

## PORTRAYING AMERICAN CHARACTER

Grade level: elementary or secondary, with adaptations  
Work of Art: *Mrs. Daniel Hubbard* (slide 3)

John Singleton Copley was considered the most accomplished portrait painter in the colonies in the 1760s. In looking at the portrait of Mrs. Daniel Hubbard, why do you think he held this status? What were Copley's greatest skills in painting portraits?

Given Copley's great status, only wealthy individuals could afford to commission him to paint a portrait. What visual evidence in this portrait makes the case for Mrs. Hubbard's social and economic status?

Now that you have identified evidence in the painting that establishes Mrs. Hubbard as an exemplary member of American colonial upper-class society, examine how Copley emphasized her role as a woman in the 1760s. What feminine traits did he represent? Look carefully at the background and "props" in the painting as well as at the lines with which Copley created her figure. Has the artist manipulated her figure to exaggerate its feminine qualities? How?

Adapted from work by Museum Classroom Participants from Evanston Township High School