Visual Arts and Social Studies: Powerful Partners in Promoting Critical Thinking Skills

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Drawing from research on art integration, we discuss why visual arts and social studies can be powerful partners in promoting critical thinking skills. Because this is an increasingly visual society, visual literacy is becoming progressively more important. Through the visual arts, students have the opportunity to analyze and evaluate information, which are critical academic and citizenship skills. The integration of these two content areas and skills facilitates effective use of the limited time teachers have with students. In order to demonstrate the integration of art and social studies, we provide a lesson plan on Western Expansion.

Keywords: social studies, visual arts, integration, critical thinking skills, Westward Expansion

“Social studies presents knowledge of human experiences while art has the power to provide an intimate understanding of human experiences…” (Manifold, 1995, p. 2)

“Critical thinking has been a long-standing major goal of education in the social studies” (Patrick, 1986, para.1). According to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Task Force on Revitalizing Citizenship Education, the “core mission of social studies education is to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and values that will enable them to become effective citizens” (NCSS, Creating Effective Citizens, nd, para.6). The Task Force characterized an effective citizen, in part, as one who “seeks information from varied sources and perspectives to develop informed opinions and creative solutions” and who “asks meaningful questions and is able to analyze and evaluate information and ideas” (NCSS, para.7). These skills, which should be part of social studies teaching and learning, often are neglected in lieu of having students memorize facts (President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities, 2011). As a result, many students leave high school without critical thinking skills such as “problem solving, critical and creative thinking, dealing with ambiguity… and the ability to perform cross-disciplinary work” (President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities, p. 28), that they need in either the workforce, higher education, or in the practice of effective citizenship (Cotton, 1991; Patrick, 1986).

Among the critical thinking skills students need are literacy skills for comprehending both text and visual images (Crawford, Hicks, & Doherty, 2009; Sandell, 2011). Today’s society is very visual with images everywhere. According to Eric Jensen (2001) “people receive more than 90% of their information visually” (p. 70). Brain research has established that the visual cortex is five times larger than the auditory cortex in modern times (Dickinson, 2002) and that visual arts offer an alternative method of presenting material, which can allow it to be better stored in long-term memory (President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 2011).
There are many students for whom the heavy reading and writing often present in social studies classrooms are challenging (Dickinson; Schmidt, 2007). Social studies teachers sometimes “tend to be word oriented” and “forget that many students think in pictures” (Schmidt, p. 108). While multiple styles of learning should be considered, research has posited that 40% of the population has a visual learning style (Dickinson), so when students are presented with learning materials through visual arts or are allowed to express themselves visually, “extremely powerful” processes can take place in student learning (Dickinson, p. 5).

**Interpretation of Visual images**

“Seeing and interpreting images is a vital part of what it means to learn and to know...in order to support teaching multiple literacies, students must be overtly taught to engage in and critically reflect” (Crawford et al., 2009, p. 1). Adding images to social studies teaching is “an acknowledgement of the increasingly visual world of our students” (Zwirn & Libresco, 2010, p. 30) and using visual images “can promote historical literacy abilities by stimulating students to analyze artistic ideas, take positions and defend them, examine the world of visual images they live in, ask new questions, and produce historical information in novel ways” (p. 35). Extracting meaning from visual images, therefore, requires that students do more than just look at the images; it requires the development of a visual literacy, which means that students “interpret [and] use images...in ways that advance understanding, thinking, decision making, communication, and learning (Sandell, 2011, p. 48). Just as text must be interpreted to be understood, so must visual images (Beal, Bolick, & Martorella, 2009; Coufal & Coufal, 2002; Crawford et al., 2009; Manifold, 1995; Sandell; Schmidt, 2007; Werner, 2002; Zwirn & Libresco).

