Masterpiece: Mona Lisa
Artist: Leonardo Da Vinci

Objectives:
A. Identify characteristics of the art of Leonardo da Vinci.
B. Draw an exaggerated or stylized version of the Mona Lisa.

Materials:
- Photocopies or line drawings of Mona
- 12"x18" heavy weight drawing paper
- pencils, erasers
- Markers, pastels, and/or colored pencils.
- Mona Lisa art print
- Funny Mona Lisa PowerPoint

Process:
1. Ask students who painted the Mona Lisa?
2. Introduce/review the art of Leonardo Da Vinci. Show examples of his work. Point out his techniques and style. Hand out photocopy or line drawings of Mona Lisa.
4. Assign students the task of creating a parody of one of Leonardo’s most famous works, the Mona Lisa. We are going to “Mock the Mona Lisa.” Students must take the original version and create a parody, satire, or exaggeration of the work in their own style. Remind students that it must be evident upon completion of their project that we are looking at a drawing inspired by the Mona Lisa. It should be fairly obvious what their inspiration was.
5. Display student works together as a group display.

http://www.monalisamania.com/index.html
6th GRADE--PROJECT #3

Artist: Leonardo Da Vinci

Masterpiece: Mona Lisa

Lesson: Mona Lisa parodies

Project Samples:
Renaissance means "rebirth". It refers to the great period of creativity that began in Italy in the fourteenth century. Renaissance art is well known for techniques of perspective drawing, which depicted objects at different distances; this gave depth and illusion of space to the artwork. Four well-known artists of this time are: Michelangelo Buonarotti, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael Sanzio, and Donatello. We studied and compared some of their works and focused on the use of perspective in their paintings. We also discussed the single impact of what is probably the most famous and influential paintings of all times—the Mona Lisa. The students transferred this image and created their own "funny Mona Lisa" portrait.
Leonardo da Vinci was born in the small Italian town of Vinci in 1452. Da Vinci lived during a time when people all over Europe were becoming interested in art and this period was called the Renaissance. Leonardo started to draw when he was very young. He drew what he saw in the countryside near his home. Da Vinci was well known as an artist but he also was an architect, musician, sculptor, scientist, inventor, and mathematician.

When he was 15 his father took him to Florence, Italy to learn about being an artist. Leonardo used what he learned from nature and science to make his paintings look real. People were amazed at how realistic his paintings were. He gave the people in his paintings a feeling of movement and being alive. He also spent as much time on the background as he did on the subject of his paintings. Many of his paintings were so smooth you could hardly see a brush mark.

As an inventor Da Vinci used his art talent to make realistic drawings of machines to show how they would work.

The Mona Lisa is Da Vinci’s most famous painting. He painted it in 1503 at the age of 51. Ever since he painted it people have been talking about the mysterious look the lady has and especially her smile. No matter where you stand, the Mona Lisa is always looking right into your eyes. Leonardo painted only a few pictures after the Mona Lisa because he was more interested in working on his inventions and experiments.

Leonardo da Vinci died in France in 1519 at the age of 67.
The Renaissance

Renaissance means “rebirth”. It refers to the great period of artistic creativity that began in Italy in the fourteenth century. It was marked by a return to classical style in architecture, and naturalism in art. The spirit of art was one that celebrated earthly pleasures and displayed healthy curiosity! Art and science joined forces. It was a time of intelligence, growth, and progress. This flowering of the arts had long-lasting influences.

Renaissance thinkers returned to the ideals of ancient Greece and Rome. They celebrated the power and dignity of human beings; their ideas were based on humanism (the study of man) rather than theology (the study of God). Their religious paintings of real people in natural settings were fresh and joyful compared with the stiff stylized medieval art.

The Middle Ages ended when people began to travel and live in large cities. This was the beginning of the Renaissance period, during which there was a greater interest in science and past cultures. When the renaissance began, there was an overlap between its introduction and the ongoing medieval style in Northern Europe, also called Late Gothic Art. There were at the time, many excellent Flemish painters, like Pieter Brueghel the Elder, Jan van Eyck, and the ironical Hieronymous Bosch! Germany had its own school, too, and gave us painting greats, such as Hans Holbein the Younger, Durer, and Lucas Cranach. But, to this day, it is Italy we think of when we speak of the Renaissance.

