

Joslyn Art Museum Comprehensive Study Lesson Plan

Created by Mary Lou Alfieri, Josie Langbehn, Kristy Lee, Carter Leeka, Susan Oles, and Laura Huntimer.

1st Semester – American Regionalism

Focus: American Regionalism, Grant Wood, Thomas Hart Benton, and John Steuart Curry

Objectives:

- Understand and create personal narratives.
- Recognize and identify American Regionalism artists and their works.
- Learn about American culture including jazz.
- Discover how these artists used their art to respond to movements such as lynch mobs.

Instructional Strategies that Strongly Affect Student Achievement – Robert J. Marzano

_____ 01 Identifying similarities and differences	_____ 06 Cooperative learning
_____ 02 Summarizing and note taking	_____ 07 Setting goals and providing feedback
_____ 03 Reinforcing effort and providing recognition	_____ 08 Generating and testing hypotheses
_____ 04 Homework and practice	_____ 09 Activating prior knowledge
_____ 05 Nonlinguistic representations	

Resources: Check out the Teacher Support Materials online, and <http://www.joslyn.org/education/teachers> for additional resources

Suggested Materials: Benton, Curry, and Wood teaching posters and prints, newsprint, charcoal, drawing pencils, recorders, Creating a Musical Dialogue lesson plan, 1900–24 Racial Tensions activities and lesson plan <http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/resources/06race.pdf>

Vocabulary: agricultural terms, array, art terms, jazz, lynching, narrative, non-standard measurement terms, primary sources, Regionalism, rural.

Procedure:

- **Engage:** Introduce students to paintings by Grant Wood, Thomas Hart Benton, and John Steuart Curry, and art movement, American Regionalism. Ask them how the phrase “lived experience” relates to the Regionalists’ works. Ask students to consider how lived experiences become part of their own narrative.
- **Art Talk:** These three artists were defined as American Regionalists before they met. While looking at examples of their work, discuss how they wanted to capture action and experience. Their subject matter bound them together. Have students talk about or come up with a list of what they see in the works. Discuss how many seem to feature the rural lifestyle.
- **History:** Who were the American Regionalists? Refer to the Benton talk presented by Spencer Wigmore at the October 2011 Thursdays for Teachers. Also refer to the **American Regionalists, Benton, Curry and Wood** topics in **Teacher Support Materials** for additional information.
- **Aesthetics:** What is *American* art? Discuss the aspects of this art. Then ask, what is *American* music? For example, jazz or blues is truly American. Refer to the workshop presented by Carter Leeka at the October 2011 Thursdays for Teachers.
- **Production 1:** Showing the movement. Benton’s works showed rhythm. Have students use the techniques for quick sketches taught by Tomie Green in his workshop presented at the October 2011 Thursdays for Teachers.

- **Production 2:** Document a narrative. Have students create a visual personal narrative that represents their feelings (it could be a reaction current events). How would they look? What colors would represent the different feelings? Discuss how mood can be set or changed by colors. Using Wood's *Stone City, IA*, compare how the warm and vivid colors and feelings to perhaps Benton's *The Hailstorm* or Curry's *Manhunt*.
- **Close:** Have students reflect on the visual personal narrative they created. Have them answer the question: What from your narrative would you infer your life to be?

Extensions:

- **Cultural Connections 1:** Analyzing Primary Sources. Curry used his canvas to portray the terrifying lynch mobs that were prevalent in Kansas during his time. Using images of his works, provide students with another perspective of lynching in American history including tying it to Omaha's unfortunate history. Refer to the workshop presented by Michael Young at October 2011 Thursdays for Teachers.
- **Cultural Connections 2:** Commercialism and painting were in relation/reaction to what was going on during the time of the Regionalists. Discuss the impact of making prints available to the masses by selling lithographs. Talk about why these artists chose to do this.
- **Fine Arts:** Art detective. Discuss the style and subject matter of Benton, Curry, and Wood. Show students several Regionalists' works, and see if they can correctly identify the artist. Refer to the Benton, Curry, and Wood Teaching posters in **Teacher Support Materials** for additional information.
- **Language Arts:** Discuss various art terms with your students. Then have students use those terms to talk about themselves. Personal narratives should start to appear through the words. Finally students should show the best of themselves through these words.
- **Math 1:** Introduce students to the idea of non-standard units of measurements and select a few to study (lower grades). For higher grades, examine how the land west of the Mississippi was divided into different parcels then add in the non-standard units of measurements used. Determine various equivalents. Consider the variety of measurement terms especially what farmers and other rural residents would use.
- **Math 2:** Arrays. Using Wood's *Stone City, Iowa* create arrays for students for lower grades. With higher grades, study mass production – from producers to consumers. Then compare how the Regionalists witnessed the Great Depression's effects on the rural conservative lifestyle versus the more urban. For example talk about how were laborers treated.
- **Science:** From forests to grasses. Study how settlers moved to the prairie then needed something to work the land. John Deere invented the steel plow to handle the land and how Benton featured a steel plow in his painting, *The Hailstorm*. Have students study how taking care of topsoil helps prevent dust bowls. Finally discuss nature versus man, specifically how farmers are the best preservationists.

