

Extension Activity

It's a small world: using microscopy to link science, technology, and art

Extension Activity: Microscope image photoediting to imitate art

This activity can be used as an extension in an art class to learn more about artists and use their works as inspiration to create a micro-macro comparison. This activity takes 1–2 h.

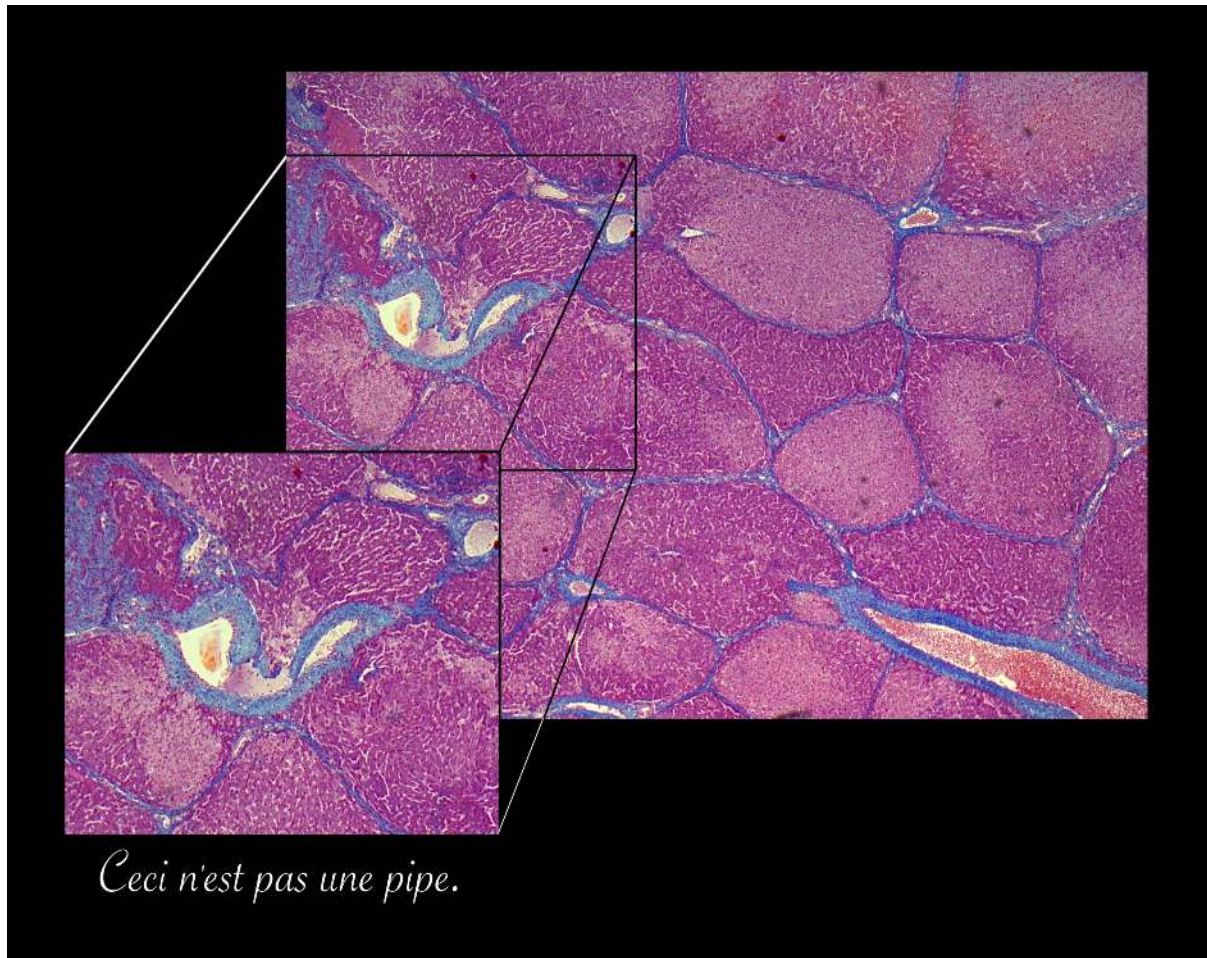
Materials

- 1 computer (per person)
- Photoediting software (e.g., Photoshop, GIMP)

Procedure

1. Ask students to find something in their microscope image that is similar to what they have seen in an artist's work.
2. Put the microscope image and the artist's work side by side. Ask students to note down the differences between the two, in particular, what is missing from the microscope image to make it look more similar to the artwork.
3. Using photoediting software, ask students to edit their microscope image by adding elements, or even combining several microscope images, to make it further resemble work from an artist of their choice.

The following page shows an example from the project it's a small world.



Ceci n'est pas une pipe (2018)

Image courtesy of the author

This image shows an overview of liver tissue of a pig, stained with azan and captured at 100× magnification. Purple areas consist mainly of hepatocytes, a cell type that makes up about 80% of the liver's total mass.

Stained in blue is connective tissue. Connective tissue is found between different tissue types, providing protection and support. It is also found around veins and arteries, two of the main types of blood vessels.

The inspiration for this image was René Magritte's famous painting *La Trahison des Images* (The Treachery of Images, 1928–1929), which shows a smoking pipe with the text "*Ceci n'est pas un pipe*" (This is not a pipe).