

“The Whistle”

Creative Inspirations Educational Resource



Eudora Welty’s “The Whistle” is a glimpse into life in rural Mississippi during the Depression of the 1930s. The story may be found in Welty’s *Collected Stories and A Curtain of Green*, as well as the Library of America volume of *Welty: Stories, Essays, and Memoir*. “The Whistle,” an excellent introduction to Welty for youth and a favorite of adults, is the basis of this educational resource package exploring the concept of creative imagination.

Singer-songwriter Claire Holley is a Jackson native and a Eudora Welty fan. During the Welty Centennial in April 2009, she performed in concert with fellow artists Mary Chapin Carpenter, Caroline Herring, and Kate Campbell in a Tribute Concert. She was inspired by “The Whistle” to write a song entitled “Pleasant Dreams.” Through the generosity of the artist, the lyrics and an audio version of the song are available as part of the unit.

The resource packet for **Creative Inspirations** can be found at www.eudorawelty.org under the Resources tab. It includes:

- A guide for teachers and others discussing “The Whistle,” “Pleasant Dreams,” and the creative process
- An excerpt from Welty scholar Suzanne Marrs’s *One Writer’s Imagination: The Fiction of Eudora Welty* about the story
- Singer/songwriter Claire Holley’s song “Pleasant Dreams,” inspired by “The Whistle”
- A brief statement from Holley about the creation of the song, and the song lyrics
- A background essay about tenant farming in Mississippi
- Two photographs taken by Eudora Welty depicting rural life in Mississippi in the 1930s: *A House with Bottle Trees* and *Tomato Packers’ Recess*

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the Welty Foundation wish to thank Claire Holley for the use of her materials. More about the artist can be found at: www.claireholley.com