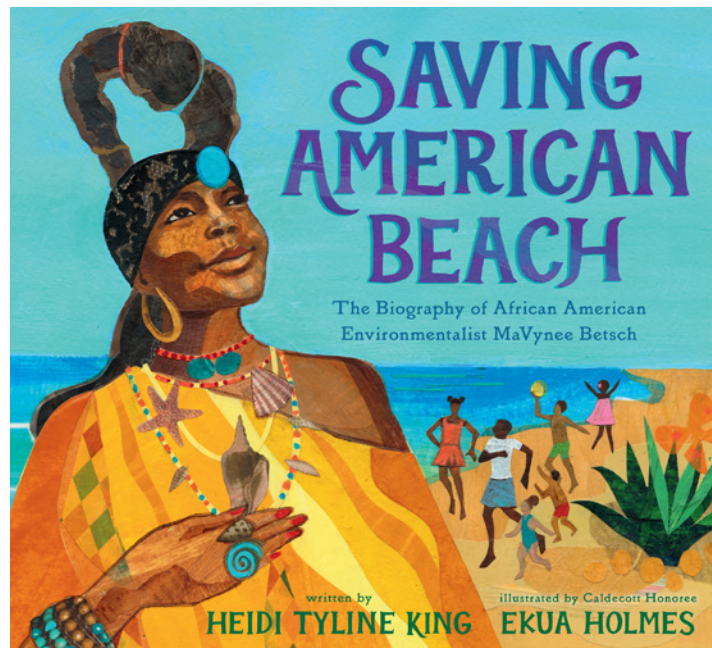


SAVING AMERICAN BEACH:

The Biography of African American Environmentalist

MaVynee Betsch



By Heidi Tyline King

Illustrated by Eku Holmes

Interested in booking a virtual reading for your classroom or school event with the author?
Contact Heidi King at <https://www.heiditking.com/contact>

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FROM THE AUTHOR



Greetings!

This curriculum guide is designed to help you bring my book to life in your classroom. With input from a STEM-certified administrator and K-5 elementary teacher, the guide features research-based strategies and activities that can be integrated across the curriculum on topics such as environmentalism, music, resilience, art, citizenship, and African American history.

I have three daughters who have very different interests and learning styles, so I understand that children do not learn the same or even gravitate toward the same messages. With this in mind, my hope is that you will use the guide to introduce *Saving American Beach* to your classroom in a way that invites curiosity and allows each child to discover The Beach Lady's story as it connects and appeals to their unique interests.

Throughout the guide you'll also notice starred tips where I've added personal insight to a lesson or activity.

Teachers are at the frontline in educating, inspiring, and nurturing wonder in our children. Your tremendous responsibility is equal only to the tremendous influence you have on our future.

Thank you for all you do.

Heidi Tyline King

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SYNOPSIS

MaVynee Betsch loved going to the beach. But in the days of Jim Crow, she couldn't just go to any beach—most beaches in Jacksonville, Fla. were for whites only. Knowing something must be done, her grandfather bought a beach that African American families could enjoy without being reminded they were second class citizens. He called it American Beach. Artists like Zora Neale Hurston and Ray Charles vacationed on its sunny shores. It's here that MaVynee was first inspired to sing, propelling her to later become a widely acclaimed opera singer who routinely performed on an international stage. But her first love would always be American Beach.

After the Civil Rights Act desegregated public places, there was no longer a need for a place like American Beach and it slowly fell into disrepair. MaVynee remembered the importance of American Beach to her family and so many others, so determined to preserve this integral piece of American history, she began her second act as an activist and conservationist, ultimately saving the place that had always felt most like home.

Themes in the Story

- Environmentalism
- Resilience
- Music/Musicians
- African American History
- Beach Ecosystems and Interdependence
- Citizenship (including protest and petition)
- Art (Collage, Modern)
- Celebrating Black History

Purpose for Reading

Students read this book to:

- Learn about the life of inspiring musician and environmentalist, MaVynee Betsch.
- Discover the injustice that African Americans experienced during the days of Jim Crow.
- Find out how The Beach Lady demonstrated resilience over the challenges she encountered throughout her life, especially in saving American Beach.
- Explore the history of American Beach.
- See how a model citizen made a positive impact on their community, society and government.
- Observe living and nonliving things at the beach and how people impact the beach environment.
- Recognize descriptive words and/or figurative language.
- Compare discriminations of our past to discriminations that currently exist.

Vocabulary

The book has beautiful word choices and imagery that provide a foundation for meaningful **vocabulary and writing for craft** discussions. For vocabulary mastery, pre-teach target words and assess the students' background knowledge of selected words.

Vocabulary Words

creatures

tangy

silken

paradise performance discovered beloved demanding encore

Brava

dimmed crumbled bleached dunes

tangled dividing determined remained caretaker sunbathed juke

chaise lounge lullaby

sacred staccato jackhammers trilling endless melody brokenhearted

protest creative squabbled unanswered scorching prima donna pluck cocooned palmettos

live oaks picket signs petitioned

protecting scattered continues

Before Reading

- Prepare child-friendly, short definitions of provided words.
- Say the words and ask students to repeat; discuss definitions.
- Provide example sentences or read sentences containing the vocabulary word from the book.
- Ask students to draw pictures representing word meanings or “act out” meanings.
- Lead discussion about parts within words that help students infer meaning. (i.e. caretaker, creative).

During Reading

As you read the story, stop and review pronunciation and definition of each vocabulary word. Show illustrations throughout the discussion to provide context for vocabulary words.

After Reading

Using vocabulary words, ask students to retell the story to a partner, draw a picture to tell the story, or write a retelling.



