

Leland Faulkner

Walker Between Worlds

Educational Guide, Grades K-12



About the Performance

Travel with Leland down a path of magical adventures and wonder tales unique to Native America. Experience the magic of our natural world and watch as Grandmother Spider weaves a web that catches nightmares. Be there on the first night of creation as stars are put into the sky. Laugh at coyote's foolishness, and experience the great bravery of a crow, while witnessing the magical transformation of his colored feathers. Using original music and the power of storytelling, Leland brings the beauty, humor, and mystery of this world to life.



About the Artist

Master storyteller, magician, dramatist and world-traveler **Leland Faulkner** is a tribal member of The Bad River Band of Chippewa, his mother's tribe. His father was a Shoshone Bannock from Fort Hall, Idaho. With a vision dedicated to the necessity of make-believe and the power of magical theatre to excite the imagination, Leland brings this heritage to life and continually searches for the entertaining and the meaningful. His work has gained awards, acclaim, and respect both at home and abroad.

Program Learning Goals

1. To become aware of Native Americans and their contributions to our culture.
2. To understand the Native American perspective on the natural world.
3. To understand Native values that explore how we are all interconnected.

Essential Questions

1. Why are animals an important part of Native American culture?
2. What happened to the Native American people who were living here when Europeans arrived?
3. Why are stories an important part of Native America?
4. Why are dreams and visions important to Native American culture?

Ojibwe Vocabulary

One way culture is passed on is through **language**. Without language a culture's traditions can be forgotten. This is how to pronounce some of the **Ojibwe** (oh-jib-way) words in Leland's performance.

Ojibwe Word	Pronunciation	English Translation
Boozhoo!	boo-shoo	Hello!
Mizhkay Minisway	mihsh-kay mih-nih-sway	Turtle Island, or North America
Nookomis, Nookomisag	noo-koh-mihs, noo-koh-mihs-ahg	Grandmother, Grandmothers
Mashkikiwinini, Mashkikiikwe	mush-kih-key-wihn-ihn-ih, mush-kih-key-kway	Medicine Man, Medicine Woman (a healer and keeper of knowledge)
Bawaajigan	buh-wah-jih-gahn	Dream, vision
Zegabam	zay-guh-buhm	A frightening or scary dream, a nightmare
Ningotaaj	nin-goh-tahj	I am afraid
Asabikeshiinh, Asabikeshiinyag	uh-suh-bih-kay-sheen, uh-suh-bih-kay-sheen-yuhg	Spider, Spiders
Miigwech	meeg-waych	Thank you

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Key Facts and Cultural Context for Students

The Ojibwe People

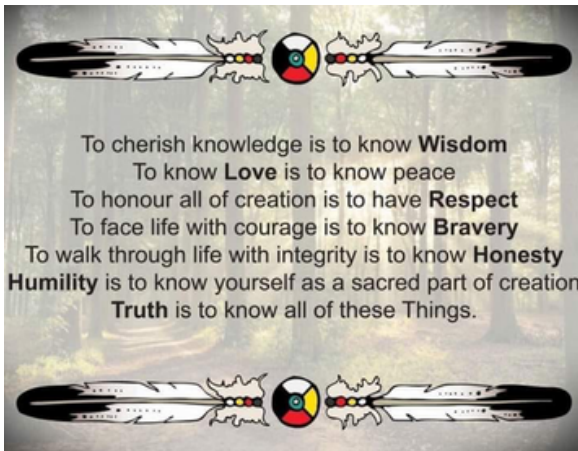
The Ojibwe people have ancestral homeland in much of the Great Lakes region across what is now the United States and Canada. Another name for Ojibwe is **Chippewa** (chip-uh-wah). As of the 2010 census, the Ojibwe population is approximately 320,000 people. The Ojibwe have traditionally organized themselves into groups called **bands**, and have special customs and traditions.



Noahedits, Wikimedia Commons

The Anishinaabe

The Ojibwe people are part of the **Anishinaabe** (uh-nihsh-ihn-ah-bay) collective along with several other distinct Native nations. According to **Basil Johnston**, an Ojibwe historian and writer, “Anishinaabe” means “Beings Made Out of Nothing” or “Spontaneous Beings”.



