

Discover Art Tour 3: A Look into the Past Curriculum Guide

Department: Public Engagement

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Prepared for: 4th grade teachers participating in Discover Art

World History, American History, and Art Conservation as an academic inspiration

In this curriculum guide, 4th grade teachers will find information on integrating historical painting and art into their social studies curriculum. Artists create artworks inspired by important moments of history that they have seen and researched. Art is an important means of preserving culture and remembering important events throughout time.

Art Focus: Hiding the Liberty Bell in Allentown, Pennsylvania by Gifford Reynolds Beal



Gifford Reynolds Beal (American, 1879-1956) *Hiding the Liberty Bell in Allentown, Pennsylvania*, 1938, Oil on Masonite. Gift of the Family of Gifford Beal, 2006. (2006.9)

In Discover Art: A Look into the Past, students learned about the Lehigh Mural and Rembrandt's portrait of a young woman. In this curriculum guide, we will focus on another historical painting: *Hiding the Liberty Bell*.

This painting depicts a little known moment during the Revolutionary War. When the British Army occupied Philadelphia in 1777, the Liberty Bell was at risk of being melted down and destroyed. Revolutionaries snuck the Liberty Bell out of Philadelphia, and hid the bell in Allentown. This painting depicts the bell arriving at Zion's Reformed Church in Allentown, which still holds a replica of the Bell in its basement today.

This painting reminds us that history takes place everywhere. By looking back on important moments in history, we can learn more about important people, places, and things. Artists capture moments of history to be shared in the future, and keep history alive.

Big Ideas:

Historical painting is important to preserving history and culture.

Artists create art inspired by history to remember important events and teach others.

History is made everywhere, and every place can be important and special.

Points of Inquiry:

How can artworks be important parts of history?

Why do artists create works of art inspired by the past?

Where is history made?

Vocabulary:

Art History

History

Historical Painting

Landmark

Symbol

Resource list and further learning:

Browse Educational resources and lesson plans from the Independence National Historical Park, home of the Liberty Bell. [Curriculum Materials - Independence National Historical Park \(US National Park Service\)](#)

Visit the Museum of the American Revolution on a 360 degree virtual tour. You can also browse a variety of different educational resources for teachers and students, including children's book excerpts, lesson plans, 360 degree virtual tours, and interactive historical timelines. [For Students & Educators](#)

Explore a super hi-resolution image of Rembrandt's The Night Watch. You can zoom in to see tiny details, microscopic cracks, and individual brushstrokes. [The Night Watch](#)

Get STEAMed recording of an online educator workshop on exploring STEAM and integrating Art Conservation into the classroom [Get STEAMed | Art Conservation](#)

Classroom Activity

Describe, Analyze, Interpret

Look at the image of Hiding the Liberty Bell with your students and ask the following questions ([Link to image in digital database](#)).

- What do you notice about this painting?

- How is this painting different from the other paintings we have seen?
- What do you notice about the people in this painting? What time period are they from? How can you tell?
- What are they moving? Is that object important?
- What time of day is it? How can you tell? Why might that be important?

Background for Students

This painting depicts American soldiers moving the Liberty Bell. The soldiers are wearing uniforms and working as a team. The soldiers are also working at nighttime, under the cover of darkness. Soldiers chose to move the Liberty Bell from Philadelphia to Allentown to protect it from British soldiers. Bells were made of metals that soldiers could use to make weapons and other supplies for the war. The Liberty Bell was an important symbol of freedom and liberty for Americans. By moving the bell to hide it in Allentown, the soldiers protected the bell and the hope and meaning it held from being destroyed.

Create

Have students respond to the following prompt:

History is made every day. One of the ways we remember history is through art, stories, and reading. Create a document of an important moment from your life or current events by writing or drawing. It could be a moment like a younger sibling being born, your first day at school, getting a pet, going on a vacation, or a special holiday or birthday. Write a paragraph to describe your memory and why it is important to you.

Encourage students to create a drawing or painting of their memory as an optional extra assignment.