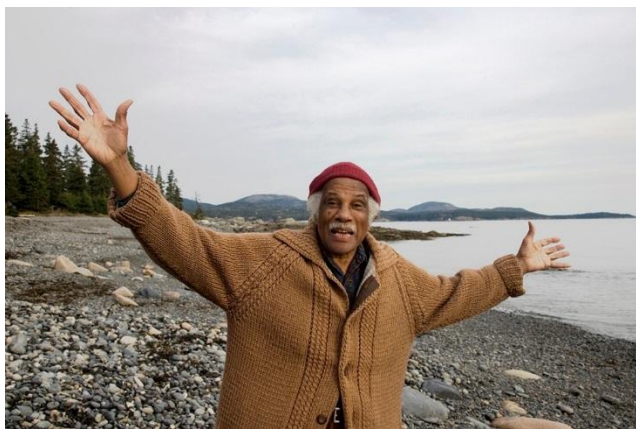


# Painter and Poet

## THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF ASHLEY BRYAN

Teacher Resource: Kindergarten–Grade 12



### About the Artist:

Artist, author, and educator Ashley Bryan (American, born 1923) says he can't remember a time when he was not drawing and painting. His unending creative zeal has fueled a long and prolific career. At a young age, Bryan noticed the lack of children's books with African American characters. Bryan is committed to filling the void in black representation by creating books about the African and African American experiences. He has traveled tirelessly to conferences, festivals, museums, and universities and has visited children in schools across the United States and in Africa to share his powerful work.

Photo: Billy McGuinness

### Books featured in the exhibition:

*The Adventures of Aku*, 1976

*All Night, All Day: A Child's First Book of African American Spirituals*, 1991

*All Things Bright and Beautiful*, 2010

*Ashley Bryan's ABC of African American Poetry*, 1997

*Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum*, 1987

*Beautiful Blackbird*, 2003

*The Dancing Granny*, 1977

*Freedom Over Me: Eleven Slaves, Their Lives and Dreams Brought to Life by Ashley Bryan*, 2016

*Let It Shine: Three Favorite Spirituals*, 2007

*Moon, For What Do You Wait? Poems by Rabindranath Tagore*, 1967

*The Night Has Ears: African Proverbs*, 1999

*The Ox of the Wonderful Horns and Other African Tales*, 1971

*Sail Away: Poems by Langston Hughes*, 2015

*The Sun Is So Quiet*, 1996

*Turtle Knows Your Name*, 1989

*Walk Together Children: Black American Spirituals*, 1981

*What a Morning! The Christmas Story in Black Spirituals*, 1987

*What a Wonderful World*, 1995

*Why Leopard Has Spots*, 1998

### About This Resource:

This Teacher Resource was created in collaboration with students enrolled in Georgia State University's Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education program in the College of Education and Human Development.

Professor: Dr. Thomas Crisp, Assistant Professor of Literacy, Early Childhood, and Elementary Education

Students: Maria Ambrosini, Andrew Bamford, Sarah Bergh, Mary Helen Bowen, Megan Burroughs, Amy Chong, Taylor Deese, Jenna Elliott, Italia Fulmer, Emily Holder, Charissa Hurst, Micaela Knott, Kelly McKenzie, Katee McNeill, Lauren Miles, Lucie Nguyen, Josiah Patrick, Keturah Reid, Casey Reyes, Melissa Richards, Sarah Roberts, Ana Romero, Marissa Twitchell, Julianna Westray

## Art-Making Processes



*Ashley Bryan: Painter and Poet* highlights Bryan's varied processes and includes a display of some of his paints, linoleum blocks, scissors, and papers. Bryan works in many different styles. He says: "In each of my books, I'm drawing upon what has been offered to me from the culture and art of the world, and I vary my approach for what the text is asking me."

Ashley Bryan uses a variety of media to make his distinctive artwork. For each book, he chooses the style most suited to the story:

- *Paintings* Bryan makes paintings for some illustrations, working in a color palette that fits the story.
- *Collages* For some books, he uses scissors to cut colorful sheets of paper and glue them into collages.
- *Prints* Bryan makes prints by carving blocks of linoleum to make a raised design in each surface. He then rolls ink across the block and presses it onto paper to create expressive, stylized, black-and-white images.

### Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Explore art-making processes:
  - Introduce students to Ashley Bryan's diverse use of media by showing images from the Key Images presentation on the High Museum of Art's Teacher Resource page.
  - Use the "Artist's Medium" worksheet in the appendix of this resource to explore materials and the messages they convey.
- Have students experiment with the different types of materials that Ashley Bryan uses:
  - *Paintings:* Ashley Bryan often uses a limited palette in his books. Show students images from *The Adventures of Aku* and *Beat the Story-Drum, Pum-Pum*. In these books, Bryan creates his illustrations using red, yellow, black, and white paint. Ask students to consider how the effect would have differed if Bryan had used the full spectrum of colors. Students can select their own limited palettes to create paintings.
  - *Collages:* Several of Ashley Bryan's endpapers picture a pair of his mother's dressmaking scissors, which he uses to create all of his collaged illustrations. Encourage students to create collages using paper shapes and designs cut with scissors.
  - *Prints:* Ashley Bryan creates relief prints by carving linoleum blocks. Replicate this process with students. Give each student a sheet of printing foam or Styrofoam. Students will draw designs on the foam by pressing into it using a pencil or pen. Students will then use a roller or paintbrush to apply paint to the foam. Press the foam onto a sheet of paper to create the final print.

### Additional Resource:

- Simon and Schuster Resource: [http://www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Ashley-Bryan/706174?mcd=vd\\_youtube\\_author](http://www.simonandschuster.com/authors/Ashley-Bryan/706174?mcd=vd_youtube_author)

### Standards:

#### **Visual Arts**

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| <b>K</b> | VAK.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art<br>VAK.CR.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and appropriate use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.<br>VAK.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.<br>VAK.CN.3 Develop life skills through the study and production of art (e.g. collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication). |
|----------|---|

<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	<p>VA1.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art.</p> <p>VA1.CR.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and appropriate use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.</p> <p>VA1.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p> <p>VA1.CN.3 Develop life skills through the study and production of art (e.g. collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication).</p>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<p>VA2.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art.</p> <p>VA2.CR.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and appropriate use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.</p> <p>VA2.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p> <p>VA2.CN.3 Develop life skills through the study and production of art (e.g. collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication).</p>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<p>VA3.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, processes, and concepts of two-dimensional art.</p> <p>VA3.CR.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and appropriate use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.</p> <p>VA3.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p> <p>VA3.CN.3 Develop life skills through the study and production of art (e.g. collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication).</p>
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>VA4.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, processes, and concepts of two-dimensional art.</p> <p>VA4.CR.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and appropriate use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.</p> <p>VA4.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p> <p>VA4.CN.3 Develop life skills through the study and production of art (e.g. collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, communication).</p>
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>VA5.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, processes, and concepts of two-dimensional art.</p> <p>VA5.CR.5 Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and appropriate use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.</p> <p>VA5CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p> <p>VA5CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p>
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>VA6.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.</p> <p>VA6.CR.3 Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and/or technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.</p> <p>VA6.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.</p> <p>VA6.CN.2 Develop life skills through the study and production of art.</p>
<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>VA7.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.</p> <p>VA7.CR.3 Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and/or technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.</p> <p>VA7.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.</p> <p>VA7.CN.2 Develop life skills through the study and production of art.</p>
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>VA8.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.</p> <p>VA8.CR.3 Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and/or technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.</p> <p>VA8.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.</p> <p>VA8.CN.2 Develop life skills through the study and production of art.</p>
<b>High School</b>	<p>VAHSAD.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create applied design art products and designs.</p> <p>VAHSAH.RE.4 Identify various works of art according to style and function, and justify identifications</p>

based on evidence in the work.

VAHSAH.CN.2 Develop life skills through the study and production of art.

VAHSPA.CR.1 Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art.

VAHSPA.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.

VAHSPA.CR.3 Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.

VAHSPA.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.

VAHSPR.CR.1 Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art.

VAHSPR.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art.

VAHSPR.CR.3 Engage in an array of processes, media, techniques, and technology through experimentation, practice, and persistence.

VAHSPR.RE.1 Reflect on the context of personal works of art in relation to community, culture, and the world.

