



## The Hopper-Ville Express

Guide for Curriculum Unit 89.05.01

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My unit was designed to create a narrative exposition of America, from the rolling hills and seashores of New England, through the myriad of major cities and towns, and finally, moving westward, to travel along the highways and the railways as we cut our way across the United States. But along the way, our unit altered its focus.

Edward Hopper was a talented and gifted artist who sought to interpret and to report the changing times and the technological achievements as he perceived them through his own eyes and the synthesis of his inner experiences. Having painted over several decades, he produced a limited number of works as he was not accustomed to paint just for painting's sake. Rather, he would work an idea over in his mind many times and add or delete several portions of the composition as he saw fit. Sometimes a painting would have a door or a window from other cities or towns. Utilizing various thematic and compositional techniques, he conveyed his impressions of a changing America as he traveled through the Great Depression, past the war years, and culminated with his comedian farewell in 1965.

Hopper was an expert in creating specific moods. His effective usage of light and shadows created dramatic scenes and he often used the horizontal border effect of railroad tracks, a railing, or a bridge, for example, to set the stage beyond which the drama would begin to unfold. He often painted solitary figures or places to convey the loneliness of a big city or a bygone era.

He was a realistic 20th century American painter who painted ordinary people and commonplaces in a changing America, but, above all, he was a symbolist expressing his impressions of our country through his experiences. America may well be proud of Edward Hopper. He has done his job well.

(Recommended for Reading and Art Appreciation classes, grades 7-12)

### **Key Words**

*Art American Painting Hopper Edward Mythology Life Urban*

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