

Allegory in Art

Create Your Own Allegorical Portrait

LOCATION: East Pavilion, Gallery E203

Name _____

PART 1

Go to Gallery E203, and find this painting.

- 1 Notice the objects the girl is carrying in her arms in this painting. Write the objects you see in the spaces below.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



This was painted by Dutch artist Frans van Mieris the Elder in 1661.

- 2 The objects in the girl's hands are symbols. The artist painted these objects to provide you with clues so you can figure out the allegory represented by the painting. The girl symbolizes an idea that is connected to the objects she holds. What do all of the objects have in common? Can you think of one theme that unifies them? Brainstorm with a partner.

- 3 After you finish brainstorming, fill in the blanks below.

I think the girl is an allegory of _____
because _____

- 4 Refer to the label next to the painting. Did you guess the correct allegory? Discuss your findings with a partner.



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PART 2

Frans van Mieris the Elder updated the imagery for this allegorical painting to match the taste of his time in 1661. Previously, allegories of Pictura, which is Latin for "painting," depicted her as a classically beautiful woman. Instead, van Mieris painted an average, young Dutch woman—the kind of woman who would be typically seen every day on the streets of his city.

Imagine you are painter who has been asked to make a present-day allegorical painting. Use this chart to help you brainstorm before you start your sketch.

Allegory:	
Symbols: objects and/or animals associated with your allegory	

Stumped? Here are some allegories for inspiration:

Drawing	Music	Painting
Dance	Science	Math
Love	Fortune	Passion
War	Power	Peace
Victory	Happiness	Sports
Any of the four seasons: Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall		



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Sketch your allegory below, making sure to include the symbols you thought of in your brainstorming.