# Puppets

Ashley Bryan makes puppets inspired by African and Caribbean folklore. In his youth, he and his sister collected fabric scraps to use in their creations. When he began spending time on Islesford, an island off the coast of Maine, Bryan encountered a wide variety of material washed up on the shore, from animal bones, shells, and sea glass to usable objects from ships.

He has always maintained that, “When you see the value in discarded things, you can make more of whatever you touch.” Bryan began constructing puppets as props to accompany his storytelling.

## Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Character and Story:
  - Ask students the following questions: Which puppet is most interesting to you? Why? If that puppet were a character in a book, what would it do? What type of personality would it have? What might the book be about?
  - Ask students to select a puppet that they find interesting. Students will complete the character identity chart located in this resource.
  - Give students the following writing prompt for a short story. As an extension, students can create illustrations to support their ideas: Imagine that one of Ashley Bryan’s puppets has escaped from its display case at the Museum. Where might it go? What might it do?
- Conservation and Recycling:
  - Students can create their own puppets using objects they find in nature.
  - Discuss:
    - How are the puppets made from local found objects different from or similar to Ashley Bryan’s puppets, which he makes from natural objects found on Little Cranberry Island, Maine?
    - How does this work have a positive impact on the environment?
    - What might have happened to the objects in Ashley Bryan’s puppets had he not picked them up? How might they have negatively affected plant and animal life?
    - What might have happened to the objects in your puppet had you not reused them?
  - Have students define *reduce*, *reuse*, and *recycle*. How is each of these words different? Which words represent what Ashley Bryan has done by creating these puppets?



Ashley Bryan  
*Pepukayi* (“Wake Up,” Ma-Shona People), 1975  
 Found objects and mixed media  
 Collection of The Ashley Bryan Center  
 AB2017.053

## Additional Resources:

- *Ashley Bryan’s Puppets* (2014), Ashley Bryan
- Ashley Bryan with Crabtree Puppet Theatre: <https://vimeo.com/201275206>

## Georgia Standards:

### ***Character and Story***

<b>K</b>	ELAGSEKRL3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	ELAGSE1RL3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details. ELAGSE1RL7 Use illustrations and details in a story to describe its characters, setting, or events.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	ELAGSE2RL6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud. ELAGSE2RL7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot. ELAGSE2W3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events,



	include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	ELAGSE3RL3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events. ELAGSE3W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. ELAGSE3W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	ELAGSE4RL3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions). ELAGSE4W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	ELAGSE5W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

### ***Conservation***

<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	S3L2. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the effects of pollution (air, land, and water) and humans on the environment.
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	SEV4. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information to analyze human impact on natural resources. SEV5. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the effects of human population growth on global ecosystems.

### ***Visual Art***

<b>K</b>	VAK.CR.4 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of three-dimensional art. VAK.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	VA1.CR.4 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of three-dimensional art. VA1.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	VA2.CR.4 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of three-dimensional art. VA2.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to engage in the understanding and production of works of art.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	VA3.CR.4 Understand and apply media, techniques, processes, and concepts of three-dimensional art. VA3.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	VA4.CR.4 Understand and apply media, techniques, processes, and concepts of three-dimensional art. VA4.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	VA5.CR.4 Understand and apply media, techniques, processes, and concepts of three-dimensional works of art. VA5.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.

## World War II



Ashley Bryan  
*Camp Scotland*, 1944  
Ink on paper  
Collection of The Ashley Bryan Center  
AB2017.080

In May of 1943, Bryan was drafted into the U.S. Army out of Cooper Union, the art school he was attending in New York City. He was assigned to the 502nd Port Battalion and trained to offload cargo from ships. He partook in the Normandy invasion of 1944 and landed on Omaha Beach on June 9.

Bryan carried art supplies in his gas mask and drew during his free time. He sketched his comrades at rest, exhausted from their physically demanding work. While the battalion was stationed in Scotland, Bryan persuaded his commanding officer to allow him to attend classes at the renowned Glasgow School of Art, and one of these efforts is on display in the exhibition. He also drew members of the battalion band—one of the first of its kind that served to improve soldiers' morale.

