

ANNOTATED LIST OF SUGGESTED VISUAL ARTS

Below are additional works which we have annotated to show how they might be used to teach the rule of law. After each entry you will find a link or links to the image and other useful information to use with your classes. (Please note that some of these links may have expiration limits unknown to us that will require teachers to conduct their own search for the image.) In some cases we have suggested pairings of works based on common rule of law-related themes. We also encourage you to use the [REED-LO Scaffolding Approach to Art](#) and the [REED-LO Matrix](#) templates described earlier to create your own lesson plans for these works. If you create your own lesson plans and wish to share them with us, we will add them to the site with full attribution to you as developer of the plan. Virginia teachers may earn recertification credit for creating and publishing lesson plans. We will be happy to provide the necessary verification information for teachers whose lesson plans are added to the site.

Jurisprudence, Daniel Chester French (1906)

Created for the Federal Courthouse in Cleveland, Ohio, this sculpture depicts *Jurisprudence* as a classical female figure because women were thought to embody purity. She “sits upon a throne, holding a tablet marked ‘LEX’ (Latin for ‘law’) and engraved with its attributes: justice, equity, ability, wisdom, piety, security, liberty, firmness, honesty, and trust. The mother and child on her right represent protection under the law. The man in chains to her left symbolizes the law’s wrath” ([View Image](#)).

The Murder of Jane McCrea, John Vanderlyn (1804) and The Last of the Race, Thompkins Harrison Matteson (1847)

While Vanderlyn’s and Matteson’s works are separated by nearly half a century, they both provide tragic views of the fate of Native Americans denied access to the rule of law. Vanderlyn depicts the early century view of the Noble Savage become simply savages murdering innocent white settlers, in this case the defenseless Jane McCrea. McCrea’s illuminated figure with upturned face and out-stretched arms seems to beg for mercy from her blood-thirsty captors, one of whom has the facial features and feathers that, intentionally or not, suggest the devil himself.

Such demonic images were not uncommon, representing white society's view that the rule of law did not apply to Native Americans. The result, as the history of the nineteenth century reminds us, was the near genocidal elimination of the race. The government's sanction of such a policy brings us to Matteson's painting *The Last of the Race*. Unlike the fierce, diabolic figures in Vanderlyn's work, Matteson's painting presents a different vision of the Native American, "the Doomed Indian" (Robert Hughes, 1997). In this painting a small group of Native Americans who have suffered the consequences of Manifest Destiny stand tragically at the edge of a cliff watching the sunset over the Pacific Ocean. As Robert Hughes notes, "This is the end of the line" (Hughes, 1997). Demonized and doomed, Native Americans' treatment in our nation's history reminds us that the rule of law has not always been applied fairly. Teachers are also encouraged to consider the Native American paintings of George Catlin, who captures the dignity and everyday life of the Western tribes and who fought tirelessly to get Congress to protect their vanishing culture. Samples of Catlin's work are available [here](#).

Access the historic background and Vanderlyn's work [here](#).

Access Matteson's painting scroll down to the ninth image [here](#).

We Owe Allegiance to No Crown, John Archibald Woodside, Sr. (After 1812) Woodside captures the spirit of national pride that swept America after the War of 1812. Like much of the art of this period, Woodside's piece is filled with symbolic images that reflect the young nation's determination to protect its freedom and liberty. At the center of this painting is an American sailor whose left foot and the American flag he holds are both firmly planted on a crushed crown. Lying next to the fallen symbol of imperial power is the broken chains of bondage. Hovering behind him and surrounded by an aura of light as if descending from heaven is the iconic Goddess of Justice carrying a staff (called a *vindicta*) supporting a liberty cap (called a *pileus*), ancient Roman symbols of liberty. With her other hand she holds a laurel wreath above the sailor's head, symbolizing the victories of the nation's new navy in the War of 1812 and in the conflict with the Barbary pirates.

This [site](#) provides a small image of Woodside's painting, which may require some formatting changes to enhance the details.

Tragic Prelude, John Steuart Curry (1941)

In Curry's mural John Brown's figure fills the foreground, resembling a wild-eyed prophet with arms extended in a religious and defiant stance. Or does he resemble Moses come down from the mountain with the sacred tablets? He does, after all, hold a Bible in his left hand while a wagon train of migrants crosses the prairie behind him. In his right hand, however, he holds a musket, and immediately behind him surge the warring factions of the "bleeding Kansas" conflict, each side carrying its standard. In the far background we see a raging prairie fire on one side and a tornado on the other, harbingers of the death and destruction that will become the Civil War, further confirmed by the dead Union and Confederate soldiers at his feet. Mad, fiery prophet of the terrible consequences to come by not abolishing slavery or incendiary abolitionist and traitor whose violence betrayed the very rule of law necessary for emancipation, John Brown, as imagined here, suggests his famous words "that the crimes of this guilty land will never be purged away but with Blood." Brown, like many of his contemporaries, understood that the nation's guilty history of slavery belied the spirit of the rule of law and *The Declaration of Independence* that all people, regardless of race, "are, and of right ought to be, FREE."

