Georgia Museum of Art

LORD LOVE YOU
Works by R. A. Miller from the Mullis Collection

Teaching Packet
Developed for Grades K-12
Acknowledgments
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On the Cover
The credit information for the images on the cover of this teaching packet can be found on pages 11, 20, 29, 37 and 46.

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About this Packet

This teaching packet will introduce your students to objects by R.A. Miller in the exhibition *Lord Love You: Works by R.A. Miller from the Mullis Collection*. The materials in this packet have been developed for students in grades K–12, with specific activities for each grade level that correlate with National Performance Standards and Georgia Performance Standards. Please feel free to adapt them to suit your needs.

This packet includes the following materials:

- About the Georgia Museum of Art
- Looking at art in a museum
- Background information about folk art
- Essay: “American Visual Culture and R.A. Miller’s Art” by Paul Manoguerra
- Information about selected works of art
- Color reproductions of the following works by R.A. Miller:
  - *Green Dinosaur whirligig*
  - *Miller Family American Flag*
  - *Bigfoot*
  - *Orange Angel*
  - *(Self) Portrait with a Blow Oskar Cutout* (with assistance of Durwood Pepper)
- Activities involving studio art, art history and language arts for the classroom that follow the National and Georgia Performance Standards
- Class activities and summary questions
- Glossary of related terms
- Internet resources
- Bibliography

All items may be photocopied for classroom use. The images in this packet are available for download at: www.uga.edu/gamuseum/education/r.a._miller_teaching_packet.html
About the Georgia Museum of Art

For more than 50 years, the Georgia Museum of Art has played a central role in the preservation of the visual arts in Georgia. Founder Alfred Heber Holbrook initially began his art collection in 1940 to honor his late wife, Eva Underhill Holbrook. A retired lawyer from New York, Holbrook generously made an initial gift of 100 paintings to the University of Georgia and later served as the museum’s first director. Visitors today may find it difficult to believe that the Georgia Museum of Art once consisted of only two galleries on the ground floor of the old university library on North Campus when it first opened in November of 1948. In 1996, the Georgia Museum of Art relocated to a state-of-the-art, 52,000-square-foot building on the east side of the university’s campus. Today, the museum houses thousands of works of art. The Georgia State legislature designated the Georgia Museum of Art the official state museum of art in 1982.

The Georgia Museum of Art has closed its gallery spaces for two years in order to begin the construction of an additional wing and renovation of its current space. This period of expansion was begun in early spring of 2009 and will continue until the museum reopens to the public in early 2011. During this time, the museum will sponsor a number of events and exhibitions, including collaborations with the Lyndon House Arts Center and other businesses and organizations state and nationwide.

Partial support for the exhibitions and programs at the Georgia Museum of Art is provided by the Friends of the Georgia Museum of Art and the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. The Council is a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. Individuals, foundations and corporations provide additional support through their gifts to the University of Georgia Foundation and the Arch Foundation. The Georgia Museum of Art is ADA compliant; the M. Smith Griffith Auditorium is equipped for the hearing-impaired.

The Georgia Museum of Art offers a diverse schedule of educational programs for all ages. Please visit our Web site at www.uga.edu/gamuseum or call 706.542.GMOA (4662) for more information.
Looking at Art in a Museum

Although you can look at art in magazines and books, on the computer and on posters, nothing can substitute for the experience of seeing real works of art. The easiest place to do this is in an art gallery or a museum like the Georgia Museum of Art. When you look at paintings, drawings, photographs and prints firsthand, you are able to see details that are often lost in reproductions. With sculpture, you are able to walk around the work and observe it from many points of view. The Georgia Museum of Art is a free and easy way to visit and experience works of art. Younger students may ask their parents to check the Georgia Museum of Art’s Web site at www.uga.edu/gamuseum for events and other information.

When you come to a museum like the Georgia Museum of Art, there are certain things you should remember:

• The museum is a quiet place, like a library, so that people are able to concentrate on the art. Please keep your voice to a whisper and raise your hand to ask questions.

• Because the works of art in the museum are fragile, there is no running or jumping allowed.

• Even though our hands may look clean, they have oils on them that you cannot see and that will damage the art if you touch it. Please stay at least 12 inches, or an arm’s length, away from the art you are viewing and never touch the art.
Wall Text

When you are looking at a work of art, there is often a label on the wall next to it. This label provides information about the art, allowing you to learn more about the work that you are viewing as well as information about the artist and time period. Museum wall labels typically include the following information:

- **Artist (Nationality, Birth and Death Dates)**
- **Title of Work, Date of Work**
- **Medium**
- **Collection Information and Donor Information**
- **Curator’s Comments About the Artist and/or the Work**

**Activity:** Make a wall label for your own work of art. For the curator’s comments, describe your influences, inspirations, artistic process and any other information that you would like the viewer to know about you or your art.
People at the Museum

There are many people who work and volunteer at museums. Below is a list of some of the people you may see during your visits:

Director
Serves as a leader and administrator for the entire museum.

Office Manager
Oversees the budget and purchasing.

Public Relations and Publications Staff
Handles all public relations and designs and oversees production of publications.

Curator
Originates ideas for exhibitions; researches and writes text for catalogue and labels.

Registrar
Manages collection and arranges insurance and shipping.

Preparator/ Designer
Prepares work for the exhibition (matting, framing) and travel (builds crates), designs exhibitions, builds pedestals and armatures, chooses paint colors for walls, works with the curator to decide the placement of works and how to hang them and maintains the exhibitions while they are up.

Security Staff
Ensures the safety of people and the art at a museum.

Educator
Designs and implements programs that serve to interpret the work for different types of audiences.

Docent
A trained volunteer who conducts tours of exhibitions for groups.
Folk Art

Originally used as a label for European crafts and decorative arts, the term folk art more recently refers to art produced by indigenous cultures. Folk art reflects the values and traditions of these cultures in both function and aesthetic. These artists often use found objects to create works of art rather than traditional art materials. Recycled materials, such as tin cans, car tires, bicycle frames, windowpanes, wood panels, car doors and other nontraditional materials, are used in American folk art. These objects provide unique surfaces on which folk artists paint.

The communal aspect of folk art is very important. These works of art celebrate their individual communities and reflect the location in which these artists live through the choice of materials, use of localized forms and overall design. Animals, family members, friends, religious imagery and the folklore tradition demonstrate the importance of the idea of community. Many of these artists do not sell the art they create or do not consider themselves to be artists.

Another reason that some folk artists do not call themselves artists is because the majority of them are self-taught, which means that they make art without any instruction from art schools or other academic institutions. Due to the artists’ lack of formal training, folk art is considered by some to be a more pure art form than mainstream art. The thoughts and experiences of the artists can be seen as more honestly described because they are instinctively drawn or painted rather than rendered in a way learned from an instructor.

Twentieth-century French artist Jean Dubuffet brought public attention to the concept of creating art instinctively. Dubuffet referred to art that existed apart from the mainstream as art brut, or “raw art,” which possesses a primitive and naïve aesthetic. Disillusioned by the contrived nature of the traditions of the art academy, Dubuffet investigated and created outsider art. He was especially interested in the art produced by the mentally impaired, prisoners and children, none of whom had received formal training.
American Visual Culture and R.A. Miller’s Art

Lord Love You: Works by R.A. Miller from the Mullis Collection, a special exhibition organized by the Georgia Museum of Art for the Lyndon House Arts Center as part of GMOA on the Move (a two-year series of events and exhibitions taking place across the state of Georgia and beyond while the museum is closed for construction and renovation) features 83 paintings, drawings, sculptures and whirligigs created by the Georgia self-taught artist Reuben Aaron “R.A.” Miller (1912–2006). Born in Rabbittown, Ga., just outside of Gainesville, R.A. Miller resided in a tiny frame house built with the scraps of a family home ruined by a tornado in 1936. Following decades working in a cotton mill and as a Free Will Baptist preacher, Miller started making art full-time in the late 1970s and early 1980s. By the time the Athens-based rock group R.E.M. used Miller’s home as the setting for the “Left of Reckoning” video in 1984, Miller had created dozens of whirligigs, angels and crosses to decorate the hill near his home.1 Lord Love You, drawn entirely from the private collection of Carl and Marian Mullis, presents many of Miller’s best-known themes: God, country, popular culture and animals.

Abstract Expressionist painter Hans Hofmann, discussing the making of art in 1931, remarked, “The only values which make a work of art are emotional and sensory. Life-content. Expressed experience. Sensory raw material blended to a spiritual unity through legitimate use of the medium art.”2 The raw emotional experience, the spiritual harmony and the personal, often autobiographical, content of the images by the extremely prolific Miller help explain his popularity among viewers and collectors of American folk art. Miller learned to create outside the usual structures of art-world learning—college and university art schools in the United States.3 The visual context in which he made art includes an overlapping ground of beliefs, concepts, images and texts found in the common American visual culture.

Images from popular American culture, often gleaned from television, appear frequently in Miller’s art, as in Coca-Cola Bottle (no. 2), Bigfoot (no. 55), Abraham Lincoln (no. 63) and Golf Player (no. 79). An inventory of Miller’s animals would rival any menagerie—wading pink flamingoes, lurking green alligators, preening barnyard chickens, slithering colorful snakes, swimming blue sharks and more. His animal kingdom includes not only “critters” from the present but creatures fashioned to represent those from the past—playing dinosaurs, soaring pterodactyls and creeping crabs.

The Mullis Collection includes some of Miller’s very personal works of art and some more controversial images. The love and pride he held for his family
emerges in works such as *I Love My Wife* (no. 39) and *Miller Family American Flag* (no. 46), which records family members’ birthdates, including his own. Other creations, such as *Cross Burning (Evil Men)* (no. 38), *Confederate Flag Shirt Devil* (no. 44) and *Devil with a Klansman in the Fire* (no. 19) recall his own experiences with the Ku Klux Klan and profoundly decry the organization’s hateful racism. “Blow Oskar,” arguably Miller’s most frequently depicted figure, references his cousin, who would blow his car horn while driving past Miller’s property. Often dressed in red, white and blue like Uncle Sam, “Blow Oskar” resurfaces in other derivatives such as “Mrs. Blow Oskar” and “Devil Blow Oskar” (no. 18). Patriotic images of American flags also appear as a recurring theme in Miller’s art.

Miller insisted his work was “junk,” not “art,” and priced it accordingly. Yet, he was conscious of the audience’s role in interpreting a work of art. Meaning in his images comes from the language of visual symbols he uses again and again. In his “junk,” Miller embeds a base of knowledge and experience that contributes to an overall process of creating rich narratives and imagery. The value in his symbolic communications rests in his ability to touch our imagination, to create a sense of wonder and to encourage a sense of beauty.

