

Claude Monet, *Houses of Parliament, Effect of Fog*, 1904. Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida



Monet's London

Artists' Reflections on the Thames, 1859-1914

Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) St. Petersburg, Florida
January 16 – April 24, 2005



Winslow Homer
The Houses of Parliament, 1881
Hirschorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution. PHOTO: Lee Stalworth



André Derain
Big Ben, London, c. 1906
Musée d'Art moderne, Troyes, France © ARS, New York/ADAGP, Paris



Camille Pissarro
Charing Cross Bridge, London, 1890
© 2004 National Gallery of Art, Washington
PHOTO: Richard Caradelli

TEACHING WITH THE *TIMES*

Educational activities to try at school or home

WAYS WE USE THE WATERS: SORT AND CLASSIFY

The Thames (pronounced /temz/) is a river flowing through southern England connecting London with the sea. The Thames is so central to and intertwined with the history of England that it has been described as "liquid history." It has been used as a highway, transporting both people and goods for centuries, and was the scene of many historic battles, forming a natural line of defense. It has always been a draw for boating and other waterside entertainment, just as the waters of Tampa Bay, the Gulf of Mexico and many Florida rivers are used today.

How important are the waters of the Suncoast to our economy and quality of life? One way to answer this question is to collect information written about our local waterways in the *St. Petersburg Times* and classify the stories by categories, such as Port of Tampa, pleasure boating, boat building/repair, off-shore gambling boats, water pollution, or water wildlife. Feel free to add your own categories. Once you have amassed a good collection, discuss with your family or class what elements are key to keeping our waterways a priority for our communities.

BRIDGING PAST TO PRESENT: AN IMPRESSIONIST JOURNAL

When Claude Monet was painting the Thames River in London, he often sat at the same window and painted the same scene on different days. Some days, the effects of fog (or pollution) would make the paintings look one way, on other days; the effects of sunlight could transform the exact same location into a completely different view. The waters of Tampa Bay are just as ever changing as the Thames was in Monet's time. Weather patterns, pollution and special events can transform a scene along one of our waterways on a daily basis. Look at the two pictures of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge on this page and discuss what makes them similar, and what makes them different. Do these pictures remind you of any of the artwork you have seen at the MFA Monet exhibition?

Select a bridge you ride across regularly and keep an "impressionist journal" of how it looks on different days. You can draw or write your impressions. Use the Weather Watch page of the *Times* to record temperatures, wind, cloud and ozone readings for each of your drawings or descriptions. Share your journals with your friends and classmates to see how different artists (like yourselves) interpret the same view.

THE THAMES IN LITERATURE: GIVE IT A TAMPA BAY TWIST

Many classic books refer to the Thames. *Three Men in a Boat* by Jerome K. Jerome describes a boat trip up the Thames. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, Alice falls asleep near the Thames. The river is mentioned in both *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame and A.A. Milne's play *Toad of Toad Hall* based on Grahame's work. Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes prowls the riverbanks looking for clues in some of his famous mysteries.

Think about some of your best-loved books and stories. What if the Hogwartsian world of *Harry Potter* was set alongside Suncoast waters? *The Magic Tree House* paperbacks are packed full of exciting adventures to far off lands – what if these stories took place on one of our barrier islands or on the shore of the Alafia River? Pick a scene or chapter from one of your favorite books and rewrite it with the setting changed to Florida's West Coast, or write a new adventure featuring your favorite characters using inspiration from a photo or story in the *Times*.



Claude Monet, *Parliament, Reflections on the Thames*, 1905
Musée Marmottan - Monet, Paris, France, Girandon/Bridgeman Art Library



Times photo – JOE WALLS (1994)

Sunshine Skyway Bridge



Times photo – JOE WALLS (2003)

Sunshine Skyway Bridge

Brought together by a river

Welcome to *Monet's London: Artists' Reflections on the Thames, 1859-1914*, featuring more than 140 paintings, watercolors, drawings, prints and photographs, all depicting the Thames River at London (pronounced /temz/).

