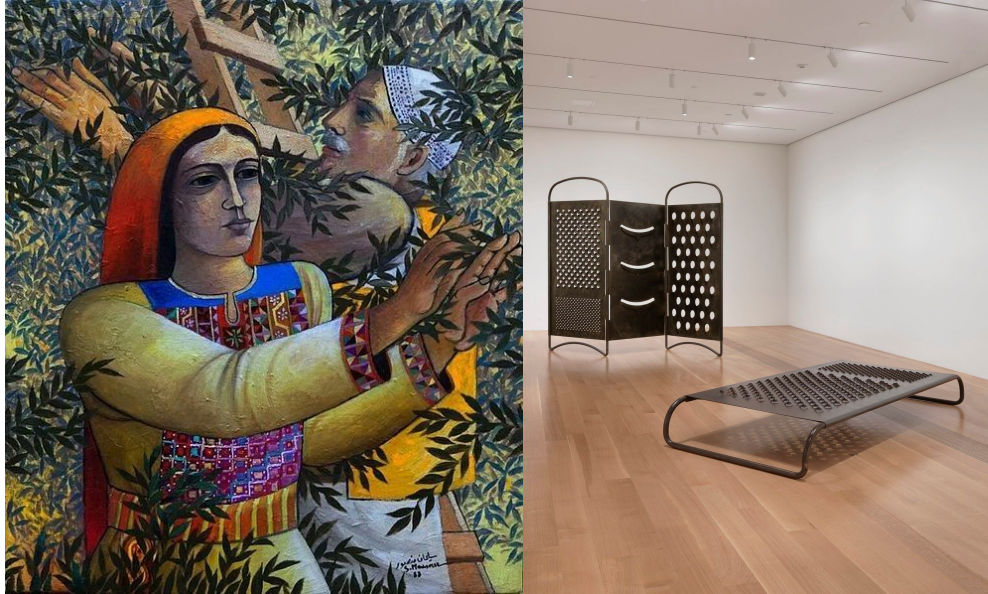


# THE EXPRESSION OF EXILE

Colleen Kalisieski  
University of Michigan  
MENA-SEA Teacher Cohort 2019-2020



GRADE: 9

COURSES: ENGLISH LITERATURE, ART

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

- How do people maintain and express their culture and identity when experiencing exile?
- To what extent can art and poetry be viewed as political? To what extent should it be viewed as personal? How do we know when an author is speaking for themselves and when they're speaking collectively for their people?

## SUPPORTING QUESTIONS

- How is a message conveyed through a work of art?
- How can we cite "evidence" in a work of art to support our analysis?

## ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS

- Art and literature have inherent value independent of their place in history, politics, and an author's personal life or beliefs.
- Genre, political, biographical, and historical analysis can deepen our appreciation for and understanding of a work of art or literature.
- Readers of literature and viewers of art regularly encounter this tension between national identity and personal identity. Part of viewing a work critically means being able to simultaneously consider both of these as we approach a work and examine its meaning.

## OVERVIEW

This lesson uses Palestinian art and poetry to introduce students to the process of reading a visual text in isolation, with background information about the artist, and in response to another text.

In doing so, students are encouraged to explore themes of identity, resistance, exile, and nostalgia within works of art and literature.

This lesson was designed with an ELA or Art classroom in mind, but can be used in a variety of content contexts as needed. This lesson is meant to be adapted and modified to suit the needs of your students and curriculum.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Cite evidence from art and literature to support analysis.
- Compare how similar themes (resistance, exile, identity, nostalgia, etc.) are developed and explored through the work of different artists and authors.
- Work with peers to find and make meaning and present an argument through a cross-textual analysis.

## CONTENT EXPECTATIONS / STANDARDS

### READING

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of

specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6

Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.9

Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work (e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.10

By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9-10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

## WRITING

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.9

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## SPEAKING AND LISTENING

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1

Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.4

Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization,

development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.6

Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

## LANGUAGE

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.5

Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.6

Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

## KEY CONCEPTS

- exile
- resistance
- identity (individualism v. collectivism)
- analysis
- nostalgia

## TEACHER PREPARATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

This lesson is designed to be delivered through either a distance-learning or in-classroom setting. Within the lesson, note the additional teacher preparation / instructional resources needed for each element.

## LESSON HANDOUTS/MATERIALS

Handouts: For in-classroom instruction, copies of Mahmoud Darwish's "To Our Land" (1 copy for every 2-3 students) should be printed ahead of time. Students will also need access to images of artwork / copies of poems for assessment.

