



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2004 Volume III: Representations of American Culture, 1760-1960: Art and Literature

In the Footprints of Lewis and Clark: 19th Century Artists' Depictions of Native Americans

Curriculum Unit 04.03.09
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Introduction

This unit is designed to dovetail with a reading of excerpts from Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage*. Eighth Grade students at my school are required to read a part of the book on the Lewis and Clark Expedition in their English classes. Upon completion of the reading I will ask students to examine various artists' depictions of Native Americans from the time of Lewis and Clark to the end of the Nineteenth Century. I believe examining the depictions will provide for an interesting extension of the Lewis and Clark Expedition reading. The artwork will help students extend their reading and make connections that they otherwise might overlook. It will also provide students the opportunity to use art in their academic class, one of many goals at my school, an arts magnet school. Students will be encouraged to look closely at a number of artists' works including Charles Bird King, George Catlin, Seth Eastman, Karl Bodmer, and others.

The history of the Nineteenth Century Native American is one documented not only by history books and explorers' journals, but artists and writers of the century as well. Like the attitudes towards Native Americans during the century, the artists' depictions of the people during this period varied throughout the century. What were the interpretations of the Native Americans during this pivotal century? Did the artists' interpretation of the Native American change from the beginning to the end of the 19th Century? If so, why, how? These are some of the questions that I believe examining the artistic interpretation of Native Americans can raise during a classroom discussion. Looking closely at the interpretations in art is what this unit will focus on. By focusing on Nineteenth Century representations of Native Americans in art, I believe that students will be able to examine more deeply the conflict and the culture that really shaped this century in American history.

Purpose

My aim in this unit is twofold. I would like students and teachers using this unit to become comfortable using art in the classroom. I am a firm believer in art as a key to real discovery in the classroom. I have always felt that art can be used as a beautiful tool that allows students the opportunity to explore academic topics in a

less traditional manner. The interpretation of visual art in this unit will be very objective and open; students will be asked to interpret the art with minimal teacher guidance at first. Next the teacher will lead the students to examine points about the art that will help them to make discoveries about changing attitudes towards Native Americans in this incredibly important century. I believe that teachers can easily adopt the techniques used in this lesson to just about any academic class. Why not enhance the study of the American Revolution with artwork from that era? Why not introduce Andy Warhol into a political science class? The possibilities are endless.

I would like students being taught in this unit to read between the lines as of artistic interpretations of Native Americans. How were the natives depicted in their times? Why were they depicted in a certain way? I would like to provide teachers and students with a unique and interesting way to examine what I believe is one of the saddest and most misunderstood chapters of American history: the nineteenth century westward expansion.

A Note on the Viewing Method

Many students at Betsy Ross Arts Magnet School are at an advantage when it comes to viewing artwork. Through a partnership with the Yale Center for British Art, teachers have been invited to learn how to lead students through art observation in a method of viewing introduced to us by New York's Museum of Modern Art. The teacher's role in the discussion of the paintings is really that of a middleman/woman; the teacher helps the students to respond and discuss their observations without any interference. By beginning with the phrase, "What do you see here?" teachers are inviting students to make their own observations and draw their own conclusions based on their own viewing. Basically all of the students have some feeling or point of view about what they are observing. It is the teacher's role to simply help them communicate what they feel, think or see. Simple repetition, paraphrasing and questioning allows teachers to do what they naturally do in class on a daily basis; helps students realize and share their own potential and abilities that make them individuals.

In the classroom or in the museum, students sit in front of the work, observe quietly for a few minutes and then are asked to share their feelings on the work. I ask probing questions to get the students to share their thoughts; what do you see? What makes you say that? Does anyone see anything else? What else do you see? What is this? What do you think this is? Why? Does anyone else see that? Does anyone else see anything different? All the students' comments are welcomed and encouraged. No answer is wrong and no answer or interpretation is any better or worse than any other.

Journal Writing

I find that journal writing is the most exciting and creative types of writing that my students regularly take part in. I emphasize creativity in the journals that I require my seventh and eighth graders to keep. They are never penalized for spelling or grammar in their journals because the entries are all about their ideas. I want students to feel free to express themselves in their journals. I want them to enjoy their writing and allow

themselves the freedom to not worry about form, structure, grammar and the other parts of writing that we regularly examine during other types of writing such as essay and research writing.

Journal writing combined with artwork almost always leads to the type of higher-order thinking that the latest changes in educational curriculum aim to enhance. Students make connections, take critical stances and are able to think past the literal interpretation that so often characterizes traditional assessment.

