, Monet began to sell more paintings as the year’s passed. He eventually earned enough money buy the house for his family. He hired workers to tend to his gardens. He would paint the water lilies of his garden hundreds of times.

Monet painted over 2,000 paintings. Claude Monet stands among the greatest painters in the history of art. Throughout his long and distinguished career, this French artist challenged and identified the focal issues surrounding modern art of the time. As a leading pioneer in the development of classic Impressionism, he explored the subtle effects of lighting upon land and coastal vistas. By training his eye to glance and his brush to gesture the impression of what he beheld, Monet developed new levels of perception and created unique studies in modern art.

Monet often painted on large canvases. Some were more than 10 feet wide.

On December 5, 1926, Claude Monet died at 86 years old.

**Style and Technique**

Impressionism is a style of painting noted for its soft edges and visual blending. This painting style is effective because the human eyes pull specks of color together to create a unified whole. The word was coined in 1874, in response to a painting that Monet was exhibiting called Impression: Soleil Levant or Impression: Sunrise.
Claude Monet

For Monet, objects themselves were not as important as the play of light over their surfaces and the hidden colors found in shadows.

"When you paint, try to forget what objects you have before you, a tree, a house, a field, or whatever. Instead think, 'Here is a little square of blue, here an oblong of pink, here a streak of yellow,' and paint it just as it looks."

Using fragmented, rough brushstrokes, he covered his canvases with dabs of paint. When seen from a distance, these paintings appear glittering, radiant and soft—truly capturing the effect of light and atmosphere. His brightly colored, abstract landscapes are like scenes from a daydream.

Monet and other painters with similar styles studied the use of color. Rather than combining pigments on their palettes, they often painted small dabs of individual colors side by side directly on the canvases. These dabs only blend together when seen from a distance. The eye of the viewer actually mixes the colors. As a matter of fact, if you take a very close look at some of Monet’s paintings, you can hardly tell what he painted. It just looks like a bunch of colorful strokes. But when you step back a little, it all starts to make sense.

Impressionist painters, like Monet, used a wide range of colors. They really liked to use soft color that had a lot of light in them. Monet really did not like to use dark colors, and you will notice that when you look at his famous paintings. He used very little black.

Remember that there are primary colors, secondary colors, and complimentary colors.

**Show:** the Elements of Art poster and point out examples of these colors

Monet used complimentary colors in all of his work because of the way that each color would bring out the best in each other. For example, a red next to its complimentary color green makes red appear redder. And then the green would become greener.

Monet preferred to paint directly on a canvas. This was not the way most artists painted. Usually they made practice drawings first. Monet believed in capturing the scene immediately, before the light had a chance to change. Sometimes he carried several canvases with him. As the light changed during the day, he could paint a scene in different ways. He had to work fast.

During Monet’s time, most artists worked almost exclusively inside their studios. Monet and the other Impressionist worked almost entirely out-of-doors. It was important for them to capture the actual effects of sunlight. Monet often painted a series of works on the same subject to show the appearance of different times of day and night and under different atmospheric conditions. He so loved the water, that he actually built a floating studio to study how light affects water.
Claude Monet

Featured Artwork
(Presenter may select from any or all of the featured works)

Water Lilies
(Oil on canvas)

The title Water Lilies refers to a series of over 250 paintings by the French Impressionist. The paintings depict Monet's flower garden at Giverny and were the main focus of Monet's artistic production during the last thirty years of his life. Many of the works were painted while Monet suffered from cataracts.

The beauty of the French village Giverny struck Monet when he passed through on a train. The artist was so inspired that in 1883 he rented a house there; it would later become his home.

When he wasn't painting the plant life on his property, Monet was remodeling its landscapes and gardens to better inspire his work, or as he put it, “I’m good for nothing except painting and gardening.” Basically, he created the perfect place for quiet reflection, then spent the rest of his days capturing it in oils.

Haystack - End of the Summer
(Oil on canvas)

Haystacks were the subject of a series of impressionist paintings by Claude Monet. The title refers primarily to a twenty-five canvas begun in the end of summer of 1890 and continued through the following spring, using that year's harvest.

Monet noticed this subject on a casual walk. He requested that his stepdaughter bring him two canvases. He believed that one canvas for overcast weather and one for sunny weather would be sufficient. However, he realized he could not demonstrate the several distinct impressions on one or two canvases. As a result, his willing helper was quickly carting as many canvases as a wheelbarrow...
could hold. His daily routine involved carting paints, easels, and many unfinished canvases and working on whichever canvas most closely resembled the scene of the moment.

Some use a broader definition of the title to refer to other paintings by Monet with this same theme. The series is known for its thematic use of repetition to show differences in perception of light across various times of day, seasons, and types of weather. The stacks depicted herein are variously referred to as haystacks and grainstacks. The 15-to-20-foot (4.6 to 6.1 m) stacks emblematized the Normandy region of France by emphasizing the beauty and prosperity of the countryside.

