



Saige™

Learning Guide

Draw on students' imaginations and nurture their creativity through the stories of Saige Copeland, Girl of the Year 2013

Developed by
American Girl
and Americans
for the Arts

 American Girl®



About the Author

Jessie Haas

Jessie Haas grew up loving horses, drawing horses, riding horses, and reading every horse book she could find, so it's no wonder that when she began writing, most of her books turned out to be about horses. She has written more than 30 acclaimed books for young readers—from picture books, easy readers, and historical fiction to poetry and craft and activity books.

Jessie's award-winning fiction titles include *Chase*, named a 2007 Junior Library Guild Premier Selection; *Jigsaw Pony*, a 2005 Gryphon Award Honor Book; *Shaper*, winner of a 2002 Golden Kite Honor Award; and *Unbroken*, winner of a 1999 Parent's Choice Gold Award and named best book of the year by *Publishers Weekly* and *School Library Journal*. Her nonfiction book *Horse Crazy* was awarded a 2009 Teacher's Choice Award and an American Horse Publications Award.

A graduate of Wellesley College, Jessie now lives in a solar-powered cabin next door to the Westminster, Vermont, farm she grew up on. She shares her home with her husband, Michael J. Daley (also a children's book author), two cats, a dog, and an adventurous hen. Her brave and opinionated Morgan horse, Robin, lives on the family farm, along with a small herd of Irish Dexters, a rare breed of cattle.

Dear Teacher,

Saige Copeland, American Girl's 2013 Girl of the Year, is a spirited, talented girl who comes to realize that the arts—both of today and of long ago—are worth protecting. Saige's stories encourage readers to explore the arts, to share their artistic passions with others, and to promote art in their schools and communities. Saige's stories also highlight the power of creativity and imagination in helping us overcome challenges big and small.

American Girl has teamed up with Americans for the Arts to create this learning guide, which encourages children to draw on their imaginations and discover just how creative they can be. Students in grades 3 to 6 will enjoy reading Saige's stories and trying the fun, inspiring art activities outlined in this curriculum.

Saige story synopsis

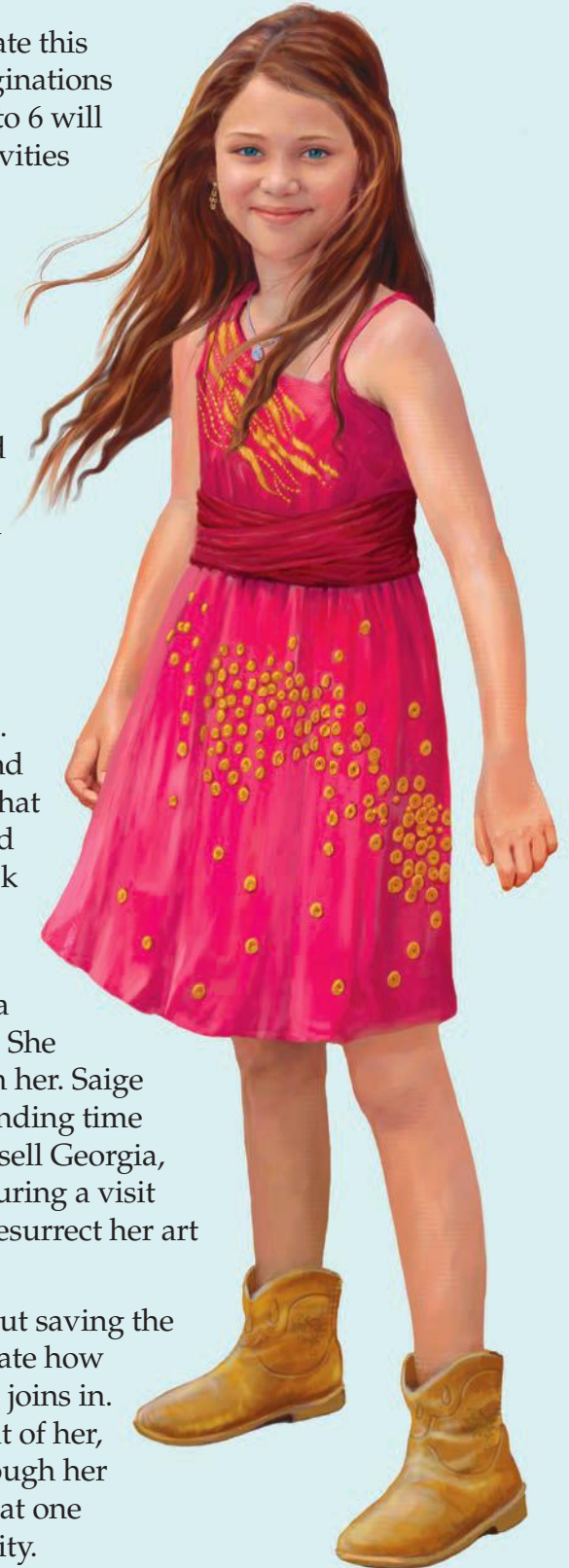
Ten-year-old Saige Copeland loves riding horses and painting in the art studio on her grandma Mimi's ranch, just outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Because of funding cuts, Saige has only music classes at school but no art, which frustrates her and separates her from her musical friend Tessa. So when Mimi joins forces with the PTA to organize a "save the arts" fund-raiser and parade, Saige jumps on board.