Bryan developed some of his war drawings into paintings and held an exhibition in Le Havre, France, in the fall of 1944. In his introductory statement, he allowed how making art in a foxhole had its limitations. While some of his war work was lost in a fire in France, Bryan sent much of it back home. This body of over 350 drawings reinforces Bryan's commitment to art that even the disruption of war could not deter.

### Suggested Discussion:

- Ashley Bryan served in a segregated unit during World War II. Use his drawings from this period to initiate an exploration of racism in the U.S. armed forces.
- How are these images similar to or different from images you've seen depicting war?
- What is happening in these images? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Why do you think Ashley Bryan wanted to capture these moments?

### Additional Resources:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/african-americans-many-rivers-to-cross/history/what-was-black-americas-double-war/>  
<http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu/centapp/oh/story.do?shortName=elliott1939vv>

### Georgia Standards:

#### ***World War II***

<b>5th</b>	SS5H4 Explain America's involvement in World War II.
<b>High School-World History</b>	SSWH18 Examine the major political and economic factors that shaped world societies between World War I and World War II. SSWH19 Demonstrate an understanding of the global political, economic, and social impact of World War II.

## Poetry

### *Sail Away: Poems by Langston Hughes*



Ashley Bryan was inspired by the African American poet Langston Hughes, who is known for his work during the Harlem Renaissance. Hughes's poetry about the ocean and its related symbolism stemmed from his travels through Africa and Europe working as a seaman.

Ashley Bryan discovered Langston Hughes's work through his love of poetry and desire to celebrate black artists. Both men saw the importance of bringing the beauty and influence of African history to the forefront of American culture through poetry and art—a combination that is very effective in capturing readers' imaginations.

#### Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Use this book as a springboard to explore the life and work of Langston Hughes. Students will research his work and consider the following:
  - In what ways was Langston Hughes's work significant to the Harlem Renaissance?
  - How did Hughes influence the field of literature and poetry?
  - Why might Ashley Bryan have been inspired by or interested in Hughes's poetry?
- Have students practice active reading and interpretation of poems. Students will read through *Sail Away* and choose three poems to interpret.

Ashley Bryan, *Sea Calm*, 2014  
Final illustration for *Sail Away: Poems by Langston Hughes* (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2015)  
Cut-paper collage on paper  
Collection of the Ashley Bryan Center

Students can consider the following questions:

- Can you paraphrase this poem?
- What is the central idea or theme of the poem?
- Who is the speaker in the poem? Whom is the speaker addressing?
- How do the illustrations relate to the poem?
- For older students: How does the poem's structure contribute to your understanding of this poem? Why do you think Hughes chose to structure the poem this way?
- Explore Hughes's use of descriptive language. Alliteration and rhyme are both evident in his work.
  - On various pages, the teacher can ask the students to close their eyes and imagine the scene as the teacher reads the poem.
  - Ask students to identify rhyming words by repeating them as a group or writing them individually. Why do poets use rhymes? How does rhyming add to or take away from the poem's meaning?
- Have students read "My People" by Langston Hughes individually. Then watch a video of Ashley Bryan reciting the poem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UjmyNiEqEbE>
  - Compare and contrast listening to and reading a poem. Have students consider how the experiences are different and similar.
  - Ask: Which did you prefer? Why?
- Connect poetry and visual arts through exploring "Sea Calm" by Langston Hughes alongside Ashley Bryan's illustrations.

#### Sea Calm

How still,  
How strangely still



The water is today.  
It is not good  
For water  
To be so still that way.

—Langston Hughes

Ask students to consider the following:

Poem	Illustration
Why do you think the poem says it is strange for the water to be so still?	Which media do you think the artist used in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that?
What would cause the ocean to be still?	How do the illustrations help you better understand the poem?
Have you ever been to the ocean or seen images of the ocean? If so, what did you see? What did you feel?	Whose reflection do you see in the water?
Which words in the poem relate to emotions or physical sensations?	How do you think the lady in this illustration is feeling? What do you see that makes you say that?
	If you were to create an image interpreting this poem, how would it be similar to or different from Bryan's illustration?

### ***Ashley Bryan's ABC of African American Poetry***

Ashley Bryan is inspired by African American poetry and spirituals. This book highlights the accomplishments and work of African American poets. Regarding the poems he chose, he states, "As I read, images sprang from the lines of the poems."

#### Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Use this book to explore poetry written by African American poets. Assign each student a poet from this book to research. Students can be assigned any or all of the following:
  - Create a presentation that shares information about the poet's life and work.
  - Connect the poet's work to the time in which he or she lived. How do you think world events of the era might have influenced this poet?
  - Select one poem by the assigned poet and make an artwork to illustrate it.

Potential poets:

- Gwendolyn Brooks
- Lucille Clifton
- Countee Cullen
- Rita Dove
- Eloise Greenfield
- Langston Hughes
- James Weldon Johnson
- Audre Lorde

#### Georgia Standards:

##### ***Poetry***

<b>K</b>	ELAGSEKRF2 Demonstrate understanding of spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	ELAGSE1RL4 Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	ELAGSE2RL4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song. ELAGSE2L3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	ELAGSE3RL5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using

	<p>terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.</p> <p>ELAGSE3L3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p> <p>ELAGSE3RL7 Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).</p>
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE4RL2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE4L3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p>
<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE5RL2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE5RL5 Explain how a series of chapters, scenes, or stanzas fits together to provide the overall structure of a particular story, drama, or poem.</p> <p>ELAGSE5RL7 Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).</p> <p>ELAGSE5L3 Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.</p>
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE6RL7 Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they “see” and “hear” when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.</p> <p>ELAGSE6RL9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.</p> <p>ELAGSE6RL10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p> <p>ELAGSE6W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>
<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE7RL4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.</p> <p>ELAGSE7RL5 Analyze how a drama’s or poem’s form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.</p> <p>ELAGSE7RL7 Compare and contrast a written story, drama, or poem to its audio, filmed, staged, or multimedia version, analyzing the effects of techniques unique to each medium (e.g., lighting, sound, color, or camera focus and angles in a film).</p> <p>ELAGSE7RL10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 6-8 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p>
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE8RL10 By the end of the year, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, at the high end of grades 6-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.</p>
<b>9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE9-10RL7 Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums</p> <p>ELAGSE9-10RL10 By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p>
<b>11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup></b>	<p>ELAGSE11-12RL7 Analyze multiple interpretations of a story, drama, or poem (e.g., recorded or live production of a play or recorded novel or poetry), evaluating how each version interprets the source text.</p> <p>ELAGSE11-12RL10 By the end of grade 11, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.</p>

## Folktales

Ashley Bryan is one of the earliest tellers of African tales in picture book form. His first professional assignment came in the 1960s to illustrate a poem by Rabindranath Tagore. When his editor later asked Bryan to use his artwork for a collection of African folktales, he responded that he didn't like the way the stories were written. The editor encouraged him to tell the stories in his own style.

Folktales are stories that have been passed down from generation to generation and often teach morals or lessons. There are several types of folktales, including “trickster tales” and *pourquoi* stories.



### Trickster Tales

Trickster tales are a type of folktale that is told all around the world. These stories feature a trickster: a character who plays tricks on the other characters. The trickster is often greedy and arrogant.

*The Dancing Granny*, featured in this exhibition, is an example of a trickster tale. In the story, Granny Anika loves to dance. She beats a rhythm as she plants and harvests her incredible vegetable garden. Spider Ananse decides to trick Granny by playing music to distract her from her garden. Sure enough, Granny can't resist the call of the music and dances away, allowing Spider Ananse to steal her vegetables.

Ashley Bryan

*When Granny Anika finally came out of her dance right side up, she was eleven miles north of her village, 1977*

Final illustration for *The Dancing Granny*  
(Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 1977)

Ink and brush on paper

The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art,  
Amherst, Massachusetts. Gift of the artist

#### Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Read *The Dancing Granny* with your students.
- Have students identify who the trickster in the story is.

Students should justify why they think this character is the trickster by exploring his or her actions and decisions.

- Incorporate movement. The line “Shake it to the east, shake it to the west” is repeated throughout the story. Ask students to mimic the

dancing granny's movements while reading this phrase.

- Students might dance for fun, at special events, or to express themselves. Make the connection that dance and music are important to many cultures around the world. Ask students the following:
  - How do you feel when you dance?
  - When do you dance? Are there special occasions where you get to dance?
  - Why might the dancing granny be dancing?