Printable: Word Scramble

Before Reading

Review concepts of print by pointing out or asking questions about the title, author, illustrator, front and back cover, and title page. Read title, author, and illustrator's names to students.

During/After Reading

During and after reading, discuss the book and ask questions related to various themes. Remind students to provide evidence for answers based on the text and illustrations found in the book.

Comprehension Questions

1. Why couldn't MaVynee go to just any beach?
2. Show students page 3 (beach scene with the rope). Ask them to describe what they see in the picture. Why were people separated by a rope? How do you think this made MaVynee and other African Americans feel?
3. What does MaVynee's grandfather do in response to discrimination?
4. Observe the picture of American Beach on page 4. How does the picture support the phrase the author uses, "...a beach should be open to everyone?" Does American Beach look different than the first beach picture we observed?
5. What did MaVynee do when she grew up?
6. What led MaVynee to return to the beach?
7. Observe the picture of what American Beach looked like after she returned home. Reread the text, "Summer houses crumbled..." How had American Beach changed from when she was a girl?
8. What challenges did MaVynee need to overcome to save her beloved American Beach?
9. What steps did MaVynee take to save American Beach?
10. What is a protest? How did MaVynee use protest to save American Beach?
11. What was MaVynee's final wish?



Author Note

The questions provided in this section are ideal for introducing a Think-Pair-Share activity, but only do this activity once to keep students engaged.

Critical Thinking Discussion Questions

1. Abraham Lincoln Lewis bought a beach, “American Beach.” How did that change the lives of the people who visited the beach?
2. Define and discuss the literary idea of “theme” with students. Lead students to discuss the themes found in the book.
3. The author uses many words in the story that are related to sound (such as whoosh, whispered). Make a list of sound words in the book. How do you think these sound words enhance the story? How does using “sound” words support the theme of the book?
4. Read the notes from the author and illustrator (the last page of the book) and discuss why they chose to create a book about The Beach Lady.
5. How does MaVynee spend her days after her mother dies? How does the author describe the sadness that MaVynee feels? Have you ever experienced sadness like MaVynee?
6. After MaVynee returns to the beach, it looks very different. What does the author mean when she says, “There was no more need for a place like American Beach.”
7. MaVynee adored the beach and when she grew up, she made American Beach her home? What places in nature would you want to make your home?
8. What did MaVynee name, “NaNa?” Why did she call it NaNa?
9. What does the author mean when she says, “MaVynee was saving more than a beach?”
10. MaVynee cared deeply about American Beach and wanted to preserve (save) it and its history. What is important to you that you have worked hard to protect? Explain the steps you have taken or will take to protect it.
11. MaVynee wrote letters to lawmakers to protect the beach. What reasons might persuade lawmakers to protect a beach?
12. Can MaVynee’s story be related to stories of other people who have stood up for what they believe such as Rosa Parks, [Ruby Bridges](#), Geronimo, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer?

Reader’s Response

Ask students to create a journal entry in response to the book. Response activities include:

1. Have students fold a sheet of paper into thirds for a beginning, middle and end. Ask them to write or draw a picture to describe what happened at the beginning, middle and end of the book.
2. Draw your favorite part of the story and label it.
3. Put yourself in the story. Draw a picture or write what you would do if you were MaVynee.
4. Using a Venn diagram, compare and contrast MaVynee to a character from another story you have read.
5. Ask students to make a list or draw a picture of as many character traits of MaVynee as they can think of. Have them share and compare their lists with each another.



Printable: Picture Frame

ELA STRATEGIES

SUPPORT ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE CLASSROOM

(cont.)

Suggested Grade Level: K-4

Introduce the Story and Reinforce the Message:

1. Walk through the illustrations and tell the story using simple sentence frames and questions. Point out objects, settings, and characters in the illustrations. For example:
 - a. “This is MaVynee. She loves the beach. Can you see the beach? Point to the beach.”
 - b. “MaVynee is sad. Her beach is not beautiful anymore. Can you spot trash on the beach?”
2. Partner ELLs with a native English speaker during the response activity. Ask the native speaker to practice taking turns with the ELL to retell the story in simple sentences.
3. Provide ELLs with extra time before reading the book to preview the vocabulary. Utilize visuals such as pictures and realia for the most essential vocabulary words in the book. Leave words and pictures displayed to refer back to while reading the book.
4. Make an audio recording of the book so that students can listen many times to aid with comprehension.



Author Note

If you plan to go all out with your classroom transformation, plan activities for the week centered around your beach theme. Otherwise, do as much room transformation as you have the time for.

Activities

Set the Stage: Classroom Transformation to American Beach

Before reading the book, transform your classroom into a beach to build anticipation. [This video by Wade and Hope King](#) is a great introduction on how to go all out. Have students bring in a beach towel and together, “pack” a bag of items to take with you. Examples of transformed classrooms include these fabulous ideas from:

- [Elementary Shenanigans](#)
- [Lucky Little Learners](#)
- [We Are Teachers](#)

To complement the story, bring in beach- and pollution-related items to share as a lead-in to reading the book. Items could include beach sand, shells, sand dollars, trash, or pictures of beach scenes (or of American Beach). Tell students the setting of the story is American Beach in Jacksonville, Florida. Use a map to discuss the location of American Beach.

Book/Picture Walk

Closely examine each page. Discuss pictures and prompt students to ask questions about the illustrations. Ask what characters, settings, and actions they see. Use the vocabulary words as you conduct the picture walk. Encourage students to make predictions but don't focus on whether the prediction is correct or incorrect. While reading, revisit predictions that students have made.

StoryWalk

Create a [StoryWalk©](#) project down a hallway, on the route to the lunchroom, or on your playground. Separate book spreads and laminate then number sequentially so that as children are walking, they can follow the story. Two good examples can be found at [Evergreen Conservancy](#) and on the [Show Me Librarian](#) blog.

