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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

Guide for Curriculum Unit 04.03.09
by Sean Griffin

This unit is designed to accompany a reading of excerpts from Stephen Ambrose's *Undaunted Courage*. Upon completion of the reading I ask students to examine various artists' depictions of Native Americans from the time of Lewis and Clark to the end of the 19th century. Examining the depictions will provide for an interesting extension of the Lewis and Clark expedition reading. The unit will 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' paintings including works by Charles Bird King, George Catlin, Seth Eastman, Karl Bodmer and others. Students will discuss the artwork as a class, reflect in journals and, in the final project of the unit, create their own interpretations of Native Americans during the nineteenth century.

(Recommended for English and Language Arts, grade 8.)

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