

# Innovative Teaching Manual

## PROJECT TITLE

The Historic Home: Using Higher Level Thinking to Investigate and Apply Four Main Historic Styles to the Design of a Historic Home

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## PROJECT LEVEL

Second Year

## ABSTRACT

Traditionally in many interior design programs, history of architecture and furniture are taught using a lecture format, augmented with slides, field trips, and short assignments; and evaluated using a multiple choice/identification test format. Since students learn and process information in different ways, using primarily a lecture format can limit the amount of students reached by this teaching technique. Using recall or identification test questions as a means of evaluating a student's understanding of history keeps their thinking processes at Bloom's 'lower' level of the hierarchy. (Lissy, 1994)

Also, due to the organization of two commonly used history textbooks — Boger's *The Complete Guide to Furniture Styles* and Whiton's *Interior Design and Decoration* — history of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is often taught by country (France, England, America), rather than by general historic style (Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, Neoclassic). This segmented approach to history can prevent students from seeing the connections between the various countries and how each expressed the main historic styles. This was the case in *Historic Styles*, a second year history class, which reviewed and applied the student's knowledge of historic periods to room settings. The students were able to replicate for example, an English Chippendale bedroom, but failed to see Chippendale as an expression of the Rococo style in England. By reworking this class to approach the historic review and new historic content from historic style, rather than individual country, the connections were made and generalizations drawn.

A variety of teaching/learning strategies were incorporated into this class in order to encourage higher level thinking (Bloom's Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation processes), as well as appeal to all Silver's learning styles. The types of teaching/learning strategies ranged from the tried and true lecture to multiple slide analysis to the design of a historically correct home. The students built upon their historic base and expanded their knowledge of the historic styles, rather than just duplicating what they already knew.

## OBJECTIVES

The two main objectives of this project were to promote critical thinking about historic interiors by incorporating all levels of thinking from Bloom's taxonomy into the course content, and to create varied learning environments that appeal to all types of learning styles. A corollary objective was to challenge students to work outside their preferred learning style.

## CRITERIA

Within the last 25 years, much has been written about how people learn and process information. Several theories (Silver, McCarthy) involving 4 quadrant learning styles developed from Kolb's original 1971 model. Both Kolb and Silver use two intersecting continuums. In Silver's model, the horizontal continuum represents how a learner processes information, ranging from thinking on one end of the continuum to feeling on the other end. Silver's vertical continuum represents how a learner perceives information, ranging from sensing on one end of the continuum to intuition on the other end. Silver classified the 4 quadrants or styles as Sensing-Feeling (SF) or the Interpersonal Learner, Sensing-Thinking (ST) or the Mastery Learner, Intuitive-Thinking (NT) or the Reasoning Learner, and Intuitive-Feeling (NF) or the Self-Expressive Learner. (See Appendix A)

Silver believes it is necessary to vary the learning activities to appeal to all the styles, forcing students to work outside their comfort zone. Neither comfort nor challenge is motivating in and of itself. The goal is to strike a proper balance between comfort and challenge, one that will insure that the students feel good about themselves at the same time it inspires them to move beyond themselves (Hanson, 1992).

Another goal of education is to promote higher level of thinking or critical thinking by incorporating all levels of Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning Processes into course activities. Although the Taxonomy implies different levels of learning, some authors (McGowan) feel that all six processes are equal and necessary for true learning to occur. Critical thinking only occurs when each aspect of thinking appropriate to a given situation is employed in an integrated way (Lissy, 1994).

## PROCESS

In completing the design of a historically correct home, the instructor and students engaged in the following teaching/learning activities:

1. Mini-lecture — a short (10 minutes) overview of the historic dates, important rulers and political/social relationships between countries was presented by instructor. The lecture format appeals to the Intuitive-Thinking type learner and incorporates Bloom's first thinking process, that of knowledge or recall.
2. Multiple slide show — four historic style slides, each from a different country (all Renaissance for the first week) were presented simultaneously. In pairs, students were asked to record the wall, floor, ceiling and fireplace treatments that they could identify. They were asked to look for commonalties between these treatments, and formulate some generalizations about Renaissance interiors. After about 15 minutes, a group discussion was lead by the instructor on the interior elements of this historic style, using the slides to point out similarities and differences.

