

# Teaching with *Dr. John Hope Franklin* by Wilson Hurley



This document is designed to help teachers present, discuss, and teach about Oklahoma history and art literacy through the use of this work of art. The information and exercises here will aid in understanding and learning from this artwork.

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# First Analysis and Criticism

The steps below may be used for group discussion or individual written work.

Before beginning the steps, take two minutes to study the artwork. Look at all the details and subject matter. After studying the artwork in silence, follow these steps:

## **Describe:**

Be specific and descriptive. List only the facts about the objects in the painting or sculpture.

- What things are in the artwork?
- What is happening?
- List what you see (people, animals, clothing, environment, objects, etc.).

## **Analyze:**

- How are the elements of art – line, shape, form, texture, space, and value used?
- How are the principles of design – unity, pattern, rhythm, variety, balance, emphasis, and proportion used?

## **Interpretation:**

Make initial, reasonable inferences.

- What do you think is happening in the artwork?
- Who is doing what?
- What do you think the artist is trying to say to the viewer?

## **Evaluate:**

Express your opinion.

- What do you think about the artwork?
- Is it important?
- How does it help you understand the past?
- Do you like it? Why or why not?

# Overview of the Artwork

Born in Rentiesville, Oklahoma, John Hope Franklin graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa and went on to become a nationally recognized historian and civil rights advocate. Franklin said it was his desire “to weave into the fabric of American history enough of the presence of blacks so that the story of the United States could be told adequately and fairly.”

In 1941, Franklin earned his doctorate in history from Harvard University and went on to a lifelong career in teaching. Franklin became the first person of color to head a major history department when he was selected to chair the history department at Brooklyn College. In 1983, Franklin became the James B. Duke Professor of History and Professor of Legal History at the Duke University Law School where three academic units are now named for him. Duke offered to name a center for African-American Studies after Franklin, but he politely declined, saying he was a historian of America and the world too.

Franklin’s prolific writing might only be outdone by his dedication to civil rights. His work *From Slavery to Freedom* was first published in 1947 and has sold more than three million copies worldwide.

In the early 1950s, Franklin served on the NAACP Legal Defense Fund team led by Thurgood Marshall that helped develop the case for *Brown v. Board of Education*, which eventually ended segregation in public schools. Franklin also marched with the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama.

In 1995, President Clinton awarded Franklin the nation’s highest civilian honor, the Medal of Freedom. In 2002, scholar Molefi Kete Asante included Franklin on his list of 100 Greatest African Americans, and in 2004, the State of Oklahoma recognized Franklin as a Cultural Treasure.

A few months prior to his 2009 death, Franklin made one of his last public appearances during the groundbreaking of the John Hope Franklin Reconciliation Park in Tulsa. Reflecting on his life he noted that he “would like [his] students to take up where [he] left off and to carry on the fight to establish history as a powerful force for good - a constructive force to rectify the ills of our society-- to change the world, as it were.”

[Listen to a KOSU Radio interview about John Hope Franklin.](#)

## About the Artist

Everett Raymond Kinstler's prolific career has established him as one of the nation's foremost portrait painters. Among Kinstler's more than 1,200 portraits are well-known celebrities and personalities in the entertainment industry, authors, and business leaders. Kinstler has painted portraits of secretaries of state, Supreme Court justices, U.S. governors, U.S. senators, and university presidents.

Seven U.S. presidents have posed for Kinstler, including Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W. Bush. The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. has acquired more than 100 of his original works for its permanent collection. In 1999, Kinstler received the gallery's highest honor, the Copley Medal.