Traditional art dates from the beginning of the fourteenth century to 1850. Religious themes were still the basis of art in the early part, but by the end of the fourteenth century in Europe the rebirth called the Renaissance began. A growth in trade, learning, travel, and culture inspired the art. Paintings of the Renaissance demonstrate the application of humanistic ideals learned from the ancients. In works from the middle Ages, saints and Biblical figures are arranged in unnatural, geometric groups, and backgrounds are nothing more than washes of gold. The Renaissance painter depicted the human figure as realistically as possible, often with backgrounds of the natural world. Science had taught the artist how to show linear perspective--that is, how to represent objects in relative sizes so that smaller objects appear to be farther from the viewer than larger objects. Careful use of light and shadow (called "chiaroscuro") made figures appear full and real. Renaissance painters not only portrayed objects with more realism than earlier artists did, they often filled their canvases with more objects, all carefully and accurately depicted.
Artists used tempera paints, which were kind of a watercolor that was thickened with egg yolks. The artists carefully studied the human anatomy so that they were able to portray it more naturally. Techniques of perspective, which depicted objects at different distances, were mastered. Renaissance artists studied many different subjects and did several things well. Three well-known artists from this time are Michelangelo Buonarotti, Leonardo da Vinci, and Raphael Sanzio. The Renaissance artists often used elaborate detail and textures, and light and shadows were important elements in their work. They discovered rules for creating distance and the illusion of space. During the Renaissance the artists sought the ideal of order.
Much has been written about Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519). We know he was a forward thinker (who wrote backwards) who was always looking for new ways to do things. We thought it might be interesting to place him in the 21st Century... in a personals ad.

**Aires Renaissance Man**

Gentle SWM vegetarian, love animals, plants, nature. Scientist, painter, inventor, engineer, mathematician, philosopher, musician, astronomer, botanist, geologist, cartographer, visionary. Despise war though I have worked as a military engineer to invent advanced deadly weapons. Love to paint, sketch, draw, fly. I'm told I am handsome, have a great physique, a splendid singing voice. Enjoy walks through the Alps. Looking for an enigmatic, mysterious woman with interior depth.

*Here's how the ad might have looked in "The Florence Gazette."*

**Aires Rinascimento Uomo**

Da Vinci's Chronology

1452: Born April 15, in Anchian near Vinci, Tuscany, Italy.
1467: Apprentices at the studio of Andrea del Verrocchio in Florence
1472: Accepted as member of Florentine painters guild, Compagnia di San Luca.
1473: Paints The Annunciation
1474: Paints Ginerva de' Benci and Madonna of the Carnation.
1477-81: Works independently in his own studio
1480: Invents prototype of the parachute
1481-1481: Paints Adoration of The Magi
1482-1489: Invited by Duke Ludovico Sforza to work in Milan, leaves unfinished Adoration of the Magi.
1483: Paints first version of Virgin of The Rocks, begins equestrian statue.
1490: designs Il Paridiso, theatrical produced for Sforza-Aragon nuptials.
1495-98: Paints The Last Supper
1500: Went to Mantua, Venice and Florence after Milan was captured by the French troops.
1502: Military Architect for Cesare Borgia
1503-06: Returns to Florence. Paints the Mona Lisa and begins work on The Battle of Anghiari (unfinished).
1506: Leaves Florence for Milan
1510: Completes painting Virgin and Child with St. Anne
1513-16: Goes to Rome at the invitation of Guiliano de Medici
1516-19: Leaves for Cloux, near Amboise on the River Loire at the invitation of King Francis I
1519: May 2, dies at Cloux, at the age of 67.
Trivia about the Mona Lisa:

The Mona Lisa is known as "La Joconde" in France, "La Gioconda" in Italy and as the "Mona Lisa" everywhere else in the world.

Lisa Gherardini Giocondo (Mona Lisa) was born in 1479 and would have been about 24 years old when Leonardo painted her. Her father was a Florentine Nobel Antonio Maria Di Noldo Gherardini.

In 1495 at the age of 16, Lisa married Francesco Di Bartolomeo Di Zanobi del Giocondo who was twice a widower and 19 years her senior. He became wealthy in the silk trade and is believed to have commissioned da Vinci to paint his wife's portrait though it did not end up in his collection.

Leonardo da Vinci carried the Mona Lisa with him for years. Took it to Milan, Rome and France. Impressing other painters with his mastery of style and techniques never seen before.

Sfumato [sfoo MAH toh] is an effect used by da Vinci to create the Mona Lisa. The word "sfumato" is derived from the Italian word "sfumare", which means "to evaporate". In the Mona Lisa, da Vinci used this technique by shading tones into each other to create soft blurred outlines. Tones blend (or evaporate) into one another to eliminate sharp lines and create an atmospheric effect.

The name Vinci comes form the word for the rushes that grow in the banks of a local stream. Leonardo identified himself with the interlacing Vinci plant which was often woven and braided. It became a recurring theme in his work. He drew several elaborate entwined knots in his notebooks and painted them as details; including the bodice of Mona Lisa's dress.

In the 1530's the painting was acquired by Francis I, King of France for approximately $105,000. Viewing was reserved for the upper class at the Fontainebleau, a 16th century chateau.

By 1625 the painting was already famous and the Duke of Buckingham tried to acquire it for England.

