

Writers of the Purple Sage

A Study of Literature Native to the American Southwest By Rondi Aastrup

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Writers of the Purple Sage A Study of Literature Native to the American Southwest

Description

This 5-week unit is primarily a literature unit, but it will encompass several other elements including art, music, world cultures, and philosophy. It is intended to augment (and in some cases replace, if desired) the first half of Unit I of the Prentice-Hall literature text, *The American*

Experience, but it would work with any American Literature text (the Prentice-Hall text is the NAD recommended text). The unit, "A Gathering of Voices," focuses on the literature of North America, from its beginnings to 1800 with an emphasis on Native American and Colonial literature. *This* unit will focus on *Southwestern* Native American and post-Colonial literature. Students will read representative pieces from both genres and will respond to its themes through reports, cooperative learning groups, videos, worksheets, classroom lectures and discussions. They will also write a psalm of praise patterned after Psalm 19.

A related optional (for those with easy access) activity is a field trip to the Grand Canyon where students can visit several sites related to Native American and Southwestern literature. A sample itinerary is included at the end of this unit.



Traditional Ceremonial Cloak

Objectives

Throughout the course of this unit, students will meet state standards and accomplish the following objectives:

- 1. Read selections from Native American and Southwestern literature
- 2. Analyze literary elements
- 3. Apply critical reading strategies to these selections
- 4. Analyze primary sources
- 5. Compare literary works
- 6. Use writing processes to write in a variety of forms
- 7. Practice listening and speaking skills
- 8. Express and support responses to various types of texts
- 9. Prepare, organize, and present literary interpretations

Textbooks/Resources

- 1. Prentice Hall Literature *The American Experience* 2010 edition
- 2. Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire
- 3. John Wesley Powell's Canyons of the Colorado
- 4. Selected poems, short stories, and essays
- 5. *The Bible* Psalm 19



Requirements

- 1. Students will read several poems, short stories and selections from longer works of Native Americans and writers from the Southwest.
- 2. Students will complete a variety of activities related to their reading.
- 3. Students will write a psalm of praise.

Outline

A rough outline of the 5 weeks follows (designed for block classes – two 80 minute classes and one 40 minute class each week but can be broken down into five 40 minute classes or even four 50 minutes classes with a little adjusting). Since the Native American portion of the Prentice

Hall textbook comes in the first unit, the assumption is that this supplementary/substitute unit will be taught within the first several weeks of the school year. Other options include teaching it during the second unit, closer to the time period when John Wesley Powell was exploring or even splitting it amongst the various time periods. Teachers can, of course, adjust the outline to suit their own needs and routines. This outline puts the unit at the beginning, all together. **Bolded** items have corresponding pages or technology pieces in this unit. If the Prentice Hall textbook is not available,



Colorado River winds through the Grand Canyon

use whatever information is included in the text being used. Most likely it will have similar information and activities.

DayMinutes	Class Activities and Assignments
Day 1-80	 Introduction to the class In-class activities (teacher's choice)
Day 2—80	 Introduction to the textbook If using the Prentice Hall textbook, look at the timeline on pages 2-13, pointing out any items of interest. Play excerpts from composers listed (Bach, Mozart) and show pictures from artists listed (Michaelangelo) from the Artists and Musicians PowerPoint to gain an understanding of the world context for this time and place. -Read pages 2-13 from the textbook out loud in class, demonstrating how to read a text, pointing out the organization of the page, the font size and color, signal words, etc. Be sure to check out any pictures, charts, etc. Answer any questions posed in the captions. -Discuss the questions on page 14, completing the graphic organizer together.



Day 3-40	 Introduction to the "Writers of the Purple Sage" unit (to be used in place of Pages 17-45). Show PowerPoint on Southwestern/Arizona Indian Tribes to acknowledge the vast array of native tribes in the area. This unit will only sample the literature from a few of the tribes represented. 			
Day 4—80	 -Show the PowerPoint on Native American poetry and common poetic techniques and terms in order to gain an overview of the sophistication of the oral language of the Native tribes. -Read pp. 15-16, discussing the oral tradition. 			
	**Assignment: do the Extend Your Learning activity			
Days 5-8	Poetry Workshop			
Day 9–40	Introduce Edward Abbey Read excerpts from Edward Abbey's <i>Desert Solitaire</i>			
	http://www.amazon.com/Desert-Solitaire-Season-Wilderness-Edward- ebook/dp/B005IHAINY/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1388471426&sr=8- 1&keywords=desert+solitaire			
Day 10-80	Activity with Desert Solitaire			
Day 1180	Introduce Tony Hillerman Read Hillerman's <i>The Great Taos Bank Robbery</i> <u>http://www.nmmagazine.com/media/1017897/hillermanoriginal.pdf</u> Activity with Hillerman's <i>The Great Taos Bank Robbery</i>			
Day 12-40	Introduce John Wesley Powell Read pp. 42; 54-57 in the textbook Read excerpt from <i>Canyons of the Colorado</i> , Chapter 11, August 13-28 entries <u>http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8082</u>			
Day 18-80	Activities for Powell and Canyons of the Colorado August 13-28 entries			
Day 14-80	In-class Writing Project – Psalm of Praise			

Day 15–40 --Share writing projects in small groups



Colorado River, South Rim, Grand Canyon, Arizona



Native American Poetry Workshop

This Poetry Workshop will take you through a series of activities involving Native American poetry of the Southwest. If you are working through this unit on your own, adapt the activities and questions accordingly. It should be spread over 3-4 class periods. Complete the activities in the order they are presented here:

A. Introduction

- 1. Answer the following questions in preparation for this Poetry Workshop on Native American Poetry:
 - a. What resources have you used to learn about history and Native Americans?
 - b. Which types of books/movies have you read about Native Americans?
 - c. What poems have you read written by Native Americans?
 - d. How could poetry help us learn about Native Americans?
 - e. What themes might you expect to read in Native American poetry?
- 2. Review the genre and vocabulary of poetry using one or more of the following:
 - a. Native American Poetry PowerPoint
 - b. Vocabulary game (below)
 - c. Native American Poetry Handout (see following two pages)



Contemporary Native Hopi Indians at Hopi House, Grand Canyon

Vocabulary Game:

This activity is for use in a classroom setting.