LINKING ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

LANGUAGE ARTS

Suggested Grade Level: K-4

Word Play

Word play is used throughout the story. Begin with a discussion on how words play together:

- When you play with friends on the playground, you try to think of ways to have fun together.
- Words in a story do the same thing as you and your friends!
- Words team up and play together to amuse or make a story more enjoyable and fun for the person reading it.

Provide students with an example of word play found in the book.

- For example, the author could have said, “MaVynee was sad,” to describe how MaVynee felt after her mother died. However, to make the words play together for the reader, the author said, “MaVynee spent her days sitting along the shore, *wrapped in a blanket of sadness.*”
- We can imagine how very sad MaVynee is because of the word play of a “blanket of sadness.” Everyone knows how it feels to be wrapped in a cozy blanket. When you are wrapped in a blanket you are completely covered.
- But what kind of blanket was MaVynee completely covered with? Sadness. This imagery helps the reader to really feel the sadness.



Author Note

The poetry of Mary Oliver is a huge inspiration on my word choices. Whenever I found myself stuck in the writing process, or needing to understand a better way to communicate an idea, I read her poetry. Oliver has many poems that would be suitable to share with elementary students.

Figurative Language

Discuss word play and personification. Practice the pronunciation of the word with them and ask them to think about what word they see within the word “personification.” Personification is giving an animal or object human-like characteristics. Provide students with a simple definition and discuss how it makes details in a story authentic and easy to imagine.

- Explain how personification is often found in animal characters. Ask students to make a list of animal characters in books and movies that are personified (such as the lions in the *Lion King*, *Frog and Toad*, etc.)
- Remind students that in many stories, objects are also personified. Reread sentences from the book that contain personification:
 - “She loved the whoosh of its waves and the blue sky stretching to forever.”
 - “Each performance the wind whispered an endless melody of gull cries and laughter.”
 - “MaVynee spent her days sitting along the shore, wrapped in a blanket of sadness.”
 - “...the winds endless melody.”
 - “Soon all that was left was a sliver of sand cocooned by palmettos, hugged by live oaks.”
- Read other common personification phrases:
 - “Time flies when you’re having fun.”
 - “The camera loves her.”
 - “My flowers were begging for water.”
 - “Hey, Diddle, Diddle”

LINKING ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

LANGUAGE ARTS

(cont.)

Suggested Grade Level: K-4

Activities

Personification Pictures

Ask students to illustrate a phrase from the book or from the list of common personification phrases. Have them write the phrase above the picture. For example, the picture could be of a clock flying through the clouds to illustrate, “Time flies when you’re having fun.”

Making Sense of Sensory Words

When an author uses “word play,” they often use words to describe the five senses—see, hear, taste, touch and smell.

1. Divide a paper into five parts and label each box with one of the five senses (a picture of a body part with the senses might be helpful, too).
2. Using a projector, display selected pages of the book and reread. Ask students to tell you what sensory words they hear. Ask them point to the corresponding body part when they hear a word read that relates to a particular sense. Read through each sentence slowly and pause to give them time to think. Record the words under the appropriate senses.
3. Discuss nouns and adjectives. Remind students that making nouns and adjectives “play” together helps the reader enjoy and relate to the story.
4. Display a picture of an event (fair, birthday party) or place of interest (beach, amusement park) to students.

Working alone or with a partner, have them think of sensory words and then write sentences of their own. Remind them to use the sensory words from the book in their sentences.



Language Laps

Divide students into groups and have them see how many personification minuets they can act out within a set time period.



Printable: Figurative Language Cards

LINKING ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE

Suggested Grade Level: K-4



Printable: Blank Journal Entry Sheet



Author Note

I was not a science kid. It took me years to discover that I enjoyed science when approached from a different way. For example, learning about gulls by recognizing their calls or designing an art project from trash while learning about ocean pollution are ways that would have caught my interest as a child.

Activities

The Impact of Litter on the Beach

1. Open the book to the page that says, “plastic bags littered the dune, tangled in sea grass.”
2. Ask students to make a Venn Diagram of their observations about the way the beach looks compared to the previous beach illustrations. Be sure students are making strong scientific observations by describing the picture using their senses and not drawing conclusions (such as “The beach is dirty.”)
3. Ask students whether they believe that people leaving trash and personal objects behind near bodies of water and the beach causes problems for the beach environment and animals.
4. Select videos from [NOAA's TRASH TALK](#) series to teach how litter gets into the ocean and how it effects marine life and water.
5. Choose a plastic pollution game from page 20-27 of the *Plastic Pollution Curriculum and Activity Guide*.
6. Watch the [Ocean Cleanup video](#) (2.5 minutes) to show students how clean up is actually done. Have students plan, design, and create their own vessel for debris cleanup. If time allows, students can make models of their vessel.

Experiment or Research Project

1. Ask students to consider questions about how human pollution affects oceans and marine life. Questions include:
 - What type of pollution is the most common on the beach?
 - What kinds of pollution cause the most harm to animals?
 - How do scientists study beach pollution?
2. Continue the scientific process by having students state a hypothesis for their question and decide how to test or research the question. Review the students' ideas and allow time for research or experimentation.
3. Ask students to create a poster, brochure, digital presentation using Google Slides or PowerPoint, or a video to present their research/experiment question, hypothesis, and observations/conclusions.

