



Art and Literature Lesson Plan for Grades 6-8:

***Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* &**

Works from the

Ogden Museum of Southern Art

Lesson Overview

In *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, the Newberry award-winning book by Mildred D. Taylor, students get a first-hand look at life in rural Mississippi in the 1930s. Issues of racism, prejudice, and the institutions that support them are survived by the narrator's developing sense of family and love of the land in the. Likewise, art in the collection of the Ogden Museum explores many of the same issues and themes. Here, visual art makes powerful connections to literature and the larger social implications that allow contemporary students to meaningfully explore another place and time in American history and connect history to their own lives.

MUSEUM TOUR

When visiting the Ogden Museum, students will observe and analyze works that will assist in placing the story of *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* into greater historical and cultural context, allowing increased engagement with the novel and its themes.

Museum docents will use the Visual Thinking Strategies method to discuss individual works, and then connect these works to the book (See Index for images).

VOCABULARY

Elements of art— a group of aspects of visual art that is used as a foundation for art discussion. Includes color, shape, line, texture, value, form, and space.

Color— hue in a work of art. Can be divided into primary (red, yellow, and blue) colors and secondary (orange, green, purple), warm (red, orange, yellow) and cool (green, blue, purple), and neutral (white, gray, black, brown).

Shape—can be divided into geometric (triangle, circle, square, polygon), and organic (puddle, blob, leaf, boomerang).

Line— “a mark that spans the distance between two points”; line can be used to define shapes (thick, thin, heavy, light, straight, curvy, etc.).

Texture—the quality of a surface, what it would feel like if touched

Value—light and dark, shade and highlight

Form—three-dimensionality of a work, includes showing height, width, and depth

Space—refers to the background, middle ground, and foreground

Principles of Art—a group of aspects of visual art that artists use to organize the elements of art into an artwork, including unity, harmony, variety, balance, contrast, proportion, pattern/rhythm, and references.

Unity—how the piece of art works a whole; the concept behind the work

Harmony—how the elements of the work look together; repeating similar elements throughout the work

Variety—using different forms, shapes, lines, and colors throughout the work

Balance—arranging elements of the work so that no one part overpowers the rest

Contrast—using elements that conflict with one another

Proportion—the relative size of elements within a composition

Pattern/rhythm—showing consistency with colors and lines within a work

Poverty—the condition of having little or no money, goods, resources, or means of support

The Great Depression—a period between 1930 and 1940 in which many people lost their jobs, farms, homes, and life’s savings due to economic decline and a stock market crash. People who were poor already became much more so, because there were so many people looking for work, and the prices of crops also fell dramatically.

Racism— a belief that differences in the race of the person determines their worth

Prejudice—an opinion of something or someone formed without knowledge, thought, or reason

Segregation— the practice or policy of creating separate facilities within the same society for the use of a minority group; a practice common in America between the Civil War (1865) and the Civil Rights Movement (1964).

Civil Rights Act of 1964—ended the legal discrimination against blacks, women, and other minorities in public places, including schools.

Sharecropping—A system of tenant farming that came into wide use in the Southern United States during the Reconstruction era (1865–1877). The South had been devastated by war; planters had land but no money to pay labor they had been getting for free. At the same time, most of the former slaves had labor but no money and no land and no other skills than farming. The solution was the sharecropping system focused on cotton, which was the only crop that could generate cash for the croppers, landowners, merchants and the tax collector. Former slave owners used the system to control and exploit former slaves, providing little progression away from slavery for black families in the south.

STORY ACTION CONNECTIONS TO MUSEUM TOUR

Connecting the story action to themes of the book and to the artwork observed during the museum tour is important for providing contextual information to students. The following can be mentioned along with vocabulary terms for applicable works:

1) Strength of Family and Independence

- The closeness of Cassie and her siblings
- Uncle Hammer's visits
- How they all work together to keep the household and farm going
- Big Ma's story about how Cassie's grandfather bought the land and worked it, and how it is still in their family

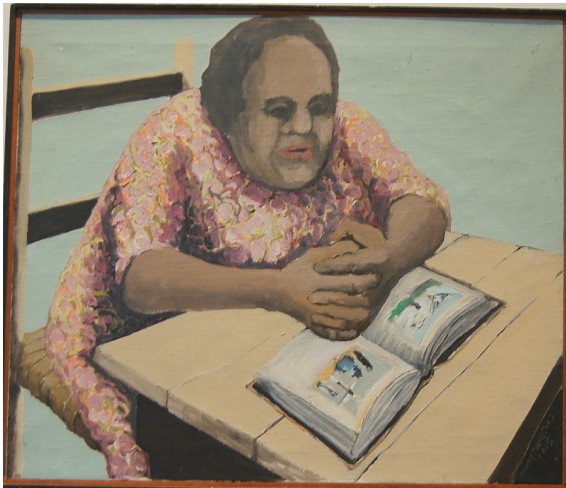
3) Prejudice, Racism, and the Institutions that Support Them

- Cassie's experiences with Lillian Jean Simms, at the Barnett store, and at the market in Strawberry
- The "night men" and what happens to the Berry family; and TJ
- Mr. Jamison is the anti-racist; helps black families even though other white families disapprove
- Schools and buses separate, textbooks inferior
- The Confederate flag that flies at the school
- Families shop at the Wallace store despite its bad influence, because they have no cash to pay for things upfront and must use credit; have someone sign for them
- Papa's job with the railroad takes him far away from the family; there is little opportunity where the Logan family lives



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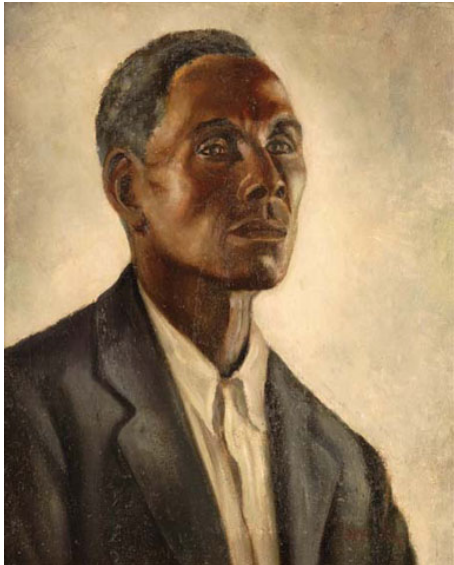


Benny Andrews, *The Plower*, *The Poverty of It All*, *Teacher*



Kathleen Blackshear, *Portrait of Robert Gould*; John Kelly Fitzpatrick, *Mules to Market*

John McCrady, *Portrait of a Negro*; *Evening Meal, Duck Hill, Mississippi*





Eudora Welty, *Woman of the Thirties*; Marion Post Wolcott, *Resting from Hoeing Cotton*



Marion Post Wolcott, *Negro Using Outside Stairway for 'Colored' to Enter Movie Theatre, Belzoni, MS, 1939*