Journal writing will work easily into this unit. After class discussions on art and literature students will be asked to comment in their journals. Another aspect of journal writing is that it is an easy way to get students to share their work. I always ask students to share what they have written with classmates when they are done writing. It is not mandatory to share, but it is encouraged, and I find that most students enjoy reading their work out loud. The more they share, the more they enjoy the writing. In this unit journal writing will help to extend the conversation that we have about the artwork and about Native Americans. I will ask my students to set aside a section of their journals for this unit. The possible topics are endless. Trying to get students to choose a topic that makes those connections to higher order thinking is key to a successful unit.

Some possible journal topics:

- Write a story based on the painting
- What does the image remind you of?
- Write one character's explanation of what is happening
- Write a character sketch
- How would you change the painting if you were the artist
- Write a soliloquy
- Compare the painting with another
- Analyze an aspect of the image (shading, texture, color, composition)
- How does the image make you feel?
- How might the image make others feel?
- Write an interview with the artist or character portrayed

The Unit

Objectives

After viewing the artwork, students will be able to:

- Express interpretations of the work both in writing and orally
- Use details from a piece of art to write narratives, make connections and examine their own interpretations in their journals
- Share their work with their class
- Create their own “western” artwork based on the lessons in the unit
- Feel comfortable talking about art and sharing interpretations

Overview

Once again this unit is designed as an interdisciplinary piece that could accompany any number of classes: a social studies class on Native Americans, a history class on Nineteenth Century politics, an English class stemming from a reading on Lewis and Clark. The starting point of the unit is a good reference point for social studies teachers. A section from Stephen Ambrose’s book *Undaunted Courage* is used in their eighth grade English textbooks, *The Language of Literature* (see bibliography). This is a wonderful starting point because it really does mark the beginning of westward expansion in this country. Students need to spend a little time getting their bearings at the beginning of the unit. Let them read and work with the section and spent some time setting the stage in the pre-settled west. After students understand the era they are starting in they will be able to begin looking at the artwork and really beginning a journey through the Nineteenth Century.

Start the students on art of the earlier artists. It is best if students are able to view the painting in slide form. Local museums, libraries and bookstores should be able to help you obtain the images. If slides are out of the question there are plenty of art books full of the images mentioned under the “Art and Artists” section of this unit. Take a look at Frances K. Pohl’s *Framing America* or some of the other sources listed in the bibliography for where to find the works in print. Display the artwork and begin the viewing by asking the students just to look for a minute. Then start eliciting their reactions (see viewing the art section of the unit). Our class periods are only fifty-two minutes so I think one or two images is about all we will be able to cover. View the early art for a couple of days (see “Art and Artists”) and then move on to the journal section of the unit.

For each of the sections students will be viewing art, writing in journals and sharing. This unit is designed to

be flexible so that teachers can adapt it to their own teaching styles and needs. I will not tell you what journal topic to use with each section. You might not want to assign a topic or you might stumble onto an angle that you want your students to focus on. Look at the journal-writing section of the unit to get ideas if you need them. Always have your students share their written work as well. I like to ask students to share journals using the “TAG” method introduced to New Haven teachers by the Connecticut Writing Project, a University of Connecticut based writing program. Write “TAG” on the board before journal sharing and get students to exchange more ideas. The “T” stands for tell them something you like; the “A” for ask a question and the “G” for give some advice.

This is the pattern of the lessons in this unit: view, discuss, write, and share.

I plan to begin each section of the unit displaying a piece of artwork, asking students to utilize the interpretation methods that they have been taught at the Yale Center for British Art. The key connecting piece in this unit will be the journal writing and discussion. The final project/assessment in the unit will be a creative session in which I will ask students to create their own depictions of Native Americans in the art rooms.

The Artists and the Art

The following section lists some suggestions as to the artists and artwork that will work well in this unit. The brief background information provides a starting point for teacher.

Charles Bird King (1785-1862)

Charles Bird King provides a direct link between Lewis and Clark and the government of the United States. When several Native American leaders were invited by the explorers to visit Washington, King was commissioned to do portraits of the visiting chiefs, and eventually painted over one hundred. Unfortunately a fire destroyed most of these works.¹ Two of King’s portraits will provide students with plenty to study for this unit. Take a look at *Petalesharro, Generous Chief, Pawnee* (1821) and *Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri and Pawnees* (1822). Both of the paintings reveal subtle hints of the beginning of European American influence on the natives. Look closely at the jewelry, clothing and profiles of the Native Americans. Ask students what this tells them about America, about the politics and about the artist at this time.