Formal analysis of the elements and principles of art is a technique for organizing visual information. Attention to elements such as, line, shape, form, space, texture, color, and value as well as principles such as, balance, contrast, movement, emphasis, pattern, proportion, and unity is very useful for facilitating the lifelong skills of seeing visual images more deeply, therefore, interpreting more thoughtfully. Just as we must be able to identify the letters of the alphabet and combine them in meaningful ways to read and write text, visual images are better understood and created if we are aware of the elements and principles that are combined to communicate meaningful representations. Teachers and students who not familiar with the elements and principles of art should explore these fundamentals to enhance their background knowledge in the arts and benefit their analysis of all visual images they encounter, leading to more informed interpretations.

The Internet offers multiple resources for teachers and students to learn about the elements and principles of art. The J. Paul Getty, *Elements and Principles of Art* (2012), provides excellent resources including operational definitions of each element and principle. The Smithsonian American Art Museum provides mini-lessons with practical ideas for engaging students in critical thinking skills in an *Integrating Social Studies and the Visual Arts* pdf. These include activities such as differentiating between observation and interpretation of visual images; dividing images to move from part to whole and revise perceptions; and exploring historical context of images through who, what, where, when, why and how questions. These are useful for building common background skills in critical thinking with visual representations such as artistic images. Institutions such as the Library of Congress (LOC), National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) provide
resources for social studies teachers to use that aid students in going beyond looking and engage in analysis, interpretation and use of perspective. Teacher guidance is a critical component in facilitating meaningful student engagement with visual images (Barton, 2005; Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson, 2010; Schmidt, 2007).

**Art Integration and Critical Thinking Skills**

Given the research on the importance of visual literacy for the 21st century learner, it is particularly relevant to social studies teaching and learning that art integration improves students’ critical thinking skills (Christensen, 2008; Costa, 2005; Gardner, 1994; Sandell, 2011) and promotes a deeper understanding of content (Dickinson, 2002). Understanding, producing and responding to visual arts encourages students to engage in critical thinking skills, such as analysis, interpretation, reflection, and use of perspective, all of which are so valuable and necessary in the social studies (Kosky & Curtis, 2008; Crawford et al., 2009). Critical thinking takes a heightened focus on thoughtful and skilled use of ideas, techniques, and materials. Arts critique includes closely analyzing details and patterns, compiling evidence, and using evaluation criteria to make judgments (Cornett, 2011).

Relevant research supports the effectiveness of art integration in promoting critical thinking across all grade levels. Fourth graders, in an arts integrated school in Massachusetts, placed first in the state on tests measuring critical thinking skills (Oddleifson, 1995). A study of 2000 elementary and middle school students revealed “significant relationships” between art integration and higher order thinking skills (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999 reported in Kosky & Curtis, p. 22). Research on art integration conducted in 14 Kindergarten-12 Chicago schools, as part of the Chicago Arts Partnership in Education Program (CAPE), concluded that not only did students’ standardized test scores improve, but that students were “actually learning content more deeply, not just memorizing facts” (Kosky & Curtis, 2008, p. 23). Research revealed not only higher test scores but also the development of critical thinking skills in classrooms where the arts were integrated, especially among at risk students (Rabkin & Redmond, 2006).

**Benefits of Social Studies and Art Integration**

There is a lack of data on the effect that integrating art has on district or state test social studies scores, but there is classroom research suggesting arts integration increases student comprehension of social studies concepts. In one study, using artwork as the basis of a 5th grade lesson on American production, researchers remarked on “noticeable gains” of students’ understandings of economic concepts as measured by pre- and post-tests. As well, students’ descriptions of the artworks changed from more descriptive to analytical (Laney, Moseley, & Pak, 1996, p. 61). In another study, art based lessons were incorporated into a 5th grade social studies unit on world explorers. Students who had difficulty expressing themselves in writing were able to express themselves through creating visual art pieces (Romero, 1996). One student in the study remarked, “In social studies I like using art because it helps if I do and see the actual picture” (p. 36). Additional research in a 3rd grade classroom revealed that students who were asked to read, draw, think, read, and then draw again were able to clarify their ideas resulting in “improved comprehension and clarity” (Jensen, 2001, p. 59). Finally, an 8th grade history teacher using American art in her unit of teaching about American Identity reported that students learned the critical thinking skills of inference, drawing conclusions, and synthesizing, and were then able to transfer those skills to other subject areas (Sandell, 2011).
In addition to the research results that support visual arts and social studies integration for the development of critical thinking skills, there is a very practical reason for combining content and skills from both disciplines. “Time is the most precious commodity in a twenty-first-century classroom…” (Schmidt, 2007, p. 16). Most teachers are experiencing the pressures of preparing students for local, state, and national testing and for teaching large amounts of information. Curriculum, additionally, has been narrowed in many elementary schools so that not all subjects are taught. Art and social studies are sometimes omitted or greatly reduced (Brewer & Brown, 2009; Christensen, 2008; Ferguson, nd; Oddliefson, 1995; President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, 2011; Schmidt). Integrating subjects can aid teachers in maximizing instructional time (Brewer & Brown; Schmidt).

