

# PIKE PLACE MARKET POSTERS

**Objective:** Students will 1) recognize popular images and landmarks in the Market neighborhood and its history; 2) be able to compare and contrast past and present images of the Market; 3) distinguish different styles of art.

**Supplies:** Computer with Projector; Online Posters

**Class Time:** 30-45 minutes, longer if you do the art activity

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Lesson Opening: In the past, the Merchants Association, a group like a “club” that helped and promoted Market businesses, invited artists twice a year to create posters for two annual summer events. One was the Market Festival, a street fair that occurred on Memorial Day weekend. The other poster was for the Market’s Anniversary, celebrating the start of the Market on August 17, 1907. The posters are no longer produced. Past posters, though, remain as creative representations of the Market.

Just as people have different personalities, artists’ styles are different, too. Look at the posters and compare the styles (this is a good place to discuss what style is). How are the posters alike? How are they different? After looking at all of the posters, closely look at each.

You may choose to divide the class into small groups. Each group can answer questions listed with each poster. Each group can make a presentation to the entire class. You may need to print the posters for students, if you can print color copies.

**Poster #1: Produce Highstall (Market Anniversary, 1983).** Artist: R.A. Benson

Identify the produce items for sale. Which ones have you tasted before? What prices are listed on the signs? What does “LB” mean? Can you identify what makes this a highstall and not a farmtable? (See Glossary) What makes this poster abstract? What looks real?

Story about this poster: This produce highstall, Manzo Brothers Produce, has been in the Market since 1975. There are six other highstalls, produce stands, like this one in the Market.

**Poster #2: History (1990 Market Festival).** Artist: Kate Wade

Name ten (10) activities taking place. How often do you think each one happens? Every day? Week? Hour? What season is it in this poster? What time of day? What clues do you see that tell you the answer? How do you think the artist chose the items included in the poster?

Story about this poster: The man shown sketching is Victor Steinbrueck, who was an architecture professor at the University of Washington. He led the Seattle citizens who organized to save the Market from destruction in 1971. (See his *Market Sketchbook* and the lesson “Tale of a Market Hero.”) This poster is done in the “collage” style. Define



and ask students to identify the elements of a collage.

**Poster #3: Japanese-American Farmers (Market Anniversary, 1991).** Artist: Aki Sogabe  
What are the people doing in this poster? Where do you think the produce will go after it's loaded onto the trucks? Describe the use of color in this poster, compared to the use of color in the "History" poster.

Story of this poster: This poster honors Japanese American farmers, who made up more than half of the total number of farmers selling in the Market in 1941. By 1942, these farmers were mostly gone from the Market because they were forced to go to internment camps during World War Two. They were forced to give up their land, and many never returned to sell at the Market.

Ms. Sogabe, who specializes in the art of paper cutting ("kiri-e"), also created a series of images that are posted under the clock, but above performers' spot, not far from Rachel the piggybank. You can view the panels and read more at <http://www.pikeartproject.org/earth.html>.

**Poster #4: Market Clock (1983 Market Festival).** Artist: R.A. Benson  
Compare this poster to the 1990 Market Festival ("History"). How would it feel to enter each scene? What season is represented in this poster? Why? How is your own neighborhood different each season? Can you find another poster that looks very similar to this one in terms of style? Since this poster was created, two well-known landmarks have been added to the Market. Can you tell what's missing in this picture? (Rachel the Piggybank, and the Information Booth at First and Pike)

Story of this poster: This view of the Market is very famous. The big neon Public Market Center sign and clock is one of the oldest neon signs in Seattle (installed in 1928). The "Meet the Producer" sign still means you meet the people who grow the food you buy (farmers) and artists who created the art or craft you purchase (craftspeople). You can also meet store owners in person. You can see in this poster two of the Market's many residential buildings: each multi-story building to the left and right of the clock is an apartment building.

**Poster #5: A Wrinkle in Time (25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Citizens' Initiative That Saved Pike Place Market, 1996).** Photo courtesy of Ed Lowe and Ivey Seright  
How does this poster play a "trick" on your eyes? Is this the way the Market looks today? Compare the Market on the left with the Market on the right. What's the same? Different? Where in the poster does the image change? What has changed in the Market? What things on the right side are too new to appear on the left?

Story of this poster: This is really two photographs made into one! The same area of the Market is seen in two eras. The left side of the image is a photograph from 1915. The right side is the Market, 1992. A computer technician at the graphics and photography firm Ivey Seright merged the two images into one. This poster celebrates the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the victorious citizen vote to preserve the Market in 1971. (See Lesson #5.)



**Art Activity:** Have students create a birthday card or poster for the Pike Place Market with paints or crayons. They can imitate one of the styles represented in the posters.

As time allows, look at other posters in the **Poster Gallery**.