Ojibwe Storytelling

Storytelling is an important tradition in Ojibwe culture. Tales are traditionally told **orally**, or by word of mouth, just like in Leland’s performance. These stories pass down through generations as a way to teach important tribal knowledge, traditions, culture, and values. This includes the **Teachings of the Seven Grandfathers**, summarized by this graphic (see left).

Native American Heritage Month

November was declared Native American Heritage Month by President George H. W. Bush in 1990 to give a platform to Native people in the United States and highlight their cultures, traditions, music, dance, crafts, and ways of life. It is also a time to reflect on the history of Native Americans, the difficult relationship with European settlers, and their place and contributions to our homeland and the earth.

Featured Ojibwe Cultural Symbols



Medicine Power

The word medicine has a meaning closer to power than pills among Native people. It can mean the power to heal or to hurt. Good medicine is considered to be found in teaching, ritual, the use of plants, and how one lives and interacts with others and the environment. Here is an example of the **medicine wheel** from the Ojibwe people. Medicine wheels are a visual reminder of how we are connected to all things, including the seasons, the animals, and more. Generally speaking it is based on the four directions.

Dreamcatchers

Making dreamcatchers is an Ojibwe tradition. They are constructed by tying strands of **sinew** (tough animal tissue) in a web around a small round or teardrop-shaped frame, similar to the Ojibwe method of making snowshoes. The resulting “dream-catcher” is hung above the bed as a charm to protect from nightmares and is said to “catch” bad dreams in its web.



Dream interpretation has influenced Native American cultural and spiritual beliefs for centuries. Native people believe dreams reflect the life and conscious soul of the dreamer, often acting as a means for change in personality traits such as confidence, maturity, kindness, and loyalty.

During the pan-Indian movement in the 1960's and 1970's, Ojibwe dreamcatchers became popular with other tribes. Today you see them hanging in lots of places other than a child's cradleboard or nursery, like the living room or rearview mirror. Some Natives think dreamcatchers are a sweet and loving tradition, others consider them a symbol of native unity, and still others think of them as sort of the Native equivalent of a tacky plastic trinket.

Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

- What do you know about the history of Native peoples in the United States? What would you like to know? How could you find out more?
- What might a story teach us about history that we might not get from a history book?
- Who tells stories in your family? What are those stories about? Do the older people in your family tell stories that were told to them by their parents? Will you tell those stories to others?

Pre-Performance Activity: Making a Dreamcatcher

Learning Goals:

- To introduce students to a traditional symbol of Ojibwe culture
- To experience a traditional Ojibwe craft



Materials:

[Metal Rings](#), [Leather Lace](#), [Artificial Sinew](#), Beads, Feathers (optional)

This is a good, affordable resource to purchase dreamcatcher kits for your classroom:

<https://www.nocbay.com/prodDetails.asp?ID=658&link=219&link2=609>

Notes for the Teacher:

One of the stories featured in the performance is about the creation of the first dreamcatcher ever made. Traditionally a small frame made out of a willow branch would be used, but this activity has been adapted to use a metal ring. Although a basic dreamcatcher is simple to make, there are very beautiful and complex designs that may inspire you to create more complex dreamcatchers.

Directions:



1 Fold the piece of leather lace in half. Knot it leaving a loop to hang the dreamcatcher. Make sure the fold leaves two equal measurements of leather lace on both sides to ensure it will cover the entire metal ring when wrapped.



2 Wrap each side of the leather lace tightly around the metal ring with remaining ends meeting at the bottom of the ring. Tie the ends in a knot.

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Pre-Performance Activity, continued

Directions, continued:



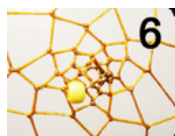
Take the artificial sinew and knot the end at the top of the ring near the loop. Move 1 inch along the loop and wrap the sinew loosely once over the ring from the front to back, crossing over to create a loop. Continue this wrap until you get back to the top of the ring.



For each round to follow, wrap the sinew around the middle of the stitch from the previous round.



On the fourth round, string one of the beads on your sinew to represent the spider on the web.



Continue looping the sinew. End at the bottom of the hole. Be sure to leave the center open. Knot the sinew, pulling it tight. Cut the remainder of the sinew.



String the remaining beads on the loose ends of the leather lacing and knot the bottom.

