

Wood, Lakes, & Rocks: Woolaroc

Grades 6-8

English Language Arts, Visual Art



Objectives

Students will learn about the western art on display at Woolaroc museum near Bartlesville, research and write reports on some of the art and artists, and examine the elements of select works of art. Students will study the process for selecting the Pioneer Woman statue.

Vocabulary

artifact—a usually simple object (as a tool or ornament) showing human work and representing a culture or a stage in the development of a culture

culture—the characteristic features of everyday life shared by people in a particular place or time

legitimize—cause to be recognized as meeting certain standards

plantation—an agricultural estate worked by laborers

range—open land over which livestock may roam and feed

sculpture—a work made by shaping, carving or molding

threshing—separating seed from a harvested plant

Background

What we know as the American Wild West took place after the American Civil War, when many of those who had served in the war moved west, seeking opportunities in land mostly held by Native American tribes. The **culture** of the Wild West centered around cowboys on horseback, moving cattle along trails like the Chisholm Trail from Texas to Kansas City, where they were loaded on trains and shipped east to feed a growing population. Scenes from the Wild West were, and still are, a favorite topic of artists, and art museums in Oklahoma hold some of the best examples of that art. The Gilcrease in Tulsa is one museum known worldwide for its collections of western art. The national Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum is famous for its collection of contemporary western art, celebrated each year with its Prix de West, a prestigious invitational art exhibit of over 300 Western paintings and **sculptures** by the finest contemporary Western artists in the nation.

One of Oklahoma's greatest treasures of western art is Woolaroc, near Bartlesville, which holds a diverse assortment of western art and **artifacts** collected by Frank Phillips, founder of Phillips Petroleum Co. The collection is on display for the public on Phillips' 4,000-acre ranch, now a museum. The name Woolaroc comes from three words—woods, lake and rocks, which refers to the woods, lakes and rocks that make up the beautiful Osage Hills of northeast Oklahoma, where Woolaroc is located.

On entering the building that houses the museum, visitors are greeted by a sculpture called "The Cowboy." The sculptor, Jo Mora, was a Uruguayan born American cartoonist, illustrator and cowboy. Mora wrote and illustrated children's books about the west. The model for "The Cowboy" was George Miller, one of the famous Miller Brothers of the 101 Ranch, near Ponca City.

Another sculpture on the Woolaroc grounds is called, "Thanks for the Rain," by Joe Beeler. It shows a cowboy kneeling on the ground next to his horse. Cowboys on the **range** were as dependent as farmers on rain to water the grass needed to feed the cattle. Beeler grew up on the borderland between Oklahoma and Missouri. He learned early how to rope, ride and hunt, and soon developed a knack for drawing cowboys, Indians and horses. Beeler helped start the Cowboy Artists of America to help popularize and **legitimize** western art. He died in the saddle, helping neighbors brand calves.

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Inside the museum, one of the most striking works of art is a very large painting of a Sioux man behind a plow, looking at the skull of a bison lying on the ground. The painting is “Visions of Yesterday,” by William Robinson Leigh. Leigh was born after the Civil War on a **plantation** in West Virginia and raised in Baltimore. early in his career he was an illustrator for Scribner Magazine, but an offer by the railroad to travel west and paint the Grand Canyon changed his focus.

Like Leigh, Oscar Berninghaus got his start painting scenes of the west when he was hired by the railroad to do illustrations for their promotional literature. On his way there he met the artist Bert Geer Phillips who was recruiting artists to come and paint the landscapes of people of the region around Taos, NM. With others, they formed what would become known as the Taos Society of Artists. Woolaroc has several paintings by Berninghaus and other Taos artists. “**Threshing** Time at Taos” depicts a herd of horses driven round and round a large stack of grain within a corral, separating the grain from the straw.

Charles M. Russell is considered one of the greatest artists of the American West. He created more than 2,000 paintings of cowboys, Indians, and landscapes set in the western United States. He is best known for his bronze sculptures. At Woolaroc, a bronze casting of his “The Night Herder” is one example of his work. “Bronco Buster “ is an example of sculpture by another great western artist, Frederic Remington. Like Russell, Remington was expert at many forms of art. He was a painter, illustrator,sculptor, and writer.