Working in pairs appeals to the Sensing-Feeling type of learner, while looking for commonalties appeals to the Intuitive-Feeling type of learner. Articulating the treatments used and drawing comparisons between the slides incorporates Bloom's Comprehension and Analysis processes of thinking.

3. Furniture bulletin board — as homework, students were asked to bring in a minimum of three photos/Xeroxes of furniture pieces (each from a different country) of the style being discussed. These pieces were displayed on a bulletin board which

remained up through the project as a point of reference. If needed, the instructor augmented the photos and led a group discussion of the furniture pieces common to the historic style being discussed. Students were asked to generalize about the types of pieces used, the scale and forms used, and types of ornamentation used. The discussion was concluded with a summary handout (see Appendix B).

Working in a group and the physical movement of creating this bulletin board appeals to both the Sensing-Feeling and Sensing-Thinking type of learner. Describing and comparing furniture pieces incorporates Bloom's Comprehensive and Analysis processes of thinking.

4. Demonstration/lecture — using color and textile boards and a corresponding handout created by the instructor (See Appendix C), new information was provided about the appropriate weaves, patterns and colors of textiles used for this historic style. The boards remained on display during the class to use as a student resource. The systematic coverage of this new textile information appeals to the Sensing-Thinking type learner. The application of appropriate textiles to the Historic Home project incorporates Bloom's Evaluation process of thinking.

5. Historic Home project — the last half of each class was devoted to lab time in which the student applies her understanding of the various styles to the design of historically correct Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassic room within a large home. Working independently on the design of the home appeals to the Intuitive-Thinking type learner. The application of the correct wall, floor, ceiling and fireplace treatments, the use of correct furniture pieces, textiles, and colors incorporates Bloom's Application and Synthesis processes of thinking.

These activities were repeated for four consecutive weeks, covering one period style per week.

#### PRESENTATION

1. Each student space plans all areas of an assigned floor plan, selecting and mixing appropriate antiques or reproduction furniture from a variety of countries to satisfy the client's functional needs.
2. Each student, within the assigned floor plan, creates a historically correct Renaissance interior, Baroque interior, Rococo interior and Neoclassic interior.
3. Each student designs and selects appropriate shell treatments (wall, floor, ceiling, and fireplace treatments) for each period room. A detailed floor plan, one elevation per style, and finish samples are required to depict these treatments.
4. Each student selects appropriate textiles for upholstered pieces and window treatments.
5. Each student creates five presentation boards which include 1 of the drafted floor plan and 1 per each style, with an assigned elevation, major furniture pieces, fabrics, and finishes.
6. Each student presents the project orally for critique by instructor and fellow students.

#### EVALUATION

Each student's grade for the Historic Home project is based on participation in the slide and bulletin board discussions, the correct application of historic content for each of the four main styles, and their visual and oral presentation.

#### PROJECT LENGTH

The Illinois based on an average class size of 12 students, this project takes 7.5 classes to complete. This project is the only assignment that the students work on within these 8 weeks.

#### RESOURCES

Hanson, Silver, & Strong. (1992). Expanding teaching repertoires through styles & strategies. Paper presented at 16 week course on Critical Literacy, Harper College, Palatine, IL.

Lissy, C., Radabaugh, B., and Waite, M. (1994). Bloom's Taxonomy. The Critical Literacy Project 1994-1995. Seminar presented as part of 16 week course on Critical Literacy, Harper College, Palatine, IL.

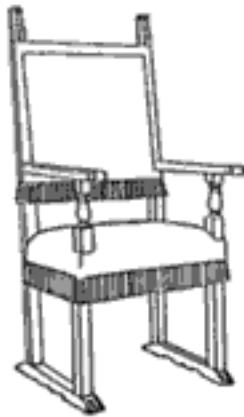
[ Appendix A ]