Ashley Bryan

*Mrs. Chicken and the Hungry Crocodile, 1998*

Final illustration for *Why Leopard Has Spots*  
(Fulcrum Publishing, 1998)

Linoleum cut on rice paper

The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art,  
Amherst, Massachusetts. Gift of the artist

### *Pourquoi* Stories

*Pourquoi* (“why” in French) stories are a type of folktale that explain “how” and “why.” For example, these fables might try to answer questions such as “Why is the sky blue?” or “Why do chameleons change color?” or, as Ashley Bryan explores in this exhibition, “Why does the leopard have spots?” Ask students to brainstorm additional questions about nature and the world around us that a *pourquoi* fable might answer.

- Before reading *Why Leopard Has Spots*, show students Ashley Bryan's illustration from this fable. Discuss the following as a class: In folktales, animals often take on human characteristics and can speak. If these animals could speak, what might they say?
- After reading the story, have students develop their own *pourquoi* stories about how leopards got their spots. Rather than writing the story, students can apply an arts-based approach. Some examples are creating a skit, making a collage, making a poster, making a timeline, or creating a song or poem.





## *Beautiful Blackbird*



This story is inspired by a Zambian folktale about a group of birds who are asked which bird is the most beautiful. They all cry out that blackbird is the most beautiful. Blackbird then shares his color with the other birds, and they all get spots of black on their feathers. This story highlights the importance of appreciating one's own heritage and discovering the beauty within.

### Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Draw inferences about the book by exploring the front and back covers. Ask students the following questions:
  - What do you see on the cover?
  - What stands out to you? Why?
  - What do you think the story is going to be about from looking at the cover and reading the title?
  - What do you think might happen to the bird? What do you see that makes you say that?
- Display the following passages of the book:
  - “Color on the outside is not what’s on the inside. You don’t act like me. You don’t eat like me. You don’t get down in the groove and move your feet like me.”
    - Ask: What do you think blackbird means by this? What inferences can we draw that help us determine a theme or moral to the story?
  - “We’ll see the difference a touch of black can make. Just remember, whatever I do, I’ll be me and you’ll be you.”
    - Ask: What does it mean when the blackbird says, “I’ll be me and you’ll be you?” Why is it important that we always be ourselves?
- Relate these passages to their paired illustrations. As a class, discuss how the text and illustrations work together to convey meaning. Examine the characters and how they are represented through illustrations as well as any action or details that are visible. Discuss how the illustrations helped present the theme to readers.
- Determine the moral of the story. A moral is a lesson that is learned or taught. Write the question “What is the moral of the story?” on the board.
  - Use the Think-Pair-Share technique: Allow students to reflect individually and then allow 5 minutes to speak with a partner about their answers. Gather as a class and discuss responses.

Ashley Bryan

*The birds’ colors were mirrored in the waters*, ca. 2002

Cut-paper collage on paper

Final illustration for *Beautiful Blackbird*  
(Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003)

The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art,  
Amherst, Massachusetts. Gift of the artist in  
memory of Trinkett Clark



- Blackbird shares his color with the other birds and says, “We’ll see the difference a touch of black can make. Just remember, whatever I do, I’ll be me and you’ll be you.” Ask students:
  - What do you think Ashley Bryan means by this?
  - How has Ashley Bryan represented each bird’s individuality?
  - How are the birds alike? How are they different?
- Explore the question “What makes you beautiful?”
  - The following quote from *Beautiful Blackbird* will serve as a springboard to discuss inner beauty and identity. “Color on the outside is not what’s on the inside.... Whatever I do, I’ll be me and you’ll be you.”
  - Have each student use construction paper to create a bird that represents his or her identity and personality. Students should consider color symbolism and body language.
  - On the back side of the paper, students will answer the question “What makes me beautiful?” Students can write sentences or bullet point ideas that identify their own inner beauty.

