

- As the students come to the end of their books, we revisit the artwork of Jacob Lawrence. Using the Harriet Tubman books, as well as a biography of Lawrence entitled Story Painter, we once again explore the characteristics that make Jacob Lawrence's work unique and recognizable. Now, just as Lawrence had illustrated the life of Tubman, the students are instructed to choose a significant section of the book they have just finished, and create an artwork, using Lawrence's style that would capture the essence of the book. When they have completed the artwork, they write a caption that succinctly summarizes the essence of the piece.

- To culminate our unit on African-Americans, I introduce the poetry of Langston Hughes and the choreography of Alvin Ailey. To teach this lesson, I used the ArtSource unit on Alvin Ailey's "Revelations" and pair it with Langston Hughes's poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." The final project in this lesson will be the creation of a dance using the imagery and words from the Hughes poem.

- As Black History month comes to an end, so does our study of famous African Americans. Through the unit, students come to understand the hardships and struggles that were part of the lives of many black Americans, from early American history until recent times. We also review the many contributions made to America and the world by blacks, including scientists, artists, authors, politicians, etc. Finally, in celebration of Black history month, the students learn a Stevie Wonder song as a way of bringing this unit to the present.

LESSON ONE: THE ART OF JACOB LAWRENCE

LESSON SUMMARY

Enduring understandings related to the work of Jacob Lawrence

- Students will be exposed to the artistic style of Jacob Lawrence and note how his work depicts the stories of African American experience

➤ **OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES:**

- Students will recognize at least four characteristics of Jacob Lawrence's work. (Artistic Perception 1.3, 1.5)
- Students will paint a picture in the style of Jacob Lawrence depicting a biographical moment from the lives of either Martin Luther King, Jr. or Harriet Tubman. (Historical & Cultural Context 3.1; Connections, Relationships, Applications 5.3)

➤ **MATERIALS:**

- Harriet and the Promised Land, by Jacob Lawrence
- John Brown, One Man Against Slavery by Gwen Everett, paintings by Jacob Lawrence
- Biographical Sketch of Jacob Lawrence
- White construction paper, Large (12x18)
- Tempera Paint, or Opaque Watercolors
- Paint Brushes, various sizes
- Newspaper (to cover desks)
- Water containers (to clean brushes)

➤ **PROCEDURE:**

- Introduce Jacob Lawrence by reading a short biography of his life.
- Share some examples of Lawrence's artwork using the book Story Painter.
- Reread Harriet and the Promised Land, discussing Lawrence's use of color, line, shape, and shadow.
- Show the students the illustrations from the children's book John Brown, One Man Against Slavery. Discuss how Lawrence is a storyteller through his art. Look at the images and discuss his use of color, etc. to convey his meaning.
- Have the children think about the lives of MLK, Jr. and Harriet Tubman. They should choose a significant event from either life and paint a picture in the style of Jacob Lawrence.
- Once the painting is finished, the students should create a title card

➤ **ASSESSMENT:**

- Pictures will reflect the qualities of Lawrence's style. (See attached rubric)
- Pictures will adequately reflect the life of either King or Tubman. (See attached rubric)

➤ **STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

- Visual Arts 1.3: Identify pairs of complementary colors (e.g., yellow/violet; red/green; orange/blue) and discuss how artists use them to communicate an idea or mood.
- Visual Arts 1.5: Describe and analyze the elements of art (e.g., color, shape/form, line, texture, space, value), emphasizing form, as they are used in works of art and found in the environment.
- Visual Arts 3.1 Describe how art plays a role in reflecting life (e.g., in photography, quilts, architecture).
- Visual Arts 5.3 Construct diagrams, maps, graphs, timelines, and illustrations to communicate ideas or tell a story about a historical event.

LESSON TWO: THE MUSIC OF DUKE ELLINGTON (This lesson has been adapted from a lesson written by Heidi Lang and posted on the pbskids.org website.

(http://pbskids.org/jazz/lesson.learning_through_duke.html)

LESSON SUMMARY

Enduring understandings related to the musical form known as jazz as introduced through the work of Duke Ellington

- Students will be exposed to jazz through an introduction to the music of Duke Ellington.
- NOTE: This is a two-day lesson.

