



Academic Resources for Teachers & Students



Don Weller:

Another Cowboy

06.17.16 - 07.24.16

6-8

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Lesson Overview

Lesson Plans

Designed to extend and enhance the learning experience of our exhibits while linking to core curriculum subject matter.

Lesson Objectives

- To understand and be able to define Manifest Destiny as well as Westward Expansion
- To be able to compare and contrast sources as well as find fact in fiction.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the myth of the American West vs. the reality of what frontier life was like.

Core Curriculum Tie-Ins: Sixth through Eighth Grade: Visual Art, Social Studies, and Language Arts

Lesson Overview

Students will learn how history is often created by and turns into myth and legend by looking at depictions of cowboys. During the first class, the students will collectively create what they think a cowboy looked like or behaved. Students will then be assigned a source for information about cowboys in the American West. Whether primary or secondary sources, they must take what they learn and create their own personal image of a cowboy. Once they have finished, students will display their works along with their sources and compare how sources changed each image of a Cowboy

Length Of Lesson: One to Two Class Sessions

Supplies

- Multiple magazines for collage
- Cardstock backing for the collage
- Multiple literary sources and appropriate illustrations.
- Scissors
- Glue

About Don Weller: Another Cowboy

Don Weller's heroes have always been cowboys. After studying fine arts, however, he reluctantly left them behind, and began a long career as a graphic designer and illustrator. His dynamic and often whimsical work appeared on record covers, posters, in advertisements, and on hundreds of magazine pages. Weller rediscovered his love for rural lands and the world of cowboys when he moved to Utah in the 1980s, creating the ongoing inspiration for his current paintings. Working exclusively in watercolor, he expertly captures the grit of cowboys and the striking landscapes of the west. This retrospective at the Kimball is a unique opportunity to view works from all stages of Weller's celebrated career—from sketchbooks and early illustrations to the iconic western scenes for which he is now well-known.

Lesson Plan

1. Prior to the start of the class, draw an outline of a cowboy, be sure to leave room so students can change the clothes and apparel.
2. Ask your students, after the civil war, what did the west look like? What did a cowboy look like? Go around and have your student take turns describing what a cowboy would look like, each adding one detail only. As the students come with another piece of information, write it on a list next to the cowboy while also drawing it on the cowboy (Don't worry if it's not perfect)
3. After your class has created a detailed image of a cowboy, go through your list of things that make a cowboy a cowboy. Have a discussion or vote on which ones students think are fact and fiction.
4. Now introduce students to the ideas of Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny. *See Resources* Make sure students understand that moving out west and frontier lifestyle were integral parts of the American Dream.
5. Assign students one of the fictional or non-fictional sources. It may be necessary to divide the students into groups and assign each group a source. These sources could include films! Have each students go through their source and pull out key bits of information. Their job is to create their own depiction of a cowboy using their source.
6. By using magazines and newspaper pictures, have the students create a collage of their cowboy. Students should use modern magazines in order to see how the myth of the cowboy and the West have influenced modern ideas of the American West. If they are unable to find specific images or details students are allowed flexibility to come up with a suitable representation or symbol. Students should also add details about the surrounding environment.
7. Hang up each image of each cowboy and have each group/student present their cowboy by highlighting what makes each cowboy unique. Have the students identify what parts of their sources they think are fact vs. fiction.
8. The students will now collectively find details and stories that seem common throughout the different the different cowboys. Ask students how these ideas promoted Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny.

Resources

Manifest Destiny/Westward Expansion

<http://www.history.com/topics/westward-expansion>

Exploring the West Using Fiction

<http://www.uen.org/Lessonplan/preview?LPid=106>

Novels about the American Cowboy

<https://bookmanspage.wordpress.com/2011/01/25/the-best-western-novels-from-the-western-writers-of-america/>

Additional novels: Any by Louis L'amour as well as *Roughing It* by Mark Twain

Western Films *Have not been edited*

<http://www.artofmanliness.com/2013/06/04/best-western-movies/>

Primary Sources about the American West

<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/resources/archives/five/>

Vocabulary

Manifest Destiny

the 19th-century doctrine or belief that the expansion of the USA throughout the American continents was both justified and inevitable.

Westward Expansion

The process of settling and expanding by the United States from the Eastern colonies to the Western frontier.

The Louisiana Purchase

The Louisiana Purchase was the acquisition of the Louisiana territory (828,000 square miles) by the United States from France in 1803.

The Homestead Act

Homestead Acts were several United States federal laws that gave an applicant ownership of land, typically called a "homestead", at little or no cost. It gave settlers 160 acres (65 hectares). In all, more than 270 million acres of public land, or nearly 10% of the total area of the U.S., was given away free to 1.6 million homesteaders; most of the homesteads were west of the Mississippi River.

Western Fiction

Western fiction is a genre of literature set in the American Old West frontier and typically set from the late eighteenth to the late nineteenth century.