**History and Art Integration**

The history component of social studies can be seen as a “particularly powerful area of art integration” (Manifold, 1995, p. 4). A great deal of our knowledge of history and culture comes from the art produced in various time periods by various cultures (Christensen, 2006; Herberholz, 2010; Manifold). Desai, Hamlin, and Mattson (2010) contend that, “works of historically engaged art suggest how we understand the past might be as much a visual question as it is a textual one” (p. 6). Using visual arts in history classes creates opportunities to allow students to gain a richer and more complete understanding of people, concepts, and events (Barton, 2005) and to express those ideas (Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson). Incorporating visual images has the potential to move students beyond the mere memorizing of factual knowledge to analyzing, questioning, responding, comparing, drawing conclusions, and even producing (Barton; Desai, Hamlin, & Mattson; Newmann, 1987; Schmidt, 2007; Zwirn & Libresco). Creating opportunities for students to apply these skills is what Barton (2001) describes as “authentic instruction” in history classes (p. 278). Through images, students can examine multiple perspectives in an alternative medium, which may be more comprehensible than text (Barton. 2001; Coufal & Coufal, 2001; Efland, 2002; Franklin, 2002; Manifold). Visual images also encourage “visual thinking” (Manifold, p. 4) which can make content connections in different ways. Deasy (2002) reported, for example, when 6th graders’ understanding of history was assessed through drawing as well as through writing, comprehension increased for all students, even those for whom English was not their first language.

**Art, Critical Thinking, and Westward Expansion: A Pedagogical Example**

“Artists grapple with important historical questions in their work. As visual documents created at a specific place and moment in time, artworks have the potential to illuminate a society’s ideas about a particular historical event or era. They can provide students with another lens through which to master historical content and to practice historical thinking skills” (Eder, 2011, p. 300). The following lesson plan, which integrates art and history, is focused on United States History: Westward Expansion. The resources, lesson plan, and adaptations were inspired by the 2008 National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) Summer Professional Development Workshop, *Teaching with Documents and Works of Art*, which was presented by the Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM), the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), and which both authors attended.

The advertisement, paintings, and photographs selected for student analysis, as a part of the westward expansion lesson, provide students with diverse types of images and a means of
considering alternative perspectives about westward expansion. As indicated by the NCSS Task Force on Revitalizing Citizenship Education, an effective citizen “seeks information from varied sources and perspectives to develop informed opinions and creative solutions” (NCSS, nd, para.7). Asking students to infer meaning about westward expansion from the ads, paintings, and photographs authentically utilizes their art knowledge and critical thinking skills. As advocated by the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities (2011), students should not leave high school without “problem solving, critical and creative thinking, dealing with ambiguity… and the ability to perform cross-disciplinary work” (p. 28). The use of both visual images and diary excerpts additionally addresses different learning styles and preferences.

As a way of introducing the visual images provided in this or any lesson, teachers should draw upon and emphasize the visual elements and principles of art through questions. Attention to aspects of images through questions such as “how does color affect the mood” or “how do the lines represent movement” helps students begin the practice of seeing more deeply, which leads to more informed analysis. While social studies teachers may be more familiar with integrating art with world history studies such as the Renaissance, we shouldn't ignore the resources and opportunities for arts integration with American history. Many of these are works located in our country and possibly more feasible for our students to view in person in their lifetime. American Progress and Westward the Course of the Empire Takes Its Way are both intriguing and complex paintings to be considered in this lesson; they are full of symbolism, allegory, and personification and both ripe for critical thinking. Ample background information and expert analyses on these paintings, located in Washington, D.C., may be obtained through Internet searches.

