Standard 8.38 Lesson

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8.38 Describe daily life - including traditions in art, music, and literature — of early national America by examining excerpts from the stories of Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper (C,H,P)

The Arts of Early America

Architecture

After winning their independence, the America architecture did not follow the styles from England. The Americans looked to the Greek and Roman architecture. Domes and pillars were used in the designs. Buildings were very balanced in appearance. Arches were used and there were equal number of windows on each side of the doors to keep a sense of balance. Notice the balance in this picture of the White House in 1807.

Folk Art

Folk art is a type of art that can be stitched on samplers, signs and weather vanes. This became a popular art form during this time. Many times, the art had patriotic colors and images used in the art work. The art below is Pennsylvania Dutch watercolor of George and Martha Washington.
Music

Many songs from this time period were based on English melodies with new lyrics! An example is "Yankee Doodle" - with new words to show pride in the new democracy.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzRhFH5OyHo
Washington Irving (April 3, 1783 – November 28, 1859) was an American author, essayist, biographer, historian, and diplomat of the early 19th century. He is best known for his short stories "Rip Van Winkle" (1819) and "The
Legend of Sleepy Hollow " (1820), both of which appear in his book The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. His historical works include biographies of George Washington, Oliver Goldsmith and Muhammad, and several histories of 15th-century Spain dealing with subjects such as Christopher Columbus, the Moors and the Alhambra. Irving served as the U.S. ambassador to Spain from 1842 to 1846.

He made his literary debut in 1802 with a series of observational letters to the Morning Chronicle, written under the pseudonym Jonathan Oldstyle. After moving to England for the family business in 1815, he achieved international fame with the publication of The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent. in 1819–20. He continued to publish regularly — and almost always successfully — throughout his life, and completed a five-volume biography of George Washington just eight months before his death, at age 76, in Tarrytown, New York.

Irving, along with James Fenimore Cooper, was among the first American writers to earn acclaim in Europe, and Irving encouraged American authors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Edgar Allan Poe. Irving was also admired by some European writers, including Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Thomas Campbell, Francis Jeffrey, and Charles Dickens. As America’s first genuine internationally best-selling author, Irving advocated for writing as a legitimate profession, and argued for stronger laws to protect American writers from copyright infringement.

Washington Irving - Biography

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pa_g9KZI1QE

Here is a link to short stories by Washington Irving:

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow by Washington Irving


Washington Irving’s Rip Van Winkle: Summary and Analysis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F6v5xW27sC0

and

Irving’s Legend of Sleepy Hollow: Summary and Analysis

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t-ceHQzmDdU

Rip Van Winkle by Washington Irving


This site also offers free audio download.

James Fenimore Cooper
James Fenimore Cooper (September 15, 1789 – September 14, 1851) was a prolific and popular American writer of the early 19th century. His historical romances of frontier and Indian life in the early American days created a unique form of American literature. He lived most of his life in Cooperstown, New York, which was founded by his father William on property he owned. Cooper was a lifelong member of the Episcopal Church and in his later years contributed generously to it. He attended Yale University for three years, where he was a member of the Linonian Society, but was expelled for misbehaviour.

Before embarking on his career as a writer he served in the U.S. Navy as a Midshipman, which greatly influenced many of his novels and other writings. He is best remembered as a novelist who wrote numerous sea-stories and the five historical novels of the frontier period known as the Leatherstocking Tales. Among naval historians Cooper’s works on the early U.S. Navy have been well received, but they were sometimes criticized by his contemporaries. Among his most famous works is the Romantic novel The Last of the Mohicans, often regarded as his masterpiece.

Here is a link to short stories by James Fenimore Cooper: