



Bill Schenck, *Cowgirl Over Kachina Mesa*, 1996. Oil on canvas, 35 x 45 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.

## Western American Art Curriculum Guide

## **WESTERN AMERICAN ART**

Bring your students to explore how artists have shaped images and concepts about the American West and how those ideas have changed from the late 18th century to the present.

## **SCHOOL TOUR INTRODUCTION**

Each tour is led by knowledgeable museum volunteer educators who engage students in a conversation-based gallery visit and an introductory hands-on art lesson.

## **HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM**

The curriculum guide includes sample images, pre- and post-visit lessons plans, background information, lesson plans, extension activities, and other resources to help you integrate the museum experience into your classroom curriculum – lessons may also be modified to be used independently of a museum visit. Grade levels are suggested for each lesson; however, teachers may adapt the lessons to other grade levels as appropriate.

## **PRE- AND POST-VISIT LESSONS**

To ensure a successful and informative museum visit, pre-visit lessons are created to prepare your students for their museum visit. After your museum visit, use the post-visit exercise to help reinforce your students' museum experience and the concepts and information addressed during the tour and art activity. Each lesson is designed to correspond to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs).

## **CONFIRMATION PACKET**

Please be sure to review the confirmation letter you received when you booked your school tour. The confirmation packet includes directions and parking instructions, and information about obtaining a free museum pass so that you may familiarize yourself with the exhibition content and the layout of the museum prior to your school tour. Also included in the confirmation packet are museum guidelines to share with students and chaperones prior to your visit to help insure a successful and safe museum visit for everyone.

## **CONTENTS:**

- Museum Background
- Visual Art Resources
- Pre-Visit and Post-Visit Lesson Plans
- Glossary and Resources

Tacoma Art Museum School Tour and Curriculum Guide lessons are aligned with Common Core State Standards and Washington State Learning Requirements in the arts and other subject areas.

Additional copies of this curriculum guide can be downloaded for free at [www.TacomaArtMuseum.org/Educators](http://www.TacomaArtMuseum.org/Educators). A paper copy can be purchased for \$10 by contacting [Education@TacomaArtMuseum.org](mailto:Education@TacomaArtMuseum.org).

**Cover Image Credit:** Bill Schenck, *Cowgirl Over Kachina Mesa*, 1996. Oil on canvas, 35 x 45 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.

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## **Art of the American West: The Haub Family Collection**

**November 15, 2014—November 2015**

From the shores of Puget Sound, to the tallest peaks of the Rocky Mountains, to the banks of the Missouri River, the artwork of the American West informs our perceptions of this varied region. This inaugural exhibition of the Haub Family Collection at Tacoma Art Museum spans more than 200 years of work by historic and contemporary artists. The artworks examine ideas of American identity over time, delve into storytelling and mythmaking, and explore the vast American landscape. See how concepts of the West—both real and imagined—have continually changed and evolved and still influence us today. Organized by Tacoma Art Museum.

### **Pamela Mayer Sculpture Hall**

The sculptures in the Haub Family Collection introduce a cast of iconic characters found in much of the art of the American West. Here you will see Native American leaders, cowboys and Pony Express riders, artists at work, and a host of wild creatures. Though all classically western subjects, these figures were created by artists from the East Coast to the West Coast, some inspired by Italian craftsmen, others by ancient Assyrian art or 19th-century Parisian trends. As a whole, they reveal that the idea of the American West extends far beyond its geographic borders.

### **Liliane and Christian Haub Gallery**

How does a new country create a distinct identity? In the early 1800s, artists turned to the people and landscapes of the West to distinguish the United States from its European roots. Soon images of the West—both real and imagined—became popular subjects in American art. At the dawn of the 20th century, new industries and growing cities reshaped life in the West. Artists responded to these changes in various ways: some sought escape by plunging into historic recreations, celebrating the past in their artwork, and others saw the unique locations in the West as inspiration for a new, modern approach to American art. Today, contemporary artists respond to and question ingrained assumptions about the American West, prompting a new understanding of the “Old West” and making bold statements about the wide variety of contemporary cultures that comprise the modern West.

