



Target Area: Social
Studies

Goal: Students will write a response after listening to *America the Beautiful*, a song inspired by an iconic American landscape, Pikes Peak.

Prior Knowledge: Landforms, American identity concepts

Observation: Display artwork depicting Pikes Peak

Discuss: What type of landforms are displayed in the painting? Where is Pikes Peak located? Why do you think the artist was inspired to paint *Pikes Peak*? How does it make you feel?

Supplies: *America the Beautiful* poem, Iconic American Landscape worksheet, pencil

Read or play the song "America the Beautiful." Katharine Lee Bates, a school teacher, wrote the poem about her experience after visiting Pikes Peak in 1893.

Activity: Iconic American Landscapes response

Process: View the painting *Pikes Peak* and listen to Katherine Bates's poem *America the Beautiful*. After discussion, students will write a response to what they see and how it makes them feel.

Time: 1 hour

Modifications: Have students brainstorm or have a list of vocabulary words that express feelings in relation to landscapes. Phrase by phrase breakdown of the poem would be helpful for emerging readers.

Standards

Social Studies

Strand 4: Geography, Concept 2: Places and Regions, PO 3. Discuss physical features (e.g. mountains, rivers, deserts) in the world

Stand 3: Civics/Government, Concept 1: Foundations of Government, PO 1. Describe the history and meaning of national symbols, documents, songs, and monuments that represent American democracy and values: d. America the Beautiful

Art

Visual Arts: Responding, Anchor Standard # 7 Perceive and analyze artistic work, a. use art-specific vocabulary to describe one's natural world and constructed environments.

Arizona Department of Education: K-12 Academic Standards <http://www.azed.gov/standards-practices/>



Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902)
Pikes Peak 1863
Oil on paper mounted on canvas
21 ½ X 27 ½ inches framed
83.157, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Aiken Fisher

About the Artist: The inspiration for ***Pike's Peak*** was Bierstadt's second western excursion. This modest study, devoid of the spectacular cloud effects and the shaft of light breaking through that often illuminates his "Great Pictures," opens out naturally to the left. The painting is vigorously drawn: one can imagine the artist with a piece of charcoal indicating the foreground diagonally with a single swipe, the middle distance with two horizontal strokes, and finally the mountain range in the background with another horizontal stroke, bumped up on the left to indicate a single peak. The gradations in color allow the viewer's eye to ascend, by steps, to the sky. The painting is so basic it had to be freeing for an artist already bound by expectations to produce pyrotechnical wonders, at once wildly theatrical and painstakingly exact. Here, he anticipates the compositional rule articulated years later by Earnest Blumenschein, "Establish your planes with color as well as perspective." Bierstadt's does both.

Brian W. Dippie, ***Crossroads: The Desert Caballeros Western Museum at Fifty***, 125 (2010)

Bickerstaff, ***Pioneer Artists of Taos***, 39

America the Beautiful

O beautiful, for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!

America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea.

O beautiful, for pilgrim feet
Whose stern, impassioned stress
A thoroughfare for freedom beat
Across the wilderness!

America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw;
Confirm thy soul in self control, thy liberty in law!

O beautiful, for heroes proved
In liberating strife,
Who more than self their country loved
And mercy more than life!
America! America! May God thy gold refine,
Till all success be nobleness, and ev'ry gain divine!

O beautiful, for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years,
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears!
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood, from sea to shining sea!

Katharine Lee Bates

Iconic American Landscapes

Directions: After viewing *Pikes Peak* and listening to *America the Beautiful*, write a response about the landscape.

Student Name _____

Title _____



Additional Resources

Pikes Peak: America's Mountain

<http://www.pikespeak.us.com/index.html>

Albert Bierstadt: The Complete Works

<http://www.albertbierstadt.org/>

Surface of the Earth: National Geographic

<http://science.nationalgeographic.com/science/earth/surface-of-the-earth/>

Desert Caballeros Western Museum exhibitions in the upstairs galleries and Cultural Crossroads Learning Center rotate throughout the year, including pieces in our permanent collection. Refer to our website calendar for exhibition schedules and special events. The downstairs historical displays are available for viewing year round.

School tours of the museum are always FREE! Ask about our docent-led tour, student activities lead by our museum staff and self-guided audio tour. Boyd Ranch reservations are available during the winter months.

Call and sign up for a school tour today!
