ARTIST: Jacob Lawrence

BIRTHPLACE: Atlantic City, New Jersey

MEDIUM: Paint

Lawrence is considered a leading African-American artist. He is famous for the distinctive flat surfaces of his narrative paintings which, when put together, tell a story. The series we will look at is entitled, "The Migration of the Negro."

ARTIST: Ellis Wilson

BIRTHPLACE: Mayfield, Kentucky

MEDIUM: Paint

Wilson was one of the earliest African-American painters to portray the everyday lives of African-Americans in rural settings. In his paintings, Wilson made special use of color and form.

color: 1. (noun) A property of an object that reflects light of a certain wavelength. The eye perceives such light as being red, yellow, blue, etc. 2. (noun) The appearance of a person's skin. 3. (noun) A substance, such as a dye or pain, that gives something color. 4. (noun) The use of color in painting.

form: 1. (noun) The shape or structure of something. 2. (noun) The design, structure, or pattern of a work of art.

Directions: Go to the interactive Jacob Lawrence: Exploring Stories Web Site of the Whitney Museum. The window will open to the panel 1, The Migration of the Negro. Read aloud the information located in the box at right entitled, "LOOK." As you move the mouse over the pictures, questions for discussion will appear in the "LOOK" box. Use them to discuss each panel. Clicking on the boxes on the left-hand side can retrieve panels. Continue the same procedure for panel 3, 53, and 58 and for Brownstones. Lawrence's migration series are referred to as panel numbers with the exception of the one entitled Brownstones (that painting would be the second, seventh, eighth and eleventh box on the left). Also use the section entitled "INFO" located in the lower/middle portion of the screen. In the box below, make a list of what you think makes Lawrence’s scenes urban.
Next display Ellis Wilson's rural paintings. (Click on "Gallery" and view several of the paintings listed on the right side.) In particular, view Funeral Procession, To Market, and Two Mothers. To enlarge, double-click on each one. In the space below, make a list of the characteristics you think make his paintings rural.

Which painting did you like best? ____________________________________________

Explain why you liked it best in a thoughtful paragraph.