

# Artists' Stamps

(art + social studies;

art + history)

This lesson plan is designed to celebrate fine artists by honoring them with a "commemorative stamp." This project also introduces students to philately, the study and collection of stamps. Students share and discuss a variety of current and collectible stamps, many of which feature famous people. Choose several artists and their works for ideas. Consider visiting a local post office to view a variety of stamps and to explore the possibility of exhibiting students' "commemorative" collections.

**Grade Levels** 3-6

*Note: instructions and materials are based on a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.*

## Process

1. Ask family members to share old or unique stamps from envelopes they have saved, then bring in a large variety of examples.
2. Review the lives and works of several artists, then select one to "commemorate" by showing the artist, the artist's work or both.
3. Measure 3/4" to 1" from the outside edge of one of the blank 9" x 12" postage stamp papers to create a border on all four sides. The design will go inside this border. (Note: The paper is matte on one side and glossy on the reverse. Since the matte side accepts pencil marks and marker ink much better, it may be the best side to draw on.)
4. After discussing stamp designs, draw a design using a pencil. Erase any unwanted pencil marks with a soap eraser. The stamps should include the price, country and name of the subject. While setting a price, think about how



## Materials

Taschen Basic Art Series Famous Artists, choose from more than 50 titles, (70033-); several books to share

Discovering Great Artists, (71804-1001); one book to share

Roylco® Postage Stamps, package of 32, 8" x12" (63216-1001); one to share

Blick® Plastic 12-inch Ruler (55403-1012); 18 to share

Fibracolor Markers 100-color set (21235-0009); three sets to share

Sharpie® Ultra Fine Marker, Black (21315-2003); 10 to share

Blick® Premium Construction Paper, 80-lb, 12" x 18", 50-sheet assortment (11409-1006); one package

Blick® Premium Construction Paper, Gold, 80-lb, 12" x 18", 50 sheets (11409-4076); one package

Blick® Soap Eraser, box of 24, 1" x 1" x 5/8" (21519-1024); two to share

Elmer's® Glue All, 7-5/8-oz bottles (23810-1005); six to share

Scotch® #665 Double-Coated Transparent Tape (23016-0050); one to share

## Process, continued

much money, time and work it takes to transfer a letter or package from one place to another.

5. Fill in the design with multi-colored fine-tip markers. The black ultra-fine marker should be used to outline the drawing, both to enhance the lettering and to make the artwork stand out.
6. Mount the stamps onto pieces of construction paper. Vivid colors in the assorted package will give artwork a color boost and emphasize the stamp's scalloped edges. Gold construction paper will provide a more formal presentation. Use glue or double-sided tape on the back of the artwork to affix it to the construction paper backing (only on the top; adhesive applied to the entire piece may cause wrinkling). Center the stamp on the backing, display and discuss!

## National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1 – Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes

Content Standard #3 – Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Content Standard #4 – Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

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