### **Katrin and Karl-Erivan Haub Gallery**

Powerful stories enchant, excite, teach, challenge, and inspire us. Since the early 19th century, storytelling and narrative have been prominent themes in the visual culture of the American West. Many artists in this exhibition worked as illustrators, bringing life to books, magazines, posters, and other forms of communication. With familiar characters and symbols, they perfected the art of storytelling through images. Influenced by European traditions of history painting, photography, and early cinema, these artists helped create an imaginative American folklore around the idea of the West. This gallery examines the tension between history and myth in these artworks, and explores artists who both craft and deconstruct the stories of the American West.

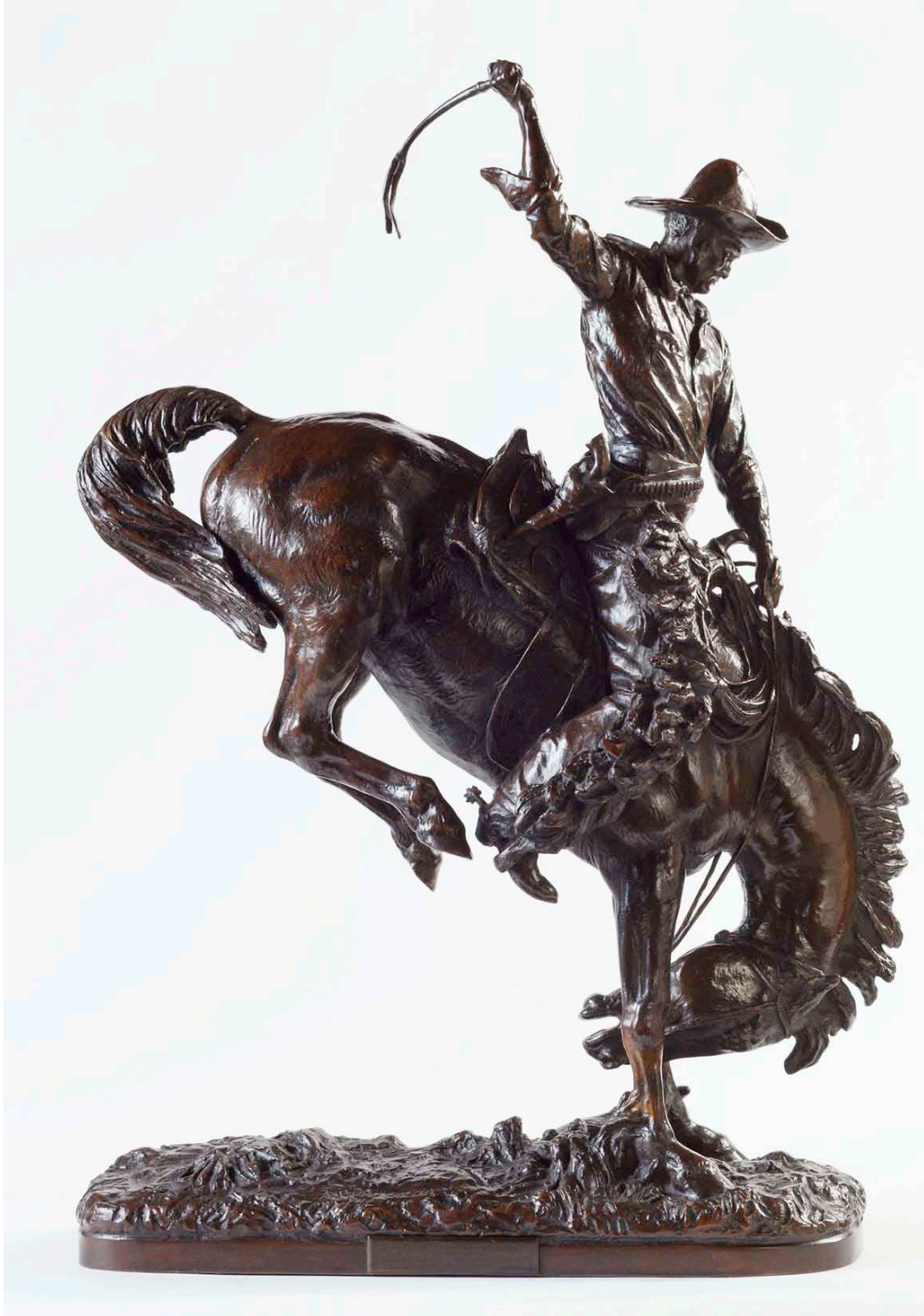
### **Georg Haub Gallery/Alice and Paul Kaltinick Gallery**