Extension:

You can decorate your dreamcatcher with a feather by cutting a notch in the end of the feather's spine and bending these ends to make a loop. Tie the bent part with sinew, and put a tie through the feather loop to attach it to your dreamcatcher. Use your imagination and dream of different and meaningful ways to decorate your dreamcatcher!

Post-Performance Discussion Questions

- What was your favorite story from the performance? What did it teach you?
- What did you learn about Ojibwe culture?
- In what ways did you think about history from a new perspective?
- How do your stories and your families stories connect to United States history? How do they connect to world history? How will future generations know your story?

Post-Performance Activity: Grandmother Spider

Learning Goals:

- To learn about spiders, their anatomy and habitat
- To understand the significance of Grandmother Spider in Ojibwe culture and stories

Materials:

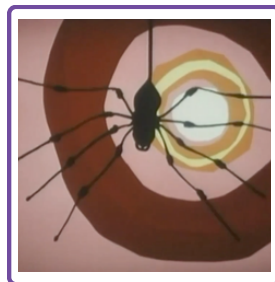
“Spider Facts” sheet (see *page 8*), “Spider Quiz” (see *page 9*), “Spider Quiz Answer Key” (see *page 10*), coloring/art supplies

Directions:

1. Discuss what you know about spiders, and what you learned about them from the stories in the performance.
2. In small groups, read the “Spider Facts” sheet and answer the questions on the “Spider Quiz”.
3. In a large group, check your answers with the “Spider Quiz Answer Key”.
4. Create a picture, painting, collage, or drawing of a spider and its web.

Extension:

Go to your backyard or local park and look for spiders. When observing, be careful to respect the work of the spider and do not destroy it or its home. Learn by watching, taking notes, taking pictures, and making drawings and diagrams.



SPIDER FACTS

Spiders are part of a group called arachnids, named after the Greek goddess Arachne. Arachne was so skilled at weaving she challenged the goddess of War, Athena, and because of her pride Arachne was transformed into a spider.

Spiders have eight legs. They have tiny claws on the ends of their legs that help them climb and descend their webs.

A spinneret is the organ in spiders that spins thread for webs. The silk that comes out of the spider's spinneret is liquid, but it hardens as soon as it comes in contact with air. Some spiders have up to seven types of silk glands, each creating a different type of silk, such as smooth, sticky, dry, or stretchy.

Spiders can't fly, but they sometimes sail through the air on a line of silk, which is known as "ballooning."

Spiders are blamed for all kinds of bumps, rashes, and growths. However, unlike mosquitoes or ticks, spiders don't feed on human blood have no reason to bite a human unless they feel threatened or surprised.

"Nookomis Asebekashi" is the name the Anishinaabe people give to Grandmother Spider, who created the first dreamcatcher.

When a spider travels, it always has four legs touching the ground and four legs off the ground at any given moment.

