

# HOOSIER ARTISTS

By  
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**Unit Description:** "The Hoosier Group" . . . Integrating Art Across the Curriculum

**Keywords:** Indiana; artists; Cecil Head; William Forsyth; T.C. Steele; Gene Stratton Porter; Paul Dresser; Robert Frost; landscape; farm; rural; Impressionists; Herron

**Curriculum Area:** Thematic or cross disciplinary/subject matter; Language Arts; Social Studies; Science; Math; Fine Arts; Technology

**Grade Level(s):** Elementary or secondary

**Appropriate Group Size(s):** Whole Class

**Time Expected to Complete Instructional Plan:** Two weeks

**Instructional Objectives:**

Students will:

1. be introduced to the paintings of T.C. Steele, Cecil Head and William Forsyth leading to a discussion of what is a painting
2. use writing skills tying together the artists' paintings and literature
3. use landscapes for social studies curriculum of Native Americans
4. learn about Indiana literature and legends
5. use map skills
6. reflect on the Indiana artists' paintings in the early 1900's
7. study Indiana history
8. research the artists and Indiana history
9. apply scientific knowledge with seeds
10. learn about rock formations and types of rocks in Indiana
11. research and study animals of Indiana
12. find information about an archaeological dig
13. write story problems with regard to their research
14. use graphing skills
15. measure and calculate using a map
16. participate and use various technology
17. study the music and musicians of Indiana
18. enjoy field experiences

**Indiana State Standards:**

- Curriculum Area: Language Arts  
<http://www.doe.state.in.us/standards/welcome.html>

- This unit of study supports all language arts standards.
- Curriculum Area: Visual Arts
  - [http://www.doe.state.in.us/standards/standards2000\\_arts.html](http://www.doe.state.in.us/standards/standards2000_arts.html)
  - All visual arts standards are provided in this unit.

### Materials & Resources:

- Images for Hoosier Artists:
  - <http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/imls/hoosierart/hoosierart.html>
- Books:
  - Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken" and "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening"
  - Johnny Appleseed by Steven Kellogg
  - Gene Stratton Porter's Girl of the Limberlost.
  - Poems and stories by James Whitcomb Riley
- Print representing at least one of the artists featured in this unit

### Museum Resources:

- Indianapolis Museum of Art <http://www.ima-art.org/>
- Indiana State Museum <http://www.state.in.us/ism/museum/index.html>
- Conner Prairie <http://www.connerprairie.org/home.html>
- Indiana Historical Society <http://www.indianahistory.org/>
- Images located at Franklin Public Library, Franklin Indiana: <http://www.jcpl.lib.in.us>
  - Cecil Head - 1935 - *Farm Winter Scene* - oil on canvas
  - Cecil Head - 1937 - *Two Farmers Planting* - oil on canvas
  - William Forsyth - 1922 - *Fall Scene* (Impressionistic) oil on canvas
  - William Forsyth - *Landscape* - (Impressionist) oil on canvas

### Web Sites:

- <http://web.indstate.edu/community/vchs/dresser.htm> (Paul Dresser)
- <http://www.jcpl.lib.in.us> (Johnson County Public Library - Franklin Public Library)
- [http://www.southernin.com/Pages/archives/march\\_00/painting\\_indiana.html](http://www.southernin.com/Pages/archives/march_00/painting_indiana.html) (William Forsyth)
- <http://www.ai.org/ism/museum/art/forsyth/> (William Forsyth)
- <http://www.indianahistory.org/> (Indiana Historical Society)
- <http://www.ima-art.org> (Indianapolis Museum of Art)
- <http://www.genestrattonporter.net> (Gene Stratton Porter)
- <http://www.ai.org/ism/sites/steele/> (T.C. Steele)

### Preparation:

First the teacher will need to acquire background information on the featured artists to be able to introduce this unit of study. Also, the structure of the I.S.T.E.P. writing sample needs to be reviewed to model good writing practices with the students. Quite simply, a teacher's enthusiasm for the potential art has to enrich existing curriculum is key to the success of this unit. Introduce the artists through the web sites and digitalized pictures. Discuss the art medium and use of color. Discuss the "Hoosier Group" of artists in Indiana.