## TEXT SET:

### ARTWORK

- Nabil Anani, "Woman in a Field," 2008
- Mona Hatoum, "Terra Infirma," Menil Collection, Houston, TX, 2018

- Monther Jawabreh, “As Once Was Known,” 2012
- Sliman Mansour, “Oliver Harvest”
- Samah Shihadi, “Dough,” 2018

## POETRY

- Mahmoud Darwish’s “To Our Land”
- Mahmoud Darwish, “Who Am I, Without Exile?”
- Naomi Shabib Nye, “Blood,” 1995
- Fadwa Tuqan, [“The Deluge and the Tree”](#)
- Fadwa Tuqan, [“Enough for Me”](#)

## ASSESSMENT / FINAL PRODUCT:

After this lesson, students will complete a cross-textual analysis. Depending upon time constraints / student level / current curricular focus, assessment could be written or presented verbally.

## LESSON SEQUENCE

### 1. OPENING/ ANTICIPATORY SET- “How can identity be linked to place and culture?”

**Step 1:** Pick 3 words that define your identity.

A. In-classroom:

Break students into small groups. Give students 5 minutes to pick 3 words that they feel define who they are and write those words down on a piece of paper, then give students another 5 minutes to present their 3 words to their small group and explain why they chose these specific words to represent who they are.

B. Distance Learning:

\*Additional teacher preparation: Prepare a padlet named “Identity” with a column labeled for each small group. Label these columns by group name/ members and “Step 1.”

Break students into small groups corresponding to the columns you’ve created. Instruct students to choose and post to the padlet

1. 3 words that they feel define who they are and
2. an explanation of why they chose these specific words to represent their identities

**Step 2:** Identify the role of place and culture on your identity.

A. In-classroom:

Students should still be in their small groups, with all of their defining words spaced so each group member can see them. As a group, students should go back through each of the words and circle any that could be linked to a specific place, religion, or culture.

B. Distance Learning:

\*Additional teacher preparation: Add to your existing padlet with additional columns for each small group. You can label these columns by group name and "Step 2."

Remaining in these small groups, instruct students to read through one another's responses to the "Step 1." Then, in the new column, they should identify and list any words that could be linked to a specific place, religion, or culture.

\*POSSIBLE EXTENSION: Be prepared for student questions/discussion about exactly what constitutes "culture" or even identity. Depending on the class / student maturity level, this can be a rich opportunity for discussion about stereotypes and cultural practices and how these can impact individual behavior, but don't always do so, or sometimes do, but not in the way we might expect them to.

**Step 3:** Whole class share-out.

A. In-classroom:

Have one representative from each group present the words the group found that could represent how identity can be impacted by place, culture, or religion. This representative should also share any pertinent discussions the group participated in as they selected their words, such as struggles to understand a concept or agree with one another.

B. Distance learning:

Each student should write (on padlet or a separate platform for a more formal assessment) a short paragraph explaining how some of their group member's words reflect how identity can be impacted by place, culture, or religion.

**Step 4:** Whole Class Debrief

A. In-classroom:

Have students return to their original seats and complete a quick write on the question: "How can identity be impacted by place, culture, or religion?"

After students have completed their quick writes, ask for volunteers to share. Discuss/present concepts of culture, religion, identity, collectivism, and individualism as needed.

B. Distance Learning

After students have completed their short paragraphs, use live or recorded lesson time to discuss / present concepts of culture, religion, identity, collectivism, and individualism as needed.

2. GUIDED INQUIRY AND INDEPENDENT PRACTICE- Whole Class Mini-lesson on reading a visual text / cross-textual analysis.

**Step 1:** Reading a Visual Text

A. In-classroom:

Using a smartboard or projector, display Sliman Mansour's *Olive Harvest* for the class to view.

After giving the students a few minutes to simply view the image, ask for volunteers to point out what they notice about the image visually. Encourage students to "cite the text" by referencing specific details in the painting. Encourage students to stand and point to specific details if needed. If possible, have a volunteer student record all observations on a whiteboard or easy-to-read space.

After students have pointed out the visual components of the text, ask them to speculate on the painting's purpose. Remind them that these are just speculations at this point, so they don't need to worry about being wrong. Some questions to consider:

- Who do you think created this painting?
- Why do you think it was made? What is its purpose?
- Who might like this message? Why?
- What is omitted from the message that might be important? (Other ideas, information, points of view, etc.)

As students respond to these questions, start giving them more information about the artist, the painting, and its themes. Some items to cover:

- Sliman Mansour = Palestinian artist
- painting depicts Palestinian people working the land
- traditional Palestinian clothing- embroidery and color show connection to the land (nature's colors moved from nature to their clothing, linking their identity with the land)
- *Sumud* – steadfastness, strong determination to stay in the country and on the land

- No visual reference to the *Nakba* (Palestinian exodus of 1948) or existence of the Israeli state, or the Intifada (1987 uprising)

Painting's themes and allusions:

- resilience
- timelessness
- nostalgia
- Adam and Eve (man and woman with tree)

B. Distance learning:

\*Additional teacher preparation:

1. Prepare a padlet displaying Sliman Mansour's *Olive Harvest* for the class to view.
2. For asynchronous classes: Record a short video covering background information about Olive Harvest. (If the class meets synchronously, this does not need to be recorded ahead of time, but can be presented at a class meeting)

In columns, encourage students to respond to the painting and to "cite the text" by referencing specific details in the painting.

