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## Great Books, Great Art

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<b>Grade Level</b>	9-12
<b>Subject Area</b>	literature, the arts
<b>Curriculum Focus</b>	literature, reading, art
<b>Duration</b>	five one-hour classes

### Objective

1. To enrich students' understanding of a literary work through careful reading and analysis of selected key scenes
2. To have students recognize how arts media can be integrated into literature studies
3. To acquaint students with masterpieces of world art
4. To reinforce learning through the use of technology, specifically through searches of selected Internet sites

### Materials


copies of literary text or texts read by all students; composition paper and Xeroxed copies of [student handouts](#), which accompany this activity; thesauruses and

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dictionaries; computers with Internet access; [Discovery Channel School art gallery](#); \*optional, but very effective for a final presentation to class: a Galaxy or similar projector that would allow students to download and present their chosen works of art on a large screen for the entire class

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### Procedure

Artistic creativity is expressed in various ways. An author uses the written language while an artist uses visual language. Either is capable of presenting complex, powerful, and intense ideas. This activity is designed to encourage students to see the connections between these creative forms.

Print out the [student handouts](#). The students begin with an examination of a work of literature they have just completed reading; while a novel best suits this activity, another genre can be used. The activity may be used so that all students work with the same book or each group works with a different book. It may also be used as a final independent project for individual portfolios.

For a class activity, begin by dividing the class into groups of four or five students. Each group will be a publishing team and will collaborate to compile a great book/great art product. The fact that all students are working with the same literary text should not affect originality and diversity of choices.

This activity relies heavily on the use of computers with Internet access so be sure to set aside ample browsing time for groups to visit the [gallery](#). The browsing is time-consuming but vital to the activity. You could limit the activity to American painters or painters of the 20th century, for example, or require at least one work of art to be a creation of the culture and the time period in which the book was written.

An alternative to the Internet browsing is to have students do this activity through library research. Instead of working with computers, they could find in art books the samples that are mentioned and provided on the Web site. They could also find their companion pieces to the literary work by perusing art books. Sharing the final products would require the small groups to provide pictures of the works of art they've selected.

For grading this assignment, teachers can take advantage of some logical points at which they can monitor progress and assess work: at the completion of Phase IA; at the completion of Phase IB; and at the completion of the final product, Phase IID. A suggestion for weighting of parts would be 20 percent for Phase IA, 40 percent for Phase IB, and 40 percent for the final product IID.

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### Extension

After sharing results of the activity, students may be led into a discussion of what constitutes a great book and what constitutes great art. If they have not engaged in a discussion of this nature about the book they have read, encourage them to do so. They could also be encouraged to gather more information about some of the painters whose works they chose and discover why they hold positions of prominence in the art world.

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Our thanks to Alisa Soderquist, an English teacher at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology in Alexandria, Virginia.

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