Saige starts getting Mimi's old horse Picasso ready for his role in the parade. Then Mimi is injured in an accident, and Saige waits and worries, wondering what she can do to help Mimi. Can Saige ride Picasso in the parade and make her grandma proud? Can she still raise money to bring back art at school? With the help of her new friend, Gabi, Saige is determined to try.

The fund-raiser is a success, but Mimi has to spend six weeks in a rehab center to heal her broken leg, and Saige misses her terribly. She misses her friend Tessa, too, who seems to be growing apart from her. Saige takes comfort in riding Mimi's youngest horse, Georgia, and spending time in her grandma's art studio. When she learns that Mimi plans to sell Georgia, Saige is devastated. Why does everything have to change? But during a visit to Mimi, Saige discovers a dusty art room and hatches a plot to resurrect her art afternoons with Mimi.

Once she's creating art again, Saige becomes *more* passionate about saving the arts at school. She and Gabi organize a Day of Beige to demonstrate how boring the world would be without art and color, and even Tessa joins in. Saige still worries about losing Georgia, but by painting a portrait of her, Saige hopes to find a way to "preserve" the horse she loves. Through her efforts, Saige weaves together generations of artists and learns that one girl can do a *lot* to promote the arts at school and in her community.



Activity 1: Color Your World

Much of Saige's artwork is inspired by her surroundings: the blue New Mexico sky, the bright hot-air balloons at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta®, and the Sandia Mountains, which appear bluish gray in the morning and watermelon pink in the afternoon and evening. This activity invites students to explore warm colors and cool colors. Consider opening the lesson by showing students the "Saige Color Wheel" posted at www.americangirl.com/guides.

Activity 2: Express Yourself

Mimi's horse is named after Pablo Picasso, who was known for his *monochromatic* paintings, made up of shades of a single color. Consider opening this lesson by sharing a piece of art from Picasso's "blue period," such as *The Blind Man's Meal* (1903), and another from his "rose period," such as *Boy with a Pipe* (1905) or *Family of Acrobats* (1905).

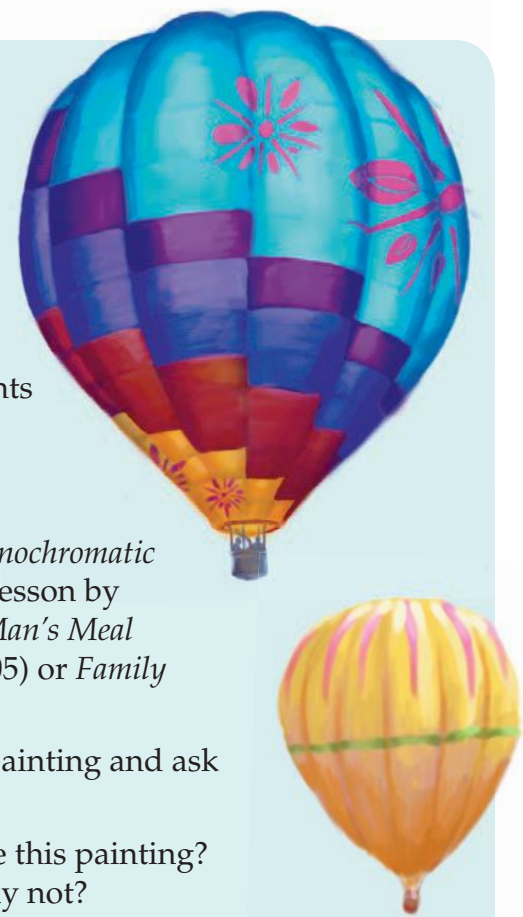
To help students compare and contrast the two paintings, share each painting and ask the following questions:*



- Do you like this painting? Why or why not?
- Look carefully at the painting. What colors do you see?
- What is going on in the painting? List what you see, no matter how small.
- What ideas or emotions do you think this work expresses?
- How do you think Picasso might have felt when he created this painting? Does it make you feel one way or another?
- What would you have called this painting if you had made it yourself? Does the actual title of the work make sense to you?
- What have you discovered from looking at this painting? What have you learned about yourself or others?
- Now that we've talked more about this painting, do you like it? Why or why not?

When you've finished the series of questions for both paintings, ask: "Do these two works look alike? What is similar about the way they look? How are they different?"

*Questions adapted from Davis, J. (1996). *The MUSE BOOK (Museums Uniting with Schools in Education: Building on Our Knowledge)*. Cambridge, MA: Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education.