Assessment methods in this lesson draw upon the research indicating that when understanding of history is assessed through art as well as through traditional writing, comprehension increases for all students, including those for who English is not their first language (Deasy, 2002). Students who have difficulty expressing themselves in writing may be able to express themselves through creating visual art pieces (Romero, 1996). In addition to traditional small and large group discussion and independent writing activities, this lesson, therefore, provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge through a creative and visual representation of their ideas in the form of advertisements.

Through the various materials, art forms, engagement strategies, and modes of demonstrating knowledge and critical thinking, the following lesson, Exploring Westward Expansion through the Multiple Perspectives, provides feasible, effective, and diverse ideas for engaging students in learning and thinking critically about American history.

Exploring Multiple Perspectives of Westward Expansion through Visual Arts

Grade Level: Middle or High School

Objectives: Students will
1. analyze messages regarding Westward Expansion contained in primary documents and visual images.
2. hypothesize reasons for conflicting messages regarding Western Expansion.
3. formulate a summary statement of what Western Expansion was like, based on their analysis of the primary documents and images.
4. construct a visual advertisement to either encourage or discourage others from going west.

**National Strands and Standards**

NCSS Thematic Strand 2: Time, Continuity and Change  
NCSS Thematic Strand 3: People, Places and Environments  
National Standards for Arts Education Visual Art Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes  
National Standards for Arts Education Visual Art Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures  
National Standards for Arts Education Visual Art Standard 6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

**Materials**

- See Appendix for Relevant Web Sites
- Packet for pairs/trios of students each containing the following diary excerpts and visual images, which have been numbered as follows:
  3. Copy of the Westward Expansion diary excerpts (Handout 1)  
  4. Copy of photograph of a Family with Their Covered Wagon During the Great Western Migration 1866, National Archives and Records Administration  
  6. Color copy of mural: Westward the Course of the Empire Takes Its Way by Emanuel Leutze, Smithsonian American Art Museum
- Westward Expansion Analysis Sheet for each student (Handout 2)  
- Magnifying glasses for each student or student group (optional, but very helpful)  
- 8 ½ x 11 white drawing paper for each student  
- Pencils/Markers/colored pencils/crayons/paints  
- The Elements of Art student handout from the J. Paul Getty Website  
- Westward Expansion Advertisement Production Instructions for each student (Handout 3)  
- Westward Expansion Advertisement Production Rubric for each student (Handout 4)  
  (Note: Depending on time and resources, the art production may be more elaborate by providing half sheets of poster board and poster paints; it may also be created electronically using graphic clip art and creative fonts).

**Teaching and Learning Procedures**

Opening Activity: Tell the students that they are beginning a unit on U.S. westward expansion. Ask students to share what they think it would have been like to travel west. Write these statements on the board, so that they can be re-visited later.
1. Give each student a Westward Expansion Analysis Sheet (Handout 2). Introduce each question on the handout, discussing it for clarity. Divide students into groups of two or three, telling them that they may work together, but that each of them should complete an individual sheet. Note that students do not have to agree on their answers within their group. Give students 5 minutes to complete the analysis and written work for each item (you may modify time and number of students in groups to meet the needs of diverse learners).

2. Go through the analysis sheet and ask students to examine six different items reflecting westward expansion and to interpret the message of each item and explain how that message was conveyed. Remind students to observe and interpret (as described in the SAAM Integrating Social Studies and the Visual Arts lesson). Remind students to consider how meaning is communicated through the elements and principles of art (as described in the resources at the J. Paul Getty website.). At the end of the exercise, lead students to analyze conflicting messages they discovered, discuss (in writing) why the conflict existed, and summarize what westward expansion was like, in one sentence. As a final assessment, require students to will draw a poster to either encourage or discourage others from moving west. (Write the instructions on the board or provide an additional handout for diverse learners).

