

The 1920's...The Migrants Cast their Ballots, from Kent Bicentennial Portfolio: Spirit of Independence

Jacob Lawrence

The 1920's...The Migrants Cast their Ballots, from Kent Bicentennial Portfolio: Spirit of Independence, 1974.

Eight-color screenprint, 34 7/16 in. x 25 7/8 in., Blanton Museum of Art, The University of Texas at Austin, Gift of Lorillard Division of Loews Theatres, Inc., 1976

A master storyteller and chronicler of history, Jacob Lawrence was one of the leading figurative painters of the twentieth century. A childhood spent largely in Harlem during the years of the Great Depression provided him with subject matter that he returned to throughout his long career. Inspired by the vibrant artistic and intellectual energy that had fueled the Harlem Renaissance, Lawrence studied visual art at an early age, and vowed to trace the specific narratives of African American experience. Lawrence's Migration Series (1941) paintings focus on the everyday lives of Black Americans migrating to the North during the 1920s and 1930s. This screenprint builds on this theme and shows Black people exercising the right to vote.





1961

The 1920s... The Migration North and Out from Atlanta

Jacob Lawrence - 1929

LOOK & TALK

Take a full minute to look at this brightly-colored screenprint by Jacob Lawrence. Notice your first reactions and questions. Take another minute to make some notes about these initial thoughts.

- Lawrence often rendered scenes of everyday life, sometimes revealing difficult realities that were not often depicted in the arts or in popular media. Why was it important for the artist to represent individuals exercising their right to vote? What other aspects of Black life might have been important to document?
- Why would there be pressure, even today, to discourage some people from voting in our democracy? What new laws are being established to make voting more difficult?



READ & MAKE

- Research the Civil Rights Movement. What connections can you make to this work of art?
- Even if you're not yet old enough to vote, you can make sure you're prepared by getting familiar with the registration process. Encourage those around you to register by designing your own compelling VOTE poster.
- With your class, identify a major topic with a narrative arc, identify key scenes, and have individuals create various moments, supported with study of Lawrence's [*Great Migration series*](#).

TAKE ACTION

- Help to organize a school forum (in person or virtually) to discuss voting, elections and voter suppression. Provide information, invite guest speakers (including elected officials and those running for office) and discuss strategies to take action.
- Get involved in your school's election process. Work with others to find ways to make sure the election enables a fair vote on issues and topics important to all students, rather than a vote based on popularity. Or enter the race as a candidate and model a campaign you believe in.
- Keep up to date on both state and federal laws that impact voting rights. Reach out to your [members of Congress](#) or your state lawmakers to share your thoughts about federal and state laws that restrict voting.

Learn more about voter suppression on the Anti-Defamation League's website:
[adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/what-is-voter-suppression](https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/what-is-voter-suppression)



Resource Guide

ADL's No Place for Hate®, the Blanton Museum of Art, and AISD have teamed up to bring anti-bias education and object based learning to our schools. This resource is one in a series featuring a work of art from the Blanton selected to foster important conversations and inspire students to act! The theme for this series is **Power and Movement**, and each resource encourages students to contextualize the impacts of historic movements and migrations in present-day American life.

This guide has everything you need to create successful discussions and a No Place for Hate Action Project.

Here you will find:

- No Place for Hate guidelines for Action Projects
- Information about the artist and artwork
- Guiding questions for initial discussion and making
- Suggested community action projects



As this guide reaches multiple schools, we hope it will inspire students to work together to create action projects that can be shared and celebrated.

Please share your projects to Austin@adl.org and Education@blantonmuseum.org

No Place For Hate®

No Place for Hate® is a self-directed framework helping educators and students take the lead on improving and maintaining a school climate where all students thrive. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) offers resources to ensure that anti-bias and diversity education are an integral part of the school curriculum. No Place for Hate® also helps create and sustain inclusive school environments where all students feel valued and have the opportunity to succeed by promoting respect for individual difference while challenging bigotry and prejudice. Launched in Austin schools in the fall of 2004, the popular campaign has been embraced by hundreds of campuses throughout the Central Texas region. Austin ISD is the largest No Place for Hate® school district in the United States.

The Need for Discussion

The success of No Place for Hate® relies on the assurance that all members of school communities have a central voice in creating a plan that will lead to lasting change. The foundation for creating that change is a strong coalition of school leaders — students, educators, and family members — who have a stake in the outcomes of that plan.

There is no more obvious stakeholder than a student. Too often, adults assume they know what is needed to support youth, but without engaging students in the process, change can be elusive. No Place for Hate® Committees create activities that amplify students' voices and give them opportunities to be active participants.

All qualifying activities must be consistent with the No Place for Hate® mission by challenging bigotry, bias and bullying; exposing young people to diverse identity groups, backgrounds and points of view; promoting respect for individual and group differences; and providing opportunities for community-building within the school. Projects should challenge students to think critically, instill a sense of empathy, and empower students to become allies for one another.

No Place For Hate® Activities Should:

- Involve all students in active learning
- Involve all students in discussion and debriefing of activities
- Address school-based issues
- Have a school-wide impact
- Take place throughout the school year, with three or more activities spread out over time
- Focus on inclusivity and community

For more information visit austin.adl.org/noplaceforhate.



Blanton School Programs

The Blanton Museum of Art welcomes groups of up to 60 students, with chaperones, for guided gallery visits during the school year. Check our website for policies and updates at blantonmuseum.org/visit. To arrange a group visit, please complete the PK-12 Group Visit Request Form [here](#). The Blanton is committed to removing financial barriers to accessing collections and exhibitions. Title I schools may apply for subsidized transportation and waived admission fees.

With the exception of the Doing Social Justice lesson (designed for middle and high school students) which last 90 minutes, most guided visits last just under an hour. Small groups of 10–12 students (plus chaperone) will work with a gallery teacher—a community volunteer, graduate student, or Blanton educator—to consider a small group of 3-5 artworks. Most lessons include time for an activity—writing, drawing, or dramatic play.

Depending on the number of groups on any given day, groups who can follow museum rules about not touching art and respecting other visitors may be allowed to explore on their own for a half hour after their guided lesson. Please request this extension when you complete the [Group Visit Request Form](#).



Blanton Digital Resources

We are also pleased to offer a range of digital resources that feature works of art from the Blanton's collections and respond to various curricular goals (TEKS). These resources are designed to support both asynchronous learning and classroom discussion. Many lessons can be broken down into smaller units for greater flexibility.

- **Social Justice [Grades 3–5, 6–8, 9–12]:** Downloadable art images with discussion prompts to engage issues of equity and inclusion.
- **#ArtWhereYouAre Studio [all ages]:** Video series led by a museum educator featuring easy, make-at-home art activities inspired by works in the museum collection.
- **SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) [Grades 4–7]:** Short video-based lessons that lead students through a close-looking activity, followed by journaling prompts.
- **STEAM [Grades 3–5]:** Longer video-based lessons that can be broken down into shorter lessons. All lessons include an art-making activity and connections to science and/or math TEKS.

All digital resources can be accessed free of charge at bit.ly/BlantonEducation.

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