

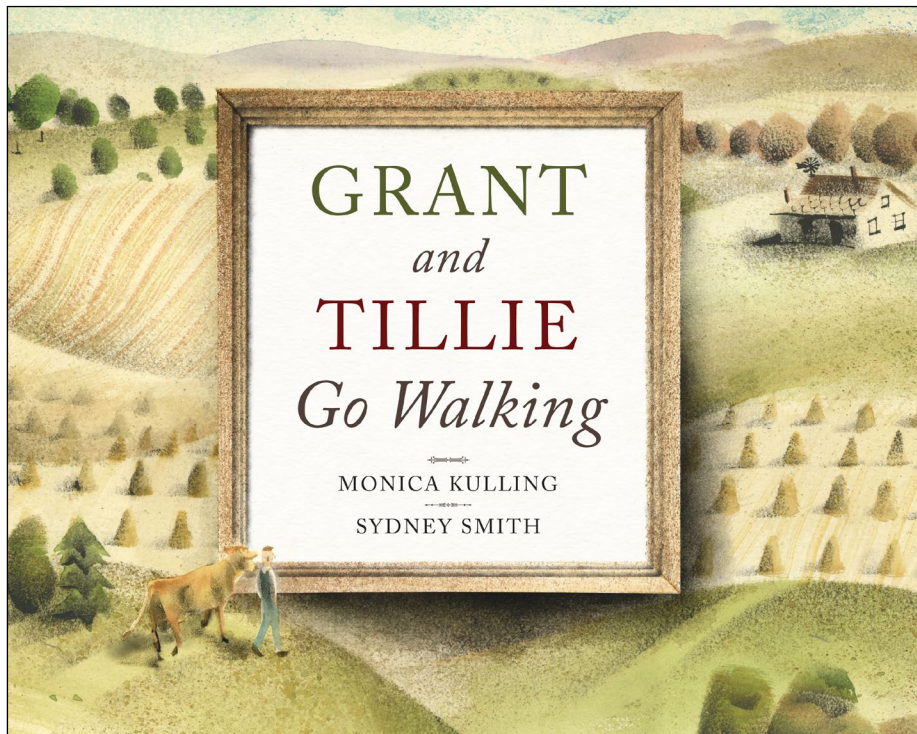


# GROUNDWOOD STUDY GUIDES

## Grant and Tillie Go Walking

*Written by* Monica Kulling

*Illustrated by* Sydney Smith



Inspired by the life of artist Grant Wood, this is the sensitively imagined story of the great American painter and a cow named Tillie.