In the 1650's, before it became a museum, the painting was moved to the Louvre, a royal residence.

During the 1700's it was kept in the king's private residence. In the 1800's it hung in Napoleons bedroom in the Tuilieres until 1804 when it was moved to the Grand Galleries of the Louvre Museum.

When the Louvre opened to the public, the Mona Lisa became accessible to the masses. Many painted copies and reproductions emerged. Writers and poets wrote about her, and idealized her. By the mid-1800's she was a legend.
In 1911 the Mona Lisa was stolen from the museum. Newspapers wrote about it, printed her picture, offered rewards. She became the subject of plays, cartoons and tribute making her a household name.

Pablo Picasso was brought in for questioning in 1911 when the Mona Lisa was stolen. He had previously purchased stone sculptures from an acquaintance (named Pieret) which had actually been stolen from the Louvre months before the Mona Lisa disappeared. Picasso thought Pieret might have also stolen the Mona Lisa.

In 1939 when France entered World War II the Louvre evacuated most works of art including the Mona Lisa, loading them into freight trains taking them to more than 72 storerooms away from Paris.

La Joconde a le sourire, or "the Mona Lisa is still smiling," served as a coded message during World War II to indicate the works of art in storage were safe.

In 1963 the Mona Lisa was shown at the National Gallery in the U.S. where a million and a half viewers stood in line for a glimpse of her.

In 1963 Salvador Dali wrote an article for Art News discussing his theories on why the Mona Lisa has provoked "violent and varied kinds of aggressions", such as Duchamp's creation "L.H.O.O.Q." The article was reprinted by Art News in celebration of the publications 90ith anniversary. It can be found in the November 1992 edition, page 166.

The Mona Lisa was displayed in Japan at the Tokyo National Museum in the Spring of 1974. The painting attracted over 1.5 million visitors creating a record for exhibition attendance in Japan. This record has yet to be broken.

The triplex glass box protecting the Mona Lisa was a gift from the Japanese after its tour there in 1974.

In 1982, Japanese artist Tadahiko Ogawa of Kyoko Japan recreated "The Mona Lisa" in a toaster from 65 pieces of white bread. This was the first in his series of toaster made pieces. Others include da Vinci's "Last Supper," and Botticelli's "Birth of Venus."

In 1502 Leonardo da Vinci designed a bridge to span the Golden Horn inlet at Istanbul. A smaller adaptation of Leonardo's design was constructed in the town of Aas in southern Norway. The bridge, often referred to as the "Mona Lisa" of bridges now links Oslo with Aas.

Lego artist Eric Harshbarger created a piece titled Mona Lego; in November of 2000. Harshbarger masterfully recreated the Mona Lisa using over 30,000 Lego's in the 6 basic LEGO colors: black, blue, green, red, white, and yellow.

The smallest Mona Lisa was painted by Yves Gerard from Luxembourg. The piece measures 9x13
millimeters. It is currently housed at the Musee de la Miniature in Drome France.

Contemporary artist Karen Eland created her rendition of the Mona Lisa, titled *Mona Latte* by using coffee as paint.

Karen Savell created the World’s Largest Paint-by-Number Mona Lisa, titled *Mega Mona*. It measures a whopping 44” X 62” on canvas!

A Mona Lisa character appeared in the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Episode titled "Raphael Meets His Match." The Turtles (Raphael, Leonardo, and Donatello) join Mona Lisa (who is also a turtle) to capture the evil captain who transformed her into a mutant.

The Mona Lisa appears on a limited edition Artifact card from the Star Trek: Next Generation customizable card game. The image of a Federation shuttle is visible in the background of the painting.

You may grow a Mona Lisa in your garden by planting a "Mona Lisa" lily. This beautiful fragrant flower grows to about two feet high or less and is beautifully colored in various shades of pink.

Since 1990, French performance artist Orlan has undergone plastic surgery six times in order to look like a computer generated ideal pieced together with traits found in art. Surgeons altered her face by giving the artist Mona Lisa's forehead, the nose of Gerome's Psyche, the chin of Botticelli's Venus as well as other traits from various works. Each operation is treated as a performance piece Orlan refers to as "Carnal art."

In 2000 a huge exhibition called "Les 100 Sourires de Monna Lisa (The 100 Smiles of Mona Lisa)" toured Japan. The exhibition featured works of artists who have copied and parodied da Vinci's masterpieces over the past five centuries. Some works included in the exhibition were Duchamps famous parody "L.H.O.O.Q" and Botero's "Mona Lisa at the Age of Thirteen." A painting of the landscape background titled "Back in Five Minutes" was also included in the exhibition, which was painted by

A mini series titled "Mona Lisa no Hohoemi (Mona Lisa's Smile)" aired in Japan from January 12 through March 2002. The show alleges that da Vinci secretly painted another version of the Mona Lisa that is believed to be somewhere in Japan. The main character, Tachibana Masayuki, is a famous auctioneer on a quest to locate the da Vinci's work for his own collection.