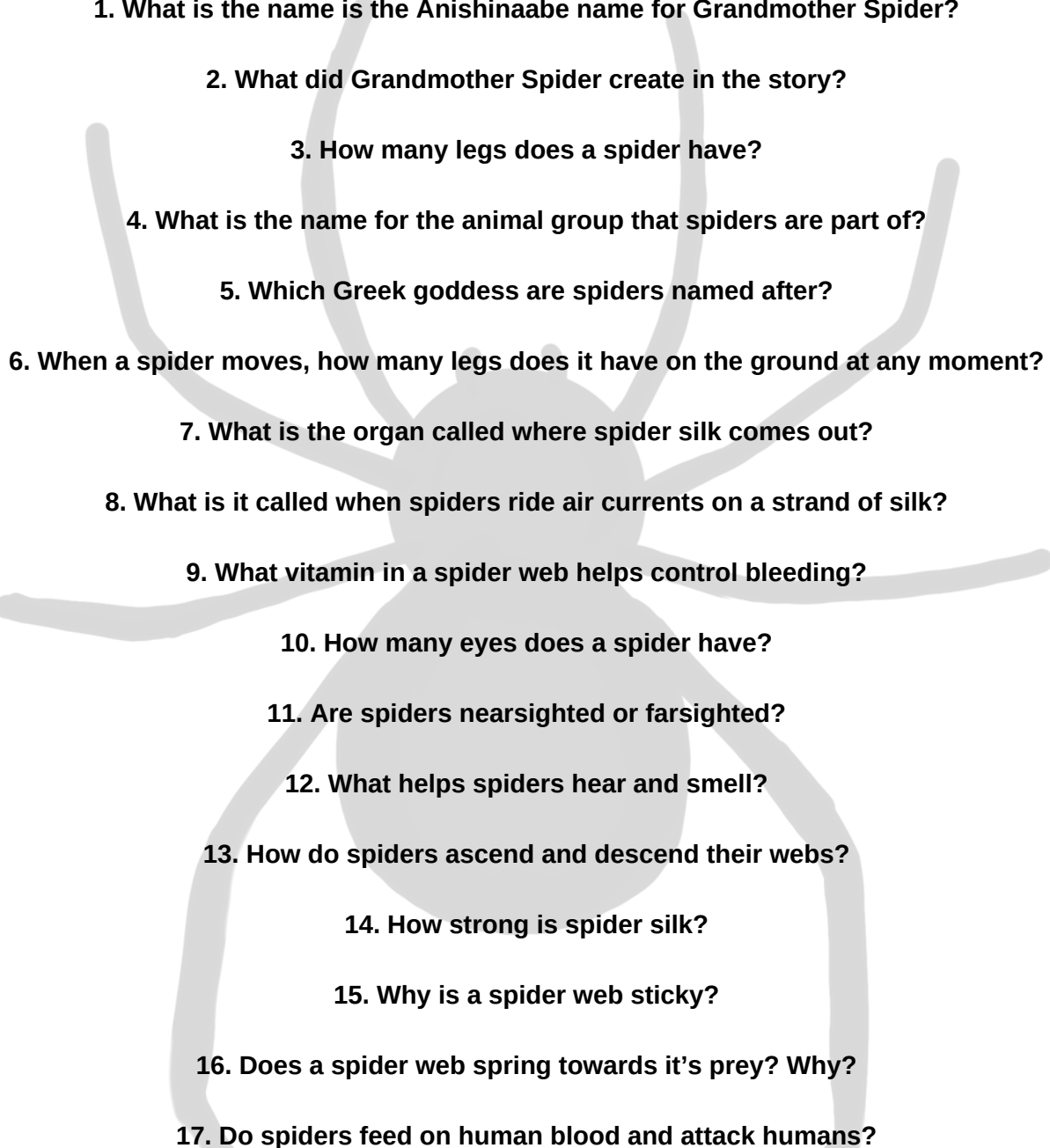
Spiders have tiny hairs on their legs that help them hear and smell. Most spiders also have eight eyes and are very nearsighted.

A web is sticky because of tiny glue droplets the spider deposits on it. The droplets are even electrically conductive so webs spring toward their prey!

Hundreds of years ago, people put spider webs on their wounds because they believed it would help stop the bleeding. Scientists now know that the silk contains vitamin K, which helps reduce bleeding.

