5. Unpacking The Big Idea with Visual Language

a. Superhero

 Family photos

 When I grow up…. Artist, Teacher, Doctor, Paleontologist, Ballerina

 Pageants

 Princess

 Gender stereotype…colors as boy or girl colors, specific boy roles and specific girl roles

 Angry Birds

 Sports

 Pets

 Where students are from…state, country, culture, region, nationality (flags and symbols)

 Religion (symbols and religious icons)

b. Frida Kahlo, Self Portrait 1940

 Andy Warhol, Self Portrait 1986

 Lorna Simpson, Wigs 1994

 Laurie Simmons, Blonde/Red Dress/Kitchen 1978

 Maya Lin, Rock Field 1997

 Kerry James Marshall, Our Town 1995

 Paul Klee, Ghost of a Genius 1922

 Georges Seurat, Sunday Afternoon on the Island of la Grande Jatte 1886

 Norman Rockwell, Triple Self Portrait, 1960

c. Family photos are a good example of my big idea. As young children they will identify themselves with who the most important people are in their lives. Right or wrong children will often look at their parents as who they want to be when they grow up. Also, at this age they will be highly influenced by their parents and grandparents, even their siblings. Children look to their family members as a way to identify themselves based on race, religion and all other aspects development.

The painting, Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte is a good example of my big idea along with the essential question: how is identity affected by our community? This painting offers a great deal of discussion question ideas and can give students and idea of how we can see ourselves through friends and family. This gives me a way to involve art technique and art history into the lessons as well. I would hope this artwork will help students use their imaginations to create their own artwork.

I think addressing gender stereotypes would be helpful when understanding how our identity makes us unique. Even if it’s not addressed word for word to my students as a teacher I need to remember not to put those stereotypes on my students. I want the art room to be a safe place where students are free to be themselves without judgment. I could definitely talk about stereotypes and help the students understand there is no reason for specific gender roles in society but we put them on ourselves.



*Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, Georges Suerat, 1886, oil on canvas