

**eva**

**ELEMENTARY VISUAL ARTS**

Park City Education Foundation • Kimball Art Center

LESSON

**3**

**John Nieto**

Painting

Verbal Directions

## LESSON OVERVIEW

John Nieto (1936-2018) was an American artist who painted with bold colors inspired by Native American cultures. Students will learn about the artist's inspirations and his style. They will then draw animals from the west using paint sticks to explore the natural world, symbolism, and color.

### INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Learn about John Nieto and Native American cultures.
- Look at local and symbolic animals and practice how to draw them
- Create a painting using bold colors and paint sticks

### SUPPLIES

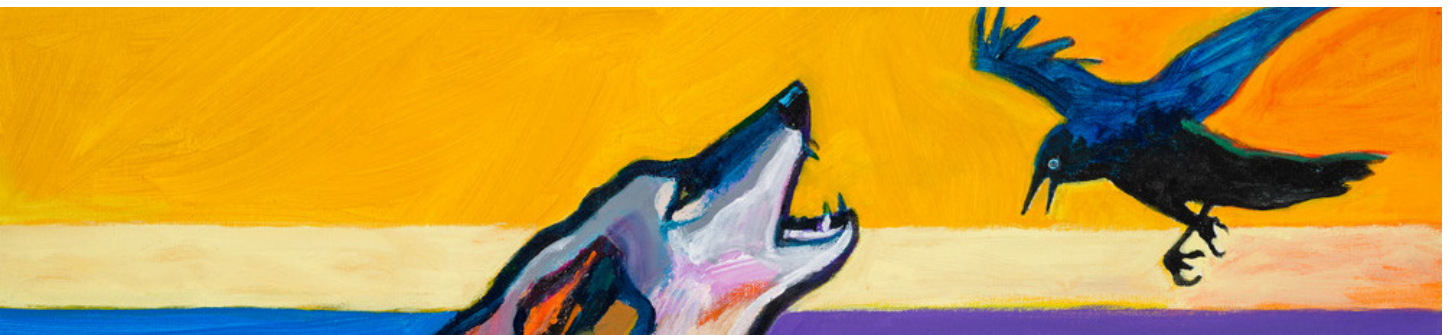
- Images of John Nieto artwork.
- Bristol or
- Colored paper
- Sketch paper
- Paint pens or paint sticks
- Pencils
- Erasers.
- Neon color paint markers

### JOHN NIETO



John Nieto (1936-2018) was an American artist who painted Native Americans in striking symbolic portrait. Nieto was born in Denver to Natalia Venegas Nieto, who was of Mescalero Apache and Hispanic descent, and Simon Nieto of Navajo and Hispanic ancestry. Nieto had 14 brothers and sisters and studied fine art at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. After finishing school, he traveled to Paris where he first saw the Fauvist paintings of Henri Matisse and André Derain. These paintings influenced his color palette. He returned home and started working on portraits of Native Americans using bright colors and bold brushstrokes.

He said: "I employ a subject matter that is familiar and express it the way I see it." He is considered one of America's most well known and dynamic contemporary artists and his art is exhibited world-wide. [Learn More](#)





# LESSON PLAN

1. Introduce students to the life and work of John Nieto. Looking at Images of John Nietos work, ask students:

- What kind of subject matter is John Nieto interested in?
- What kinds of colors is John Nieto interested in? and what do you see in the background?
- What do you notice that reminds you of Cubism?

*Cubism was an approach to painting used by artists Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. They brought different views of subjects together in the same picture, resulting in paintings that appear fragmented and abstracted.*

- What do you see that you want to know more about?

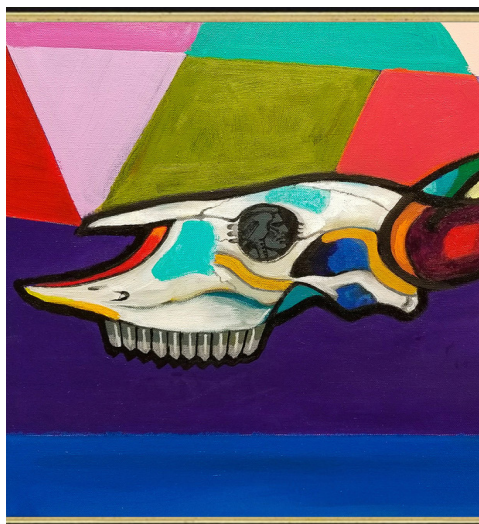
2. Utah is home to approximately 60,000 Native Americans, representing more than 50 Tribal Nations, with 8 being federally-recognized. These Tribes are Northwestern Band of Shoshone Nation, Confederated Tribes of Goshute, Skull Valley Band of Goshute, Ute Indian Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation, Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, San Juan Southern Paiute Tribe, Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah and Navajo Nation. Each has their own contemporary traditions, festivals and lifestyles, as well as a unique heritage. Today, Native Americans continue to live on the lands of their ancestors. **Look at a map of Utah and talk about the land. Use first person testimony to share about traditions and history from different tribes or Nations.**

3. As a group, discuss the idea of artists making artwork inspired from personal experience or cultural heritage. Share that in Native American traditions, animals are sometimes used to communicate the values and spiritual beliefs of Native communities. Animals' importance is also evident in the creation stories of many tribes. Then learn about Utah wildlife using local resources. Together, make a list of animals from this area.

4. Now, demonstrate and practice drawing animals, breaking down complex forms into basic shapes. Start first with the large shapes and then add details. Once students have practiced on sketch paper, they can draw out their animal on bristol paper and add color with paint pens, paint sticks and neon colors. Encourage students to fill in the paper to make it pop and to add a background that contrasts with their subject. Remind students that the colors do not need to be realistic. Grade Differentiation: For mini artists focus on a simple animal for the whole class so that students can practice drawing basic shapes together and build confidence with drawing. Older students can choose their own animals from source reference materials.

EVA +: Develop art appreciation and take a closer look at art objects made by Native American peoples in Utah.





## KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS:

Based on National Core Arts Standards visual Arts Requirements (5th Grade).

### VA:Cr2.2.5a:

Demonstrate quality craftsmanship through care for and use of materials, tools, and equipment.

### VA:Cr2.3.5a:

Identify, describe, and visually document places and/or objects of personal significance.

### VA:Re.7.2.5a:

Identify and analyze cultural associations suggested by visual imagery.

## ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Click on links to learn more.

- <https://americanindian.si.edu/nk360/informational/native-american-spirit-animal>
- <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/what-is-the-relationship-between-indigenous-peoples-and-animals>
- <https://www.nietofineart.com/>
- [https://www.ducksters.com/history/native\\_american\\_teepee\\_longhouse\\_pueblo.php](https://www.ducksters.com/history/native_american_teepee_longhouse_pueblo.php)
- <http://www.artnet.com/artists/john-nieto/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3eS29YMe-I>
- <https://www.inaturalist.org/places/summit-county-ut-us>
- <https://www.facinghistory.org/en-ca/resource-library/culture-stereotypes-and-identity>
- <https://www.visitutah.com/articles/art-keeps-the-native-american-culture-alive>



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