



THE IMAGINATIVE WORLD:
Prominent Women Artists



VICTORIAN ENGLAND: THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS



WHAT WE LEARNED:

- We discovered that the artists covered today were all inspired by the various people, painters, and illustrators we've been learning about all year!
- We learned that during the early Victorian era, woman artists were thought of as amateurs—regardless of their skill.
- We explored the lives and art of five women artists: Kate Bunce, Marie Spartali Stillman, Emily Mary Osborne, Emma Brownlow, and Adelaide Claxton. Their imaginative work helped change the way Victorians viewed women artists.

ART ACTIVITY: Botanical Drawings

Over the course this academic year, we studied many important Victorian figures. Today your little learners were introduced to some 19th-century female artists. We observed the fantastical paintings by artists like Marie Spartali Stillman and Kate Bunce. Together we noticed the elaborate scenery which is iconic in each of these masterful Victorian artworks. To wrap up our time together, your child was able to create a botanical picture. They drew their flowers and plants on a fabric or vinyl square and used oil pastels to make them pop!



FOR Parents

During much of the Victorian era female painters were generally considered novices—regardless of their skill. Kate Bunce, Marie Spartali Stillman, Emily Mary Osborne, Emma Brownlow, and Adalaide Claxton (the artists highlighted in this lesson) did much to alter that misconception. Through their talent and influence the Royal Academy recognized their artistic skill and the quality of their works, including them in their annual art exhibitions (and ultimately opening its doors to female students in the 1900s.) Wealthy patrons like Queen Victoria also began to take note, paving the way for women to enter the professional art world.

A CLOSER LOOK: Marie Spartali Stillman



As we learned in today's lesson Marie Stillman's painting *La Pensierosa* (or *The Thoughtful*) used blossoms from the purple plum leaf tree as a way to get us thinking about the title as it relates to this young girl. In "flower language" these blossoms represent perseverance, resilience, and hope.

Take some time to re-examine the painting and jot down some notes on the following questions:

- What do you think this young girl is pondering?
- What does her expression reveal about her mood?
- What might the artist's addition of these specific flowers tell us about the ending of the girl's "story"?

Once you've finished your examination, use your notes and write two to five paragraphs that unfold your version of her story. To explore more about the Victorian language of flowers click [HERE](#).

BOOK Nook

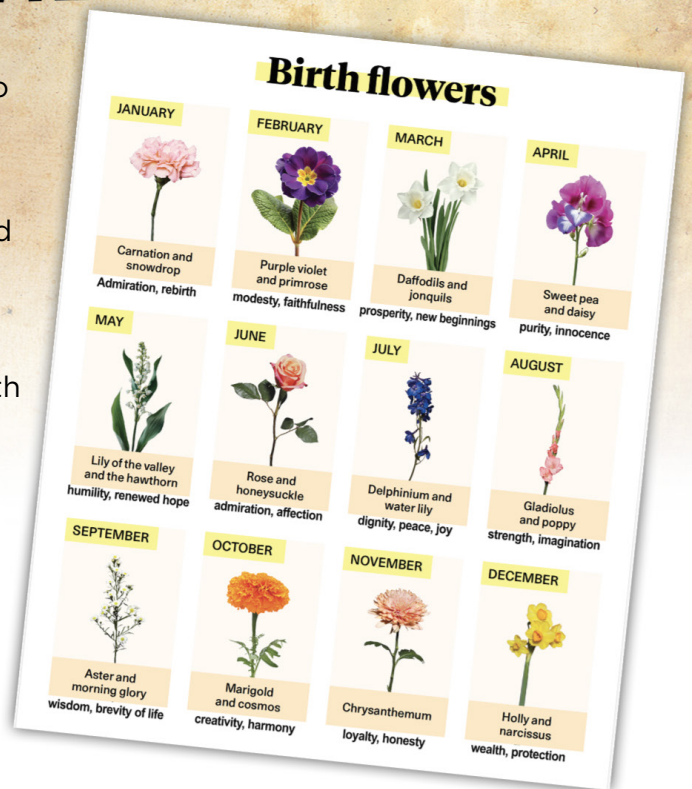
13 Women Artists Children Should Know
By Bettina Shuemann



CONNECTIONS AT HOME: Birth Month Flowers

“The tradition of birth month flowers dates back to ancient Rome, when people celebrated birthdays with floral gifts and offerings. . . Over time, certain flowers became associated with each month based on seasonal availability, birthstone colors, and regional growing traditions.” (Martha Stewart)

Take a look at the chart to the right to find the birth flowers for each person in your family. Then using what you’ve learned design a family garden. (Or think about “gifting” a family member with a birth flower bouquet for their next birthday.) To learn more about each month’s flower click [HERE](#).



EMMA BROWNLOW: Foundling Museum Paintings

As we learned in today’s lesson, Emma Brownlow and her family were well acquainted with the plight of the poor, especially foundlings. Emma’s father, John Brownlow, was brought up in London’s Thomas Coram Foundling Hospital. He later became its director. Emma recounts several happy memories of growing up at the hospital. Once she became an artist, she produced three paintings for the hospital. The first one, *The Foundling Restored to Its Mother*, we studied in our lesson. The other two are *The Christening* and *The Sick Room*;



Take time to look carefully at each work. As you do, answer the following questions:

1. How are these works similar?
2. How do they differ?
3. Of the three which one would you choose to write a story about? Why?

ADDITIONAL Resources

- Learn more about floriography by watching [The Secret Victorian Language of Flowers](#).
- Learn more in [History of Women Artists for Children](#).
- See (and read about) [Emma Brownlow's Self-Portrait](#).
- Learn about [The Foundling Museum's Resources and Shared Stories](#).
- Learn about [The Foundling Museum's Story](#).

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.



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