Petalesharro, Generous Chief, Pawnee (1821)

One of two King portraits to be examined in this course, *Petalesharro, Generous Chief, Pawnee* is a beautiful portrait that was once a part of King’s “Indian Gallery.” Students will surely insist that the chief is a female, but reassure them that the chief was considered a hero for having saved a Comanche maiden from sacrifice.² The softness in this portrait depicts a boy-like chief with a soft complexion and peaceful eyes. The way he wears his robe, coming down off of one shoulder and revealing a hairless chest, as well as the pearl-like blue beads around his neck makes him seem peaceful and effeminate. At the same time the chief wears a beautiful headdress that seems like it would be worn like a crown. Ask students what they make of the peace medal the chief wears around his neck. How does this depiction of the Pawnee chief add to the premise that the European expansion would rob the Native American of their culture?

Young Omahaw, War Eagle, Little Missouri, and Pawnees (1822)

This second King portrait also comes from the “Indian Gallery” collection. Like the portrait of *Petalesharro*, this portrait depicts Native Americans with a distinctively European flare. The Roman noses, the robe draped over

the shoulder, the skin tone and haircuts make these noble warriors seem like they could be city dwellers from the east if they simply changed their costumes. Again the peace medal in the portrait as well as the glass beads and “gunstock” club at least hint of a European influence. How do the students respond to the question, “How do you think Bird intended to depict these Indians?”

Karl Bodmer (1809-1893)

Karl Bodmer’s collection of Native American portraits was commissioned when he accompanied a German Prince named Maximilian zu Weid on a trip up the Missouri River from 1833-1834. The expedition, much like a European version of the Lewis and Clark Expedition covered over 5,000 miles along the Missouri where the explorers encountered many of the great tribes of America’s plains. Two extraordinary paintings by Bodmer are *Pehriska-Ruhpa* (1840) and *Bison Dance of the Mandan Indians* (1834) Students will marvel at the beautiful details of the paintings.

Bison Dance of the Mandan Indians (1834)

More than a decade after King’s portraits of Native Americans visiting Washington, Karl Bodmer (1809-1893) traveled up the Missouri with Maximilian, Prince zu Wied. In some ways the fact that Bodmer was traveling to the Native Americans as opposed to waiting for them to arrive in Washington speaks to the fact of westward expansion. Here were Europeans and Americans together traveling to the West, into the unknown. Behind Bodmer and Maximilian, the Indian Removal treaty of 1830 was already making the finding of a Native American with culture and home intact more and more rare.

With this in mind, take a look at the *Bison Dance of the Mandan Indians*. This powerful depiction of a large group of Mandans involved in a ritual as old as the tribe itself will certainly make the students sit up and pay attention. Several men in buffalo masks dance among a large active crowd. Some participants beat drums while other shoot guns into the sky. Onlookers wave their arms and hoot to the ceremony. This is a fascinating painting that takes an altogether different look at Native Americans than other paintings students have seen up to this point.

Again, after students have discussed what they see and what is different about the painting, ask them what European influence can be seen in the art. See how many students say the rifles came from the west. See how many students notice the forged steel heads of the spears. See if any students pick out the red colored moccasins that look as if they could be bedroom slippers. The material used looks as if it may have come from a European source.

Pehriska-Ruhpa (1840)

Here is another very unique look at the Native American as seen through the eyes of Karl Bodmer. Five years after the “Trail of Tears,” the forced relocation of thousands of Native Americans (as a direct result of the Indian Removal Act of 1830), marked the removal of the four largest of the Southeastern tribes (Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creeks and Cherokee), this painting was produced.

What about this painting might reflect the changing mood in the US towards the Native Americans? Just twenty years earlier great chiefs were being depicted as noble, Roman like warriors, dignitaries on their way to Washington. But this painting, like the *Bison Dance*, portrays Native Americans in a different light. In a headdress that is reminiscent of Medusa’s head of snakes, *Pehriska-Ruhpa*’s eyes glow from beneath a dark shadow. His skin is dark, his body strong, and he holds a bow and arrow in his hand. There is no peace medal

and there is very little ready sign of European influence save the sparkling steel tipped arrows. Is Bodmer trying to portray Native Americans as more savage than other artists before him or is he simply being more honest in his depiction? Perhaps the portrait is simply a sign of the times, reflecting a fear of Native Americans that justified (in the government's eyes) the relocation of thousands of Native Americans. Give your students the background and see what they conclude about these fascinating paintings.