Since the time of early exploration and settlement, artists have responded to the dramatic landscapes and changing environments of the American West. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, artists lamented senseless environmental destruction and created works that generated a call to action, helping prompt early ideas about conservation and influencing the formation of the national park system. The landscapes of the West—with rolling hills, jagged peaks, bright skies, and brilliant colors—have long served as artistic inspiration, prompting both realist and abstract interpretations. These artists encourage us to see the land and wildlife in the West through their eyes, with wonder and admiration.



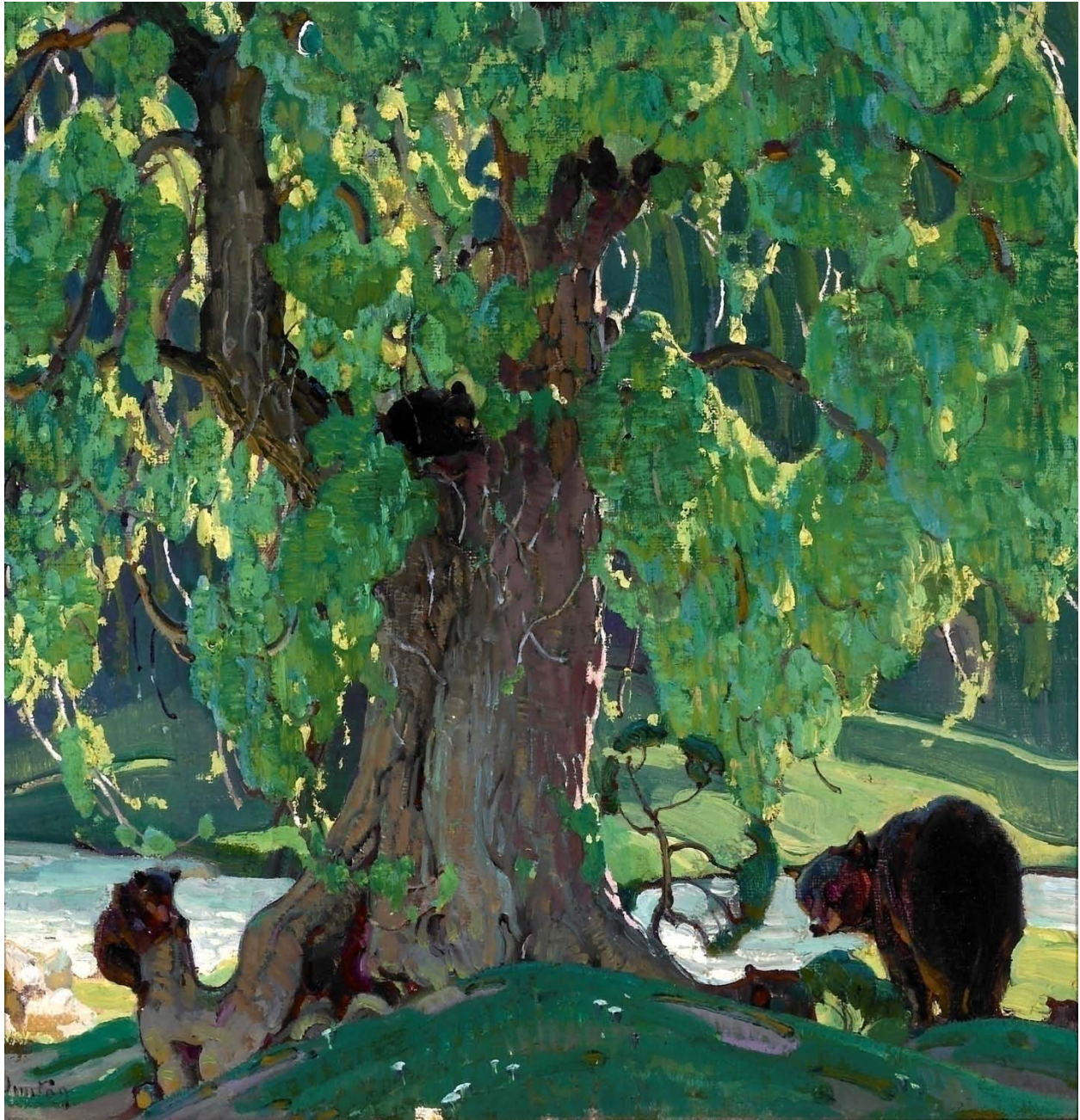


Martin E. Hennings, *Towering Aspens*, c.1940. Oil on canvas, 20 x 20 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.



Phimister Alexander Proctor, *The Buckaroo*, 1915. Bronze, 20 3/8 x 20 1/2 x 8 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.





Herbert William Dutton, *Summer Silhouette*, c.1926. Oil on canvas, 14 x 14 1/2 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.





Edward Borein, *Headin' Up the Range*, c.1915. Oil on canvas, 30 x 20 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.



Clyde Aspevig, *White Cliffs of Missouri*, 2009. Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.

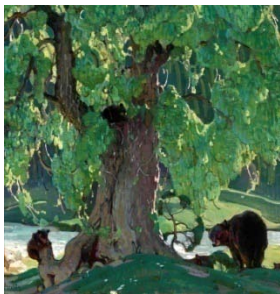


Thomas Moran, *Green River, Wyoming*. 1907. Oil on canvas, 20 x 28 1/2 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.



Curtis Walters, *Supreme Moment of Evening*, 1993. Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 inches. Tacoma Art Museum, Haub Family Collection, Promised gift of Erivan and Helga Haub.





## **PRE-VISIT LESSON: Reading Art**

**GRADES:** K–12

**LESSON LENGTH:** 1 class period

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** What can we learn by “reading” art?

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

This pre-visit activity will help to prepare students for their museum visit by increasing their comfort level in viewing and discussing art in an encouraging, non-judgmental atmosphere while utilizing their speaking and listening skills.

