

American MASTERS

Norman Rockwell: Illustrator of Small Town America

What We Learned:

- Norman Rockwell always wanted to be an artist and began art school at age 14.
- When he was 22, he became an illustrator for *The Saturday Evening Post*; throughout his career, he painted 322 covers.
- Rockwell painted everyday scenes, small-town life, and historical events.
- He used live models, costumes, and props. Eventually he used photography with his models.
- Rockwell also worked 10 years for *Look* magazine painting more serious American subjects including civil rights, poverty, and space exploration.



Art Activity: *Storytelling Picture*

Norman Rockwell was a great storyteller. It has been said that you could look at his painting and know the story behind it within 30 seconds of viewing it. Every included detail was intentional and added to the storyline.

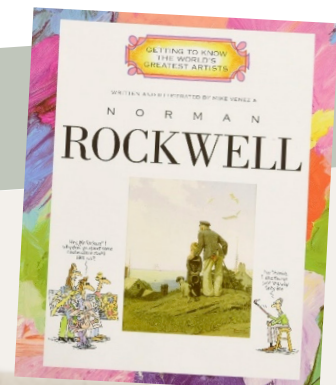
The students chose an interesting event or happening to draw as a Post cover. They added specific details to help tell their story visually. By using watercolor pencils, students were able to draw and color their illustration, allowing them to finish their work with watercolor at home.

THE SATURDAY
EVENING POST



Book Nook

Norman Rockwell
By Mike Venezia



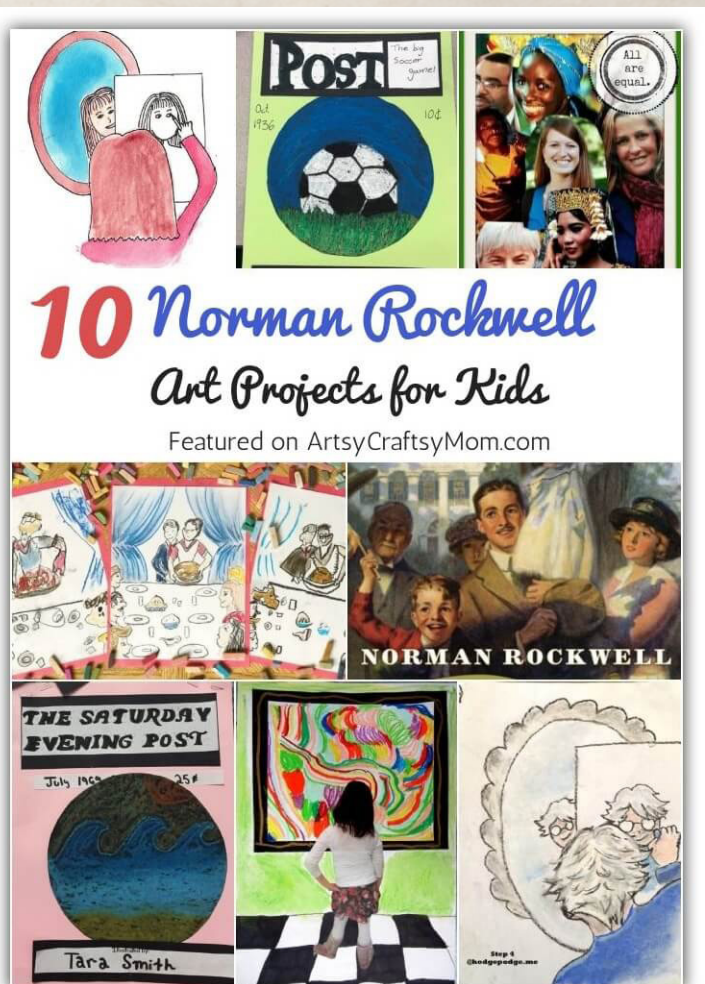
For Parents:

Norman Rockwell was born in New York in 1894 and died in 1978 at the age of 84. He began art classes when he was 14, and by age 22 he was illustrating for *The Saturday Evening Post*, which was a coveted job for illustrators of his day. Rockwell was a great storyteller, but he used paints and canvas instead of penned words on paper. His illustrations were used for calendars, books, and several magazines. His original artworks number over 4,000. Rockwell may be best known for his *Four Freedoms: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Want & Freedom from Fear*. These were illustrated after Franklin Roosevelt's speech on freedom, and the paintings toured America to raise money for WWII. Norman Rockwell is known as "America's Artist."