### **CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS**

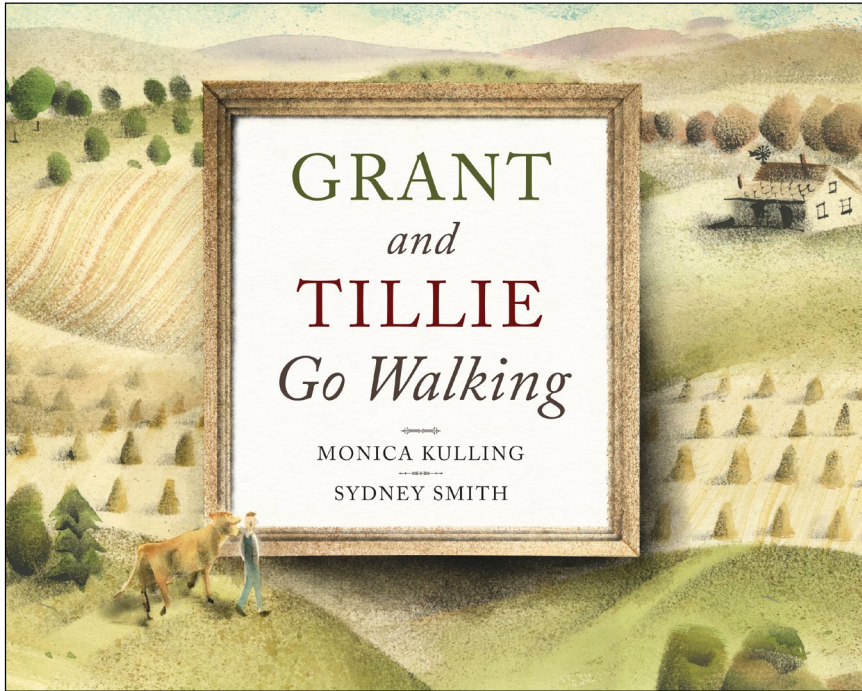
Ages 4 to 7 / Grades P to 2

JUVENILE FICTION / Biographical / United States

Full-color illustrations / 10.25 x 8.125 / 32 pages

Hardcover with jacket / \$18.95 / 978-1-55498-446-6 / ebook 978-1-55498-448-0

[groundwoodbooks.com](http://groundwoodbooks.com)



## BOOK DESCRIPTION

Grant Wood believed that to be a real artist, he had to live in Paris. But once he got there, he realized that to be a great painter he needed to return to the people and places—and even animals—that he knew and loved the best.

Inspired by the life of artist Grant Wood, this is the sensitively imagined story of the great American painter and a cow named Tillie. Skillfully mixing fact with fiction, Monica Kulling’s text explores the making of an artist, while Sydney Smith’s illustrations echo Grant Wood’s own techniques. The result is a gently wise picture book that will encourage young readers and artists to trust the love that is sometimes only found close to home.

Includes an author’s note that provides biographical information about Grant Wood and historical context for his European and American artistic influences.

► Note: The activities in this guide align with English Language Arts standards for grades 2 and 3 but standards for other grades may also apply.

## PRE-READING QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

In this story, the main character becomes homesick. Ask students if they have ever been homesick. How did it feel? What did they miss? How did students deal with it?

Explain to students that this book is about American painter Grant Wood and provide students with a brief biographical overview of his life and his art.

Look at images of Grant Wood paintings, especially “American Gothic,” which appears in this book. What are the themes the class sees in his work? How do these paintings make students feel?

### VOCABULARY

While reading the book, instruct students to raise their hands when they hear a word they do not know. Working as a class, derive the meaning from context. Then look up the word in the dictionary. How does the formal definition differ from the one the class created via context clues? Here are some of the words they will encounter in the story that they might not know:

frothy	barrows
furrowed	beret
muster	palette knives
encourage	pitchfork



## POST-READING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Figurative language is used frequently in *Grant and Tillie Go Walking*. Discuss the difference between literal and non-literal language. After you have read the book once, reread it as a class, instructing students to be on the lookout for figures of speech. Have students raise their hands when they hear one and discuss it as a class. What is the author trying to convey? Have students suggest a literal description to replace the figure of speech. Does it change the meaning and impact of the passage?

Although Tillie the cow can't talk, she expresses her feelings in different ways. As a class, identify the clues in the story that tell the reader how much Tillie missed Grant and how she feels when he returns. Remind students that some of these clues are in the words of the story and some are in the illustrations.

Break the class into small groups for further study of the book. Citing specific clues from the text and illustrations, have students describe Grant Wood's character. What does he look like? What is he like as a person? What is he like as a painter? Do people like his paintings in Paris? How do people in Iowa and the USA respond to his work? Come together as a class and create a character map of Grant Wood based on students' insights.

Grant Wood goes to Paris to learn to paint like the French artists do. As a class, study the parts of the book where he is painting in Paris. How does his approach to painting change? How does it stay the same? How do people in Paris respond to his work?

Discuss how Grant feels about living on a farm in Iowa at the beginning of the book. How do his feelings change by the end? What brought his true feelings to the surface?

Grant Wood once said, "I realized that all the really good ideas I'd ever had came to me while I was milking a cow. So I went back to Iowa." Come together as a class and discuss this quote. What do students think he meant? Are there any special places or activities that students find inspire their best ideas?