### Strategies and Activities:

**Language Arts:**

- Writing:
  - Prepare and direct student writing using Process Writing Skills. Refer to Language Arts Standards.
  - Show Cecil Head's, William Forsyth's, and T.C. Steele's landscape paintings to discuss roads and paths. Read and discuss with students the poem by Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken." Discuss with students the "road" Frost is referring to in poem. Instruct students to write about their own paths in life.
  - Show Cecil Head's *Farm Winter Scene* and tie in with Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." Ask students to look at painting and discuss what they see in painting. Ask students how the painting compares with Indiana winters in their own neighborhood. Read to students Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." Discuss with students the "promises" Frost refers to in the poem. Continue the discussion of "promises" with promises students make to themselves, their parents, friends, and teachers. Challenge students to write about the value of keeping promises made to others.
  - Show Cecil Head painting, *Two Farmers Planting*. Ask students what the farmers might be planting. Correlate this planting with Johnny Appleseed; discuss his legacy and significance in Indiana. Have students generate questions about farming and interview local farmers in Indiana. Students then compile interviews in a class book and take a field trip to a local farm.
  - William Forsyth's landscape paintings would correlate with Native American legends. Ask students to write a Native American legend explaining why leaves turn color in the fall.
- Literature:
  - Read and discuss Johnny Appleseed by Steven Kellogg
  - Read and discuss Indiana author, Gene Stratton Porter's Girl of the Limberlost. Discuss with students how does the story relates to Indiana and the Indiana artist's view of Indiana?
  - Read and discuss Native American legends - specifically Miami and Delaware tribes of Indiana
  - Encourage students to read some poems and stories by James Whitcomb Riley. Ask students to compare the description of Indiana by Riley with the paintings by the Hoosier artists.

**Social Studies:**

- Using maps skills, challenge students to locate the birthplaces of William Forsyth, Cecil Head, T.C. Steele, and Gene Stratton Porter
- Ask students to discuss how the works of these Indiana artists reflect Indiana during the early 1900's. . . farms, fields, rural landscapes, etc. Have students compare with Indiana communities today.
- Use computer software such as Timeliner CD to make a time line on Indiana history. Have students find important dates in Indiana history including birth dates of the artists.
- Have students research what other events were happening in Indiana and the nation during the time the Hoosier artists were painting. Plan a field trip to the Indiana Historical Society.

**Science:**

- Discuss with students Indiana landscape (earth science) - southern Indiana quarries and hills of Brown County. In this discussion, tie in the glacier movement, sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks. How did the geography of Indiana inspire these artists? Include discussion of Washington D.C.'s monuments made of Indiana limestone.
- Cecil Head's *Farm Winter Scene* includes a dog, which would lead into a discussion of what animals are native to Indiana. Compare animals wild in the 1900's with animals in the wild today. Have students research if there are any species endangered or extinct now and find out why. Students also should tie in hunting as a food source (see hunter in painting). Ask students what animals were hunted such as a turkey and then discuss Thanksgiving. Discuss overpopulation of some animals such as deer and the efforts being made to control them.
- Plan an archaeological dig. Ask parents to help could bury items typical of early 1900's for students to discover in an archaeological dig. Challenge students to try to piece together a picture of life in Indiana

based on the archaeological find. Have students make a chart of items found and how it was used in pioneer life. A field trip to Connor's Prairie would fit with this activity.

**Math:**

- Encourage students to use their Indiana research to draw a picture for a story problem. Challenge students to create a math problem that fits with their picture or use one of the artist's scenes.
- Have students use the Internet to check the Chicago Board of Trade for corn prices. Graph the corn prices to correlate with farming.
- Use the scale on an Indiana map to measure and calculate mileage from the student's own community to birthplaces of the Indiana artists.

**Technology:**

- Scan student art and project activities to write on a CD for a showcase portfolio.
- Plan videoconferencing with Indianapolis Museum of Art, Eiteljorg Museum, or Indiana State Museum
- Web Sites listed in previous section
- Research using the Internet

**Art:**

- Have students take a digital picture of Indiana landscape and frame.
- Take students outside to draw a landscape or plan a field trip to the Indianapolis Museum of Art and draw landscape in the garden.
- Have students draw a four season mural on the landscapes of Indiana.
- Have students draw a quilt piece of Indiana landscape and put together an Indiana landscape quilt.
- Have students study Impressionist artists and their relationship to the "Hoosier Group" artists

**Music:**

- Paul Dresser's "On the Banks of the Wabash"

**Student Assessment:**

- Writing activities will be graded holistically using a rubric
- Comprehension will be evaluated by the body of research accumulated and through discussion
- Appreciation and enthusiasm for art and its role in the world will be informally evaluated using anecdotal records.

**Extensions and Field Experiences:**

- T.C. Steele study
- Impressionist study of Monet, Renoir, Degas
- Study of Grant Wood as a regionalist artist
- Virtual tour of N.A. Noel studios (Central Indiana artist) <http://www.nanoel.com/>; Compare with Hoosier Artists.
- Discussion of Van Gogh and the yellow dominance in his pictures as in William Forsyth's Impressionist landscape
- Visit T.C. Steele's House of the Whispering Winds in Brown County
- Visit a farm
- Visit Eiteljorg Museum, Indianapolis Museum of Art; Indiana State Museum; Conner Prairie

**Family Activities:**

- Invite parents into the classroom to help with the archaeological dig.
- Ask parents to assist students in interviewing local farmers.
- Encourage parents to take students to the Franklin Public Library to see the original works of Cecil Head and William Forsyth.

**Teacher Notes:**

It is important to stress that every child will have different levels of artistic ability, but that all artistic attempts are celebrated for their individuality and effort.