



New way to learn country's history

| Thursday, May 01, 2008

ST. JOHN | St. John the Evangelist School is one of the 1,500 pilot school recipients of the National Endowment for the Humanities program, Picturing America, an innovative program that helps teach U.S. history and provides students with a gateway to the broader world of the humanities.

"We are so pleased to be part of the pilot phase of Picturing America," said enrichment teacher Barbara Cerwinski, who secured the grant on behalf of the school. "This program will really allow our students access to some of the nation's most important art without ever leaving the classroom," she said in a news release.

Picturing America is composed of 40 carefully selected works of art spanning several centuries - all by American painters, sculptors, photographers and architects.

The endowment will distribute large, high-quality reproductions of these images, along with a teacher's resource book, lesson plans and materials, to schools and libraries nationwide. Including the newly unveiled Web site, www.PicturingAmerica.neh.gov, Picturing America's resources unlock the potential in each work of art to enhance the study of U.S. history, social studies, language arts, literature and civics.

"I really like looking at the pictures because I like art," fourth-grader Katie Stalter said in the release. "My favorite so far is 'The Boating Party' by Mary Cassatt."

"Our goal is eventually to have Picturing America in every school and public library in the United States," said NEH Chairman Bruce Cole. "Picturing America helps us understand our democracy by bringing us face to face with the people, places, and events that have shaped our country. It provides an innovative way to experience America's history through our nation's art."

Public, private, parochial, and charter and home school consortia for youths in kindergarten through high school, as well as public libraries in the United States and its territories, are eligible to receive Picturing America material. Information is available by visiting www.PicturingAmerica.neh.gov.

- For The Times

Copyright © 2008 nwi.com