

Who is Cyrus Dallin?

Cyrus Edwin Dallin (1861-1944) Springville, Utah
War or Peace, 1905
Sculpture-bronze cast, 33-1/2"x 16"x 10"

SUGGESTED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

QUESTIONS FOR LOOKING (History, Aesthetics, Criticism)

Why does the Native American appear so poised to strike when he is holding a peace pipe as well as a tomahawk? Was Utah's situation between the early settlers and the Native Americans unique from the rest of the country? What can the details of the Indian's clothing tell about his beliefs and customs? What is the process of casting a sculpture in bronze? What is the finish called that is put on the bronze after it's completed? (Patina.) What is an armature and why is it used? (It's a metal and wood structure used to support the sculpture during the initial process.)

ACTIVITIES

1. Visual Arts-making

Objective: The students will demonstrate an understanding of the process of sculpture by creating a clay sculpture of a human figure.

Show the image and analyze the sculpture of *War or Peace* by discussing what basic shapes make up the form of the figure. Write these on the board, then re-draw the figure for the students using only the basic shapes. Then have the students draw the figure using the same basic shapes. Next, give each child modeling clay and have all the

students form the basic shapes of the figure. Have them continue to smooth one form into the other until the sculpture starts to look similar to the real shape of the figure.

2. Visual Arts-making

Objective: The students will demonstrate an understanding of figurative sculpture by creating wire gesture sculptures of the figure.

Remind the class that thumbnail sketches are important preliminary steps to drawing. Then show the image of *War or Peace* and explain that the same can be said of quick, metal wire sculptures used to plan out a major bronze cast. Give each student several strands of flexible wire, and using a student as a model, have the students, as quickly as they can, (several times if desired), catch the essence of the model in the posed stance. Change the pose several times so the students can practice catching the form and action of the live figure. Students could also quickly draw a gesture drawing for each pose.

3. Visual Arts-making

Objective: The students will demonstrate an understanding of figurative sculpture by completing a clay study of a head.

(For advanced classes to be used as a term project.) Show the image of *War or Peace* and other figurative sculptures. Have each student build an armature. Then discuss and study the skeletal and muscular structure of the human head. Have the students start from the inside out building the human head, keeping proportion foremost in mind. Have them start with the skeletal form, then add the muscles, then overlay the skin. Use a live model for the entire process.

4. Language Arts-writing

Objective: The students will explore first-person narrative by writing a piece based on the Native American in *War or Peace*.

Show the class the image of *War or Peace* and ask the students to write a first-person account that contains the information to the following questions: If you were this Native American in 1905, how would your life be changing? (Being confined to a reservation.) How would you feel about a reservation and about not being able to roam freely from place to place? The sculpture of the Native American shows two symbols of how he felt about his life at this time. Have the students include aspects of a Native American council with each student taking either the side of the peace pipe or the tomahawk. Ask some of the students to share their writings.