**Suggested Teacher Blurbs**

**Day 1**

Intro *Read the following*:

**Teacher Blurb A** Many of you want to be musicians, artists, dancers, etc. Many people go to college and universities to train themselves in their crafts. If your family can’t afford school you can apply for scholarships, grants, or loans. However there was time when these great opportunities for advancement were not available to all. This man (reveal a picture of William Edmonson) did not have the pleasure of attending a school like Nashville School of the Arts, Julliard, or an art institute. However, his art now sells for thousands of dollars. How is this possible? William Edmondson is a self-taught artist. His struggles in life created the visions that he needed to become one of the greatest artist of all time.

William Edmondson, son of Tennessee slaves, did not consider himself an artist when he began carving around 1932, after retiring from his job as a laborer. Inspired by a vision, he emphasized his divine calling, claiming, "Jesus has planted the seed of carving in me" and describing his works as "mirkels." While he lay asleep, God appeared at the head of his bed and talked to him, like a natural man, concerning the talent of cutting stone He was about to bestow. He talked so loud He woke me up. He told me He had something for me." Edmondson was instructed to make chisels and other sculpting tools.

*Have the students examine a picture of William Edmonson’s Crucifixion (image A) as you read the following blurb:*

**Teacher Blurb B** In several sculptures entitled *Crucifixion,* Edmondson celebrated Christ as the Savior, the most popular figure in the spiritual tradition of African-American art. This example is an early version, once also called *Baby Jesus.* Its rectangular silhouette and upright frontality suggest the gravestone tablets that Edmondson saw in his original vision. *Crucifixion* retains a strong sense of the block's shape and texture in its minimally articulated form and detail. Only the emphatic curves of the lower torso reveal Edmondson's attempt to break away from the block, suggesting that he executed *Crucifixion* soon after he turned from carving gravestones to more imaginative, free-standing subjects. Compact and stylized, the sculpture conveys its spiritual message with the authority and immediacy of an archaic monument.

(image A and image B) Compare Edmonson’s depiction of Christ to a depiction created by a trained artist? How are they different? How are they similar?

**Teacher Blurb C** We can see that there are benefits to being self-taught and professionally trained. Tomorrow we will take a virtual tour of a park created in Mr. Edmondson’s honor. Let’s take a look at another artist. His work will also be displayed in the park. His name is Lonnie Holley. Holley began his artistic life in 1979 by carving tombstones for his sister's two children who died in a house fire.[[1]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lonnie_Holley#cite_note-Dialogue_Talk-1) Holley became so depressed that he almost committed suicide. In the weeks that followed, he decided to do something constructive with his grief. As the family could not afford to buy tombstones for the children, he decided to make them himself.

"I asked God to give me something so that I may go to the top in life, and he did. I use the setting sun, the stars, the hills--all that has affected my imagination and what I put in my work. He believes that divine intervention led him to the material and inspired his artwork. He shares messages through his artwork but interpretation can be subjective.

(display image C)

**Teacher Blurb D** Let’s compare the image on the projector to the one on your paper. To do that, we will create a table. On one side we will describe parts of the image on your paper and on the other side we will describe the same parts but using the image on the projector.

What do you see?

A pattern again. What’s a happening on one side and on the other? (as x increases, y increases and vice versa) This is what we would describe as a directly proportional relationship. As one side goes up so does the other. However, sometimes there’s more to it the numbers than meets the eye so use a formula.

*Give students three similar problems to answer yes or no, is this directly proportional?*

**Teacher Blurb E** We can agree that the art says something about each artist. Our challenge today is to create an image that you believe represents the class of 2015. What stands out about you? What is monumental to your time period? You can pick an event to focus on or specific person, but it must have some link to you. You may work with a partner.

(4 minutes of private think time)

You must begin by creating your image in the three by three squares on your paper then you will construct a larger model using any of the tools in the back of the classroom. Your model and the image created in three by three square are expected to be directly proportional and this must be proven in your work. Remember the art should speak for itself without explanation.

Tomorrow we will vote as a class on the best image that depicts your time.

**Possible Learning Extensions: Create a scale model of Edmondson Park and include this Class of 2015 scaled image in the model of the park.**