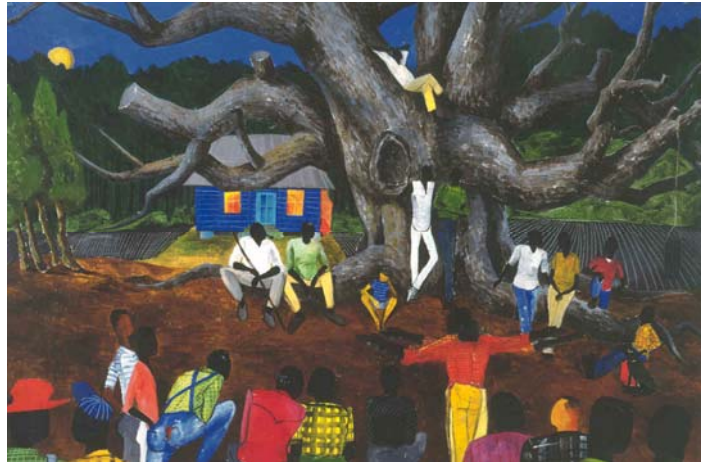




'Tales' in the Arts & in Our Community
K-12 standards-based discussion guide and activities
for *Home Again: Jonathan Green*
@ ARTworks February 2010, and beyond
from the Arts Council of Beaufort County
prepared by Lisa Annelouise Rentz & adapted from Portland School
System



"Tales," 1988 – Oil on Masonite 24" x 36" © Jonathan Green



Jonathan Green Studios, Inc.
295 Seven Farms Drive Suite C-214
Daniel Island, SC 29492-8002 • (843) 377-8094



1 • <http://www.beaufortcountyarts.com/talesedu.htm>
The Arts Council of Beaufort County



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Introduction

'Tales' in the Arts & in Our Community is a guide for educators of all subjects, and students of all ages, to explore and enjoy Jonathan Green's painting 'Tales' and his *Home Again* show at ARTworks in February 2010, and beyond.

Green's artwork and career captures the tales of our own coastal community, providing aesthetic enjoyment, intellectual amazement, and countless opportunities for critical thinking in classroom groups and independent learning. These skills are vital to Beaufort County's arts community and to the Arts Council of Beaufort County's mission to support Arts in Education.

It is also crucial for Beaufort County students to study Jonathan Green's work because so much of his imagery and inspiration stems from his own childhood, in the Gullah community that still offers insight into the seasons, the pace, and the salt of the environment around us now.

Contents:

discussion guide (for the entire exhibit and 'Tales.')

three arts-integrated activities

links for Promethean Boards & reference materials

Big Idea: *Time is well spent listening to good tales!*

By studying Jonathan Green's painting 'Tales' with these arts integrated prompts, students will be able to:

1. **Comprehend** the four disciplines of art (aesthetics, criticism, history, production.)
2. **Appreciate** the history of storytelling and the Gullah culture, and **achieve** a greater sense of place about their own environment.
3. **Understand** that tales are told in many different ways and with a big variety of materials; and **tell** their own important stories using various formats and genres.

Essential Questions:

What is the artist trying to communicate?

What story do I have to tell?

Why is it important for the community to recognize and interact with local artists?



Discussion Guide & Assessment Activity for Jonathan Green's 'Tales'

Students will better **comprehend** the four disciplines of art by **discussing** these points in groups, at ARTworks' gallery or in the classroom. Students can also **creatively write** their responses, in a journal or on a post card to the arts council, for example.

#1 aesthetics ~ *what is this? why do I like it? who else likes it?*

- What is the focal point in this painting? What are the two main objects your eyes notice first? What details do you see after a few moments?
- What are these people doing?
- What is the artist telling us with this picture? In this painting, how many people are talking, how many people are listening? What is the mood?
- What is the role of the tree in this scene? (follow up Q: would the tree work in this scene if it was a sapling?)

#2 art criticism ~ **analyzing the painting:** *What are the components of this work of art?*

- What are the main colors and tones? For example, what color is the sky, and why? (follow up Q: why is it nighttime? when are most tales told?)
- What makes the people visible? (outline of their figures, bright clothes.)
- What shapes do you see? What kind of lines did Jonathan Green use? (flat, wavy, horizontal, diagonal, vertical, repeated.)
- Do you see movement? How did Jonathan Green create movement in a painting? How can you tell people are listening?
- Do you think that Jonathan Green spent a lot of time brainstorming, planning and practicing in order to paint this scene? How can you tell, and why would he?
- Do you think this is the beginning, middle or end of the scene?
- What is a Tale? Why did Jonathan Green choose that as the title for this particular piece?

#3 Art history ~ **time period and cultural context:** *Why did this painting and the artist happen here in the Lowcountry, now in our own time?* - Jonathan Green was born in 1955 in Gardens Corners. Please see Reference List for more background info.

- When is this scene happening? *How* could it happen now?
 - What looks familiar to you in this scene, about the land and about the people?
 - What time of year is represented in this painting?
 - Jonathan Green is now (in 2010) 55 years old. How old do you think he was when he saw a scene like this in real life? Where would he have been in this scene? Where would you be?
 - Based on the setting and time period, what could the Tale be about?
- Follow up Qs: Where do you hear stories? Who tells them? What makes tales so interesting to listen to?



#4 The Discipline of Art Production & Tales of My Painting activity

This hands-on activity will **assess** how students understand Jonathan Green's process by giving them a chance to incorporate their new knowledge and observations into their own creative work.

This project, "Tales of My Painting," combines creative writing and visual arts, and can be accomplished in 1-2 class periods. Reading a Gullah tale outloud together will also help the ideas flow, please see reference list for online and book resources.

required materials: pencil, paper, scotch tape or stapler.

optional materials: colorful papers and scissors

rubric criteria: 1. use Jonathan Green info to brainstorm; 2. use all five senses; 3. match your description and illustration.

First, ask students to brainstorm based on what they've learned about Jonathan Green and tales:

- If you could tell any tale, what would it be about?
- Write a long list of your ideas about the setting, time, mood, characters, and activity— each one should have a different adjective!
- Then, decide on the message that you the artist want to convey— What's your point? What's the moral of your story?

Second, after students share their ideas outloud, ask students:

- Write a description, with details, about the tale you would tell.
- Please use all five senses.

(note: for some students it's helpful to specify the number of sentences or paragraphs you expect.)

Finally, ask students: Illustrate your painting for the Tale of My Painting!

- What details from the writing should be in the picture? Out of your whole written tale, which scene should be the only picture?

Note: work with available materials such as pencils for sketching, or even cut out paper shapes (especially for math lessons) with scissors. Attach the writing to the illustration, and display with the standards.

National Visual Arts Standards:
iii. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.
iv. Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture.
vi. Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.



ELA 2008 Standards

Folktales: A story that has no known author and was originally passed on from one generation to another by word of mouth. Unlike myths, which are about gods and heroes, folktales are usually about ordinary people or animals that act like people.

“**tales**” in 2-1; 3-1; 4-1; 5-1; 6-1: The student will read and comprehend a variety of literary texts....including folktales, fables, tall tales...

Creative writing and brainstorming

K4.1; 14.1; 2-4.1; 3-4.1; 4-4.1;

Generate ideas for writing by using techniques...

creative writing and descriptions

1-5.3; 2-5.3: Create written pieces that describe personal experiences, people, places, or things and that use words that appeal to the senses.

4-5.3: Create written descriptions using language that appeals to the readers' senses.

7-5.3; 8-5.3: Create descriptions for use in other modes of written works (for example, narrative, expository, or persuasive).

E1-5.2; E2-5.2; E3-5.2; E4-5.2: Create narratives (for example, personal essays, memoirs, or narrative poems) that use descriptive language to create tone and mood/that use figurative language and word choice to create tone and mood.

E35.3; E45.3: Create descriptive pieces (for example, personal essays, travel writing, or restaurant reviews) that use sensory images and vivid word choice.

[End of discussion guide and activity 1.]



Observe & Tell the Tale

Home Again Activity 2: Science and History are a big part of the Arts in the Lowcountry. Students will **appreciate** the history of storytelling and the Gullah culture, and **achieve** a greater sense of place about their own environment.

1. Refer to the discussion guide, and explore Jonathan Green's "Tales" painting with students.
 - Talk about Jonathan Green's life and career (see reference materials list). How—and how much—did his childhood influence his talent?
2. Choose a Gullah tale to share out loud with the class. (see reference materials list.)
3. Look at 'Tales' by artist Jonathan Green, and make a list of words suggested by students from one or more of these prompts:

Science

- What do you observe in this painting?
- What features of an eco-system can you find in the painting?
- What animal habitats could be in this painting?
- How do you bring nature into your home, meals, play time, sports, church, and school?
- What type of land and waterforms could be in and around this Lowcountry scene? What forms are in your neighborhood?

Occupations and Social Studies

- What occupations and activities are based in the outdoors and nature in the Lowcountry?
- What year could this be in, and what historical event could they be discussing? What would be some of their viewpoints?

Bonus Vocabulary Concept

- Self-sufficiency

4. Take the time to discuss the students' ideas.
5. Assess student comprehension by asking students to write a subtitle for the "Tales" painting, referencing their lists. For example:
 - Running: How I Ran As Fast As I Could To Get Home While the Biscuits Were Still Hot!
 - Walks: The Day I Learned How to Walk in the Rain and Only Two Drops Touched My Head
 - Play: Sometimes You'll Win, Sometimes You'll Scrape Open Your Knee. ...and continue writing if possible! [End of activity 2.]



Artists have Perspective: the Viewpoints of Storytelling

Home Again activity #3: Students will be able to **understand** that tales are told in many different ways and with a big variety of materials; and **tell** their own important stories using various formats and genres.