In the Author’s Note, Monica Kulling says, “*American Gothic* was exhibited in 1930, winning a prize and bringing Grant Wood instant fame. People disagreed about what the painting meant. Some said Grant was praising country folks. Others thought that Grant was showing how narrow-minded country people could be.” Invite the art instructor at your school or another resource from the community to talk to the class about Grant Wood’s painting *American Gothic*, explaining its meaning, its impact and this difference of opinion about it. Then, have students write an opinion piece. What do they think Grant Wood was trying to say in his painting?

Paris in the 1920s was a very important place for the art world and for artists. When Grant Wood lived there, he found it was very different from his home. Using the Internet, locate images of Paris as well as of Cedar Rapids and Iowa dairy farms from those days to show your students. Come together as a class and compare the pictures. How are these places different? Based on the photographs, what do students think Grant Wood might have missed about his home when he went to Paris? What might he have missed about Paris when he returned home?

Every character in a story has their own point of view. Discuss this with students. How might the story be different if told from the point of view of Marvin, Grant’s friend? His mother and sister? After the discussion, have students retell the story, writing from the point of view of Tillie the cow. When they are finished, have students revise and edit their work based on peer and teacher feedback.

Have each student select their favorite illustration from the book. Have them describe the picture, what action it depicts and the characters in it. How do the words and picture on this page work together to convey a feeling and tell the story? What does the student like about this picture? Why is it a favorite? Gather as a class and have each student read their piece aloud. Can the rest of the class figure out which illustration the student wrote about?

*Grant and Tillie Go Walking* combines real characters and events with ones that were made up. Working with adult help if necessary, have students do a short research project on Grant Wood, his life and his art. What parts of *Grant and Tillie Go Walking* are true? What parts are made up? Why do students think the author made up the things she did?

## INTERNET RESOURCES

Use the following keywords to find images of Paris and the Parisian art world of the 1920s. Select appropriate examples from the results to illustrate what Paris was like back then.

- Paris 1920s artists
- Paris 1920s

Compare and contrast the images and people of Paris with 1920s Iowa and lowan farm life, as well as the works of art that Grant Wood painted using the following keywords.

- Cedar Rapids Iowa 1920s
- Iowa Farms 1920s
- Grant Wood American Artist



Visit the following sites for biographical information on Grant Wood as well as images of his artwork:

Wikipedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grant\\_Wood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grant_Wood)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American\\_Gothic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Gothic)

Grant Wood Art Gallery

<https://www.grantwoodgallery.org>

American Gothic House

<https://americangothichouse.org/home?rq=grant%20wood>

University of Virginia American Studies Program

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma98/haven/wood/intro.html>

Sullivan Goss, An American Art Gallery

<https://www.sullivangoss.com/artists/grant-wood-1891-1942>

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art

<https://www.crma.org/grant-wood>

Encyclopedia Britannica

<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Grant-Wood>

Art Institute of Chicago (home of “American Gothic”)

<http://www.artic.edu/aic/collections/artwork/6565>



## STANDARDS USED IN THIS GUIDE

### GRADE 2

#### READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE GRADE 2

##### *Key Ideas and Details*

Ask and answer such questions as who, what, where, when, why and how to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.

Recount stories, including fables and folktales from diverse cultures, and determine their central message, lesson or moral.

Describe how characters in a story respond to major events and challenges.

##### *Craft and Structure*

Describe how words and phrases (e.g., regular beats, alliteration, rhymes, repeated lines) supply rhythm and meaning in a story, poem or song.

Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

##### *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting or plot.

#### WRITING STANDARDS GRADE 2

##### *Text Types and Purposes*

Write opinion pieces in which they introduce the topic or book they are writing about, state an opinion, supply reasons that support the opinion, use linking words (e.g., because, and, also) to connect opinion and reasons and provide a concluding statement or section.



Write informative/explanatory texts in which they introduce a topic, use facts and definitions to develop points and provide a concluding statement or section.

