

AMON
CARTER
MUSEUM OF
AMERICAN
ART

Parson Weems' Fable

Art Discovery Guide

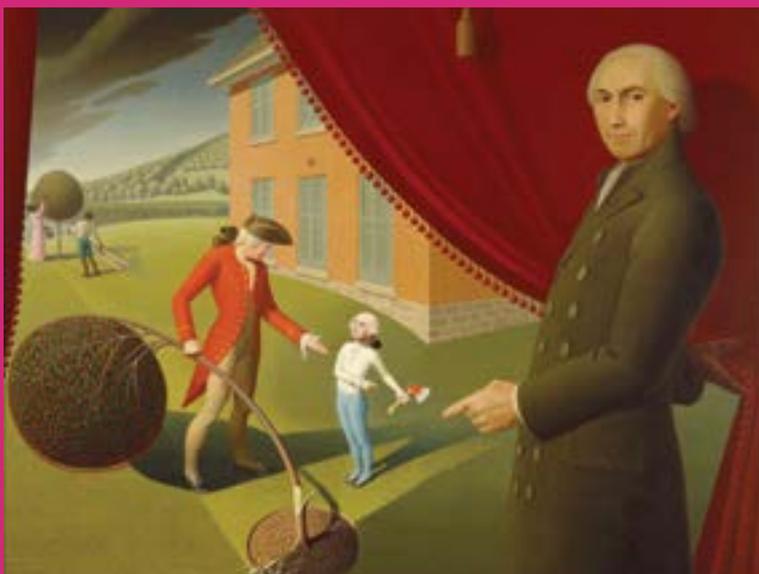
family





There are many things to see at the Carter, but for now, let's focus on one artwork.

Use this guide to get to know the painting *Parson Weems' Fable* by Grant Wood, hanging in the galleries on the first floor.



Grant Wood
(1891-1942)
Parson Weems' Fable
1939
Oil on canvas



george washington



Recognize George Washington's face?

It's the same face you see on the dollar bill, which was originally painted by another artist named Gilbert Stuart.



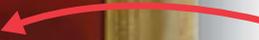
from see to shining see

Let's look a little closer at this painting.
Use these questions to explore further



Grant Wood loved the theater. He helped with set construction and directed plays at his local theater in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Can you spot things that make this painting feel like you're watching a play?

a tall tale



This guy is Parson Weems, a writer in the late 1700s and early 1800s (so, a pretty long time ago!). He wrote George Washington's biography. In it, he tells the tale of the prez as a kid, when he tried to cut down his father's cherry tree using a hatchet. (Who gives a kid a hatchet?) Afterward, George Washington uttered the famous quote, "I cannot tell a lie" when confessing to his dad.

Sounds like a great story about honesty.

But as it turns out, it probably didn't happen! So, why make it up? Weems wanted to show that Washington was the best, even as a little boy. (Irony, am I right?)

Still—do you want to know why Wood painted this scene? He painted this during a tough time in the U.S. (right at the end of the Great Depression and right before World War II), hoping to spark viewers' love of the country. The artist celebrated the importance of the first president and made sure that this well-known story wasn't lost and gone forever.



How is the scene taking place in the background different from the action in the foreground?

More on the back!





Grant Wood, the artist, used a lot of repetition in this painting. Use a pencil to list or draw some of the details that you see repeated over and over again.



Notice the stars on the frame? That's a pretty patriotic symbol. What other symbols are often used to describe America? Use a pencil to list them here:

DID THIS MAKE *PARSON WEEMS'*
FABLE ONE OF YOUR FAVORITES?
TAKE A PIC AND SHARE IT USING
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