#### Additional Resources:

- Why are Folktales Important? <http://www.augusthouse.com/testimonials/icxvrhv937/Why-are-Folktales-Important>
- What Is Beautiful? Lesson: <http://conceptsofbeauty.weebly.com/lesson-four.html>
- Video of Ashley Bryan reading *Beautiful Blackbird*: <https://gpb.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/43a88b2b-5031-4c48-986b-6ef50ff05d75/ashley-bryan-beautiful-blackbird-georgia-read-more/#.WWzg94TyUk>

#### Georgia Standards:

##### **English Language Arts**

<b>K</b>	ELAGSEKRL1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text. ELAGSEKRL2 With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details. ELAGSEKRL3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story. ELAGSEKRI5 Identify the front cover, back cover, and title page of a book. ELAGSEKRI6 Name the author and illustrator of a text and define the role of each in presenting the ideas or information in a text.
<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	ELAGSE1RL1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. ELAGSE1RL2 Retell stories, including key details, and demonstrate understanding of their central message or lesson. ELAGSE1RL3 Describe characters, settings, and major events in a story, using key details. ELAGSE1RL4 Identify words and phrases in stories or poems that suggest feelings or appeal to the senses. ELAGSE1RI1 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. ELAGSE1RI2 Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text. ELAGSE1RI3 Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.
<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	ELAGSE2RL1 Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why, and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text. ELAGSE2RL2 Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson, or moral. ELAGSE2RL3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges. ELAGSE2RL4 Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem, or song. ELAGSE2RL5 Describe the overall structure of a story including describing how the beginning introduces the story, the middle provides major events and challenges, and the ending concludes the action.
<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	ELAGSE3RL1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. ELAGSE3RL2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text. ELAGSE3RL3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events. ELAGSE3RL5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections. ELAGSE3RL7 Explain how specific aspects of a text’s illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

4 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE4RL1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE4RL2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE4RL3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).</p> <p>ELAGSE4RI7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.</p>
5 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE5RL1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE5RL2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE5RL3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).</p> <p>ELAGSE5RL7 Analyze how visual and multimedia elements contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text (e.g., graphic novel, multimedia presentation of fiction, folktale, myth, poem).</p>
6 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE6RL2 Determine a theme and/or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</p> <p>ELAGSE6RL5 Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.</p> <p>ELAGSE6RL9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.</p> <p>ELAGSE6W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>
7 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE7RL2 Determine a theme and/or of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.</p>
8 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE8RL2 Determine a theme and/or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE8RL9 Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new</p> <p>ELAGSE8W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>
9 <sup>th</sup> –10 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE9-10RL1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE9-10RL2 Determine a theme or central idea of text and closely analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE9-10RL6 Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.</p>
11 <sup>th</sup> –12 <sup>th</sup>	<p>ELAGSE11-12RL1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p> <p>ELAGSE11-12RI1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>

## Freedom Over Me: Slavery in the United States



Ashley Bryan  
Stephan Dreams, 2015  
Final illustration for *Freedom Over Me: Eleven Slaves, Their Lives and Dreams Brought to Life* by Ashley Bryan (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2016)  
Diluted tempera and felt-tip pen on paper  
Collection of the Ashley Bryan Center

Years ago, Ashley Bryan purchased a trove of slavery-related documents. It included a bill of sale from an estate that listed eleven enslaved people for sale along with farm animals and material assets. Through his moving free-verse poetry and meticulously rendered portraits, Bryan restored the humanity that had been so cruelly stripped from these people. The documents listed only a name and a price for each person; Bryan imagined their histories and dreams for the future. *Freedom Over Me* was awarded a Newbery Honor, a Coretta Scott King Author Honor, and a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor for 2017.

*Freedom Over Me* was inspired by an 1828 legal document that outlined the property owned by a slave owner. It listed 11 people who had been enslaved and how much they cost. For hundreds of years leading up to the Civil War, millions of people in Africa—specifically, from West African and Central African countries—were bought and sold as slaves. They were separated from their families and friends, and their lives and cultures were ruined. This was part of the Transatlantic Slave Trade—one of the most devastating events in human history.

Ashley Bryan used these primary sources to create his work. He imagined what the 11 people would have been like and what their dreams would have been. Each page focuses on a different person. On one side of the page, you see the primary source in the background and an image of the person in the foreground. On the other side, it shows a freestyle form of poetry about the person's life. When you turn the page, we see what Ashley Bryan imagined would have been the individual's dream.

