

Go West Young Artists: Western Exploration in the American Landscape Tradition

Grades: Grades 3, 4 and 5
Subject: Visual Arts, Social Studies
Time Required: 30 minutes
Author: Biggs Museum Curator of Education
Featured Biggs Artwork: *The Waterfall*, Christopher Pearce Cranch, 1851

<u>ANCHOR STANDARDS:</u>	<p>VA: Cr2. 3. 3a, 4a</p> <p>VA: Pr6. 1. 3a, 4a</p> <p>VA: Re7. 2. 3a, 4a, 5a</p> <p>VA: Cn11. 1. 4a</p> <p>Social Studies: History - Anchor Standard Four [Content] K-3b</p> <p>Social Studies: History - Anchor Standard Four [Content] 4-5a</p> <p>Social Studies: Geography - Anchor Standard One [Maps] K-3a, 4-5a</p>
<u>ESSENTIAL QUESTION and ENDURING UNDERSTANDING:</u>	<p>How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities?</p> <p>What is an art museum? How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts, and artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs, and experiences? How do objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented, cultivate appreciation and understanding?</p> <p>What is an image? How do images influence our views of the world?</p> <p>How is a personal preference different from an evaluation?</p>
<u>PERFORMANCE STANDARD:</u>	<p>Identify and explain how and where different cultures record and illustrate stories and history of life through art</p> <p>Compare and contrast purposes of art museum, art galleries, and other versus, as well as the types of personal experiences they provide</p> <p>Determine messages communicated by an image</p>

	<p>Analyze components in visual imagery that convey messages</p> <p>Identify and analyze cultural associations suggested by imagery</p> <p>Through observation, infer information about time, place, and culture in which a work of art was created</p> <p>[History] Students will develop an awareness of major events and people in United States</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Who lives here and how did they get here? <p>[History] Students will develop an understanding of Delaware history and its connections with United States history, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Native American inhabitants before European contact - Exploration and settlement (1609-1775) - Growth of commerce, industry, transportation, and agriculture (1865-1945) <p>[Geography] Students will demonstrate development of mental maps of Delaware and of the United States which include the relative location and characteristics of major physical features, political divisions, and human settlements</p>
<p><u>I CAN STATEMENT</u></p>	<p>I CAN create a piece of art of a place I know, by myself or with others</p> <p>I CAN explain why different people use art to tell about themselves</p> <p>I CAN compare and contrast the purpose of different places art is displayed and why people go there</p> <p>I CAN find the message when looking at an image</p> <p>I CAN explain what symbols in an artwork mean</p> <p>I CAN identify and analyze cultural symbols in artwork</p> <p>I CAN learn about times, places, and different cultures from looking at works of art</p>
<p><u>ACCELERATION STRATEGIES:</u></p>	<p>Students will learn about the history of paintings turning an era when America was rapidly spreading westward and what region of the country this painting depicts.</p> <p>Students will learn the emotions the artist wanted to convey about this landscape and how this message is conveyed through the small figure of a Native American</p>

	Students will learn and understand the words foreground, middle ground, and background and create a work of art using this knowledge
<u>ACTIVATING STRATEGIES:</u>	<p>Vocabulary</p> <p>Background: the area of a scene that is furthest from the viewer</p> <p>Foreground: the part of a scene that is closest to the viewer</p> <p>Landscape: a drawing, painting, or photograph of a scene from nature</p> <p>Horizon line: the line that separates the sky from the ground in a painting</p> <p>Middle ground: the part of the scene that is in the middle</p> <p>Perspective: the creation of depth on a flat picture plane</p> <p>Scale: the size of an object in relation to another object</p>
<u>LEARNING STRATEGIES:</u>	Students will apply the art concepts they've observed and learned to create their own landscape with a foreground, middle ground, and background and will include a figure that is small or large with specific intent
<u>SUMMARIZING STRATEGIES:</u>	Students can have a chance to describe their work of art to the class and explain why they've made their person small or large
<u>EXTENDED THINKING STRATEGIES:</u>	This lesson could be expanded on and combined with a social studies lesson on westward expansion and the history of Lewis and Clark and the pioneers

Featured Artwork

The Waterfall, Christopher Pearce Cranach, 1851

Lesson Overview

Students will learn about foreground, middle ground, and background, as well as scale and perspective through looking closely at Christopher Pearce Cranach's *The Waterfall*. They will also gain a basic understanding of where in America this painting depicts and

the movement of Americans from the East Coast to the West. Students will then create their own landscape drawing by applying their knowledge of these art concepts.

Learning Objectives

Students should be able to:

- Describe the definitions of key art concepts
- Apply these concepts in their own art
- Understand that paintings were and still are used to show people new places
- Understand that our country originally consisted of only the states on the East Coast and that it later expanded into the Western part of the country
- Identify “The West” on a map of the United States

Materials

- Worksheet
- Map of America
- Colored Pencils

Lesson Steps

1. View *The Waterfall* by Christopher Pearce Cranach
 - a. Ask students if this is a landscape or a portrait and how they know
 - b. Ask students if they’ve ever seen a landscape like this in person or in a photograph or movie
 - c. Ask students what kind of emotions it made them feel
 - i. Happy, scared, amazed, impressed
 - ii. Explain that the artist of this painting and artists of all the paintings in this gallery wanted to show dramatic landscapes to emphasize the awe they felt in landscapes like this
 - d. Explain to students that this painting was created during a time when there were no movies or photographs and it was very difficult for people to travel, so they had to rely on artists to create paintings and drawings of places they’d never seen
 - e. Use the map to explain that this painting was painted when the people in the part of the country we live in – the East Coast – were beginning to explore the parts of the country to the West of us which had large mountains and were inhabited by Native Americans
 - i. Ask the students what “imaginary” means and explain that this scene probably doesn’t show a real place, but a place that the artist imagines might be in the West
 - ii. Show them the small Native American in the foreground and ask why the artist drew him so small, integrating the word “scale” into your question and explanation
 1. Help them come to the conclusion that he was so small to represent how incredible and large the wilderness around him was and help

them understand that it shows the artist probably had great respect for the wilderness in America

2. Ask them to imagine how the painting might be different if the Native American were, say, as large as the trees
- f. Ask students why they think the museum decided to acquire and show this piece
 - i. What part of America's story does it tell and why is it important to remember that part?
- g. To explain foreground, middle ground, and background, point out the three portions in the painting that correspond to the concepts and explain that foreground is in the front, middle ground is in the middle, and background is in the back
 - i. To help students physically and 3-dimensionally understand the concept, ask for three volunteers and have them stand in a diagonal line
 1. Ask the rest of the group to identify which of the three students is "in" the foreground, middle ground, and background
2. Create a landscape of using the concept of foreground, middle ground, and background and scale of an imaginary place
 - a. Handout worksheets and pencils
 - b. Ask students to pick a region of the country and draw an imaginary landscape from that region
 - c. Make sure students employ foreground, middle ground, and background, and that they include a small or large figure for a specific reason
 - d. If there's time, allow students the opportunity to share what they've drawn and why they've drawn it that way

Topography of the United States





Name: _____

Foreground

Middle Ground

Background