

# The Same, *but Different*

Let's take a look  
at two portraits at  
The Huntington



THE HUNTINGTON  
Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens

Huntington Education

# The Same, but Different

The goal of this activity is to provide an opportunity for elementary school students to evaluate two objects at The Huntington.

While the objects are the same—maybe through title, material, or function—they can also be different, perhaps through time period, culture, or form.

## Here's the format:

- Look closely at both images
- Explore the terms
- Sort the terms on the Venn diagram
- Check your answers
- Learn about each object
- Questions and activity



Kehinde Wiley (American), *A Portrait of a Young Gentleman*, 2021, oil on linen. © Kehinde Wiley. Collection of The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens, and commissioned through Roberts Projects, Los Angeles. [Zoom in to view this painting.](#)

Gift of Anne F. Rothenberg, Terry Perucca and Annette Serrurier, the Philip and Muriel Berman Foundation, Laura and Carlton Seaver, Kent Belden and Dr. Louis Re, and Faye and Robert Davidson.



Thomas Gainsborough (British), *The Blue Boy* (originally titled *A Portrait of a Young Gentleman*), ca. 1770, oil on canvas. The Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. [Zoom in to view this portrait.](#)

Review the terms that describe **both** images. Which facts go in the **same** area of the diagram? Which facts go in each **different** area of the diagram?

Kehinde Wiley

Black frame

White figure

Hand on hip

1770

Satin and lace

Nature background

Black figure

American artist

*A Portrait of a Young Gentleman*

2021

Painting

Hat

Thomas  
Gainsborough

Costume

Portrait

Everyday clothes

Gold frame

The Huntington's Collection

Poppies

British artist

**Time to sort!**

***A Portrait of a Young Gentleman***

***The Blue Boy***

**Both**



Time to sort!

## *A Portrait of a Young Gentleman*

Kehinde Wiley

American artist

Black frame

Everyday clothes

Poppies

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## Both

Portrait

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*A Portrait of a  
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## *The Blue Boy*

1770

Gold frame

Costume

British artist

Thomas Gainsborough

White figure

Satin and lace

# Learn about the portraits



- Kehinde Wiley grew up visiting The Huntington and seeing portraits like Thomas Gainsborough's *The Blue Boy*. This is his version of that painting.
- In Wiley's painting, a man wears everyday street clothes instead of a fancy costume, like the boy in Gainsborough's. The man modeled for this painting in Wiley's studio in Senegal, Dakar.
- Wiley re-imagines classical works of art by painting Black and brown models in the same poses as historical works that featured white figures. Do you like how he re-imagined *The Blue Boy*? Why or why not?
- The colorful background shows orange poppies against a blue-purple background. The designs for his backgrounds are similar to West African fabrics and textile designs by William Morris and Company.



- The original title of *The Blue Boy* was *A Portrait of a Young Gentleman*. Because of the boy's bright blue costume, this painting was nicknamed *The Blue Boy*.
- This painting is an example of a Grand Manner portrait, which is an 18th-century portrait style that includes a full-length figure, in costume, located in an outdoor setting.
- To create this blue costume, artist Thomas Gainsborough used many different blues, including indigo, lapis, cobalt, slate, and turquoise.
- Does this costume look casual or fancy? Where do you think this boy would have worn this costume?

- What did you notice about object 1, *A Portrait of a Young Gentleman*?
- What did you notice about object 2, *The Blue Boy*?
- How are they the same?
- How are they different?
- What did you learn?
- Which portrait did you like best? Why?



# Activity



## Strike a Pose

Materials: Paper and pencil

Time: 10 minutes

### Steps:

1. In both portraits, the young gentlemen stand in a similar pose. Move your body to pose like these figures by:
  - Standing tall, placing your left foot out in front, and bending your knee just a little bit.
  - Placing your left hand on your hip.
  - Hanging your right arm straight down and pretending to hold some kind of hat.Hold this pose! Great job! Then stop posing and shake it out.
2. How did it feel to pose in this way? Did you feel confident? Powerful? Uneasy? Unnatural? You can write how you felt on your piece of paper or share as a group.
3. If you were going to pose for your own portrait, how would you stand? You can write it down, or strike a pose and show the class!

# We would love to see your work!

Please take a picture of your Venn diagram.

Then post it on social media and tag The Huntington!

#LearnAtTheH