### **LESSON**

Let students know that they are going to discuss a work of art to see what they can learn about the artwork and the artist(s) just by looking. Select one or more of the artists highlighted in this guide, or select your own image(s). For a first time discussion, a figurative or narrative scene makes for a steady stream of conversation as well as diversity of interpretation. Using more abstract pieces can prove challenging for first-time art viewers, but can be developed quickly by guiding questions down a qualitative checklist – for example, “Who would like to tell me about the textures they see (line, depth, contrast, shape)?”

- Seat students in front of selected artwork and give them a moment to look at the image in silence before inviting them to speak. Look carefully at the image with the students. Encourage them to view the art much like they would read a book, scanning across, up, and down.
- Ask, “**What is going on in this image?**” Rather than starting out with “What do you see?” a question that invites a checklist of responses—“a dog,” “the color green,” “a red square,” e.g.—an open-ended question about what is *happening* starts the discussion off by inviting students to make meaning out of what they see. It also implies that we can find meaning in any work of art.
- Paraphrase each student’s comment after he or she responds, pointing to the details he or she mentions. Paraphrasing and responding to each comment in the same way helps indicate to students that no one interpretation is more valid or interesting than another.
- Introduce the appropriate vocabulary as it appears in the conversation.
- If a student provides an interpretive comment about the image (“I think the artist is sad,” “It looks like a farm,” “This takes place in the future,” e.g.), ask, “**What do you see that makes you say that?**” This reminds students to return to the image to find evidence for their opinions; it also builds descriptive vocabulary.
- Ask “**What more can we find?**” intermittently to keep the discussion going—and to imply that there is always something more that we can find in a work of art.

### **CONCLUSION**

Use your own judgment to close the discussion when student focus wanes. (The time needed for this lesson may vary from 10-45 minutes, depending upon the age and developmental needs of students.) As you conclude, thank all the students for their contributions, summarize the observations shared, and remind them that they will be participating in a similar activity while visiting the museum.



## **PRE-VISIT LESSON: Regional Identity**

**GRADES:** 4-12

**LESSON LENGTH:** 1 class period

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** What is the West?