# Details



1. John Hope Franklin was born in Rentiesville, Oklahoma, in 1915.
2. Franklin graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in Tulsa, and Fisk University in Nashville. He earned a doctorate in history from Harvard University in 1941.
3. Franklin was an accomplished historian and was best known for his book *From Slavery to Freedom*, first published in 1947. He also authored numerous publications including *The Militant South*, *The Free Negro in North Carolina*, *Reconstruction After the Civil War*, and *A Southern Odyssey: Travelers in the Ante-bellum North*.
4. In the early 1950s, Franklin served on the NAACP Legal Defense Fund team led by Thurgood Marshall. The work of this team led to the 1954 United States Supreme Court decision to end the legal segregation of black and white children in public schools.
5. Franklin was also an educator, teaching at several prestigious universities. In 1956, as chair of the history department at Brooklyn College, he became the first person of color to head a major history department.
6. In recognition of Franklin's achievements, Duke University in Durham, North Carolina, opened the John Hope Franklin Center for Interdisciplinary and International Studies in 2000.
7. In 1995 Franklin was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

# Suggested Reading

**Oklahoma Adventure**, Centennial Edition 2006 by Oklahoma History Press  
*No Reference*

**Oklahoma: Land of Contrasts** by Clairmont Press  
Chapter 18: Oklahoma Roundup, **page 476**

**The Story of Oklahoma**, Second Edition by Baird and Goble  
*No Reference*

## Online Resource

Encyclopedia of Oklahoma History & Culture, Oklahoma Historical Society  
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/F/FI009.html>

# Final Analysis

After completing the readings and activities, go back and look at the artwork again. Now that the students are more familiar with the subject matter, ask them to write a few paragraphs about their interpretation of the artwork. In their own words, the writing should address the following:

- Description of the artwork and who/what is in it
- How the elements of art and principles of design are used within the artwork
- What feelings, emotions, or information the artwork depicts
- Their opinion of the artwork

# Pass Objectives

## Grade 4- Social Studies

**Standard 5: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the unique features which contributed to the settlement of the state of Oklahoma.**

4. Identify state and local governing bodies (e.g., the state legislature and city councils) and officials (e.g., governor and mayors) that make laws and carry out laws, with an emphasis on civic participation (e.g., the importance of studying the issues and voting).
5. Develop an understanding of and an appreciation for the cultural diversity of his or her community by examining the historical and contemporary racial, ethnic, and cultural groups of the area.

## Grade 4- The Arts

**Standard 2: Visual Art History and Culture - The student will recognize the development of visual art from an historical and cultural perspective.**

1. Describe and place a variety of specific significant art objects by artist, style and historical and cultural context.
2. Identify themes and purposes of works of art and artifacts in history and culture.
3. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of several fields of art such as painting, sculpture, drawing, computer graphics, printmaking, architecture, and fiber arts.
4. Identify how visual art is used in today's world including the popular media of advertising, television, and film.

## High School- Oklahoma History

**Standard 1. The student will demonstrate process skills in social studies.**

1. Identify, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary sources (e.g., artifacts, diaries, letters, art, music, literature, photographs, documents, newspapers, and contemporary media).

**Standard 7. The student will examine major cultural and ethnic groups represented in Oklahoma.**

1. Identify cultural and ethnic groups in Oklahoma (e.g., African-Americans, Eastern Europeans, Italians, Germans, and Vietnamese) and explore the causes and effects of their immigration and settlement patterns.
2. Trace the cultural, political, and economic contributions of these groups.

**Standard 8. The student will examine factors that contributed to the political, economic, and social history of Oklahoma during the twentieth century.**

1. Identify significant individuals and their contributions (e.g., Jerome Tiger, Frank Phillips, Kate Barnard, Angie Debo, Ada Lois Sipuel, Clara Luper, George Lynn Cross, Ralph Ellison, Robert S. Kerr, Henry Bellmon, and Reba McEntire).

## **High School- The Arts**

### **Standard 1: Language of Visual Art - The student will identify visual art terms (e.g., content, engraving, foreshortening, mosaic, perspective)**

3. Describe exhibitions of original works of art seen in the school or community.
4. Differentiate between art criticism and art reviews, recognizing that criticism is positive as well as negative in its evaluation of a work of art.

### **Standard 2: Visual Art History and Culture - The student will recognize the development of visual art from an historical and cultural perspective.**

5. PROFICIENT: Identify major regional, national, and international collections of art.

### **Standard 4: Visual Art Appreciation - The student will appreciate visual art as a vehicle of human expression.**

2. Demonstrate respect for their work and the work of others.