Activities

Living and Non-Living Things

1. Show students pictures of various non-living things. Ask what the pictures have in common. Repeat for various living things.
2. Introduce the terms “living” and “non-living” and identify which group of pictures were living and non-living things. Discuss characteristics of living things and non-living things.
3. Using beach illustrations from the book or other pictures and videos, make a list of living and non-living things found in beach areas.
4. Provide non-fiction books on high-interest animals for students to read. Ask them to record what they learned from the books and videos in journals. Give them time to read/watch about a specific animal and then be prepared to share fun facts about the animal, its habitat (location), anatomy, and ways it is harmed or helped by humans.

Gulls

1. The book references the distinct cry of gulls. Visit allaboutbirds.org to explore information and sounds of gulls.
2. After reading about gull calls, ask students to listen to audio clips and guess which call is the chick’s call.
3. Read about [various species of gulls](#), including classification, description, range, habitat, life cycle and behavior. Ring-billed gulls, laughing gulls, and great black-backed gulls are found in Florida.
4. Review the life cycle of birds. Show [pictures or videos of the ring-billed gull](#) and how its appearance changes from a juvenile to an adult.

Green Classroom Initiative

Share environmental initiatives where students can get involved. Use a leaderboard and awards to create excitement. Ideas include:

- making sustainable artwork or murals out of repurposed materials.
- having a “litter-less lunch” campaign and incentivizing students and teachers to use only reusable containers, water bottles, and utensils.
- creating and encouraging the use of a classroom recycling bin.
- Reading books and websites on “green living.”
- making posters to promote reducing, reusing, and recycling within the classroom and school.
- creating and maintaining a class garden.
- hosting a green challenge and setting certain “green goals” for the community to achieve.

Finally, help students with their own classroom or school green initiative. Begin by brainstorming about different types of waste that is disposed of within the classroom. Ask them to think carefully about every piece of trash and paper. Make a list of common items put in the trash and sort them by what material they are made of. Have students think of ways to reduce, reuse or recycle each item. Give students time to think and share ideas with one another for a green initiative. Ask students to share their best green initiative ideas with the class, then vote to determine the classroom project.

LINKING ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

SCIENCE (cont.)

Suggested Grade Level: K-4

Trash-to-Treasure Entrepreneurship Project

Challenge students to take a trash item and turn it into a treasure item. For example, a student might turn an empty milk carton into a bird house. Another idea is to take a bottle cap and turn it into a necklace.

Teachengineering.org has some excellent ideas that can also be modified for this project.

1. Allow students to work in groups.
2. Ask students to create a sales plan. They will need to:
 - Determine much it would cost to make.
 - Create a marketing plan to sell their item.
 - Design an advertisement in their choice of media.
 - Present their plan collaboratively.

LINKING ACTIVITIES ACROSS THE CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

SOCIAL STUDIES

Suggested Grade Level: K-7

Activities

MaVynee Betsch: Model Citizen

1. Discuss what makes a good citizen. The characteristics of a good citizen could include honesty, compassion, respect, responsibility, and courage.
2. Ask students to think of ways they can be a good citizen. Allow them time to tell stories about people who have showed the various characteristics of a good citizen and how they have been good citizens themselves.
3. Reread the page in the book that shows the condition of the beach after it was neglected. (“Summer houses crumbled...”) Ask students what challenge MaVynee faced in her community.
4. Remind students how MaVynee was not only concerned for her beach but also how she took responsibility and action to promote change. She first cleaned up the beach and planted trees. She even grew her hair out in creative protest. Discuss how her actions to clean up the beach demonstrate that she is a responsible citizen.
5. Discuss the concept of protests and remind students of MaVynee’s acts of protest. Ask them what characteristics of citizenship MaVynee displays when protesting to save American Beach.
6. Discuss the concept of “petition” and ask students how MaVynee petitioned for American Beach. Next, watch the movie, [No More Baths](#), to see how kids stand up for what they believe with a creative way to protest.
7. Ask students to think about their favorite place (a special beach, mountains, park, amusement park, etc.) and how they would feel if it was trashed. How would they attempt to save it? Direct students to the illustrations of protest signs and letters to lawmakers in the book. Ask them to think of reasons their place should be saved and then to make creative signs or posters to petition for their favorite place.
8. Research your congressman, review letter writing, and then have students write a protest letter in support of an issue they care about (printable provided).

Civil Rights Challenges of the Past

Open the page in which the beach is divided by “colored” and “white.” Ask students to compare the picture of the way people interacted at the beach when MaVynee was a girl to the way all people interact at a beach today. Discuss the segregation that African Americans faced in the past. Use resources from [PBS Learning Media](#) to discuss the challenges Black people and other minorities faced past and present.

1. Ask students to reflect on the challenges and injustices Black people have faced.
2. Write or draw pictures to demonstrate what they have learned about the discrimination and how they can treat all people with dignity and respect no matter how different they are from themselves.
3. Have students reflect on a time when they have been discriminated against.



Printable: Protest Letter



Author Note

Right now in Florida, where I live, we are experiencing controversy over who owns the beach. If you vacation in Florida, you might have even seen how some homeowners have roped off sections of beach that are in front of their beachfront homes. Do beaches belong to everyone? Or do they belong to the people who own homes that are beachfront? Should everyone be allowed to go to the beach, or only those people who own property along the ocean?

ACTIVITIES

Resilience

1. Discuss resilience using quotes to show a growth mindset from important figures. For example, Thomas Edison said, “I have not failed. I’ve just found 10,000 ways that won’t work.” You may also choose to provide students with examples of [famous people who failed but refused to give up](#).
2. Resiliency is the ability to recover quickly from difficulty. Discuss the idea of what it means to bounce back. Ask students to talk about times they or others have bounced back from difficulty.
3. Continue the discussion using “[Resilience Sample Lesson](#)” from the New York Academy of Sciences. Ask students what it means when women from the video who are visually impaired say that, “I believe that I have control...since I can do things like think for myself and feel my own emotions. I choose whether or not I give up or just sit there and live a really sheltered life. It’s my decision.”
4. End the discussion about resiliency listing the ways that MaVynee displayed resiliency when she “bounced back” from failure.
5. Have students compare and contrast resilient thoughts versus “give up” thoughts. For example, “I can’t do this!” versus “I can’t do this YET!” or “I will keep trying!” Keep going with a discussion of ways to change one’s “give up” thinking to resilient thinking.

