

A Conversation with a Text

PreAP/GT Argument and Persuasion

Objectives:

A. Students will consider the themes found in the short movie, *The Boy Who Painted Christ Black*.

Synopsis: Georgia, 1948. A talented young student submits a painting of Christ as a black man for a statewide contest on the theme of ethnic pride. This creates a conflict for his school's principal, George DuVaul. After much soul-searching, DuVaul agrees to enter the painting in the contest, even though it will come with a price.

Themes found in the story:

Race:

- Racism is a lingering shadow in American life and history, but with the ever-present reminder of racism, change for the better can come.
- Relationships allow people to learn how to coexist in society.
- A single movement is often the first step to people being willing to change the status quo.
- Establishing a mutual understanding and respect for others is the way we should treat human beings in this world.

Art:

- When a child is involved in an art, it's possible for them to escape the ugliness of reality and express themselves in a positive and beautiful way.
- In order for art to be accepted by the mainstream culture, it must transcend the perceptions of racism.
- Regardless of how oppressed a society or group of people may be, there will always be individuals who strive to create art and beauty in despite environment.
- In a more tolerant society, art is measured by talent rather than race.

B. Students will write a letter persuading Principal DuVaul to take a particular stance on entering Aaron Crawford's painting in the Pride Day competition. (letter format included on next page)

Letter Format:

Typed, block business letter:

- Heading
- Inside address
- Salutation
- Body of the letter: (five paragraphs)
 1. introduction
 2. body paragraph 1
 3. body paragraph 2
 4. a counter-argument and rebuttal
 5. a conclusion
- Closing
- Signature