As a preacher, Miller often relied upon the Bible for communicating his strongly symbolic message. Works like *Archangel Gabriel* (no. 51) and *Noah’s Ark* (no. 12) draw from the Bible for inspiration. In *Crucifixion* (no. 60), he presents his interpretation of the scene from the life of Christ. Miller is acutely aware of the numerous representations of the Crucifixion in our shared visual culture. Of course, the Crucifixion is prolific in art history (see, for example, Paolo di Stefano Schiavo’s *Crucifixion* from about 1430 in the Samuel H. Kress Study Collection at the Georgia Museum of Art). Unlike the black background Paolo used for the tempera painting, Miller utilizes a white sky as scenery. Set upon a blood-red landscape of Golgotha and flanked by the two criminals crucified with him, Christ on the cross looms at the center of Miller’s composition as in Paolo’s painting. Miller enhances the theatrical nature of the scene by employing stage-like painted drapery around its edges. He provides a black sun and a dark cloud as representations of the eclipse at the time of Christ’s death.

Within some of Miller’s art there occurs an element of millennialism, the idea that the return of Christ is imminent and the final judgment of sinners will transpire. The recurring “Lord Love You” and “Devil Hate You” statements within many of his images operate as textual reminders. Other images provide guidelines for behavior (*No Lying, No Cursing [with Red Devil]* [no. 26]) or simple, colorful images for spiritual uplift (*Angels and Crosses* [no. 53]). Devil after devil, and
some evil men, burn in the fires of hell. The final judgment also becomes explicit in works like *Seven-Headed Beast* (no. 10) and *People Going to the Lake of Fire* (no. 56).

The Mullis Collection also includes a few of the hundreds of whirligigs and wind ornaments that originally made the Rabbittown property an attraction. Miller’s *Green Dinosaur* whirligig (no. 71), created using enamel paint on tin cutouts, wood and a bicycle tire rim, was originally conceived as a whimsical yard decoration. The abstracted red and green dinosaur anchors one side while the green tin scales serve as the mechanism for rotation when the wind blows against them. Within a gallery setting, however, the whirligig emerges as sculpture, as a tour de force of kinetic opportunity.

As images by self-taught and outsider artists appeared in museum and gallery exhibitions, Miller’s work did meet with some success during his lifetime. His art was included in such exhibitions as *Outside the Mainstream: Folk Art in Our Time* (1988) at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta and *Passionate Visions of the American South* (1993–94) at the New Orleans Museum of Art in Louisiana. His *American Flag* was chosen along with images by Al Hirschfeld, Peter Max, and Jamie Wyeth to decorate commemorative September 11, 2001, issues of *TV Guide*. Thanks to collectors like Carl Mullis, to international publications like *Raw Vision*, and to the inclusion of his work in the permanent collections of such museums as the Georgia Museum of Art and the High Museum of Art, R.A. Miller has emerged as an important figure among the South’s self-taught artists and in understanding contemporary art in the 20th century.

Paul Manoguerra
Curator of American Art
Georgia Museum of Art

Notes
4. As one example, see Luke 23:1–56.
R.A. Miller (American, 1912–2006)

*Green Dinosaur* whirligig, n.d.

Enamel paint on tin and wood with bicycle tire rim

Approx. 30 1/2 x 35 3/4 x 30 1/2 inches

Collection of Carl and Marian Mullis

The images in this packet are available for download at:

www.uga.edu/gamuseum/education/r.a_miller_teaching_packet.html
R.A. Miller created many whirligigs of different subjects, decorating his lawn with these movable sculptures; when the wind blew, they would all spin. In this one, he uses a green dinosaur with red spikes, eyes and mouth; the dinosaur faces the spinning part of the whirligig, which is a bicycle wheel with green spikes around it.

**Grades K–4**

*Studio Art: Make a Whirligig*

Look at different examples of whirligigs. As a class, discuss how they work; point out which parts move, which parts stay still and what makes them move. Develop a definition for “whirligig.” Then, make your own pinwheel, a simple type of whirligig. Decorate the front and back of a square piece of cardstock or heavy paper (a template is included below) with a pattern or design. Then, cut along the lines and bend one corner of each section, pinning it to the middle with a pin, staple or other fastener. Blow on it or place it in the wind. How do the patterns on your pinwheel change when it spins?

![Diagram of a pinwheel]

**Enrichment:**

1. Why do you think that Miller placed so many whirligigs in his front yard? Would they have functioned differently if they had been kept indoors? Can you imagine what all of these whirligigs would look like spinning with the wind in his front yard?
2. Using the class definition of a whirligig, discuss some other whirligigs that you have seen. What are some architectural structures that have moveable parts?
3. After seeing examples of whirligigs and discussing architecture that has moveable elements, design a plan for your own whirligig. Draw a diagram
for it and write two to three sentences about how it works. Grades K–1 can present their plans to the class instead.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**
**Grades K–4: Content Standard 2:** Using knowledge of structures and functions.

**Art History: Site-Specific Art**
Whirligigs can be considered site-specific because they are designed to be outdoors where there is wind. The term “site-specific” refers to a work of art designed to function in a specific place. Look at examples of site-specific art. How can you tell a work of art is site-specific?

**Enrichment:**
1. Look at images of sculptures and murals. Can you point out which ones are site-specific? Explain why you think they are or are not.
2. Study a photograph of Robert Smithson’s *Spiral Jetty*, a site-specific work located in the Great Salt Lake in Utah. What kind of materials did Smithson use? If this were a work that was not site-specific and could be moved, do you think he would use a different type of material? Why or why not? Could Miller use a different type of material for his whirligigs and still have them function in the same way?
3. Compare and contrast Smithson’s work and Miller’s whirligig. What are their similarities and differences? Is one of these works more able to be moved to a new site? Why do you think that?

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**
**Grades K–4: Content Standard 2:** Using knowledge of structures and functions.

**Language Arts: Animals with Something to Say**
On the dinosaur attached to his whirligig, Miller painted the words “Lord love you.” Miller often used text in his art to communicate a message to the viewer. Many people do this when they design or select greeting cards for their friends and family. Draw, cut out and color one of your favorite animals. Somewhere on that animal, write a message to a family member or friend. Grades K–2 should write two to three sentences, and grades 3 and 4 may elaborate and write in a traditional letter format.
Enrichment:
1. Why do you think that Miller chose to include text on his work?
2. How would the work be different without the text? Would you like it better with or without text? Why?
3. If you could add text to his work, what would you say?

**Georgia Performance Standard: Writing**
**Kindergarten:** ELAKW1 The student begins to understand the principles of writing. The student:
b. Uses drawings, letters, and phonetically spelled words to create meaning.

**Grade 1:** ELA1W1 The student begins to understand the principles of writing. The student:
l. Uses appropriate end punctuation (period and question mark) and correct capitalization of initial words and common proper nouns (e.g., personal names, months).

**Grade 2:** ELA2W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student:
e. Begins to use appropriate formatting conventions for letter writing (e.g., date, salutation, body, closing).

**Grade 3:** ELA3W1 The student demonstrates competency in the writing process. The student:
c. Writes text of a length appropriate to address the topic or tell the story.

**Grade 4:** ELA4W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative that:
c. Creates an organizing structure.

**Grades 5–8**

**Studio Art: Colorful Pinwheels**
After looking at different examples of whirligigs made by Miller, discuss the color schemes that he chose for his works. Are there any that you prefer? Are there any that are unappealing to you? After discussing which color combinations you think are most successful, use this information to design your own color wheel whirligig.

Use a color wheel to choose a group of colors with which you would like to create your whirligig. Decorate the front and the back of a square piece of cardstock or heavy paper (a template is included below) with these colors. One color should go in each quarter of the square, separated by the lines. You can use either flat colors or designs in the colors you chose. Then, cut along the lines and bend forward one corner of each section, pinning it to the middle with a pin, staple or other fastener. Blow on it or place it in the wind. How do the colors on your pinwheel change when it spins?
Enrichment:
1. What kind of mood is communicated with each color scheme? Why?
2. This particular whirligig could be used as a children’s toy. What are some other examples of children’s toys that are considered whirligigs or have similar designs?
3. Design your own children’s toy that moves. Incorporate your conclusions about which color schemes are the most effective in the aesthetic design of the toy. Write a paragraph explaining how the whirligig will work and to which age group it will be marketed.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**
**Grades 5–8: Content Standard 2:** Using knowledge of structures and functions.

**Art History: Kinetic Sculpture**
A whirligig is a kinetic sculpture, which means that it has moveable parts. Look at the work of Alexander Calder, a sculptor who created mobiles and kinetic sculptures. Discuss what you think his inspiration was for each work and how he expanded that idea into a moving form. How have contemporary artists expanded on this idea of kinetic sculpture? Where can you find examples of kinetic sculpture?

Enrichment:
1. Why do you think Calder’s art was so revolutionary in the 1950s? Would it be as revolutionary in today’s art scene? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think artists might want their art to move? How does movement change how a work of art looks? How does movement connect to the environment in which it is placed?
3. How does Calder’s art relate to children’s toys?
**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades 5–8: Content Standard 4:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

**Language Arts: Artful Engineering**

The creation of Miller's whirligig involved planning and an understanding of how parts fit together and make each other move. Architects and engineers must go through a similar planning process to create buildings and machines that function properly. Select a building or other architectural structure in your neighborhood. Write a description of it that includes the shapes you see in it and the materials used. What might have influenced the architect or engineer who designed this structure?

Enrichment:

1. How do you think Miller planned his whirligigs before constructing them? Was his process similar to or different from your architect or engineer?
2. When building whirligigs, what factors would you need to consider for your design?
3. If you were going to design a building, what other buildings would influence you? Where would you want to build your structure?

**Georgia Performance Standard: Writing**

**Grade 5: ELA5W1** The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:

a. Selects a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

**Grade 6: ELA6W1** The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and provides satisfying closure. The student:

a. Selects a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

**Grade 7: ELA7W1** The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and provides a satisfying closure. The student:

a. Selects a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

**Grade 8: ELA8W1** The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:

a. Selects a focus, organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.
Grades 9–12

Studio Art: Spinning Art
Miller used materials that he found around his house, yard and community to construct his whirligigs. Collect found objects you could use to make your own whirligig. You might choose wire hangers, plastic soda bottles or cardboard boxes to construct your spinning sculpture. Bring your materials to class, and work with a partner to design and build your own whirligig using your materials. Be sure to share your materials with other classmates who may have things you can use too. Consider not only how to make your sculpture spin, but also the design of the work of art.

Enrichment:
1. Why do you think Miller used found materials instead of purchasing art supplies? After working with found materials, what are your opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of them?
2. There are many types of whirligigs. What did you like about the construction process you chose? What would you change?
3. Miller placed a lot of whirligigs together on his lawn. Design a plan for arranging different kinds of whirligigs in a public space. Write a paper explaining your concept, the different types of whirligigs used and why, what materials were used and how the whirligigs function both individually and as a group. Make a diagram of the plan and the individual whirligigs and present the idea to the class.