- 1. Half the class has strips of paper with Native American Poetry vocabulary words (from the PowerPoint) on them, the other half has the definitions. Repeat words/definitions, if necessary until every student has either a word or a definition.
- 2. Students walk around the room looking for their vocabulary word/definition match.
- 3. When everyone is matched, pairs read aloud their word and definition.



Characteristics of Native American Poetry

Many works from Native American literature have their basis in myth and symbolic archetypes. Songs, poetry, chants, and Native American rituals use a number of recurring motifs and techniques that may include initiation rites, hunting and planting ceremonies, healing rituals, medicinal chants, trickster tales, symbolic landmarks and mythology. These



were also a way to hold on to their history and beliefs, passing the information down through poetry from generation to generation. Favorite tales and tribal folklore were passed down as well.

Native American poetry is one aspect of this literary tradition that mixes oral storytelling and tribal mythology with traditional literary forms as well as traditional songs and tribal rituals. It expresses and describes such things as loss, religious beliefs, war ceremonies, and other traditions. The history and heritage of the Native American people is often passed on from generation to generation through the vehicle of poetry.

Native American poetry can either be written by or about Native Americans and/or about Native American themes. Poetry that expresses thoughts or feelings about the culture include ancestral accounts, desires to understand Native American life, or

frustrations over the treatment of Native Americans throughout the history of the United States. This poetry contains the same subjects and themes of early Native poets, though: their morals and beliefs with an emphasis on courage, bravery, closeness to nature and the earth, etc. Historical accounts are also shared in poetic form.

Contemporary Native American poetry does not necessarily focus on traditional subjects and themes, although certainly some of it does. Keep this in mind when researching Native American poetry.

Literary Forms

- 1. Poetry
- 2. Myths
- 3. Legends
- 4. Stories of creation

Native American Themes:

- 1. The circle of life
- 2. Nature is God, the Supreme Being, the Great Spirit
- 3. Nature and humans are related, intertwined
- 4. Wind has power



- 5. Dreams
- 6. Respect for nature, especially animals
- 7. Gods, spirits creating Earth

Native American Subjects

- 1. Beliefs
- 2. Myths, legends
- 3. Accounts of bravery
- 4. Tribal traditions
- 5. Any number of other subjects

Native American Motifs

- 1. Hero Initiation
 - a. Young man undergoes ritual initiation; accomplishes heroic act
 - b. Young man has mixed parentage or is born under divine circumstances
 - c. Does not fully belong to either part of his heritage and must prove himself
 - d. Dies tragically and becomes revered by his tribe

2. Trickster

- a. Is a spider in the Lakota tribe
- b. Is a coyote in the Kiowa tribe
- c. May be a foolish character with human greed
- d. Often punishes selfish or mean-spirited deeds
- e. Is a cultural hero in tribal stories despite cruel or evil nature of actions



Native culture at Tusayan Ruins, Grand Canyon

- 3. Symbolic Landmarks and Mythology
 - a. Attributes human characteristics to landmark formations or inanimate objects; similar to the anthropomorphic tendency in Native American folk traditions
 - b. Gives human behaviors and emotions to animals) is common as well
 - c. Gives Inanimate objects and animals equal status with humans in the cosmos

Oral Tradition

- 1. Poetry and rhythmic prose
- 2. Meant to be sung or chanted
- 3. Includes customs, rituals, religious philosophies, hierarchies, traditions, etc.



B. Sample Native American Poem:

This activity can be done in a classroom setting or by an individual.

1. Read the following poem (or another of the teacher's choosing) written by a Native American from a Southwestern Tribe (In a classroom setting, the teacher should read the poem aloud to students. It could also could be posted on a PowerPoint slide so students can read it simultaneously, or printed so students can have their own copy).

Havasupai Prayer to the Sun

Sun, my relative, as you rise, be good to me. Bring good things to us. Give me strength to work, so that I can be strong in the garden, so that I can hoe, plant corn, and water my fields.

Sun, my relative, as you go down, be good to me, as we lay down to sleep, give me peace. As I sleep, may уои соте ир again. May you go on your course many times, Making good things happen for people. *Let me be always* the same as I am now.



Tusayan Ruins, Grand Canyon, Arizona

- 2. After reading the poem, the teacher should share the following information (skip this step if you are working on your own):
 - a. Why you selected the poem
 - b. What you noticed about the title and author's name
 - c. From which tribe and location the author and poem came
 - d. How you felt when you first read the poem
 - e. If there were any confusing lines in the poem
 - f. How you figured out what the poem was about



- g. If you were reminded of other poems or experiences
- h. What you could infer about Native Americans from the poem

C. Native American Poetry--Analysis

This activity can be done in a classroom setting or by an individual (except for step 3).

Students should read the following selections of Southwestern/native poems independently and answer the questions (#1 and 2) on a separate piece of paper. If possible, play **Native American music** in the background (see links) while reading.

- 1. Choose a favorite poem from the selections on the following pages. Write down its title.
- 2. Write down answers to these 8 questions about the poem:
 - a. Why did you select the poem?
 - b. What did you notice about the title and author's name (if known)?
 - c. From which tribe and location did the author and poem come?
 - d. How did you feel when you first read the poem?
 - e. Were there any confusing lines in the poem? If so, which were they and why?
 - f. How did you figure out what the poem was about?
 - g. Were you reminded of other poems or experiences when you read this poem? If so, what were they? Be specific.
 - h. What could you infer about Native Americans from the poem?
- 3. Work in groups of 3 or 4 to share responses to the above questions.