Write narratives in which they recount a well elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order and provide a sense of closure.

### *Production and Distribution of Writing*

With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.

### *Research to Build and Present Knowledge*

Participate in shared research and writing projects (e.g., read a number of books on a single topic to produce a report; record science observations).

Recall information from experiences or gather information from provided sources to answer a question.

## **SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS GRADE 2**

### *Comprehension and Collaboration*

Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade 2 topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- Build on others' talk in conversations by linking their comments to the remarks of others.
- Ask for clarification and further explanation as needed about the topics and texts under discussion.

Recount or describe key ideas or details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to clarify comprehension, gather additional information or deepen understanding of a topic or issue.

## LANGUAGE STANDARDS GRADE 2

### *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use*

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 2 reading and content, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies.

- Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix is added to a known word (e.g., happy/unhappy, tell/retell).
- Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., addition, additional).
- Use knowledge of the meaning of individual words to predict the meaning of compound words (e.g., birdhouse, lighthouse, housefly; bookshelf, notebook, bookmark).
- Use glossaries and beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases.

Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe foods that are spicy or juicy).
- Distinguish shades of meaning among closely related verbs (e.g., toss, throw, hurl) and closely related adjectives (e.g., thin, slender, skinny, scrawny).

## GRADE 3

### READING STANDARDS FOR LITERATURE GRADE 3

#### *Key Ideas and Details*

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

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.

Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.

#### *Craft and Structure*

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.

Refer to parts of stories, dramas and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.

Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

#### *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).

## WRITING STANDARDS GRADE 3

### *Text Types and Purposes*

Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons.

- Introduce the topic or text they are writing about, state an opinion and create an organizational structure that lists reasons.
- Provide reasons that support the opinion.
- Use linking words and phrases (e.g., because, therefore, since, for example) to connect opinion and reasons.
- Provide a concluding statement or section.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions and details.
- Use linking words and phrases (e.g., also, another, and, more, but) to connect ideas within categories of information.
- Provide a concluding statement or section.

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details and clear event sequences.

- Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.
- Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.
- Provide a sense of closure.

### *Production and Distribution of Writing*

With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising and editing.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.

Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.

### *Range of Writing*

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 discipline-specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

## **SPEAKING AND LISTENING STANDARDS GRADE 3**

### *Comprehension and Collaboration*

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions (e.g., gaining the floor in respectful ways, listening to others with care, speaking one at a time about the topics and texts under discussion).
- Ask questions to check understanding of information presented, stay on topic and link their comments to the remarks of others.
- Explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively and orally.

Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

## LANGUAGE STANDARDS GRADE 3

### *Vocabulary Acquisition and Use*

Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known affix is added to a known word (e.g., agreeable/disagreeable, comfortable/uncomfortable, care/careless, heat/preheat).
- Use a known root word as a clue to the meaning of an unknown word with the same root (e.g., company, companion).
- Use glossaries or beginning dictionaries, both print and digital, to determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

Demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings.

- Distinguish the literal and nonliteral meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps).
- Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., describe people who are friendly or helpful).
- Distinguish shades of meaning among related words that describe states of mind or degrees of certainty (e.g., knew, believed, suspected, heard, wondered).

## AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR BIOGRAPHIES

**Monica Kulling** is the author of over fifty books for children, including the popular Great Idea series. Her work has been nominated for many awards, including numerous Silver Birch Express and Golden Oak awards. Monica Kulling lives in Toronto.

**Sydney Smith** has illustrated numerous children's books, including the highly acclaimed wordless picture book *Sidewalk Flowers*, conceived by Jon Arno Lawson, which won a Governor General's Award and was named a New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Book. He is also the illustrator of *Town Is by the Sea* by Joanne Schwartz, for which he was awarded the Kate Greenaway Medal, and which won the TD Canadian Children's Literature Prize. *Small in the City*, which Sydney both wrote and illustrated, won a Governor General's Award among many other honors. He lives in Halifax, Nova Scotia.