Additional Reading

Durham, David Anthony, *Gabriel’s Story*, Doubleday, 2001.

George-Warren, Holly, *The Cowgirl Way: Hats Off to America’s Women of the West*, Houghton-Mifflin Books for Children, 2010.

Savage, Candace, *Born to Be a Cowgirl: A Spirited Ride Through the Old West*, Tricycle, 2004.

Charles River Editors, *Frederic Remington and Charles Marion Russell: The Life and Legacy of the America’s Most Iconic Western Artists*, Kindle Edition, 2020

Websites

www.woolaroc.org

<https://www.frederic-remington.org/>

<https://www.charlesmarionrussell.org/>

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Activity 1

Grades 6-8 Teacher Resources and Standards

Activity 1: Artist Research, (ELA)

1 50 minute class period

Students will study the process for selecting the Pioneer Woman statue.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

Activity 1: Artist Research (ELA)

- 6.2.R.3 Students will paraphrase main ideas with supporting details in a text.
- 7.2.R.3
- 8.2.R.3
- 6.3.W.3 Students will clearly state an opinion supported with facts and details.
- 6.3.W.4 Students will show relationships among facts, opinions, and supporting details.

Materials

- computer or Library access
- Activity 1 Reading Page “**The Pioneer Woman**”
- Activity 1 Worksheet 1 “**The Pioneer Woman**”

Procedures

1. Read and discuss “**The Pioneer Woman.**”
2. Have students complete Worksheet 1 “**The Pioneer Woman**”
 - Encourage internet or library research to compare “Confident” to the other works in the competition to select the Pioneer Woman statue
 - Encourage students to research other work by artist Bryant Baker and compare them to the Pioneer Woman statue
 - Note that “Affectionate” depicts a woman breastfeeding, which some families may find inappropriate for student viewing (and your school internet filter may block)**

Ernest W. Marland was a wealthy oilman and governor of Oklahoma from 1935-39. However, before becoming governor, he desired to build a statue to honor the women who helped build our state. From 1926-30 he held a contest to build the Pioneer Woman Statue. Marland worked with a New York art gallery, and held a contest for the statue's design. Twelve well known U.S. and international sculptors were paid \$10,000 each to create three-foot models for the Pioneer Woman statue. Each artist received a brief, written description of the idea and two genuine sunbonnets.

The twelve submissions included:

- “Adventurous” by F. Lynn Jenkins
- “Affectionate” by James E. Frasier
- “Challenging” by H.A. MacNeil
- “Confident” by Bryant Baker
- “Determined” by Maurice Sterne
- “Faithful” by Arthur Lee
- “Fearless” by Wheeler Williams
- “Heroic” by Mario Korbel
- “Protective” by John Gregory
- “Self-Reliant” by A. Stirling Calder
- “Sturdy” by Mahonri Young
- “Trusting” by Jo Davidson

In 1927 the New York gallery revealed the models and toured them to New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Dallas, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, and Ponca City. At all tour stops, the public voted. More than 750,000 votes were cast. Bryant Baker's model, titled “Confident” received 123,000 votes and won the contest. Bryant received \$100,000 to create the twenty-seven foot statue.



The Pioneer Woman stands as a monument to honor the women who made significant contributions to Oklahoma's rich history. The statue is inscribed with the words, *“In appreciation of the heroic character of the women who braved the dangers and endured the hardships incident to daily life of the pioneer and homesteader in this country.”* The statue depicts a woman, Bible under her arm, leading her young son bravely and confidently into the future. The twelve-thousand pound, twenty seven-foot-tall, cast-bronze piece stands atop a pyramid shaped, silverdale-stone base. The entire piece rises to forty feet. The Pioneer Woman statue stands in Ponca City. However, the original twelve entries have been displayed at Woolaroc since 1940. Marland deeded the statue and the surrounding property to the State of Oklahoma. The Pioneer Woman Museum was dedicated just east of the statue in 1958.

