

**Exploring Rural Kentucky Through Documentary Art:
Creelsboro Landing, 1890s - Documentary Art Interactive
Unit 1 - Lesson Set 4 - The Steamboat
- For the Teacher -**

**SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES – Visual and Media Art, Visual Art and Theater, Visual Art
and Music**

Visual and Media Art

1. **Responding:** Access the Powerpoint - [Creelsboro Landing, 1890s - Images for Projection](#). Project the vignette and ask students what is happening in it. What do they see that makes them think that? What else do they see?

Then, watch the short video [Rural Economy](#) or the short video [Dennis Thrasher](#).

Project the vignette again and ask students how knowing more about the context of the painting helps them notice details they had not noticed before.

2. **Responding:** Access the Powerpoint - [Creelsboro Landing, 1890s - Images for Projection](#). Project the vignette and ask students how Dennis Thrasher used color, texture, shapes, and lines to create perspective and depth.

Watch the short video [Dennis Thrasher](#). Ask students to explain Thrasher's intent in creating the painting. Based on his intent, develop criteria to evaluate the success of the painting.

Allow small groups to complete a critique of the painting using the four steps of Describe, Analyze, Interpret, and Judge. Share the critiques as a class, emphasizing that no two people experience the same reaction to a work of art.

Visual and Media Art Standards

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Visual Art and Theater

3. **Responding, Creating, Connecting, Performing:** There is a lot of activity going on in this vignette and even more that might be happening just out of sight.

Ask students to work in small groups and imagine the exchange between characters that are visible in the painting and/or characters who might be there but are not visible.

Ask them to improvise a short scene between two or more characters with movement, dialogue, props, or background. The scene should clearly take place in the 1890s at Creelsboro Landing. The characters might be passengers, workers, livestock handlers, or the crew of the steamboat. Students can take different roles in creating the scene – director, script writers, prop and set designers. Allow time for the students to complete and rehearse their scene and then perform it for their classmates.

Discuss how many different interpretations there were of this one vignette. Discuss why a documentary artist might want to leave some things in their paintings open to the imagination of their viewers.

Visual Art and Theater Standards

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Visual Art and Music

4. **Responding, Creating, Connecting, Performing**: Dennis Thrasher likes his paintings to appeal to more than just our visual senses. He wants viewers to feel that they could walk into the scene and be immersed.

Looking at the scene, ask students to imagine the different sounds they would hear at Creelsboro Landing - from the first whistle announcing the steamboat's arrival through the hub-bub of unloading and loading goods, livestock, and passengers.

Using instruments, improvised instruments, apps, voices, and sounds found on the Internet, have students improvise, refine, and perform for their classmates a soundscape that captures the excitement and activity of Creelsboro Landing.

After each group's performance, allow time for them to describe their creative process. In what ways were the groups' processes similar and in what ways were they different? In what ways were the groups' processes similar to and different from the process Dennis Thrasher uses to "build" a painting?

Visual Art and Music Standards

- Anchor Standard 1:** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard 2:** Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- Anchor Standard 3:** Refine and complete artistic work.
- Anchor Standard 4:** Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- Anchor Standard 6:** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- Anchor Standard 7:** Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Anchor Standard 8:** Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Anchor Standard 10:** Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Anchor Standard 11:** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.