Native drawings in Watch Tower, Grand Canyon, Arizona

Native American Poetry

The Ones We Have Been Waiting For

You have been telling the people, That this is the eleventh hour. Now, you must go and tell the people, *That THIS is the hour,* And there are things to be considered. Where are you living? What are you doing? What are your relationships? Are you in the right relationship? Where is your water? Know your garden ... It is time to speak your truth. Create your community, Be good to each other. Do not look outside yourself for a leader. There is a river flowing now very fast, It is so great and swift. That there are those who will be afraid, They will try to hold onto the shore. They will feel they are being pulled apart, And will suffer greatly. Understand that the river knows its destination, *The elders say we must let go of the shore.* Push off into the middle of the river,

Keep our eyes open and our heads above water. And I say; see who is in there with you, Hold fast to them and celebrate! At this time in history, We are to take nothing personally. *Least of all, ourselves!* For the moment we do, *Our spiritual growth and journey comes to an end.* The time of the Lone Wolf is over! *Gather yourselves!* Banish the word "struggle" from your attitude and vocabulary. All that we do now must be done. In a sacred manner and in celebration. We are all about to go on a journey, We are the ones we have been waiting for! -~ Thomas Banyacya Sr. (1910-1999); Speaker of the Wolf, Fox and Coyote Clan

Elder of the Hopi Nation

Members of the Hopi Tribe



Tsaile April Nights

Earlier today, thin sheets of red dirt folded into the dark mountain blown up from the western desert floor. You know, the whole, empty Navajo spaces around Many Farms, Chinle, Round Rock. Later, light rain slanted into the valley. The female paused for an hour or so. She sat and watched us awhile, then clouds of mist waited until evening and left. The male rain must have been somewhere over the mountain, near Cove or Beclabito, chasing children and puppies indoors. But here, the quiet snow will move in a newborn breathing those first new nights. The lake is frozen, a glazed white plate suspended in the dark. I long to hear your voice. Hushed, deep murmurs in the cold quiet, and low laughter echoing in the still. I like to sleep with piñon smoke. The cold dry air chills my skin, my breath. Stories descend into the dark, warm, light circles. Oh these nights. *My blessed bounty of dreams.*

~ Luci Tapahonso, Blue Horses Rush In Navajo



Luci Tapahonso

Paiute Medicine Song

Now all my singing Dreams are gone, But none knows where they have fled Nor by what trails they have left me. Return, O Dreams of my heart, And sing in the Summer twilight, By the creek and the almond thicket And the field that is bordered with lupins!

Now is my refuge to seek In the hollow of friendly shoulders, Since the singing is stopped in my pulse And the earth and the sky refuse me; Now must I hold by the eyes of a friend When the high white stars are unfriendly. Over-sweet is the refuge for trusting; Return and sing, O my Dreams, In the dewy and palpitant pastures, Till the love of living awakes And the strength of the hills to uphold me.

Teach Me A Ute Prayer

Earth teach me stillness as the grasses are stilled with light. Earth teach me suffering as old stones suffer with memory. Earth teach me humility as blossoms are humble with beginning. Earth teach me caring as the mother who secures her young. Earth teach me courage as the tree which stands alone. Earth teach me limitation as the ant which crawls on the ground. Earth teach me freedom as the eagle which soars in the sky. Earth teach me resignation as the leaves which die in the fall. Earth teach me regeneration as the seed which rises in the spring. Earth teach me to forget myself as melted snow forgets its life. Earth teach me to remember kindness as dry fields weep with rain.



Painted Desert, Holbrook area, Arizona



D. Native American Poetry--Response and Apply

This large-scale activity is for classroom use. Individuals doing the project should do it on a smaller scale (8 ¹/₂ by 11 inch paper).

- 1. Divide students into groups. Give each group a copy of the same Native American poem (poem is on next page) attached to a large piece of chart paper (see example at right).
- 2. Give students colored markers/pens and tell them to silently read their poem and then write questions and comments on the chart paper for others to read and answer.
- They can draw lines from poem lines to their comments, answer each other's questions, agree or disagree with each other – all silently, via written comments.

- 4. Post the papers around the room so each group can read through what the other groups have written.
- 5. Conduct a general classroom discussion, sharing highlights from each group.

Pueblo Poem on How Nature Heals

My help is in the mountain Where I take myself to heal The earthly wounds That people give to me. *I find a rock with sun on it* And a stream where the water runs gentle And the trees which one by one give me company. So must I stay for a long time Until I have grown from the rock And the stream is running through me And I cannot tell myself from one tall tree. Then I know that nothing touches me Nor makes me run away. *My* help is in the mountain That I take away with me. Earth cure me. Earth receive my woe. Rock strengthen me. Rock receive my weakness.



Rain wash my sadness away. Rain receive my doubt. Sun make sweet my song. Sun receive the anger from my heart.

E. Writing a Native-Inspired Poem

This activity gives students the opportunity to try their hand at the subject matter they have been exploring.

- 1. Review the native poetry-writing techniques, paying special attention to the themes traditionally addressed in native poetry.
- 2. Choose one of the options below and write a Native-inspired poem of at least 15 lines.
 - a. Pick one of the Native themes and write a poem based on that topic.
 - b. Choose a word or phrase from one of the poems in this unit and use that as a "jumping off" point for your own poem. It does not have to have any connection with the poem except using the words somewhere in the poem.
 - c. Use the picture of the Grand Canyon below as inspiration for a poem.
- 3. Share your poem with your classmates

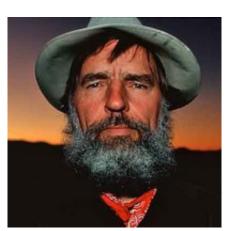




Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* Introduction, The First Morning, Solitaire, & Cliffrose and Bayonets

Edward Abbey Biographical Sketch

Known as an environmental radical even during his lifetime, Edward Paul Abbey was an



American author who advocated for the environment through his actions and words. His best-known works include a novel, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, and a non-fiction autobiographical work, *Desert Solitaire*. Among his literary influences were the iconic "nature" authors Aldo Leopold and Henry David Thoreau, but Abbey did not want to be regarded as such. He thought it more interesting to go out *into* nature rather than read about it. Ironically, it is his account of his own experience of going into nature that keeps him listed in the same breath as other nature writers and that is considered one of the finest nature narratives in all of American literature. *Desert Solitaire* describes his experience working as a park ranger in Southern

Utah, vividly painting a picture of desert life in the Southwest.

