

# FIELD TRIP STUDY GUIDE

## 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Utah Studies: *Great Ambitions*



### Introduction:

The exhibition you will be touring is titled *Grand Ambitions* and explores the ambitions of Utah artists from the nineteenth century to the present day. Start out by asking your students what ambition means to them? Have they heard that word before? Explain that it means “a strong desire to do or to achieve something, typically requiring determination and hard work.”

Then start to look at individual artworks, connecting them to Utah history, and exploring this larger theme of ambition. We have selected some works from the exhibition that connect well to Utah history and the theme of ambition. We have also included some questions to ask to prompt discussions with your students.

Objective: Through this field trip experience, students will:

1. understand how Utah’s history has been shaped by many diverse people, events, and ideas.
2. explore points of view about life in Utah from a variety of cultural groups using primary source documents.
3. explore works of art that will help them identify key events and trends in Utah history and their significance (e.g. American Indian settlement, European exploration, Mormon settlement, westward expansion, American Indian relocation, statehood, development of industry, World War I and II).

### 1. Carl Christian Anton Christensen (1831 - 1912) b. Copenhagen, Denmark

#### *Weighing the Baby* 1872

oil on canvas

Gift from Diane and Sam Stewart, Salt Lake City



CCA Christensen was a pioneer artist who came with the Mormon settlers to Utah from Nauvoo, Illinois. This painting depicts a scene of everyday pioneer life in Utah. This family would have most likely lived on a farm in rural Sanpete county. Christensen painted this when families were still practicing polygamy. This painting depicts the family after the birth of a new baby.

Ask your students to look closely at this painting. What can it tell them about what life was like for women, children, men, and families as Mormon settlers began life in Utah?

### Questions to ask:

- How many people can you find in this painting? What role do each of them play in the family?
- Imagine you lived in this house. What would your everyday life be like?
- What kinds of things can you find in this painting? What do the clothes and furniture tell us about what this family’s life was like?
- Imagine this artist painted your family at home today. What would be different? What would be the same?

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2.

John Willard Clawson  
(1858 – 1936) b. Salt Lake City, UT

*Portrait of Mrs. Angelica Andrews Walker* 1901  
oil on canvas  
Gift from Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Walker Wallace



John Willard Clawson was a famous artist in Utah that traveled to many places in his life to learn. He painted this portrait of Mrs. Angelica Andrews Walker in a similar style to famous European painters at the time. This portrait shows how Angelica was wealthy and elegant. Ask your students to look closely at the painting. What clues do we see that suggest she is wealthy and elegant? What can this portrait tell us about life in Salt Lake City in 1901?

Questions to ask:

- What else do you know that was happening at this time in Utah?
- How would you like your own portrait painted? Who would you hire to paint it?
- Imagine you are having your portrait painted – not a photograph, a painted portrait. What clothes would you wear? How would you pose? What would be different from this portrait of Mrs. Angelica Andrews Walker?
- How does this image illustrate the idea of “ambition?”

3.

Mahonri Mackintosh Young  
(1877 – 1957) b. Salt Lake City, UT

*Da Winnah* 1927  
bronze  
Gift from the 1947 Springville High School  
Sophomore Class



Mahonri Young is one of Utah’s most famous and successful artists. In the 1920s he became known for his sculptures of American boxers. This sculpture shows the 1927 fight between Jack Dempsey and Luis Firpo. In Utah, Mahonri is most famous for sculptures of his grandfather, Brigham Young. Mahonri studied in Paris for many years and became friends with other famous artists like Pablo Picasso. Ask your students to look closely at this sculpture. How would this image be different if it was a painting instead of a sculpture? Why is sculpture an effective way to tell this story?

Questions to ask:

- How does this sculpture illustrate the idea of “ambition?”
  - Why do you think the artist would choose to use sculpture to represent this moment in history?
  - Where do you imagine the sculpture is taking place?
- Imagine what happened right before this sculpture was captured and right after. What do you hear? What do you smell?

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4.

LeConte Stewart  
(1891 - 1990) b. Glenwood, UT

*Main Street*  
oil on board  
Museum Purchase

1930

LeConte Stewart painted Utah landscapes fast and usually outdoors. He did not try to make his landscapes look better than what they looked like in real life. He painted them exactly like he saw them. He painted quickly -- sometimes he painted up to six paintings in one day. Have your students look carefully at this painting. Have them conduct a five senses experiment; Ask them if they were in the painting, what would they hear, smell, taste, or touch?



Questions to ask:

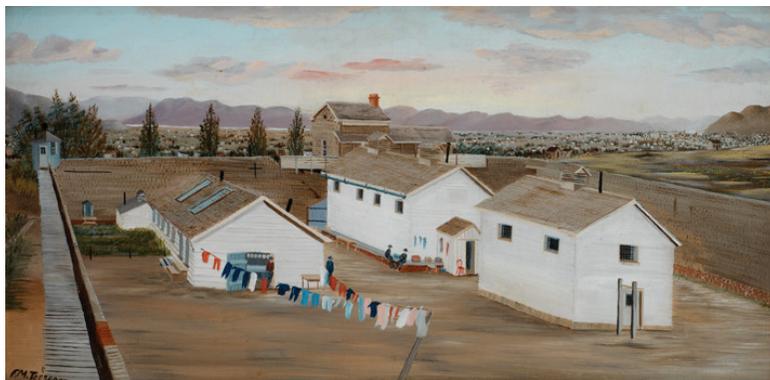
- Have you seen places like this before? Where were you?
- Do you think places still look like this in Utah?
- What places do you recognize, if any?
- This painting was painted in 1930. What has changed since then? What do you see on a "main street" now?

