



Image Analysis: *Tragic Prelude*



Tragic Prelude is a famous mural painted by John Steuart Curry in the Kansas State Capitol. It dramatically depicts the fiery abolitionist John Brown during the violent pre-Civil War conflict known as "Bleeding Kansas." With a Bible in one hand and a rifle in the other, Brown stands at the center of the chaos, symbolizing the deep divisions over slavery and the turbulent path that led to the Civil War. The mural captures both the passion and the tragedy of the era.

Instructions: On the following page, finish the various prompts and then “zoom in” on a portion of the painting, recreate it, and explain its meaning and symbolism.

1. In this painting, John Brown looks like a _____ because
2. "If I could change one thing in the painting, I would change _____ because
3. "The most powerful part of this painting is _____ because

Zoom in and recreate

Zoom-in Image	What does it mean?