Activity 3: Creative Changes

When Mimi breaks her wrist, she learns how to draw with her nondominant hand and discovers a free-flowing art style that she loves. When Saige gets cat hair in her painting, she works with the texture to create an *impasto*-style painting that's unlike anything she's done before. This lesson invites your students to try new drawing techniques and activities, too, and shows them how tapping into creativity can help them overcome challenges.

To supplement this activity, consider offering your students art time with new tools and mediums. Instead of a paintbrush, invite them to use fingers or sponges. Instead of painting on paper, try aluminum foil or coffee filters. Instead of using paint, use glue or food coloring diluted with water.

Activity 4: Art-Inspired Art

Saige enjoys having Tessa in the art studio with her because when Tessa plays guitar, it seems to help Saige's paintbrush move more freely. This activity demonstrates for students the ways in which one art form might influence and inspire another.

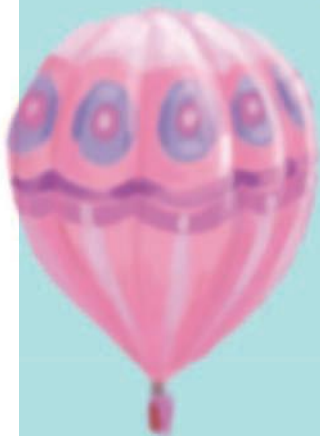
Go to www.americangirl.com/guides to review the "Saige Music" MP3s posted along with this curriculum. Each 60-second clip features a song that evokes a different mood, such as "whimsical," "peaceful," or "spooky." Choose three clips that evoke varying moods. As you play each piece of music, invite your students to draw the images that come to mind. Drawings can be abstract or show a specific object or scene. Ask students to create a separate drawing for each piece you play.

Consider incorporating dance and theater into this activity, too, by inviting students to move their bodies to the music. Students might also act out the emotions they feel as they listen to the music through facial expressions, poses, or gestures. Can other students identify the emotions expressed?

For the "Paintings, Poems, Stories, and Songs" portion of the activity, consider drawing content from the following sources:

- a museum, local gallery, or virtual gallery (such as those listed at googleartproject.com);
- another curriculum unit, such as poetry from a language arts unit or songs and stories from a history unit;
- students themselves! Encourage students to pair up for this activity and to choose songs, stories, or poems to inspire their partners' artwork.





Activity 5: Preserving Art

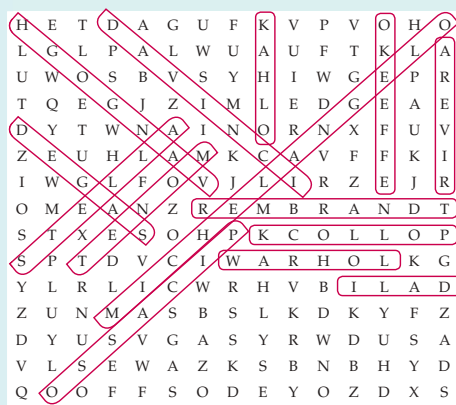
When art class was threatened at Saige’s school, she and her friends organized a “Day of Beige” and wore neutral clothes to school to demonstrate how boring life would be without art and color. This activity invites your students to imagine a world devoid of art and color.

Depending on the situation at your school, consider some of the following ways to support the arts and to help your students “turn passion into persuasion,” just as Saige does.

- Are art supplies limited? Hold a supply drive, craft fair, or silent art auction to raise money for more.
- Collect art from students, print it in a bound book, and sell the book to raise money for your school’s art program.
- Invite your students to paint a school window (using window paint or markers) to show their passion for the arts!
- Encourage students to write a letter to the principal, PTA, or school board expressing how they feel about limited art in schools—or a thank-you note to administrators for including the arts as part of the school day.
- Look for ways to incorporate art into other subject matter. For instance, a history report might take the form of a painting, or a book report may be acted out as a play.

Activities 6 & 7

Activities 6 and 7 are extra handouts for students to do in their free time or at home. “Creative Columns” provides fun pairings of words to prompt creativity and inspire new pieces of art. “Famous Names” is a word search that includes the names of some of Mimi’s pets, along with the last names of other famous artists. Answers for the word search are included below.





AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS

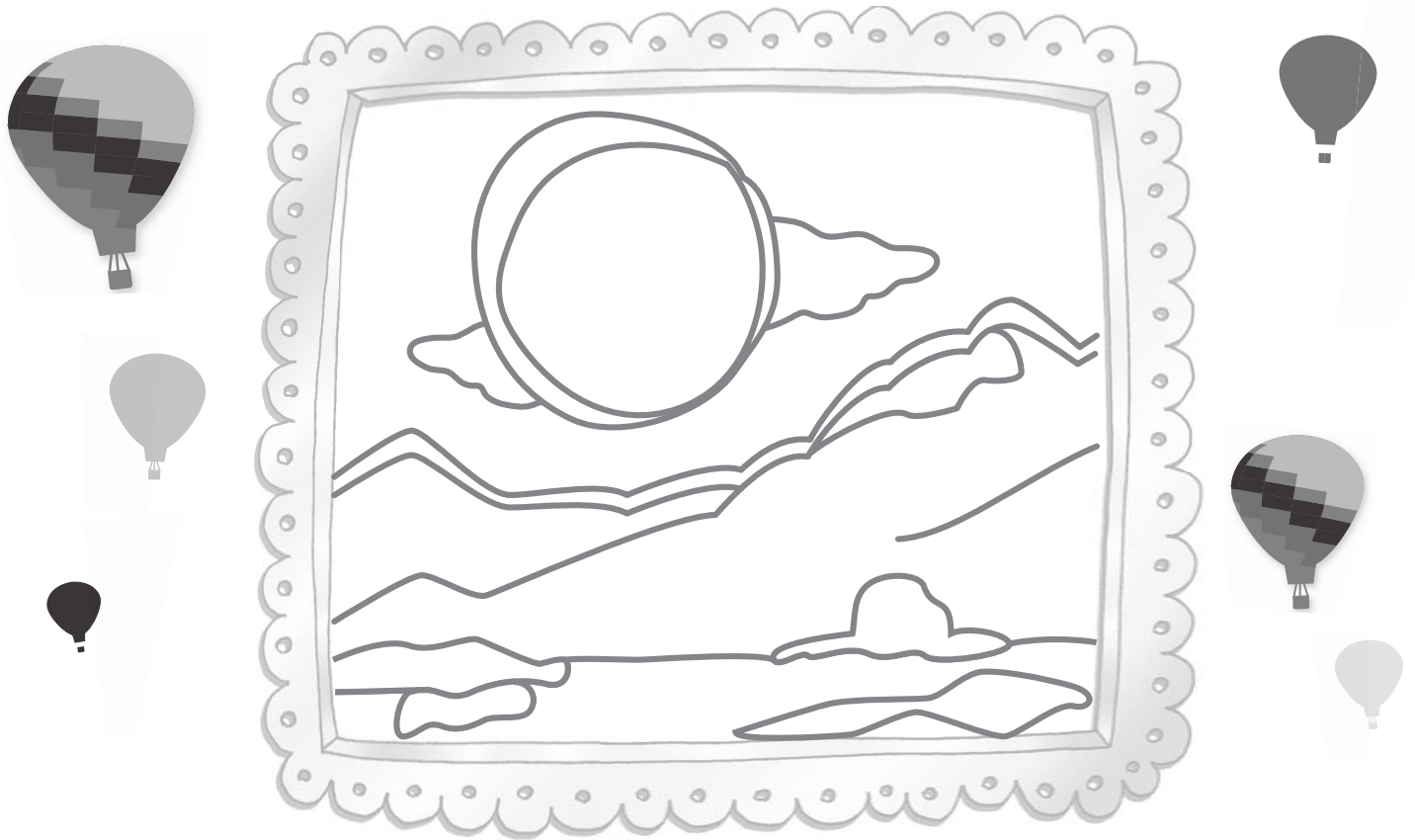
Americans for the Arts is proud to partner with American Girl in celebrating the 2013 Girl of the Year. We envision a country where every child has access to—and takes part in—high-quality learning experiences in the arts, both in school and in the community. Like Saige and her family, friends, and teachers, we believe that learning in the arts enables every person to develop the critical thinking, collaborative, and creative skills necessary to succeed in today's ever-changing world.

For more than 50 years, Americans for the Arts has led the national effort to ensure that every American has an opportunity to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Championing the cause of the arts and arts education in communities across the country, we dedicate ourselves each year to providing programs that help foster an environment in which the arts can thrive and contribute to the creation of more livable communities, generate more resources to support arts and arts education, and build individual appreciation of the value of the arts. From our offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, we proudly serve more than 150,000 members and stakeholders annually. Learn more about us at www.AmericansfortheArts.org or by calling (202) 371-2830.

Activity 1

COLOR YOUR WORLD

Much of Saige's and Mimi's artwork is inspired by their surroundings: the blue New Mexico sky, the bright hot-air balloons that often fly overhead, and the Sandia Mountains, which appear bluish gray in the cool morning and watermelon pink in the warmer afternoon and evening. Color in this art with either the "cool" colors of morning (blues, grays, violets, and greens) or the "warm" colors of afternoon and evening (pinks, reds, yellows, and oranges).



NAME THAT COLOR

Saige and her friend Gabi were so inspired by the colors around them that they imagined naming crayons after them, such as Sandia Pink and Balloon Silk Yellow. Think of a place that inspires you. If you could name three crayon colors after that place, what would they be?

INSPIRE OTHERS

On the back of this activity sheet, write a poem or song lyrics inspired by your favorite place. Or sketch an image of it. Imagine that you are creating the front of a postcard or travel poster, inviting people to come visit this special place.