During the Depression, Marland endured financial setbacks. These included the loss of his oil company. Marland contacted his friend, Frank Phillips, with an offer to sell his art collection. This sale included the twelve models entered in the contest, at a great discount. Phillips sent an art expert to inspect the art collection. Phillips then negotiated with Marland to purchase part of Marland's collection. In the end, Phillips purchased the sculptures, along with other artwork. The art became part of Phillips collection and were displayed at Woolaroc. The twelve original entries have been displayed at Woolaroc since the early 1940's.

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Activity 1 Worksheet 1: The Pioneer Woman



Name: _____ Date: _____

After reading about the Pioneer Woman, answer the questions below:

1. According to the inscription beneath the statue, why was the Pioneer Woman statue created?
2. Describe how the idea for Pioneer Woman statue became reality.
3. The models for the Pioneer Woman statue are displayed at Woolaroc in Bartlesville rather than in Ponca City. Describe what caused the sculptures to be relocated, in your own words.
4. Find one of the other eleven sculptures listed on the reading page by doing internet or library research. Compare "Confident" with the sculpture you selected to research.
5. Bryant Baker, the artist who created "Confident", has other famous works. Find other examples of his work and compare to his interpretation of the Pioneer Woman.
6. Has he created other western art?

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Activity 1 Worksheet 1: The Pioneer Woman

ANSWER KEY



Name: _____ Date: _____

After reading about the Pioneer Woman, answer the questions below:

1. According to the inscription beneath the statue, why was the Pioneer Woman statue created?

To show appreciation for the heroic character of the women who braved the dangers and endured the hardships incident to daily life of the pioneer and homesteader in this country.

2. Describe how the idea for Pioneer Woman statue became reality.

EW. Marland paid 12 artists \$10,000 each to create a three-foot model to honor the spirit of pioneer women. The finished models were displayed in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Dallas, Fort Worth, Oklahoma City, and Ponca City. More than 750,000 people voted for their favorite and “Confident” by Bryant Baker received 123,000 votes. Baker received \$100,000 to create the twenty seven foot statue that stands in Ponca City.

3. The models for the Pioneer Woman statue are displayed at Woolaroc in Bartlesville rather than in Ponca City. Describe the circumstances that caused the sculptures to be relocated.

After financial setbacks during the Depression, Marland contacted his friend Frank Phillips and offered to sell his art collection, including the twelve models. Phillips sent an art expert to inspect the collection and began negotiating the purchase with Marland. In the end, Phillips purchased the sculptures, along with other artwork which became part of the collection at Woolaroc, where they have been displayed since the early 1940’s.

4. Find of one of the other eleven sculptures listed on the reading page by doing internet or library research. Compare “Confident” with the sculpture you selected to research.

Answers will vary based on the work created. **Note that “Affectionate” depicts a woman breastfeeding, which some families may find inappropriate for student viewing (and your school internet filter may block)**

5. Bryant Baker, the artist who created “Confident”, has other famous works. Find other examples of his work and compare to his interpretation of the Pioneer Woman.

Much of Baker’s work included busts and statues of political figures. “Confident” showed more energy, emotion and movement than most of his work. However, his work was recognized for being extremely life-like. He seemed to work almost exclusively in bronze.

6. Has he created other western art?

Much of Baker’s work included busts and statues of political figures, so if he did, the art is not well known.

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Activity 2

Grades 6-8 Teacher Resources and Standards

Activity 2: Artist Research, (ELA) 2-3 50 minute class periods

Students will research an artist and create a presentation about him/her.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

Activity 2: Artist Research (ELA)

- 6.3.W.2 Students will compose essays and reports about topics, incorporating evidence (e.g., specific facts, examples, details) and maintaining an organized structure and a formal style.
- 7.3.W.2
- 8.3.W.2
- 6.6.R.2 Students will follow ethical and legal guidelines for finding and recording information from a variety of primary and secondary sources (e.g., print and digital).
- 7.6.R.2
- 8.6.R.2
- 6.6.R.3 Students will determine the relevance and reliability of the information gathered.
- 7.6.W.3
- 8.6.R.3
- 6.6.W.4 Students will summarize and present information in a report.
- 7.6.W.4
- 8.6.W.4
- 6.7.W.1 Students will select, organize, or create multimodal content to complement and extend meaning for a selected topic.
- 7.7.W.1
- 8.7.W.1
- 6.7.W.2 Students will utilize multimedia to clarify information and strengthen claims or evidence.
- 7.7.W.2
- 8.7.W.2

