

Close Study: Close Viewing Georgia Mills Jessup

Artist: [Georgia Mills Jessup](#) (Washington, D.C., 1926—Columbia, MD, 2016)

Work: [Rainy Night, Downtown](#), 1967; Oil on Canvas, 44 x 48 in.; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Savanna M. Clark; © Georgia Mills Jessup

Target grade range: 6-8

DPCS Curricular Unit: Everyday DC

DPCS Curricular Arc: Interaction/Other

DPCS Curricular Theme: Community and Viewpoint

Note: Annotation is a key feature of Close Study, ensuring that students are engaged in the process of evidence gathering. Annotation can take a range of forms across grade levels and disciplines. Annotation can provide assessment information as to each student's depth of comprehension. Additionally, it can be a useful tool for launching critical discussions. Encourage students to annotate this work physically or virtually.

Round 1

Type of Question: General Understanding/Responses

Sample Question: **What personal memories of Washington, D.C., does this artwork evoke? What do you see that makes you think that?**

Guidance: The goal of this conversation is to generate a range of student responses to the work. There is no wrong answer, but rather the idea is to open the conversation and create an environment in which students see the value of both their own opinion and the possible range of opinions.

Round 2

Type of Question: Key Details

Sample Question: **How would you describe the mood of this artwork? How does it make you feel? What do you see that makes you say that?**

Guidance: The conversation should focus on gathering evidence from the image; formal and technical evidence, as well as evidence based on the imagery. Student responses should include discussion of specific visual aspects of the work. You may ask guiding questions such as, **“How would you describe Georgia Mills Jessup’s color palette and tones in this work?”** OR **“Look closely at Jessup’s application and texture of paint, noting differences. Describe contrasts you see. Why might the artist have incorporated these variations?”** pushing students to focus on the visual aspects of the work and how they might begin to support the responses discussed in Round 1.

Round 3

Type of Question: Structure

Sample Question: **Georgia Mills Jessup is known for her dense compositions, created by layering and juxtaposing colors, shapes, and lines. How do her artistic choices make you think and feel about this scene?**

Guidance: This discussion should focus more specifically on how the structure of the work is supporting the students' interpretations of the work. This conversation might be around compositional strategies, the use of evocative visual designs, or the inclusion of distinct features.

Round 4

Type of Question: Intent/Inferences

Sample Question: **Georgia Mills Jessup was born in Washington, D.C., and lived her entire life in the D.C. area. She regularly depicted her hometown, yet wanted those unfamiliar with the city to relate to her art. What clues did the artist provide to let us know the subject is a specific place? What aspects of this work might express the dynamism, or energy, of any city?**

Guidance: Unlike the intentional omission of information in other rounds, prior to asking students to respond to this question, the teacher should provide some context for the work. This context should come in the form of another visual work. The nature of the context should promote the goals of the overall lesson or unit. This work might be:

- Another work by the same artist
- A work that serves a similar purpose in a more familiar context
- Another work from the same school, movement, or genre

Possible Contextual Works:

- Photo of the Trans-Lux Theater, photo ca. 1960
- Georgia Mills Jessup, *Untitled*, 1972; Mixed media on canvas, 29 1/8 × 48 3/8 × 2 1/2 in.; Anacostia Community Museum, Gift from the Trustees of the Corcoran Gallery of Art (Dr. Charles Warfield and Mrs. Savanna Clark); Photo accessed from https://anacostia.si.edu/collection/object/acm_2019.1.6
- Berenice Abbott, *New York at Night*, 1932; Gelatin silver print, 22 x 17 3/8 in.; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of The Tony Podesta Collection, Washington, DC; Photo by Lee Stalsworth

Round 5

Type of Question: Opinion/Application

Sample question: **If you were to create an artwork that was about Washington, D.C., a) what part of the city would you depict, b) how would you like people to feel about that place, and c) what artistic choices would you make to express that mood?**

