

“Reading” Historical Images

Images, such as paintings and photographs, can be valuable keys to understanding historical events. Historians try to answer many kinds of questions by studying different types of images. You can practice “reading” a historical image by completing the exercise below.

Study the painting *Independence Creek* by Michael Haynes on page two of the bicentennial issue of *Kansas Kaleidoscope*. Answer the following questions based on your observations.

1. What emotions are being expressed by the characters in the picture? Why are they expressing these feelings?

2. What objects did the artist include in this painting? How were these things used by the Corps of Discovery?

3. How did the explorers celebrate the Fourth of July? How is this like or not like the ways you celebrate this holiday?

4. What did the artist have to know about this subject before painting “Independence Creek”? Why do you think he painted this scene?