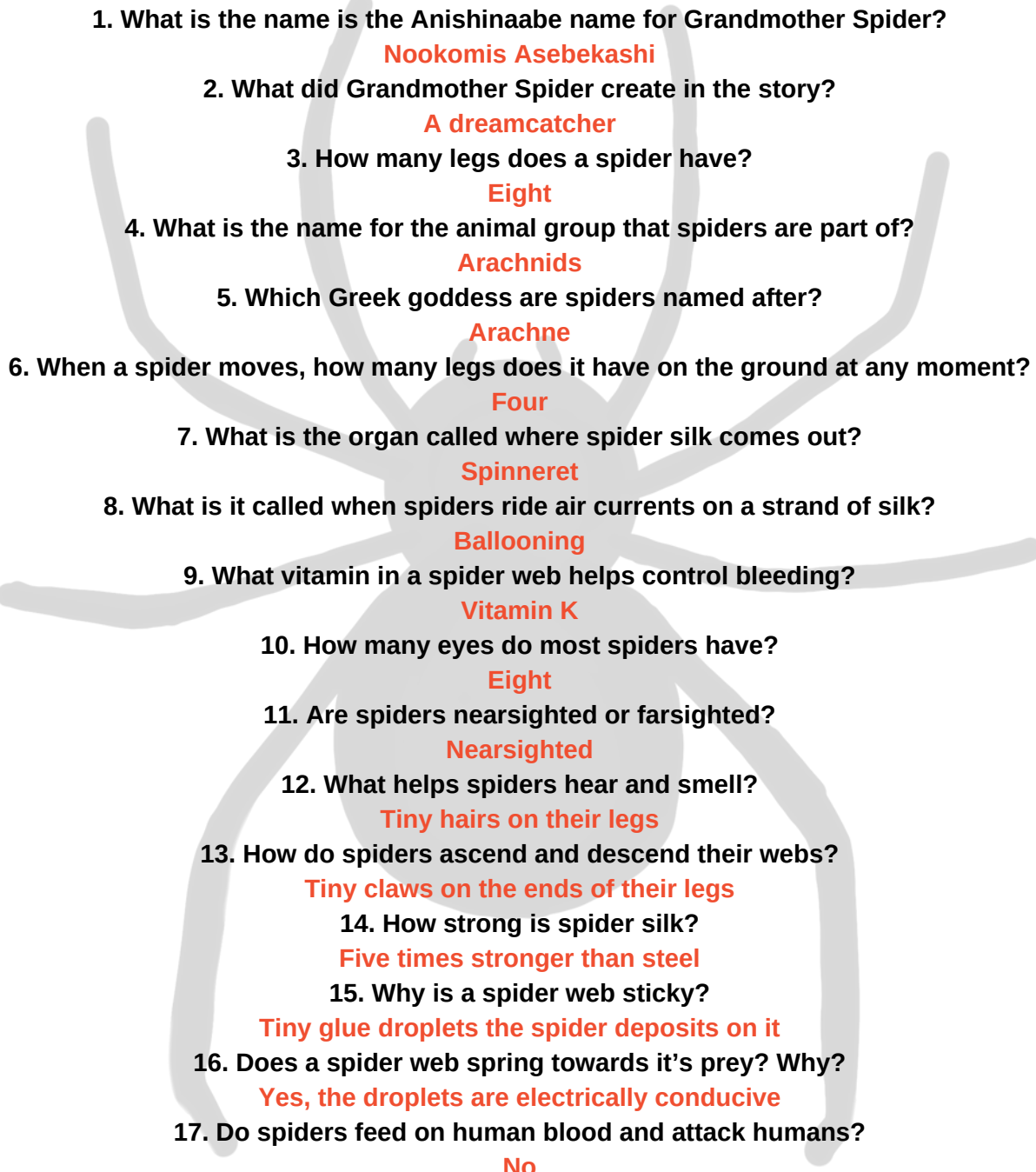
The silk in a spider's web is five times stronger than a strand of steel of the same thickness. Scientists still cannot replicate the strength and elasticity of a spider's silk.

SPIDER QUIZ

- 
1. What is the name is the Anishinaabe name for Grandmother Spider?
 2. What did Grandmother Spider create in the story?
 3. How many legs does a spider have?
 4. What is the name for the animal group that spiders are part of?
 5. Which Greek goddess are spiders named after?
 6. When a spider moves, how many legs does it have on the ground at any moment?
 7. What is the organ called where spider silk comes out?
 8. What is it called when spiders ride air currents on a strand of silk?
 9. What vitamin in a spider web helps control bleeding?
 10. How many eyes does a spider have?
 11. Are spiders nearsighted or farsighted?
 12. What helps spiders hear and smell?
 13. How do spiders ascend and descend their webs?
 14. How strong is spider silk?
 15. Why is a spider web sticky?
 16. Does a spider web spring towards it's prey? Why?
 17. Do spiders feed on human blood and attack humans?