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

This pre-visit lesson will provide students with the opportunity to reflect on regional identity.

### **BACKGROUND**

It is said that appreciation of Western American art in the 21st century stems from a sense of the familiar in which the images are categorized as tradition, history, and nostalgia. Formerly, they were appealing because as they represented the unfamiliar and captured feelings of discovery, growth, and curiosity of the unknown. As scholar Peter H. Hassrick notes, "throughout the 19th century, artists who ventured into the far northwest came with a wide variety of incentives and styles. It was this diversity of motivation and the individual artistic approaches that made for such a rich store of creative responses to the area."

Artists had varying motivations and as Hassrick further notes, "some were documentary artists who came in the service of science, some were pure romantics who fancied exotic experience, some were grand manner landscape painter who exulted in the splendor of mountain scenery, and yet others were pictorial historians who preserve the narrative of the West." It is important to stress that the majority of images of the American West do not represent historical records and what the Haub Family Collection provides is an opportunity to have a dialogue(s) about imagined versus realistic regional identity.

### **LESSON**

Break students into small groups, providing them with writing paper and pencil. Review with students that they will be reflecting on regional identity, specifically thinking on what "American West" means and how it's defined.

### **PROMPTS**

- What images come to mind when you hear the term American West?
- How would you explain the geography of the American West (by state, history, landscapes, culture and people, resources, etc.)?
- Who has defined what the American West is (cultures, government, artists, etc.)
- What role do you think the Lewis and Clark Expedition had in defining our understanding of the American West?
- It has been said that the West was for America what the cathedrals and castles were for the Europeans – what do you think that means?
- Do you think our understanding of the American West is rooted in imagination (images presented by artists, cinema, and pop culture) or reality (history, culture, and traditions of the people of the region) perhaps both? Teachers may wish to share the visual resources on pages 4 – 8 at this time.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ask the groups to share their reflections – were there any overlapping thoughts or differences. Did the groups notice a change in their thoughts after seeing the visual resources? Teachers are encouraged to expand the conversation beyond the lesson by incorporating the theme of regional identity into existing lesson on Washington State history. As an extension, have students repeat the lesson after visiting the museum and compare the experiences.





**POST-VISIT LESSON:** Western Mythology

**GRADES:** 4-12

**LESSON LENGTH:** 1 class period

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION:** Whose story is missing?

### **BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

This post-visit activity will provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their museum visit while utilizing their speaking, listening, language, and writing skills.

### **BACKGROUND**

When discussing the American West it is important to remember that there are two broad understandings – the “historical” West which included frontiersmen, immigrants, and Native Americans who were dealing with displacement and disease and then there is the “legendary” West which portrayed a world of endless opportunities and a romanticized way of living.

It was this idea of the legendary West that appealed to artists, writers, and easterners. During the latter 19th century a folk hero emerged who represented America’s need for a vicarious experience of adventure, violence, and masculine dominance – and that hero was the cowboy. Many artists shaped this image but it is said that Frederic Remington, more than any other person, popularized the visual image of the cowboy – which moviemakers have subsequently adhered to and stereotyped. Additionally, President Theodore Roosevelt and Buffalo Bill – with his Wild West show – helped shape this folk hero.

While this folk hero image is still popularized in art, novels, and movies it is important to note that there is a historic basis to the cowboy. The original cowboys were Mexican cattleman known as *vaquero* (see page 7), as well as freed slaves and Native Americans – these original cowboys were often looked down upon. When Americans moved westward, it was the *vaqueros* who knew the land and wildlife enough to help settlers, which led to the West of legends that is engrained in popular culture.

### **LESSON**

The mythological image of the cowboy still resonates to this day, but so many stories have been forgotten or gone untold. As noted, the *historical* West represents explores, immigrants from all over the world, and cultures and people long settled in the region before Europeans and early Americans went West. Students will be asked to research and present the story of an individual or group of people that impacted the American West.