After students have pointed out the visual components of the text, ask them to speculate on the painting's purpose. Some questions to consider:

- Who do you think created this painting?
- Why was it made? What is its purpose?
- Who might like this message? Why?
- What is omitted from the message that might be important? (Other ideas, information, points of view, etc.)

Record a short video presenting more information about the painting, the artist, and its themes. (Can also be done synchronously without recording)

Some items to cover:

- Palestinian artist
- depicts Palestinian people working the land
- traditional Palestinian clothing- embroidery and color show connection to the land
- *Sumud* – steadfastness, strong determination to stay in the country and on the land
- Ladder- could be a reference to process/ steps to be taken
- No visual reference to the *Nakba* (Palestinian exodus of 1948) or existence of the Israeli state, or the Intifada (1987 uprising)

Painting's themes and allusions:

- resilience
- timelessness
- nostalgia



- Adam and Eve (man and woman with tree)

## **Step 2:** Completing a Cross-textual analysis

### A. In-classroom

\*Note Additional Teacher Preparation: Copies of Mahmoud Darwish's "To Our Land" should be printed ahead of time. 1 copy is needed for every 2/3 students.

Keeping the image of *Olive Harvest* on the smartboard/ projector, add next to it the poem "To Our Land" by Mahmoud Darwish.

Break students into small groups (2-3 students), giving each small group a copy of Mahmoud Darwish's poem "To Our Land." Instruct students to read the poem and begin a basic poetic analysis, looking for elements such as figurative language, poetic devices, author's purpose, and theme. Feel free to have students annotate, if appropriate.

Have a representative from each small group share-out some of their observations, then ask them to revisit both texts and, in their small groups, discuss the following:

- What is the role of the land in each of these texts?
- How do each of these texts represent the author/artist's relationship to the land?
- How do each of these texts represent the Palestinian people's relationship to the land?
- Based upon these works, how can people maintain culture and identity when experiencing exile?

### B. Distance Learning

\*Note Additional Teacher Preparation: Either add on to your existing padlet, or create a new padlet with Mahmoud Darwish's poem "To Our Land", along with 4 columns for the questions.

Break students into small groups (2-3 students). Instruct students to read the poem and begin a basic poetic analysis, looking for elements such as figurative language, poetic devices, author's purpose, and theme. Feel free to have students annotate, if appropriate.

Have students share-out some of their observations, then ask them to revisit both texts and, in their small groups, discuss the following:

- What is the role of the land in each of these texts?
- How do each of these texts represent the author/artist's relationship to the land?

- How do each of these texts represent the Palestinian people's relationship to the land?
- Based upon these works, how can people maintain culture and identity when experiencing exile?

### 3. SHARING AND REFLECTION

#### **Step 1:** Share-out

##### A. In-classroom

After small groups are given time to discuss, a representative from each group should present their findings to the whole class.

##### B. Distance Learning

For asynchronous learning: After small groups have posted their findings to the padlet, each student should reply to another group's post with a *\*substantial question\** in order to encourage them to read one another's work.

For synchronous learning: After small groups have posted their findings to the padlet, a representative from each group should present their findings to the whole class.

#### **Step 2:** Reflection

##### A. In-classroom

Give students time to complete a written reflection for the following questions. After they've completed a written reflection, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts with the class.

- To what extent can art and poetry be viewed as political?
- To what extent should it be viewed as personal?
- How do we know when an author or artist is speaking for themselves and when they're speaking collectively for their people? Can we?

##### B. Distance Learning

Asynchronous learning: Assign students to complete and submit a written reflection for the following questions. After reading through the reflections, the teacher should address some of the common responses and themes in a video lesson.

Synchronous learning: Assign students to complete and submit a written reflection for the following questions. After they've completed a written reflection, ask for volunteers to share their thoughts with the class during class meeting time.

- To what extent can art and poetry be viewed as political?
- To what extent should it be viewed as personal?

- How do we know when an author or artist is speaking for themselves and when they're speaking collectively for their people? Can we?

#### 4. ASSESSMENT

Depending upon time constraints / student level / current curricular focus, assessment could be written or presented verbally.