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions.

Art History: Moving Works of Art
Look at images of Miller’s whirligigs and whirligigs by other artists, such as folk artist Vollis Simpson. Make notes about how you think they work, what types of materials were used and if they were built for specific locations. Compare and contrast the whirligigs of folk art with the mobiles of the fine arts, such as the work of Alexander Calder. How are they similar? How are they different?

Enrichment:
1. Place the whirligig in the context of today’s fast-paced, technology-driven society. How could the whirligig be “upgraded” to keep up with other technology? Pair up with a partner and discuss your plans to create a whirligig that is technologically advanced but retains its identity as a work of art.
2. Design blueprints, choose materials, invent a name and write a one-to-two-page paper explaining how this whirligig spins, its materials, how you have improved it from its basic model and whether or not you think it should be considered art. Additionally, create a slogan to advertise it.
3. Present your design to the class. Treat the presentation as a sales pitch. The class should vote on the design that best achieves its goals of being a high-tech work of art.

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.

Language Arts: Where Is Your Whirligig?
Because they are moved by wind, whirligigs are designed for outdoors. Discuss the idea of art created for a certain place or environment. How does the object change when it is placed in a different context? Write a short story about a whirligig that is found in a setting for which it was not intended.

Enrichment:
1. How do you think an artist would react if he or she found his or her work in a place for which it was not intended? Are there some situations in which this change of setting would be viewed negatively? Are there situations in which it could be viewed positively?
2. Besides art, is there anything else that seems intended for a specific setting and seems completely out of place otherwise? If so, what are some examples?
3. Folk art is sometimes referred to as outsider art, as it remains outside of the mainstream art scene. For what type of environment do you think folk art is intended? Where would it seem out of place? Discuss your perceptions of folk art. What are the general opinions surrounding folk art among high school students? Teachers? Parents? The general public? What do you think influenced these opinions?

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing
Grade 9: ELA9W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals closure. The student:
b. Selects a focus, structure, and point of view relevant to the purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.
Grade 10: ELA10W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals closure. The student:
b. Selects a focus, structure, and point of view relevant to the purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

**Grade 11: ELA11W1** The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:

b. Selects a focus, structure, and point of view relevant to the purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

**Grade 12: ELA12W1** The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:

b. Selects a focus, structure, and point of view relevant to the purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.
R.A. Miller (American, 1912–2006)
Miller Family American Flag, n.d.
Enamel paint on tin
Approx. 26 1/2 x 32 1/4 x 1/2 inches
Collection of Carl and Marian Mullis

The images in this packet are available for download at:
www.uga.edu/gamuseum/education/r.a._miller_teaching_packet.html
In this work, R.A. Miller incorporates his family tree onto an American flag painted on tin. He lists his family’s names and birthdates in the white stripes of the flag. Miller’s work, such as many of his Blow Oskar figures dressed in red, white and blue, often included patriotic themes.

Grades K–4
Studio Art: Folk Art Flags
Folk art often reflects the culture in which it is created. Miller chose multiple symbols of the United States, such as the American flag, patriotic colors and other images, to identify himself as American. Use found images to create your own version of the American flag. Look through old magazines for red, white and blue images and cut them out (be sure you have permission to cut these materials). Next, draw an outline of an American flag on a piece of 20 x 16-inch cardstock (teachers can provide photocopied flags on cardstock to save time). Mark the parts of the flag on your cardstock that are red, white and blue. Glue your red, white and blue images onto the corresponding areas of the flag to make a collage. The images can include objects and people that you think symbolize the United States. Present your collage to the class.

Enrichment:
1. Besides the American flag and the colors red, white and blue, what are some other symbols of the United States? Are there any that you see every day? What are they?
2. Why do you think some artists, like Miller, think that it is important to use this type of American imagery in their art?
3. Find another symbol of the United States and draw a picture of it. Present the picture to the class and explain how it represents the United States.
4. Choose a new symbol for the United States. What symbol did you choose and why?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades K–4: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Art History: Patriotic Art
What words or images come to mind when you think of patriotism? Create a list of associations you have with this word and apply them in the context of art. What makes art patriotic? What types of images typically are used within a work that people consider patriotic? Are there certain colors typically used? Choose a single work that represents your definition of patriotic art.
Enrichment:

1. Based on your definition of patriotic art, would you consider Miller’s art to be patriotic? Why or why not?
2. Can you think of any other artists who make patriotic art?
3. Find examples of patriotic art from other countries. How is it similar to patriotic art from the United States? How is it different?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades K–4: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: My Family
On this tin cutout of an American flag, Miller lists the names and birthdates of his wife and eight children. Think about the arrangement of the names. Is there any order, or did Miller place them randomly throughout the work? Discuss the idea of a family tree, using examples of more traditional depictions. Just as Miller chose a nontraditional format for his family tree, students can choose any object or symbol that represents their family. Each student should select a symbol or motif for his or her own family tree that represents his or her family. On this symbol, students can list the names of their immediate family. Grades K–2 should write two to three sentences about their favorite family memory or dictate them to their teacher. Grades 3 and 4 can write two to three sentences describing each family member.

Enrichment:

1. Present your family symbol to the class, reading your favorite memories or descriptions of each family member out loud. What made you select the symbol for your family? Does it reflect your family in some way, or did you choose it for another reason?
2. Why do you think that Miller chose to write his family tree on an American flag rather than a tree?
3. Does Miller’s selection of the American flag tell you anything about his family? What is a symbol? Could the American flag function as a symbol in this work of art? If so, what do you think it could symbolize?

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing
Kindergarten: ELAKW2 The student begins to write in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student writes a narrative that:
a. Involves one event.
Grade 1: ELA1W2 The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive and response to literature. The student will write a narrative that:
a. Begins to capture a reader’s interest by writing a personal story.
Grade 2: ELA2W2 The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces informational writing that:
d. Adds facts and details.

Grade 3: ELA3W2 The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces informational writing (e.g., procedures, report, correspondence) that:
d. Includes relevant examples, facts, anecdotes, and details.

Grade 4: ELA4W2 The student demonstrates competency in a variety of genres. The student produces informational writing (e.g., report, procedures, correspondence) that:
d. Includes appropriate facts and details.

Grades 5–8

Studio Art: Patriotic Mobile

The American flag is one of the most commonly used symbols for American culture. Using this image, students can create a patriotic mobile using recycled soup can lids (edges should be sanded smooth by an adult), acrylic paint, hammers, nails, craft wire, wire coat hangers, wire cutters, superglue and fishing line. Ask students to use these materials and other found objects they bring from home to create a mobile that represents the American flag.

Enrichment:

1. Look at different ways that the American flag icon is used in contemporary culture, such as in advertisements, commercials, album covers and food wrappers. Discuss as a class why designers would want to connect this symbol to their products.
2. Do you think artists, such as Miller, use the American flag for the same reasons as commercial designers? If not, why do you think he uses the American flag?
3. Using this understanding of the American flag’s symbolism, design an advertisement for a product that uses the American flag. Write a three-to-five-minute presentation to give in front of the class as though pitching the idea to a major advertising firm. As a class, vote for the most effective advertisement.

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts

Grades 5–8: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.
Art History: Patriotism in Other Cultures
How do you define patriotic art? Divide the class into groups of three or four students. Each group should select a work of art (from any culture) that is considered patriotic. Research basic facts about the work and explain why this work is considered patriotic by its culture. What conventions does the artist use to represent the culture? How can you tell that it is patriotic? As a group, construct a three-minute presentation about the work you selected, including reasons your group considers the work patriotic.

Enrichment:
1. Are there any works that you do not agree are patriotic, or are all of the selected works patriotic? Debate as a class what constitutes patriotic art.
2. Compare the patriotic works selected by the class with Miller’s works. How does patriotic folk art compare to fine art with patriotic subject matter? Discuss the similarities and differences.
3. Why is patriotic art so important to these artists? Is it important in today’s society? Why or why not?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 5–8: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: American Symbols
Miller uses one of the most famous symbols of the United States, the American flag, in his painting. The history behind the creation of its symbolic meaning, however, is often forgotten. Read Steven Kroll’s book “By the Dawn’s Early Light” as a class and create a timeline of events. Discuss which historical events contributed to the symbols we use to represent the United States today, such as the American flag, the Liberty Bell and the colors red, white and blue.

Enrichment:
1. After discussing the origins of these symbols, divide into groups and assign one symbol to each group. Make a list of the original associations of the symbols and how their meanings have changed. How do Americans feel about these symbols? How do you think people from other countries view them?
2. Write a one-to-two-page paper responding both to the book and to your selected symbol. Give a brief summary of the American history that your symbol represents, as well as a personal response to its current
connotations. Make sure to include multiple examples of where one could find your symbol today.

3. Present your papers to the class. Based on how these different symbols are perceived by the general population, if Miller were to paint his family tree today, should he still use an American flag? Why or why not?

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing

Grade 5: ELA5W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a response to literature that:

b. Advances a judgment that is interpretive, evaluative, or reflective.

Grade 6: ELA6W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of forms. The student produces a response to literature that:

c. Advances a judgment that is interpretive, analytic, evaluative, or reflective.

Grade 7: ELA7W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a response to literature that:

d. Supports a judgment through references to the text and personal knowledge.

Grade 8: ELA8W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a response to literature that:

f. Produces a judgment that is interpretive, analytic, evaluative, or reflective (orally, graphically, in writing).

Grades 9–12

Studio Art: Tin Can Luminary

As a class, discuss American imagery and symbolism and how you think the rest of the world perceives American symbols. How can these motifs be presented in a positive way that celebrates the achievements of the United States? Brainstorm designs on sketch paper, using work by Miller and other folk artists for reference. Use your favorite design on a tin can luminary, made with a soup can (with edges sanded), nails, a hammer, permanent markers, gloves and a candle.

Directions:

1. Transfer designs from sketch paper directly onto the can with permanent marker.
2. On the design, draw evenly spaced dots where the holes will be punched.
3. Fill the can with water and freeze overnight.
4. Hold can in place with a clamp.
5. Wearing gloves, use a nail and hammer to pierce the can at each marked dot.
6. After the ice melts, place a candle inside and light it.
Enrichment:
1. Look at different examples of American imagery. Did you implement some of the same strategies in your designs?
2. Compare contemporary advertisements with historical representations of the United States. How have these symbols evolved? Are any of the same representations used today?
3. Critique the designs on the luminaries. Are there some designs that work more effectively as two-dimensional images? How did they function individually versus as part of a larger group? Are smaller, repeated designs more visually interesting, or do you prefer single, larger motifs? Which luminaries are most effective in presenting American imagery positively? How does a lit candle change the overall effect of the work?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Art History: Patriotic Images in Contemporary Culture
How have patriotic images been integrated into today’s culture? Consider recent political events, cultural events and elections that have produced memorable patriotic images, ranging from street art to official political campaign graphics. Each student should select one example of contemporary patriotic art, such as work by Jasper Johns or David Hammons. Prepare a presentation for the class explaining why the work is considered patriotic, the events surrounding its creation, what visual strategies the artist uses, the original function of the work, how you think the work will be viewed 20 years from now and any other relevant information.