Born on January 29, 1927, in Indiana, Pennsylvania (yes), to parents who brought him up to appreciate classical music and literature, Abbey left home after graduating from high school and made his first acquaintance with the desert Southwest before he was 18, traveling by foot, bus, car (hitchhiking), and train (train hopping) to get there. He fell in love with the land, saying that "for the first time, I felt I was getting close to the West of my deepest imaginings, the place where the tangible and the mythical became the same." Once drafted, Abbey served as a military police officer in Italy before being honorably discharged. He returned to the U.S. and got his B.A. in philosophy and English as well as his M.A. in philosophy from the University of New Mexico.

It was during Abbey's two seasons (April to September) working as a ranger for the U.S. National Park Service at Arches National Monument near Moab, Utah, that he collected the information he later used for his first non-fiction work, *Desert Solitaire*. He took copious notes and made careful and detailed sketches of all he saw and thought during his often solitary hours of work in the park.

Abbey died on March 14, 1989, in his home in Tucson, Arizona, of surgical complications.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Abbey



Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* Introduction, The First Morning, Solitaire, & Cliffrose and Bayonets

Synopsis of Desert Solitaire



A collection of personal vignettes set in the desert Southwest, specifically the Colorado Plateau region near Moab, Utah, *Desert Solitaire* is more memoir than autobiography, with Edward Abbey reflecting on his experience as a park ranger for two seasons. Themes vary from the particulars of his job to the universal application of the life lessons he observed out in nature. He philosophized on society and religion (Mormonism). He expounded on necessary survival skills for life in the desert. He equivocated on the paradox of being a solitary, independent member of a much bigger picture than what was in front of him. *Desert Solitaire* is often compared to Thoreau's *Walden* and

Aldo Leopold's *A Sand County Almanac* for its content but in reality it is very different in tone and purpose.

Source: <u>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Solitaire</u>

Issues, Themes, and Concepts

- Natural Beauty
- The Two Sides of the Desert it is harsh, wild, and sublime
- The Meanings and Causes for the Power of Nature
- The Relationship Between Nature and Civilization
- Mankind vs. Man-Centeredness
- Culture vs. Civilization
- Science vs. Scientism
- Human Abuse and Mismanagement of the Natural World

Resources

- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Abbey
- <u>http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Desert_Solitaire</u>
- http://www.abbeyweb.net/
- https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/37218.Edward_Abbey
- http://www.abbeyweb.net/books/ea/desert_solitaire.html
- <u>http://www.amazon.com/Desert-Solitaire-Season-Wilderness-Edward-ebook/dp/B005IHAINY/ref=sr_1_1?s=digital-</u>text&ie=UTF8&gid=1388501067&sr=1-1&keywords=desert+solitaire



<u>Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire</u> Introduction, The First Morning, Solitaire, & Cliffrose and Bayonets Before You Read

This activity can be done as a solitary student or in small groups. If working in small groups, discuss each question first before writing the answers. The writing activity should be done first and then shared.

Pre-reading Discussion

1. What is the first experience with nature that you can remember? How old were you? Who were you with? What did you do? How did you react/respond to what you saw? What are some of the sensory details you remember from that first experience? List details, then write a paragraph, using as many details as you can.



Bull Elk at Grand Canyon National Park

2. Have you ever experienced the extremes of nature (high/low temperatures, desert/mountain/ocean, etc.) or hardships in nature? If so, describe those in as much detail as you can.

3. Have you ever observed or experienced the power/force of nature (e.g., flood, hurricane, tornado, wildfire, etc.)? If so, what was it like? How did you feel about it in the moment? Afterwards?



Photo from Wikipedia, "Yarnell, Arizona, Wildfire 2013"

4. What mainstream movies have you seen (or heard of) that depict nature either positively or negatively? What might be the agenda (politically, socially, otherwise) the producers/director of such films have for mainstream audiences?

5. Have you witnessed (or heard of) a recent abuse of nature? If so, what was the situation? How did you feel about the situation? Was there anything you could do about it? Did you do anything about it? Why or why not? If you have not seen or heard of an abuse, imagine if you had. What *would* you have done? Write a paragraph describing the situation.



Photo by Rondi Aastrup, Grand Canyon National Park, "South Kaibab Trailhead."

Think of a favorite memory you have of time spent in nature – especially alone in nature. Paint a three-paragraph word picture of this experience, using as much sensory detail as possible. Include your reaction/response to what you saw, heard, smelled, tasted, felt – physically and emotionally. Give your piece a meaningful and inviting title. Outline your thoughts here first:



Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* Introduction, The First Morning, Solitaire, & Cliffrose and Bayonets While You Read



Complete this activity <u>while</u> reading the two excerpts from Edward Abbey's <u>Desert Solitaire</u>. The focus is primarily on the literary techniques of the selections. Be succinct and specific in your answers and observations. Questions occur in the order the information appears in the excerpts. If a question asks you to trace evidence (or something similar), make sure to keep track while you're reading so you have an accurate accounting for the answer.

1. Complete the following chart regarding the details of Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*. Be complete, succinct, and specific.

PAGE	PURPOSE	SETTING	CONTEXT	CHARACTERS	CONFLICTS	COM- MENT

2. Notice Abbey's writing style – including tone, point of view, diction, syntax, literary techniques (metaphor, simile, hyperbole, etc.). Is it easy or challenging to read? What makes it so? While you are reading, use the following chart to keep track of striking techniques of Abbey's writing style. Be sure to include the page number with your examples.

TECHNIQUE	EXAMPLE 1	EXAMPLE 2	EXAMPLE 3	EXAMPLE 4
Metaphor				
Simile				
Hyperbole				
Alliteration				
Assonance				
Diction (word choice)				
Syntax (sentence structure)				

3. Abbey calls this book an *elegy*. Look up the definition of *elegy* and then track how the book *is* an elegy through the details throughout the excerpts.



<u>Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire</u> Introduction, The First Morning, Solitaire, & Cliffrose and Bayonets After You Read – Discussion

Complete this activity after you have read the above selections from Edward Abbey's <u>Desert</u> <u>Solitaire</u>. If you are in classroom setting, this should be done in small groups before recording your answers on paper.

1. Abbey says in "The First Morning" that everyone "carries in heart and mind the image of the ideal place." He goes on to list such things as a houseboat, a farmhouse, a cabin on a lake and other such idealistic places. For him, that place is Moab, Utah, the setting for this book. Do you have such a place — real or imagined? Compare and contrast your ideal place with Abbey's description of his.