### **SUGGESTED GUIDELINES**

- Students will write a 5 – 10 page research paper on the individual or group of people they selected, including
  - Cultural and historical information
  - Impact that the individual or group had on the American West
  - What is their story – either the fact based or the imagined as represented in art and pop culture
- Have the class brainstorm ideas of who they could research. Ideas may include: Chinese immigrants who worked on the railroads; Oregon pioneers; and Coastal Native Americans including the Puyallup Tribe.
- Each student will present their research to the class – students should be encouraged to include images during their presentation. Once each student has presented ask the class what they learned from the experience.

## GLOSSARY

**American West** – traditionally refers to the region comprising the westernmost states of the United States. Because the U.S. expanded westward after its founding, the meaning of the West has evolved over time. Prior to about 1800, the crest of the Appalachian Mountains was seen as the western frontier. Since then, the frontier moved further west and the Mississippi River was referenced as the easternmost possible boundary of the West. In the 21st century, the states which include the Rocky Mountains and the Great Basin to the West Coast are generally considered to comprise the American West.

**Appropriation** – the action of taking something for one's own use, typically without the owner's permission.

**Culture** – the entirety of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, and all other products of human work and thought: decorative artifacts, environmental pollutants, high art, political ideologies, ritual beliefs, social customs, and so on.

**Identity** – may be defined as the distinctive characteristic belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group.

**Landscape** – depiction of natural scenery such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers, and forests.

**Mythology** – a traditional or legendary story, usually concerning some being or hero or event, with or without a determinable basis of fact or a natural explanation.

**Permanent collection** – is a term describing art owned by a museum which is a group of objects or works to be seen, studied, or kept together.

**Pop Culture** – consumption of cultural products such as music, art, literature, fashion, dance, film, television, and radio.

**Portrait** – a likeness of a person, especially one showing the face that is created by a painter or photographer.

**Regional Identity** – the act of identifying with a specific geographic region of a nation.

**Sculpture** – the art of making two- or three-dimensional representative or abstract forms, especially by carving stone or wood or by casting metal or plaster.

**Storytelling** – is the conveying of events in words, and images, often by improvisation or embellishment. Stories or narratives have been shared in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation, and instilling moral values.

**Style** – the distinctive characteristics contained in the work of a individual, a group of artists, a cultural group, a period of art, or art from a common geographical location.

**Symbol** – something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance.



## ARTIST RESOURCES

Albert Bierstadt – was a German-American painter best known for his lavish, sweeping landscapes of the American West. <http://www.albertbierstadt.org/>

Cyrus Dallin – was an American sculptor best known for Native Americans subjects. <http://dallin.org/>

Veryl Goodnight – is a sculptor whose realistic sculptures of horses have achieved international acclaim. Her art is dedicated to the American West, the pioneer ideal and the animals shown as friends. <http://www.verylgoodnight.com/GalleryNew.html>

John Nieto – widely regarded as one of the most accomplished and exciting contemporary artists in the United State and an innovative interpreter of his native southwest. <https://www.nietofineart.com/>

Kevin Red Star – born and raised on the Crow Indian Reservation in Lodge Grass, Montana, Red Star's heritage and abundance of visual experiences serve as his thematic palette. Working primarily in acrylic, ink, and collage, he is known for conjuring evocative images of his ancestral Crow tribe: its culture and history – past to present. <http://kevinredstar.com/>

Frederic Remington – was an American painter, illustrator, sculptor, and writer who specialized in depictions of the Old American West, specifically concentrating on the last quarter of the 19th-century American West and images of cowboys, American Indians, and the U. S. Cavalry. <http://www.fredericremington.org/>

Charles M. Russell – was an artist of the Old American West. Russell created more than 2,000 paintings of cowboys, Indians, and landscapes set in the Western United States and in Alberta, Canada, in addition to bronze sculptures. Known as 'the cowboy artist', Russell was also a storyteller and author. <https://cmrussell.org/>

Bill Schenck – known internationally as one of the originators of the contemporary “Pop” western movement, Schenck is an American painter who incorporates techniques from Photo-Realism with a Pop Art sensibility to both exalt and poke fun at images of the West. <http://billyschenck.com/>

Gilbert Stuart – was an American painter from Rhode Island. He is widely considered to be one of America's foremost portraitists. His best known work is the unfinished portrait of George Washington. <http://www.gilbertstuartmuseum.com/>

## EDUCATOR RESOURCES

[Art Resource Center](#) – Learn more about the exhibitions on view at Tacoma Art Museum by visiting the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Art Resource Center – with more than 6,000 art books, numerous art periodicals, videos, and teacher resource packets available, the ARC is an excellent community resource to learn more about the visual arts.