3. After addressing questions students may have about the process, move students into their groups and distribute packets and magnifying glasses. Signal when the students should begin. (A timer may be useful to encourage time on task). After 5 minutes, instruct the students to move to the next item, so that at the end of 30 minutes, students will have analyzed the six items. Students should then answer the final three items on the analysis sheet.

4. After the students have finished the small group analysis and individual written responses, return to whole group instruction and ask the students to share their responses to each of the packet items. As they discuss the answers, instruct students to look back at the items in their packets, or these items could be projected onto a white board or screen. Ask students to share how they arrived at their interpretations of the items. The discussion could proceed from what they observed, interpreted, and how the elements and principles of art in the visual images influenced their perceptions and interpretations.

5. After discussing the items and interpretations, prompt the class to discuss what conflicting messages were present and why these might have occurred. Ask students to share their statements summarizing what westward expansion was like. Record shortened versions of these statements on the board beside their original statements, which began the exercise, and compare these to note any similarities and differences. Ask students to choose an interpretation and be prepared to present, promote, and defend it through an advertisement.

6. Working at their desks, provide students with paper and drawing materials to produce an advertisement that would either encourage or discourage other settlers from moving west, based on their interpretations of the packet items. Give students a rubric (Handout 3), with criteria, which will guide their advertisement production. Along with the visual representation of their advertisement, instruct students to explain, in writing, (1) what type of ad they have created, (2) for whom the ad is intended, (3) why the ad would be
created and (3) where the ad would be posted (as modeled in the SAAM Integrating Social Studies and the Visual Arts).

7. Require students to submit both their completed Analysis Sheets and advertisement production for assessments. Before class ends, review the important objectives of the lesson, asking students to reflect and share thoughts indicating if they have changed their view about anything that they previously thought about western expansion, what they learned from the lesson, and if they think that other historical events could also have different perspectives. Ask students to indicate by a show of hands how many produced ads encouraging western settlement and how many produced ads discouraging western settlement.

Assessment
Prior to the lesson: Informally assess students through participation in the opening activity sharing initial statements.
During the lesson: Circulate during the activity to informally assess progress while reinforcing art content and to promoting on task behavior as well as helping individual students as needed.
After the lesson: Informally assess through noting participation in the discussions following completion of the Analysis Sheet. Formally assess through successful completion of the Analysis Sheet and the ads using self- and teacher-assessment with the Westward Expansion Advertisement Production Rubric (Handout 4) provided.

Lesson Adaptations/Extensions
1. In addition to examining diaries and images from Westward Expansion, students may read the Homestead Act of 1862 that prompted much of the westward movement, and look for qualifications for homesteaders.
2. Students may examine homestead applications. There is a wonderful lesson that does this entitled The Homestead Act of 1862 in the Teaching with Documents section of the National Archives and Records Administration site.
3. Students may construct a diary from the perspective of someone traveling west or from someone living in the west, such as Native Americans.
4. Students may select the supplies they would take in their wagon based on weight limits available. The Wayne County Kentucky Marriages and Vital Records, Volume 2 contains such a list.

Conclusion and Discussion

Literacy is no longer tied merely to the written word. As we live in a technologically and print savvy world that bombards us with visual images, it is essential that students also develop visual literacy. Just as students need guidance, opportunity, and practice to become proficient readers of text, so they also need guidance to develop effective visual literacy. Integrating visual images into social studies lessons and providing opportunities for questioning, evaluating, examining perspective, and assessing elements and principles of art within the images can allow students to develop an additional way of seeing and analyzing the world around them.

