

Joslyn Art Museum Comprehensive Study Lesson Plan

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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.

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 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**.