Creative Self-Expression

Read the illustrator’s note at the end of the book and emphasize the quote from MaVynee’s grandfather about self-expression. As an adult, MaVynee grew her hair seven feet long in a burst of creative protest. This type of self-expression was a radical way for MaVynee to express her passion for American Beach. Encourage students to brainstorm ways they can express themselves and their passions in healthy ways. Ask them to plan and start a self-expression project. Some self-expression project ideas include:

- Blogging about a passion
- Journal writing
- Writing music or poetry
- Starting a club or school/community initiative to pursue shared passions
- Creating a video to educate others about a topic
- Photographing various hobbies or passions
- Creating a performing arts presentation (dance, music, or theater)



Author Note

When I was in college, we would read our writing aloud and fellow students would offer feedback. One student told me that my writing was ordinary, and that “other people had done it better.” Her criticism stung. It hurt my self-confidence. But it also pushed me to be a better writer. Today, I have written many books because I refused to let that one opinion define me.



Author Note

The following standards are probably applicable to any state standards, but I used Florida since it is my home state.

- SS.912.A.2.5 - Assess how Jim Crow Laws influenced life for African Americans and other racial/ethnic minority groups.
- SS.6.G.1.1 - Use latitude and longitude coordinates to understand the relationship between people and places on the Earth.
- SS.7.C.1.9 - rule of law
- SS.7.C.2.12 - Develop a plan to resolve a state or local problem by researching public policy alternatives, identifying appropriate government agencies to address the issue, and determining a course of action.



ACTIVITIES

Investigating Coordinates: Where is American Beach?

- Define terms related to coordinates such as latitude, longitude, prime meridian, equator, degrees, etc.
- Use a ball or a ball-shaped objects such as an orange, apple or small globe to have students draw lines representing the above terms.
- Use latitude and longitude software (Google Earth, etc.) to locate the exact location of American Beach.
- Ask students to write a description of the relative location of American Beach using state, city, county and road names, north, south, east and west.

The Rule of Law and the Injustice of Jim Crow Laws

- Review and discuss the rule of law with students. Many resources for teaching the rule of law are available from [The Center for the Rule of Law](#).
- Discuss the benefits of the rule of law. Discuss how rights and the rule of the law are related.
- Turn the discussion to the question: Does the rule of the law necessarily prevent injustice?
- MaVynee lived during the time of Jim Crow laws of segregation. Provide students with background on Jim Crow laws by referring to the illustration of “colored” and “white” separation at American Beach. Use images and primary sources from [The Library of Congress](#) to continue the discussion. Ask students to think about the 14th Amendment regarding equal protection and how it relates to the rule of the law and Jim Crow laws.
- Ask students to research and report on Jim Crow laws. [National Geographic](#) has several helpful resources.

- Provide students with a rubric to guide their research project. Project scores may be based upon:
 - Summary completion of what Jim Crow laws are
 - Examples of Jim Crow laws
 - Restatement of each of the laws in students' own words
 - Inclusion of primary sources including articles, pictures, etc.
 - Observations and conclusions that students made based upon the primary sources
 - Discussion of how Jim Crow laws affected Black people, and
 - Student's use of proper grammar and mechanics

Landmark Civil Rights Cases

- Jim Crow laws created a repressive environment for Black people in MaVynee's childhood. Have students research landmark cases in civil rights:
 - [THIRTEEN Media with Impact](#) has resources on many landmark cases in civil rights.
 - Focus student's research on *Brown vs. the Board of Education* using [PBS resources](#).
 - [ReadWriteThink.org](#) has a comprehensive lesson plan and correlating research project to guide students through effective research and a project report on important civil rights cases.

Your State During the Days of Jim Crow

- Using resources from [Ferris University](#), ask students to research and report on how Jim Crow Laws were imposed on black people in their particular state.
- Have students read about Jim Crow laws in another state and compare and contrast those state’s laws to their own state.

Segregation Now?

- Ask students whether segregation still exists today. Discuss this quote by George Wallace, former Alabama governor who said, “Segregation today. Segregation tomorrow. Segregation forever.” Though laws have changed, in what ways do people continue to be segregated?
- View the [US Census](#) to explore modern segregation in neighborhoods and view dissimilarity indices that filters data by city and state to yield information about how often people from different races interact within their neighborhoods. Discuss the reasons why people may continue to be segregated by race.
- Explore resources from [FacingHistory.org](#) that explains the persistence of racial segregation in American schools. Continue with a discussion of public policies that affect the ongoing segregation of students in schools and people in general. Ask students how policies could change to make more equal opportunities for people of color.

Student-Led Civics Project

- Have students brainstorm and learn about various state or local problems. Use principles from [The Civics Project Guidebook](#) to address a state or local problem through a student-led project. Have students use the case studies to prompt ideas for solutions. Projects should include research on public policy alternatives, identify appropriate government agencies to address the issue, and determine a course of action.

Abraham Lincoln Lewis

- Have students read the author’s note and specifically focus on information about Abraham Lincoln Lewis. Read and gather more information about Abraham Lincoln Lewis’ life and how he became one of Florida’s earliest African-American millionaires. Resources include [BlackPast.org](#) and [FindaGrave.com](#). What challenges did Mr. Lewis overcome to be successful? What can we learn from his example of overcoming difficult circumstances?

ACTIVITIES



Printable: Blank Journal Entry Sheet

Write Around

Depending on the theme of the book that you want to emphasize, share an illustration from the book or a piece of civil rights artwork. Formulate three-to-five open-ended questions that relate to the picture you will display such as:

- What do you observe in the picture?
- How does the content of the picture make you feel?
- What is the artist's purpose for creating this art?
- Does this art remind you of anything else you know about or have read before? If so, what does it remind you of?

Next, organize students into groups of three-to-five and give each a piece of paper. Give students a few minutes to consider the picture displayed and write a response, then have them pass their papers to the person next to them in a circular fashion so that by the end of the “write around” everyone has had a turn to write a response to each of the questions on each piece of paper.

Create a Song or Poem

Using the book as inspiration, have students reflect on what they consider the most important themes or ideas from reading MaVynee's story. Ask students to create a poem (haiku, free/blank verse, narrative poem, ode, rhymed poem). Themes for the songs or poems could include the story of MaVynee Betsch's life, resilience, environmentalism, the beach, “NaNa” the sand dune, segregation, depression, the responsibility of citizens, or the power of protest and change.

Ekua Holmes and Other Black Artists

Read the illustrator's note at the end of the book. Explore and gather information about the Holmes using resources such as her [website](#). Study other Black artists such as Kehinde Wiley, Betye Saar, Augusta Savage, Faith Ringgold, Ed Johnetta Miller, Romare Bearden, Henry Ossawa Tanner, Yinka Shonibare, and Prince Twins Seven-Seven.

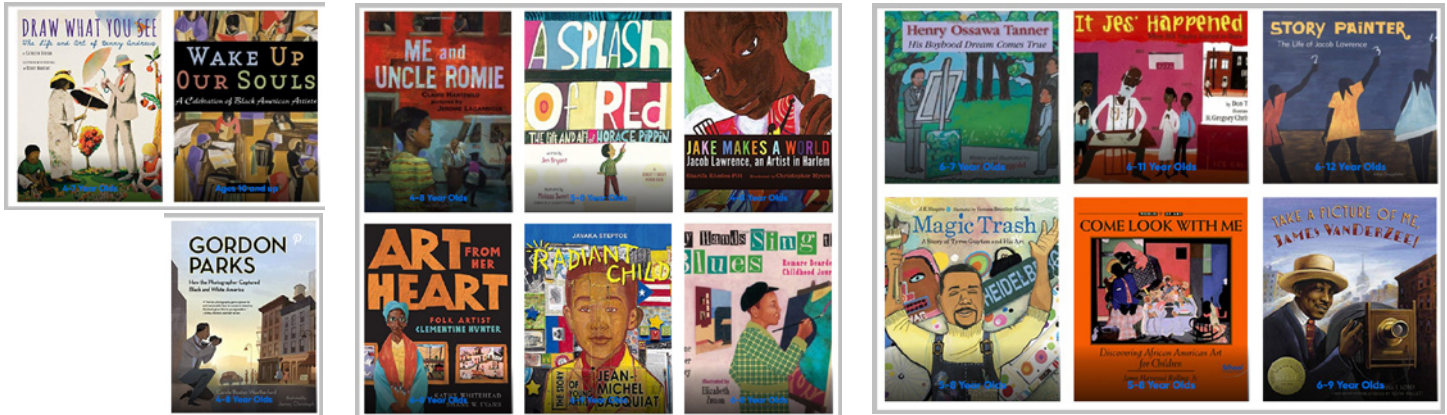
EDUCATOR GUIDE

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY

(cont.)

Suggested Grade Level: K-7

Read Children's Stories About Black Artists



Write a Letter to The Beach Lady

Ask students to think about what they would want to say to The Beach Lady if they could communicate with her:

- What questions would they want to ask?
- What has her life and work inspired them?
- What have they learned from her story?

Have students consider writing about themes such as resilience, environmentalism, civil rights, protest, and the things they are passionate about.

Black Environmentalists

Ask students to browse and read parts about [Black environmentalists](#), then choose an environmentalist to research for a project. The project could be a presentation, video, essay, poster, or brochure about the environmentalist's life and work. Be sure that students include a visual component with their report such as videos, audio clips, or pictures if possible.

Black History Fact of the Day

Each day during Black History Month, [read or display a fact or quote related to Black history](#). This could include facts and quotes about Black environmentalists, artists and civil rights activists. Challenge students to bring in quotes to share.

History in the Making

Ask students to think about what things they are passionate about. Explain how The Beach Lady is an example of how one person can make a huge impact on their community and world. Ask students to create a poster, personal logo, self-portrait, or other [visual display](#) to represent their dreams and passions.

Mock Interview with a Black Person from History

[Research and conduct a mock interview](#) with MaVynee Betsch or another black person from history.

Reflecting on “I Have a Dream” Speech

Display the picture of American Beach right after Abraham Lincoln Lewis bought the beach. This picture shows people of all colors interacting happily and describes American Beach as “hopping.” Ask students what they remember about Martin Luther King and his dream for his children and grandchildren. Listen to the speech (or an excerpt) of his speech online. Ask students to record what he dreamed would change in the world. Have students reflect on how the illustration of American Beach reflects Martin Luther King Jr.’s dreams.

Exploring Black History of the Opera

Explore the history of [Black people in the opera](#). Student interested in music may be interested to learn about the history of black people in the opera. Of particular significance is the video on performer Marian Anderson who was the first black performer with The Metropolitan Opera.

ACTIVITIES

Mixed Media Stories

Using artwork from ***Saving American Beach*** as inspiration, students will create mixed media (newspaper/magazines and paint) artwork to create a story about their favorite place.