Photo by Rondi Aastrup, "Second Wind," Rangeley, Maine

2. Why does Abbey not feel alone in his solitary outpost? He says, at the end of the "Solitaire" chapter that he did not feel loneliness but loveliness. What does he mean by that?



3. Abbey spends quite a bit of time and space observing and describing the flora and fauna of his desert surroundings. He is especially partial to a juniper tree and gives his readers a detailed description of this tree in "Cliffroses and Bayonets," almost personifying it. What is it about this tree that attracts Abbey so? Why does he question if it has a heart? Is there a similar tree or other piece of nature that you feel strongly about? If so, describe it in detail.



Photo by Rondi Aastrup, South Rim Sunset, Grand Canyon, Arizona

- 4. Based on your reading of the early excerpts of *Desert Abbey*, review the issues, themes and concepts listed at the beginning of this section. Which of these themes is evident in these chapters? Where in the chapters are these themes evident?
- 5. In the "Introduction," Abbey writes about how difficult it is to use language to describe nature. List some of the descriptors he uses for language. Based on what you have read, how well does Abbey use language to describe nature? Support your answer with specifics.



6. Based on what you have read of *Desert Solitaire*, what is Abbey's view of nature? Where does he see mankind fitting into nature? Where does he see himself fitting in?



Sonoran Desert, Phoenix, Arizona

- 7. Pick one of the chapters (including the Introduction) from *Desert Solitaire* and write a precise of that chapter keeping the following in mind about a precis:
 - a. It is a *precise condensation* of the main idea and major points of a piece of writing;
 - i. It tells the reader the gist of what has been said
 - ii. It answers the question: "What's this chapter saying?"
 - b. It uses direct, simple language.
 - i. It includes only major points.
 - ii. It does not argue or explain main points, it simply states them.
 - iii. It is comprehensive, efficient, and clear.



<u>Tony Hillerman</u> The Great Taos Bank Robbery

Tony Hillerman Biographical Sketch



Tony Hillerman is an American writer best known for his mystery series featuring Navajo Tribal Police. Hillerman, who was born in Oklahoma but spent most of his adult life in New Mexico, worked as a reporter, editor, and journalism professor at the University of New Mexico in addition to writing more than 30 books. His work as a reporter and editor introduced him to many of the characters and situations he would later chronicle in his books. Hiller received many literary awards for his works on the Navajo tribe, but he is also recognized for his depiction of the Southwest in general.

The Great Taon Bank Robbery Synopsis

The title story in Tony Hillerman's collection of *true* stories is drawn from his experience as the editor of *The New Mexican*, a daily newspaper for Santa Fe, New Mexico. It's a classic example of how perception is everything. Two men are planning to rob a bank, but their lack of attention to detail and their resulting embarrassment sets up a "comedy of errors" that can only happen in a small town setting. Hillerman's sense of irony and his reportorial skills refined during his time working in the story's setting make for good reading.

Literary Techniques

- Humor
- Situational Irony
- Verbal Irony

Resources

- http://www.umsl.edu/~smueller/bio.htm
 - Biography of Tony Hillerman
- <u>http://www.nytimes.com/2008/10/27/arts/27iht-</u>28hillerman.17272323.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0
 - Obituary for Tony Hillerman
- <u>http://harpercollins.com/authors/4488/Tony_Hillerman/index.aspx</u>
 o Harper Collins Publishers' author page on Tony Hillerman
- <u>http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/mystery/american/navajoland/abouthillerman.html</u>
 <u>PPC site for TV mustery american/navajoland/abouthillerman.html</u>
- PBS site for TV program on Tony Hillerman
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tony_Hillerman
 - Wikipeida page on Tony Hillerman and his works

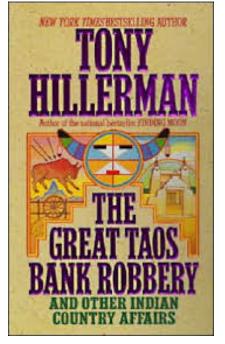


Tony Hillerman *The Great Taos Bank Robbery* **Before You Read**

This activity is meant to be done prior to reading Hillerman's short story, "The Great Taos Bank Robbery." If you are in a classroom setting, answer the questions in small groups before writing them down.

1. Have you ever witnessed or participated in an event and later compared notes with others? How were your accounts the same? How were they different? Why might that be? How does your experience and perspective change what you see and how you see it?

2. Describe the difference between watching something (a movie, a TV show) for the first time and watching it again, for the second or third time. Which experience do you like best--anticipating what will happen or knowing what is going to happen in advance? What details do you notice the second or third time that you didn't notice the first time?



3. Describe a situation you experienced or observed, or a story you've read or watched, where everyone in the situation knows what's going on except the main character (situational irony)



Tony Hillerman *The Great Taos Bank Robbery* While You Read

This activity is meant to be done while reading the nonfiction account of "The Great Taos Bank Robbery." If in a classroom situation, answers can be discussed once all have read and completed the questions.

1. Look up the following literary terms and record their definitions. Then keep track of each time Hillerman makes use of that technique. Keep track of other literary conventions as well. Make sure to include the page where you found the technique.

LITERARY TECHNIQUE	DEFINITION	PAGE NUMBER	EXCERPT	COMMENT
SITUATIONAL IRONY				
VERBAL IRONY				
HUMOR				
SIMILE/METAPHOR				
ALLITERATION/ ASSONANCE				



2. Make a list of the characters in this story. Keep track of the details that flesh out that character. When you finish the story, go back through the list and provide a one or two-word character descriptor for each one.

CHARACTER	DETAIL #1	DETAIL #2	DETAIL #3

3. How does Hillerman create suspense in this story? Be specific, citing examples throughout the story.



<u>Tony Hillerman</u> *The Great Taos Bank Robbery* After You Read

This activity can be done in a classroom setting or by an individual. If in a classroom, the questions should be discussed either in small groups or as a class.

- 1. Summarize the story in 3-4 sentences. What makes it interesting? What makes it challenging?
- 2. Describe the editor and his attitude towards the caller and the potential robbery. What do we learn about him throughout the story? What do we learn about the people of Taos? Does that explain the editor's attitude? Why? How?



- 3. This story has been described as a "comedy of errors." What are the errors? Who makes them? Why? What is comedic about them?
- 4. What does the Great Flood have to do with anything in this story? Why do you think Hillerman includes it here? What purpose does it serve?
- 5. Think of a similar kind of situation that you have experienced, observed, read, or watched. Recount that story in 2-3 paragraphs, using similar techniques as Hillerman used. If you don't know of any such incident, create one.



<u>John Wesley Powell</u> *Canyons of the Colorado* Chapter 11, August 13-28 entries

You are going to read two accounts of experiencing Arizona's Grand Canyon for the first time. One, from the 16th century, describes the first time Europeans saw one of the seven great wonders of the world. The other, from the 18th century, describes the first time Caucasians explored the Colorado River as it runs through the Grand Canyon. Both accounts are firstperson. Both accounts are intended to paint a picture of an awe-inspiring place for those who have no other way of seeing it except through words.

Generally speaking, accounts like these are called exploration narratives. They give firsthand accounts of travels to places heretofore unknown. Written in chronological order, they describe in rich detail what the author is seeing, giving the reader the opportunity to visualize something they wouldn't otherwise have the opportunity to see. Today, you might find such information at a travel website or someone's blog. In many ways, these two chronologies are the precursors to today's internet travel sites.

A. Garcia Lopez de Cárdenas

- 1. Read the biographical sketch of Cárdenas on page 47 of the Prentice Hall textbook.
- Read Cárdenas' excerpt, "Boulders Taller Than the Great Tower of Seville" (pp. 52-54 in the Prentice Hall textbook). As you read, keep track of the challenges and solutions that Cárdenas and his men faced during their travel.

	Cárdenas – 1541	Powell #1-1868	Powell #2-1871
Problem:			
Solution:			
Problem:			
Solution:			
Problem:			
Solution:			



B. John Wesley Powell

- 1. John Wesley Powell was a U.S. soldier, geologist, explorer, university professor and director of major scientific and cultural institutions. He is most famous for the three-month river trip down the Green and Colorado rivers in 1868 that included the first known passage through the Grand Canyon. You will learn more about him when you do the webquest as part of this session.
- 2. Read Chapter 11, August 13-28th entries from John Wesley Powell's *Canyons of the Colorado*. You can find this book free online at http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/8082
- 3. While reading, complete the chart that you started while reading the Cárdenas excerpt, tracking the challenges and solutions that Powell and his men faced.
- 4. Watch <u>Paul Winter's "River Run" video</u> that captures the feel of the river running through the canyon through music and video. Write 2-3 paragraphs about how the music and the images make you feel.
- 5. Watch the National Geographic documentary about <u>Powell's second exploration</u> of the Colorado River. Compare and contrast the challenges and solutions shown there with those of the first trip. Use the chart above to track this information.
- 6. Do the Webquest to discover more information about John Wesley Powell and his explorations.



Colorado River, Grand Canyon, Arizona



<u>Creative Writing Workshop</u> A Psalm of Praise

We've looked at a number of ways to respond to the forces and beauties of nature around us – in this case specifically connected with writers of the American Southwest and the Grand Canyon. We've read authors who love the land (Edward Abbey); authors who love the land, the people, and their quirks (Tony Hillerman); authors who love the adventure of exploring the land for the first time (Cárdenas and John Wesley Powell); and authors indigenous to the land, whose lives are dependent on the land and all it has to offer (Native Americans). Now, it's time to put it all together, adding the spiritual dimension to what we've learned and done so far by writing a Psalm of Praise to the Creator of the land and its peoples.

The Technical Information:

A Psalm is a form of Hebrew poetry. It works a little differently from what we traditionally think of as poetry. Instead of rhyme and rhythm, a psalmist is more dependent on imagery and wordplay. There are three main techniques:

- 1. **Synonymous parallelism** where two lines say nearly the same thing, for emphasis. For example:
 - a. Psalm 3:1
 Lord, how many are my foes!
 How many rise up against me!"
 - b. Psalm 139:7-8"Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

c. Psalm 85:2

"You forgave the iniquity of your people and covered all their sins."



- 2. **Antithetical parallelism** where two lines say the opposite about the same idea. For example:
 - a. Proverbs 17:22

"A cheerful heart is good like medicine, But a crushed spirit dries up the bones."

b. Psalm 20:7-8

"Some trust in chariots and some in horses, But we trust in the name of the Lord our God.

They are brought to their knees and fall, But we rise up and stand firm.



3. **Synthetic parallelism** – where a thought is stated and then all the following lines build to a point, working to persuade the reader. Sometimes these passages are long. Look at Psalm 139:1-6 or Joel 1:1-20. Also:

Psalm 84:10-11 "Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere;

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor;

no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.



Psalms have several different purposes:

- 1. **Hymns** songs of praise for God as Creator and for what he's done throughout history.
 - a. Open with a call to praise
 - b. Describe the reason for the praise
 - c. Conclude with a repetition of the call to praise
- 2. **Communal Laments** a nation regrets a disaster for the community.
 - a. Address God
 - b. Describe the suffering of the people
 - c. Curse whoever is responsible
 - d. Protest innocence or admit guilt
 - e. Petition for God's help
 - f. Express faith in what God can do
 - g. Look forward to what God will do
 - h. Give thanks
- 3. **Royal Psalms** addressing with such national concerns as royal coronations, marriages, battles, etc.
- 4. **Individual Laments** where an individual cries out against personal disasters and unhappy fates. These are perhaps the most common types of psalm.
 - a. Open with a call to God
 - b. The lament and cries for help
 - c. End with an expression of confidence in God to answer the prayer.



5. **Individual Thanksgiving** – the opposite of the individual lament, this is a psalm of thanksgiving for deliverance and blessings.

The Example:

Psalm 19 is a beautiful example of a psalm praising the beauties of nature and the wonders of nature's Creator. We will use this Psalm as the model for our own psalm-writing activity.

- 1. Read Psalm 19 in the King James Version and then in another version, taking care to note how the psalmist uses the Hebrew poetic techniques discussed above.
- 2. Look at the **PowerPoint** on Psalm 19. The reading comes from *The Message* version of the Bible and is illustrated with photos from the Grand Canyon. This falls into the "Hymn" pattern of structure and language.