George Catlin (1796-1872)

In 1830 George Catlin left a successful career as a portrait painter to head west and paint Native Americans.³ Despite the warnings by many that he wouldn't succeed and might not live through such a venture, Catlin spent eight years in the west depicting Native Americans on canvas and making a huge name for himself as a documenter of the quickly disappearing cultures of the west. His life was an adventure of westward exploration and fascinating insights into the great tribes of the Plains. The narratives that go with the stories also provide fascinating biographical information to accompany the painting. Mary Sayre Haverstock gives a nice sampling of artwork and narrative in her book, *Indian Gallery: The Story of George Catlin*.

Some of Catlin's later action paintings will also serve as a nice transition in this unit as the artist began to look more at the struggle of Native Americans. *Prairie Fire* (1832), and *Troupe of Indians in London* (1844)" will all provide students with paintings that will naturally take them the way of the Native American at this time. Here they see the proud warriors caught in struggle, fleeing storm and displaced, far from home. Where was Catlin going with these paintings? How was he depicting the natives? What does that say about them, about him or about us? While there are dozens of paintings to choose from, I will have students look at *Pigeon's Egg Head*, (*Wi-Jun-Jon*) *Going to and Returning from Washington*, (1837-39), and *Prairie Fire* (1832).

Pigeon's Egg Head, (*Wi-Jun-Jon*) *Going to and Returning from Washington* (1837-39).

This painting provides a nice contrast with King's portraits of the Native American dignitaries who began visiting Washington right after the Lewis and Clark Expedition. In this painting, Catlin provides us with a sort of before and after picture of a Native American going to and returning from Washington. D.C. Upon his arrival in Washington Pigeon's Egg Head is dressed in a long headdress, a robe, moccasins and beads. In his hand is a peace pipe. The depiction of Pigeon Egg Head on the right has the chief staggering into a village with a top hat, a cigarette in his mouth and a bottle in his back pocket. The only feather he has stands in his top hat like the plumage of a grand Marshall in a parade. The peace pipe is gone, replaced with an umbrella and an oriental style fan. There has truly been a transformation here! Ask your students what they see in this portrait and they will certainly see what Catlin was doing here. Have students imagine how Catlin might have portrayed Young Omahaw or Petalasharo if he had a chance to use those chiefs as models. Students can draw their renditions of the chiefs in their journals. Students could also finish the story of Pigeon's Egg Head in their journal and share with the class. It will be interesting to see how many students will portray Pigeon's Egg Head rejected in their pieces. Be sure to tell them that he was not well received in his village. Mary Sayre Haverstock points out in her book that many refused to recognize him and eventually he was murdered by the village for being a "braggart and a liar."⁴

Prairie Fire (1832)

In this painting a large group of Native Americans are fleeing through the tall grass as a huge prairie fire eats up the landscape behind them. The riders are almost portrayed as a herd of elk or buffalo trying to escape this fire, which sends a dark shadow over them as the smoke races above their heads.

I see this painting as a foreshadowing. Catlin knew that the West would be “won” before long. In fact within less than twenty years of the completion of this painting the Gold Rush of 1849 would send settlers in a frenzy across the west much like the wild fire depicted in this painting. Ask students if they see any hidden meaning in the painting.

Seth Eastman (1808-1875)

Seth Eastman’s military background is probably what prompted him to choose Native Americans as his subject matter. Graduating from West Point in 1829, Eastman spent several years as a soldier at Fort Snelling in Minnesota.⁵ A fairly successful artist in his time, Eastman was commissioned by Congress to paint many of his masterpieces. Eastman’s paintings of Native Americans cover a wide variety of subject matter and are detailed enough to provide quite a bit of interpretation by the students.

Sioux Indians (1850)

Upon first glance this painting seems to depict Native Americans in a rustic scene of nature and native eloquence. Several canoes can be seen either arriving or departing from the shore. The characters at the center of the picture seem to be exchanging directions. While this is a peaceful scene, there is activity going on here that seems to at least hint at the presence of a white society. Ask students to look closely for signs of the Western expansion in this painting of non-European navigators. The canoes and hand-made Native American tools are easily spotted. Give your students a chance and they will begin to see pots and pans that are clearly European in nature and design. Ask students to examine the faces in the work. How does Eastman’s depiction indicate the onslaught of European expansion? Notice the swirling clouds echoed in the swirls of the landscape. Notice the drab colors. Notice the movement. Could Eastman have been commenting on the relocation of Native Americans?

