

Norman Rockwell (1894-1978).

- Born in New York City
- Always wanted to be an artist.
(He was skinny and not very good at sports)
- His father would read to him and he would draw the pictures of the story told.
- When he was 15 (1909) he left High School to begin studying art.
- When he was still a teenager (19), he was hired as the Art Director for Boy's Life - The official magazine for Boy Scouts of America.
He was paid \$50 per month.
- When he was 22 he started drawing covers for The Saturday Evening Post
- He illustrated more than 300 covers for The Post for 47 years.
- Each cover told a story. Most were humorous stories that people really liked.
- He painted for more than 60 years and captured the ordinary and extraordinary moments of everyday American life.
- He used friends and family members as "models" for his characters.
- He always had music playing in his studio.
- He paid his models \$2 for sitting for him. He paid his sons only \$1.
- Used clues in each illustration to let the viewer know what was going on in everyday life.
- His pictures for The Post were so popular, The Post would print 250,000 extra copies just to meet the demand.
- He would often take a photograph of an everyday event and paint it.
- His favorite subjects were scenes of everyday life.
- The early Post editions only used the colors black, white and red so these colors are used often in his art.

Thoughts and Questions for “The Surprise”:

- What is an Illustrator?
- What is going on in this picture?
- What can you tell about the setting and the time period from the clues in the picture?
- What happened right before this event (the surprise) – an eraser fight!
- What have the student’s done to the classroom to celebrate their teacher’s birthday? (Chalkboard, gifts on her desk)
- How does she feel about this?
- Which student do you think called the teacher “Jonesy” on the chalkboard? How can you tell?
- What were the “normal” everyday events going on?
- How is this setting different than today?
- What changes would have to be made to make the illustration reflect life today
- He designed this post cover as a tribute to his eighth grade teacher who encouraged him to draw and to all the hardworking teachers.
- He arranged the surprise party and had the children pose
- He staged the scene: Gifts on the desk (apple, orange, flowers, tied packages)
- Depicted events of normal life: Kids having eraser fights (erasers on the floor), one kid has his eraser on his head
- Shows very strong attention to detail
- His art has a realistic style – often looks like a photograph

For the art project:

- Have the lesson put the student in the role of the illustrator, with the role of designing a cover for “The Saturday Post”
- Objective – design and draw in full color and use different media including chalk for “chalkboard”, markers, crayons and colored pencils
- Remember that Norman Rockwell felt the viewer should be able to understand the situation in the illustration in under a minute
- Allow plenty of time to draw and to use full color
- Ask for volunteers to show their work and describe what their illustration represents

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

2012

5 cts. *THE COPY*

Today your child participated in another Art Appreciation lesson!

The Art we presented was by Norman Rockwell titled
“The Surprise”
1956
(also called “Happy Birthday, Miss Jones”)

We discussed his art talents and his life.



Two words or ideas we discussed that represented Norman Rockwell's art are:

1: Illustrations

2: Art showing simple daily activities through art

After the art lesson, each student had the opportunity to create their own work of art for a cover for “The Saturday Post” as Norman Rockwell had done more than 300 times and for more than 40 years. We decided to illustrate our own “Surprise” message

We had so much fun and a great discussion about the life of Norman Rockwell.
We hoped they enjoyed this art appreciation lesson!