Because the Mona Lisa is priceless she is uninsured. (See FAQ page for more information).

In 2005 Diane Shipley DeCillis and Mary Jo Firth Gillett co-edited and anthology, *Mona Poetica*, devoted to the Mona Lisa and creativity in general.
It was called the biggest art heist in history, in 1911- An employee of the museum left with the Mona Lisa hidden under his house painters smock. Vincenzo Peruggia noticing a large number of Italian paintings in the French national collection, assumed they were stolen by Napoleon. He wanted to pilfer the Mona Lisa and return to Italy because he thought it was the most beautiful. It was not returned until 1913 when he attempted to sell it to a collector.

Early on the morning of August 21st, 1911, a workman, Vincenzo Peruggia found himself alone in the Salon Carre at the Louvre. He left unnoticed with the Mona Lisa under his house painter smock.

Eduardo de Valfierno, an Argentine con man put Peruggia up to stealing the painting. He hired an art forger who made six copies of the stolen painting and sold it to unscrupulous collectors who thought they were getting the real thing. The deal made the equivalent of 67 million today for him. Peruggia kept it stored in the false bottom of a trunk until he naively offered it for sale to a Florence art dealer and was caught. (Quoted from: Joseph Harris, Smithsonian, May 1999)

December 30th, 1956, a Bolivian named Ugo Ungaza Villegas, stared at the Mona Lisa for awhile, then threw a rock at it, damaging a speck of pigment near her left elbow.

Mona Lisa is now protected by a formidable railing, bulletproof glass and will have her own room at the Louvre.
**Renaissance**- French for rebirth of art, literature and science in the revival of the spirit of Greece and Rome. Involves the concept of Humanism and the importance of the individual and secular life. The Renaissance brought printmaking, mechanical arts, manufacturing and international trade that made available new materials and processes.

**High Renaissance**- 1500-1530 Painting in Italy reached a peak of technical mastery and artistic expression. Leonardo, Michelangelo and Raphael contributed to this with innovations in composition, ideal proportions and perspective. Leonardo developed techniques of chiaroscuro and easel painting.

**Chiaroscuro**- means light/dark in Italian. Introduced by Leonardo, it is the contrast between pronounced light and dark areas in the painting used to create an illusion of depth and space.

**Sfumato**- A delicate blurring and blending that fuses one tone on to another. In Italian it means hazy or smudged and is related to smoke or a smoky quality. Leonardo uses this smudging instead of lines to define the corner of the eyes and mouth. The effect gives the illusion of the corners but allows one to use their imagination in different ways.

**Glaze**- A thin film of transparent color laid over dried paint. When several layers are applied (as they are even to the pupils of Mona Lisa's eyes), it creates the effect of luminosity. Light penetrates through the transparent layer and reflects from the under layer through the glaze.

**Perspective**- the illusion of depth created on a flat surface to represent three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface. Painters in the early 15th c observed that angles of shapes, roof tops etc. appeared to converge on a single point, called the vanishing point known as linear perspective. The vanishing point in the Mona Lisa occurs behind her head.

**Aerial perspective**- In landscape painting it is the illusion of recession created by the depiction of atmospheric effects, mist etc. The colors in the distance appear progressively fainter and cooler.

**Pyramidal composition**- Profile portraits and figures grouped on a horizontal plane gave way to a more three-dimensional triangular composition. Figures were placed around the central imagery giving the work symmetry and stability. Mona Lisa occupied the painting in a pyramid shape giving her a three-dimensional quality. Her
portrait is broader at the base occupying the foreground while the background recedes in depth.

**Three Quarter Pose**  Though the Flemish had used the three-quarter pose in the 1430s, painting in 1500's Florence was done in profile revealing very little about the sitter. Leonardo introduced this new three-quarter pose. The sitter turns the trunk of the body facing frontal to give life and movement to the portrait and allow eye contact. This new frontal pose explored the interior as well as the exterior of the sitter.

**Tempra**  Painting that uses colors made of ground pigment in a liquid emulsion such as egg yolk or thin glue and water. The pigments are ground into a paste with a small amount of water and kept in a jar. When ready to use the artist adds equal parts paste and egg yolk. In the 15th century egg tempura was not sufficient for the new innovative techniques and artists began to use oil painting.

**Fresco**  Italian for fresh. Mural painting technique in which permanent pigments are painted on freshly laid plaster. The pigments are absorbed into the wet wall and become a permanent part of the surface.

**Cartoon**  Full sized drawings used as models for finished paintings or frescoes. Pinpricks were often made to outline the images to be transferred to the final surface.