

Goal: Learn to identify common plants found in the desert southwest.

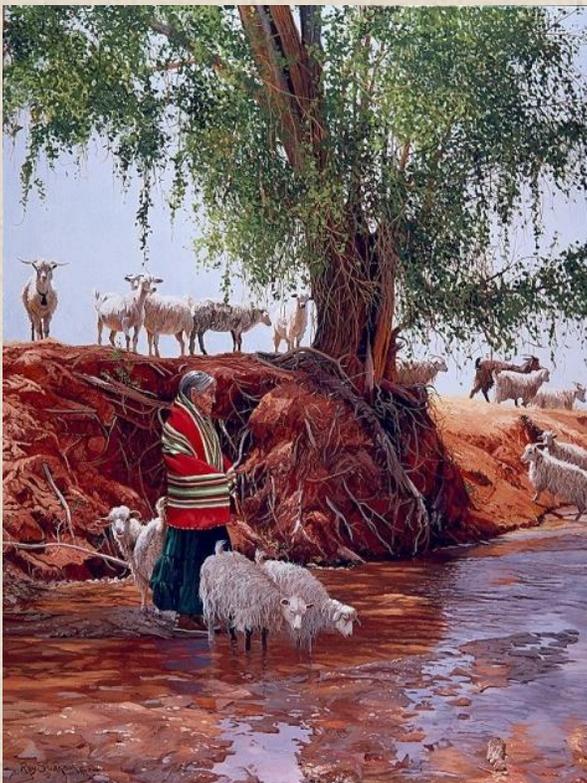
Prior Knowledge: Be able to identify basic plant families such as tree, cactus, shrub.

Observation: Look at paintings of southwest landscapes showcasing desert plants.

Discussion: How would you describe the plants shown in the paintings? What type of plants are common in the desert? Why do you think the artist decided to paint these plants? What adaptations have the plants developed to survive dry climates?



Target: Science



Supplies: Paper, pencil, crayons, colored pencils

Activity: Desert Landscape Drawing

Process: Sketch in pencil a desert landscape with a minimum of 4 plants found in the desert southwest. Label the plants and use colored pencils or crayons to add color.

Time: 1 hour

Modifications: Provide printed pictures of desert plants or a plant identification guide for individual student reference.



Charlie Dye (1906-1972)

Cullin the Herd 1964

Oil on Canvas

34 ¾ x 46 ¾ inches framed

As one of the founders of the Cowboy Artists of America in 1965, Charlie Dye was devoted to the legacy of Remington and Russell, but more than subject matter linked them to a tradition that they honored in their work. Their way of seeing the West became their trademark.

