

## Language through Art: An ESL Enrichment Curriculum (Beginning) Information for Teaching

### ***A Calm at a Mediterranean Port***

Claude-Joseph Vernet (French, 1714–89)  
1770  
Oil on canvas  
44 1/2 x 57 3/8 in.  
2002.9.2



### **Background Information**

*He has stolen Nature's secret; whatever she produces, Vernet can re-create.*  
—Denis Diderot, reviewing the Salon of 1763

In brilliant detail, Claude-Joseph Vernet captured in this painting the gorgeous weather and leisurely activities of a day by the sea. Fishermen clean the day's catch on a stone pier while several people chat nearby, one of them pointing toward the large ship in the bay. Meanwhile, a man sits and smokes his pipe, the tobacco glowing a bright red. A cumulus cloud, perhaps the remnant of a distant storm, towers to the left of the setting sun. Warm tones of red, orange, and yellow predominate, suggesting a hazy sunset after a bright day.

In *A Calm*, Vernet portrayed a completely peaceful scene in striking contrast to its pendant, *A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast*. Taken together, the two works show, on the one hand, nature's benevolence, and, on the other, nature's fury.

### **About the Artist**

Claude-Joseph Vernet (French, 1714–89)

A coach painter's son, Vernet first studied with his father, then with a painter in Aix-en-Provence in France. Supported by some of the region's art patrons, the young artist went to Rome in 1734. From 1746 until his death, he regularly sent pictures to the Salon, where they were enthusiastically received. Returning to France in 1753, Vernet became a full member of the Académie Royale. His fame was assured when Louis XV commissioned him to paint a series of ports of France. Assisted by Pierre-Jacques Voltaire, Vernet traveled around France for nine years. After 1762, he settled in Paris and painted highly successful storm scenes, shipwrecks, and moonlit night pieces.

## Language through Art: An ESL Enrichment Curriculum (Beginning) Lesson Plan

### Places: Outdoors—The Sea

**Grades:** K–12, Adult Learners  
**Subjects:** Visual Arts, English–Language Arts, ESL  
**Time Required:** Single Class Lesson  
1-hour class period  
**Author:** J. Paul Getty Museum Education Staff

### Lesson Overview

This lesson focuses on different exterior spaces depicted in works of art. Students practice using vocabulary associated with the weather and how people react to the sea. Activities in this section teach students about some of the elements of art (color and line), adjectives, and two kinds of sentences (declarative and imperative).

### Learning Objectives

*Students will be able to:*

- write declarative sentences related to what figures are doing in a work of art.
- write imperative sentences related to what figures are doing in a work of art.

### Featured Getty Artworks

*A Calm at a Mediterranean Port* by Claude-Joseph Vernet

<http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/artObjectDetails?artobj=144722&handle=li>

*A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast* by Claude-Joseph Vernet

<http://www.getty.edu/art/gettyguide/artObjectDetails?artobj=144721&handle=li>

### Materials

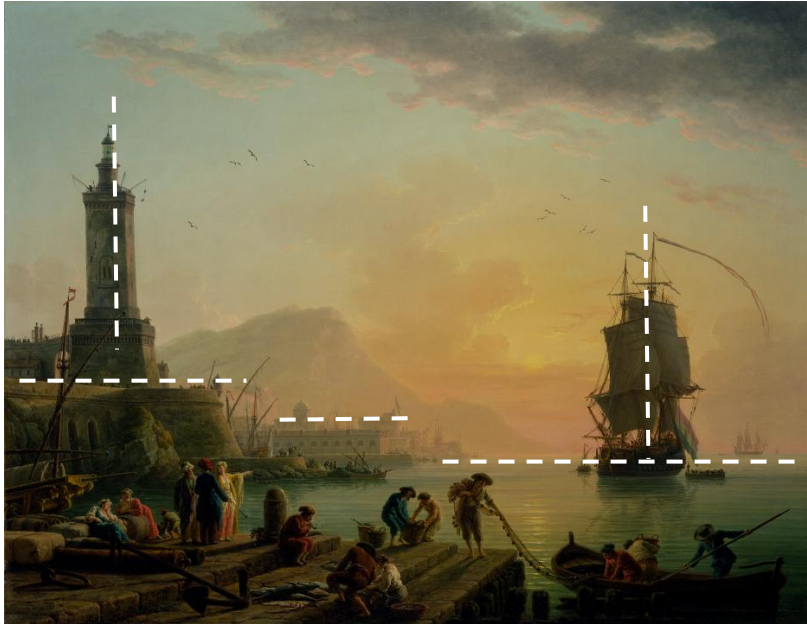
- Reproduction of *A Calm at a Mediterranean Port*, Claude-Joseph Vernet
- Reproduction of *A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast*, Claude-Joseph Vernet
- Information for Teaching about *A Calm at a Mediterranean Port*, Claude-Joseph Vernet
- Information for Teaching about *A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast*, Claude-Joseph Vernet
- Teacher Resource: “Art Vocabulary”
- Paper and pencils
- One sheet of transparency film
- Dry-erase marker
- Student Handout: “Declarative Sentences/Imperative Sentences”