President Lincoln Writing the Proclamation of Freedom, Jan. 1st, 1963, David Gilmour Blythe (1863)

Blythe's symbolic painting provides teachers with an exceptional resource for teaching the rule of law and many of its related themes. As the title suggests, the focal point is a slightly disheveled President Lincoln, eyes contemplatively downcast, at work on *The Emancipation Proclamation*. Lincoln sits in shirt sleeves with slipperless left leg crossing right leg, his right foot resting on a document inscribed with the words "Peace" and "Democracy" as if holding these ideals in place. While his right hand holds a quill pen on a draft *Proclamation*, his left hand rests on a Bible and a copy of *The Constitution*. The symbolic clutter of his office, which seems to engulf him, speaks to the contentious and tragic events that have brought him to his current task. Among this clutter we see books bearing the names of Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and Randolph; petitions and protests from groups advocating for emancipation; dispatches from field commanders, reminding Lincoln and us of the war that rages outside his office; and a map of the "Rebel States," on which rests a rail splitter's maul. In the background stands a large bookcase inscribed, "WITHOUT SLAVERY THE WAR WOULD NOT EXIST AND WITHOUT SLAVERY IT WOULD NOT BE CONTINUED." From one corner of this case hangs a sword labeled "WASHINGTON," while dangling from the other corner is a bust of James Buchanan, who as president practiced a policy of Southern appeasement, with a noose around its neck. The most conspicuous objects are an out-of-balance scale (the scales of justice?) and a key that hangs

over a “Copy of PRESIDENTIAL OATH.” Difficult to see in the dark left foreground, appears an additional, and to Lincoln, significant object, a sheet of paper on which is written, “THE UNION MUST AND SHALL be PRESERVED.”

With so much visual detail, teachers and students will have a wonderful experience decoding these and the other images that speak so directly to this volatile epoch of American history. The rule of law, Constitutional issues, The Missouri Compromise, nullification, states’ rights vs. Federalism, secession, the slave issue, and even the promise of *The Declaration of Independence* provide an expansive field of fertile ground for a lively and educationally rich class discussion.

Allegory of Freedom, Anonymous (1863 or after)

The physical setting of this primitive painting depicts an odd mix of mountains, river, the Washington Monument, flatlands with palmetto trees, and the ruins of a mansion. The key figures in this tableau include two African-American Union soldiers and an African-American woman and child. One of the soldiers stands below an American flag. With broken chains in both hands and chains and shackles lying on either side of him, we see the symbolic evidence of emancipation. He stands on a ragged parchment bearing a palm tree image. The other soldier, riding a horse and carrying another American flag, drags a Confederate “Stars and Bars” flag on the ground. Taken together, the presence of the palmetto trees, the ruins, and the Confederate flag (similar to the one flown over Fort Sumter after its fall) suggest South Carolina and its role as the first secessionist state. Other images of note are an eagle sitting atop the ruins clasp a bloodied snake in its talons and a second unidentifiable rider at the edge of the painting. This figure, with chalk-white, featureless face and dressed in black, sits astride a white horse, perhaps alluding to the “pale horse, pale rider” of “Revelations,” who brings death and destruction to the world. In this case the death and destruction is divine punishment for the South’s refusal to abolish its “peculiar institution” of slavery. To view the painting click [here](#).

Reminiscences of 1865, John Frederick Peto (1897)

While David Gilmour Blythe’s painting of Lincoln writing *The Emancipation Proclamation* is filled with chaotic clutter that suggests the issues that engulfed the president as he sought to end slavery and reunite the nation, Peto’s painting suggests Lincoln’s tragic fate as a result of his efforts. Starkly plain at first glance, the painting’s evocative power emerges from the very plainness and scarcity of images. The focal point is a portrait of Lincoln with a large knife suspended above and “Abe” carved into the wooden blank background. On the left side is carved

“65” and hanging by a nail in the upper right corner is a corncob pipe. As the title indicates, these few simple images are a reminiscence about “Abe,” a simple, plain-spoken man suddenly thrust into a horrific situation. The issues he faced as president became a “Damocles sword” hanging over his head throughout his administration: secession, the war, emancipation, and restoring the Union. The “sword” would finally drop in 1865 when John Wilkes Booth, the embodiment of these issues, assassinated Lincoln. While the issues identified above speak directly to the rule of law, Booth’s assassination plot also reveals the tragic consequences of one man taking the law into his own hands as we are left to wonder what would reuniting the Union and reconstruction have been like had Lincoln survived to guide the nation through the healing process. To view the painting click [here](#).