Enrichment:
1. Have you seen any of these images in everyday life? Which ones have you not seen? Discuss as a class why certain images were seen more often than others in contemporary culture.
2. What do you think the artist of a patriotic work of art is trying to accomplish? Based on those criteria, do you find these works effective? Why or why not? If not, how could the art be altered to be more effective?
3. Select a recent political or cultural event. As a class, discuss how Miller would have addressed the subject in his art. Would he have used a symbol to represent the subject? What colors and materials would he use? Base your opinions on specific works of Miller’s.
National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: Patriotic Poetry
While Miller expresses American themes visually, writers, such as the American poet Walt Whitman, verbalize their thoughts. Read Whitman’s poem “In Former Songs” and discuss it as a class, analyzing its themes. What are Whitman’s views of love, death, patriotism and democracy?

Enrichment:
1. After discussing the class’s conclusions about how Whitman viewed patriotism and democracy, consider how Miller might feel about the same topics. How would they differ? Would they agree on anything?
2. Write a one-page personal response or journal entry to “In Former Songs” that expresses your own feelings on the themes of love, death, patriotism and democracy. Present them to the class.
3. How would you translate your ideas visually? Would expressing ideas through visual art be more liberating or limiting? Do you think that Whitman and Miller have compromised a fulfilling expression of their beliefs because of their selected media?

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing
Grade 9: ELA9RL2 The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works from various genres and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:
d. Compares and contrasts the presentation of a theme or topic across genres and explains how the selection of genre affects the delivery of universal ideas about life and society.

Grade 10: ELA10RL2 The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:
a. Applies knowledge of the concept that the theme or meaning of a selection represents a universal view or comment on life or society and provides support from the text for the identified theme.

Grade 11: ELA11W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces narrative writing that applies polished narrative strategies acquired in previous grades, in other genres of writing such as reflective compositions, historical investigative reports, and literary analyses, by raising the level of critical thinking skills and rhetorical techniques. The student produces expository (informational) writing to explain an idea or concept and/or convey information and ideas from primary and secondary sources accurately and coherently; the student:
k. Uses language, point of view, characterization, style, and related elements effectively for specific rhetorical and aesthetic purposes.

Grade 12: ELA12W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces narrative writing that applies polished narrative strategies acquired in previous grades,
in other genres of writing such as reflective compositions, historical investigative reports, and literary analyses, by raising the level of critical thinking skills and rhetorical techniques. The student produces expository (informational) writing to explain an idea or concept and/or convey information and ideas from primary and secondary sources accurately and coherently; the student:

1. Varies language, point of view, characterization, style, and related elements effectively for different rhetorical and aesthetic purposes.
R.A. Miller (American, 1912–2006)
*Bigfoot*, n.d.
Enamel paint on board
Approx. 15 1/4 x 15 7/8 inches
Collection of Carl and Marian Mullis

The images in this packet are available for download at:
www.uga.edu/gamuseum/education/r.a_.miller_teaching_packet.html
R.A. Miller often included imaginary creatures in his works of art. In this painting, Bigfoot is covered in hair that sticks out from his red body; his arms and claws are raised, his eyes are wide open and his pointy teeth can be seen in his grinning mouth.

**Grades K–4**

**Studio Art: Imaginary Creatures**

Miller often used animals in his work, ranging from pets and farm animals to imaginary creatures. As a class, create your own imaginary creatures by combining parts of two or more real animals out of clay. First, sketch your creature, then use clay to construct it. Be sure to think of a name for it.

**Enrichment:**
1. As a class, look at each of the creatures. Can you tell which parts of each creature belong to each animal?
2. Why do you think Miller uses both real and imaginary animals in his art? Which kind do you like to create better? Why?
3. Present your creature to the class and explain which animals it combines. Talk about where you think it lives and what you think it does every day.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades K–4: Content Standard: 1:** Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

**Art History: Subjects in Art**

What do people mean when they refer to the subject of a work of art? As a class, discuss this idea and create a definition of the word “subject” as it relates to art. Look at different examples of works in which Miller uses animals as his subject. Make a list of the different types of animals you see in his work. Talk about what words, sounds, smells and feelings you associate with each animal. Which ones do you like the best? Why? Do you think that Miller thought about these common associations with animals when he made them? Would people from different cultures have these same associations? Why or why not?

**Enrichment:**
1. After discussing common associations with different types of animals, make a list of words that come to mind when you think of your favorite animal. Include words describing how the animal might smell, feel and act.
2. With this list of words in mind, think about how you will represent your animal visually. Discuss as a class or in small groups the best way to communicate words from your list in a two-dimensional picture. After thinking about different strategies, make a few sketches of ideas. When you have an idea you really like, draw the animal.

3. Present your drawing to the class and have them guess at least five of the words that you intended to represent. Discuss which visual clues were most effective in communicating these words.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades K–4: Content Standard 4:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

**Language Arts: Wild Things**

After looking at Miller’s painting of Bigfoot, read Maurice Sendak’s book about imaginary creatures “Where the Wild Things Are.” What five adjectives would you use to describe the Wild Things? Write two to three sentences that incorporate these words and make a drawing to go with them. Grades 2–4 can incorporate their words into a short story about the Wild Things.

Enrichment:

1. Discuss different types of imaginary animals and creatures you have seen in books, movies and stories. Do they have any special powers? What do they look like?

2. How do you think people come up with these different imaginary animals? Are they influenced by animals that already exist? Think of some examples of fantastical creatures that share physical features with living animals.

3. What do you think inspired Miller to draw Bigfoot? Does it look like a real animal? What about Sendak’s Wild Things? Compare Bigfoot and the Wild Things. What do they have in common and how are they different?

**Georgia Performance Standard: Writing**

**Kindergarten: ELAKW1** The student begins to understand the principles of writing. The student:

b. Uses drawings, letters, and phonetically spelled words to create meaning.

**Grade 1: ELA1W1** The student produces information writing that:

c. Adds details to expand a topic.

**Grade 2: ELA2W2** The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces a narrative that:

b. Begins to write fantasy/imaginary stories.

**Grade 3: ELA3W2** The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces a narrative that:
Grades 5–8

**Studio Art: Wood Scrap Creatures**

Design and construct a fantastical creature using wood scraps of various sizes and shapes. After adhering the various pieces together with nails or glue, add details with paint. Present your animal to the class and explain where it lives, what it eats, how it spends its days and what it is called.

Enrichment:

1. Look at examples of Miller’s fantastical creatures. How do you think he came up with the designs? Were they intuitive creations, or did he plan them out and design them with details about their lives in mind?
2. Miller’s animals tend to be painted with a single color and a bold outline, giving them a flat appearance. Compare this style to the class’s three-dimensional wooden creatures. Which method do you think is more effective in depicting fantastical creatures? Why?
3. Miller often painted religious phrases on his works. Select a quotation, phrase, sentence or word that relates to your work of art.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades 5–8: Content Standard: 3:** Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

**Art History: The Folk Tradition**

Find images of Miller’s art and discuss how he incorporated animals into his work. How did he represent them? Are there specific animals that are recognizable? How do these works fit into other forms of folk art such as writing and music? After discussing Miller’s use of animal subjects, choose a culture and look at how its artists incorporate animals in their works. Examine multiple images from this culture, noting how animals in art functioned both historically and in more contemporary works.

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a. Captures a reader’s interest by writing both personal and fantasy/imaginary stories, setting a purpose, and developing a point of view.

**Grade 4: ELA4W2** The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative that:

d. Includes sensory details and concrete language to develop plot and character.
Enrichment:

1. Each student should choose a work of art from the culture he or she researched that includes an animal. Write a one-to-two-page paper describing how the animal is represented. Is it rendered realistically? Does it function as a symbol for a larger idea? Are there multiple animals within a single work? What colors are used? What pose is the animal striking? What is the animal doing?
2. Present your paper to the class, along with a reproduction of your selected work. Based on your knowledge of the culture in which the art was produced, draw conclusions about why the artist chose to represent that animal in that specific way.
3. Compare this work to an animal rendered by Miller. Are there similarities between the two? How does Miller’s animal represent its culture?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 5–8: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: Advertising Campaign
Divide the class into two groups. Each group should create a fantastical creature; this animal can have the traits of existing animals or be completely imaginary. Each group is responsible for a visual representation of its creature, a one-page paper describing the creature and an ad campaign that promotes this creature for the job of being the next subject of Miller’s work.

Enrichment:

1. Present your paper, drawing and campaign to the class. In five minutes or so, explain the qualifications of your fantastical creature and why it would be the best candidate to use in Miller’s work.
2. After the presentations, debate as a class which candidate would be better. Cite examples in Miller’s body of work and other art historical references that support your claims.
3. Each student should submit a design for the animal that most looks like it belongs in Miller’s work. Consider how Miller would represent this animal. What would the composition look like? What kind of materials would he use? Would he use any text? If so, what would it be?
Georgia Performance Standard: Writing

Grade 5: ELA5W2. The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative that:
  a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest.

Grade 6: ELA6W2. The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative (fictional, personal) that:
  b. Creates an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context.

Grade 7: ELA7W2. The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative (fictional, personal, experiential) that:
  b. Creates an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context.

Grade 8: ELA8W2. The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative (fictional, personal, experiential) that:
  b. Creates an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context.

Grades 9–12

Studio Art: Soft Sculptures

Look at different examples of Miller’s animal depictions. Choose your favorite and design a stuffed animal based on the work. Select fabric, colors, size and other features that relate to Miller’s original creation. Research the work of Claes Oldenburg for inspiration.

Enrichment:

1. How would the aesthetics of a flat animal design translate into a three-dimensional stuffed animal? What would be the difficulties of this process? What are the advantages of creating a three-dimensional interpretation of the subject?

2. Discuss the concepts of commodity and copy. Miller created unique works of art, but he often repeated the themes and subjects in his art. How does this aspect add to or detract from the individual work of art’s uniqueness? What other artists have dealt with this dynamic between the individual work and copies?

3. Discuss the communal aspect of folk art, as experienced through this project. Does this aspect add value to the idea of multiple works of art with the same idea? As a class, argue the merits of both sides, citing examples found in both Miller’s works and in the stuffed animals.

