

COUNTING ON FREEDOM

ART AND MATH

GRADE LEVEL: K-2

BASED ON

Henry Mosler
The Quadroon Girl
Gift of Louise F.Tate
1976.25

MATERIALS

yes sign
no sign
one construction paper rectangle, approximately 8
inches by 2 inches, for each student
Scotch tape (or stapler)

OBJECTIVES

Students will review concepts of more and less.

Students will have visual reinforcement for the
concept of more

Students will apply that concept in order to
understand that the winner in an election has more
votes than the loser.

VOCABULARY

more than
less than
majority
plurality
voting
democracy
election

CONCEPT

Poems and artistic masterpieces, such as *The Quadroon Girl*, create such an awareness of injustice and a longing for what is right that people are motivated to action. The poem *The Quadroon Girl* by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow inspired Mosler to paint his painting of the same title. The novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is another case in point.

BACKGROUND

Mosler spent two years documenting what was happening on the field during the Civil War for *Harpers Weekly*, a northern journal. Abolitionist feelings ran high, and even after the war, during Reconstruction, there was much interest in what had happened and what would happen to the newly freed people. *Quadroon Girl*, based on a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow of the same title, was a close-up, three-quarter-length image of a beautiful, helpless girl who was one-quarter African and about to be sold into slavery by her white father. He painted this while in Paris and submitted it to the 1878 Paris Salon, thirteen years after the end of the Civil War but during the difficult period of Reconstruction.

PROCEDURE

1. Look at *The Quadroon Girl* and discuss the injustices of slavery.
2. Explain how some disagreements are solved by voting. Slavery in the United States stopped because President Abraham Lincoln, who had been voted president, declared slaves who wanted to join the Union free. Later there was a Constitutional Amendment that made slavery illegal because more representatives in the House and the Senate voted against slavery than those who voted for it.
3. Students solve a class problem by voting. This could be whether to have science or math after lunch, whether to paint or color a picture, or whether to play Duck, Duck, Goose or Seven-Up.
4. Each one will vote by attaching his/her rectangle (taped or stapled into a circle shape) to the yes sign or the no sign.
5. After all children have voted, the chains will be compared to see which sign has more circles (votes).
6. The group action will respond according to the majority vote.

CLASS EXPERIENCE

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS:

1. Why did Henry Mosler paint this girl looking sad?
2. How would you change the story?
3. Would a law against slavery have made a difference for this girl?
4. What has to happen for a law to be changed?

ASSESSMENT

After setting up a situation where the class will vote for or against a given choice, students will produce, compare, and reflect on the results.

Five points

The student demonstrates a thorough understanding of the voting process—voting, sorting, counting, totaling, and comparing the results.

Four points

The student demonstrates an adequate understanding of the voting process—voting, sorting, counting, totaling, and comparing the results.

Three points

The student demonstrates poor understanding of the voting process—voting, sorting, counting, totaling, and comparing the results.

0 points

The student does not comprehend the concept of more or less and majority/minority.

NATIONAL STANDARDS: VISUAL ARTS

Students connect and apply their learning of visual art to the study of other arts, areas, and disciplines outside the arts.

MATH

Number, Number Sense and Operations

Instructional programs from pre-kindergarten through grade 12 should enable all students to recognize and apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.

Use concrete, pictorial and verbal representation to develop an understanding of invented and conventional symbolic notation.

Model situations that involve the addition and subtraction of whole numbers.

Recognize, classify, compare and order whole numbers.

RESOURCES/BIOGRAPHY:

<http://www.kidsvotingusa.org>

<http://www.civicsalive.org>

<http://www.destinationdemocracy.org>

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