

**Catlin Painting the Portrait of Mah-to-toh-pa—Mandan, 1861/1869 by George Catlin  
[1796–1872]**

1. Locate these elements.
  - a. Two dogs:
  - b. Artist and easel:
  - c. Quiver:
  - d. Five horses:
2. Have students describe the setting for this painting.
3. Describe the chief's dress – (find out what everything is called)
4. Describe Catlin's easel.
5. How did Catlin emphasize Mah-to-toh-pa in this painting?
6. What else did Catlin emphasize?
7. Explain the main subject of this scene. Is it Catlin painting or a Mandan chief?
8. Why do you think all these people are so interested in watching Catlin paint a portrait?
9. Why do historians value Catlin's paintings?
10. When Catlin first painted Mah-to-toh-pa's portrait, they were indoors, but Catlin changed the setting when he painted this version. Why do you think Catlin might have done this?
11. Catlin did not include in this painting all the weapons that the chief was wearing when he posed for it. He said he left these out because he wanted to emphasize the grace and simplicity of this figure. Do you think it is or is not all right for an artist to change details in a painting such as this?
12. How would our impression of Ma-to-toh-pa change if he were wearing all his weapons?

**Historical Connections:** Lewis and Clark expedition; Louisiana Purchase; Manifest Destiny; Westward Expansion; American Indian tribes and histories; Trail of Tears; Indian Removal Act

**Historical Figures:** Thomas Jefferson; Andrew Jackson; Meriwether Lewis; William Clark; Sacajawea

**Geography:** Westward Expansion; lands of American Indian tribes

**Literary Connections and Primary Documents:** *The Story of Sacajawea: Guide to Lewis and Clark*, Della Rowland I Will Fight No More Forever, Chief Joseph; *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, George Catlin