Activity 2

EXPRESS YOURSELF

Mimi's horse is named Picasso after Pablo Picasso. Picasso was an artist who often created *monochromatic* paintings, or paintings that were made up of shades of a single color. During a sad time in his life, Picasso painted portraits using shades of blue. During a happier time, his paintings were rose-colored.

You can use color to express your mood, too. Color in this horse art using shades of just one color. Don't limit yourself to brown, black, or other natural "horse colors." Choose a color that expresses how you feel right now.

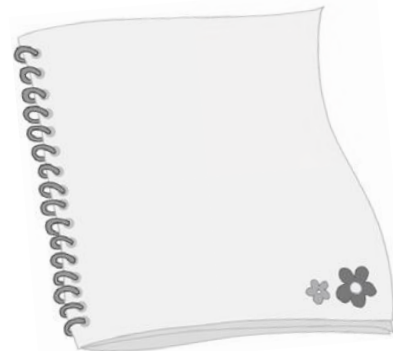


Why did you choose the color you did?

How does looking at the finished piece make you feel?

DOODLE DIARY

Start a doodle diary, a notebook in which you use images and colors instead of words to describe how you're feeling each day.



Activity 3

CREATIVE CHANGES

When Mimi breaks her right wrist, she learns how to draw left-handed and discovers a free-flowing art style that she loves. When Mimi's kitten jumps on Saige's shoulder and gets cat hair in her painting, Saige works with the texture to create an *impasto*-style painting that's unlike anything she's done before. Change up your art style, too, by trying these activities on separate pieces of paper.

- Use your nondominant hand to draw a picture. If you're right-handed, draw with your left hand. If you're left-handed, use your right.
- Draw a picture with your eyes closed. Use your hands to keep track of the edges of the paper, but don't open your eyes!
- Find an image that you like of a person, place, or thing, and turn that image upside down. On another piece of paper, draw your own version—also upside down.

Which activity did you enjoy the most? Why? Which did you enjoy the least? Why?

What do you like about the drawings you created?

What other new things have you tried lately? Do you think trying new things improves your creativity?

MAKE A MISTAKE

On the back of this activity sheet, draw something small and scribble it out. Now turn that scribble into something else, and use it as the start of a new drawing. Is the scribble a cloud in the sky? A ball of yarn?

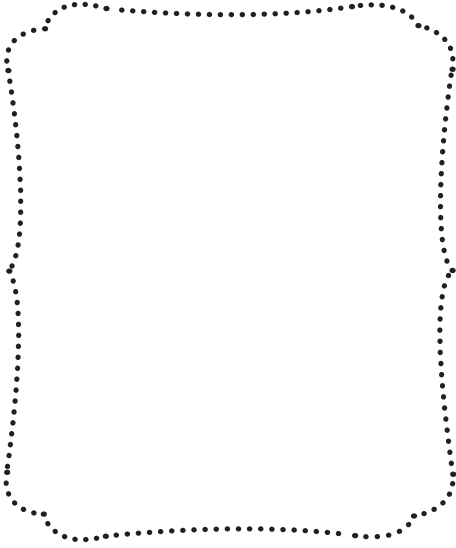


Activity 4

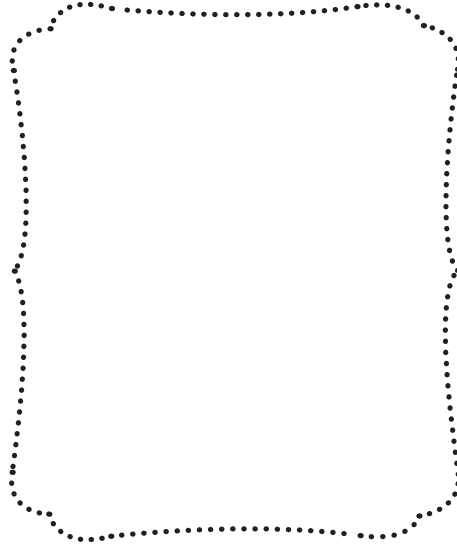
ART-INSPIRED ART

Saige enjoys having Tessa in the art studio with her because when Tessa plays guitar, it seems to help Saige's paintbrush move more freely. Do you like to listen to music while you draw or paint? Try it! As your teacher plays music, draw the images that come to mind. Your drawings can be abstract or show a specific object or scene.

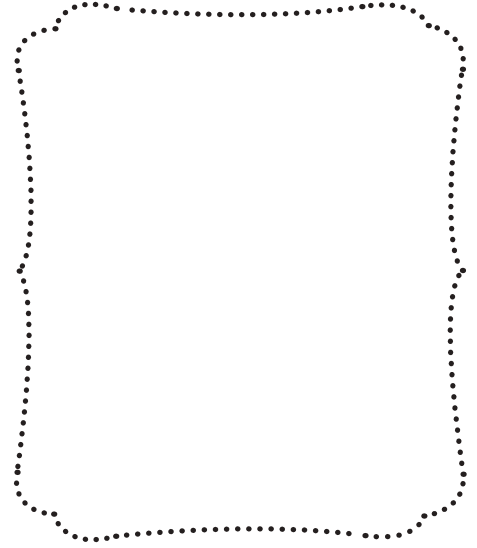
SONG 1



SONG 2



SONG 3



Compare your pictures to those created by students around you. Are there any similarities in what you drew, or were your drawings totally unique?



PAINTINGS, POEMS, STORIES, AND SONGS

On the back of this activity sheet, create a piece of art that was inspired by another piece of art:

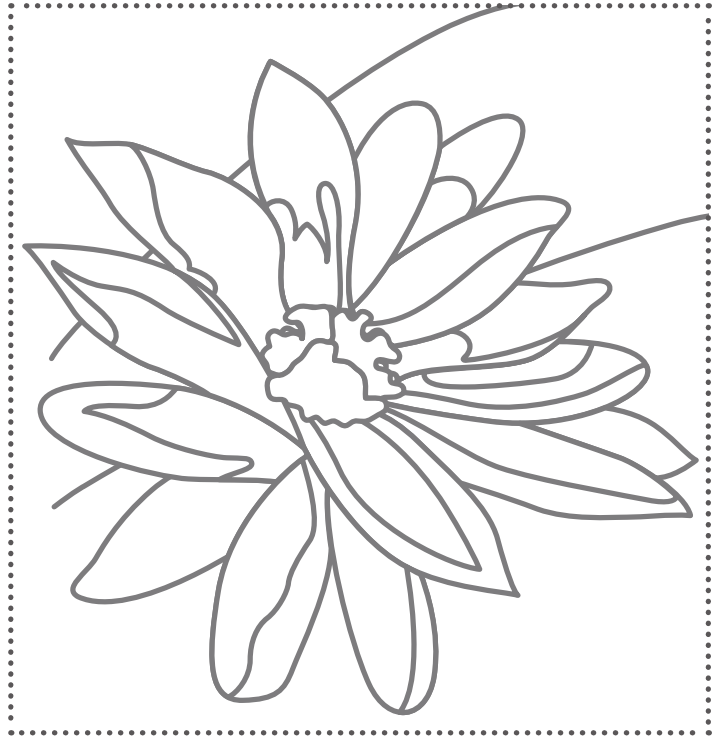
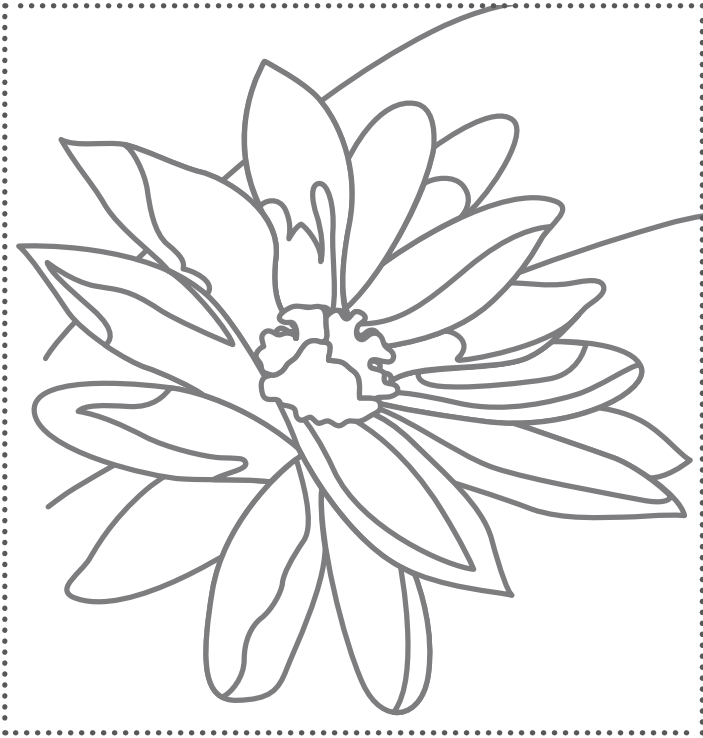
- Draw a picture inspired by a poem.
- Choose a painting and write a poem or story inspired by the painting.
- Think of a song you love and write new lyrics to it.

Activity 5

PRESERVING ART

When art class is threatened at Saige's school because of budget cuts, Saige and her friends organize a protest called "Day of Beige." By wearing beige and tan clothes to school, the students demonstrate how boring life would be without art and without color. Imagine a world without a variety of colors. What would that look like?

Shade in the first piece of art with a black-lead pencil. Color in the second piece with vibrant hues.



Look at your two pictures. How does each make you feel?

Imagine a world without color, a world without art, music, dance, or theater. Which activities would you miss the most? Why?

