

American Landscape, 1930 by Charles Sheeler [1883-1965]

1. Locate the tiny figure.
2. Where is the ladder?
3. Where are the silos?
4. How does Sheeler indicate distance in this painting?
5. What lines look as if they were drawn with a ruler?
6. Much of this painting is geometric. What parts are not?
7. What is the comparison in size between the buildings and the man?
8. Visualize how industrial progress changed this view of the American landscape. Imagine and describe how this scene looked before the canal, railroad, and factories were built.
9. Do you think this painting seems more positive or negative regarding industrial development.
10. How might an average American in 1930 answer this question?
11. How did factories like this affect the lives of American consumers?
12. How would an average American regard this development today?

Historical Connections: industrialism; progressive movement; the Great Depression

Historical Figures: Samuel Gompers

Civics: substantive due process

Geography: growth of cities

Economics: labor unions; industrial expansion; transportation innovations

Science: machinery

Literary Connections and Primary Documents: *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair (secondary); "Chicago," Carl Sandburg (secondary)

Arts: photography; film; Modernism; Precisionism; compare to Cézanne; contrast with Cole