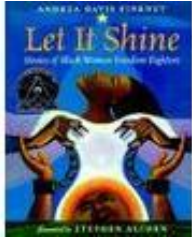


Lesson Plan

Let it Shine Lesson Plan

Supplement a reading of *Let it Shine* with this lesson plan, through which students use descriptive language, and analyze artwork for hidden meanings.



ELA Gr.3 SCO 7.2 identify some different types of print and media texts

- recognize some of their language conventions and text characteristics
- recognize that these conventions and characteristics help them understand what they read and view

SCO 5.1 answer, with assistance, their own questions and those of others by seeking a variety of texts

- identify their own personal and learning needs for information
- generate their own questions as a guide for research
- use a range of print and non-print materials to meet their needs
- use basic reference materials and a database or electronic search
- reflect on their own research process

Let It Shine

By [Andrea Davis Pinkney](#)

About this book

Grade Level Equivalent: 5.5

Lexile Measure: 940L

Guided Reading Level:

Age: Age 8, Age 9, Age 10

Genre: Biography, General Nonfiction

Subject: Civil Rights, Slavery, Underground Railroad, Abolition, Civics and Government, African American, Prejudice and Tolerance Experiences

Awards: Coretta Scott King Award

Subject Area: Language Arts

Reading Level: 5.5

Book Summary

This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine. The poignant words of this African-American freedom song still ring true today, inspiring Andrea Davis Pinkney's *Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters*. In *Let It Shine*, Pinkney has collected the biographies of ten incredible African-American women — from Sojourner Truth to Shirley Chisholm — who fought tirelessly for freedom, equality, and social justice. Stephen Alcorn's magical and evocative illustrations enhance the overall reading experience, painting vivid portraits of these unforgettable women.

Objective

Students will learn how to interpret artwork to enhance their knowledge and understanding while reading a nonfiction text with illustrations. During the process, they will notice details, use descriptive language, and analyze artwork for hidden meanings.

Standard: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

Warm-up Activity

Examine the illustration on the front cover. What do you notice? In a brief journal response, describe what you see in the picture. Be specific and detailed in your writing.

Teaching Plan

1. Share journal responses from the Warm-up Activity. Note all details from the illustration, such as the broken chains, connected bodies of the two African-American women, and shining star on top of a blue pyramid.
2. Discuss: What do you think the illustration means? How would you interpret it? How does it relate to the title of the book? For example, students might respond, "The women are connected by the chains of slavery, but the woman in white is helping to break the chains. The shining star is the light of freedom, which relates to the book's title." Explain to the class that interpreting art is similar to interpreting literature; in both cases, the point is to unlock the hidden meaning or message.
3. Read the section on Sojourner Truth. While reading, ask students to write notes in their journal about her appearance, personality, important events in her life, major accomplishments, and legacy in the world of black women freedom fighters.
4. Study the two illustrations of Sojourner Truth (one facing page 1 and the other on page 4). Using the journal notes as a point of departure, write the "story" of the artwork. First, describe the illustrations in detail. What do you notice? What is happening in the picture? What is she thinking or feeling? Next, interpret the artwork. What do you think it means? What is the hidden message? Give the portraits creative titles that reflect your research and knowledge of this person.
5. Students can repeat this activity for three black women freedom fighters of their choice. The illustrations of Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, and Mary McLeod Bethune provide especially interesting interpretations.

Other Books About Black Women in History

Black Women in Nineteenth Century American Life: Their Words, Their Thoughts, Their Feelings
by Ruth Bogin and Bert James Loewenberg, eds.

An anthology celebrating the lives and dreams of 24 black women leaders, in fields such as religion, education, and politics.

I Dream a World: Portraits of Black Women Who Changed America
by Brian Lanker

A timeless collection of photographs and first-person accounts recognizing the contributions of black women to the arts, literature, politics, education, and athletics.

Teaching Plan written by Lauren Gold