Migration Series #10, #15, and #57, Jacob Lawrence (1940-41)

During the early decades of the twentieth century, millions of African-Americans fled the poverty and persecution of the rural South for the promise of a new and better life in the industrial North. What most found, however, was not what they expected. Lawrence seeks to capture the story of this Great Migration in 60 panels filled with “bold colors and expressive forms [that] ... convey with stark poignancy the aspirations, determination, and dedication of individuals and families striving for a better existence” (Mark Cole, 2004). Lawrence also captures the disappointment and despair African-Americans faced as they journeyed from one form of oppression to another. Panel #10, “They were very poor,” presents a stark scene of two sharecroppers “staring at empty bowls on a bare brown plain, an empty basket hung on the wall by an enormous nail – the sort of nail you imagine in a crucifixion” (Robert Hughes, 1997). Panel #15, “There were lynchings,” avoids the sensationalism of other media of the period to show a lone tree with dangling noose and a solitary female mourner. Panel #57, “The female worker was also one of the last groups to leave the South,” like the previous panels, reveals a stark scene of a single African-American laundress in a brilliant white dress bent over a wash tub posed against a black background. Head bowed and hands gripping the pole with which she washes the clothes, her figure reflects the “permanence and resistance which is one of the underlying themes of Lawrence’s series” (Robert Hughes, 1997). Taken together, these three works from *The Migration Series* provide teachers with a resource for teaching students that “free” doesn’t necessarily mean “equal,” especially during this historical period. For African-Americans of the early twentieth century, the journey to full equality under the rule of law was still a distant dream.

View all 60 panels [here](#).

View Panel #10, “They were very poor”.

Teacher instructional resources for Jacob Lawrence’s *The Migration Series* are available here.

The Dove, Romare Bearden (1964)

Although Bearden denied any political message in his work, one cannot view *The Dove* without sensing the chaos and despair so many African-American communities faced in the twentieth century and continue to face today. Filled with visually chaotic images of dismembered limbs, heads and bodies; eyes peering from windows and doors; and assorted street clutter set against a background of mismatched tenements, “it is not difficult to attach a meaning such as hope or peace to the serene bird [the white dove] that appears in the center of urban life, or to see a predatory connection in the white prowling cat, which the bird appears to be watching”. As we view Bearden’s work, we are left to question if, today, the rule of law does apply equally to all American citizens.

Image available here.

Lodgers in a Crowded Bayard Street Tenement, “Five Cents a Spot,” Jacob Riis (ca. 1889)

In “Five Cents a Spot,” Jacob Riis, a New York reporter and social reformer, documents the squalor of the endless blocks of tenements inhabited by New York’s poverty-stricken immigrants at the beginning of the twentieth century. Living in cramped, dark, airless rooms, as captured in this photograph, these new arrivals to America – the land of opportunity and freedom – found only despair and oppressive privation. Absent the legal protections enjoyed by most citizens, Riis’s subjects faced a future as bleak as the room in his photograph. Through his documentary photos Riis shed light on a dark corner of American society and made it possible for middle-class New Yorkers and the rest of Americans to see the plight endured by these desperate men, women, and children whose only wish was the freedom to begin life anew.

Photograph

Here is a copy of Riis’s description of “The Bend” from *How the Other Half Lives* (1890) visit.

The Four Freedoms, Norman Rockwell (1943)

Inspired by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech before Congress on January 6, 1941, Norman Rockwell created a series of four illustrations that capture the cause

Americans were fighting to preserve during World War II. Published in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1943, the four illustrations include *Freedom of Speech*, *Freedom to Worship*, *Freedom from Want*, and *Freedom from Fear*. Then, as now, Rockwell's illustrations remind us of the universal personal rights guaranteed and protected by the rule of law. Teachers are encouraged to pair Rockwell's illustrations, containing the iconic images of middle-American citizens for which he is so famous, with a copy of the relevant excerpt from Roosevelt's speech to show students the connection between the spoken word and art.

For downloadable high resolution copies of the illustrations visit [this link](#). After accessing the above link, enter <ANY>norman rockwell's four freedom paintings in the Search Archives.gov box. When the next screen appears, click on "Power of Persuasion" and scroll down the page to images.

For the relevant excerpt from Roosevelt's speech visit [this link](#).

