STEAM LESSON PLAN

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Grade Level Middle school (adaptable for lower and higher grades)

INSPIRED BY Seth Eastman, Sioux Indians

PROJECT TITLE: My World

DRIVING QUESTION
What is daily life?

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Put these on the board or have students write them in a notebook/journal.

- I will create observational drawings from my world.
- I will respond to questions to explore daily life–both mine and others.
- I will present a narrative of an artwork.
- I will connect artists’ work from two different centuries.

CONTENT STANDARDS
NEBRASKA CONTENT AREA STANDARDS
IOWA CORE STANDARDS

THE FOUR C’S FOR STEAM CAREER READINESS SKILLS

- Critical Thinking: Students will use artworks to determine what life was like for the Dakota and Ojibwe people in the 19th century.
- Creativity: Students will demonstrate their creativity in the maps they develop.
- Collaboration: Students will work together to discover what daily life means.
- Communication: Students will share their observations both in writing and visual forms.

VOCABULARY: daily life, European American, First Nations People, illustration, Indian Agency, Indigenous, narrative, Native American, newcomers, observation, perception, quotidian, sensationalized, Sioux Nation (Dakota and Ojibwe people), tribe

RESOURCES: Eastman Teaching Poster; Eastman Pinterest board; Nelson Teacher Resource Center
- Resource - Seth Eastman: Pioneer & Painting: Overview, Minnesota Historical Society
- Resource - Seth Eastman: Painting the Dakota, PBS
- Resource - Seth Eastman, MNopedia, Minnesota Historical Society
- Resource - Newcomers, Minnesota Historical Society
- Resource - What maps tell us, Dr. Christina Connett, Khan Academy
- Resource - How to Paint With Watercolors, wikiHow
- Images - Seth Eastman - Artworks, The Athenaeum
PROCEDURE

Overview: Students will discover the Dakota and Ojibwe peoples world in the 19th century through artist Seth Eastman’s work and develop their observational skills as they define what daily life means to them.

Engage: Show students *Sioux Indians* by Eastman. Give them two minutes to write down what is happening and then share.

Ask students...

- Do you think this is something that happened every day or is it a special occasion? Explain.
- What are your daily rituals?
- What are your habits?
- Do you do them in a certain order or mix it up?
- Do you have chores? What are they?

Now have students imagine it is 100 years ago or 200 years ago and think about where they would live—In town? On a farm?

Ask students...

- What do you think your routine would be?
- What do you do in the morning?
- What do you do after school?
- What do you do after dinner?
- Do you have chores? What are they?

Deliverables: Tell students they will...

- Observe and draw scenes of their daily life.
- Write a narrative for an Eastman drawing.
- Make a map related to their daily life.

Art Talk: Starting with the teaching poster, share more about Eastman’s work and how he differed from other artists, like George Catlin, who were also painting similar subjects at this time. Talk about perception and how these works are Eastman’s perception of the Dakota and Ojibwe people.

Ask students...

- What story is Eastman telling in his works?
- Whose depictions are more accurate to what life was really like? How do you know?
- Why did some artists choose to sensationalize Native Americans’ lives?
- Can it harm Indigenous people when artists create more sensationalized images? Why or why not? Explain.

Extension: Introduce students to 20th-century artist Romare Bearden (1911–1988), who depicted African American life and culture in his work (some from personal memories). Together, see if there are any universal
themes between Eastman’s and Bearden’s work. Discuss how they differed in their process of developing a narrative on their canvases. Images: Bearden Foundation – Art.

Description of Activity:
- At home, have students sit outside their front door or look out a window of their home.
- Using a sketchbook—could be as simple as some paper folded in half to make a "book"—instruct students to draw what they see.
- They can do this once a day for week and see if there are any common or patterns of activities occurring or in their neighborhood.
- Then back in the classroom, discuss the sketches and discoveries.

Ask students...
- What sounds did you hear?
- What movement did you see?
- What scents did you smell?
- How could you make one of your pictures come alive?

- Then take time to discuss how Eastman was able to observe the Dakota and Ojibwe daily life.
- Study Eastmen’s depictions, but do not tell them the names of it, first have students write a narrative for the composition.
- After revealing the activity pictured, talk about what the Dakota and Ojibwe peoples did regularly and discuss what that tells us about their life.

- You may decide to have students do another week of observational sketches of daily life, perhaps even at school. Then select one of the sketches to turn into a drawing that is rendered in watercolor, similar to Eastman’s aesthetic.

- Shift the discussion to technology. Look at Eastman’s works depicting daily activities again, but from a technological perspective.
- Have students work in groups to research how technology developments have changed these activities.
  - For example, discuss how the European American newcomers encouraged Dakota men to take up large-scale agriculture.
- Students can also choose to study the diet of various tribes and research how newcomers impacted their health.
- From this research, students may start to develop an understanding of what daily life was like for the Dakota and Ojibwe peoples who Eastman observed.
  - This may be an opportunity for students to compare the observations from their daily life to those they are studying.
  - Ask students if they would like to live in that time period? Why or why not?

- Finally, taking the lead from Eastman, who also made maps, have students map out their daily life.
- Study some of the maps Eastman created to understand the components each map needs.
- They can choose to draw a map of their daily routine at school or their way from school to home.
- For older students, they can measure and calculate how far they traveled.

Closing: Create a gallery in the classroom for students to view each other’s drawings and maps of their daily life.

Assessment: Have students answer the driving question: what is daily life?
STEAM LESSON PLAN  Joslyn Art Museum uses the Nebraska Department of Education's STEM Approach as a guide, but we took the liberty of adding the “A” to emphasize the ARTS.

NDE's STEM Approach reflects an integrated and interdisciplinary philosophy to teaching and learning that emphasizes collaborative school-based, work-based, family-based, and community-based experiences as a context for helping students to master key competencies within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Teaching and learning resources, experiences, and example activities included within NDE's STEM Approach serve as a standards-based framework for supporting the engagement of students in hands-on, authentic, and contextual learning experiences that provide students with the opportunity to learn STEM content while promoting essential career readiness skills, including communication, creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.

NDE's STEM Approach strives for compatibility with all content-areas, all grade levels, and all career clusters, not just those traditionally defined as STEM.