Materials

- computer
- Activity 2 Worksheet 1 “**Research Outline**”

Procedures

1. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
2. Students will select one of the artists listed in the background and complete Worksheet 1 “**Research Outline.**”
3. Students will write research papers from the information they find or use online resources to produce computer generated presentations showing examples of the artist’s work.
4. Students will work in groups to research one of the following topics and present their findings to the class in oral presentations, PowerPoint, posters, etc.
 - 101 Ranch
 - Pioneer Woman Statue
 - Taos School of Artists
 - Chisholm Trail

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Activity 2 Worksheet 1: Research Outline



Name: _____ Date: _____

Select one of the artists listed below and use online search engines or library references to research the artist. Use the questions below to organize the information. Write a research paper or create a computer generated presentation showing examples of the artist's work.

Bryant Baker
William Robinson Leigh

Jo Beeler
Jo Mora
Charles M. Russell

Oscar E. Berninghaus
Frederic Remington

Artist's Name _____

Where is the artist from?

What works of art is he/she know for?

Where did the artist study or apprentice?

What school or style of art is he/she associated with?

List at least three of the artist's other works

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Do any of the artist's other works relate to farming or ranching? If so, list those works.

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Activity 3

Grades 6-8 Teacher Resources and Standards

Activity 3: Ag in Art, (Visual Art)

2-3 50 minute class periods

Students will compare and contrast two works of art and create an original piece of western art.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

Activity 3: Ag in Art (Visual Art)

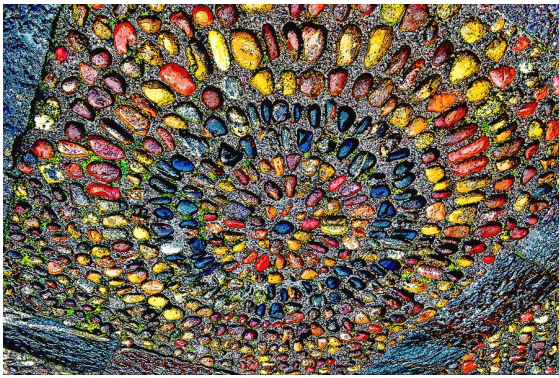
6.VA.CHP.1.3	Identify works of art and artists in relation to specific movements, historical periods and cultures
7.VA.CHP.1.3	
8.VA.CHP.1.3	
6.VA.CP.1.1	Apply knowledge of elements of art (e.g. line, color, form, shape, texture, value and space) and principles of design (rhythm, balance, contrast, movement, center of interest, and repetition) throughout the creative process
7.VA.CP.1.1	
8.VA.CP.1.1	

Materials

- Activity 3 Reading Page “**Elements of Art**”
- Activity 3 Worksheet 1 “**Ag in Art**”
- computer
- art supplies

Procedures

1. Provide copies of the “**Ag in Art**” questionnaire included with this lesson.
 - Review and discuss “**The Elements of Art**,” reading page
 - Students will select three of the works of art listed on the questionnaire and find images of the art using an online search engine.
 - Students will answer the questions based on their impressions of the selected works of art.
2. Students will select two or more of the works of art listed in the background.
 - Students will compare and contrast the two works using the questions on the worksheet.
3. Students will use the Elements of Art to create an original work of western art, using a variety of materials, techniques and sources for ideas.
 - Display the students’ artwork and invite other classes to view your “Western Art Gallery.”
 - Students will teach the other classes about
 - the elements of art
 - appropriate behavior for an art gallery.



TEXTURE is what you would be able to feel with your sense of touch if the work of art were real. Textures can be rough or smooth; soft or hard. Textures do not always feel the way they look; for example; a picture of a porcupine may look prickly, but if you touch the drawing, the paper is still smooth.

FORM is the element of a work of art that makes it look three-dimensional, showing the subject’s height, width and depth. Some examples of form are: balls, cylinders, boxes and pyramids.

