



# LITERATURE LESSON PLANS

Good children's literature  
appeals not only to the child  
in the adult,  
but to the adult in the child.

~ ANONYMOUS ~

# WEST 1

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Reading:** Biographic sketch of Marguerite Henry

**Goal:** Introduce children to the author and biography as a genre

**Review:** The five literary elements of a classic

**Principle:** God imparts a special purpose to His children that His glory might be proclaimed throughout the earth.

**Scripture:** I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. (Exodus 9:16 NIV)

## TEACHER



### Vocabulary:

**biography** (n.) The history of the life and character of a real person.

**characterization** (n.) The external and internal qualities of each character in the story.

**chosen** (pp.) Selected from a number; picked out; taken in preference, elected, predestinated.

**foolscap** (n.) A large size of paper (14x17 inches) used for printing books.

**galleon** (n.) A large three-masted sailing ship with a square rig used mainly by the Spanish in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries as a merchant ship or warship.

**infamous** (adj.) Having a reputation of the worst kind; being associated with something detestable.

**literature** (n.) 1) Learning. 2) The expression of life in words of truth and beauty.

**plot** (n.) The sequence of events in the story that leads to a conclusion.

**setting** (n.) The background of the story including place, time, environment, climate, and society.

**style** (n.) The individuality of the author's expression in writing.

**theme** (n.) The lessons or message the author is trying to convey through the story.

## STUDENT



### Key Word:

**purpose** (n.) That which a person sets before himself as an object to be accomplished.



### Notebook Record:

1. Label a divider "West" for your binder.
2. Print your name on the title page and color the illustration with your colored pencils.
3. File your divider and title page in your binder.



### Reason Questions:

1. Define literature. What is the greatest book ever written?
2. What makes a book a classic?
3. Define biography.
4. What unique talents and characteristics made Marguerite Henry so special?



## Preparation and Lesson Background:

1. Read the entire classic. Then read and study the Introduction and the Benjamin West Timeline (the Reading for Lesson 19 found on pages 113–16).
2. Read “The Place of the Fine Arts” in your AMO® Teacher Manual.
3. Study West’s paintings ([http://hoocher.com/Benjamin\\_West/Benjamin\\_West.htm](http://hoocher.com/Benjamin_West/Benjamin_West.htm)).
4. Create the “Benjamin West Classroom Art Gallery.” (See page 33.) Refer to the various paintings in your gallery when opportunities arise.
5. Become familiar with the colonial Pennsylvania setting of the biography, which we will study in our next lesson.
6. Read the biographic sketch of Marguerite Henry.
7. Review the definitions of literature and the elements of a classic. Study the teacher vocabulary words before teaching.
8. Identify the West paintings in your classroom Art Gallery that you want to use.
9. Gather all the resources needed for the lesson: *Benjamin West and His Cat Grimalkin*, Marguerite Henry biographic sketch, student vocabulary card, dividers, and title pages.



## Teaching Plan:

1. Distribute student binders, dividers, and West title pages. Have each child label one divider, “Benjamin West.” Have each write his or her name on the title page and color the illustration with their colored pencils while you read aloud the biographic sketch of Marguerite Henry.
2. Review the definitions of literature, classic, and the five literary elements (theme, plot, setting, characterization, author’s style).
3. Introduce biography as a genre and teach the children what can be gleaned from the study of a well-written biography from the Introduction.
4. Pin the student vocabulary card on the bulletin board and define the word for the children. Connect the vocabulary word to the principle.
5. Introduce the principle to the children.  
God entrusts a plan and a purpose in life to each of His children that, when accomplished, proclaims His glory. Therefore, parents and their children need to seek God’s unique plan and purpose for their lives and to gain His guidance for investing the talents that He endows us to fulfill that purpose.

5. What was Mrs. Henry’s life purpose? How did she fulfill it?
6. Have you and your parents sought the Lord for God’s purpose for your life?
7. Describe your talents. How do you plan to invest them for God’s glory?



## Oral Work:

I am chosen by God and have great purpose in “His Story.”

Our biography is about a boy who was blessed with a unique plan and purpose from God. He was gifted as a painter of history, and his life did, indeed, glorify God.

*The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil. (Proverbs 16:4)*

*In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:10–12)*

*Now when David had served God's purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his ancestors and his body decayed. (Acts 13:36 NIV)*

*And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28)*

6. Introduce the author, Marguerite Henry. Read the biographical sketch of Mrs. Henry aloud to the children. Show her picture. Discuss how she fulfilled God's purpose for her life and how she came to write this children's biography.
7. Ask the reason questions and have children respond orally.
8. Before completing the lesson, have children repeat the student oral work.
9. You may end with a short prayer and blessing for the children.