Inspired by Monet's *Houses of Parliament, Effect of Fog* (1904), part of the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, this exhibition includes some of the most important paintings produced by this great French Impressionist. A dozen masterpieces by the artist are on view, as well as stellar works by such contemporaries as Daubigny, Tissot, Derain and fellow Impressionist Pissarro. The American artists Whistler, Homer and Hassam also are on display.

This exhibition is making history, because it is the first time in the United States that Monet's London series will be placed within the context of the artistic



David Roberts, *The Houses of Parliament from Milbank*, 1861
© Museum of London

experimentation of the time. The Thames and London inspired some of the most gifted artists of the day, including the American expatriate artist, James McNeill Whistler, who left Paris for London in 1859. His "Thames Set" became one of the period's most influential series of prints. Whistler's work in London encouraged other leading artists, including Monet, to cross the channel. *Monet's London* will spotlight many significant works, such as the only known scenes of the Thames by Pissarro and Homer.

Though Monet's paintings are the central focus, other important aspects of the time will be emphasized in the exhibition, including artistic and cultural exchange, the power of London as a site to create unforgettable works of art, the changing landscape of the city and the move toward modernism.

This teaching poster is designed as a guide and inspiration for the students of the Tampa Bay area, their parents and teachers. We invite you to try the education activities included and to use the suggestions on the back cover on how to make your visit to the MFA a powerful, pleasurable learning experience.

Special thanks to *Splendor in the Glass*

Funding for this education poster was provided by *Splendor in the Glass*, a fundraiser held in May 2004 to benefit children's art education programs at the Museum of Fine Arts.

Museum hours for *Monet's London* (January 16 – April 24, 2005)

Tuesday through Thursday 10 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Sunday 11 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

For information on group sales, call 727-896-2667, ext. 248.

FOR TEACHERS

The *St. Petersburg Times* Newspaper in Education program has developed a multidisciplinary curriculum guide that can be used with this teaching poster. The guide can be downloaded at the *Times'* Web site dedicated to this exhibit: www.spetimes.com/monet/ (Look for the NIE logo). The guide includes handouts, overheads, Internet resources and classroom activities (aligned with the Sunshine State Standards) that cover the following topics:

- The Thames River
- London during the Industrial Revolution
- The artists (short biographies of the artists featured in this exhibition)
- The Impressionist movement
- Printmaking
- Photography
- Vocabulary to know
- Describing and analyzing works of art
- Multimedia collage
- Exploring weather conditions through art
- Scientific impressions of artists' representations of natural environments
- The effects of pollution on the environment
- Chemical reactions
- Color spectrum
- Simple machines and steam engines
- Geometry: Symmetry and shapes
- Architectural clues
- Economics of the Industrial Age
- Acting it out: Students create dramatic presentations of scenes in paintings
- Letter writing: Students write letters from one exhibit artist to another
- Setting: Writing a short story set in London illustrated or inspired by one of the exhibition works
- Geography: Learning about maps
- Living in London: Exploring high society to tenement life
- Creating a 19th century art gallery advertisement
- Creating a turn of the century London newspaper

ARRANGING YOUR SCHOOL TOUR AT THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS ST. PETERSBURG

To register, call 727-896-2667, ext. 260 or download the registration brochure at www.fine-arts.org/education/images/Monet_School_tours.pdf

TOUR TIMES: Mondays: 9:30-10:15 a.m., 10:30-11:15 a.m., 11:30-12:15 p.m. and 12:30-1:15 p.m. **Thursdays and Fridays:** 9:30-10:15 a.m., 10:30-11:15 a.m.
TOUR FEES: Students and required chaperones: \$5 each (one chaperone is required per seven students) **Additional adults:** \$12
These rates include special exhibitions and the permanent collection. School tour limit maximum of 60 students per group.

Look for these artists' works as you explore the Monet exhibition



Ned Swain, *Westminster from the River Thames*, 1884 © Guildhall Library, Corporation of London

Alvin Langdon Coburn, *St. Paul's from the River*, 1909
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida



Joseph Pennell, *The Shower, London*, 1909
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida



Andre Derain, *The Houses of Parliament from Westminster Bridge*, 1906 © The Cleveland Museum of Art / © 2004 ARS, New York/ADAGP, Paris



E. Hull, *The Thames Embankment Works between Charing Cross Bridge and Westminster*, 1865
© Museum of London



J.M.W. Turner, *The Tower Bridge*, 1893 New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs

ART VOCABULARY

Architecture: The art and science of designing and erecting buildings.