Activity 6

CREATIVE COLUMNS

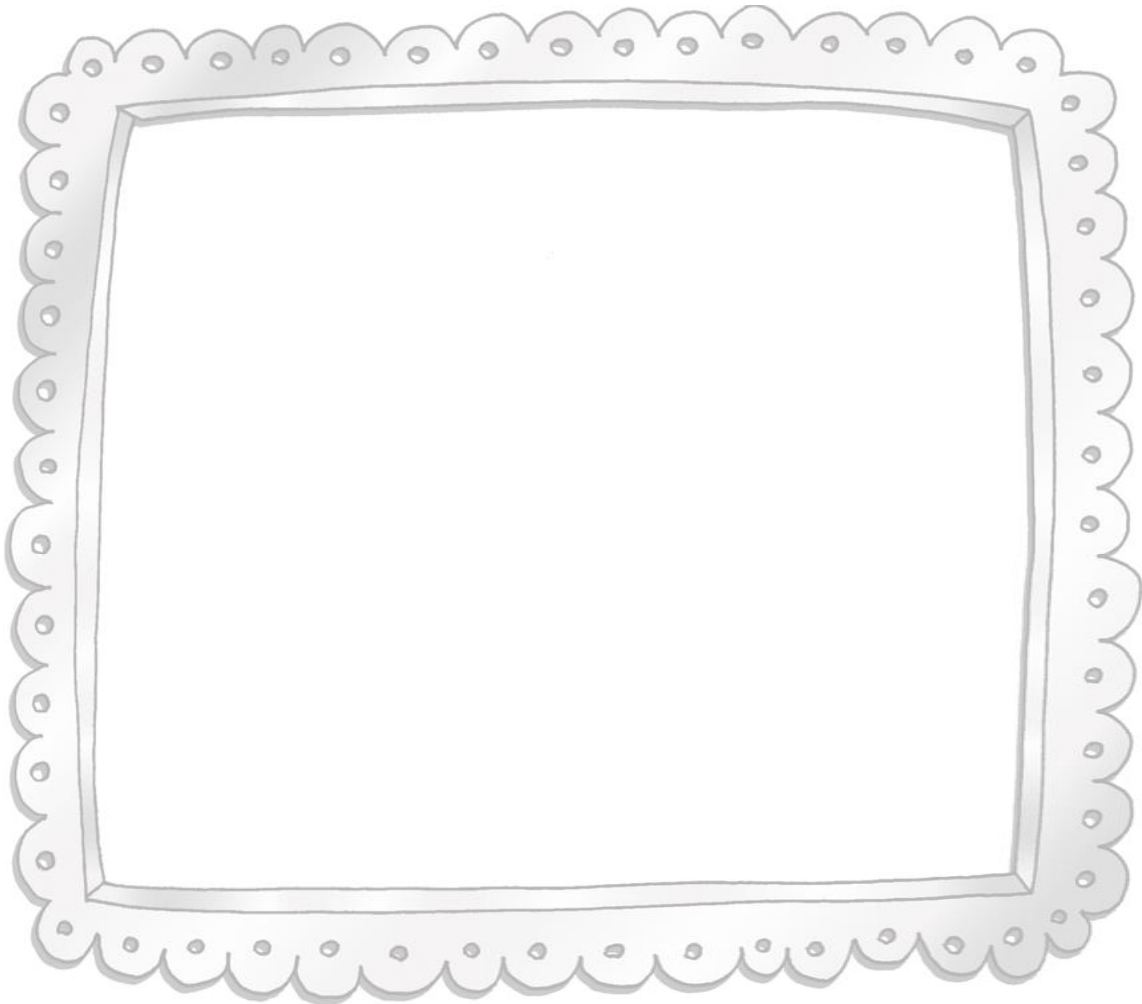
Need inspiration for your next drawing? Using the lists below, match a word in the first column with a word in the second column. Put the words together and draw the pairing in the space provided. Will you create a “flying paintbrush”? A “musical kitten”? You decide!

COLUMN 1

blue
bouncy
flying
giant
miniature
musical
pink
smiling
talking

COLUMN 2

balloon
boots
carrot
dog
earrings
guitar
horse
kitten
paintbrush



Activity 7

FAMOUS NAMES

Saige's grandma Mimi named all of her animals after famous painters. See if you can find the names of some of her pets in this word search, along with the names of other famous artists.