Joslyn Art Museum Comprehensive Study Lesson Plan

Created by Angela Fischer, Kristy Lee and Mary Lou Alfieri and Laura Huntimer.

Theme: Portraying the American Scene

Focus: John Steuart Curry and his *The Manhunt*

Objectives:

- Gain a unique perspective of one of the American Regionalists, John Steuart Curry.
- Understand controversies surrounding some murals and then students will sketch out one of their own.
- Discover how to explore region and landscape when looking at the American Regionalists' art.

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Resources:

Check out the **Teacher Support Materials** online for additional resources.

Suggested Materials: John Steuart Curry's *The Manhunt* framed reproduction or teaching poster, images of Curry's artworks, foot template, tag board), markers, 11x17 paper, drawing pencil, tape.

Vocabulary: agricultural measurements, controversy, graffiti, landscape, natural disasters, and regionalists

Procedure:

- **Engage:** Gather students around John Steuart Curry's *The Manhunt* adhered to a wall. Hand out a foot template and have students diagram the "w's" on the toes and the "how" on the heel based on what they observe. Then have students pick one of the items to share as they stick their foot on the wall (or floor) creating a path to the image.
- **Art Talk:** Descriptive Graffiti. Attach an image of *The Manhunt* to a big board (i.e. tag board). Have students think of three words that they that come to mind when viewing the painting. Using their favorite marker, students should take turns writing their words around the image. Challenge the students with their word selection so there are not any duplicate words. These unique words should be the focus of the discussion about the art.
- **History:** Who is John Steuart Curry? Refer to the **Bibliography** and **Webology** in **Teacher Support Materials** for additional information.
- **Aesthetics 1:** Muralists. Discuss the controversy surrounding John Steuart Curry's murals at Kansas State Capitol. And then incorporate other murals/muralists in the discussion (i.e. Diego Rivera's murals at Rockefeller Center). What are the similarities and differences between the murals/muralists? Answer the question: Does time influence the controversy?
- **Aesthetics 2:** The art of the American Regionalists immediately takes one to a particular time and place. But what place? And why? Refer to the lesson taught by Dr. Christina Dando at the February 2010 Thursdays for Teachers to explore region and landscape through the lens of regionalist art.

- **Production:** Murals. Using 11x17 paper, have students sketch out a mural. They could choose to draw current events, natural disasters, neighborhood, Omaha, Nebraska or something represents the American scene. Perhaps this could even turn into a project for the school if it has a blank wall ready for a mural.
- **Other:** Share with students information learned in the workshop taught by Kenneth Bé at the February 2010 Thursdays for Teachers. Then bring students to Joslyn Art Museum to spend time amongst the Regionalist paintings to make their own discoveries.
- **Close:** Retrace your steps. Have students look back foot template. After learning more about Curry and his art, what would they add to or delete from their foot?

Extensions:

- **Cultural Connections:** Curry kept a scrapbook filled with magazine clippings and sketches. Then study more famous journals (i.e. Prince Maximilian or Lewis & Clark). This could be a lead in to Fine Arts.
- **Fine Arts:** Sketchbook|Scrapbook. Have students keep it for a month (or quarter). Have them focus on clipping subjects they want to draw. Give them weekly goals (i.e. five pages of drawings with five clippings).
- **Language Arts:** Have students imagine they needed to leave their home due to a natural disaster. Write a story about the five possessions they would grab and why.
- **Math:** Agricultural measurements. Curry was born on a farm and during his career, that is where his heart remained. Study agricultural measurements such as acre and bushel. Draw or graph out the sizes to compare. Continue on with other different measurement terms such as knots to measure nautical speed. Discuss the origins of these different measurement terms.
- **Science:** Share John Steuart Curry's *Tornado Over Kansas*. Then study the science of tornados. How are natural disasters defined?

Selected References: Go online to **Teacher Support Materials** and review the **Bibliography, Webology** and **Videos**.

**Joslyn Art Museum
Inspired by Art – Lesson Plan Workshop**

Created by _____
(name and school)

Focus: _____
(artist and artwork)

Objectives:

Suggested Materials:

Vocabulary:

Select category(s) for classroom activity

Procedure:

_____ Engage:

_____ Art Talk:

_____ Aesthetics:

_____ Production:

_____ Close:

Extensions:

_____ Cultural Connections:

_____ Fine Arts:

_____ Language Arts:

_____ Math:

_____ Science:

Write Classroom Activity or Activities Below

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