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts

Grades 9–12: Content Standard: 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.
Art History: Animal Signs

Many artistic traditions use the qualities of animals symbolically within their art and culture. One example of this is the Chinese zodiac, which uses 12 different animals (rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, ram, monkey, rooster, dog, pig) to correspond with the year in which people are born, assigning certain attributes and flaws accordingly. Break the class into groups, each assigned to one animal. Discuss your group’s sign. How does your animal embody those specific characteristics? How are those qualities reflected artistically?

Enrichment:
1. Each group should compile 5 to 10 examples of its animal found in works of art. Write a brief summary of each work: in what culture it was produced, its artistic qualities and whether or not it reflects the characteristics assigned to it by the Chinese zodiac.
2. Present your conclusions to the class in a 5-to-10-minute presentation. As a class, discuss whether or not the zodiac associations are relevant within your examples of how other cultures and artists implemented that animal within their art.
3. Which of these animals does Miller use in his own art? Do they have the same associations? If not, what qualities do you associate with Miller’s animals?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: Animal Characters

Miller uses animals, both fantastical and real, as subjects in his art. Yann Martel’s novel “Life of Pi” includes animals as main characters. While reading the novel, keep a journal with an entry for each chapter. Each journal entry should include a brief synopsis of the chapter’s events, a list of characters and a brief personal response.

Enrichment:
1. Divide the class, and assign each group a central theme of the story. Referencing your journals, compare notes on how the themes developed in each chapter, any significant events and which characters personified these themes. Prepare a two-to-three-page group essay that outlines your theme and how it is elaborated throughout the novel.
2. Write a poem from the point of view of one of the animals. This poem should indicate an understanding of the events of the novel and a grasp of its themes.

3. As a class, discuss the themes of the novel and how they relate to Miller’s art. Consider the author’s use of animals as characters and interpret each animal’s point of view. Why did Martel include animals in his novel? Why do you think Miller portrayed animals in his art? Are there any similarities or differences between Martel’s novel and Miller’s art?

**Georgia Performance Standard: Writing**

**Grade 9: ELA9RL4** The student employs a variety of writing genres to demonstrate a comprehensive grasp of significant ideas in selected literary works. The student composes essays, narratives, poems, or technical documents. The student:
a. Demonstrates understanding of significant themes in specific literary works.

**Grade 10: ELA10RL4** The student employs a variety of writing genres to demonstrate a comprehensive grasp of significant ideas in selected literary works. The student composes essays, narratives, poems, or technical documents. The student:
b. Explains important ideas and viewpoints introduced in a text through accurate and detailed references or allusions to the text and other relevant works.

**Grade 11: ELA11W2** The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces narrative writing that applies polished narrative strategies acquired in previous grades, in other genres of writing such as reflective compositions, historical investigative reports, and literary analyses, by raising the level of critical thinking skills and rhetorical techniques. The student produces expository (informational) writing to explain an idea or concept and/or convey information and ideas from primary and secondary sources accurately and coherently; the student:
j. Enhances meaning by employing rhetorical devices, including the use of parallelism, repetition, and analogy.

**Grade 12: ELA12W2** The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces narrative writing that applies polished narrative strategies acquired in previous grades, in other genres of writing such as reflective compositions, historical investigative reports, and literary analyses, by raising the level of critical thinking skills and rhetorical techniques. The student produces expository (informational) writing to explain an idea or concept and/or convey information and ideas from primary and secondary sources accurately and coherently; the student:
k. Enhances meaning by employing rhetorical devices, including the use of parallelism, repetition, analogy, and humor.
R.A. Miller (American, 1912–2006)

*Orange Angel*, n.d.

Enamel paint on metal house shutters

Approx. 55 5/8 x 17 1/8 x 1/2 inches

Collection of Carl and Marian Mullis

The images in this packet are available for download at:

www.uga.edu/gamuseum/education/r.a_miller_teaching_packet.html
R.A. Miller painted on different types of surfaces, often using common items that one can find around the house. In this work, he painted an orange angel on a house shutter. The angel appears tall, and his clothes are decorated with different patterns. Miller painted blue dots around the frame of the shutter and, above the angel, included the phrase “Jesus sed com to me.”

**Grades K–4**

*Studio Art: Recycled Puppets*

Look at the different types of materials Miller used. Discuss the difference between using found objects and buying art supplies. Students can give examples of materials that they might have at home that could be used in art projects. Make a list of these materials and identify which would work best in making a puppet. Ask the students to bring in one or two of them to make puppets. Based on the materials, these can be hand puppets or rod puppets. Students can decorate them to look like people, animals or imaginary creatures with paper scraps, markers, fabric, yarn and other reusable materials.

**Enrichment:**

1. What was fun about making puppets out of recycled materials? Were there any parts of the process that were more difficult?
2. Why do you think Miller used found materials to create art instead of buying them? As an artist, do you prefer to use art supplies you buy in the store or those you have found around your house? Why?
3. As a class or with your family, visit a local recycling plant. Look at all of the different materials that can be recycled. Which ones can you find in your house? Are there any objects that you have not seen before? Did you see something unexpected? Draw a picture of your trip and include the most interesting recyclable object that you saw. If you are unable to go to the recycling plant, find objects around your house that are recyclable and make a list. Combine your lists to create a class list of recyclable objects.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades K–4: Content Standard: 1**: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes.
**Art History: Suitable Surfaces**

Miller uses unconventional surfaces for his paintings. Artists have always experimented with the surfaces on which they paint. Look at some examples, including cave paintings, mummy tombs, wall murals, paintings on primed and unprimed canvas, drawings on paper, wood panels, metal plates, cloth, cement and even cars. As a class, discuss why artists might choose to depict different subjects on different surfaces. How would the subject look different if it were created on another surface?

Enrichment:

1. As a class, brainstorm ideas about different surfaces that would be ideal for paintings or drawings.
2. Go through this list and decide which surfaces would be most like the ones in the images. For instance, which surface could you find around your house, school or neighborhood that would provide the same effect as painting on a cave wall? What about a metal plate?
3. What are some surfaces from the list that could be found around the house? Each student should bring in three different objects from this list, which could include empty soup cans, old newspapers, plastic containers, scraps of wood or cereal boxes. The students can experiment with different types of paints to see how each material reacts with each surface. Can the designs on some of the surfaces be incorporated into the art? Discuss as a class the materials that are most effective on each surface.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades K–4: Content Standard 4:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

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**Language Arts: Giving to Nature**

Miller uses recycled and found materials for his work. This makes his art unique and is good for the environment to recycle and reuse. As a class, read Shel Silverstein’s book “The Giving Tree.” How is the idea of recycling and reusing materials addressed in this story? As a class, brainstorm ways that we can give more to the environment. Each student should write a sentence describing one way he or she can help nature. Grades 2–5 can write a short paragraph describing how this action will help the environment.
Enrichment:

1. What has nature given to you? Why do you think it is important to give back to nature?
2. Could the giving tree be symbolic of other things, places or people? Can you think of something or someone who has been a giving tree in your life? Who is it? Has he, she or it helped you out?
3. Write a short thank-you note to a tree that you appreciate. This tree could be one that gives you apples, one that provides you with shade, one that you enjoy climbing or one that you have never met but has provided you with paper. Read your cards out loud to the class so that everyone can understand all of the reasons people appreciate trees.

**Georgia Performance Standard: Writing**

**Kindergarten: ELAKW1** The student begins to understand the principles of writing. The student:
- a. Writes or dictates to describe familiar persons, places, objects, or experiences.

**Grade 1: ELA1W2** The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive and response to literature. The student produces a persuasive piece that:
- a. Captures a reader's interest by stating a position/opinion.

**Grade 2: ELA2W2** The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces a persuasive piece of writing that:
- a. Captures a reader's interest by stating a clear position/opinion.

**Grade 3: ELA3W2** The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces a persuasive piece of writing that:
- a. Captures a reader's interest by stating a clear position/opinion and developing a point of view.

**Grade 4: ELA4W2** The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a persuasive essay that:
- a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker's voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.

**Grades 5–8**

**Studio Art: Tin Art**

One of Miller’s most commonly used materials was tin scrap. Look at different examples of folk art that uses tin. How do artists maximize this material’s versatility? As a class, discuss the most interesting and effective ways in which artists are manipulating this material. Each student should bring in several used, washed tin cans to create his or her own tin can sculpture. An adult should sand the rim of the can to smooth sharp edges. Students should manipulate this can to create a work of art using paint and other recycled materials.
Enrichment:

1. What was your experience working with tin? Would you use it again? Why or why not? Why do you think Miller used tin so often?
2. Do you think these sculptures are more effective individually, or could they be combined into a large sculpture? Discuss as a class how each individual sculpture could be combined into a collaborative work of art.
3. Divide the class into groups. The group should look at each student’s tin can sculpture and discuss what was successful about it. Then design a collaborative tin can structure based on these elements. You can incorporate the individual sculptures or design a completely new work. Create the sculpture together and present it in the class for a group critique.

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 5–8: Content Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes.

Art History: It’s a Material Thing

Look at images of Miller’s work, paying close attention to the types of materials that he uses. Do you think that different materials can change the experience that the viewer has with a work of art? Debate these opinions in class, using specific examples of both Miller’s work and that of more traditional artists. Would you react differently to Miller’s work if it were painted on canvas rather than tin or on a wood panel rather than a window shutter? Why do you think you would react this way? Do you expect to see paintings on tin in a museum? Why or why not?

Enrichment:

1. Divide the class into groups to research the work of Vik Muniz, an artist who uses unconventional, recycled and found materials to re-create famous works of fine art. Each group should select one work that they find particularly interesting and compare it with the original.
2. As a group, write a one-to-two-page comparison paper comparing the two works and your relationship to them. How do the materials used in a work change how the viewer reacts to it? Which version of the work do you prefer and why? Would you think differently if you were living when the original work was produced?
3. After hearing the conclusions of each student, students should write a one-page reflection about their own views on the importance of the artist’s selection of materials either in the context of the viewer’s relationship to the work or simply in terms of the work’s overall effectiveness. Cite specific examples.
National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 5–8: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: Trash to Treasure
Consider the popular phrase “one man’s trash is another man’s treasure.” What does this mean? Have you ever experienced a situation in which this phrase could be applied? In five minutes, write a paragraph that incorporates this phrase. Then divide the class into groups. Create a story that combines all the paragraphs. Present your short story to the class.

Enrichment:
1. Did the original meaning of the phrase get altered when you combined paragraphs with your group? If so, how?
2. Why do you think that this phrase is so popular?
3. What do you think Miller’s opinion on this phrase would be? Support your opinion with examples from his work.

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing
Grade 5: ELA5W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces a narrative that:
a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a point of view, and otherwise developing reader interest.

Grade 6: ELA6W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and provides a satisfying closure. The student:
b. Writes texts of a length appropriate to address the topic or tell the story.

Grade 7: ELA7W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and provides a satisfying closure. The student:
b. Writes texts of a length appropriate to address the topic or tell the story.

