**Who?** Andy Warhol, (1928-1987) American, Pop Art

**What?** Campbell’s Soup Cans; synthetic polymer paint on 32 canvases

**When?** 1962

**Where is it now?** The Museum of Modern Art, New York

**Why is this artist/artwork important?** Both the artist and this particular image are among the most famous in the history of contemporary art. They epitomize the Pop Art movement: the fusion of art, industry and popular culture. Warhol focused on popular, iconic images of celebrities, brand name products, and photos from newspaper headlines. This work is a series of 32 painted canvases, one for every available variety of the soup at the time.

Warhol once said, “Everything is beautiful. Pop is everything.” Relates to the idea that anything could be transformed into art that people would want to look at.
Artist Information Sheet:

--Andy Warhol was born in 1928 in Pittsburgh

--He started studying art as a kid and continued his studies in collage. He began his career as a commercial illustrator, doing advertisements for department stores and magazines. He moved to New York in 1949 and became one of the most famous advertising artists of the time.

--Warhol also hung out with artists, writers, composers, and dancers. All the hip people of the time were friends with him. They shared ideas about how to make new kinds of art.

--Like other artists, Warhol was interested in combining fine art (painting, sculpture) with popular and commercial images. It was a challenge to the snobbish ideas of the art world. This kind of art would be known as Pop Art.

--Warhol put his paintings in his window displays for department stores, with the mannequins. He included advertising logos in his paintings.

--People liked his work. He became famous for his paintings of commonly known commercial products, movie stars, and comic books. Some of his paintings from this time include: Superman, Close Cover Before Striking (Pepsi), Campbell's Soup Cans.

-He set up a huge studio to produce his art called “The Factory”. He had many employees working on each image – this was a very new concept at the time.

-Toward the end of 1962, shortly after completing the painted Campbell Soup Can Series he began using the photo-silkscreen process to make his series paintings of individual images.

--The images he chose were items recognizable from popular culture, consumer products or tabloid headlines. (For example: Coca-Cola Bottles, Marilyn Monroe).

--In this way he was challenging the accepted subject matter of “fine art.” By using techniques normally associated with advertising, he challenged the method by which artists made art.
He also took actual cans of Campbell's soup, signed them and sold them at his gallery, as if to say, what's the difference between selling art and soup.

He became very famous for his outrageous antics as well as his innovative art.

**Warhol's Photo Silkscreen Paintings**

"The reason I'm painting this way is that I want to be a machine, and I feel that whatever I do and do machine-like is what I want to do." Warhol was referring to his newfound process of silk-screen printing images repeatedly onto a single canvas.

Photo-silkscreen: Warhol worked with professionals to have the photos he chose transferred onto the mesh of a silk screen. When Warhol passed an ink-laden squeegee over the mesh as the silk screen sat atop his canvas, ink would pass through the mesh and impress a print of his image onto the canvas. Areas of the mesh where a layer of glue has been applied – in Warhol's case, the "negative" space of the photos he selected – keep paint from passing through to the canvas.

In his silkscreen series, he made each canvas look slightly different by using different colored inks. This process was a printmaking technique originally invented for commercial use. The photo-silkscreen process would become his signature medium.

**Discussion Questions (Warhol's quotes lend themselves to great discussion questions):**

“In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes.” This is one of Warhol’s most famous quotes. What does it mean and how does it relate to his art? (Anyone or everyone can be famous, but that fame is fleeting).

“What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca Cola, and you know that the President drinks Coca Cola, Liz Taylor drinks Coca Cola, and just think, you can drink Coca Cola, too. A coke is a coke and no amount of money can get you a better coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All
the cokes are the same and all the cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it, and you know it.” --Why do you think Warhol chose the subjects that he did? What was he trying to say or do with his art?

-What do you think is the difference between a “factory” for making art, and a “studio”? How is this important to Warhol’s work?

-Warhol made people ask the question: “What is art?” Critics didn’t like his work, thought it was too commercial, called it a “hoax”. Discuss this: do you agree with this criticism? Why or why not?

-What happens to an image when it is reproduced many times? Does this change how you think about the person/ object? What happens to the images when different colors are applied? How does this change the effect?

**For Additional Information:**
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Campbell's_Soup_Cans

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy_Warhol

Books:

**Project Idea:**
In advance of your presentation, find newspaper or magazine photographs of iconic objects (for example: Coca Cola, iPod, Apple logo, NFL or NBA logo, etc.). Make enough Xerox copies of each image so that each child will get two of the same image.

Other required materials: Square pieces of white construction paper or tag board; colored pencils, markers, scissors, glue.

Give each student a piece of paper, plus two copies of the selected image. Ask them to hand color the images using colored pencil or marker, each one different. Then, cut out and clue the images to the white paper in “series” like Warhol. (Do not cut out and paste the images before hand coloring, it does NOT work!)
Comparative Images:

Warhol Bonwit Teller Window Display, April, 1961

Superman, 1960 (painting)
Close Cover Before Striking, 1962 (painting)

Andy Warhol Making a Silkscreen
Four-Colored Campbell’s Soup Can, 1965 (Silkscreen)

210 Coca-Cola Bottles, 1962 (Silkscreen)
25 Gold Marilyns, 1962 (Silkscreen)