SPACE is the area between and around objects. It includes the background, foreground and middle ground. It is the distances or areas around, between or within components of a work of art. There are two types of space: positive and negative space. Positive space is the space representing the subject matter. Negative space refers to the space around and between the subject matter. Space can also refer to the feeling or illusion of depth in a work of art..

SHAPE—Shapes in a work of art can be geometric (e.g.: square, circle, triangle, hexagon, etc.) or organic (such as the shape of a puddle, blob, leaf, boomerang, etc.).

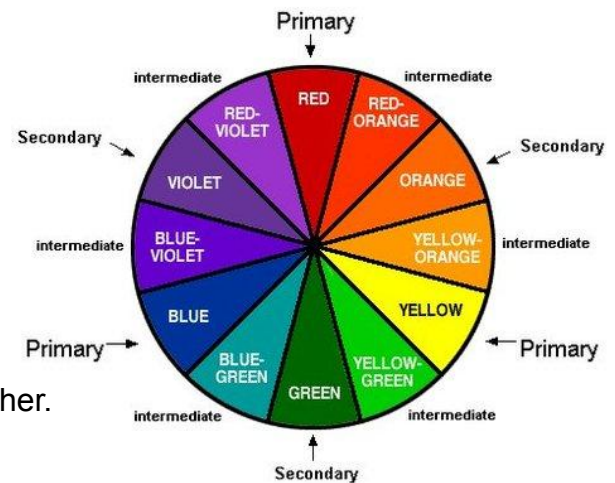
COLOR—is light reflected off of surfaces. Color has three main characteristics:

Hue - the name of the color (red, green, blue, etc.)

Value - how light or dark the color is

Intensity - how bright or dull the color is

- White is pure light. Black is the absence of light
- Primary Colors (red, blue and yellow) are the only true colors. All other colors are a mixture of primary colors
- Secondary Colors (green, orange and violet) are two primary colors mixed together
- Intermediate Colors, sometimes called tertiary colors are made by mixing primary and secondary colors together. Some examples are blue green, yellow green and blue violet.
- Complementary colors are located directly across from each other on the color wheel. These colors contrast because they share no common colors. When complementary colors are mixed together, they neutralize each other to make brown.



TONE (VALUE)—Value, or tone, refers to the use of light and dark, shade and highlights, in an artwork.

LINE—Line is a mark with greater length than width. Lines can be horizontal, vertical, or diagonal; straight or curved; thick or thin. Implied line is the path that the viewer’s eye takes as it follows shapes, colors, and form along a path.

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Activity 3 Worksheet 1: Ag in Art



Name: _____ Date: _____

Find the works of art from Woolaroc below, using an online search engine. Select one or more and answer the following questions about the work of art you have selected.

“The Cowboy,” by Jo Mora

“Thanks for the Rain,” by Jo Beeler

“Visions of Yesterday,” by William Robinson Leigh

“Threshing Time at Taos”, by Oscar E. Berninghaus

“Night Herder,” by Charles M. Russell

“Bronco Buster,” by Frederic Remington

Using the definitions and examples from the Elements of Art reading page, answer the following questions about the work of art you have selected.

Name of painting or sculpture _____

Describe the **textures** you see in this work of art.

Describe the three-dimensional **forms** in this work of art.

Describe the use of negative and positive **space** in this work of art. Is there more negative or positive space?

Describe the **shapes** you see in this work of art.

Activity 3 Worksheet 1: Ag in Art (continued)

Make a list of the **colors** you see in the painting.

Are they mostly primary colors or are there more secondary colors?

How do the colors make you feel (cheerful, sad, etc.)?

Describe the **tone** in this work of art.

What **lines** do you see in this work of art?

Are they mostly vertical or horizontal lines?

What is going on in this work of art? Mention whatever you see happening, no matter how small.

Activity 2 Worksheet 1: Ag in Art (continued)

What do you see in this work of art that is related to ranching or farming?

What does it teach you about the time and place in which it is set?

Does this work of art tell a story? If so, write what you think the story is. If not, use your imagination and write your own story.