***Rosa Parks*, Marshall D. Rumbaugh (1983) and *The Problem We All Live With*, Norman Rockwell (1964)**

While each of these works individually offer the teacher the opportunity to explore the rule of law through art, together they provide the resources for a lesson on the inequities when the rule of law is denied – *Rosa Parks* – and the fulfillment of individual and group rights when the rule of law is enforced – *The Problem We All Live With*. Together, they represent two of the most famous events in the civil rights movement of the twentieth century.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks said "No" to the segregation policy that forced African-American citizens of Montgomery, Alabama, to ride in the back of buses and relinquish their seats to white riders. Her defiant and courageous act stands as a seminal event of the civil rights movement and paved the way for the nation's most aggressive effort to apply the rule of law equitably to all citizens. Marshall Rumbaugh depicts this historic scene in his painted wood sculpture of a three-dimensional Rosa Parks in handcuffs being arrested by two police officers, two-dimensional caricatures, who seem to tower over the diminutive Mrs. Parks. Rumbaugh's work serves to illustrate the absence of the rule of law at a time when America struggled to right the wrongs of centuries of inequality and racism. For sources visit [this link](#).

Based on the integration of William Franz School in New Orleans in 1960, Norman Rockwell illustrates a scene from this event in which six-year old Ruby Bridges is escorted to her first day of school by US marshals. Appearing on the cover of *Look Magazine* in January of 1964,

Rockwell's image shows tiny Ruby Bridges dwarfed by her adult escorts. Dressed in a spotless white dress, walking determinedly with eyes focused straight ahead, Ruby passes a wall covered with racially-charged graffiti that reflects the temper of the times and the white opposition to integration. Intentionally or unintentionally, Rockwell captures a turning point in history, and we learn once more that the rule of law, though slow at times in being enforced, does protect the rights of the oppressed and, when applied fairly, guarantees the rights of all citizens. Rockwell wasn't alone in rendering this scene artistically. Unlike Rockwell who created his illustration second hand, John Steinbeck was an eye witness to the event and recorded it in his book *Travels with Charley*.

Painting available [here](#).

Liberty Leading the People, Eugene Delacroix (1830)

Delacroix painted *Liberty Leading the People* to commemorate the July Revolution in 1830 against Charles X. Like most images of "Liberty" Delacroix's "Lady Liberty" represents the embodiment of liberty, guiding a troop of people in a battle for their freedom. Delacroix's figure reflects both vulnerability with her exposed breasts and strength with a musket in her raised right hand and the French flag in her left hand. Fearless and determined, she urges the crowd forward over a mound of fallen comrades. (Adapted from [this link](#).)

Painting is [here](#).

Lady Justice Leading the People, Ron Anderson (2005)

Commissioned for the Ohio Judicial Center, Anderson's painting of *Lady Justice Leading the People* recalls some of the same imagery of Delacroix's painting of *Liberty Leading the People*. Anderson's "Lady Justice," also embodies the traditional feminine ideals of purity and fairness. Set during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, "Lady Justice symbolically leads her people, while at the base of the pillar she approaches, the scales of Justice appear firmly grasped in the right hand of a young man, struggling to hold the balance as he gazes up at her for direction. Lady Justice is poised, with body facing outward toward the viewer, yet skewed to the past. The Sword of Truth, positioned in her left hand, points earthward. Her blindfolded head is turned over her right shoulder, intent on the presence of the youth steadying the scales, as she appears to protect him beneath her flag-wielding arm. Pausing, in timeless awareness, listening to the voice of the future, reviewing with wisdom and temperance the events of the past and the present, she

engages the viewer, intending perhaps to evoke pensive reflection regarding the history of the rule of law and what it means to each of us”.

Note: By scrolling to the fourth image at the following link, you will be able to view a higher resolution watermarked image of Anderson’s painting, but it will require some cutting, pasting, and resizing to enhance the detail: [link here](#).

Mother of Exiles, Rebekka Seigel (ca. 2005-2006)

“The Statue of Liberty stands with six women in this ‘Mother of Exiles’ quilt by Rebekka Seigel of Owenton, Ky. Left to right, they are Anne Hutchinson, who challenged the Puritan establishment in Massachusetts; Betsy Ross, who probably contributed part of the design of the US flag; Harriet Tubman, who led escaped slaves to freedom; Susan B. Anthony, who fought for women's voting rights; Emma Lazarus, who wrote the poem "The New Colossus" that linked the statue to immigrants' hopes; and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who helped draft the UN Declaration of Human Rights. Courtesy Phyllis George”.

Guernica, Pablo Picasso (1937)

For the unarmed citizens of the Basque city of Guernica, the rule of law exploded in chaos when Germans bombed the city in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War. Picasso captures the horror of this tragic event in his monochromatic painting that is filled with the torn and broken bodies of men, women, children, and animals. Incorporating symbolic images drawn from classical, religious, and cultural sources, *Guernica* depicts the carnage inflicted by the Nazis on the hapless citizens. The painting remains one of the world’s most powerful anti-war statements and a reminder of the need to protect and preserve the rule of law.