

**A Look At Leadership Teaching Poster**



*Portrait of John Manners, Marquis of Granby*  
Sir Joshua Reynolds; British 1723-`792, active in London  
Oil on Canvas, 1766, 97 x 82 5/16 inches  
Bequest of John Ringling, 1936  
SN 389

**Introduction**

**Objectives:**

Students will:

- Recognize that a portrait documents a moment in time and often reveals clues to the personality and character of the sitter.
- Discuss the role of leaders in our society.
- Learn about leadership qualities.
- Learn the difference between a military portrait and other portraits.
- Understand the story of The Ringling's Museum's portrait of John Manners.
- Understand the event in history leading up to the painting of the portrait of John Manners.
- Learn about the artist Joshua Reynolds.
- Compare *Portrait of John Manners, Marquis of Granby, 1766* to other portraits at The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art.



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- Create an original portrait of someone they consider a leader.
- Write a narrative museum label for their work of art.

*A Look at Leadership Teaching Poster* is designed as a resource for classroom teachers to prepare students for a visit to The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. Using this poster with the accompanying information and suggested activities will help students understand more about military portraits and especially those on display at The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. Students will analyze and discuss *Portrait of John Manners, Marquis of Granby, 1766*. Students will also look for clues artist Joshua Reynolds provided us to learn more about his subject, John Manners. Students will be inspired to create a portrait of someone they know who is already a leader and write a narrative museum style label to accompany the work of art.

### **What is a “Military” Portrait?**

The word “portrait” is used to describe a work of art in which the person or the sitter chooses to have his or her own identity the main subject of study. A “military portrait” is traditionally that of a high ranking officer but may be of any soldier, often depicted in battle or posed in battle dress (uniform). In many portraits the subject’s mount is also often included.

### **About the Art and the Times**

This large painting was commissioned by John Manners, Marquis of Granby to be given as a gift to the general whom he had fought against in the Seven Years War-the French Marshall Victor-Francois, the second Duc de Broglie, Granby’s respected adversary.

Granby is depicted in the full uniform of a British general, standing in front of his warhorse, with his servant nearby. By showing Granby after dismounting, right glove off as if he’s ready to shake his opponent’s hand, Reynolds emphasizes his victory in battle over his esteemed opponent who is literally “out of the picture.” The portrait is full length and life size. Granby is shown in a three-quarters profile, looking over his right shoulder into the distance. A cavalry battle is being fought in the left background. What do you make of that sky heavy with deep indigo-gray clouds directly behind the horse’s head and the brilliant sunlight just above the left side of the horizon line? Notice how the shadow and light play up the beautifully rendered textures of the clothing, the horse’s flank, the jewels and even the leather of his boots. Granby’s uniform is complete with every detail befitting an officer from the armor protecting his chest to the sash around his waist, gold epaulets on his shoulders, glove, buttons and tassels.

The Seven Years’ War (1756-63), fought in Europe, North America and India between France, Austria, Russia, Saxony, Sweden, and (after 1762) Spain on one side and Great Britain, Prussia, and Hanover on the other, was one of the major conflicts in history since the fall of Rome in the 4<sup>th</sup>-century BCE. The Seven Years War was mainly the result of trading rights and was important historically because: it established Britain as a colonial power, it united Prussia, and it sparked the American Revolution as the colonists rebelled against being taxed to help pay for the War. The heavy debts that the French government incurred and the defeat of the



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French Army helped the course of the French Revolution. Granby was a staunch partisan of the House of Hanover, the reigning family in the England of his day.

Granby became a war hero in 1760 fighting in Prussia when “with his wig off and his bald head glistening in the sunshine, he led 22 squadrons against the French, first driving their horse from the field and then routing their infantry (Winstock, 1970; pg 55).” He also fought in the American Colonies and became a hero in the French troops that they sang songs about him as they marched in the streets. He often helped his retired officers start new careers as innkeepers (and they in turn named their inns after Granby!). Granby was made commander-in-chief in 1766 and died in 1770 at the age of 49 from poor health.

Take a good look at the image on the front of the poster. Compositionally, the “weight” of the painting is sited in Granby’s body that makes up the left side of the central pyramid (Granby, servant, horse) that’s grounded by everyone’s feet and soars to the top of the horse’s gorgeous head. Look at how Granby holds the composition together by the sheer force of the vertical thrust that starts at his elegant boots and runs to the top of his shining head and with the breadth that’s reinforced by his outstretched left arm resting on his horses’ back. Would you say that the focal point of the painting is his head? Located near the center bulls-eye of the image, it’s certainly the brightest aspect of the painting visually brought forward by the horse’s black mane that’s behind him and the brilliant red of the uniform details below. All action revolves around him.

### **About the Artist**

Sir Joshua Reynolds, the English painter and writer on art, was a dominate figure in English artistic life in the middle and late 18<sup>th</sup> century. As the founder and the first president of the British painting Academy of the Arts, he attempted to lead British painting away from the regional picture of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century towards the continental Grand Style. He wrote and delivered lectures every year from 1769-1790 at the Academy and was the founder of the Literary Club. Reynolds was one of the two leading portrait artists of his day, the other being Thomas Gainsborough, and was known for his versatility and ability to satisfy his many patrons’ individual preferences. (FACT: Reynolds’s portrait of Granby was painted in response to Gainsborough’s portrait of Lieutenant General Philip Honywood done the year before in 1765 and on view in the very same gallery- now, isn’t that amazing!?) Nearly every important English family commissioned a Reynolds’ portrait. He painted more than 2000 portraits in his career! He became such a success that King George III knighted him in 1769.