The Westward Expansion lesson plan offers the opportunity for students to engage in historical thinking (Zwirn & Libresco, 2010) as they are asked to examine text and images. Scaffolding is provided to the students in the form of guiding questions that can aid them in moving from description to analysis (Desai et al., 2010; Werner, 2002), and help them
understand what questions they can use in viewing both text and visual images to reach a deeper understanding of content. The presence of visual images may allow students who struggle with text to comprehend information they would be unable to otherwise (Barton, 2005; Deasy, 2002; Sandell, 2011; Schmidt, 2007). Students also are taught a new vocabulary and a new way of describing and analyzing, through learning about the elements and principles of art (Manifold, 1995). As students are asked to analyze multiple perspectives, they are required to take a position, and then represent that position in a visual way; something which research says can lead to increased comprehension (Jensen, 2001; Romero, 1996).

Students often are taught to believe that problems have one correct answer, when issues frequently are much more complex.

“It can be empowering for students to realize that artworks provide no “right” answer and that students can develop their own interpretations. This in turn can free them up to develop their own analyses and opinions about the meanings of the past and the present and to support their ability to communicate, believe in, and defend their ideas” (Eder, 2011, p. 298).

It our desire that the research discussed will inform classroom teachers why the integration of visual arts into social studies classes is so valuable. We also hope that the lesson plan and resources provided would be the impetus for teachers to seek opportunities and new strategies for integrating the visual arts into social studies lessons and provide ideas and aids in doing so. Just as in our everyday lives, the arts teach students that “problems can have more than one solution,” that “complex forms of problem solving are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity,” and “there are many meaningful ways to see and interpret the world” (National Art Education Association, 2012, para 1, 3, & 4).

References


**Web-Based References**


Handout 1

Westward Expansion Diary Excerpts

From the Diary of Mrs. Amelia Stewart Knight (1853) on the way to Oregon Territory

Tuesday, June 28th—Still in camp waiting to cross. Nothing for the stock to eat. As far as the eye can reach it is nothing but a sandy desert and the road is strewn with dead cattle and the stench is awful. One of our best oxen is too lame to travel; have to see him for what we can get, to a natives for 15 dollars (all along this road we see white men living with Indians; many of them have trading posts; they are mostly French and have squaw wives). Have to yoke up our muleycow in the ox’s place.

Reminiscence of Sarah Sprenger, Ohio to Oregon, 1852

There was a great deal of cholera that year. So many people had started without any tools to do anything with, and without enough food to eat…As we traveled, we met a great many people who were sick and dying. Often there was nothing to dig a grave with, and the dead had to be wrapped in quilts and blankets, and laid on the ground with stones piled over them. In spite of these precautions we saw many graves that had been invaded by wolves.

Reminiscences of A.H. Garrison (account of 1846 migration to Oregon, written in 1906)

That night we camped at rockey point, an Indian shot Miss Leland Crowley with a poisoned arrow, Mrs. Crowley was sitting by the fire baking bread when shot, the Indian must [have]shot from the Mountain side which was close by, as we had out a stray guard. The arrow was extracted, but no precautions were taken in regard to the poison as we did not know at the time, that poisoned arrows was used…From here to Grave Creek Miss Cowley died from the affects of the poisoned arrow…
Handout 2
Westward Expansion Analysis Sheet

Name:

**Item 1:** Observe. What are you viewing?

*Interpret.* What message does it contain about westward expansion in the 1800s?

*Analyze:* What about the item helps convey that message?
*(Consider the elements and principles of art)*

**Item 2:** Observe. What are you viewing?

*Interpret.* What message does it contain about westward expansion in the 1800s?

*Analyze:* What about the item helps convey that message?
*(Consider the elements and principles of art)*

**Item 3:** Observe. What are you viewing?

*Interpret.* What message does it contain about westward expansion in the 1800s?

*Analyze:* What about the item helps convey that message?
*(Consider the elements and principles of art)*

**Item 4:** Observe. What are you viewing?
Interpret. What message does it contain about westward expansion in the 1800s?

Analyze: What about the item helps convey that message?  
(Consider the elements and principles of art)

Item 5: Observe. What are you viewing?

Interpret. What message does it contain about westward expansion in the 1800s?

Analyze: What about the item helps convey that message?  
(Consider the elements and principles of art)

Item 6: Observe. What are you viewing?

Interpret. What message does it contain about westward expansion in the 1800s?