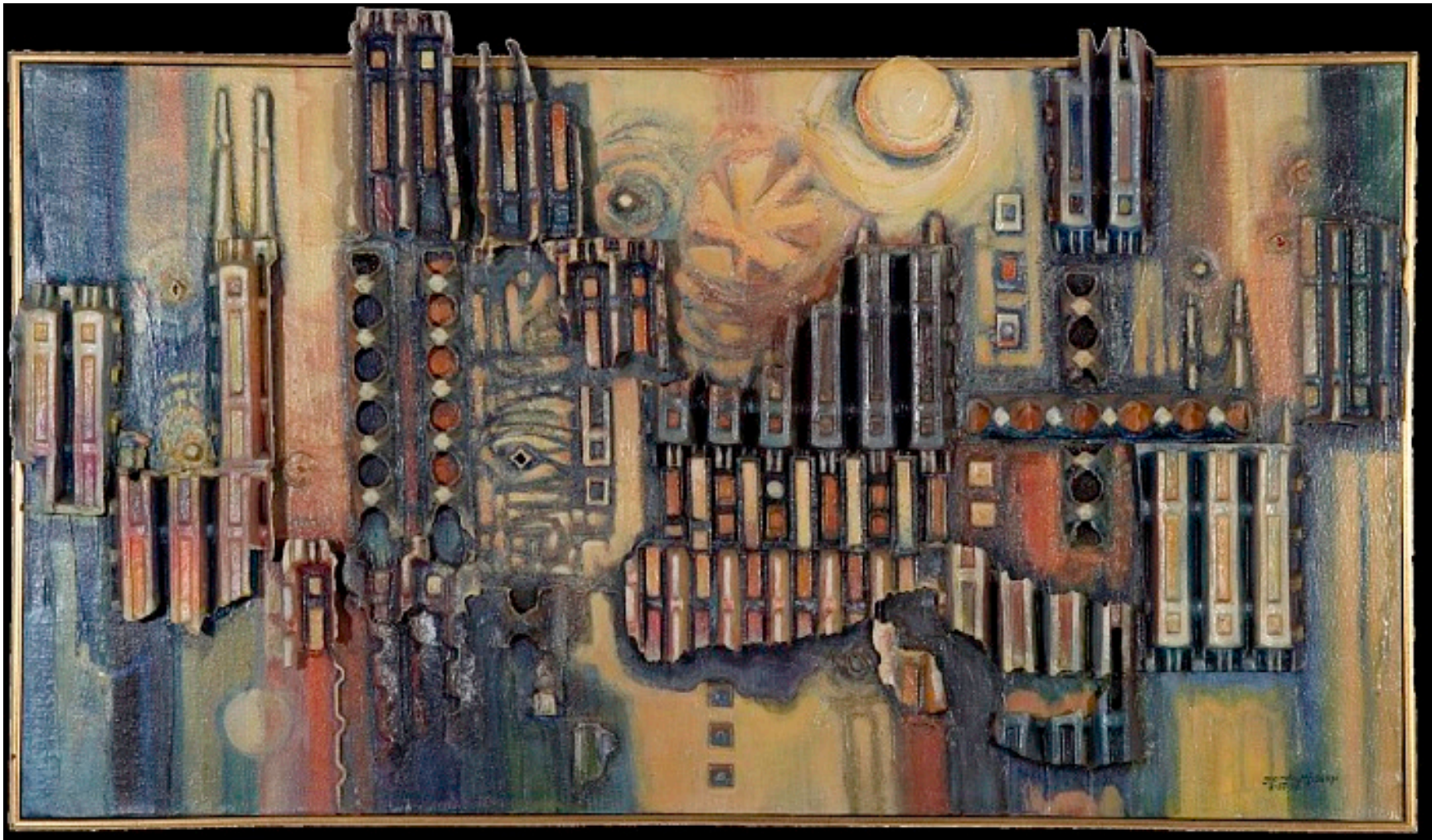
Guidance: This round is asking students to internalize the knowledge and information built in the previous rounds by using the concepts generated to visualize a work that applies to a personal goal of communication. The direction of this question is directly related to the broader thematic goal of the lesson or unit.



Georgia Mills Jessup, *Rainy Night, Downtown*, 1967; Oil on Canvas, 44 x 48 in.; National Museum of Women in the Arts, Gift of Savanna M. Clark; © Georgia Mills Jessup



The Trans-Lux Theater, located at 738 14th St NW, Washington, DC 20005 (1937–1975), Photo ca. 1960; Image courtesy Pat Padua, from <https://dc.curbed.com/maps/theater-movie-dc-historic>



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