➤ **OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES:**

- Students will describe Duke Ellington's life and understand the contributions he made to jazz music. (Music 4.1)
- Students will learn the vocabulary associated with jazz and use it to create a poem. (Music 5.1; Music 1.6)
- Students will be able to verbalize how jazz music makes them feel and reflect those emotions in a piece of art. (Music 5.2)
- Students will illustrate the feelings associated with Ellington's music (Visual Arts 1.3; Visual Arts 3.1)

➤ **MATERIALS:**

- Duke Ellington by Andrea David Pinkney
- CD of recordings by Duke Ellington, including "Mood Indigo" and "Take the A Train"
- Writing paper
- Pencil
- Construction paper
- Markers
- Prewritten chart with jazz terms from the 1920's

➤ **PROCEDURE:**

• **Day One**

- Play "Mood Indigo" for the students. Ask them what they think they are listening to. Then ask them how the music makes them feel. Ask them what genre of music they think this is.
- Play the music again. This time have the students close their eyes and visualize images and colors to go with the music. Elicit their responses. Create a list of responses on the board or on a chart.
- Play "Take the A Train". Repeat the same questions as in step one. Ask how this composition differs from the first one?
- Play the song again. Repeat step 2 and ask for responses again.

- Read the students a short biographical sketch of Duke Ellington
 - Tell students you will be reading Andrea Pinkney's book about Duke Ellington. Have them look for ways the book is similar to the biographical sketch and ways in which it differs. Pass out paper and tell the students that as you read, they should jot down phrases that reflect the music and life of Duke Ellington.
 - Read the book aloud.
 - Lead a discussion of the book. Have the students tell you some of the phrases they discovered in the book. Have them try and guess what the phrases might mean.
 - Display your chart (prewritten) with the following words on them: **hot-battered, sassy, cool, slick-steppin, Daddy-O, fine-as-pie, ivory eighty-eights, press on the pearlies, cats, ace**
 - Once the class has brainstormed a series of words, play a CD of uptempo Ellington music while the students create a list poem describing Ellington and his music
 - Students take their favorite line from their poem and the class makes a compilation poem with one favorite line from each student.
 - Students perform their poems to Duke Ellington music, trying to match the words to the tempo and emotion conveyed in the music
- **Day Two**
 - Review what the students learned about Ellington and jazz music
 - Show students Pinkney's book again, this time emphasizing the illustrations and how they express the "feeling" of the music.
 - Remind the students that Pinkney drew the way she did because according to her "Duke painted colors with his band's sound."
 - Play "Mood Indigo" for the students. Ask them to close their eyes and visualize what shapes, colors and lines they

would use to express this music. (You may want to explain that indigo is a shade of blue- a cool color.)

- Distribute construction paper and markers to each group of students. (They will most likely need to share unless they have their own supply.)
- Explain that while they are listening to "Mood Indigo" they should imagine what the music "looks like" to them.
- Students should create a picture illustrating the emotions and ideas that projected through the music. Remind them of the emotional nature of different colors, lines and shapes.
- Students should complete the self-assessment page and turn it in to teacher.

➤ **ASSESSMENT:**

- Students will write a reflection demonstrating their understanding of the material.
- Rubric for the poetry assignment attached.
- Rubric for the art project attached.

➤ **STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

- Visual Arts 1.3 Identify pairs of complementary colors (e.g., yellow/violet; red/green; orange/blue) and discuss how artists use them to communicate an idea or mood.
- Visual Arts 3.1 Describe how art plays a role in reflecting life (e.g., in photography, quilts, architecture).
- Music 1.6 Recognize and describe aural examples of musical forms, including rondo.
- Music 4.1 Use specific criteria when judging the relative quality of musical performances.
- Music 5.1 Identify and interpret expressive characteristics in works of art and music.
- Music 5.2 Integrate several art disciplines (dance, music, theatre, or the visual arts) into a well-organized presentation or performance.

LESSON THREE: POETRY AND DANCE-A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP LESSON SUMMARY

Enduring understanding of Langston Hughes's poem through the interpretive nature of dance.

learned to create a dance about Hughes's poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."

- NOTE: This is a two-day lesson.