Analyze: What about the item helps convey that message?  
(Consider the elements and principles of art)
Handout 3

Westward Expansion Advertisement Production Instructions

Task:
- Work independently to produce an advertisement that would encourage or discourage other settlers from moving west, based on your interpretations of the packet items

Required Elements:
- A minimum of at least one visual representation or picture encouraging or discouraging westward expansion
- At least one sentence or slogan which either encourages or discourages westward expansion with additional information, in writing, supporting your point of view
- At least seven (7) accurate facts are represented (visually and/or in text) to convey your message
- Read the Westward Expansion Advertisement Production Rubric thoroughly BEFORE beginning your advertisement. It provides criteria you should follow. You will use it as a self-assessment at the completion of your product and your teacher will also use it to assess your advertisement
- In addition to the visual representation of the advertisement, address the following four questions, in writing on the back: What type of ad you have created? Who the intended audience would be? Why the ad would be created? Where the ad would be displayed?

Handout 4

Westward Expansion Advertisement Production Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Elements</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Passing</th>
<th>Do Again</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The poster includes all required elements as well as additional information.</td>
<td>All required elements are included on the poster.</td>
<td>All but 1 of the required elements are included on the poster.</td>
<td>Several required elements were missing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advertisement</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Passing</th>
<th>Do Again</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students create an original, accurate and interesting ad that adequately addresses the issue of western migration.</td>
<td>Students create an accurate ad that adequately addresses the issue of western migration.</td>
<td>Students create an accurate ad but it does not adequately address the issue of western migration.</td>
<td>The ad is not accurate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>migration</td>
<td>migration.</td>
<td>Not attractive, hard to read.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design</td>
<td>Attractive, easily readable, with color picture(s), different fonts to catch the eye.</td>
<td>Pleasant to look at, easily readable, with at least one of the other elements (listed in the first column).</td>
<td>Acceptable to the eye, readable.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Ad is persuasive and effective. The ad combines elements in a manner that is creative and highly effective and appealing.</td>
<td>The ad combines elements in a manner that is effective and appealing.</td>
<td>The ad combines elements in a manner that is limited in its effectiveness and appeal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content - Accuracy</td>
<td>5-6 accurate facts are displayed on the ad.</td>
<td>3-4 accurate facts are displayed on the ad.</td>
<td>Less than 3 accurate facts are displayed on the ad.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graphics - Originality</td>
<td>The graphic(s) used on the advertisement reflect a exceptional degree of student creativity in their creation and/or execution.</td>
<td>The graphic(s) used on the ad reflect student creativity in their creation and/or execution.</td>
<td>The graphics are made by the student, but are based on the designs or ideas of others.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Capitalization, punctuation and grammar are correct throughout the poster.</td>
<td>There is 1 error in capitalization, punctuation, or grammar.</td>
<td>There are 2 errors in capitalization, punctuation, or grammar.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Rubistar
Appendix

Relevant Web Sites

American Memory Collection, Library of Congress
http://memory.loc.gov

*American Progress* by George Crofutt, Library of Congress
http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/ppmsca.09855/

Burlington & Missouri River R. R. Co Land Ad from American Memory Collection, Library of Congress
http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpebib:field(NUMBER+@band(rbpe+13401300))

*Family with Their Covered Wagon During the Great Western Migration*, 1866, National Archives and Records Administration
http://docsteach.org/documents/518267/detail

Homestead Act of 1862

*Integrating Social Studies and the Visual Arts*, Smithsonian American Art Museum
http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/learning_to_look.pdf

http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/civil/jb_civil_homested_2_e.html

Library of Congress
http://www.loc.gov

National Archives and Records Administration
http://www.nara.gov

Rubistar
http://rubistar.4teachers.org

Smithsonian American Art Museum
http://americanart.si.edu

Teaching with Documents: *The Homestead Act of 1862*, National Archives and Records Administration

The J. Paul Getty Elements and Principles of Art.
http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/building_lessons/formal_analysis.html

The Oregon Trail: *Diary of Mrs. Amelia Stewart Knight* (1853)
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