

Arts Through Time

How American creative works reflect society and change.

8.26 "Culture. The student understands the relationship between the arts and the times during which they were created. The student is expected to: identify examples of American art, music..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each example of American art, music, or literature. Circle the words that tell what social beliefs, events, or changes each work reflects.

Creative Works as Evidence

- ① In the early nineteenth century, many Americans looked westward and debated what their growing nation should value. Hudson River School painters, including Thomas Cole and Asher B. Durand, made large landscape paintings of forests, mountains, rivers, and glowing light. Their scenes often placed tiny people, farms, or buildings beside vast wild land. These works reflected pride in the nation's scenery, but they also raised questions about settlement, industry, and the possible loss of wilderness. Art recorded both confidence and concern during expansion.
- ② During the Civil War, Julia Ward Howe wrote "Battle Hymn of the Republic" after visiting a Union Army camp in 1861. Published in 1862, the song used biblical images, including a coming judgment, to describe the Union cause. Its marching rhythm and powerful chorus suited public singing by soldiers and civilians. The lyrics show how many Union supporters used religious language to understand the war as a moral struggle. Music could unite people while expressing the conflict's fierce beliefs.
- ③ Transcendental writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau challenged Americans to trust conscience, learn from nature, and question unfair rules. Their essays and books appeared mainly from the 1830s through the 1850s, when factories, cities, and reform movements were changing daily life. Like Hudson River School painters, these writers treated nature as meaningful. Unlike the wartime song, their work often focused on an individual's inner judgment. Together, these arts reveal continuity in American interest in ideals and change in the issues artists addressed.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did Hudson River School paintings reflect both pride and concern during American expansion?

2 How did “Battle Hymn of the Republic” reflect the way many Union supporters understood the Civil War? Use two details from the passage.

3 What idea about nature did Hudson River School painters and transcendental writers share?

4 What continuity and what change in American life do the three examples reveal?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose an American artwork, song, or piece of literature from an era not discussed in the passage. In 3 sentences and 55 to 85 words, name the work and its creator, explain one social condition it reflects, and compare its message about American life with one idea from the passage.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each example of American art, music, or literature. Circle the words that tell what social beliefs, events, or changes each work reflects. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Hudson River School paintings reflect both pride and concern during American expansion?	They showed pride in America's scenery and concern that settlement and industry could cause the loss of wilderness.
2	How did "Battle Hymn of the Republic" reflect the way many Union supporters understood the Civil War? Use two details from the passage.	It used biblical images and described the Union cause as a moral struggle. Its public, marching style also suited soldiers and civilians.
3	What idea about nature did Hudson River School painters and transcendental writers share?	Both treated nature as meaningful. The painters showed grand natural landscapes, and the writers urged people to learn from nature.
4	What continuity and what change in American life do the three examples reveal?	They show continuity in Americans' interest in ideals. They show change because artists addressed expansion and wilderness, Civil War beliefs, and individual conscience during industrial and social change.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

"Strange Fruit," written by Abel Meeropol and performed by Billie Holiday in 1939, confronted the racial terror of lynching in the United States. The song reflected a society in which Black Americans faced violent racism and demanded that listeners notice it. Like "Battle Hymn of the Republic," it used music to make a moral claim, but it addressed a different injustice.

Accept responses that accurately identify a work and creator, connect the work to a relevant social condition, and make a meaningful comparison to an idea in the passage. The comparison may identify either continuity or change.