The Process:

- 1. Find a comfortable place where you can think and write undisturbed. If possible, go out to a favorite place in nature and find a view that can inspire you with something for which to give thanks.
 - a. Take a notebook or journal with you.
 - b. Bring your Bible along as well.
 - c. Make sure you have good light for writing.
 - d. You might want to bring some quiet music to help inspire your thinking.



Psalm writing at the Grand Canyon

- 2. Take some time to sit and think about God's presence in your life.
 - a. Review high and low times in your life and see how He's been there for you.
 - b. Consider what your life would be like without Him.
 - c. Invite God to speak to you now.
 - d. Listen for His answer.



- 3. Reread Psalm 19 or choose another psalm as a model for your own writing.
 - a. Read it all the way through without stopping.
 - i. What is its overall tone?
 - ii. What is its overall purpose and meaning?
 - b. Read the psalm again.
 - i. Think about the character the speaker. What kind of person is speaking?
 - ii. Who is the speaker addressing? What concerned are being addressed?
 - c. Read the psalm again, this time out loud, line-by-line, stopping to listen to the words. Listen to God's message to you.



Contemplating Psalm 19 at the Grand Canyon. Photo by Rondi Aastrup

- 4. Think about what you relate to in this psalm.
 - a. What about your life connects to the various details in the psalm?
 - b. Which part of the psalm speaks most to you?
- 5. Write your own psalm.
 - a. Use your model Psalm as an example for writing your own prayer or song.
 - b. Don't worry about the length of line, the rhythm and rhyme. Just let your thoughts flow. If you want more of a challenge, try using the Hebrew poetry techniques mentioned above.
 - c. Include at least one simile ("God is like a Rock, solid, unchangeable.") or metaphor ("God is my Rock, solid, unchangeable.").
 - d. Subject matter can include:
 - i. God the Creator write about the beauties of nature



- ii. God the Provider write about a time God gave you what you needed, how He answered your prayer
- iii. God the Protector write about a time God took care of you
- iv. God the Comforter write about a time when God lifted you out of sadness or despair
- v. Praise for God's character
- vi. Things you've learned, how you've grown through your relationship with God
- vii. Thanksgiving for what God has done
- e. Use descriptive language:
 - i. Make every word count
 - ii. Use adjectives
- f. Personalize your psalm using personal pronouns such as "Me," "My," "I."
- g. If you have difficulty in creating your own structure, follow your model Psalm, replacing the specifics with details from your own life.
- 6. Give your Psalm to God.
 - a. Once you have written your psalm, share it with God either silently or out loud.



- b. If you're a musician, try singing it to a favorite hymn tune.
- c. Share your psalm with your classmates or your family.

The Resources:

- 1. <u>http://www.jesuswalk.com/psalms/psalms-0-intro.htm Hebrew_Poetry</u>
- 2. http://www.jesuswalk.com/psalms/psalms-exercises.htm
- 3. http://www.examiner.com/article/how-to-write-a-psalm-or-song-of-praise-to-the-lord
- 4. <u>http://mysonginthenight.com/songwriting/how-to-write-a-personal-psalm/</u>
- 5. <u>http://marcalanschelske.com/try-this-psalm/</u>



Sample Optional Interdisciplinary Trip to the Grand Canyon

Thunderbird Adventist Academy's senior class of 2014 spent 5 days at the South Rim of the Grand Canyon in September 2013 taking part in an interdisciplinary field trip. They studied the history and geology of the Canyon, took part in a psalm writing workshop, spent several hours painting the Canyon with a professional Canyon artist, and hiked the Bright Angel Trail into the Canyon and back. What follows are the details of that trip, shared here as an example of one of the rich educational opportunities available in the American Southwest. For more information on this specific trip, contact Thunderbird Adventist Academy.



Thunderbird's Grand Canyon Suite September 11-15, 2013

- WHO: Class of 2014 (21 seniors), Ms. Aastrup, Mrs. Kline, Mr. and Mrs. Morada, Mr. and Mrs. Turk
- WHAT: Senior Cross-curricular Field Trip
- WHEN: September 11-15, 2013
- WHERE: Grand Canyon, South Rim and vicinity
- WHY: To study material indigenous to Arizona through the academic vehicles of art, history, science, and writing; to bond as a class, paving the way for their leadership role as seniors
- HOW: Thunderbird's two mini-buses and one van (luggage and food)
- COST: Everyone is responsible for spending money (souvenirs), snacks, and money for two restaurant meals (Wednesday supper at Bright Angel Lodge and Sunday lunch at the Cameron Trading Post.

THE SCHEDULE:

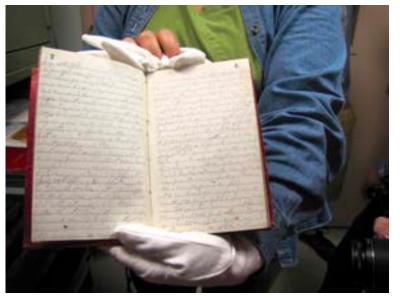
Wednesday

Leave TAA by 1:30 p.m. Arrive at the Grand Canyon by 5:30 p.m. Supper at Bright Angel Lodge ASAP Settle into rooms at the Albright Training Center after supper Worship Kyle QuickWrites Ms. Aastrup Evening activities Class Officers

Thursday

Breakfast Worship Grand Canyon Museum tour Ecology activity Lunch at the Canyon Art project at the South Rim Option #1 Supper at Albright Training Center Worship QuickWrites Evening activities Mr. & Mrs. Morada Mr. & Mrs. Turk Dean Linda, Ms. Aastrup Mr. Turk

Dean Linda/artist Ms. O'Brien Mr. and Mrs. Morada Group #1 – Daniel, Nay Nay Ms. Aastrup Class Officers



Diary of a crew member in John Wesley Powell's Colorado River Exploration

Friday

Breakfast Worship Art project at the South Rim Option #2 Lunch at the Canyon History activity Mr. & Mrs. Turk Mr. & Mrs. Morada Dean Linda/artist Ms. O'Brien Mr. and Mrs. Turk

Mr. Morada

Movie at the Visitors' Center Supper at Albright Training Center Worship **OuickWrites** Evening activities

Group #2–Genesis, Earl Mario Ms. Aastrup Class Officers



Art lesson from a professional Canyon artist.

