

Adopt an Artwork 2025 -2026

Illustrating My Style and Story

"The Prince lay huddled upon the stones of the court", Elizabeth Shippen Green

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Campus Community

6th

Visual Art

OVERVIEW

Students examine Elizabeth Shippen Green's mixed-media approach, combining charcoal underdrawing with translucent watercolors/oils; the field of illustration employs a vast array of traditional and modern techniques and media. They explore her storytelling and focus on historical accuracy and the colors used to guide the viewer through the mixed-media work. Focus on materials used and techniques in traditional illustration relies on physical media and hands-on processes, each offering unique textures and aesthetics:

Pencil/Graphite: This is a fundamental, versatile medium used for quick sketching, detailed shading, and creating a wide range of values. It's often a starting point for more complex works in other media.

Pen and Ink: Known for precision and high contrast, this technique uses sharp, solid lines. Shading is typically achieved through techniques like hatching (parallel lines) and crosshatching (overlapping perpendicular lines) rather than smooth blending.

TIME REQUIRED

Five 1-hour classes

STANDARDS FOR INSTRUCTION AND ASSESSMENT

- VA:Cr1.2.6a Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work: I CAN plan a work of art through investigation of relevant content.
- VA:Cr2.1.6a Organize and develop artistic ideas and work: I CAN use my art words to explain how I made my art.
- VA:Cr3.1.6a Refine and complete artistic work: I CAN improve my artwork based on peer discussion.
- VA:Re7.2.6a Perceive and analyze artistic work: I CAN infer how an artist created their work of art.
- VA:Cn11.1.6a Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, or historical context to deepen understanding: I CAN analyze how and why the artist created the artwork.

STUDENT "I CAN STATEMENTS"

- I CAN describe the artistic style and techniques used by Elizabeth Shippen Green, specifically her use of bold outlines and translucent colors.
- I CAN plan an illustration that tells a story or conveys a mood.
- I CAN use charcoal and watercolor (or colored pencils) on an illustration board to simulate Green's mixed-media approach.
- I CAN participate in a peer critique to refine my artwork.
- I CAN explain how Green's work reflects the historical context of women illustrators in the late 19th/early 20th century.

MATERIALS

- Examples of Elizabeth Shippen Green's illustrations (digital or printed)
- 9x12 inch Illustration board (one per student)
- Charcoal pencils or sticks
- Ink markers
- Fixative spray (for charcoal)
- Watercolor paints or high-quality colored pencils
- Paintbrushes, water cups, paper towels
- Mini Pastel Compressed Chalk Sticks

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Lesson 1. Introduction, Planning, and Underdrawing

- Introduction to Elizabeth Shippen Green (Connecting/Responding):
 - Show examples of Green's illustrations. Discuss her style: bold, hand-hewn lines, rich colors, "stained-glass" effect, and narrative quality. In groups students discuss what they think the story is about and how the artist is telling the story.
 - Briefly explain her historical context as a successful female illustrator ("New Woman" movement) who studied with Howard Pyle. Students take notes in sketchbook on use of historic clothing and objects in background. Use of color to help guide the viewer's eye through work.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN explain how Green's work reflects the historical context of women illustrators. (Exit ticket, verbal)
- Sketchbook Planning (Creating):

- Students choose a simple narrative or a mood they want to illustrate (e.g., a quiet moment, an adventure).
 - They create several small thumbnail sketches in their sketchbooks, focusing on composition and storytelling.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN plan an illustration that tells a story or conveys a mood.
- Charcoal Underdrawing on Illustration Board (Creating):
 - Students transfer their chosen design onto the illustration board using charcoal. Emphasize creating bold outlines as a key part of her style.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN use charcoal to create a bold underdrawing for my illustration.

