Student name: Group:

Art movement.....Impressionism, 19th c.
Timeframe.....1870 - 1900
Topic Focus.....Art & Modernity

Teaching material: The instructor will provide video materials for educational purposes. ~15'

Discussion questions: Read an excerpt from C. Baudelaire's "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863) and discuss how C. Monet's "Boulevard des Capucines" (1873) reflects these ideas. At the end of the session, we will review the concepts (15').

Background information: This lesson focuses on the changes that can be observed in modern life. The nineteenth century was the century of large urban areas and the migration of the rural population away from farms and peasant life caused the size of the city to grow, necessitating extensive strategies to avoid another revolution and to accommodate the restless population. These necessary changes in the city were also changes in life itself. In this context, artists focused on determining how they should respond to their time. In Baudelaire's work, modern life is defined by constant change: a new and bewildering urban environment, populated by new kinds of people, a space of visibility and spectacle in which the "multitude" gathered and unfolded. The role of the artist is to capture these fleeting moments of the modern city.

Many Impressionists had been rejected for their Salon entries, so in addition to taking the reins of the subject matter, artists organized their own exhibitions, again, a product of modernity. This paved the way for the now familiar commercial gallery system, through which many artists exhibit and sell their work.

Main activity: Discuss how artists depict modernity and what themes represented it.

Perhaps the most important site of modernity in the late 19th century was the city of Paris itself, renovated between 1853 and 1870, refurbished to create more open space for a cleaner and safer city. The Impressionists enthusiastically painted the city, employing their new style to depict its wide boulevards, public gardens and grand buildings. While some focused on cityscapes, others turned their gaze to the city's inhabitants. The population explosion of Paris provided them with a wealth of material for their scenes of urban life. Characteristic of these scenes was the mixing of social classes that occurred in public places. They also painted new forms of leisure, such as theatrical performances, cafés, popular concerts and balls. With an approach similar to that of naturalistic writers, painters of urban scenes depicted fleeting but typical moments in the lives of the people they observed.

Group activity: Compare and analyze various works of urban scenes (shown and listed after seeing the video). What elements in the works induce us to think about the idea of Modernism? There is a change of theme with respect to Realism, what contributes to the change? In relation to the situation they present, what do these works show? What do these people do?

Related reading: Charles Baudelaire (1821-1867), in his work "The Painter of Modern Life" (1863), decided to undertake the task of defining "modern life" and chose to do so through the filter of fashion because it was fleeting, ephemeral and changeable. Unlike the reconstruction of Paris, a work in progress for decades, fashion was a complete work of art that allowed him to present paintings that were art-about-art.

1. Notes on the artistic movement of IMPRESSIONISM. General background

3. Key words on the subject. Artists and Artworks.

2. Notes on the subject of Modernity in the context of Impressionism. Individual activity

4. Summary of group activities. General conclusions.