



Portraits of a Place

A WV Social Studies Lesson Plan
Grade 12

Lesson Essential Question	Notes:
How do people express attachment to places and regions through arts and literature?	
Lesson Objectives (“I Can...” Statements)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● I can identify expressions of attachment to places and regions within essays, novels, poems, short stories, feature films, and songs.● I can interpret various works of literature and art.● I can connect with local history through personal attachment to places and regions.● I can create my own expression of attachment to a place or region through creative means.	
Lesson Standards	
SS.US.13: Interpret how people express attachment to places and regions (e.g., by reference to essays, novels, poems, short stories, feature films and songs).	
Prior Knowledge/Prerequisite Skills	
<i>Prior to this lesson, students should be familiar with the process of analyzing and critiquing essays, novels, poems, shorts stories, films and songs. It would be helpful for students to have recognition of notable West Virginians, but necessary.</i>	
Lesson Vocabulary	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Culture● Expression● Humanities	
Materials and Resources	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Various selections of essays, poems, short stories, songs, novels (or excerpts), and feature films (excerpts)<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A pre-made list is provided● Teacher computer and projector or student devices● Graphic Organizer<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A template is provided● Student Directions and Rubric<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Both a directions page and rubric are provided, but teacher can substitute with self-created materials if desired● Paper and writing utensils	
Accommodations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Provide leveled and/or annotated resources to students based on individual student needs● Allow students to work in strategic pairs/groups for the project● Provide additional time for each activity● Use visual cues and other graphic organizers to help students analyze works● Modify assignment instructions to reduce choices● Provide additional instructions and resources	



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Learning Procedures

1. Activating Strategy: Acrostic Poem

- a. Display either the name of the town, county, state (or state abbreviation if you are short on time) and instruct students to write an acrostic poem using the name displayed. Students will need to write a word or phrase for each letter of the word.
- b. Allow a couple of student volunteers to share their work. Ask the class (or the author) how their poem reflects how they feel about the place the poem is about.

2. Show the class the trailer or a clip of your choosing from the movie *October Sky*.

- a. [Link to October Sky \(1999\) Trailer | https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWBZIZTSnvM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWBZIZTSnvM)
- b. Provide any necessary helpful background information to students (i.e. setting of the movie, information about Homer Hickam, *Rocket Boys*, Coalwood, WV, etc.)
- c. Ask students to describe how the town was portrayed and what emotions did the trailer evoke.
 - i. Invite students to dig deeper once an emotion is identified—what did the writers and actors do to evoke this emotion? Does it relate to how Homer Hickam feels about Coalwood today?

3. Divide students into small groups of 3-4 students/group. Assign each group an essay, short story, novel, poem, song, or feature film to analyze. A list of several resources is provided (attached). For longer works and feature films, it may be best suited to provide an excerpt in place of the whole work.

- a. Allow students to review and discuss their assigned work for 10-15 minutes depending on your time constraints. At the end of the time frame, each group should share how their work expresses personal attachment to a specific place or region.
- b. As each group shares, add it to a graphic organizer for the class. A template is attached.
- c. If time allows, have students switch essays, short stories, novels, poems, songs, and feature films in a Rotation or Stations style activity.

4. Provide students with the concluding assignment. Students will write an essay, short story, poem, or song (or novel if time allows) that expresses their attachment to a particular place or region. Students can also have the option to create a short film or film trailer to express their attachment to a particular place or a region. A sample rubric and instructions page is provided.

Outcome & Assessment Strategies

Outcome:

Students will interpret and identify the ways in which people express attachment to places and regions through essays, novels, poems, short stories, feature films, and songs.

Assessment Strategies:

- Graphic Organizer: Students identify various ways authors and performers express attachment to places and regions by analyzing different works.
- Student Projects: Students utilize their own creativity to express their attachment to a particular place or region.



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Suggested Works

The following works feature West Virginia and/or Appalachia. Additional resource links for short stories are provided but do not necessarily feature WV. A list of West Virginia authors and poets is also provided for your convenience.

Essays

- [The View from the Sundial Tavern](#)
 - <https://www.loc.gov/collections/folklife-and-landscape-in-southern-west-virginia/articles-and-essays/american-gingseng-and-the-idea-of-the-commons/the-view-from-the-sundial-tavern/>
- [Crafting Locality | Ramp Suppers, Biodiversity, and the Integrity of "The Mountains"](#)
 - <https://www.loc.gov/collections/folklife-and-landscape-in-southern-west-virginia/articles-and-essays/ramp-suppers-biodiversity-and-the-integrity-of-the-mountains/crafting-locality/>
- [Why I am proud to be a West Virginian](#)
 - https://www.register-herald.com/news/why-i-am-proud-to-be-a-west-virginian/article_4c1d589e-a0a3-595d-9a3b-4f6f30a08894.html
- [Souvenir -- Winter 2017 -- Dear West Virginia](#)
 - <https://www.souvenirlit.com/ann-pancake>

Feature Films

- *October Sky (1999)*
 - Based on the *Rocket Boys* novel by Homer Hickam
- *Patch Adams (1998)*
 - Tells the story of Dr. Hunter "Patch" Adams, founder of the Gesundheit! Institute in Pocahontas Co.
- *We Are Marshall (2006)*
 - Aftermath of the Marshall plane crash

Poems

- [Dispatch From the Mountain State - Marc Harshman, poet laureate of West Virginia](#)
 - <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/25/us/a-poem-of-gratitude-from-west-virginia.html>
- [West Virginia by Roy Lee Harmon, poet laureate of West Virginia in 1937](#)
 - <https://allpoetry.com/West-Virginia>
- [Appalachia - Muriel Miller Dressler](#)
 - <https://www.wvencyclopedia.org/sidebars/3>