Cassily Adams (1843-1921) Otto Becker (1854-1945)

Cassily Adams finished painting *Custer’s Last Fight* in 1886, ten years after George Armstrong Custer was killed. In 1895 Otto Becker, a German lithographer, was hired by Anheuser-Busch to paint a version of the painting from which 150,000 colored lithographs were produced. The lithographs were distributed to saloons throughout the US.⁶

Custer’s Last Fight (1886)

This painting gives a fascinating interpretation of “Custer’s Last Stand” and really goes to the point of this course; how some artists choose to portray people, specifically Native Americans and events in history. This painting has always fascinated me. A reproduction of it hung in a local pizza restaurant that my family often frequented during my childhood. Every Friday night while waiting for a pizza to go, I found myself staring at this painting, terrified and fascinated at the same time. I believe teachers today will also find their students riveted to this painting when it is displayed.

The Battle of Little Big Horn, where a conglomeration of Plains Indian tribes annihilated Custer and the 7th Cavalry, is really the only significant battle that Native Americans ever won. Basically Custer’s race to defeat the Indians and return to Washington with political ambitions led to an early attack and his own defeat.

The painting really builds on the legend of Custer while taking much away from the Native Americans. Custer stands in the middle of this painting, dressed in light fringe with a sword raised above his head in one hand

and an empty pistol in the other ready to club the on comers. He is the only cavalry member standing in the midst of this huge attack by the Indians. Nearly all of the Native Americans are either looking at or readying to attack Custer. Those who are not are engaged in violent bashing of brains, scalping or shooting of the other soldiers. The natives' dark skin contrasts with the whiteness of Custer and the remaining cavalry members. At Custer's feet the field is golden and light while the outer edges of the painting in the foreground are dark with bodies and corpses.

The painting is a good example of the liberties painters take with their subject matter. Royal Hassrick points out in *History of Western American Art* that the artists depicted many of the natives carrying Zulu war shields. Also, the painting neglects the fact that the cavalry was not carrying sabers. Custer's Last Fight also showed Custer with his famous long flowing locks which were cut before the battle in hopes of keeping his identity concealed.

Students should be able to tell you a lot during the "What do you see?" portion of this viewing. Make sure you let them tell you what they see before you lead them with the information provided by Hassrick.

Frederic Remington (1861-1909)

Frederic Remington may be one of the most famous artists of Western American Art. His art covers subject matter of everything western; horses, cowboys, Indians, cavalry and gunfights are common subject matter of the artists' paintings and sculpture. The artist's love of horses becomes apparent in his paintings as does his fascination with action of the west. Remington's paintings give a nostalgic and exciting picture of life in the west and have become a staple of American art much like the art of Norman Rockwell. One interesting point to remember when including Remington in your classroom discussion is that the artist painted the West as he imagined it. By the time Remington actually visited the west, once touring with the 10th Calvary in 1888,⁷ most of the territory was already tamed. Most Native Americans were already on reservations, the gun slinging days of the old west were history and the US was on the verge of entering the 20th Century. Remington's romantic depictions of Native Americans and the old West relied heavily on the artist's imagination.

Remington's paintings will work well with the journal writing activities that this unit proposes students be given. His artwork is all narrative. Every picture tells a thousand stories, many just waiting to be invented by your students. Get a Remington collection from the library and go through his work. Decide which ones you will use with your class. I will examine *Apache Medicine Song* (1908) in which a group of Apaches sit around a fire will surely spark children's imagination. *The Grass Fire* (1908) is a great painting that plays with shadows and elements of light.

Apache Medicine Song (1908)

By the time this painting was completed the depiction of Native Americans could take place on reservations or in the imagination. The great battles of the plains had come to the end with Wounded Knee in 1890. Geronimo, the last of the great Apache chiefs to hold out had long been subdued by that time.

The Apache in this depiction sit in front of an adobe building (not original homes to Apaches) and sing around a fire in the dark. The green tint of the painting gives it a serene, sad feel to it. The Apache sit in white headbands that contrast with the night. The glow of the fire reveals a glowing redness in the legs and faces of the natives. This is not a joyous night for these men. The darkness and shadows seem to encroach upon their space.

The Grass Fire (1908)

In *The Grass Fire* Remington is again playing with the shadows and reflections. The upper third of the painting is pitch black. A line of Native Americans echoes the line of the grass fire being set by one brave. Peter Hassrick points out in *Frederic Remington* that Plains tribes regularly partook in setting the grass ablaze in an attempt to confuse their enemy before battle.⁸ There is a sense of desperation in the painting as the warriors seem to look up into darkness for answers while one brave rushes before them setting the blaze.