**Women in the Garden (1866-67)**
*(Oil on canvas)*

*Women in the Garden* is an oil painting begun in 1866 painted at Ville d'Avray using his wife Camille as the only model. Monet finished the work indoors, and used magazine illustrations to render fashionable clothing. The goal of this large-scale work, while meticulously composed, was to render the effects of true outdoor light, rather than regard conventions of modeling or drapery. From the flickers of sunlight that pierce the foliage of the trees to delicate shadows and the warm flesh tones that can be seen through her sleeve, Monet details the behavior of natural light in the scene.

Monet at this time was early in his career, experimenting with method and subject matter. His earlier paintings were successful at Paris Salons, but *Women in the Garden* was rejected in 1867 on the grounds of subject and narrative weakness. The Salon was also troubled by Monet's heavy brushstrokes, a style that would, of course, become one of the hallmarks of Impressionism. A judge commented, "Too many young people think of nothing but continuing in this abominable direction. It is high time to protect them and save art!" This painting was purchased by a fellow artist to help support Monet at a time when he had no money.

**Discussion**

**General Questions**

- What words would you use to describe Monet’s works? (colorful, soft, peaceful, vibrant, exciting, soothing)
- How do we know Monet had a passion for nature? (He always painted landscapes, some at different times of the day).
- What do you think is going on in this painting? Let's create a story about each painting.
- How does this painting make you feel? (Relaxed…comfortable…peaceful)
- How do you think this painting would be different if Monet had painted it earlier in the morning? Later in the day? How about if it was a different time of year or season?
**Claude Monet**

**Use the Elements of Art for further discussion:**

| Color | • What kinds of colors did Monet use? (Look closely to see how Monet did not really blend the colors but put them side by side so that the viewer’s eye could blend them.)  
• How do the colors Monet chose provide you information about the time of day and/or the season?  
• Where do you see contrasting colors? |
|---|---|
| Shape | In his paintings, Monet often simplified the shapes of plants, trees and even bridges in his garden. His eyes focused on the patterns he found in nature, rather than every tiny detail of shape. He wanted to capture what your eye might see in a moment, your lasting first impression. Monet told other painters, "Forget about what is before you - a tree, a house, a field - and think simply. Here's a small blue square, there's a pink rectangle, there's a yellow band. Then paint as you see it."  
• What simple shapes do you see in each painting? |
| Texture | • Texture is how something feels or, in painting, the appearance of how something feels so you can imagine it.)  
• How does Monet depict texture? (Sometimes the paint is flat and thin and sometimes it’s thick and swirled.)  
• What texture words come to mind when you look at the water? Haystacks? Water garden? |
| Line | • Which kind of lines did Monet use? Monet used many kinds of lines, or strokes of paint, to depict the many kinds of plants and trees in his garden. He used a long S-curved line to describe the stem of a single iris; he also used spiky straight lines to create a whole thicket of irises along the water’s edge.)  
• What quality of lines does Monet use -- sketch lines or clean, crisp lines? (Quick brush strokes.)  
• Monet includes the horizon line in his painting. How does this make you feel? (Usually horizontals are calming and relaxing.) |
| Light | • What kind of light is depicted? (Natural)  
• Where is the light coming from?  
• How can you tell Monet is painting water? (Look at the reflections.)  
• How does Monet’s use of light tell you about the time of day? |
| Space | • What is most important? What is the center of interest?  
• Does the painting appear three-dimensional? (Yes, Monet made it look three-dimensional by creating an illusion of depth.)  
• Is there a foreground, a middle ground, and a background? Have children point out foreground, middle ground, and background.  
1. Foreground: The objects and land that are “before” or in front of everything else in the picture.  
2. Middle ground: The objects and land in a picture that are mid-distant, in front of the background.  
3. Background: The farthest away objects in a picture, usually near the top of the picture plane. In a landscape it is the sky and the farthest land. |
Composition
What are all the elements of his paintings?

Activities to Try at Home

Monet drew funny drawings—caricatures—of his teachers and townspeople. Try drawing funny—not mean—pictures of your favorite TV characters. See if anyone wants to buy them!

Look at a nearby landscape, a garden, or a street. What colored shapes form the house, tree, flowers, or other objects that you see? Instead of drawing your idea of those things, paint the colored shapes that form them, or draw them with crayons, pastels, or colored pencils.

Monet liked to imagine being born blind and then suddenly being able to see. Get prepared to draw, i.e., get your paper and pencil ready and select an image in front of you to draw. Then, close your eyes for a minute or two. When you open your eyes, imagine you are seeing the image for the very first time. Now, try to draw in very fast—give yourself only two or three minutes to draw the image.

Resources
http://www.wikiart.org/en/claude-monet
http://mentalfloss.com/us/go/63929
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haystacks_(Monet)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_Lilies
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_the_Garden