

Georgia O'Keefe

1887-1986



Early Years

- Born on Nov. 15, 1887 in Sun Prairie, WI (on a dairy farm).
- Enjoyed art as a child and her parents decided she had enough talent to receive private art lessons.
- Knew she wanted to be an art teacher by the time she graduated high school.
- Family tradition to get a good education, so attended the Art Institute of Chicago.
- Went to NY and studied at the Art League.
- From 1911-1918 she taught art at schools in Virginia, Texas, and South Carolina



Middle Years

- In 1916 she met Alfred Stieglitz, an important photographer and strong supporter of modern art.
- He exhibited her work in his NY gallery.
- In 1918, she moved to NY, gave up teaching, and devoted her life to her own art.
- In 1924 (37 years old), she married Alfred Stieglitz.
- O'Keefe was strongly influenced by landscapes, each year she left NY city to retreat to the country.
- She painted flowers during this time. She used clean colors, sharp edges, and strong patterns. Her flowers are all very close up.





Later Years

- In 1929 she visited New Mexico for the first time. The natural wonders provided her with inspiration for landscapes, flowers, and bones.
- She visited NM every year until 1949 when she moved there permanently.
- NM's natural wonders were the subject of her work for the next 37 years.
- She drew for 60 years and created over 900 pieces of art and wrote her autobiography.
- Georgia O'Keefe died on March 6, 1986 at the age of 98 in Santa Fe, NM.





Ram's Head With Hollyhock



In the 1920's O'Keeffe moved to Taos, New Mexico.

She loved the desert! She would take long walks and admire the scenery.

She collected dried animal bones from her desert walks and soon had a great collection.

This painting incorporates everything Georgia loved to paint – landscapes, bones, and flowers.

Skull is very detailed and close up, landscape is distant.

Rancho's Church



- This is a painting of an actual church in Taos, New Mexico in the 1920's.
- Georgia loved to walk behind the church and study the building's unusual shape and form.
- She would go at different times of the day to notice how the church looked as the light and sky changed.
- She painted many versions of this church over the years.

Art Project- Flower Painting

Just as Georgia O'Keeffe did, the children will paint single flowers which will fill up their whole paper.

Materials needed: construction paper, pencils, oil pastels

- Bring in fresh or artificial flowers for the children to observe. Ask the children to look carefully at the parts of the flowers. Point out the simple shape of an individual petal and how that shape is repeated over and over. Look closely at the center of the flower and its different textures. Talk about the variety of colors on each flower.
- Using pencils, have the children draw the basic outline or outer edge of their flowers on their paper. Encourage them to draw their outlines so big that they touch or even go off the edge of the paper.
- Use oil pastels to paint the flowers. Have fun!

