

Communication PRinciples for Principals

SCHOOL YEAR 08/09 ISSUE FOUR | JANUARY 5, 2008

PICTURING AMERICA



IDEA

Encourage your teachers to share lesson plans using *Picturing America*. Visit <http://dodea.blackboard.com>, click on the *Picturing America* icon, and follow the instructions to self enroll.

Picturing America

ACCESS CODE:
PicturingAmerica
(one word)

Highlighting the *Picturing America* Educational Program

There is much to be celebrated in DoDEA's commitment to instruction and programs in the fine arts. Highlighting the *Picturing America* Educational Program is a great way to showcase this important aspect of our education program.

DoDEA has signed an interagency agreement with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that allows DoDEA to accept the innovative *Picturing America* educational program. *Picturing America* helps teach American history and provides students with a gateway to the entire universe of the humanities. It is a free resource that provides each participating institution with a comprehensive package of materials that includes:

- Forty high-quality color reproductions of selected masterpieces (24" x 36").
- A Teachers Resource Book providing a wide range of ideas and background information to support educators using the works of art in all subject areas.
- Additional resources and lesson plans available at <http://www.PicturingAmerica.neh.gov>.

All DoDEA Middle and High Schools received these materials through the USPS (DDESS schools) or the APO (all DoDDS schools) in October 2008. The materials are contained in a box clearly marked *Picturing America*. Supply clerks were asked to deliver these materials to the Information Centers (IC), where the images should be cataloged and included in the IC's circulating collection. Cataloging information and MARC records are shared on the IS Blackboard community. *Picturing America* images should be made available for checkout through the School Library Information Center.

Let parents know about this great partnership. Talk with staff members about ways to incorporate this art into instruction across the content areas.



DoDEA HQ Communications Office

4040 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203
USA

Telephone: 703.588.3030
Facsimile: 703.588.3000

Frank O'Gara: 703.588.3260
Frank.O'Gara@hq.dodea.edu

Elaine Kanellis: 703.588.3265
Elaine.Kanellis@hq.dodea.edu

Visit the DoDEA website
for more information.
<http://www.dodea.edu>

About *Picturing America*

Great art speaks powerfully, inspires fresh thinking, and connects us to our past.

Picturing America, an exciting new initiative from the National Endowment for the Humanities, brings masterpieces of American art into classrooms and libraries nationwide. Through this innovative program, students and citizens will gain a deeper appreciation of our country's history and character through the study and understanding of its art.

The nation's artistic heritage—our paintings, sculpture, architecture, fine crafts, and photography—offers unique insights into the character, ideals, and aspirations of our country. By bringing high-quality reproductions of notable American art into public and private schools, libraries, and communities, *Picturing America* gives participants the opportunity to learn about our nation's history and culture in a fresh and engaging way. The program uses art as a catalyst for the study of America—the cultural, political, and historical threads woven into our nation's fabric over time.

Consider displaying the forty pieces of art for the parents at a special school event.

TIPS



Why is *Picturing America* important and how is it a good public relations tool?

Perpetuating democracy is difficult. And it's become more difficult in an increasingly fast-paced, global environment. *Picturing America* conveys our common heritage and ideals by bringing us face to face with the people, places, and events that shaped our country. It provides an innovative way to experience America's history through our nation's art.



Allies Day, May 1917, 1917
Childe Hassam

By bringing some of our country's finest works of art directly to classrooms and providing the educational context for these images, we can open more eyes to the legacy of our great country.

How does *Picturing America* support our curriculum?

➤ Collectively, the masterpieces in *Picturing America*, used in conjunction with the Teachers Resource Book and program Web site, help students experience the humanity of history and enhance the teaching and understanding of America's past.

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- This cultural material can serve as a gateway to the entire world of the humanities. Materials allow students to learn in American history in the most direct way possible – through art. Teaching through a visual medium facilitates learning in a way not always possible in textbooks and lectures.
- *Picturing America* explores the story of our nation through its visual culture. *Picturing America* uses works of art to reveal important aspects of our history and culture. It portrays America’s history, ideals, and aspirations. It allows everyone, regardless of their location or income, to explore American art and enjoy the process of visual discovery.

How can teachers incorporate this program into their existing curriculum?

Picturing America is a tool for teaching American history and culture through our nation’s art, and is designed to serve as a gateway to the entire world of the humanities. Supplementary materials include resources and lesson plans for using the images to teach social studies, history, writing, literature, geography, civics, and other subjects. The images appeal to students and citizens of all ages, from elementary school through high school and beyond.

It is supported by Educator Resources

The National Endowment for the Humanities believes that engaging, masterful works of art can bring the story of America to life. When displayed on the walls of your classroom or library, *Picturing America*’s noteworthy, high-quality images offer an innovative way to teach American history and culture. These images, and the accompanying Teachers Resource Book, help students better understand America’s diverse people and places and connect them to our nation’s travails and triumphs.

Visual stimulation enhances learning and makes it more enjoyable. Art can introduce social studies, literature, civics, and even science and math in an immediate, tangible way. With *Picturing America*, students develop a deeper understanding of history and our shared human—and American—experience.

Get more information

For additional information about *Picturing America* program visit the website at PicturingAmerica.neh.gov. Please direct other questions via email or phone to Carla Southers, DoDEA IC Coordinator or Mark Bignell, DoDEA Fine Arts Coordinator, both of whom may be reached by email or phone at 703-588-3120 or 703-588-3114, respectively.

Acknowledgments

The information in this tip sheet for principals comes directly from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