1. **Explore** Jonathan Green's painting 'Tales' via the discussion guide.
2. **View** more of his paintings, with comments about his life at <http://www.pbs.org/now/arts/greenessay.html>
(or see reference materials list.)
3. **Discuss** what the painting 'Tales' is physically made of:
media of painting (oil on masonite) perspective and lines, colors and shapes.
(National visual arts standard "expand knowledge of visual arts media and techniques and processes.")
4. **Read** a tale aloud (as appropriate to class topics or see reference list) to explore the genre of tales.
(ELA 2008 standards "Genre" in 7-1; 8-1; E1-1; E2-1; E3-1; E4-1;
Compare and contrast, evaluate use of...)
5. **Identify** the point(s) of view in the painting and in the story.
(ELA 2008 standards "point of view" 5-5.2; 6-5.2; 7-1.2; 8-1.2; E1-1.2; E2-1.2; E3-1.2; E4-1.2: Create narratives that have a...consistent point of view; explain the effect of point of view; Analyze the impact of point of view...)
5. **Ask** the class to brainstorm and decide: Other than painting or writing, how can you tell a tale? (singing, dancing, drama.)
 - Make notes about the who, what, when, where, why, and how about each format (painting vs. writing vs. new option) on white board or Promethean.
 - What words are in common?
6. **Assess** by asking students to write a creative paragraph with a beginning, middle, and end, about studying 'Tales' and what they've learned about telling and listening to a good story.
Is it time well spent?
(ELA 2008 standards: "Create narratives..." is in every grade level.)

[End of activity 3.]



Links & Reference for 'Tales' in the Arts & in Our Community

websites

- <http://www.pbs.org/now/arts/greenessay.html>

A photo essay of 12 of Green's paintings, each accompanied by statements by Green about how the images relate to his childhood and the Gullah community.

- <http://www.knowitall.org/gullahnet/gullah/index.html#>

Maps of the Lowcountry and info about the Gullah culture, straight from SCETV and Aunt Pearlie Sue (Beaufort resident Anita Prather Singleton!)

- <http://www.beaufortcountyarts.com/artnews.htm>

ARTnews magazine, a print publication of the arts council, has published two original Gullah stories by Beaufort County writers, in these issues:

- How Peachy Burned Down Her House by Natalie Daise, Nov 09-Feb 2010.
- The Going Away, by Vernie Singleton, July-Oct. 2009

- <http://www.beaufortcountyarts.com/talesedu.htm>

This arts council page also has a JPG image of the 'Tales' painting, and downloadable docs about Jonathan Green's life and work.

- JGreenBackground.doc
- JGreenArticles.doc

- <http://www.nps.gov/guge/parkmgmt/index.htm>

The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor is managed by a Federal Commission. Commissioners work in partnership with the National Park Service and the state historic preservation offices of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

books

Gullah Images: The Art of Jonathan Green, University of South Carolina Press, 1996. ISBN 1-57003-145-2. The 180 images contained in this book illustrate the meaning, purpose and beauty that Green finds in the daily tasks of life. Four essays describe the vitality of Gullah life and the progression of Green's career.

Branch, Muriel Miller: *The Water Brought Us*, The Story of the Gullah Speaking People, Cobblehill Books, Dutton, 1995.

Carawan, Guy and Candie: *Ain't you got a right to the tree of life*, University of Georgia Press, 1989. ISBN 0-8203-1643-1. First person stories by people of Johns Island, South Carolina provide insight into Gullah culture today as outsiders move onto the formerly isolated islands.

Hamilton, Virginia: *The People Could Fly*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1985, ISBN 0-679-84336-1. This collection of American Black folk tales



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delight young students. Brief descriptions following many of the stories provide information about the history and deeper meaning of the story.

Hurmenche, Belinda: *Before Freedom, When I just Can Remember*, John F. Blair, Publisher, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 1989. ISBN 0-89587-069-X. Twenty-seven narratives selected from interviews of former slaves, recorded in the 1930s. Firsthand accounts of the last years of slavery and early years of freedom.

Jaquith, Priscilla: *Bo Rabbit Smart for True, Folktales from the Gullah*, Philomel Books, 1981

Jones-Jackson, Patricia: *When Roots Die: Endangered Traditions on the Sea Islands*, University of Georgia Press, 1997. ISBN 0-8203-0833-1. Brief sketches of people and communities provide an introduction to the social structure of the Gullah people today. Gullah Tales, included "ber Rabbit," provide a basis for an introduction to the unique Gullah language. Recommended for older students.

Krull, Kathleen: *Bridge to Change, How Kids Live on a South Carolina Sea Island*, Lodestar Books, 1995.

Sukey and the Mermaid. Adapted from a Gullah Tale by Robert San Souci and illustrated by Brian Pinkney.

Children's books illustrated by Jonathan Green

Denize Lauture, *Father & Son*, Philomel Books, 1992. ISBN 0-399-21867-X (hc) 0-698-11380-2 (pb). Text and illustrations convey the facets of the special relationship between a father and son.

Patricia Lee Gauch, *Noah*, Philomel Books, 1994. ISBN 0-399-22548-X. An interpretation of the traditional story of "Noah and the Ark."

Dennis Haseley, *Crosby*, Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996. ISBN 0-15-200829-2. The story of a boy, Crosby, his kite and a new friend and how the kit and friend make a difference in Crosby's life.