Lesson 2. Adding Color and Refining

- Fixative and Color Application (Creating):
 - Spray the charcoal drawings with fixative (teacher discretion/assistance required due to ventilation and safety). This step mimics Green's technique to prevent smudging when adding color.
 - Students then apply watercolor (or colored pencils) over the charcoal. Encourage translucent application to let the outlines show through, similar to stained glass.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN use watercolor to add translucent color to my illustration.
- Peer Critique (Responding/Creating):
 - Students pair up and offer constructive feedback on their works in progress. They can discuss the effectiveness of the outlines, color choices, and how well the artwork conveys the intended message.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN participate in a peer critique to refine my artwork.

Lesson 3. Final Touches, Reflection, and Presentation

- Refinement and Final Details (Creating)
- Students make revisions based on peer feedback. They can use additional charcoal over the dry watercolor to add more detail or deepen shadows, applying another light layer of fixative if necessary.
- Class museum: students walk around and place Post-it notes on the works they have questions about, would buy, would hang, make them think, and they love. Artist Statement (Connecting/Creating):
 - Students write a short artist statement explaining their artistic choices, using art vocabulary (e.g., "composition," "translucent," "narrative," "mood," "illustration board").
- Exhibition and Reflection (Presenting/Responding):
 - Display the finished illustrations in the hallway of the school with student input on how to present the works.
 - Students can informally share their work and read their artist statements with labels connected to works of art.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN use my art words to explain how I made my art.
 - I CAN statement: I CAN explain the mood and message of the artwork by the use of the media and composition.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

- Formative:
 - Exit ticket on Artist
 - Teacher observation during studio time
 - Verbal feedback.
- Summative
 - Rubric
 - Artist statement
 - "I can" checklist

VOCABULARY

- Art Media & Techniques
 - Illustration Board: A heavy-duty, rigid surface used by professional illustrators that provides a sturdy base for painting and drawing.
 - Charcoal: A black, brittle drawing material made of burned wood used for sketching, underdrawing, and creating bold lines and shading.
 - Fixative: A spray used to coat and protect charcoal drawings from smudging, often making the surface ready for wet media like watercolor.
 - Translucent: Allowing light to pass through without being completely transparent. In this lesson, it describes the watercolor's effect over the charcoal lines.
 - Opaque: Not allowing light to pass through; solid color (the opposite of translucent).
 - Underdrawing: The initial sketch or drawing that serves as the foundation for a finished illustration or painting.
 - Mixed Media: Artwork that is created using more than one medium (e.g., combining charcoal and watercolor).
- Design & Composition
 - Composition: The arrangement of visual elements (shapes, lines, colors, forms) in a work of art, often used to guide the viewer's eye or create balance.
 - Narrative: The storytelling aspect of an illustration; what the artwork is "about" or the event it depicts.
 - Mood: The feeling or atmosphere conveyed by a work of art (e.g., calm, energetic, mysterious).
 - Style: A characteristic way in which an artist or group of artists expresses themselves.
- Historical & Contextual Terms
 - Illustrator/Illustration: An artist who creates images specifically to accompany written text (books, magazines, advertisements) to tell a story or explain a concept.
 - Golden Age of Illustration: A period in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when illustrative art flourished and became widely popular through mass-produced publications.
 - Howard Pyle: A famous illustrator and teacher from Delaware who mentored Elizabeth Shippen Green and other influential artists.
 - "New Woman": A term used in the late 19th century to describe the growing independence, education, and career aspirations of women during that era.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- Kennedy, Martha H., and Elizabeth Shippen Green. "About Elizabeth Shippen Green - a Petal from the Rose: Illustrations by Elizabeth Shippen Green | Exhibitions - Library of Congress." [Www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov), 25
- Norman Rockwell Museum. "Elizabeth Shippen Green - Illustration History." [Www.illustrationhistory.org](http://www.illustrationhistory.org), Norman Rockwell Museum, www.illustrationhistory.org/artists/elizabeth-shippen-green. Accessed 10 Nov. 2025. June 2012, www.loc.gov/exhibits/petal/about.html.
- Elzea, Rowland, and Elizabeth H Hawkes. A Small School of Art. 2025. 1980. <https://delart.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Elliott-Elizabeth-Shippen-Green.pdf>