

Lesson Plan for “Home Sweet Home” by Rhonda Collier

published in the online anthology [Nobody’s Home: Modern Southern Folklore](#)

CCSS Standard(s): CCS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA R.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; W. 2, 3, 4, 5 ([ELA Anchor](#)) or alternately: CCS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.RH.11-12.1, 3, 6 ([Social Studies](#))

Objective(s): To examine a Tuskegee, Alabama in personal rather than historical terms; to explore the idea of ‘sense of place’

Essential Question(s): What does it mean to live one’s life in a place that has mythic meaning for others?

Preparation for Teacher (Strategy and Purpose): Tuskegee, Alabama is known worldwide as the location of Booker T. Washington’s famous college, as the site of the infamous Syphilis Study, and as the training ground of the celebrated Tuskegee Airmen. Yet, it is also a small Southern town where many people have lived, worked, learned, raised families, and did other ordinary daily activities. Using resources such as the [Encyclopedia of Alabama](#), Booker T. Washington’s book *Up from Slavery*, Fred D. Gray’s book *The Tuskegee Syphilis Study*, Tuskegee University’s [Mission and History](#) webpage, and the National Parks Service’s [Tuskegee Airmen Historic Site](#), alongside Rhonda Collier’s essay “Home Sweet Home,” the teacher should develop a range of materials appropriate to their students about this historic place.

Preparation of Students (Strategy and Purpose): The teacher will lead a unit on the historic significance of Tuskegee, Alabama by including selected resources. Students should be grounded in the facts of the city’s history, and myths and narratives should be discussed (and, if necessary, falsehoods and misnomers pointed out). After that direct instruction is completed, the teacher will provide students with Rhonda Collier’s “Home Sweet Home” to read for homework.

In-class activities (Recommended): Students will break into small groups to compare and contrast “Home Sweet Home” with what they learned about Tuskegee’s history. In these small groups, students will prepare presentations to share their findings and ideas with others in the class.

Lesson Follow-up (Recommendations): Students will present their groups’ findings about Collier’s narrative as compared to the historical realities and mythic status of the city.

Technology: SmartBoard, Elmo, other device for sharing the texts

Tiered Instruction/Intervention/Differentiation: Accommodations per needs, IEPs, or 504s

Assessment: The teacher may choose a variety of assessments, dependent upon the historical unit on Tuskegee. The recommended presentations are one option.

Homework: See assessment suggestion above.

Comments: The teacher might consider a field trip to Tuskegee, if it is feasible to do so. Also, for teachers who include the Civil Rights era in their lesson, *The New Yorker* did a particularly good article on Tuskegee in July 1965.