

PORTFOLIO COPY

BACKGROUND READING FOR PRESENTERS

Edward Hicks (1780-1849)

Grade Two

Source: Teaching Guide for My Weekly Reader Art Gallery

Edward Hicks was an American painter born in Pennsylvania during the difficult days of the Revolutionary War. When George Washington was elected the first President of the United States, Edward Hicks was a child of nine. In those days a visitor to Edward's home might find him sitting at the fireside studying. Edward found school work hard, yet he enjoyed making things with his hands.

Because Edward liked to work with tools instead of books, his father decided that the boy should learn a trade. When Edward was thirteen years old, he went to live with a coachmaker. Horse-drawn coaches were a popular way to travel in those days. It seemed that would be a good job for him to learn. He became very good at making coaches and also painted furniture, shop signs, and street signs. After a whole year's work on a coach, he might only be paid ten dollars.

At the age of twenty-three Hicks got married and as the years passed became the father of many children.

One day Edward decided that he wanted to paint a picture. From then on he found that he loved to paint. He never had art lessons, but he enjoyed painting and people enjoyed the pictures that he made. Some pictures were sold; others he gave to good friends.

During these years Hicks was not only a painter. He was a Quaker minister as well. Hicks traveled on horseback to distant places where he spoke at Quaker meetings.

Edward Hicks wrote the following poem which tells the story of the painting that we are going to look at today. There were over sixty-one different paintings that he painted and called by the same title. (The poem is included here not so you will read it to the students, but so that you (the presenter) might enjoy it.

The Peaceable Kingdom

The wolf with the lambkin dwells in peace
His grim carnivorous thirst for blood will cease;
The beauteous leopard with his restless eye,

Shall by the kid in perfect stillness lie;
The calf, the fatling, and the young lion wild,
Shall all be led by one sweet little child;
The cow and the bear shall quietly partake
Of the rich food the ear and corn stalk make;
While each their peaceful young with joy survey
As side by side on the green grass they lay;
While the old lion thwarting nature's law
Shall eat beside the ox the barley straw.
The illustrious Penn this heavenly Kingdom felt
Then with Columbia's native sons he dealt,
Without an oath a lasting treating made
In Christian faith beneath the elm tree's shade.

This is one of the most beautiful of the 61 paintings by this name. We see gentle farm animals and fierce beasts gathered together. A child pets a leopard. No one is afraid. Even the lamb and the wolf have learned to live together as friends.

The animals gave at us in a friendly way. They seem to be placed one on top of the other. The artist used this arrangement to fill his canvas and add beauty to the design.

The artist wished to show that people, too, could live in peace. He pictured Penn's famous treaty with the Indians signed in 1861. William Penn, a Quaker, like Hicks, lived peaceably with the Indians.

Hicks used many shades of brown, yellow and white to suggest the forest scene. We see the animals clearly. They stand out against the dark background. The distant landscape is painted in light colors. It pictures the New England countryside on a quiet fall day.

PORTFOLIO COPY

ART PRESENTER PROGRAM

The Peaceable Kingdom
Edward Hicks

Grade Two

SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What do you see in the picture?
2. In the group of animals, is there anything which seems unusual to you? (animals that are usually enemies are together peacefully)
3. What are the people in the left of the picture doing?
4. How are they dressed?
5. When do you think this meeting took place?
6. What are the people on the right doing?
7. Are they supposed to be real people?
8. Are the animals real animals?
9. When do you think THIS meeting took place?
10. Are there any things that are the same between these two groups of people? What are they?
11. Could one of the meetings really taken place (real) and the other one not real?
12. What idea do you think the artist was trying to make us think about?
13. What is the color that you see most in this painting? (brown)
14. What other color is important in the painting? (white)
15. Compare the brown and white to the other colors. Do they stand out (the other colors) because they are different from the brown and white?

16. If you could take this painting home, what room would you hang it in?

PORTFOLIO COPY

Second Grade
The Peaceable Kingdom
Edward Hicks

MONMOUTH ART PRESENTER PROGRAM

EXTENDED ACTIVITIES

1. Construction paper torn animals

Materials: construction paper, white paper, glue sticks

Have students choose a favorite or interesting animal. Tear the animal shape from construction paper. Additional tearing will be needed to add legs, tail, ears, etc. Encourage children to make animal large to cover most of their paper. Then, if time permits, also tear paper for trees, hills, clouds--for the background. Paper can be overlapped just like in *The Peaceable Kingdom*.

2. Take an animal to the kingdom

Materials: white paper, pencil, crayon, or colored pencils

Have the students pretend that they are an animal in *The Peaceable Kingdom*. Draw any animal that they would like to take with them to the Kingdom. As they are working, discuss how they could make a Peaceable Kingdom in their classroom, the playground, at home. Add pictures of how they could help make that happen.

3. Natural/Organic Shape

Materials: white construction paper--pre-cut to 12 x 12, with 1-inch border pre-drawn
pencils, black markers, pastel crayons

Prepare the paper with the 1-inch border ahead of time.

Pick two animals that may not always get along, such as a lion and a bunny; a tiger and a puppy.

Draw the animals within the framed area of the paper. Make animals large and then

fill in the leftover space with trees, leaves, grass, sky

Finally, use a black marker to go over their pencil lines and color with crayons.

For the border--design and then color