Songs

- [My Home Among the Hills - E.W. James](#)
- [Take Me Home, Country Roads - John Denver](#)
- [Morning Morgantown - Joni Mitchell](#)

Short Stories and Feature Films

- <https://americanliterature.com/>
 - Collections of Short Stories
- <https://dailyyonder.com/wellspring-a-series-of-short-stories-about-appalachian-women/2022/04/15/>
 - Collection of short stories about Appalachian Women
- <https://www.newyorker.com/>
 - Free digital access to a limited number of articles

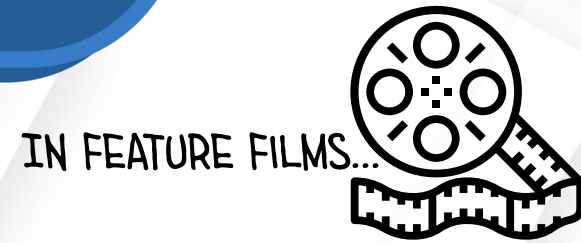
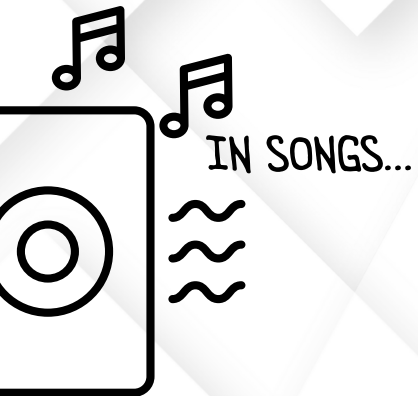
West Virginia Authors & Poets

Authors: Homer Hickam, Carlene Thompson, Stephen Coonts, Rajia Hassib, Cynthia Rylant, Denise Giardina, Craig Johnson, Ann Pancake, Anne Royal, Rebecca Harding Davis, John Knowles, Breece D’J Pancake

Poets: Marc Harshman, Louise McNeill, Irene McKinney, John Peale Bishop, Anne Spencer, Maggie Anderson, Julia Davis



HOW DO PEOPLE EXPRESS ATTACHMENT TO PLACES AND REGIONS?



IN NOVELS...

IN SHORT STORIES...

IN POEMS...

PORTRAITS OF A PLACE

Instructions:

Think of a particular place or region that is important or otherwise memorable to you. Choose **ONE** of the project types below to express your attachment to that place or region. At the conclusion of your project, **write a personal statement with a minimum of 5 complete sentences** that: (1) identifies the particular place or region by name, (2) clearly states your personal ties to the location, (3) offers insight as to why you chose that place, and (4) any other additional relevant information that you would like to add.

ESSAY

Write a 5-paragraph essay that captures your attachment to a particular place or region. Include at least 2 literary devices (i.e. similes, metaphors, imagery, etc.) within your writing.

SONG

Write and perform (either pre-recorded or performed live in class) a song that captures your attachment to a particular place or region. Include at least 2 verses and a chorus as well as at least 2 literary devices. Your song should be at between 3 and 5 minutes long.

DRAMA

Write a script for a bite-sized play (no more than a 5-minute performance) that captures your attachment to a particular place or region. Your script should include all of the essential elements of a story in addition to character dialogue, notes on setting, and stage directions.

SHORT STORY

Write a short story complete with fictitious names and characters that capture your attachment to a particular place or region. Be sure to identify your plot, character(s), setting, conflict, and theme.

CHILDREN'S BOOK

Write and illustrate a children's storybook with a minimum of 12 pages. Your story and illustrations should capture your attachment to a particular place or region and engage readers in its plot, characters, and setting.

GRAPHIC NOVEL

Write a mini graphic novel complete with illustrations and dialogue that captures your attachment to a particular place or region. Be sure to include a clear beginning, middle, and end to your story. You should have a minimum of 20 panels.

FILM

Create a trailer for a movie that captures your attachment to a particular place or region. Your trailer must include depictions (illustrated or live) of the setting, at least two characters, and an exciting introduction to the plot. Your trailer should be at least one minute long, but no more than three minutes long.

NOVEL REVIEW

Pretend that you have just read a novel that features a particular place or region that you have an attachment to. Write a Critic's Review between 500-750 words about the story. Be sure to include statements about the plot, character(s), theme, and your personal connection with the featured setting.

POEM

Choose one of the following types of poems:

Acrostic	Blank Verse	Cinquain
Concrete	Free Verse	Limerick
	Ode	Sonnet

Write a poem that captures your attachment to a particular place or region. Include at least 1 literary device and be sure to follow the rules for the form of your poem.



Do not forget to write your personal statement of at least 5 complete sentences!

STUDENT RUBRIC

Directions: Use this rubric to guide your work. Don't forget to proofread and edit your work before submitting!

	4	3	2	1
Expression of Attachment to Place or Region	Strongly expresses attachment to a place or region	Sufficiently expresses attachment to a place or region	Loosely expresses attachment to a place or region	Does not express attachment to a place or region
Spelling and Grammar	0-1 minor errors; no major errors	1-2 minor errors; no major errors	>2 minor errors or at least one major error	>5 minor errors or at least 2 major errors
Adherence to Instructions	Followed all instructions	Followed MOST instructions	Followed SOME instructions	Did not follow instructions
Personal Statement	Clearly identifies place or region and personal ties in sentence format.	Clearly identifies place or region in sentence format but fails to include personal ties	Identifies place or region but fails to include personal ties; lack of sentence format	Place or region unidentified; no personal ties included; lack of sentence format
Creativity	Work is original and stands out as unique to the creator	Work is original but lacks personal flair	Work is semi-original, but mostly based on copied ideas	Plagiarism detected or failure to complete assignment

Total Score: _____/20