



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2006 Volume VI: Anatomy and Art: How We See and Understand

The Vitruvian Teen

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This unit is written as an introduction to a high school anatomy and physiology course. It is a multidisciplinary unit exploring the links between art and science. The unit is highly engaging and experiential and is based on a study of Leonardo Da Vinci's drawing of the Vitruvian man done as an illustration for Marcus Vitruvius Pollio's classic architectural writings. This famous illustration has been popularized in the book and movie "The Da Vinci Code." The final art project is the creation of the student's own life-sized "Vitruvian Teen." Students will interpret Vitruvius' work translated from the Latin as if they were Renaissance artists illustrating a translation of this ancient work, just as Leonardo was hired to do.

This unit can be readily adapted to middle and elementary school students. Each lesson can be simplified to emphasize a particular theme for the younger students. It can be used in science, studio art, art history, mathematics (proportion, measurement, and geometry), history or virtually any class by nature of its multidisciplinary lessons.

(Recommended for Anatomy and Physiology, Biology, Mathematics, Studio Art, Art History, grades 7-12.)

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