Working in small groups or independently, students should complete a cross-textual analysis, choosing any of the following images/ poems to work with. (Preview all poems and images to make sure they're appropriate for your students. Feel free to substitute if needed.) Their focus should be on at least one of the questions:

- How does works suggest people maintain and express their culture and identity when experiencing exile?
- To what extent can these works be viewed as political? To what extent should they be viewed as personal? How do we know when an author is speaking for themselves and when they're speaking collectively for their people? Can we?

#### ARTWORK

- Nabil Anani, "Woman in a Field," 2008
- Mona Hatoum, "Terra Infirma," Installation View, Menil Collection, Houston, TX, 2018
- Monther Jawabreh, "As Once Was Known," 2012
- Samah Shihadi, "Dough," 2018

#### POETRY

- Mahmoud Darwish, "Who Am I, Without Exile?"
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- Fadwa Tuqan, ["Enough for Me"](#)

#### EXTENSION OPTIONS AND SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES

Another assessment option: Students can complete a reflective writing piece or create a work of art that expresses how their own homeland, culture, or religion has impacted their identity. Suggested focus: themes of nostalgia, resilience, exile (as appropriate).

Students can explore more about Mahmoud Darwish:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/mahmoud-darwish>

Students can explore more up-to-date words by Monther Jawabreh on his [facebook page](#) or read an interview with him [here](#).

More art from the MENA region can be found [here](#) at Art Scoops, whose website also has some interesting [interviews and features](#), or [here](#) at the Palestinian Poster project.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) can be helpful for the first part of the mini-lesson. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#).



## Blood

BY NAOMI SHIHAB NYE

“A true Arab knows how to catch a fly in his hands,”  
my father would say. And he’d prove it,  
cupping the buzzer instantly  
while the host with the swatter stared.

In the spring our palms peeled like snakes.  
True Arabs believed watermelon could heal fifty ways.  
I changed these to fit the occasion.

Years before, a girl knocked,  
wanted to see the Arab.  
I said we didn’t have one.  
After that, my father told me who he was,  
“Shihab” — “shooting star” —  
a good name, borrowed from the sky.  
Once I said, “When we die, we give it back?”  
He said that’s what a true Arab would say.

Today the headlines clot in my blood.  
A little Palestinian dangles a truck on the front page.  
Homeless fig, this tragedy with a terrible root  
is too big for us. What flag can we wave?  
I wave the flag of stone and seed,  
table mat stitched in blue.

I call my father, we talk around the news.  
It is too much for him,  
neither of his two languages can reach it.  
I drive into the country to find sheep, cows,  
to plead with the air:  
Who calls anyone *civilized*?  
Where can the crying heart graze?  
What does a true Arab do now?

Naomi Shihab Nye, "Blood" from *Words Under the Words: Selected Poems* (Portland, Oregon: Far Corner Books, 1995). Copyright © 1995 by Naomi Shihab Nye. Reprinted with the permission of the author.

Source: *Words Under the Words: Selected Poems* (Far Corner Books, 1995)

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## Who Am I, Without Exile?

BY MAHMOUD DARWISH

TRANSLATED BY FADY JOUDAH

A stranger on the riverbank, like the river ... water  
binds me to your name. Nothing brings me back from my faraway  
to my palm tree: not peace and not war. Nothing  
makes me enter the gospels. Not  
a thing ... nothing sparkles from the shore of ebb  
and flow between the Euphrates and the Nile. Nothing  
makes me descend from the pharaoh's boats. Nothing  
carries me or makes me carry an idea: not longing  
and not promise. What will I do? What  
will I do without exile, and a long night  
that stares at the water?

Water  
binds me  
to your name ...  
Nothing takes me from the butterflies of my dreams  
to my reality: not dust and not fire. What  
will I do without roses from Samarkand? What  
will I do in a theater that burnishes the singers with its lunar  
stones? Our weight has become light like our houses  
in the faraway winds. We have become two friends of the strange  
creatures in the clouds ... and we are now loosened  
from the gravity of identity's land. What will we do ... what  
will we do without exile, and a long night  
that stares at the water?

Water  
binds me  
to your name ...  
There's nothing left of me but you, and nothing left of you  
but me, the stranger massaging his stranger's thigh: O  
stranger! what will we do with what is left to us

of calm ... and of a snooze between two myths?  
And nothing carries us: not the road and not the house.  
Was this road always like this, from the start,  
or did our dreams find a mare on the hill  
among the Mongol horses and exchange us for it?  
And what will we do?  
What  
will we do  
without  
exile?

Mahmoud Darwish, "Who Am I, Without Exile?" from *The Butterfly's Burden*. Copyright © 2008 by Mahmoud Darwish, English translation by Fady Joudah. Reprinted by permission of Copper Canyon Press.  
[www.coppercanyonpress.org](http://www.coppercanyonpress.org)

Source: *The Butterfly's Burden* (Copper Canyon Press, 2007)

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