

ACTIVITY		EXPLORING LINKS BETWEEN PAINTING AND LITERATURE				
Level	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Target language	English Spanish	French Polish	Latvian German	Any*	Duration	1,5 h
Type of activity	1) Pair work and 2) Group discussion			Search for images Introduction to poetry and painting Learning new words and concepts		
Objective	Cultural	Approach of poetry and painting Development of knowledge (Tools to measure time, concept of “vanity”) Links between the arts.				
	Linguistic	Reading Listening		Speaking		
Description	<p>The teacher gives a copy of the poem “L'horloge” to each participant. They read it silently. The teacher asks to three of four learners to read it loudly. Difficult words are pointed and explained. By pairs, search of images of “clock” and “Water-clock”. Discussion about other tools used to measure time (e.g. sandglass...) By pairs, search of images of these other tools. Collective explication more deep on the meaning of the poem → it is a “vanitas” Searching for meaning of “Vanitas” Finding a link with “Vanitas” in painting, using encyclopedia, dictionaries and other sources of illustration.</p>					

* Using the appropriate translation of Charles Baudelaire: *L'horloge* in *Spleen et Idéal*, Les Fleurs du mal. 1857.

Photos

Pictures will be searched and selected by the participants on internet or in books (dictionaries, encyclopedias...) available in the classroom.

Examples of “Vanity” in painting:

- Georges de La Tour, Madeleine pénitente, XVIIème siècle.
- Pieter Claez
- Simon Renard Saint André, XVIIème siècle.

L'Horloge

Horloge ! dieu sinistre, effrayant, impassible,
Dont le doigt nous menace et nous dit : « Souviens-toi !
Les vibrantes Douleurs dans ton cœur plein d'effroi
Se planteront bientôt comme dans une cible

Le plaisir vaporeux fuira vers l'horizon
Ainsi qu'une sylphide au fond de la coulisse
Chaque instant te dévore un morceau du délice
A chaque homme accordé pour toute sa saison.

Trois mille six cents fois par heure, la Seconde
Chuchote : Souviens-toi ! Rapide avec sa voix
D'insecte, Maintenant dit : je suis Autrefois,
Et j'ai pompé ta vie avec ma trompe immonde !

Remember ! Souviens-toi ! Esto memor!
(Mon gosier de métal parle toutes les langues.)
Les minutes, mortel folâtre, sont des gangues
Qu'il ne faut pas lâcher sans en extraire l'or !

Souviens-toi que le Temps est un joueur avide
Qui gagne sans tricher, à tout coup ! c'est la loi.
Le jour décroît ; la nuit augmente, souviens-toi !
Le gouffre a toujours soif ; la clepsydre se vide.

Tantôt sonnera l'heure où le divin Hasard,
Où l'auguste Vertu, ton épouse encor vierge,
Où le repentir même (oh ! la dernière auberge !),
Où tout te dira : Meurs, vieux lâche ! il est trop tard ! »

— *Charles Baudelaire, Les Fleurs du mal, (1857).*

The Clock

Impassive clock! Terrifying, sinister god,
Whose finger threatens us and says: "Remember!
The quivering Sorrows will soon be shot
Into your fearful heart, as into a target;

Nebulous pleasure will flee toward the horizon
Like an actress who disappears into the wings;
Every instant devours a piece of the pleasure
Granted to every man for his entire season.

Three thousand six hundred times an hour, Second
Whispers: Remember! — Immediately
With his insect voice, Now says: I am the Past
And I have sucked out your life with my filthy trunk!

Remember! Souviens-toi, spendthrift! Esto memor!
(My metal throat can speak all languages.)
Minutes, blithesome mortal, are bits of ore
That you must not release without extracting the gold!

Remember, Time is a greedy player
Who wins without cheating, every round! It's the law.
The daylight wanes; the night deepens; remember!
The abyss thirsts always; the water-clock runs low.

Soon will sound the hour when divine Chance,
When august Virtue, your still virgin wife,
When even Repentance (the very last of inns!),
When all will say: Die, old coward! it is too late!"

— *William Aggeler, The Flowers of Evil (Fresno, CA: Academy Library Guild, 1954)*