SPIDER QUIZ

ANSWER KEY

- 
1. What is the name is the Anishinaabe name for Grandmother Spider?
Nookomis Asebekashi
 2. What did Grandmother Spider create in the story?
A dreamcatcher
 3. How many legs does a spider have?
Eight
 4. What is the name for the animal group that spiders are part of?
Arachnids
 5. Which Greek goddess are spiders named after?
Arachne
 6. When a spider moves, how many legs does it have on the ground at any moment?
Four
 7. What is the organ called where spider silk comes out?
Spinneret
 8. What is it called when spiders ride air currents on a strand of silk?
Ballooning
 9. What vitamin in a spider web helps control bleeding?
Vitamin K
 10. How many eyes do most spiders have?
Eight
 11. Are spiders nearsighted or farsighted?
Nearsighted
 12. What helps spiders hear and smell?
Tiny hairs on their legs
 13. How do spiders ascend and descend their webs?
Tiny claws on the ends of their legs
 14. How strong is spider silk?
Five times stronger than steel
 15. Why is a spider web sticky?
Tiny glue droplets the spider deposits on it
 16. Does a spider web spring towards it's prey? Why?
Yes, the droplets are electrically conducive
 17. Do spiders feed on human blood and attack humans?
No

Further Resources

- [Leland Faulkner Website](#)
- [Ojibwe People's Dictionary](#)
- [Native American Picture Books: Ojibwe Nation](#)
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne with Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese: *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States for Young People*, Beacon Press (2019)
- Peacock, Thomas and Marlene Wisuri: *The Good Path: Ojibwe Learning and Activity Book for Kids*, Minnesota Historical Society Press (2009)
- Yellowhorn, Eldon and Kathy Lowinger: *Turtle Island: The Story of North America's First People*, Annick Press (2017)

Curricular Connections

Arts Standards: Theatre and Visual Arts

Creating

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. (T.Cr.01, V.Cr.01)
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. (T.Cr.02, V.Cr.02)

Performing

- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. (T.P.06, V.P.06)

Responding

- Perceive and analyze artistic work. (T.R.07, V.P.07)
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. (T.R.08, V.P.08)
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. (T.R.09, V.R.09)

Connecting

- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. (T.Co.10, V.Co.10)
- Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding. (T.Co.11, V.Co.11)

English Language Arts and Literacy Anchor Standards

Speaking and Listening

- Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. (SL.PK-12.2)
- Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric. (SL.PK-12.3)

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Curricular Connections, continued

History and Social Science

K

- Topic 1: Civics: classroom citizenship (HSS.K.T1)
- Topic 2: Geography: connections among places (HSS.K.T2)
- Topic 3: History: shared traditions (HSS.K.T3)

Grade 1

- Topic 1: Civics: communities, elections, and leadership (HSS.1.T1)
- Topic 2: Geography: places to explore (HSS.1.T2)
- Topic 3: History: unity and diversity in the United States (HSS.1.T3)

Grade 2

- Topic 3: History: migrations and cultures (HSS.2.T3)

Grade 3

- Topic 2: The geography and Native Peoples of Massachusetts (HSS.3.T2)
- Topic 3: European explorers' first contacts with Native People in the Northeast (HSS.3.T3)

Grade 4

- Topic 1: North America: geography and map skills (HSS.4.T1)
- Topic 2: Ancient civilizations of North America (HSS.4.T2)
- Topic 4: The expansion of the United States over time and its regions today (HSS.4.T4)
- Topic 4c: The expansion of the United States over time and its regions today: The Midwest (HSS.4.T4c)

Grade 5

- Topic 1: Early colonization and growth of colonies (HSS.5.T1)
- Topic 4: The growth of the Republic (HSS.5.T4)

Grade 6

- Topic 1: Studying complex societies, past and present (HSS.6.T1)

Grade 8

- Topic 1: The philosophical foundations of the United States political system (HSS.8.T1)

Grades 9-12

- US History I Topic 2: Democratization and expansion (HSS.USI.T2)
- US History I Topic 6: Rebuilding the United States: industry and immigration (HSS.USI.T6)
- US History II Topic 4: Defending Democracy: the Cold War and Civil Rights at Home (HSS.USII.T4)

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Curricular Connections, continued

Science and Technology/Engineering

Earth and Space Sciences

- Earth's Systems (K.ESS.2, 2.ESS.2)
- Earth and Human Activity (K.ESS.3, 5.ESS.3)
- Earth's Place in the Universe (1.ESS.1, 4.ESS.1)

Life Science

- From Molecules to Organisms: Structures and Processes (K.LS.1, 1.LS.1, 3.LS.1, 4.LS.1, 6.LS.1)
- Ecosystems: Interactions, Energy, and Dynamics (2.LS.2, 5.LS.2)

