

Language through Art: An ESL Enrichment Curriculum (Beginning) Information for Teaching***Burroughs Family, Hale County, Alabama***

Walker Evans (American, 1903–75)
Negative, 1936; printed later
Gelatin silver print
7 9/16 x 9 1/2 in.
84.XM.129.12

**Background Information**

In this photograph, the Burroughs family sits and stands against the side of their house, dressed in their best clothing, posing for a family portrait. George Burroughs, standing at the center, does not smile; rather, he looks proud and strong, his arms extended across the shoulders of his wife and eldest daughter on either side of him. The photograph shows the Burroughses as they wished to be seen.

About the Artist

Walker Evans (American, 1903–75)

Walker Evans began to photograph in the late 1920s, during a European trip. Upon his return to New York, he published his first images in 1930. During the Great Depression, Evans began to photograph for the Resettlement Administration, later known as the Farm Security Administration (FSA), documenting the lives of workers and architecture in the southeastern United States. In 1936, he traveled with the writer James Agee to illustrate an article on tenant farm families for *Fortune* magazine; the book *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941) came out of this collaboration.

Let Us Now Praise Famous Men focused on three tenant cotton-farming families living in Hale County, Alabama, during the Depression. Agee invented the last name “Gudger” for the Burroughs family in the book. The Burroughses hosted Agee and Evans for nearly a month, and this photograph was made at George Burroughs’s request.