5.

Francis "Frank" M. Treseder  
(1853 - 1923) b. Jersey Island,  
England

*Territorial Penitentiary, Sugar House, Looking West* 1886  
oil on canvas  
Gift from Stouffer Food Corporation

Frank Treseder was a prisoner at the Utah Territorial Penitentiary while he painted this picture. He often painted images of the prison grounds and buildings. He was such a famous painter that newspaper articles, when writing about his crimes, would almost always identify him as an artist, as well. Have your students look closely at this painting. You may want to withhold the information that this is a prison. What place do you think this is? What things can you identify that might clue you in to its identity?



Now that the students know this is depicting a prison, here are some questions to ask:

- What evidence do you find that this is a prison?
- What things are different from current prisons? What is the same?
- How is the artist exhibiting ambition while a prisoner?
- What are some times that you have done something really wonderful even though you were in a tough situation?

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6.

Alfred Lambourne  
(1850 - 1926) b. Chievely, Berkshire,  
England

*Temples of the Rio Virgin, Southern Utah* 1876  
oil on canvas  
Museum Purchase



This painting represented the territory of Utah in the World's Fair of 1876 in Philadelphia. This would be some people's first time seeing any part of the territory of Utah. This painting depicts the Rio Virgin in Southern Utah near Zion National Park. Alfred Lambourne traveled with another landscape painter, Thomas Moran, and painted in a very similar way to Moran. Have your students look closely at this painting. Have you been to a place in Utah that looks like this?

Some questions to ask:

- Where in Utah do you think a place like this could be?
- What parts of the landscape could be exaggerated?
- What impression would this painting give to someone who had never been to Utah before? Is it an accurate impression of what you think Utah is like?
- If you could paint any landscape in Utah, what would you choose?

7.

Curtis Yanito  
(1964 - ) b. Bluff, UT

*Indian Way* 1994  
ceramic  
Museum Purchase

Yanito's artwork ties closely to his heritage as a Native American. He grew up surrounded by Dine (Navajo) culture and traditions, as well as the history and art of the Ancestral Puebloans. Yanito is a self-taught artist. He uses different mediums, like pottery, painting, illustration, poetry, and music. Yanito combines modern details with traditional details to create something completely new.

Some questions to ask:

- How does our family and our heritages influence what we make and what we do?
- Why is it important to learn about art and history from a different culture than our own?
- If you were to choose an artistic medium, which one would you choose? Painting, watercolor, pottery, music, film, and writing are just some examples.
- What are some other examples you know of modern and traditional things combined?



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8. Donald Penrod Olsen  
(1910 - 1981) b. Provo, UT

*Chelsea VI* 1980  
acrylic on canvas  
Gift from Vern G. and Judy N. Swanson

Don Olsen is one of the greatest Utah “modernists.” Modern art is typically more abstract and uses shapes, colors, and lines to communicate its message. He originally was a famous violinist but he developed a throat disorder and could no longer play the violin. He switched to painting. When he traveled to New York City he would always stay at the Chelsea Hotel. The places he visited, like the Chelsea Hotel, inspired artworks like this one. Have your students look closely at this painting. What are some shapes and objects you can see?

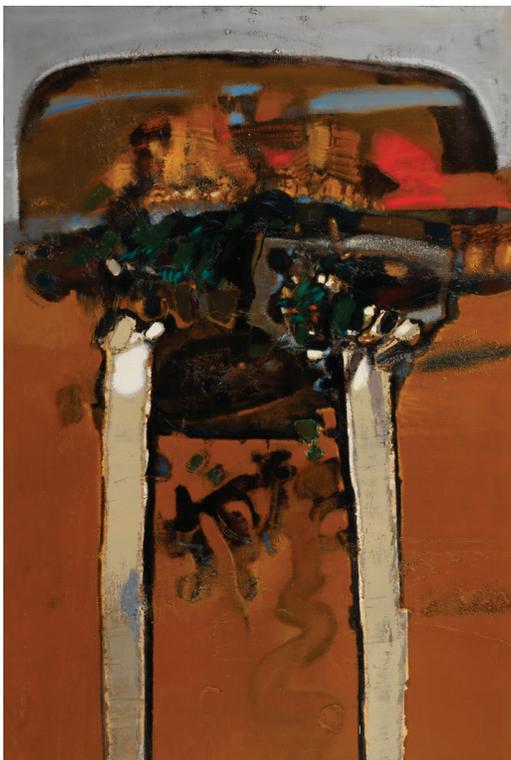


Some questions to ask:

- The word “celebration” was often used to describe Olsen’s art. What aspects of this painting seem like a celebration?
- Why do you think people make abstract art? What stories can you tell with abstract art?

9. V. Douglas Snow  
(1927 - 2009) b. Salt Lake City, UT

*Desert Landscape* 1959  
oil on canvas  
Gift from Nathan Winters



Douglas Snow was one of the first artists in Utah to create abstract art. He studied all over the country (and even in Italy) before returning to live in Salt Lake City. One of his greatest artistic influences was the desert landscape.

Have your students look closely at this painting. You may want to compare and contrast to another landscape mentioned earlier, Temple of the Rio Virgin, Southern Utah by Alfred Lambourne.

Some questions to ask:

- What parts of the desert do you see in this abstracted painting?
- How does this painting differ from the other landscape? What is similar?
- What place have you seen that looks like this before? What else do you think it looks like?
- How does this abstract landscape represent ambition? How was the artist’s life ambitious?