Reynolds was born in Devonshire, England in 1723. He attended the Plympton grammar school where his clergyman father was master. Reynolds aspired to be an artist and, in 1740, was apprenticed to Thomas Hudson, a portrait painter. By the time he was 25, he was already earning a living painting portraits of English tourists in Italy, where he studied the Italian masters for three years. It is said that Reynolds lost his hearing by spending too much time sketching in the Vatican galleries, which were damp and cold. He was a strong believer in the classic style of art; his heroes were Michelangelo, Rubens, Raphael and Rembrandt. While he became well known for his fashionable society portraits, he became enamored of portraying



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his subjects as goddesses or stoic heroes and tended to add Greek and Roman architectural elements to the backgrounds as his way of inserting classical elements into contemporary portraits.

His speeches at the annual Academy banquets were published under the title *Discourse* and were an important influence on the next generation of artists, particularly the Neoclassicists. In the *Discourse*, he outlined what is considered grandeur in art and suggested the means of achieving it through strict academic training and the study of old masters of art. He urged the artists of his day to choose dignified and noble subjects using a strict code based on Classicism; he wanted visual artists to achieve the same social standing as poets and writers.

Reynolds lived a long and productive life and died in 1792, leaving an impact on the Academy that lasted 100 years.



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### **Looking and Discussing**

#### **Description**

Ask student to look quietly for a few moment at the poster *A Look at Leadership: Portrait of John Manners, Marquis of Granby, 1766*. Ask students to describe in detail what they see. Record their conversations on an overhead or board for the class to view.

#### **Ask the following questions:**

- Is this a portrait of an ordinary soldier or a military leader? How do you know?
- Is he shown alone in this painting? Who else is in the scene...Look carefully!
- Describe the Marquis of Granby's clothes.
- Describe his pose. Is he looking towards you or away from you?
- Describe the expression on the Marquis of Granby's face.
- Describe the horse.
- Where is the Marquis of Granby standing? Is it on level or higher ground?

#### **Analysis**

##### **How is the work organized?**

- Where did Reynolds place the Marquis of Granby in the painting? Close to the front (foreground), in the middle or far away?
- Look at the measurements of this painting. Is this painting half size or about life size?
- What is the first color you noticed in the work of art? Is it repeated anywhere?
- What geometric shape do the heads of the Granby, the horse and the servant make?

#### **Interpretation**

##### **What does it mean?**

- What did Sir Joshua Reynolds include in this work of art to tell you about the Marquis of Granby?
- Based upon your observations and the facts about Granby that were provided for you, do you think Granby was a good leader? Why or why not?
- Are the battle scene, horse and servant important to the work of art? Why or why not?

#### **Judgment**

##### **What do you think of the work of art?**

- Do you think John Manners, the Marquis of Granby was pleased with this portrait?
- Did Reynolds depict Granby as a man who appeared to enjoy war or as a man who was responsible in his duty in times of trouble? Explain.
- What do you think the Polish general, Marshall Victor-Francois, thought of the portrait he was given as a gift?
- Is this a good work of art? Why or why not?



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### Suggested Classroom Activities:

#### Recognizing Leaders All Around You!

Ask students to work in small groups to brainstorm a list of leaders they can identify in the following areas:

1. Leaders in our classroom (teachers, student of the month, etc...)
2. Leaders in our school (principal, etc...)
3. Leaders in our home
4. Leaders in our community
5. Leaders in our state
6. Leaders in our nation

Ask students to define, rate and add to the list of character traits below.

Honesty  
Integrity  
Respect  
Courage  
Self-Discipline  
Fairness  
Caring  
Responsibility  
Citizenship  
Loyalty

Ask students to list the character traits you need to become a classroom leaders.

What character traits do you need to become a community leader? A state or national leader? Are any of the character traits the same? Can you think of any others?

#### A Portrait of Leadership

Ask students to imagine that they are apprenticed to a modern Sir Joshua Reynolds! Remember that an apprentice learns to work like the master artist! Remind them that Reynolds always wanted his portraits to show his subjects in very noble, or classic poses.

Ask students to choose a friend, family member, community or a national leader as a subject for a portrait that they will create using Reynolds' ideas of classicism. Use photographs, magazine or newspaper clippings to help create the drawing. The portrait will also have to show the viewer clues about what job the person has as a leader. Use computer graphics, colored pencils, markers or other art media to create the work of art.

Give the work of art a title! Write a short *Discourse* about the work of art, explaining why the person is a leader and how the work of art makes the person appear noble.

#### For a Fun Discussion!

If Sir Joshua Reynolds could paint your portrait today, how would you choose to be painted?



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### A Time Line from 1700 to 1800

A time line is a very useful device for graphically illustrating art history or any other kind of history because it gives students a visual representation of consecutive events.

To use a time line, a student must know how to read dates and understand their meaning. The length of the time line, as well as the span of the intervals, are determined by the subject and the period of history which it illustrates. Since art can be considered a reflection of its time, it is important to study some of the events that occurred in the time period 1700-1800. Invite your students to help construct a class time line.

#### 1706

Benjamin Franklin, American statesman and inventor, is born.

#### 1723

Sir Joshua Reynolds is born.

#### 1726

Jonathan Swift writes *Gulliver's Travels*.

#### 1728

James Bradley discovers the aberration of starlight and uses it to determine that the speed of the light is about 283, 000 kilometers per second.

#### 1732

George Washington, first President of the United States, is born.

#### 1743

Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, is born.

#### 1763

Treaty of Paris. It ends the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), weakens France, and makes England a great colonial power.

#### 1769

James Watt patents the steam engine.

#### 1775

The American Revolution begins.

#### 1792

Sir Joshua Reynolds dies.

#### 1796

General Napoleon Bonaparte invades Italy.