

## **AS TIME PASSES OVER THE LAND: WHITE MOUNTAIN ART**

### **An Integrated Secondary Visual Arts Activity**

#### **Introduction: The White Mountain Painters**

The White Mountains have been a center of tourism, industry and artistic inspiration for decades. The earliest explorers and settlers of the region related its beauty to those who had never experienced it, one of the earliest explorers, Philip Carrigain, called the White Mountains the “Switzerland of America”. The landscape experienced by the early explorers and farmers would not stay the same and eventually change due to the impact of the groups that came to the area to take advantage of its resources.

The land of the New Hampshire valleys and mountains were greatly transformed during the early nineteenth century by farmers and loggers. Farmers cleared wooded areas for farming and loggers cleared timber for industry further south. As the nineteenth century progressed, more roads and rail lines were built that brought more industry, travelers and tourists into the region. The transformation of the landscape opened vistas and scenery that was attractive to tourists. The increased interest brought with it larger and more developed hotels for travelers and tourists and the protection of wooded areas by individual landowners who wanted to develop trails and wooded areas to accompany their hotels.

Despite the interest and travel to the area, it was a disaster that brought the first artists to the region. The Wiley family was wiped out by a rockslide in August 1826 that left their house standing. It was this disaster that brought artists Thomas Cole and Henry Cheever Pratt to the region. Cole’s artwork showed other artists the beauty and potential of the landscape of the White Mountains. More artists soon followed Cole and Pratt. Among the artists and tourists traveling to the region were many prominent transcendentalists such as Henry David Thoreau and well know authors such as Ralph Waldo Emerson.

With the increased development of the area the landscape became less rugged and wild. The White Mountain painters moved away from depicting the wild and undeveloped landscape seen early in the century. In addition, they did not paint the devastated landscape left by unregulated logging. The painters edited the compositions they created by excluding manmade structures or the effects of industry they did not want to depict. The landscape they were painting became a romantic, peaceful countryside. People, light and atmosphere became more important in their paintings. More and more the artists were making their paintings for sale to the tourists. The depictions of the White Mountains’ landscapes, small towns and villages, and people helped the preservation movements that sought to save the White Mountains and its forests. The paintings showed Americans the importance and beauty of the region whether the artwork was truly accurate or not.

The activities and essential questions of this curriculum have been designed to meet a range of ages and abilities. They are foundations that may be modified and changed to meet the needs of educators in their classroom and community.

## **EXPRESSING SENSE OF PLACE AND BELONGING**

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS**

- How can a place be important to an individual?
- What would show belonging or membership to a place?
- Why is important to feel connected to or that you belong to a place?
- What would it feel like if one does not feel connected to a place?

**MATERIALS** (*materials and resources may be modified to meet the needs of students and teachers*)

Internet  
Computer  
Computer Printer  
Photographs from the community  
Magazines  
Pencil  
Rulers  
Paper  
Scissors  
Glue  
Paint  
Paint Brushes  
Paint Trays  
Water Containers  
Colored Pencils

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Investigate, explore and discuss the impact of industry and tourism upon the White Mountains and identify and express the effects it has had on the White Mountain painters and their expression of the White Mountains region.
- Identify and describe the role that place and belonging play in the paintings of the White Mountains.

- Identify and express the qualities of a place they feel membership or belonging to and visually express their sense of belonging to and the personal importance of the place.

## **DESCRIPTION OF LESSON**

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed the landscape of the White Mountains changed and became less rugged and wild. The White Mountain painters followed this and began to focus less on the rugged landscape and move to a focus on depicting a romantic landscape and the people in it. Their work became more about place. This lesson is an exploration, investigation and discussion of place and how it can be visually depicted to express one's personal feelings of its importance. The teacher and students will investigate and discuss the evolution of the images and compositions of the White Mountain paintings and how the painters made efforts to express location of place, personal investment in place and emotional connection to place. Students will explore, investigate and discuss places they feel connected to or have a sense of belonging to. They will investigate the qualities of those places and their connection to the feelings of sense of place. Connections will be made between the expressions of the White Mountain painters and their observations of the places they have identified. Each student will choose a place and create a mixed media work of art that expresses their personal sense of belonging to that place, its beauty and importance.

## **ANTICIPATED LENGTH OF THE LESSON**

*\* Class times may vary from school to school. The sequence may be modified to fit to a schools instructional schedule.*

Estimated Class Length: 45 minutes

Estimated Length of Lesson: 4 to 5 days

## **SEQUENCE OF DAILY LESSONS**

The following is an outline of the possible sequence of procedure for the activity. This is a foundation that may be modified as needed by the instructor.

