



AP[®] Art History 2003 Sample Student Responses

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2. Thomas Cole painted the work shown.

Identify the art historical school with which Cole was associated. Discuss how this painting embodies the political, social, or philosophical ideas of its time. (10 minutes)

This landscape painted by Thomas Cole is a fine example of the Hudson River Valley Academy of which Cole was a part of. Focused on finding the artistic identity of the United States of America, the students of the Hudson River Valley painted stirring landscapes of a vast and untamed America in the late 1700s to early 1800s. From flora and fauna scenes of native plants and animals, to brilliant landscapes such as the one done by Cole, these paintings attempted to move a sense of patriotism and nationalism from the American viewer of the work.

Cole's painting also illustrates the ideas of romanticism, focusing on the beauty of the untamed wildlife of America, as portrayed in literature by James Fenimore Cooper and his "leatherstocking tales." In addition, the painting alludes to ideas of transcendentalism, of going back to nature, as encouraged by Ralph Waldo Emerson and Walt Whitman, who were both great American writers of the time.

In all, Cole's work featured the best qualities of the Hudson River School, as well as embodying an important ideal of nature as focused on by the ideals of romanticism and transcendentalism. A great American work done by a great American artist.

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2. Thomas Cole painted the work shown.

Identify the art historical school with which Cole was associated. Discuss how this painting embodies the political, social, or philosophical ideas of its time. (10 minutes)

Cole's painting shows a beautiful landscape often associated w/ Dutch landscapes as it emphasizes the contrasts, shape and color of the clouds. During Cole's period society showed great appreciation for nature but portrayed it realistically. It also shows that Cole had great knowledge of depth cues and vocal points as color is darker in the foreground but lightens in the distance. People of Cole's time appreciated the beauty of nature and the emotions it gave them. Cole was associated with the Hudson River School of Art.