**Theme 8. AMERICAN AND CANADIAN PAINTING,**

**SCULPTURE AND LITERATURE**

###### American painting

The first important artist in the history of American painting was **Benjamin West** (1738-1820). The first American artist to produce history painting was **John Trumbull** (1756-1843). His pictures deal with contemporary American events. He painted mostly battle and revolutionary war scenes. One of his famous pictures is **“The Declaration of Independence”** where 48 figures can be seen and 36 of them were painted from life. We can see there **Thomas Jefferson, Robert R. Livingston, Benjamin Franklin** and others.

**Gilbert Stuart**, portrait painter was best for his portraits of George Washington. He painted three his portraits from life.

In the 1825 **Thomas Cole** became a leader of a group of American artists who often painted the Hudson River valley in New York State. Called the **Hudson River School**, this group of artist painted quiet scenes of mountains, forests and rivers.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century was connected with the names of **Winslow Homer, Thomas Eakins, James Whistler** who represented the progressive and democratic line of American culture.

James Whistler developed his own style based on impressionism. Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins painted American life in realistic style.

**Mary Cassatt** used the Parisian technique to personal themes.

In the opening decade of the new century, the academic domination of the American art world was challenged by a group of young realist painters - **Robert Henri, John Sloan, George Lucks William Glackens and Shinn**. These five were close friends - all Philadelphians, all former students of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. Their leader was Henri. These young realists turned to the life around them. They explore the everyday life of ordinary people in large cities. They painted the urban scene with frankness and humour.

The social realism of Henri, Sloan and Lucks was maintained and developed further by the younger generation of artists who were Henri’s pupils. The most remarkable of them were **George Bellows, Edward Hopper and Rockwell Kent.**

Hopper’s style was highly individual. His subject matter was the face of the American city and countryside.

**American Sculpture**

Compared with painting, American sculpture was late in development. The first professional native-born sculptor was William Rush. His career commenced with wood carving and wood remained his favoured material.

The first American sculptor to work directly from life was **Erastus Dow Palmer** (1817-1904). He was a completely self-taught sculptor, the only important sculptor of the period to resist attraction to study abroad.

The most successful artists of the mid-nineteenth century were **Horatio Greenough, Thomas Crawford and Hiram Powers.** They went to study in Italy and produced a stream of marble portraits and allegorical figures.

Three important sculptors emerged in the post-Civil War period who largely contributed to the growth of realistic tradition in American sculpture were: **John Quincy Adams Ward, Daniel Chester French, and Augustus Saint-Gaudens.**

The most important figures in the American sculpture of the twentieth century were **Jacob Epstein, Jo Davidson and William Zorach.**

There are more than 12,000 artists and sculptors now only in New York, who are supporting themselves from their work. There are about 400 art galleries and hundreds of exhibitions and shows each season.

###### American literature

The first major American novelist was **James Fenimore Cooper**, with *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Prairie (*1827), and other works about the frontier.

The romantic period of American literature introduced famous poets and writers such as **Edgar Allan Poe** and **Henry Longfellow**. **Edgar Poe** invented detective genre and was the founder of short stories. **Henry Longfellow** wrote long poems which helped to create romantic American legends. *The Song of Hiawatha* made his name famous all over the world.

*Uncle Tom’s Cabin* by **Harriet Beecher Stowe** became a best-seller and a vehicle for anti-slavery sentiments.

**Mark Twain** enriched the world of literature with native American humour. He is best known for the novels *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *The Adventure of Huckleberry Finn*, but he also wrote travel books and essays, many of them based on his experiences of life on the Mississippi River. His other books include the historical novels *The Prince and the Pauper, Life on the Mississippi.*

Among famous writers of this period we can name **O’Henry,** who wrote short stories, the best of them were published in the book *Cabbages and Kings*, *The Four Million* and many others; **Jack London** who wrote adventure novels and short stories. *The Sun of the Wolf, The Sea-Wolf, White Fang* are his best creations.

**Theodore Dreiser** marked the new age of naturalism. In his novels *Sister Carrie, An American Tragedy, The Titan, The Genius* he described real life as he saw it.

**Ernest Hemingway** created a style of writing using short simple sentences. He received the Noble Prize for literature in 1954. The most famous novels include *The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms, The Old Man and the Sea.*

**Canadian Architecture**

Familiar examples of traditional architecture in Canada include the French-style homes of Quebec and the neo-Gothic Parliament buildings in Ottawa. Modern Canadian architecture is international in style. The Toronto Dominion Centre in Toronto and the Place Ville Marie in Montreal reflect the sleek, uncluttered style originated by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe of Germany. The Toronto City Hall, one of Canada’s most impressive structures, was designed by Viljo Revell of Finland. Arthur Erickson, a famous Canadian architect, designed many buildings in or near Vancouver, B.C. He is best known for his designs that dramatically harmonize with the landscape.

**Canadian Painting and Sculpture**

Early Canadian painters followed European trends. Paul Kane painted pictures of Indian life in Western Canada. A group of landscape painters called the Group of Seven developed the Canadian style of painting. Tom Thomson /1877-1917/ was of the beat-known Canadian painters. His West Wind and the Jack Pine became two of the best-known works of Canadian art.

The works of the Group of Seven are exposed in the McMichael Canadian Art Collection. Robert and Signe McMichael gave their art collection to the Province of Ontario in 1965. McMchael Canadian Art Collection has the special combination of Canadian architecture, Canadian landscape, and Canadian art that makes it a unique national treasure.

 Emily Carr became famous for her painting of the totem poles of British Columbia. The best collection of Canadian Indian Art is in the Raven’s Work Gallery. It contains masks, carvings, and paintings. The finest work of Canadian sculpture includes woodcarving of Indian artists. The McMichael Canadian Art Collection includes Inuit sculpture and drawing.

**Canadian Literature**

 Canada has two great literatures, one written in French and the other written in English. One of the central themes of Canadian writers is the “idea of North”. The literature helps link the vast nation.

 Early Canadian literature expressed an optimistic pioneering attitude toward the new country. France Brooke wrote the first Canadian novel “The History of Emil Montague” in 1769.

 The first English Canadian to be considered a national poet was Charles Sangster. His poem “The St. Lawrence”/1856/ celebrates the beauty of the Canadian landscape.

 Pauline Johnson was known for her poetry about Indian life. Her father was a Mohawk Indian chief and her mother was English Isabelle Crawford.

 Margaret Attwood’s novel Cat’s Eye /1988/ earned her many awards and international reputation.

 Michael Tremblay is the leading Quebecois playwright. Among the best known current Canadian playwrights are D. French and S. Pollock.

**Answer the questions:**

1. Who was the first important artist in the history of American painting?
2. What can you tell about John Trumbull?
3. Who painted the portraits of George Washington?
4. Who founded the Hudson River School?
5. What can you tell about Winston Homer and Thomas Eakins?
6. What did they paint?
7. What is the subject matter of Edward Hopper?
8. What famous American sculptors do you know?
9. What famous American writers can you name?
10. What American Noble Prize winners do you know?
11. What can you say about Canadian arts?