See if students can tell you what is different about Remington's portrayals of the Native Americans. How does the artist feel about the plight of the Native Americans? Was he sympathetic or not? These painting make for a great chance at some good narrative journal writing.

Charles M. Russell (1864-1926)

Charles M. Russell, the final artist examined in this course, is another artist that congers romantic images of the "Old West" in his paintings. Unlike Remington, however, Russell's paintings come from his life as a cowboy. Russell's paintings seem show the artist's respect for the Native American. Take a look at "Salute to the Robe Trade" for a session of compare/contrast with Remington's paintings. "The Last of His Race, 1899" which shows a Native American begging on the side of a road, is an excellent painting to end the unit with.

Salute to the Robe Trade (1899)

If you don't let your students know the name of this painting they might decide it is the start of another battle. A band of Native Americans is descending on an outpost by a river. The rich earthen tones and reds suggest it is dusk at the end of a hot summer day. The warriors are shooting their rifles into the air.

But upon closer examination, two of the warriors are having what looks like a friendly conversation. In the background many others are guiding horses laden with goods. Why would the party attract attention to itself so far from the outpost? Why are only a few descending? Why do they have so many supplies? The title of the painting answers the questions. This is a trading party, not a war party. Russell's nostalgic look at Native Americans should be compared with Remington's. Can we tell how the artists, both creating after the west was "won" felt about Native Americans?

The Last of His Race (1899)

This is a powerful sketch to end the course with. In it an old Native American sits by the side of the road. He is destitute and looks to be begging. A woman in a dress races by him on her bicycle, she glances back at him as she rushes down the road much like a pedestrian in New York City might race past someone begging in the street. In the background we can see power lines, a road, a factory, the modern world. In the clouds the buffalo still run.

Russell clearly sees what has happened to the Native American in the Nineteenth Century and comments on it. Ask your students to interpret this representation of Native Americans. They will see the irony. They will see the images. Bring the viewing of paintings full circle by putting King's *Young Omahaw*, *War Eagle*, *Little Missouri*, and *Pawnees* up next to *The Last of His Race* . Give students a chance to look at the images to recall the stories and ask them to comment on how far we have come as a class and as a nation during the nineteenth century. I believe students will make some real discoveries during this viewing and writing period.

The Final Project

After viewing the paintings and discussing the journals over a period of time which might be from a week to a month depending on the teacher, comes the artistic element of this unit the: students artistic interpretations of Native Americans. During this, the final section of the course, students will be asked to create their own depiction of Nineteenth Century Native Americans using an artistic medium of their choice.

I will remind students that we have examined many portrayals of Native Americans by many artists. Now they are the artists. How will they portray the Native American? The depictions the students create can be portraits, battle scenes, sculpture, photography, dance, music, modern art, whatever they choose. They must come up with something that is their own rendition or portrayal of Native Americans during the Nineteenth Century.

My students have the advantage of being at an arts magnet school. They are offered a variety of art classes and are fortunate to be able to choose an art emphasis. Students choose from visual arts, photography, video, dance, music, drama or creative writing for their emphasis. Students in my school have the resources and the guidance to interpret academic projects artistically. For teachers who do not have these resources available this will be more difficult. I would first try to connect with whoever leads the arts department in your building. If this is not helpful, do your best with your own supplies in your own room. Last resort, students can even simply sketch with pencils, create a one-act play or bring in sculpture supplies from home, but do your best to provide them with resources which will lead to a really exciting and fun culminating ending to this course.

As always, (this is an English class) students will be expected to write a bit and attach it to the back of their works. See the appendix for the specific assignment.

Lesson Plans

The following lesson plans are designed for an eighth grade classroom. The period for each class is 52 minutes. The lesson may need to be adapted in certain ways for your classroom, but this will give you the basic format of the course. I have taken one artist, Charles Bird King, to show how the unit should work. These three lessons will take you from the observation of artwork, discussion, journal entries and sharing and a transition to the next artist. Simply repeat the pattern with the other artists.

By the time you are at this point, you'll have already read the *Undaunted Courage* section of the textbook, discussed the importance of the Lewis and Clark Expedition and explained to the students that the expedition ushered in a new era in the settling of the American West.

Sample Lesson Plan One- The Great Chiefs come to Washington

Objectives

- Students will view paintings *Petalesharro*, *Generous Chief*, *Pawnee* (1821) and *Young Omahaw*,

War Eagle, Little Missouri and Pawnees (1822).