Sabbath

Breakfast at 5 a.m. for hikers Hike to Indian Garden Breakfast for non-hikers Church Lunch at the Canyon Drive out to Hermit's Rest Supper Sundown worship QuickWrites Evening activities

Mr. & Mrs. Turk Turks and whoever wants to go Ms. Aastrup & Dean Linda Ms. Aastrup Ms. Aastrup & Dean Linda

Group #3 – Johann, Angel Abel Ms. Aastrup Class Officers

Sunday

Breakfast Worship Dean Linda Pack up to leave Trip to Tusayan Ruins & Watch Tower Mr. Morada Late lunch at the Cameron Trading Post Arrive home by 6 p.m.

Group #4–Kyle, Donna

THE MEALS:

Wednesday lunch

TAA cafeteria

Wednesday supper

At the Bright Angel Lodge at the Grand Canyon

Thursday breakfast--Moradas

Breakfast burritos - scrambled eggs, links, country potatoes, tortillas and salsa with a side of sliced oranges.

Thursday lunch

Luncheon "meat," cheese slices, condiments, bread, granola bars, chips, fruit, juice boxes

Thursday supper

Grilled cheese sandwiches, soup--tomato, mushroom and/or minestrone, fruit, juice boxes



Sketching the Canyon

Friday breakfast--Turks

Breakfast sandwiches: English muffins, eggs, sliced cheese, stripples, ketchup, mayo, OJ, fruit

Frisday lunch

Luncheon "meat," cheese slices, condiments, bread, granola bars, chips, fruit, juice boxes

Friday supper

Haystacks, fruit, juice boxes

Sabbath breakfast for hikers--Turks

Hard boiled egg, fruit, granola bars, yogurt/go-gurt, trail mix, water, gatorade

Sabbath breakfast for non-hikers – Ms. Aastrup and Dean Linda

Pancakes--chocolate chip, blueberries; fruit; OJ; hot chocolate

Sabbath lunch – Ms. Aastrup and Dean Linda

Hot dogs, potato salad, baked beans, chips, juice boxes



Listening to an on-location history lesson at the Grand Canyon.

Sabbath supper

Vegeburgers; fixings; chips; fruit; juice boxes

Sunday breakfast

Omelets--cheese, tomatoes, red and green peppers, onions, salsa, hash browns; Fruit; OJ; Hot Chocolate

<u>Sunday lunch</u> Cameron Trading Post

WHAT TO BRING

- Modest and appropriate clothing that follows the principles of Thunderbird's dress policy
 - Layers of clothes (short to long) for variety of temperatures (day to night)
 - Hiking shoes or comfortable walking shoes if not hiking (and socks)
 - Sleepwear
 - Rain gear
- Personal toiletries
- Personal medications, first aid basics
- Water bottle
- Journal
- Bible
- Snacks
- Camera
- Book/eReader
- A favorite game (for group activities)



Getting a Canyon culture lesson from a long-time Canyon resident (and TAA's girls' dean)

Page 45 of 47

<u>Writers of the Purple Sage</u> Notes and Resource Information

Annotated List of Southwestern Literature and Author Websites

http://www.mpm.edu/wirp/icw-14.html

Indian Country Wisconsin is a project of the Milwaukee Public Museum funded by Ameritech. It is designed primarily to assist teachers in meeting the requirements of <u>Wisconsin</u> <u>Educational Act 31</u> which mandates kindergarten through grade 12 instruction in culture, history, sovereignty, and treaty rights of Wisconsin Indian tribes.

http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/canyon/peopleevents/pandeAMEX05.html PBS program about John Wesley Powell. Resource material here is extensive.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Wesley_Powell Source for photos of John Wesley Powell and his expeditions.

http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/473251/John-Wesley-Powell Biography of John Wesley Powell.

http://historytogo.utah.gov/people/johnwesleypowell.html Biography of John Wesley Powell from the Utah state history website.

http://www.powellmuseum.org/museum_powell.php

Website for the Powell Museum in Page, AZ. "John Wesley Powell was a soldier, scientist, and explorer. He is best known for his daring exploratory trips down the Green and Colorado Rivers in 1869 and 1872, and is credited with leading the first group of white men down the Colorado River through present day Grand Canyon."



Replica of John Wesley Powell's boat, the Emma Dean. Page, Arizona.

http://www.amazon.com/Laughing-Boy-Navajo-Storyebook/dp/B009UQ7KTY/ref=sr_1_28?s=digital-text&ie=UTF8&qid=1371502286&sr=1-28&keywords=navajo+fiction

"Capturing the essence of the Southwest in 1915, Oliver La Farge's Pulitzer Prize-winning first novel is an enduring American classic. At a ceremonial dance, the young, earnest silversmith Laughing Boy falls in love with Slim Girl, a beautiful but elusive "American"-educated Navajo. As they experience all of the joys and uncertainties of first love, the couple must face a changing way of life and its tragic consequences."

http://www.ilhawaii.net/~stony/lorei ndx.html More than 150 NA folklore/stories

http://www.pbs.org/circleofstories/vo ices/index.html NA stories and storytellers

http://www.amazon.com/Ten-Who-Dared/dp/B003Y1G27C/ref=sr_1_1?s=i nstantvideo&ie=UTF8&qid=1371679271&sr=1-1&keywords=10+who+dared Disney movie about JWP's exploration of the Colorado River and Grand Canyon



http://worldcat.org/identities/lccn-n50-19556

Powell, John Wesley 1834-1902

824 works in 1,389 publications in 10 languages and 42,751 library holdings

About the Unit Photos

- All Grand Canyon photos were taken by the unit author, Rondi Aastrup, except where indicated, and they were used by permission of the source.
- All Native American artifact photos were taken by the unit author, Rondi Aastrup, except where indicated.
- Any author or book photos are from *Wikipedia* and used under media commons permission.
- All supplementary unit photos (Grand Canyon trip) were taken by the unit author, Rondi Aastrup. Photos of students are used with their permission.