

# CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (GRADES K-5)

HIGH MUSEUM PERMANENT COLLECTION SPOTLIGHT ON

**NELLIE MAE ROWE**

Nellie Mae Rowe (American, 1900–1982), *Brown Dog on the Road, Vinings, GA*, 1981, crayon and graphite on paper, High Museum of Art, Atlanta, gift of Judith Alexander, 2003.145.



Photo by Jay Wieland, courtesy of the Souls Grown Deep Foundation.

Use the artwork *Brown Dog on the Road, Vinings, GA* by Nellie Mae Rowe to investigate the elements of narrative, including character, setting, and plot.

## A CLOSER LOOK AND SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Nellie Mae Rowe (American, 1900–1982) grew up working very hard with her family on their farm and sometimes on neighboring farms as well. When Nellie Mae became an adult and no longer had to do the hard work of picking cotton and planting crops, she thought back and remembered fun and carefree times when she could play as a child. Her adult home on Paces Ferry Road in Vinings, Georgia, became “Nellie’s Playhouse.” Rowe decorated her house with objects that she found, including handmade dolls, chewing-gum sculptures, and hundreds of drawings, which she displayed in books, lined up on ledges and hung side by side on walls. Thanks to a major gift from her neighbor and friend Judith Alexander, the High offers the largest public collection of Rowe’s artwork. Take one minute to look closely at this artwork by Nellie Mae Rowe.

- What’s going on in this picture? What do you see that makes you say that?
- If you were going to give this picture a title, what would it be? Why?
- How many characters can you find? Describe each of them. Use adjectives to describe what they look like and what their personalities might be like.
- Imagine that two of the characters are having a conversation. What might they be saying?
- What is the setting of this picture? Imagine if you jumped inside. What would it sound like? Feel like? Smell like? Taste like? Can you turn these answers into sentences using lots of adjectives?
- Pretend this picture takes place in the middle of the story. What happened right before? What might happen next?

- Nellie Mae Rowe loved to use animals as subjects, or characters, in her artwork. Do you have a favorite animal? It can be real or imaginary. Think of your favorite animal as the main character in your story. Now think of one of your favorite places to go, and make it the setting of your story. What will happen? Write and draw a picture to go with your story!

## **RELEVANT GEORGIA STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE**

- ELAGSEKRL3 With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
- ELAGSEKW3 Use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate a single event or several loosely linked events, tell about the events in the order in which they occurred, and provide a reaction to what happened.
- ELAGSE1W3 Write narratives in which they recount two or more appropriately sequenced events, include some details regarding what happened, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide some sense of closure.
- ELAGSE1L5 With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.
- ELAGSE2RL3 Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.
- ELAGSE2RL6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.
- 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.
- ELAGSE4RI1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- 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).