➤ OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES:

- Students will create a found poem of two contrasting images/emotions from the Langston Hughes's poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."
- Students will interpret their found poem through dance. (See Dance standards addressed below)

➤ MATERIALS:

- Art Source videotape of Alvin Ailey's "Revelations" excerpt
- A copy of "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" by Langston Hughes
- Biography of Alvin Ailey by Andrea David Pinkney
- Langston's Train Ride by Robert Burleigh and Leonard Jenkins

➤ VOCABULARY:

- Clear beginning
- Hold ending
- Slides
- Gestures
- Choreographer
- Choreography
- Large & small movement
- Little & large space
- Jumpers
- High & low levels
- Strong
- Bold & light
- Soft energy

➤ **PROCEDURE:**

• **Day One**

- Read Langston's Train Ride to establish an understanding of Langston Hughes and where he got the inspiration for his poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers."
- Read the poem "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" to the class.
- Distribute copies of the poem to each student and read the poem chorally.
- In pairs, have the students find at least four images of rivers in the poem.
- Students will create tableaux representing one of the images from the poem.
- Students will create body language to express one of the images from the poem.
- Have students think about two ideas from the poem that they really can see or feel vividly and that have contrasting (opposite) emotions.
- Write the suggestions on the board.
- Put students with a partner and have them select and share an image with their partner.
- Students should write their "found poem" of contrasting images on paper. They should select a meaningful title for their poem. Encourage them to use contrasting emotions as a title.
- Have students share their work.
- Chart the responses under the captions Images and Emotions.
- Save the chart for Day Two.

• **Day Two**

- Explain that today the students will be adding movement to their found poem in the form of a dance
- Introduce Alvin Ailey by reading the biography by Andrea Davis Pinkney
- Show the Art Source videotape of Alvin Ailey's "Revelations".
- Discuss how Ailey expressed joy and sorrow through inward and outward movement.

- Demonstrate big and small movement and ask the class whether the movements demonstrated express joy or sorrow. Ask why they think that way?
- Model the use of little and big space; little movement and big movement.
- Have the students create a movement to show how a water drop moves; how a river moves. Which are big movements; small?
- Have students work with partners to use their bodies to express joy and sorrow. What kinds of movements would they make? Would they be big or small?
Model different movements the students could use to create a dance about their poem such as sliding, turning, walking, jumping, galloping, slinking, etc.
- In groups of three, have students brainstorm ways they can use space, movement, energy levels (high & low), and line (paths) to express the imagery and feelings of their poem. Remind them that the imagery will represent some type of river.
- Have each group demonstrate the movements they came up with.
- Read the poem again, stopping to have a group demonstrate accompanying movements for each line/section.
- Critique the groups to see whether their choices reflect the words of the poem.
- Closure: Ask students how using dance added to their understanding of "The Negro Speaks of Rivers." Ask several students to share their favorite parts of the poem and the movements they used to interpret the words.

➤ **ASSESSMENT:**

- Students will write a reflective paragraph describing how they choreographed their poem and why they chose the movements they chose.
- Rubric will be used to assess the dance

➤ **DANCE STANDARDS ADDRESSED:**

- 1.3 Demonstrate increased range and use of space, time, and force/energy concepts (e.g., pulse/accent, melt/collapse, weak/strong).
- 1.5 Describe a specific movement, using appropriate dance vocabulary.
- 2.2 Improvise extended movement phrases.
- 2.3 Describe, discuss, and analyze the process used by choreographers to create a dance.
- 2.4 Create a dance study that has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Review, revise, and refine.
- 2.5 Convey a range of feelings through shape/postures and movements when performing for peers.
- 2.7 Demonstrate additional partner and group skills (e.g., imitating, leading/following, mirroring, calling/responding, echoing).
- 3.3 Perform and describe dances that reflect the geographical place in which the dances are performed
- 4.1 Use dance vocabulary to describe unique characteristics of dances they have watched or performed from countries studied in the history social science curriculum (e.g., rhythms, spatial patterns, gestures, intent).
- 4.3 Describe ways in which a dancer effectively communicates ideas and moods (strong technique, projection, and expression).
- 5.1 Explain how dance practice relates to and uses the vocabulary of other art subjects (e.g., positive and negative space, shape, line, rhythm, character).

INTEGRATING THE ARTS INTO OTHER CORE CURRICULUM

I often integrate the artistic disciplines into my core curriculum. I concentrate on social studies and language arts because they are two of the core curricular subjects most easily accessed through the arts. Since I do not teach science, I have not listed any examples here. My partner teacher does, however, often incorporate the arts into her lessons as well.