

How the *ArtAchieve* Website Got Started

The art lessons that you find on this website had their beginnings

- When the owner, John Hofland, and his wife homeschooled their children,
- And later as John was developing a one-semester university drawing course for beginning theatrical stage design students.

In addition, since 1986 John has

- Studied drawing and design with Eastern European master teachers.
- Designed scenery, puppets, and lighting for US, Canadian, and Eastern European theaters.
- Published scholarly articles based on teaching design
- Taught workshops for elementary teachers, and
- Presented papers at international conferences.

The work of Eastern European master teachers - and the amazing success of their students - had a strong influence on the university course John taught, and is the foundation for the approach used at ArtAchieve.

Working and traveling abroad has also given John opportunity to collect an international array of images for his art lessons. As a result, each ArtAchieve art lesson centers around a real object that introduces students to cultures from around the world. In addition, each lesson includes complementary teaching resources for unit studies.

ArtAchieve's Philosophy

- We believe that anyone can learn to draw, and that learning to draw is an essential skill. Drawing is not a skill reserved for special people who have "talent." Rather, it is a skill, just like reading or math. Our goal is to provide you and your students with art lessons that insure success (e.g, the cat you draw will LOOK like a cat), while leaving plenty of room for creative interpretation (the cat you draw will be YOUR OWN unique cat).
- We believe that art should be integrated into the curriculum. The visual images included in each lesson are designed to pique student interests in geography, history, literature, math, and/or science.
- Although we operate from a Christian worldview, the art lessons do not attempt to proselytize. At the same time, when an object reflects the values of Christian history or culture, we make no attempt to hide that.
- We want our lessons to be easy for anyone to teach, whether they have a background in art or not. Therefore, the lessons are so complete that children who can read could follow them on their own. If you have never taught art lessons before, go to "[Tips for Teachers](#)" to learn some basic tips for teaching art.