Objectives

1. Students will assess their own and other's artistic work, use critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills, all of which are central to artistic growth. (VA.1.C.2)
2. Students will practice, learn to manage, master, and refine simple then complex, skills, and techniques. (VA.1.S.3)
3. Students will develop skills, techniques and processes in the arts to strengthen their ability to remember, focus on, process and sequence information. (VA.1.S.2)
4. Students will create, interpret, and respond to the art studied to stimulate the imagination and encourage innovation and creative risk-taking. (VA.1.F.1)

Materials

- Pencil
- Heavy paper
- Watercolors
- Glue
- Paper and fabric scraps
- Fine tip black marker

Steps

1. Provide background knowledge about mixed media art, explaining terms such as collage, mixed media, primary colors, complimentary colors, composition. Mention background, middle ground and foreground.
2. Read ***Saving American Beach*** to students. Discuss with students how Ekuia Holmes tells a story with pictures and Heidi King tells a story with words.
3. Discuss the use of color and how it helps create an interesting work of art.
4. Have students draw or paint a scene of their favorite place on paper.
5. When dry, have them cut and glue fabric and paper scraps to their picture, layering media as desired to complete the image.
6. Display the finished work and have students discuss their inspiration, why they chose certain colors and media, and what story they are trying to tell.

The Beach Lady Portrait Collages

Objectives

1. Students will evaluate their own art and their classmate's art through self-evaluation and class critique. (VA.3.C.3)
2. Students will create a self-portrait collage that tells a story about an experience they have had. (VA.A.3.S.1)
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of artists Faith Ringgold, Romare Bearden, and Ekuia Holmes by participating in class discussion about their works. (VA.3.O.1)
4. Students will understand how to use an assortment of mediums to create a successful composition. (VA.3.S.3)
5. Students will demonstrate use elements and principles of design such as color, line, and shape to convey a message or emotions. (VA.3.S.2)

Materials

9x12 heavy white paper or posterboard

Mirrors

Pencils

Erasers

Magazines

Foam trays or pieces of cardboard to mix paint

Water cups

Scissors

Markers and crayons

Oil pastels

Face pattern

Tissue paper

Modge Podge or watered down glue

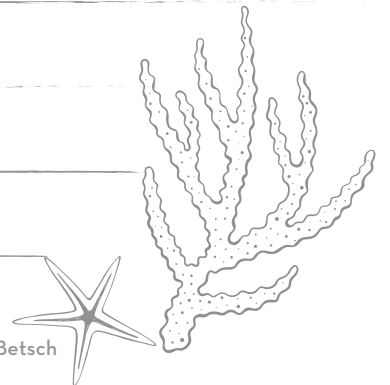
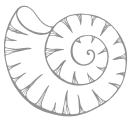
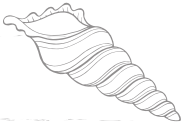
1. Prepare a bulletin board on portraits, the works of Ekuia Holmes, Romare Bearden, Faith Ringgold, and other collage artists.
2. Include terms such as mixed media, abstract style, proportion, value, portrait, self-portrait, and scale. Discuss how artists make studies or practice sketches to work out art challenges. Then discuss how artists observe the real world and study live models.
3. Introduce portraiture as an art form. Brainstorm about why artists create portraits and provide students with examples. Discuss why some artists favor realistic style and others prefer abstract style. Have students view a realistic portrait and then explain what makes it look real. Finally, compare the artistic styles of several collage/mixed media artists.
4. Read ***Saving American Beach***. Explore the life of The Beach Lady and discuss how she lived her life to make things better. Look at the portraits Holmes created to express The Beach Lady's dreams and passions.
5. Using mirrors, have students sketch a self-portrait. Play music to inspire students as they create.
6. After students have made sketches, refer to the works of well-known collage artists and have students layer paint, magazine scraps, and other mixed media to create their portrait collage. Glue down all pieces of paper.
7. When dry, have students use a black marker to add details.
8. Display the art through the classroom and have students present their art and discuss why they made certain artistic choices.

Trash-to-Treasure Art

1. Ask students to bring in beach trash, or trash that they would find on the beach.
2. Provide students with a 9x12 or larger piece of paper.
3. Paint the background of the paper like a beach: blue sky, brown sand, etc.
4. Attach trash to the paper where they would find it. Use tape, staples, and glue to hold the items in place.
5. Using spray paint, paint the beach and trash on it gold, the ocean and its trash blue-green, and the sky and its trash blue.

