

Talking points for teachers: What did the artists get right or wrong about the battle?

Jackson holding a sword

Wrong	Correct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jackson would probably not be standing on top of the barricade where he could be easily shot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Americans used bayonets to push the British soldiers back.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It doesn't accurately show the canal (ditch) before the barricade. The British would have to go down in the canal and then climb up the ladders. These ladders seem to be on level ground with the soldiers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the British soldiers were from the Scottish regiment as shown by the soldiers wearing kilts. (Note to teacher: The Scots suffered very high casualties.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The British commander died trying to get on a new horse in the middle of the field. This shows him at the barricade. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Americans had both troops in uniform and the militia in buckskin.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The British had ladders to try and climb the barricades.

Jackson on a horse

Wrong	Correct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The American officers were probably not on horses behind the barricade. They had horses, but they would have only ridden them if they planned to attack across the field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The British did build small boats, as shown in the painting, to try and get across the river to attack the American artillery on the western bank.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The barricade was built hastily out of mud and rock. This one looks like concrete. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Americans had cannons behind their barricade.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of ships on the river firing. Neither the Americans nor British had ships firing on the other side during the battle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The British are shown attacking in straight lines.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The British had ladders to try and climb the barricades.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Americans had both troops in uniform and the militia in buckskin.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both muskets and cannon put out a puff of smoke when fired. In a battle, this can become thick and difficult to see through.

Correct view of the battle

Wrong	Correct
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Americans would have been flying flags at the barricades but they wouldn't have erected flag poles for a battle position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gen. Pakenham's horse was shot out from under him, and he was shot trying to mount another horse. There appears to be a dead horse on the ground with another horse to the side.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The battle was fought on flat ground not on a hill. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The British attacked in straight lines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The puffs of smoke from the American guns seem to be above the guns, not in front as they should be. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The river is on the wrong side. The British attacked from the south; the river was to the west so it should be shown on the left side. 	