Grade 8: ELA8W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:
b. Writes texts of a length appropriate to address the topic or tell the story.
Grades 9–12

**Studio Art: Recycled Sketchbook**

Bring cardboard, paper, yarn, string, buttons and other supplies you want to include from home. Cut two heavier pieces of cardboard for covers and choose a mix of printed and blank paper cut slightly smaller than your covers for your sketches. Punch holes in one side of the sketchbook and use string or yarn to stitch your book together. You may want to research different bookbinding techniques to get the look you want for your sketchbook.

**Enrichment:**

1. What do you think is the difference between creating art and making a craft, or are they synonymous? After your experience making sketchbooks, which do you think bookmaking falls under? Why?
2. Discuss bookmaking in terms of folk art. Do you think that bookmaking could be considered folk art? Why or why not?
3. Discuss possible alterations in the bookmaking process that would make different types of paper, such as thicker sheets, thinner sheets, colored sheets, paper with designs embedded within it and other variations. Design the book around a certain theme that is somehow reflected in the paper and the overall design. Present it to the class, explaining your theme and how you implemented it in the bookmaking process.
4. Sketch ideas for larger works of art in your sketchbook. How do the pages with print on them influence your drawings? Which paper do you like to work on best?

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades 9–12: Content Standard 1:** Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes.

**Art History: Art Recycled**

Folk art often uses recyclable materials. As a class, discuss traditional art materials versus recycled and found materials, such as the ones that Miller uses. Talk about each material’s versatility and relevance. Do you find one to be more important or innovative than the others? Why or why not? What companies, businesses and other organizations advertise their use of recycled materials? Cite examples, and discuss how effective you think they are.
Enrichment:
1. Hold a fashion show of clothing made entirely out of recycled materials. Research garments that incorporate recycled materials. Which materials are most effective? What were the designers trying to achieve? Were they successful or unsuccessful? Why?
2. With a partner, brainstorm where to acquire the necessary materials and how to combine and attach them. Each pair should construct one garment, keeping in mind that it should use as little non-recycled material as possible.
3. Present your fashion show to the rest of your school or community. Discuss the different steps of your process, the materials used and the benefits and difficulties of working with recycled materials. Include projections of the long-term impact of continuing to construct clothes out of recycled materials. What do you think is preventing companies from switching over to using these materials? Why do you think that R.A. Miller used found materials? Would fashion designers have the same reasons for using found materials?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.

Language Arts: Got Trash?
In “Waste & Want: A Social History of Trash,” Susan Strasser outlines how the concept of garbage in the United States has changed with the rise of consumerism and mass-production. Read this book and consider your own views on what defines “garbage.” Is there something that you used to consider trash that you no longer do, or vice versa? Write a journal entry that addresses these questions. Discuss your perceptions with the class. What is society’s definition of trash? Does it correlate with your definition?

Enrichment:
1. Create your own definition of trash and write a persuasive essay that attempts to convince others of your opinion. Include statistics, historical events and documents that support this point of view.
2. Does the definition of “trash” in the United States coincide with the rest of the world’s? How is it similar or different? Cite examples from current events.
3. Based on his art, how do you think Miller would define trash?
Georgia Performance Standard: Writing
Grade 9: ELA9W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals closure. The student:
a. Establishes a clear, distinctive, and coherent thesis or perspective and maintains a consistent tone and focus throughout.

Grade 10: ELA10W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals closure. The student:
a. Establishes a clear, distinctive, and coherent thesis or perspective and maintains a consistent tone and focus throughout.

Grade 11: ELA11W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:
a. Establishes a clear, distinctive, and coherent thesis or perspective and maintains a consistent tone and focus throughout.

Grade 12: ELA12W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:
a. Establishes a clear, distinctive, and coherent thesis or perspective and maintains a consistent tone and focus throughout.
R.A. Miller (American, 1912–2006)
(Self) Portrait with a Blow Oskar Cutout, n.d.
Collaborative work with Durwood Pepper
Enamel paint on tin
Approx. 67 3/4 x 24 5/8 inches
Collection of Carl and Marian Mullis

The images in this packet are available for download at:
www.uga.edu/gamuseum/education/r.a_miller_teaching_packet.html
In this work, R.A. Miller collaborated with another Georgia folk artist, Durwood Pepper. Together, they created a portrait of Miller holding one of his most popular figures, Blow Oskar. Blow Oskar was named after Miller’s cousin, who used to drive by Miller’s home every day and blow his horn. In this work, Miller’s clothes are splattered with paint, as if he had just made the work of art he is holding.

Grades K–4

Studio Art: Sock People

The figures that Miller creates are very simple; he often uses single strokes of paint for facial features and blocks of color to create bodies. Look closely at Miller’s self-portrait and the Blow Oskar cutout in this work and discuss how he represents different parts of the body with simple shapes. What shapes do you see? What lines can you find? Using this idea of lines and forms, students can create their own sock people.

Directions:
1. Each student should bring in one old but clean sock.
2. Stuff each sock with beans, batting or crumpled paper.
3. Secure the open end with string.
4. Section off a part of the sock to create a head, tying a string in the gap between the head and the body.
5. Attach a dowel to the back of the figure by running it under the string used to create the head.
6. Use fabric scraps and felt pieces, buttons, yarn, markers and other materials to create a face, arm, legs and clothes for your sock person. Keep in mind the lines and shapes you found in the work by R.A. Miller.

Enrichment:
1. Why do you think that Miller chose to make such simple human figures?
2. As a class, point out the big shapes that make up the different parts of the body on the sock people. Are these shapes that you can find on the human body? Did Miller use these same shapes or did he create new ones?
3. Write two to three sentences describing your sock person and present it to the class.

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades K–4: Content Standard: 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions.
**Art History: Portraits**
Discuss how individual figures are represented in paintings. Why would an artist choose to paint himself or herself rather than another person? Look at images of self-portraits from art history. What does the artist include in these works that tells you something about him or her? If you were going to create a self-portrait, what would you want to include that would tell the viewer something about your personality, where you are from or what you like to do?

**Enrichment:**
1. Look at Miller’s self-portrait. Why do you think he chose to include a Blow Oskar cutout in it?
2. What do you think he is doing or has done in this cutout? What is a hint that shows you what he is doing?
3. Make a self-portrait that includes something you like. Present the portrait to the class and tell your classmates about it.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**
*Grades K-4: Content Standard 4:* Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

**Language Arts: Family Memories**
Miller’s Blow Oskar figure is a portrayal of his cousin who blew his horn loudly when he drove by Miller’s house. Do you have anyone in your family who does silly or memorable things? Write about that family member, what he or she does and why you think it is memorable. Share your stories with the class.

**Enrichment:**
1. Miller includes family members in his art. Why do you think he does this? Do you think that these people are important to him? Why or why not? What does the word “family” mean to you?
2. The book “In My Family/ En Mi Familia,” by Carmen Lomas Garza, describes the author’s experiences growing up in a Mexican-American family. Read the book as a class and discuss the roles of different family members within the book and the traditions that they practice. How is your family similar to this family? How is it different?
3. If you were to write a book about your family members, which memories and traditions would you include? Make a list of your three favorite memories or traditions and your family members’ roles in celebrating them. Choose your favorite and present it to the class.
Georgia Performance Standard: Writing
Kindergarten: ELAKW1 The student begins to understand the principles of writing. The student:
- Writes or dictates to describe familiar persons, places, objects, or experiences.

Grade 1: ELA1W1 The student begins to understand the principles of writing. The student:
- Describes an experience in writing.

Grade 2: ELA2W2 The student writes in a variety of genres, including narrative, informational, persuasive, and response to literature. The student produces a narrative that:
- Captures a reader’s interest by writing a personal story in first or third person consistently.

Grade 3: ELA3W1 The student demonstrates competency in the writing process. The student:
- Begins to include relevant examples, facts, anecdotes, and details appropriate to the audience.

Grade 4: ELA4W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:
- Selects a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

Grades 5–8
Studio Art: Aluminum Foil People
Instead of taking the time to model the likeness of particular individuals, Miller uses generalized features to give the impression of a type of person rather than an individual. Consider this idea when making figures out of aluminum foil. First, roll sheets of foil to create the head, torso and limbs of the figure. Add extra foil to create more bulk to the figures. Each student can bend his or her figure to show it doing an activity. Students can then cover their sculptures with gesso or masking tape and paint them with colors or keep the metallic surface of the foil.

Enrichment:
1. After looking at different examples of Miller’s figures, do you agree with the assessment that he creates types of figures rather than individuals? Why or why not? If so, why do you think he made that decision?
2. What do you think motivates an artist to depict an individual rather than a type?
3. Include details on your figure that represent either a type or an individual. Present your figure to your classmates and ask them to guess who it represents. Are the elements of either an individual or a type easily recognizable to others?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades K–4: Content Standard: 2 Using knowledge of structures and functions
**Art History: Simple Forms**

Look at images of people Miller painted. As a class, discuss how he simplifies and flattens his forms. Note the lack of modeling, the use of thick outlines and the blocky shapes. Talk about whether you still read this form as a figure or if you consider it part of a flat design. What do you think is the difference between representational art and realistic art?

**Enrichment:**

1. Look at images of artists who have also preferred depicting flat, blocky forms, especially the Cubists. How are these paintings similar to Miller’s? How are they different?
2. Read the art criticism of Cubism when it first debuted in Paris in 1910. What are the main arguments? Could any of this criticism be applied to Miller’s work? If yes, how so?
3. Discuss formal aspects of Miller’s work, such as how he depicts the figure through the use of line, shape, color and texture. Address more conceptual qualities of the work, such as the relationship between the viewer and the work, which visual qualities convey mood and what themes are conveyed.

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades 5–8: Content Standard 4:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

**Language Arts: Illustrating Family**

Miller sometimes uses members of his family in his work, such as Blow Oskar. Children’s books address the theme of family; select one of your favorites that does so. Write a five-paragraph essay that assesses how the book presents this topic, how the topic develops throughout the story and whether it is effective for its intended audience. This should be persuasive, so write this paper as though you are a book critic for a newspaper and take a strong standpoint.

**Enrichment:**

1. What are some works of art in which artists explore the theme of family? How are families presented visually? How are these works of art similar and different?
2. If Miller’s Blow Oskar was a character in a children’s book about families, what role do you think he would play? What adventures would he have? What traditions would he and his family practice? Why?
3. If you were to write a children’s book about the importance of families, how would you compose it? What would you include? What would the
storyline be? Write a two-page rough draft that outlines the basic ideas of this book.

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing

Grade 5: ELA5W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:
a. Selects a focus, an organizational structure, and a point of view based on purpose, genre expectations, audience, length, and format requirements.

Grade 6: ELA6W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces writing (multi-paragraph expository composition such as description, explanation, comparison and contrast, or problem and solution) that:
a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker's voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.

