

# Activity: Reflect on the Meaning

This activity is offered to use just after studying Indian Removal. The activity will allow students to further reflect on the facts and emotions involved in Indian Removal while also strengthening their fine art vocabulary and skills.

The activity is appropriate for students from 6th to 12th grade.

## Study

Complete the appropriate lessons and reading requirements for Indian Removal.

## Observe

Show the students *As Long As the Waters Flow* by Allan Houser. Explore and discuss the information offered with the teacher resources.

## Vocabulary and Discussion

Allan Houser's sculptures were said to be influenced by the modernist sculpture works of [\*Jean Arp\*](#), [\*Constantin Brancusi\*](#), [\*Henry Moore\*](#), and [\*Barbara Hepworth\*](#) (click on the names see examples of their art).

1. Have the students look at the art of each of the above artists and compare with Houser's [\*As Long As the Waters Flow\*](#). Through class discussion, explore what makes these works similar. List the answers the students give on the board.

Introduce the students to new vocabulary (below) and apply the words to the images through class discussion:

Abstract – art in which the elements of art and principles of design may be stressed or shapes of real objects may be simplified or distorted

Figurative – artwork which is clearly derived from real object sources or represents the human figure

Modern Art – a style of art often associated with revolutionary ideas; the art that developed in the early 20th century as a reaction to traditional forms

Monumental – exceptionally great, as in quantity, quality, extent, or degree

Negative space – empty space, space around an object or form; in sculpture, voids or hollow spaces within the work

Plane – a flat or level surface; in sculpture, large flat areas

Representational – art that represents its subject in a way that is recognizable to the viewer

Streamline – to design or style in a simplified style

Stylization – to represent or design according to an artistic pattern rather than according to nature or tradition

## Draw

1. Show the students several images of *As Long As the Waters Flow* found, [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).
2. Instruct the students to draw an outline drawing on a large piece of white drawing paper (11" x 17") with a pencil. The drawing should include the outline of the sculpture as well as the details in the few small areas including the woman's face, hair, necklace, and eagle feather fan. Be sure to leave the large surface planes blank with no detail.
3. Use some of the ideas generated from the discussion and vocabulary such as streamlining and stylization.
4. Once the drawing is complete, they may retrace the lines with a black marker to make the image bolder.
5. The drawing will be simple and doesn't have to be perfect. Example



## Connect the Title

1. Lead a class discussion about the title of the sculpture. Ask leading questions to connect the title to the artwork such as:
  - Where does the title come from?
  - Who said those words?
  - What do the words in the title mean?
  - Why would the artist choose this quote as a title?
  - How does the subject of the artwork relate to the title?

## Reflect

Allan Houser intended *As Long As the Waters Flow* to be a monument to American Indians. The title references the broken promises which caused hardship to them. The size and stance of the sculpture radiate strength while the posture shows serenity. Perhaps these are attributes many American Indian people gained after overcoming such a struggle like the Trail of Tears. What other descriptive words do the students think of when looking at the sculpture?

1. Incite a class discussion and ask the students to offer descriptive words they think of when reflecting on the sculpture. The words may be about the attributes they believe the Indian woman possesses; or, they might describe what the woman is thinking about or what she knows.
2. List the words on the board.
3. Using the empty space of the large sculptural planes depicted in their drawing, instruct the students to fill the empty spaces with their descriptive words. They may use words listed on the board or come up with more on their own.
4. Tell them to be creative with their handwriting and use many different styles to make it interesting. Example:



## Assessment

Using the information in 'Final Assessment', the students understanding of the artwork and its meaning may be assessed.