Color: An element of art with three properties: *hue or tint* – the color name (e.g., red, yellow, blue, etc.) *intensity* – the purity and strength of a color (e.g., bright red or dull red) and *value* – the lightness or darkness of a color.

Museum: An institution for exhibiting artistic, historical or scientific objects.

Perspective: Method used by artists to represent three-dimensional objects on two-dimensional surfaces, making objects appear closer or farther away.

Gallery: A room or series of rooms where works of art are exhibited.

Reflection: The mirroring of an object or objects on a shiny surface.

Impressionism: Progressive art movement that originated in France in the late 19th century.

Shadow: The darkest part of an image with visible details.

Shape: Forms such as circles, triangles, squares, rectangles, ovals, etc.

Landscape: An image representing a portion of the natural scenery, usually from a distant viewpoint.

Texture: The "feel" of an artwork: rough, smooth, soft, hard, etc. Texture can be real (for example, an oil painting may be bumpy) or an artist may create the appearance of a texture.

Line: A mark on a painting with length and direction. Types of lines include horizontal, vertical, wavy, curved, bent, straight, etc.

Technique: Method or procedure used to produce a work of art.

Light value: The lightness or darkness of the colors used in a painting.

TOURING MONET'S LONDON

at the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg
A guide for parents, teachers and kids

PREPARING FOR YOUR MUSEUM VISIT: GET EXCITED!

- Turn your daily commute into teachable moments: Ask your children to pay careful attention as you drive over the bridges or past the bodies of water that surround Tampa Bay. Ask them to describe the colors, reflections, clouds and fog they may see and how the weather can make the same place look different on different days.
- Have your children select a favorite location that they see everyday and ask them to draw pictures that show the different "weather moods" of that place. Look at the Weather Watch page of the *St. Petersburg Times* together each morning and talk about how that day's forecast could affect the view of their special place.
- Create a "gallery" in your house to display your children's series of artwork.
- Look at photographs, paintings and drawings of outdoor scenes in the *St. Petersburg Times*, and *Times'* magazines LIFE and PARADE. Introduce new words as you describe details of the pictures to each other using the "art vocabulary" list on this page.

WHILE YOU'RE THERE: WALKING AROUND QUESTIONS

- Let your child know what kind of behavior is expected in a museum. Set the ground rules in advance: **Walk**, and use low voices. **Look**, be inspired and imagine while staying two feet away from the art. **Sit** on gallery benches or on the floor during your tour.
- Prepare an activity bag to take to the museum with you with notebooks, pencils and clipboards for writing and drawing.
- Pick something specific for your group to hunt. *Examples for younger children:* Find the colors blue, red and purple, straight or curly lines, rough or smooth textures, where artists sign their works, boats, buildings, people. *For older students:* Look for different types of river craft, weather patterns, color palettes, etc.
- Ask your child to tell or write a story that explains what he thinks is going on in the pictures being viewed.
- Relate elements of the pictures to your child's current surroundings. *Examples:* "Do those docks remind you of the shipyards we drive past on the Crosstown Expressway? Are those boats with the tall masts like the sailboats docked behind the museum? Does the Charing Cross Bridge in this painting look more like the Gandy Bridge or the Skyway?"
- Take a break in the Membership and Sculpture gardens. Talk with your child about what she liked most and what she'd like to see more of. Point out colors, light and reflections you see in the gardens and compare them with the exhibition pictures in this guide.

AFTER THE VISIT: CONNECT WITH YOUR LIFE

- Revisit your home gallery and talk with your children about their interpretations of local scenes.
- Have each family or class member create a new piece of art inspired by one of their favorite artists from the exhibition. See if you can guess each person's favorites.
- Look for articles and pictures in the *St. Petersburg Times* to talk about how we use the waters of the Tampa Bay area for work and pleasure today like the people of London did in the last century.
- Try the educational activities on the inside of this publication.
- Plan your next visit to a local museum!