Day 1: The teacher will introduce the history of the White Mountains and investigate and discuss the impact of industry and tourism on the landscape of the White Mountains with the class. Students will explore, investigate and discuss the paintings of the White Mountain painters and the choices they made to depict the landscape without the effects of industry and tourism. They will investigate and discuss the painters' focus on place and its qualities and the elements that may express belonging and place. Students will identify places that they feel belonging to and identify and discuss why they feel a connection and belonging to that place. They will explore and investigate the physical and aesthetic qualities that appeal to them and give them a sense of place and belonging and make

connections to the visual expressions of the White Mountain painters. The students will choose a place that they have a sense of belonging to and brainstorm ideas of how to express their sense of place.

Day 2: The teacher will refocus the students on the painters of the White Mountains and the students' discussion of their place and sense of place and belonging to a place. The teacher will discuss with the students the visual and emotional qualities of place they want to express in their artwork. The teacher will introduce and demonstrate mixed media processes as a basis to express their sense of place. Painting and collage will be used to create a composition that expresses the students' sense of place and the personally important qualities of it. Students will begin working on the development of their artwork.

Day 3: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the activity. The students will work independently on their artwork.

Day 4: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the activity. The students will work independently on their artwork. Students will be nearing completion of their artwork.

Day 5: The teacher will refocus the students on the topic of the lesson and the activity. The students will complete and then discuss their artwork in class as a group focusing on the choices they made, their sense of place and the important elements that expresses their sense of place.

*\* Modifications: The teacher may make changes to the media used for the activity.*

## **ART HISTORY COMPONENT**

Teacher selected images from *As Time Passes over the Land: White Mountain art*.

*\* Additional materials and resources may be researched and added by the teacher.*

## **ASSESSMENT PLAN**

Teachers may assess students formally and informally and design those assessment strategies using this lesson as a foundation and additionally tailoring them to their needs based upon their classroom profiles.

## **VOCABULARY**

Place  
Belonging  
White Mountains  
Industry  
Tourism  
Aesthetic Qualities  
Mixed Media  
Landscape  
Sense of Place

## **STANDARDS**

### **Visual Arts Standards**

Standard 1. Apply appropriate media, techniques, and processes  
Standard 2. Identify and apply the elements of visual art and principles of design  
Standard 3. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas  
Standard 4. Understanding the arts in relation to history and culture  
Standard 5. Analyze, interpret and evaluate their own and others' artwork  
Standard 6. Making connections between the visual arts, other disciplines and daily life

### **New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks**

- SS - 3.10.6.8 - Employ photographs to classify areas as rural, suburban, and urban, and to identify similarities and differences in land use in those areas.
- SS - 3.11.6.2 - Identify and discuss the human geographic features of neighborhoods and places including population density, economic activities, forms of shelter, and modes of transportation and communication.
- SS - 3.11.6.4 - Discuss the attachments people have for a particular place and region as well as their sense of belonging in certain places and regions.
- SS - 3.13.10.4 - Evaluate, take, and defend positions concerning the ways changing population patterns can influence the environment and society.
- SS - 3.14.6.1 - Identify and discuss ways people depend upon, use, and alter the physical environment.
- SS - 3.15.10.1 - Evaluate sites within their community or region in order to identify the best location for a particular activity (for example, school, factory, shopping area, waste treatment plant).

- SS - 3.15.10.4 - Use the concept of sustainable development to analyze how different countries respond to changes in population and the needs of society.
- SS - 4.16.6.6 - Demonstrate an understanding that people, artifacts, and documents represent links to the past and that they are sources of data from which historical accounts are constructed.
- SS - 4.16.6.10 - Discuss the importance of individuals and groups that have made a difference in history, and the significance of character and actions for both good and ill.
- SS - 4.16.10.4 - Examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; analyze change over time; and make logical inferences concerning cause and effect.
- SS - 4.16.10.6 - Develop and implement research strategies in order to investigate a given historical topic.
- SS - 4.16.10.11 - Utilize knowledge of the past and the processes of historical analysis to carry out historical research; make comparisons; develop and defend generalizations; draw and support conclusions; construct historical explanations, narratives, and accounts; solve problems; and make informed decisions.
- SC - 4.3.10.1 - Investigate how human activities, such as reducing the amount of forest cover and increasing the amount and variety of chemicals released into the atmosphere have changed the Earth's land, ocean, and atmosphere.
- SC - 4.3.10.3 - Describe possible consequences of reducing or eliminating some of the Earth's natural resources.