Please note: As M&G's host location for *Homeschool Days*, Mack Library will feature books each month for parents to reference as resources. We hope these additional features will further support your teaching at home.

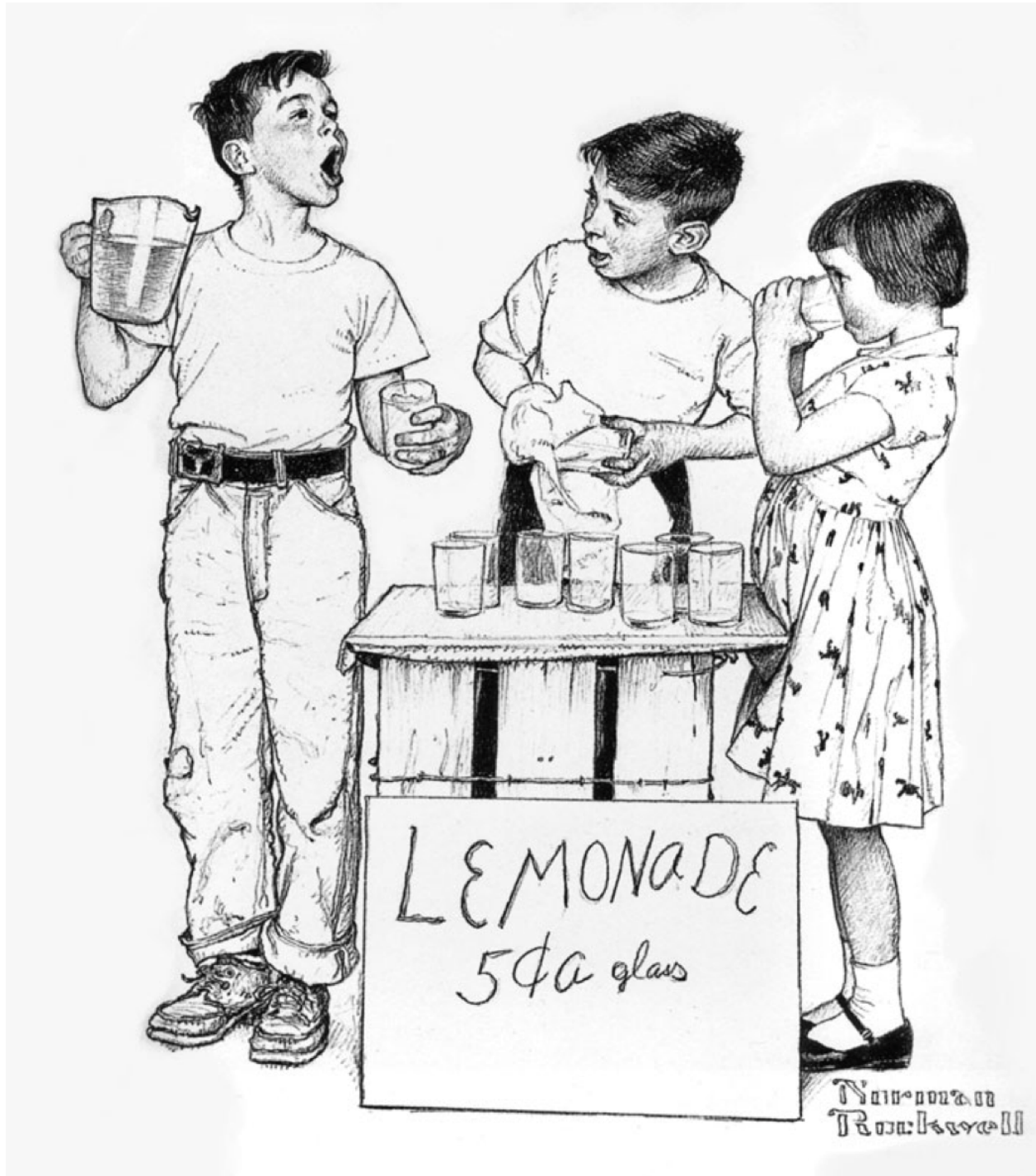
Connections at Home:

By following this link: [10 Fascinating Norman Rockwell Art Projects for Kids](#), you can choose from 10 Norman Rockwell projects that best fits your child's artistic abilities and interest.



Coloring Page: *Lemonade Stand*, 1955 by Norman Rockwell

This picture and text are part of an exhibition called, *Norman Rockwell and the American Family* at the Norman Rockwell Museum. "In the 1950s and 1960s, the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company of Springfield, Massachusetts, commissioned illustrator Norman Rockwell to create scenes reflecting American family life for its national advertising campaign. These popular images appeared in such leading publications as *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Time* and *Newsweek* with text that inspired readers to consider purchasing life insurance."



Norman Rockwell's April Fool Series

“The covers turned seemingly innocent depictions of American life upside-down with hundreds of top-sy-turvy injections of laughable absurdity. The first of the paintings appeared on April 3, 1943; the second on March 31, 1945; and the final April Fools’ Day cover on April 3, 1948. The scenes are simple Rockwell “Americana”: an elderly couple playing chess, a man fishing while leaning against a tree, and a girl shopping for a doll—all comically, nonsensically twisted.” *The Saturday Evening Post*

April Fool, 1948

Can you find the 56 errors in Rockwell's third April Fools painting?

To see the errors listed go to [Norman Rockwell's April Fools Covers | The Saturday Evening Post](#)



Additional Resources

To learn more about Norman Rockwell, click on the links below:

- For Rockwell information, videos, artwork, and more check out the Norman Rockwell Museum in Stockbridge, MA: <https://www.nrm.org>
- Parents can continue the instruction of illustrator Norman Rockwell with the teacher packet from the Norman Rockwell Museum: www.nrm.org/pdfs/teacher_resource.pdf
- To find more Norman Rockwell biography information and fun activities visit: [Norman Rockwell Biography and Activities for Kids - Liberty Hill House](#)
- View a short video to watch Rockwell's painting process: [Norman Rockwell's Painting Process \(youtube.com\)](#)
- See the details and story behind Rockwell's famous painting, Triple Self-Portrait, with this video: [Rockwell Video Minute: Triple Self-Portrait \(youtube.com\)](#)
- For many more Rockwell videos go to: [Rockwell Video Minute | The Saturday Evening Post](#)

Due to the changing nature of web resources, M&G strongly urges you as the parent to preview these sites before your child accesses them. The fact that these sites are available on this handout does not imply that M&G endorses their content from the standpoint of morals, philosophy, theology, or scientific hypotheses.

M&G Educational Mission:

Through tours, events, and publications, the Museum & Gallery seeks to partner with educators in fulfilling all of the National Visual Arts Content Standards. By integrating art into the core curriculum, M&G's goals are to teach children to value the arts, to communicate through the arts, to become creative problem solvers through the inclusion of STEAM-related concepts and fully-developed STEAM units, to understand history and culture in light of the arts, to improve literary interest and understanding through visual storytelling, to critique the arts, and to develop an aesthetic awareness of the arts. Through fulfilling the mission, M&G is able to help develop citizens who have the ability to think, feel, and understand the world in which they live.