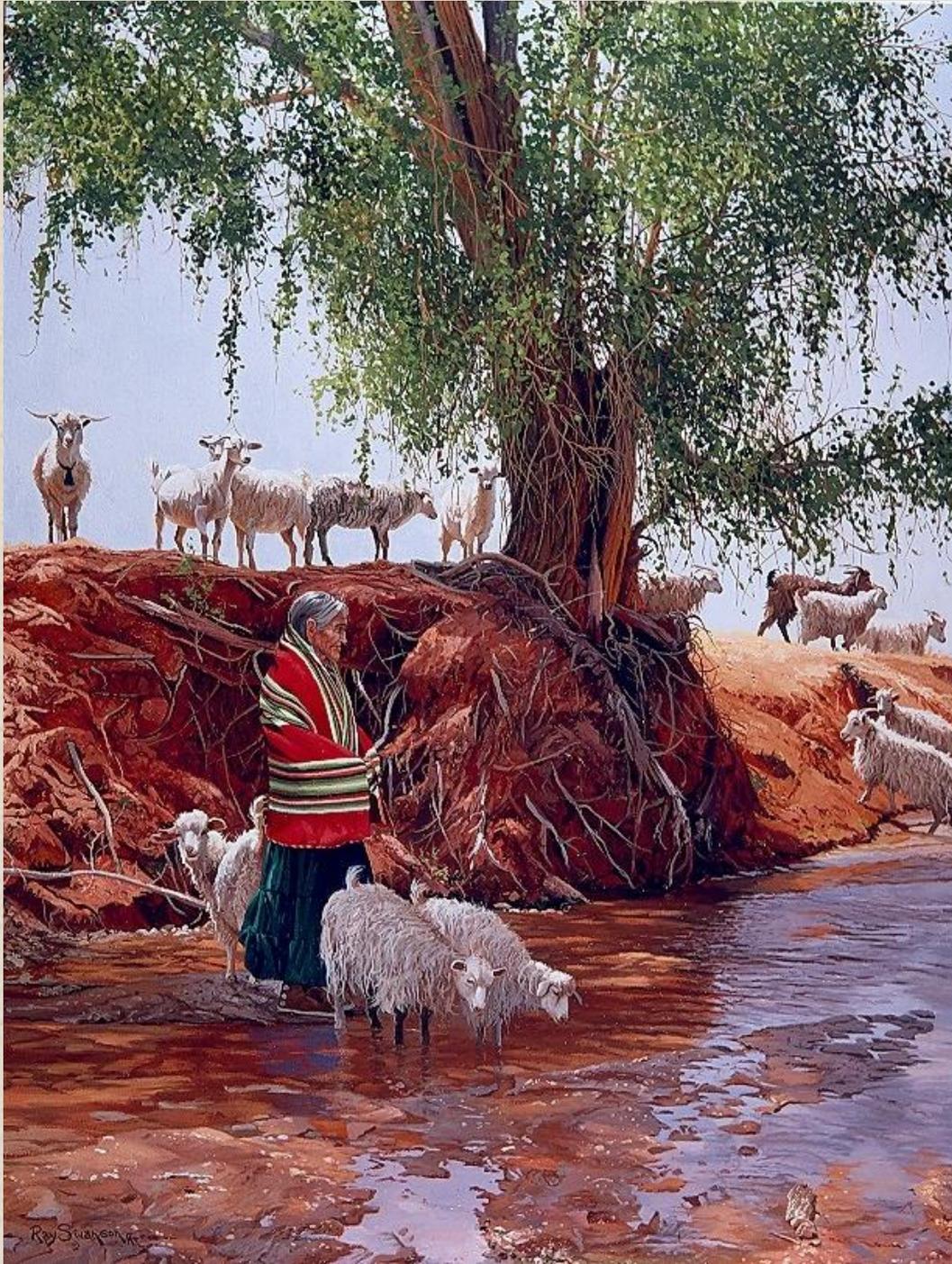
Brian W. Dippie, *Crossroads: The Desert Caballeros Western Museum at Fifty*, 94 (2010)



James G. Swinnerton (1875-1974)
Palo Verde and Saguaro-Arizona Desert, n.d.
Oil on canvas, 35.5 x 45.5 inches framed
92.18, Gift of Mr. William B. Ruger Sr.

Jimmy Swinnerton, a successful cartoonist who devoted himself to landscape painting beginning in 1907, worked with a limited palette to capture the essence of desert scenes. "So many grays," he said, and colors at once somber and elusive. "I never paint from photographs or transparencies. They are never true. It is difficult enough trying to capture Nature herself. I keep a great array of desert stones in my studio to see whether I have caught the true color and tone on canvas."

Brian W. Dippie ***Crossroads Desert caballeros Western Museum at Fifty***, 135 (2010)



Ray Swanson, CA (1937-2004)

***Spring Rain at Shonto*, 2004**

Oil on canvas, 58.5 x 46 inches framed

2007.2 Purchase, Art Acquisition Fund

Brian W. Dippie ***Crossroads Desert caballeros Western Museum at Fifty***, v (2010)

DCWM Plant Identification Activity

Directions: Look at the artwork and locate examples of the following desert plants.



Yucca: Long fibers for leaves, often used in weaving



Creosote Bush: Small waxy greenish-yellow leaves can be boiled into a tea, has a distinct odor when it rains



Saguaro: Tall slow growing cactus, white blossoms in the spring and fruit can be harvested



Brittle Brush: Grayish-blue plant with bright yellow flowers on long stems.



Prickly Pear Cactus: Flat segmented plant, fruit can be harvested



Cottonwood Tree: Large fast growing tree with leaves that change color in the fall, often found by streams and rivers



Palo Verde: Tree with green bark, small green leaves and yellow flowers

Which plant would you like to learn more about?

Standards

Science

Concept 3: Organisms and Environments, understand the relationships among various organisms and their environment

- Identify some plants and animals that exist in the local environment
- Identify that plants and animals need the following to grow and survive
 - Food
 - Water
 - Air
 - Space

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

Additional Resources

<http://www.aznps.com/floras.php>

<http://landscapearizona.com/arizona-plants-htm/>

<http://www.learningtogive.org/units/sand-sand-everywhere-sand/desert>

Cactus Hotel, a book by Brenda Z. Guiberson

Arizona Native Plant Society

Arizona Landscapes Plant Identification

"Into the Desert" lesson by Learning to Give

Desert Caballeros Western Museum exhibits 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 exhibit 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 lead tour, student activities led 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!
