

American Writers Museum
My Personal Bookshelf
Teacher Materials

Description of Museum

Mission: The American Writers Museum will:

- Educate the public about American writers – past and present
- Engage visitors to the Museum in exploring the many exciting worlds created by the spoken and written word
- Enrich and deepen appreciation for good writing in all its forms
- Inspire visitors to discover, or rediscover, a love of reading and writing

Through innovative and dynamic state-of-the-art exhibitions, as well as compelling programming, the American Writers Museum will educate, enrich, provoke, and inspire the public.

Located at 180 N Michigan Ave, AWM is on Chicago's Cultural Mile, a short walk up the street from the Art Institute of Chicago, the Chicago Symphony and the Chicago Cultural Center. Its galleries offer visitors a sweeping history of United States literature from Native American storytelling traditions to today's innovative works through interactive, digital touch-screen exhibits, reading spaces and encounters with familiar and unfamiliar works.

Description of My Personal Bookshelf

Thomas Jefferson once said, "I cannot live without books." With the goal of sharing and exploring a wide variety of authors and styles, the American Writer's Museum hopes to inspire children to begin to feel similarly to Thomas Jefferson.

As students explore the virtual exhibit they will be asked to create a personal bookshelf. They will reflect on books they have read in the past, books that they could read over and over again, and books they find throughout the virtual exhibit that they want to read in the future.

Students will create a "Personal Bookshelf" with the various types of books as listed above. They will share and discuss the importance of books on our lives as they share with one another their personal bookshelf.

American Voices is ideal for students in 3rd-4th grade. These activities can be adapted to varying classrooms within this age group.

Time Frame:

We suggest using at least 1 class session or a 1-hour block to explore the virtual exhibit

content as well as going through the educational material.

Standards: Common Core Standards (Grades 3rd-4th ELA)

- RL. 3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
- RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g. a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g. in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

Some of the More Than 300 Authors Highlighted at AWM

Anne Bradstreet
Thomas Jefferson
Washington Irving
Emily Dickinson
Ida B. Wells
Laura Ingalls Wilder
William Carlos Williams
Herman Melville
F. Scott Fitzgerald
Ernest Hemingway
Ralph Ellison
Richard Wright
Flannery O'Connor
James Baldwin
Gwendolyn Brooks