IMPRESSIONS OF THE THAMES AND INDUSTRIAL AGE LONDON

Through artists' eyes and writers' words



James Tissot, *The Thames*, 1876
Wakefield Museum and Galleries, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, UK/Bridgeman Art Library



James McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne*, c. 1870
Collection of Mississippi Museum of Art, Jackson



Claude Monet, *Waterloo Bridge, London*, c. 1903. Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh



Claude Monet, *Houses of Parliament, Effect of Fog*, 1904
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida

“My practiced eye has found that objects change in appearance in a London fog more and quicker than in any other atmosphere, and the challenge is to get every change down on canvas.”

Claude Monet, 1901

WHICH ARTIST'S WORK MIGHT HAVE INSPIRED THESE FAMOUS WRITERS' WORDS?

Where, if not from the impressionists, do we get those wonderful brown fogs that come creeping down our streets . . .? To whom, if not to them and their master [Whistler], do we owe the lovely silver mists that brood over our river, and turn to faint forms of fading grace curved bridge and swaying barge? The extraordinary change that has taken place in the climate of London in the last ten years is entirely due to this particular school of art One does not see anything until one sees its beauty. Then, and only then, does it come into existence. At present, people see fogs, not because there are fogs, but because poets and painters have taught them the mysterious loveliness of such effects. There may have been fogs for centuries in London. I dare say there were. But no one saw them, and so we do not know anything about them. They did not exist till Art had invented them.

Oscar Wilde, Irish dramatist and founder of the Aesthetic Movement, which advocated “art for art's sake.” *“The Decay of Lying,” Intentions, 1891*

I like [the river] best when it is all dyed and disfigured with the town and you look from bridge to bridge — they seem wonderfully big and dim — over the brown, greasy current, the barges and the penny-steamers, the black, sordid, heterogeneous shores. This prospect, of which so many of the elements are ignoble, etches itself into the eye of the lover of “bits” with a power that is worthy perhaps of a better cause.

Henry James, American novelist. *“London,” Century, December 1888*

Nothing here is natural: everything is transformed.

Hippolyte Taine, French historian and philosopher, *Taine's Notes on England*

And when the evening mist clothes the riverside with poetry, as with a veil, and the poor buildings lose themselves in the dim sky, and the tall chimneys become campanili, (bell towers) and the warehouses are palaces in the night, and the whole city hangs in the heavens, and fairyland is before us — then the wayfarer hastens home; the working man and the cultured one, the wise man and the one of pleasure, cease to understand, as they have ceased to see, and Nature, who for once, has sung in tune, sings her exquisite song to the artist alone.

From Mr. [James MacNeill] Whistler's “*Ten O'Clock*” lecture, 1885

His mind conjured up a picture of London as an immense, sprawling, rain-drenched metropolis, stinking of soot and hot iron, and wrapped in a perpetual mantle of smoke and fog. He could see in imagination a line of dockyards stretching away into the distance. . . . swarming with men . . . All this activity was going on in warehouses and on wharves washed by the dark, slimy waters on an imaginary Thames, in the midst of a forest of masts, a tangle of beams and girders piercing the pale lowering clouds.

Joris-Karl Huysmans, French novelist, *A Rebours*, 1884



Hayley Lever, *London Docks*, c. 1900-1910
PHOTO: Spanierman Gallery, LLC New York



Gustave Doré, *Westminster Stairs – Steamers Landing*, 1872.
Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida

MY IMPRESSIONS

Use this space to write or draw your response to one of the paintings on this poster.

MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS
ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA

About Newspaper in Education (NIE)

The *St. Petersburg Times* is one of the more than 950 newspapers offering “a living textbook,” the daily newspaper, to teachers and students. In addition to making newspapers available free to classrooms, an important focus of our NIE program is providing education supplements such as this one, teaching guides and workshops. Our complementary teaching materials on all subjects base their instruction on using the newspaper and are aligned with the Sunshine State Standards. For information on how to receive the free classroom sets of the *St. Petersburg Times*, or teacher or family workshops on how to use the newspaper as a learning tool, or about becoming an NIE sponsor, please call 727-893-8138 or e-mail edpub@sptimes.com.



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