[Arts Impact](#) – Based out of the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD), a professional development program that empowers K-8 classroom teachers to become competent and confident teachers of visual and performing arts using arts-infused lesson plans with a focus on mathematics and literacy.

[Tacoma Art Museum's collection database](#) – designed to make the museum's 3,200 object collection available online, was launched on November 1, 2011 and is a work in progress. New objects and information are being added to the database regularly.

## EXTENDED LEARNING

Amon Carter Museum of American Art –established by Amon G. Carter to provide a museum in Fort Worth devoted to American art. <http://www.cartermuseum.org/>

Asia Pacific Cultural Center – is a non-profit organization formed in November 1996 from the vision of a small group of citizens representing three generations of Americans from Asian and Pacific Islanders heritage. APCC represents 47 countries and cultures, offering programs and services honoring their distinct artistry, business protocols, history and social practices. <http://www.asiapacificculturalcenter.org/>

Buffalo Bill Center of the West – is a complex of five museums and a research library featuring art and artifacts of the American West located in Cody, Wyoming. Founded in 1917 to preserve the legacy and vision of Col. William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, the Buffalo Bill Center of the West is the oldest and most comprehensive museum of the West. <http://centerofthewest.org/>

Buffalo Soldiers Museum – The 9th and 10th Horse Cavalry Buffalo Soldiers Museum is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. The museum's mission is to educate, preserve, and present the history and outstanding contributions of America's Buffalo Soldiers from 1866-1944 and this includes WWII 1941-1945. <http://www.buffalosoldierstacoma.org/>

Gilcrease Museum – is a museum located northwest of downtown Tulsa, Oklahoma. The museum now houses the world's largest, most comprehensive collection of art of the American West as well as a growing collection of art and artifacts from Central and South America. <http://gilcrease.utulsa.edu/>

Heard Museum of Native Cultures and Art – located in Phoenix, Arizona the museum's overall mission is to educate the public about the heritage and the living cultures and arts of Native peoples. <http://heard.org/>

National Museum of the American Indian – is part of the Smithsonian Institution and is dedicated to the life, languages, literature, history, and arts of the Native Americans of the Western Hemisphere. <http://www.nmai.si.edu/>

Puyallup Tribe of Indians –The Puyallup Indians have lived along the shores of Puget Sound for thousands of years. In their native language they are known as S'Puyalupubsh, meaning "generous and welcoming behavior to all people (friends and strangers) who enter our lands." The membership of the Tribe has grown considerably in recent years, and is now more than 4,000 people. Tribal members play vital roles in many aspects of life in the Puget Sound region. Many members are active in sharing the rich Puyallup culture with the community through pow wows, art exhibits and other activities. <http://www.puyallup-tribe.com/>

Washington State History Museum – Founded in 1891 and now into its second century of service, the Washington State Historical Society is dedicated to collecting, preserving, and vividly presenting Washington's rich and varied history. The Historical Society is comprised of a family of museums and research centers, offering a variety of services to researchers, historians, scholars, and the lifelong learners. <http://www.washingtonhistory.org/>

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Washington Tribes: A public education program sponsored by the Washington Indian Gaming Association (WIGA) to raise awareness about how tribal government investments are benefiting everyone in Washington.



## **COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS (CCSS)**

### **Speaking and Listening Standards**

- Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on other's ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

### **Language Standards**

- Demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

### **Writing Standards**

- Write informative/explanatory texts to convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.

## **ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC LEARNING REQUIREMENTS (EALRs)**

### **Arts**

- 1.1 Understand arts concepts and vocabulary
- 2.1 Apply a creative process in the arts
- 2.3 Apply a responding process to an arts presentation
- 3.1 Use the arts to express and present ideas and feelings
- 3.2 Use the arts to communicate for a specific purpose
- 4.2 Demonstrate and analyze the connections between the arts and other content areas