Grade 7: ELA7W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces writing (multi-paragraph expository composition such as description, explanation, comparison and contrast, or problem and solution) that:
a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker's voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.

Grade 8: ELA8W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres. The student produces writing (multi-paragraph expository composition such as description, explanation, comparison and contrast, or problem and solution) that:
a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker's voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.

Grades 9–12

Studio Art: Shadow Boxes

Look at Miller’s depiction of figures. Sketch basic shapes that make up the figures. Use these sketches to help design a shadow box in Miller's style. Using four pieces of wood, construct a deep frame or you can use a cardboard box. Attach a panel to the back to close off the space. Create figures out of tin, wood, paper or other materials to place within the box. Implement other techniques that Miller uses including phrases using simple color schemes and adding movable parts.

Enrichment:

1. Which aspects of Miller’s art did you implement in your shadow box? How do they reflect his art? How did you translate it into your own style?
2. Folk artists are both praised and criticized for their simplified forms. After reviewing your sketches and the figures within your shadow boxes, which side do you agree with? Why?
3. If your figures were created using three-dimensional forms, how would that change the composition of your shadow box?
Grades 9–12: Content Standard: 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

Art History: Self-Portraits
Artists often create self-portraits, or paintings of themselves. In this work, R.A. Miller portrays himself with his most famous subject, Blow Oskar. Find examples of other artists’ self-portraits. These examples can be contemporary or not. Choose one work of art and write a description of it, looking closely at how the artist chose to represent himself or herself, how the artist’s personality is reflected in the work and what symbols, objects and design elements the artist included to tell the viewer about him or her.

Enrichment:
1. Choose a partner who wrote about a different artist’s work. As a pair, compare the two works of art. What are the similarities and differences between the works of art? How do they compare to R.A. Miller’s self-portrait?
2. Discuss why artists might create self-portraits. Why do some artists, like Rembrandt, create many self-portraits?
3. What would you include in a self-portrait? What would you want the viewer to know about you? Is there a specific object or environment that you would want in your own self-portrait?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Language Arts: Family Roles
Blow Oskar was one member of Miller’s large family. How does your family interact with one another? The different roles people play in their families are explored in Jane Austen’s novel “Pride and Prejudice.” This novel examines relationships in family and community in early-19th-century England. As a class, read this novel and think about familial dynamics and the roles of each character in the Bennett family. Discuss how these roles and relationships change.
Enrichment:

1. Pair up with a partner. Each of you should choose one of the characters and write a three-to-five-paragraph essay from the point of view of your selected member of the Bennett family. Next, compare it to the role of your partner’s character. You can compare how these characters perceived one specific event or how their perspectives were similar or different at points in the novel.

2. Switch papers and discuss them. How do different family members perceive the same events? Do you think that having a certain role within the family dictates reactions to events? If so, give an example of how.

3. Do the roles within the family change in different times and places? Use examples from Miller’s life and Austen’s characters.

Georgia Performance Standard: Writing

Grade 9: ELA9RL2 The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works from various genres and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:

d. Compares and contrasts the presentation of a theme or topic across genres and explains how the selection of genre affects the delivery of universal ideas about life and society.

Grade 10: ELA10RL2 The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:
a. Applies knowledge of the concept that the theme or meaning of a selection represents a universal view or comment on life or society and provides support from the text for the identified theme.

Grade 11: ELA11W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:

g. Supports statements and claims with anecdotes, descriptions, facts and statistics, and specific examples.

Grade 12: ELA12W1 The student produces writing that establishes an appropriate organizational structure, sets a context and engages the reader, maintains a coherent focus throughout, and signals a satisfying closure. The student:

g. Supports statements and claims with anecdotes, descriptions, facts and statistics, and specific examples.
Class Activity for Grades K–4: Recycled Travel Sketchbooks

**Essential Questions:**
- How can found objects be used to create works of art?
- How can the community or culture inspire artists?
- What parts make up a book?

**Materials:**
- Cereal boxes or similar printed boxes
- An assortment of scrap paper
- Scissors
- Staplers
- Colored pencils
- Markers
- Acrylic paint
- Cups of water
- Paintbrushes
- Large sheets of paper

**Preparation:**
- Cut up old cereal boxes into pairs of rectangles that are the same size (at least 7 x 7 inches).
- Cut up scrap paper into sheets of the same size as the cereal boxes.
- Gather examples of various types of bound structures, such as books, photo albums, journals, magazines and textbooks.
- Gather images of works by artists who have distinctly different regional aesthetics that can be presented to the class in a PowerPoint presentation, through books or color photocopies.

**Discussion:** Briefly discuss the history of bookmaking and how the functions of books have changed over time. Pass around examples of different types of bindings and books. Discuss their different parts and content—the cover, binding, pages, text, photographs and illustrations. Talk about how books have been used throughout history, ranging from illuminated manuscripts to artists’ sketchbooks, and the materials from which they have been constructed. Show images of different examples, ending with examples of artists’ sketchbook pages. Compare preparatory drawings from sketchbooks with finished paintings. Discuss the idea of how different materials serve different functions when they are used to make books, especially found, appropriated and recycled objects.
Discussion Questions:
1. What are some of the different functions of books?
2. How do a book’s materials and construction reflect its function?
3. What is a traditional material? What is a nontraditional material?
4. What are the different ways in which an artist might use a book?
5. While traveling, why might an artist carry around a sketchbook rather than a canvas?

Activity
Day 1: Create small sketchbooks out of recycled paper products. Have the students select a pair of cardboard rectangles and sheets of paper. After students have arranged their books with a front cover, paper in the middle and a back cover, the books should be stapled or stitched together using yarn or string. Students can incorporate designs on the sketchbooks using scrap paper and other recycled materials.

Day 2: Visit www.roadsideamerica.com, a Web site that lists different roadside works of art throughout the United States, many of which are considered folk art. Create handouts for the student with reproductions of 5 to 10 of the roadside works made from recycled materials. From these handouts, students can select and draw their favorite attractions. Imagine what it would be like if you were actually standing in front of your selected work with your sketchbook. Take a walking tour of your community and use your sketchbook to record the yard art and public sculpture that you find.

Day 3: Artists often use sketches made on site as studies for larger, more finished paintings and drawings. Select your favorite sketch and use it as a guide for a larger painting or drawing. As you create your larger work, you may decide to include more details or make changes from your sketches.

Day 4: Follow-Up Discussion:
1. What does it mean to be “recycled”?
2. Make a list of the materials that different artists used in their roadside works. Are they recyclable?
3. Did Miller use any of the materials on this list in his works? If so, which ones?
4. Looking at all of the sketches, compare and contrast drawings of the same roadside works. How are they similar? How are they different?
5. How are the same sites represented differently in the larger paintings and drawings?
6. Compare and contrast the original studies or sketches with the final paintings and drawings. Did anything change between the two versions? If so, what?

7. Why do you think that artists make sketches from life for their larger works?

8. Do you think your drawings and paintings might be different if you drew them from life? If yes, what might some of those differences be?

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**

**Grades K–4: Content Standard 1:** Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes.
Class Activity for Grades 5–8: Combining Words and Images in Art

Essential Questions:
- In what ways can art reflect the culture from which it is produced?
- How do artists incorporate text into visual art?
- How can a sense of place be reflected in visual art and literature?

Materials:
- Copies of the novel “To Kill a Mockingbird”
- Rectangular sheets of tin or cardboard (1 per student) cut to 9 x 12 inches
- Acrylic paint
- Cups of water
- Paintbrushes
- Reproductions of words from newspapers, magazines and other sources
- Scissors
- Glue

Preparation:
- Collect magazines, newspapers, old brochures and other printed materials with text that can be cut apart.
- Select images of R.A. Miller’s work that incorporate text.
- Select images of contemporary and historical art that use text, such as the art of Ed Ruscha, Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein.
- Select examples of commercial art, especially graphic design and advertisements that creatively use text.

Discussion: Miller often incorporates phrases into his works, especially the religious message “Lord Love You.” Look at the different ways Miller incorporates text into his art. Then, find contemporary examples of art and advertisements that use text in their compositions. Discuss the artists’ strategies and techniques when juxtaposing text and images. Keep the most effective strategies in mind while viewing different examples because students will integrate text from Harper Lee’s “To Kill a Mockingbird” into their own art.

Discussion Questions:
1. What phrases does Miller use in his work? What do you think these phrases mean? Do you think he is including text to communicate to the viewer or for another reason?
2. Does Miller attempt to create a connection between the subject and the text? If so, how?
3. What phrases are used in the examples of contemporary art you selected? What do they mean?
4. Do any of these examples integrate the text into the imagery? Which ones? Are these more or less effective visually than the other examples? Are they more or less effective in terms of how the message comes across to the viewer?
5. In your opinion, which works effectively incorporate text?
6. Does Miller’s art reflect the culture in which it is produced? If so, how?

**Activity Preparation:** Students should read Lee’s novel “To Kill a Mockingbird.” For each chapter, students should prepare a summary, including the characters involved, the main events, important quotes and any questions that arise. Each day, students should break into groups, compare notes, discuss the readings and answer any questions that they have. Once a week, the class will discuss the chapters assigned and analyze the events. Discuss the book in terms of how it represents southern society and the themes it addresses.

**Day 1:** Based on the chapter summaries, each student should select an important word, phrase or quotation from the book that relates to its themes. Each student will design an advertisement or work of art based on the novel. Students should look through the available papers and magazines for words, letters, phrases or fonts that interest them or align with a selected theme. Consider composition, the possible meanings and connotations of the words or phrases and how the text could be integrated in an image. Students can draw thumbnail sketches and write down their ideas for the next day.

**Day 2:** Based on the words selected the previous day, students should paint or create a collage of an image, symbol or abstract representation that relates to their text. Once again, consider the composition, how the possible meanings and connotations of the words or phrases relate to the text and how the text could be effectively integrated into the selected imagery.

**Day 3:** Hold a critique during which students can discuss the ideas and techniques of the finished works. Each student should present his or her work to the class, read his or her selected text or phrase, explain why he or she chose those words and describe his or her intentions, compositional strategies and any artistic influences. The class may ask questions and discuss whether or not the student’s work is effective in relating those ideas to the viewer. Students should critique the work formally and conceptually. After each student is done presenting, discuss
which strategies seemed to work best in terms of incorporating text into a work of art.

**Day 3: Follow-Up Discussion:**
1. How does the work relate to the themes in “To Kill a Mockingbird?”
2. Is the work effective?
3. Is the theme of the student’s work apparent?
4. How are text and imagery integrated?
5. Were any of the devices used by students to integrate text and imagery found in works of art by Miller or other artists?
6. Were there any strategies that did not work as well for the students?

**National Performance Standard: Visual Arts**  
**Grades 5–8: Content Standard 1:** Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

**Georgia Performance Standard: Reading and Literature**  
**Grade 5: ELA5R1** The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts. For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:
   d. Relates a literary work to information about its setting (historically or culturally).