### Suggested Discussion and Activities:

- Use *Freedom Over Me* to discuss primary sources.
  - Have students define what primary and secondary sources are. Ask: How are primary sources different from secondary sources?
  - In this book, Bryan includes an image of each enslaved person against a backdrop of documents related to historical slave sales. What influence do these documents have on the message Bryan is communicating? Why do you think he chose to include them?
- *Freedom Over Me* introduces the topic of slavery from a perspective that focuses on humanity and empathy. Use this book to springboard teaching and learning about the transatlantic slave trade.
  - How did slavery increase tensions between the North and the South leading up to the Civil War? How does Ashley Bryan depict the slave owners—the Fairchilds—in this book?
  - Bryan considers hopes and dreams of individuals who are enslaved. Have students reflect upon how slavery affected the people who were enslaved, their families, and their communities. Students should refer to examples in the book's text or illustrations to support their answers.
- Slavery was prominent in the South, including Georgia. Use this story to explore the history of slavery in Georgia. Consider:
  - What are the lasting impacts that slavery has had on our society?

- One of the largest slave sales in history took place in 1859 in Savannah, GA, when 436 men, women, and children were sold and their families broken apart. This time is referred to as “the weeping time.” How does this event connect to *Freedom Over Me*? If there were a book about the weeping time, what additional dreams or talents might we see?
  - Have students read the author’s note in the back of *Freedom Over Me*. Ask them to write their own author’s note for a hypothetical book about the weeping time or other slave sales that took place in Georgia.
- The title of this book comes from the spiritual “Oh, Freedom!” Divide students into small groups and ask them to analyze the song. Students should consider why the spiritual was written, who might have written it, and how it connects to Bryan’s text.
- Use the story dice, found in the appendix of this resource, to prompt questions about the images in Bryan’s book. In small groups, students will take turns rolling the dice and answering questions about the images.
- Assign each student a character in the book and use the “Letter from the Artwork” worksheet in the back of the book to consider what the character might say if he or she were to write a letter to the reader of the book.
- Before reading the book, show students a pair of illustrations, one depicting an individual when he or she was enslaved and one depicting the individual’s dreams. Ask the following questions:
  - What do the body language and facial expression of the characters tell you about how they are feeling in each image?
  - Which details stand out to you? Why do they stand out? Why are they important?
  - What is the setting? Does the character seem comfortable there? What do you see that makes you that?
  - How are the two images similar? How are they different?
  - What do you think the author/illustrator is trying to communicate?

#### Additional Resources:

- Slavery in colonial Georgia: <http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/articles/history-archaeology/slavery-colonial-georgia>

#### Standards:

##### *Effects of Slavery*

<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	SS3H3 Explain the factors that shaped British Colonial America.
<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	SS4H5 Explain the causes, major events, and consequences of the Civil War SS4H6 Analyze the effects of Reconstruction on American life.
<b>8<sup>th</sup></b>	SS8H2 Analyze the colonial period of Georgia’s history SS8H5 Analyze the impact of the Civil War on Georgia
<b>U.S. History</b>	SSUSH7 Investigate political, economic, and social developments during the Age of Jackson. SSUSH8 Explore the relationship between slavery, growing north-south divisions, and westward expansion that led to the outbreak of the Civil War. SSUSH9 Evaluate key events, issues, and individuals related to the Civil War

## Appendix: Worksheets and Printable Resources

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Answer the following questions about the pictures in the Ashley Bryan exhibition.

1. When artists talk about a medium or multiple media, they are describing the different materials used in the artwork. Ashley Bryan uses a variety of media: paints, linoleum blocks, and papers (collage). Write one sentence describing each.

Paint:

\_\_\_\_\_

Linoleum Block Prints:

\_\_\_\_\_

Cut-Paper Collage:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. The medium an artist chooses affects the mood and tone of the art work. What might Ashley Bryan have been trying to convey by using each medium?

Paint:

\_\_\_\_\_

Linoleum Block Prints:

\_\_\_\_\_

Cut-Paper Collage:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Which is your favorite type of medium used in the exhibition? Provide an example and explain why.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Letter from a Work of Art:

Dear viewer,

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