DA VINCI

DALI

DEGAS

KAHLO

MICHELANGELO

MONET

O'KEEFE

PICASSO

POLLOCK

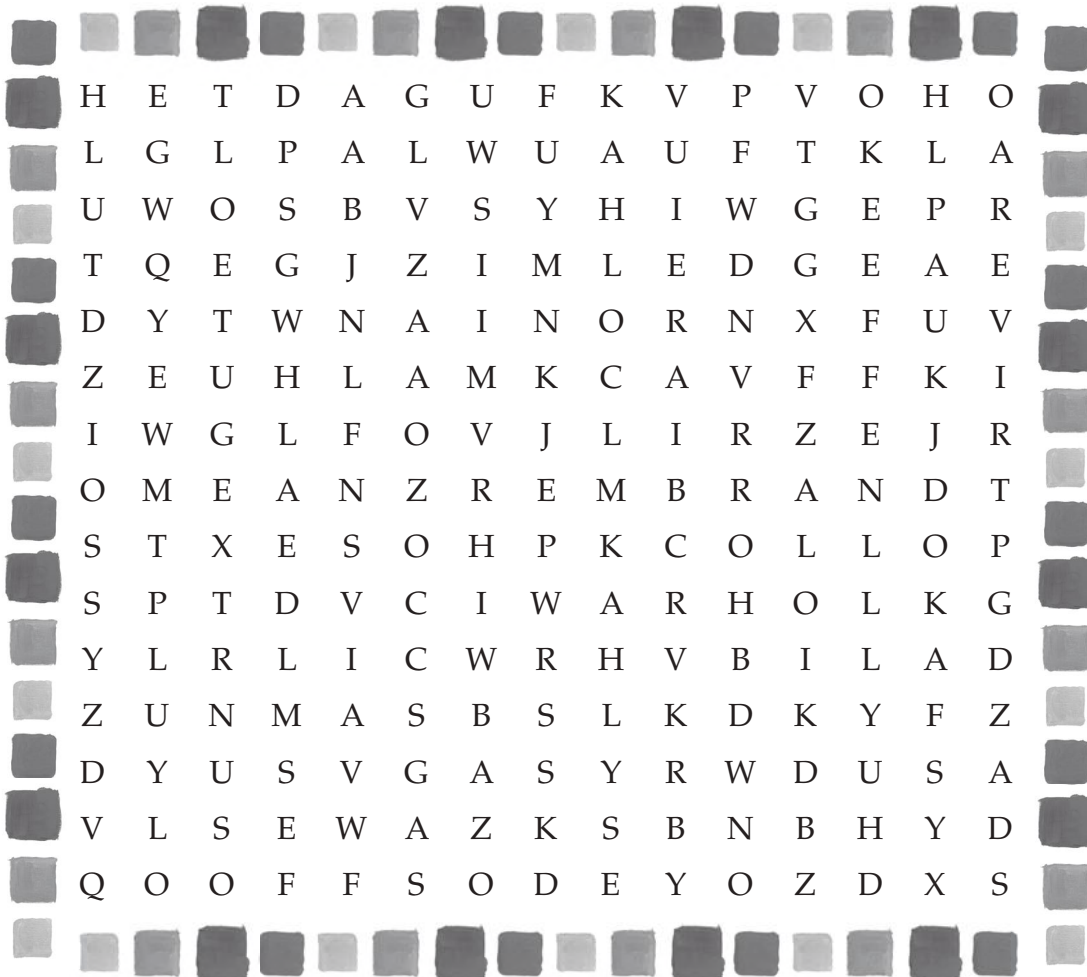
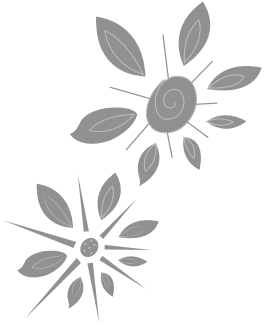
REMBRANDT

RIVERA

STELLA

VAN GOGH

WARHOL



GIRL OF THE YEAR® 2013

Each January, American Girl introduces a new Girl of the Year, a character who shares the interests, activities, and aspirations of today's girls. From Nicki to McKenna, these popular contemporary characters reflect the lives of real girls today. This year, Saige Copeland inspires girls to draw on their imaginations and discover how creative they can be.



by Jessie Haas



McKenna and McKenna, Ready to Fly! by Mary Casanova
McKenna Brooks has always been a good student—so when her grades suddenly begin to fall, her confidence is shaken. Can she find a way to believe in herself again?



Aloha, Kanani and Good Job, Kanani by Lisa Yee
Kanani Akina can't wait to show her cousin Rachel what life is like in a friendly Hawaiian town. But Rachel seems homesick and unhappy—until an urgent animal rescue on the beach brings the girls together.



Lanie and Lanie's Real Adventures by Jane Kurtz
Lanie Holland loves the outdoors and dreams of being an explorer. Trouble is, the rest of her family has "inside genes"—except for Aunt Hannah, who shows Lanie a few surprises right in her own backyard.



Chrissa and Chrissa Stands Strong by Mary Casanova
When Chrissa Maxwell starts at a new school, the girls in her fourth-grade class are decidedly unfriendly. When the teasing turns into serious bullying, Chrissa must find the courage to stand strong and speak out.



Mia and Bravo, Mia! by Laurence Yep
Mia St. Clair grew up playing ice hockey with her three older brothers. Now she wants to pursue her passion for figure skating. Does she have what it takes to be a figure skater?



Nicki and Thanks to Nicki by Ann Howard Creel
Nicki Fleming is a natural with animals. When the chance to train a service dog comes up, she just can't say no—even though it means giving up some of her other interests.

All books are recommended for readers 8 and up.



American Girl and Americans for the Arts are proud to join together to bring you this learning guide to help your students draw on their imaginations and discover how creative they can be—just as Saige does.