- Students will share their own interpretations of the art
- Students will make connections between artwork and Lewis and Clark
- Students will be given background on artist/artwork

Materials

- Slides or pictures of artwork

Initiation

Begin the class by reminding students about how the *Undaunted Courage* excerpt mentioned that Jefferson had invited many Native Americans to Washington through Lewis and Clark. What would the chiefs look like what would they wear? Have students speculate for a few minutes in a class discussion before putting up the artwork in front of the class. Now put up the painting *Petalesharro, Generous Chief, Pawnee* (1821).

Procedure

Begin interpreting the painting by asking students to silently look for one minute. Then simply ask, "What do you see?" Follow up with the phrases discussed in the "A Note of Viewing" section of the unit. Let the students talk about the painting themselves for a few minutes before using the provided background information to give students some more information on the painting.

Follow the same procedure with the second King painting. "What do you see?" "What makes you say that, etc. Allow students to make their own discoveries before giving them the background information or the titles. But once you have shared some of that information with them, ask them to compare the paintings. What do they see in the paintings that are similar? What aspects are different? The students might mention the peace medals figures in both paintings are wearing. They might also mention the robe like clothing that the figures wear. What do the figures remind them of? Does anyone see ancient Rome in either of the paintings?

The more the students look, the more they will have to say about these and all of the paintings. Not only will they see more and want to share more, but they will gain an appreciation for art that they might not otherwise have. Children will discover that the feeling of looking at a painting and sharing one's own interpretation is a wonderful one. Encourage and nurture this new power.

Closure

Have students choose one of the paintings and write ten adjectives describing it. Go around the room and share the students' ideas.

Sample Lesson Two-Journal Writing

Objectives

- Students will review knowledge shared from yesterday's viewing
- Students will review use of first person narrative in fiction writing
- Students will write Native American soliloquies in journals

Materials

- Students' journals
- Images of paintings

Initiation

Begin today's lesson by recalling some of the information shared in yesterday's class. Put the images up for students and simply ask, "Who can share something that we said about one of these images yesterday." Students will give you a dozen responses. Now that all the children are on the same page, ask someone to share what they think one of the paintings might say if they could speak. Some student will be glad to help you with this and even if it is the class clown who wants to be in the spotlight, make sure he or she speaks in the first person. The content of the sentence is not the point, the point of view is. Take about ten or fifteen minutes to make sure students know the difference between first person narrative and the other points of view.

Procedure

Today's journal entry will be a Native American soliloquy. Tell students that they are one of the six Native Americans depicted in the King paintings. They have been invited to Washington and have come to meet with the president. What might the character say?

Would they be nervous or excited? Happy or sad? Have the students write a full page in their journal.

Closure

To finish up today's lesson ask a volunteer to read what they have written so far. Students should finish what they have not yet finished for homework.

Sample Lesson Three-The Paintings' Voices

Materials

- Students' journals
- Images of paintings
- Native American music

Initiation

Try to find some music to play briefly for students at the beginning of class today. There are lots of recordings of modern Native American music available in libraries and on the Internet.

Procedure

Make sure you have the images up on the screen again today. Students will use the TAG method discussed under the “journal writing” section of this unit. Today’s lesson should be a fun one as students get to share their creative writing with each other.

Once again, write TAG vertically on the board. Next to T write “Tell something you liked.” Next to A write “Ask a Question” and next to G write “Give some advice. Have students stand up in front of the class for this portion of the lesson. They should identify the painting they are portraying and read so that both the student and the painting can be viewed. Class participation is important at this point of the lesson. Give students a chance and they will come through for you.

Closure

Bring students back to the main point of the unit by talking about how they portrayed the Native Americans in their journals. Are there any connections between how students write the soliloquies and how the artist portrayed the natives? Follow this three-lesson procedure for the remainder of the artists mentioned in the course.

Appendix A: Standards

Connecticut’s Common Core of Learning Program Goals

Having completed this unit, students will have achieved the following Connecticut’s Common Core of Learning program goals for language arts:

- Create works using the language arts in visual, oral and written texts;
- Read, write, speak, listen and view to construct meaning of written, visual and oral texts;
- Choose and apply strategies that enhance the fluent and proficient use of the language arts; (brainstorming, use of graphic organizers)
- Read with understanding and respond thoughtfully to a variety of texts.

When done with this unit, students will have achieved the following Connecticut's Common Core of Learning program goals for the arts;

- Create (imagine, experiment, plan, make, evaluate, refine and present/exhibit) art works that express concepts, ideas and feelings in each art form
- Respond (select, experience, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate) with understanding to diverse art works and performances in each art form
- Understand the connections among the arts, other disciplines and daily life.

New Haven Public Schools Academic Performance Standards

Students will also achieve the following goals from the New Haven Public Schools Academic Performance standards for eighth grade Language Arts;

- Students will demonstrate strategic reading skills before, during and after reading
- Students will demonstrate strategic writing behaviors

Students will participate in a wide variety of writing experiences

Appendix B: Final Project Assessment

Now that you have completed the viewing of several Nineteenth Century Artists' depictions of Native Americans, you will become the artists. Working with the art material available to you, come up with your own Nineteenth Century depiction of Native Americans. Create a representation of the Native American in this pivotal century. You may choose to do a portrait, a landscape, an abstract piece, write a play, whatever you decide. Just make sure that you explain your feelings and your reasons for creating the way you do on the reflection paragraph that should be either attached to the back of your artwork or handed in separately. Also compare your work with one of the artists we studied. Use the following criteria for the project. Each category is worth ten points.

1. Student completes a representation of 19th Century Native Americans_____
2. Student includes a reflective paragraph on the back of the artwork_____

3. Student's work is neat and creative _____
4. Student relates work to another artist's work _____
5. Student shares work with class _____
- Total (x2) _____

Annotated Bibliography

Axelrod, Alan. *Chronicle of the Indian Wars from Colonial Times to Wounded Knee*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1993. An excellent book for background information on Native American/European American relations.

Brown, Dee. *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1970. If you are going to read one book on the history of Native American/European-American relations this is the one to read.

Cole, Donald B. *The Presidency of Andrew Jackson*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993. This book is a thorough examination of the Jackson presidency. Especially interesting in regards to this unit are the sections on Jackson's attitude toward Native Americans.

Hassrick, Peter. *Frederic Remington*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1973. This large book contains excellent reproductions of dozens of Remington's paintings with background. A very useful book for those using Remington in the classroom.

Hassrick, Royal B. *History of Western American Art*. New York: Bison Books. 1987.

This book is a wonderful resource for this project. Beginning with Charles B.J.F. de Saint-Memin (170-1852) and ending with Michael Coleman (b. 1946), this collection of artwork and narrative gives teachers a wide variety of artwork to choose from when doing this unit.

Neihardt, John G. *Black Elk Speaks*. New York: Pocket Books, 1972. A classic in Native American literature. Excellent background for teachers

Pohl, Frances K. *Framing America; A Social History of American Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002. This book gives a thorough survey of art in America and touches on some of the paintings and attitudes towards Native Americans explored in this unit.

Thomas, Davis and Karin Ronnefeldt, editors. *People of the First Man: Life Among the Plains Indians in Their Final Days of Glory*. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1976. This book provides the firsthand account of Prince Maximilian's expedition up the Missouri River (1833-1834) which was illustrated by Karl Bodmer. Bodmer's sketches and paintings adorn the book.

Students' Bibliography

Ambrose, Stephen. *Undaunted Courage* . New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996. Students interested in studying more about Lewis and Clark will find no better single source than Ambrose's book.

Applebee, Arthur N., editor. *The Language of Literature* . Evanston, IL: McDougal Little, 2001. This is a wonderful textbook which includes a wide variety of short stories, poetry, memoirs and others. The excerpt from *Undaunted Courage* is in this book.

Brandon, William. *The American Heritage Book of Indians* . New York: American Heritage Publishing Co., Inc. 1961. This wonderful overview of the Native American is nicely punctuated with lots of artwork which includes not only artists from this unit but others as well.

Horne, Lois T. *Painting for Children* . New York: Reinhold Book Corp., 1968. This book is a collection of children's artwork with commentary.

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. *The Song of Hiawatha* . New York: Bounty Books, 1973. (Frederic Remington Illustrated Edition) This edition of the classic Longfellow poem is especially prevalent to this unit as Frederic Remington does the illustrations in it

Notes

1. Hassrick, Royal B. *History of Western American Art* . New York: Bison Books, 1987, pg. 36.
 2. Hassrick, pg. 36.
 3. Pohl, Frances K. *Framing America; A Social History of American Art*. New York: Thames and Hudson, 2002. pg. 156.
 4. Haverstock, Mary Sayre . *Indian Gallery: The Story of George Catlin* . New York: Four Winds Press, 1973, pg. 53.
 5. Hassrick, pg. 46.
 6. Hassrick, pg. 96.
 7. Hassrick, Peter. *Frederic Remington* . New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1973. pg. 22.
 8. Hassrick, Peter, pg.162.
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