**Grade 6: ELA6R1** The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts. For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:
   d. Applies knowledge of the concept that theme refers to the message about life and the world that the author wants us to understand whether implied or stated.

**Grade 7: ELA7R1** The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts. For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:
   d. Analyzes recurring and similar themes across a variety of selections, distinguishing theme from topic.

**Grade 8: ELA8R1** The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts. For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:
   e. Evaluates recurring or similar themes across a variety of selections, distinguishing theme from topic.
Class Activity for Grades 9–12: Illustrated Books of Poetry

Essential Questions:
• What are some of the themes and characteristics of folk art?
• How does southern poetry relate to southern culture?
• How can old books be recycled to create a new type of book?

Materials:
• 1 old book per student
• Sketchbooks or sheets of drawing paper
• Markers, crayons, pens, pencils and other drawing materials
• Acrylic paint
• Cups of water
• Paintbrushes
• Scrap paper, magazine images and other collage materials

Preparation:
• Prepare images of Miller’s work that include a variety of subjects.
• Prepare images of other examples of works by self-taught artists.
• Prepare images of deconstructed books and other examples of book art.
• Compile handouts about the tradition of southern poetry including a list of poets, important historical background and themes commonly addressed.

Discussion:
Folk art is sometimes described as “naïve” because it lacks the conventions of work by formally trained artists. Look at images of Miller’s work and works by other folk artists. Notice the lack of spatial description, the flattening of forms, the lack of modeling and other formal qualities that might make the art appear “naïve.” Sketch the most interesting forms and subjects. Then, look through the southern poetry handouts. Southern literature and poetry address some of the same themes as folk art; both are influenced by the culture in which they are produced. Read some of the poems you found and discuss how they might be presented visually. Students should begin thinking about ways to illustrate the poems. Look at the images of books reused by artists for ideas about how to take an existing book and alter it; students will take an existing book and incorporate the themes of southern poetry and folk art.
Discussion Questions:
1. What connotations does the word “naïve” have?
2. Why do you think that the word “naïve” is often used to describe folk art?
3. Which forms did you choose to sketch? Why did you find them interesting?
4. What are some of the themes commonly addressed in southern poetry?
5. How is southern poetry different than poetry produced in other regions?
6. Discuss how regional identity is manifested in both literature and art.
   What words and images do you find to be particularly southern?
7. How could folk art enhance the reading of these poems?
8. Think about the concept of a book. How can altering an existing book by adding both poetry and imagery add meaning to its text and structure?

Activity
Day 1: Students should select a southern poet and research his or her work. Investigate commonly addressed themes and subjects in this poet’s work, his or her writing style and any biographical and historical information that could be used further to examine and understand his or her poetry. Consider how this poet’s work fits into the broader category of southern poetry. What makes this work distinctly southern? Students should select multiple poems that they believe could be reproduced and enhanced with folk art imagery. Plan out how these poems and images can be integrated into an existing book structure.

Days 2–4: Students should bring in an old book to alter. Using paint, scrap paper, pens, markers and any other materials, students should restructure the pages to include their selected poetry and folk art imagery. Consider both the composition of the individual pages and the arrangement of the book as a whole.

Day 5: Follow-Up Discussion:
1. Which poet did each student select? Were the unique qualities of that poet and his or her poetry expressed visually?
2. How were the themes of the student’s selected poet addressed?
3. How was the text of each poem integrated into the page?
4. Did the dynamics of the original book change? If largely unaltered, did the original book’s subject enhance the poems and folk art?
5. Was there an overall cohesiveness to each book? If yes, how was this achieved?

National Performance Standard: Visual Arts
Grades 9–12: Content Standard 1: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.
Georgia Performance Standard: Reading and Literature, Writing

Grade 9: ELA9RL2 The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works from various genres and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:
   a. Applies knowledge of the concept that the theme or meaning of a selection represents a universal view or comment on life or society and provides support from the text for the identified theme.

Grade 10: ELA10RL2 The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of theme in literary works and provides evidence from the works to support understanding. The student:
   a. Applies knowledge of the concept that the theme or meaning of a selection represents a universal view or comment on life or society and provides support from the text for the identified theme.

Grade 11: ELA11W3 The student uses research and technology to support writing. The student:
   a. Formulates clear research questions and utilizes appropriate research venues (i.e., library, electronic media, personal interview, survey) to locate and incorporate evidence from primary and secondary sources.

Grade 12: ELA12W3 The student uses research and technology to support writing. The student:
   a. Formulates clear research questions and utilizes appropriate research venues (i.e., library, electronic media, personal interview, survey) to locate and incorporate evidence from primary and secondary sources.
Summary Questions

1. What is outsider art?
2. Do you consider Miller to be an outsider artist?
3. Who is Jean Dubuffet?
4. Why did he think that self-taught art was important?
5. Define “art brut.” How did it affect the creation of folk art?
6. Define “self-taught” in terms of art.
7. Give two examples of artists who are self-taught.
8. What is folk art?
9. How is folk art different from fine art? How is it similar?
10. What does folk art look like?
11. Why do some folk artists not consider themselves artists?
12. Would you call the people who create folk art “artists”? Why or why not?
13. Why is the idea of a community so important to folk artists?
14. Why did Miller start making art?
15. What subjects does Miller address in his art?
16. What did you like most about working with recycled materials?
17. What were the biggest challenges when working with recycled materials?
18. Define “whirligig.”
19. How does a basic whirligig work?
20. What makes a work patriotic?
21. Miller includes names on his American flag. Whose names are they?
22. Discuss the different kinds of animals that Miller uses in his art.
23. What is a fantastical creature? Give an example.
24. How are fantastical creatures different than animals you see every day?
25. Who is Blow Oskar? What does he look like?
26. How did Blow Oskar get his name?
27. Is family important to Miller? How can you tell?
28. What materials does Miller use? How do they distinguish him from other artists?
29. Define “found materials.”
30. What are some examples of folk art you see in your community?
Glossary of Terms

Academic style
Based on the principles of classical drawing, works in the academic style depict lifelike figures set in historical scenes with elaborate details, smooth surfaces and no visible brush strokes (paint is applied in thin glazes). This style was promoted in the 19th-century national academies.

Art brut
This French term literally means “raw art.” It was used to describe an art movement in the early 20th century that investigated the innate nature of art and how it is most honestly expressed spontaneously and without academic instruction. French art collector and artist Jean Dubuffet coined the term in 1945 when he used it to reference works by people considered to be on the outside of society and not working in the fine art tradition.

Artistic convention
A widely used way of conveying an image or an idea. This method of artistic execution is typically universally understood.

Balance
The ways in which color, shapes and lines are distributed in a work of art.

Color
Light waves absorbed in and reflected off of surfaces around us. Color is created in paint and other art materials by mixing powdered materials, or pigments, with another material that will bind it to the canvas or paper.

Composition
The way objects are arranged in a work of art.

Contrast
The value and color relationships in a work when placed next to each other.

Emphasis
Specific parts of a work of art on which the artist wants the viewer to focus.
**Focal point**
A part of the painting that the viewer first sees when he or she looks at a work of art and concentrates on more than the other components of the work.

**Folk art**
An art tradition created by people with no formal training. Typically, folk art is described as “naïve,” as folk artists use flattened shapes, shallow spatial planes, bold outlines and simple forms to describe three-dimensional objects, forms and space.

**Folk music**
A broad musical genre that includes bluegrass, country, gospel, old-time, Appalachian folk and blues. This music is traditionally associated with the lower classes, is participatory and is based on a strong oral tradition. The traditional “folk sound” is created by string instruments, including fiddle, guitar, banjo and mandolin.

**Form**
A three-dimensional shape with height, weight and thickness.

**Genre scene**
A depiction of the everyday activities of ordinary people.

**Gesture drawing**
A quick, informal sketch of a subject. The purpose of a gesture drawing is to capture the general shape, movement and feel of the subject. These drawings are typically preliminary studies and are used as references in more fully developed paintings and drawings.

**Landscape**
A type of work in which natural scenery is the main subject.

**Line**
A path from one point to another.

**Museum**
A building where a collection of objects of interest is studied, conserved and exhibited.
**Narrative**
A story that is told through words, lyrics of a song, pictures or some other medium.

**Negative space**
The space around objects in an image.

**Outsider art**
A broad term used to describe works of art by people considered to be on the outside of society and not trained in the tradition of fine arts or exposed to art galleries, academies and schools.

**Pattern**
Using a line, shape or color repeatedly in a work in a certain order.

**Portrait**
A work of art in which the subject is a person or a group of people.

**Positive space**
The space occupied by the object in an image.

**Proportion**
The size of an object in relation to other objects.

**Rhythm**
Repeating patterns in a specific order.

**Self-taught**
In terms of art, “self-taught” refers to artists who have received no formal artistic training. Typically, their art lacks the traditional conventions of spatial, formal, and color description, which are taught in art schools and academies.

**Shape**
A flat, two-dimensional area or depth enclosed by lines and having depth or width. A shape can be geometric or organic.

**Space**
Distance, area or depth shown in a work of art.
**Texture**
How a surface feels or appears to feel.

**Unity**
When the main parts of a work of art fit together.

**Value**
The lightness or darkness of a color.

**Whirligig**
A device with a moveable part that spins.
Online Resources

**American Folk Art by Contemporary Craft Artists**
[http://www.american-folk-art.com](http://www.american-folk-art.com)
This Web site showcases selected folk artists, their collections, links to their galleries, biographical information and a list of nationwide folk art shows.

**American Folk Art Museum**
www.folkartmuseum.org
This Web site has images from exhibitions currently at the museum in New York and from the museum’s collection.

**American Visionary Museum**
www.avam.org
On this Web site, you can find information about outsider art, teacher resources, a make-your-own-robot activity and information about art cars.

**Folk Art Society of America**
www.folkart.org
On this Web site, you can find information about publications on folk art and links organized by subject to a number of sites.

**PBS “Off the Map”**
www.pbs.org/independentlens/offthemap
On this site, you can find lesson plans, information about different types of outsider art and interactive components such as tours of art yards and a program where visitors can make their own yard art online.

**Raw Vision Magazine**
www.rawvision.com
Based on features from the magazine, this Web site also includes articles on more general topics, such as “What is Outsider Art?”

**Roadside America**
www.roadsideamerica.com
This Web site contains sites around the country where travelers can find unusual manmade constructions.

**“Left of Reckoning,” by Jim Herbert**
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRJISbABcys](www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRJISbABcys)
Part of this collection of videos, created for the first half of songs on R.E.M.’s 1984 album *Reckoning*, was shot at R.A. Miller’s home and features his art.
Bibliography

Note: Some of these resources may include images and information not suitable for children. Please preview before bringing them into your classroom.