## **Places: Outdoors—The Sea**

### **Lesson Steps**

1. Introduce students to different types of **lines** by illustrating them on the board:
  - thin lines, thick lines, squiggly lines, straight lines, curved lines, vertical lines, horizontal lines, diagonal lines, long lines, dotted lines. For example: ~ — |  
/ \
  - As you introduce the word, you can have students draw the line in the air with their finger.
2. Remind students about directional phrases (right and left, as well as top, bottom, center, etc.). Pass out paper and pencils and instruct students to draw different types of lines on their paper in response to your directional phrases. Examples: *Draw a vertical line in the center of the paper. Draw a horizontal line to the left of this line.*
3. Show students an image of *A Calm at a Mediterranean Port*. Ask students to share what they see in the **painting**. Ask students to discuss what they think is happening on a calm day by the Mediterranean Sea. If necessary, discuss the definition of a *sea*. If possible, locate the Mediterranean Sea on a map. (See the Information for Teaching about *A Calm at a Mediterranean Port* by Claude-Joseph Vernet.)
4. Show students an image of *A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast*. Ask students to share what they see. Ask students to discuss what they think is happening on a stormy day by the Mediterranean Sea. Tell students that the artist meant for the two paintings to be shown together. They are the same size and depict two views along the Mediterranean Sea. (See the Information for Teaching about *A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast* by Claude-Joseph Vernet.)
5. Ask students to think about how the people are responding to one another in each of the two paintings. Ask students also to think about how the sea is causing the people's reactions in each painting. Point out the lines in both paintings and describe how they help "tell" the story of the painting. For example: *A Calm* has a lot of horizontal and vertical lines (and the people are calmly interacting with each other), while the sharp diagonals of *A Storm* help to illustrate the chaos of the scene (where the people are excitedly gesturing to each other). You can place a transparency over the image and use a dry-erase marker to demonstrate this point, as illustrated in the following examples:

**Places: Outdoors—The Sea**



*A Calm at a Mediterranean Port* by Claude-Joseph Vernet



*A Storm on a Mediterranean Coast* by Claude-Joseph Vernet

## **Places: Outdoors—The Sea**

6. Tell students that a declarative sentence is one that declares something (makes a statement). Review the present progressive by forming declarative sentences using the following sentence frame: I am \_\_\_\_\_. You can demonstrate by using physical motions. Examples: *I am thinking. I am sitting.*
7. Distribute the student handout "Declarative Sentences/Imperative Sentences" and have students fill in the speech bubbles on the front of the handout with the appropriate declarative sentences.
8. Tell students that an imperative sentence is one that orders someone to do something (gives a command). You can demonstrate this kind of sentence by having students respond to ordinary classroom commands. Examples: *Open your books. Sign your name.* Imperative sentences can be followed by an exclamation mark if they are expressing strong emotions. Examples: *Sit down! Be quiet!*
9. Have students turn the handout over and fill in each of the speech bubbles with the appropriate imperative sentence. This exercise will reinforce the chaos of *A Storm* versus the tranquility of *A Calm*.

### **Extensions**

- Have students recall a time when they were in a storm and describe the experience to a partner.
- Have student volunteers stand in front of the class and take the pose of the characters speaking in one of the paintings. Invite each student to speak aloud the sentence he or she wrote for his or her character.

### **Standards Addressed**

#### **Common Core Standards for English Language Arts**

#### **Grades K–5**

##### **SPEAKING AND LISTENING**

K.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and text with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

K.6 Speak audibly and express thoughts, feelings, and ideas clearly.

1.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.

1.4 Describe familiar people places, things, and events, with relative details expressing ideas and feelings more clearly.

2.3 Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather information, or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

2.4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details,

## **Places: Outdoors—The Sea**

speaking audible in coherent sentences.

3.3 Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

3.6 Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification. (See grade 3 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

4.3 Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker or media source provides to support particular points.

4.6 Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., *presenting ideas*) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., *small-group discussion*); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation. (See grade 4 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

5.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

5.3 Summarize the points a speaker or media source makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence, and identify and analyze any logical fallacies.

### LANGUAGE

3.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

3.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., *After dinner that night we went looking for them*).

4.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., *quizzed, whined, stammered*) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., *wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation*).

5.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

5.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., *however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition*).