Oklahoma Voices and Visions

Trace how different kinds of work reached and influenced audiences.

OKH.C.7.5 "Describe the contributions of Oklahomans, including the political and social commentaries of Will Rogers and Woody Guthrie, Wiley Post's aviation milestones, the artwork of the Kiowa Six, and African American jazz musicians."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a contribution by each person or group, then circle a phrase that shows how the work reached or changed an audience.

Beyond Oklahoma

1. In the 1930s, a newspaper reader might meet Oklahoma's Will Rogers in a column before hearing him on the radio. Rogers, a Cherokee citizen raised in Indian Territory, used jokes to question political leaders and their promises. His humor made criticism easier to hear, but the questions were serious: Who benefits from a decision, and who pays for it? Another Oklahoma voice, Woody Guthrie, turned social criticism into song. After seeing the hardship of Dust Bowl migrants, he wrote "Do Re Mi," which warns that arriving in California without money could bring disappointment rather than opportunity. Both artists brought public problems into everyday conversation.

2. Other Oklahomans changed how people saw distance and cultural history. In 1931, aviator Wiley Post and navigator Harold Gatty flew around the world in just over eight days. In 1933, Post completed the first solo flight around the world, showing what one pilot and an aircraft could accomplish together. He also helped develop a pressure suit for high-altitude flying. At the University of Oklahoma in the late 1920s, six Kiowa artists studied and exhibited paintings. Known as the Kiowa Six, they portrayed Kiowa dancers, clothing, and community life. Their work carried Kiowa perspectives into galleries where Native artists had rarely received such attention.

3. Jazz offered another way to reshape what audiences heard. Oklahoma City singer Jimmy Rushing gave blues feeling and a powerful voice to the Count Basie Orchestra, helping its swing music reach listeners across the country. Guitarist Charlie Christian grew up in Oklahoma City and later played with Benny Goodman. His amplified electric guitar carried single-note solos that stood out beside horns, expanding the guitar's role in jazz. These musicians worked amid racial discrimination, yet their performances influenced an art form heard far beyond Oklahoma. Taken together, the columns, songs, flights, paintings, and jazz performances show Oklahomans reaching wider audiences through very different kinds of work.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Will Rogers and Woody Guthrie use different forms of commentary to draw attention to public problems?

2. Describe two of Wiley Post's aviation contributions. What did one of them show or make possible?

3. How did the Kiowa Six contribute to the way gallery audiences encountered Kiowa culture?

4. Describe how Jimmy Rushing and Charlie Christian each contributed to jazz.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence exhibit label of 70 to 95 words that pairs two contributors from different fields in the passage. Describe each contribution using a passage detail, then make your own claim about how their work changed what audiences could see, hear, or understand.

ANSWER KEY

Oklahoma Voices and Visions

HIGH SCHOOL · OKH.C.7.5

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a contribution by each person or group, then circle a phrase that shows how the work reached or changed an audience. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Will Rogers and Woody Guthrie use different forms of commentary to draw attention to public problems?	**Rogers used humor in columns and on radio to question political leaders. Guthrie used song to call attention to the hardship of Dust Bowl migrants.**
2	Describe two of Wiley Post's aviation contributions. What did one of them show or make possible?	**Post completed the first solo flight around the world, showing what one pilot and an aircraft could accomplish. He also helped develop a pressure suit for high-altitude flying.**
3	How did the Kiowa Six contribute to the way gallery audiences encountered Kiowa culture?	**Their paintings portrayed Kiowa dancers, clothing, and community life, bringing Kiowa perspectives into galleries.**
4	Describe how Jimmy Rushing and Charlie Christian each contributed to jazz.	**Rushing brought a powerful, blues-influenced voice to the Count Basie Orchestra's widely heard swing music. Christian's amplified single-note solos expanded the guitar's role in jazz.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

An exhibit could pair a Kiowa Six painting with a recording of Charlie Christian's guitar. The Kiowa artists showed dancers, clothing, and community life from Kiowa perspectives, bringing those views into galleries. Christian's amplified solos made the guitar stand out beside horns and expanded its role in jazz. Together, these works show that changing what audiences notice can be a contribution: one group widened whose cultural stories appeared in galleries, while one musician changed what listeners expected to hear in a jazz performance.

Accept other accurate passage details that explain each contribution and its effect. For the exhibit label, look for two different fields, four sentences, 70 to 95 words, and a claim that connects the contributors rather than merely listing facts.