<p><b>ST (SENSING-THINKING)</b></p> <p>Neat, well organized, precise          Needs to be active, likes activity          Likes concise step by step instructions          Needs to know exact expectations          Results oriented          Needs to apply learning immediately          Experiences with five senses</p> <p><b>Appropriate teaching methods:</b>          Drill, memorization          Direct experiments          Field trips          Making or doing activities          Lists, definitions, basics          Instructor directed activities</p>	<p><b>SF (SENSING-FEELING)</b></p> <p>Emotionally involved in learning          Spontaneous, acts on impulse          Motivated by what affects others          Works well with others          Needs first hand experience          Works well with others          Needs praise and reassurance</p> <p><b>Appropriate teaching methods:</b>          Group sharing/team projects          Group discussions          Journals, interviews          Projects which express or identify feelings          Sharing about self</p>
<p><b>NT (INTUITIVE-THINKING)</b></p> <p>Logical, knowledge oriented          Thinks things through before beginning          Likes to work independently          Patient, persistent          Likes organizing, planning          Facility with language, likes to read</p> <p><b>Appropriate teaching methods:</b>          Independent research          Lectures          Reading assignments          Games of strategy theorizing</p>	<p><b>NF (INTUITIVE-FEELING)</b></p> <p>Imaginative, 'dares to dream'          Searches for new solutions          Motivated by own interests          Likes to use intuition as guide          Flexible in thought and action          Divergent thinker, sees the big picture</p> <p><b>Appropriate teaching methods:</b>          Open ended discussions          Fantasizing          Artistic modes of expression          Creative freedom to plan &amp; organize          Independent projects</p>

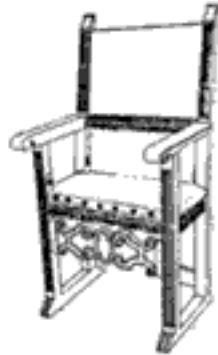
[ Appendix B ]

Appendix B  
RENAISSANCE COMPARATIVE FURNITURE STUDY

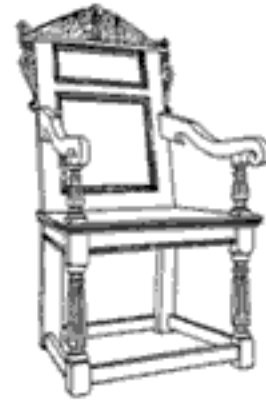
CHAIRS



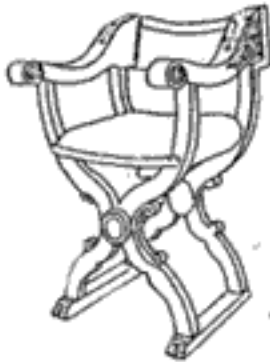
Sedia (Italy)



Friar's Chair  
(Spain/Portugal)



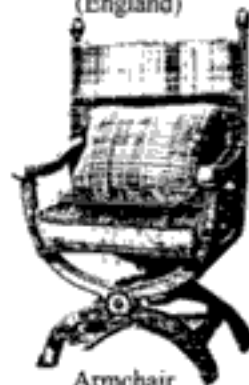
Wainscot chair  
(England)



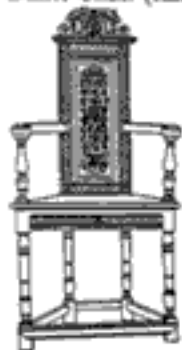
Dante Chair (Italy)



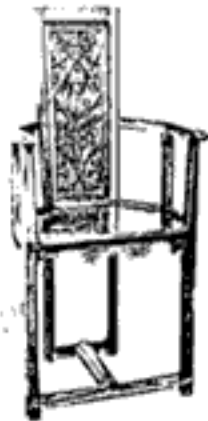
Sidesaddle/Scissor chair  
(Spain/Portugal)



Armchair  
(England)



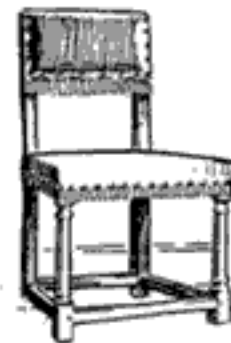
Caquetoire (France)  
Figure B1.



Armchair (England)



Side Chair (France)



Farthingale chair  
(England)

RENAISSANCE TEXTILE PATTERNS



Stylized florals set within an ogee network



Stylized florals

Fleurons



Stylized pomegranates, artichokes, pines  
Figure C1.



Lozenge or diaper pattern