# Benjamin West Classroom Art Gallery

The following paintings and etchings have been selected based on the lesson plans in this literature unit and/or the suitable content for young children. Print each one in color and glue onto construction paper to “frame.” You may want to back with cardboard or core foam to provide stability. Type the title of the painting, print, and glue onto the bottom portion of the “frame.” Create a permanent “Benjamin West Art Gallery” in your classroom and display the paintings for the children to enjoy throughout this unit. Letter a sign that says:



## Historical Paintings:

- The Death of General Wolfe, 1770 (Painting that revolutionized the painting of history)
- The Treaty of Penn with the Indians, 1771
- The Battle of La Hogue, 1778
- Treaty of Paris, 1783 (Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin)
- Edward III Crossing the Somme, 1788
- Harvesting at Windsor, 1795
- Joshua Passing the River Jordan, 1800
- Franklin Drawing Electricity from the Sky, 1816

## Self-Portraits:

- Self-Portrait, ca. 1763
- Self-Portrait, 1793
- Self-Portrait, 1820 (Year of his death)

## West Family Portraits:

- Mrs. Benjamin West and her Son Raphael, 1767
- Portrait of Raphael West and Benjamin West Jr., 1775

## Portraits:

- George III (King of England)
- Charles Willson Peale, 1767–69 (Famous American painter whom West tutored)
- Portrait of Prince Octavius, 1783 (One of King George’s sons)

## Biblical Scenes:

- Jacob Blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, 1766
- Christ Blessing Little Children, 1781
- Angel Announcing the Birth of Our Savior, 1790
- The Nativity, 1796
- Christ Healing the Sick in the Temple, 1800 (Commissioned by Philadelphia Hospital)

## Source for all the paintings:

- Online



"This be Elmira. She will mother thy kitten, too."

# Grimalkin the Cat Watercolors

## Our Project:

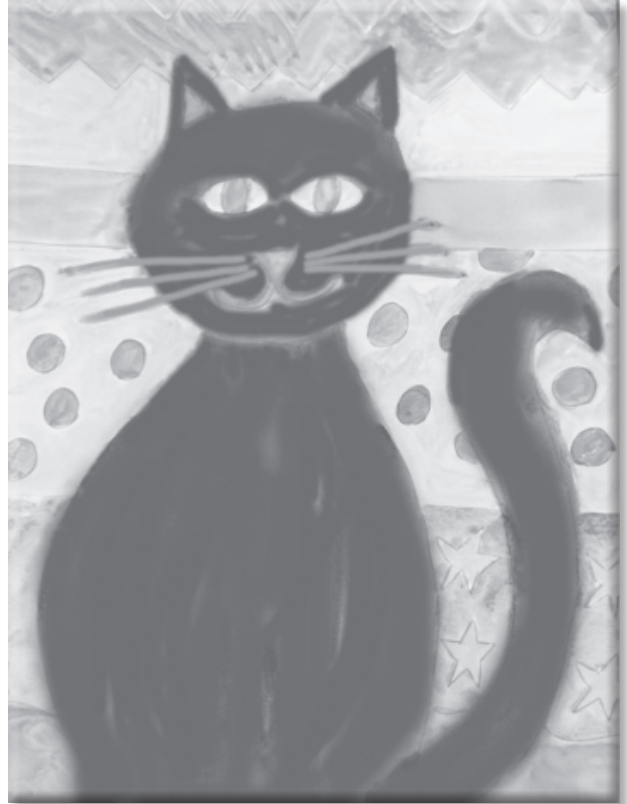
Benjamin West sketched and painted his beloved cat and friend, Grimalkin. She was a beautiful cat with shiny black fur, green eyes, and a long, fluffy tail. In this project, children will sketch Grimalkin and use watercolors to paint a background with various shapes and colors and then the black cat.

## Supplies:

- 8½ x 11 inches watercolor paper or white construction paper
- watercolors, trays can be shared among the children
- paintbrushes, various small sizes
- water in vessels that won't tip easily
- paper towels
- newspaper
- hairdryer

## Instructions for Class:

1. Paint a sample Grimalkin with watercolors to show students.
2. Cover the art tables with newspaper and distribute the supplies.
3. Demonstrate with various geometric shapes, how to sketch the cat. Then suggest various shapes and patterns they can use in the background.
4. Have the children paint the background first and dry the painting with a hair dryer.
5. When the background is dry, have them paint Grimalkin. Explain that mixing the watercolors while they're wet on the painting creates more depth and beauty in a painting. Demonstrate how they can paint Grimalkin black and deep purple or blue to get a depth of color.
6. Have the children sign their name in the lower left-hand corner.
7. Leave paintings to dry thoroughly and then flatten with heavy books.
8. Frame each painting by gluing onto a piece of construction paper that coordinates with the colors in the painting. Your children's artwork will now be ready to hang in the classroom and the Art Gallery for the end-of-unit Benjamin West Festival.



*"A kiss from my mother made me a painter."*

—BENJAMIN WEST