Class Mural

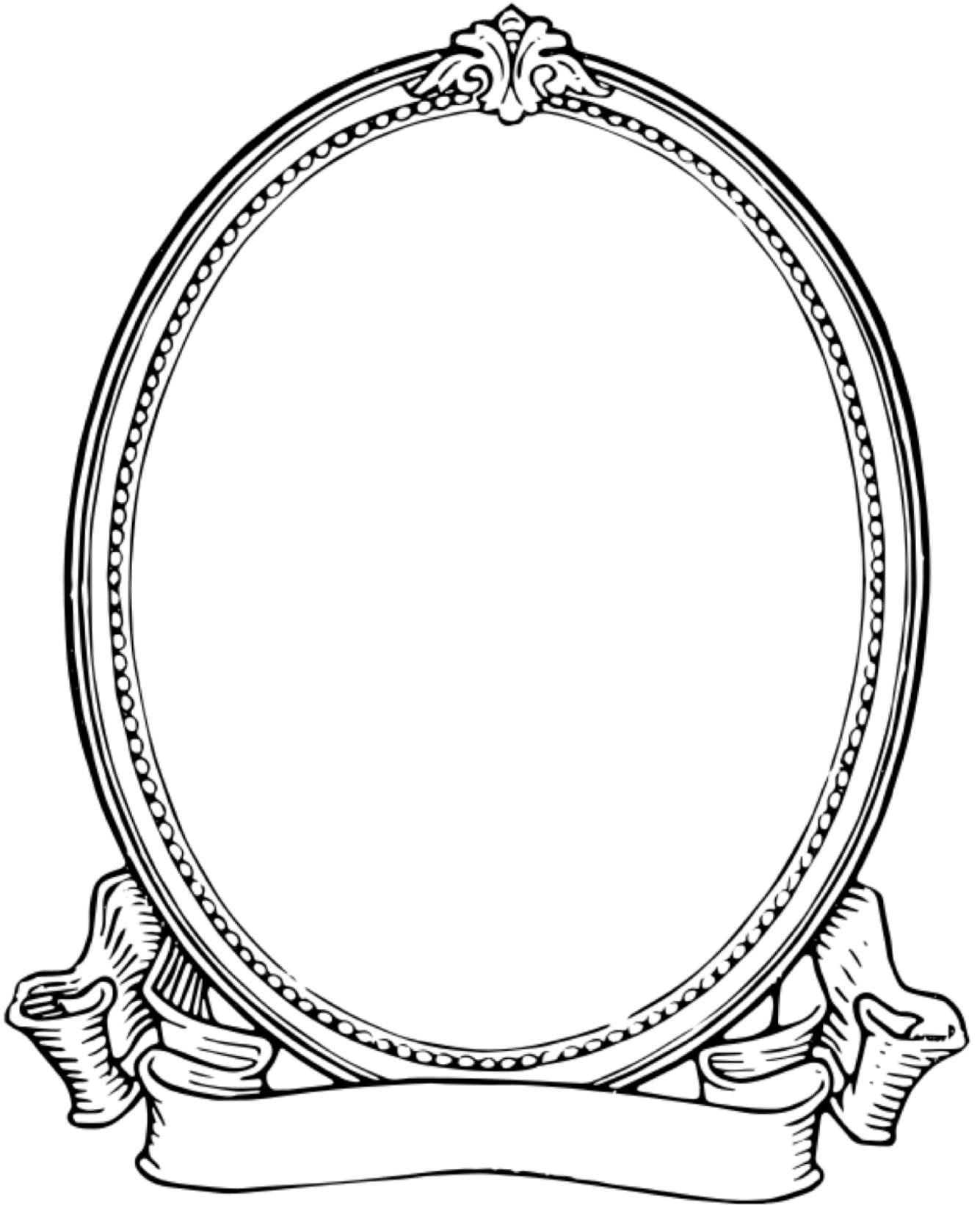
Using the same concept as above, cover one hallway or classroom wall with bulletin board paper. Secure firmly. Delineate between the beach, ocean, and sky. Next, have students bring in trash and attach it to the paper. When the entire paper is covered, take it down from the wall and lay it flat outside. Spray-paint the various sections and let dry. Rehang securely.



FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE CARDS

Divide students into groups and have them see how many personification minuetts they can act out within a set time period.

homework is a breeze	she's a couch potato
making a mountain out of a molehill	he has a broken heart
barking up the wrong tree	all bark and no bite
my head is in the clouds	a blanket of snow
she is a ray of sunshine	a rollercoaster of emotions
eats like a bird	let the cat out of the bag



Date: _____

From (Address): _____

To (Full Name, Title, and Address): _____

Dear _____,

I am writing to _____

I care about this issue because: _____

I would like: _____

Sincerely,

Name Printed Out: _____

WORD SCRAMBLE

b r a v a o d p r o t e c t i n g m e l o d y k s
y w j a c k h a m m e r s d c t r i l l i n g h g
s u n b a t h e d b l p e t i t i o n e d a q y p
p b i y o d h o g b r c o n t i n u e s i l k e n
s d z d p n b o y f w o f c f m s y f t x m d p j
k n e p g e r z u s b p k l q k h m n f d s u a u
m t j m a j r m l u a p e e c c k n m h i q m l k
h y a d a r j f r q f c c w n y t y s b v u u m e
p p s n k n a f o m c i r k w h t x s x i a c e d
k r q u g e d d c r d h q e i z e f b e d b o t r
s g i s n y l i i s m w a x d d l a a m i b c t e
o t s m t a n z n s c a q i b e u i r y n l o o m
z m a l a a n e b g e o n b s t p p v t g e o s a
f w e c u d n s n l k n r c y e j r f e e d n l i
p d v n c l o g w c e q o c e r l u o k o d e g n
x i l v d a l n l e o a y u h m c o k t t a d o e
t m c c n l t a n e r r c z x i o q u d e t k b d
b m r k r g e o b a d e e h g n n m y n u s r s q
e e u m e e q s c y t a d h e e q g u e g j t l j
l d m q v t a c s j l p h j w d i s c o v e r e d
o d b j m h s t v g g l w s c a t t e r e d v o i
v u l y h h s i u p r u h v o f p e n o s i y c z
e n e h g z e l g r o c m u v c i e j r j a m j q
d e d a d b p h e n e k c a r e t a k e r q c j t
x s t k i j d u r v s s t b j b c r e a t i v e i

creatures

tangy

silken

paradise

performance

discovered

beloved

demanding

encore

Brava

dimmed

crumbled

bleached

dunes

tangled

dividing

determined

remained

caretaker

sunbathed

juked

chaise

lounge

lullaby

sacred

staccato

scattered

jackhammers

trilling

endless

melody

brokenhearted

protest

creative

squabbled

unanswered

scorching

prima donna

pluck cocooned

palmettos

live oaks

picket signs

petitioned

protecting

continue