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| **Lesson Plan:** “What Are You Hiding?” | **Room Requirements & Arrangement:** Open space (if desk or chairs are in the way, these are to be moved to the walls of the room to create open space). |
| **Content Area & Arts Discipline:**  Language Arts and Dance  |  |
| **Overview of the Lesson:**  Analyzing multiple accounts in different forms/genres (stories, poems, historical novels) of the same event or topic, noting similarities and differences in the point of view they represent (RL/RI 6.9). Examine this in integrated dance instruction through literal and abstract movement.  | **Materials/Equipment:** CD, boombox, poetic excerpts from *Dream Variation* by Langston Hughes and *The Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou**School:** Clarksdale, MS |
| **Grade Level:** 5th Grade | **Date Lesson Created:** March 2015 |
| **Proposed Time Frame:** 45 minutes | **Lesson Author:** Julie White  |

**Big Ideas & Learning Objectives**

1. The student will be able to identify similarities and differences in both content (movement) and language (abstraction).
2. The student will become familiar with select Maya Angelou and Langston Hughes texts and use these as “sources” for movement invention (physicalizing and developing written phrases into movement phrases) as well as reference these when considering a comparison of two artistic works on a similar topic.
3. The student will demonstrate and understand the importance of respectful and collaborative participation in group creative work, and contribute both ideas and enthusiasm to the process.

**Procedures**

***Affective Hook*:** Who has ever felt trapped? Has anyone ever wanted something that they couldn’t have? Today we are going to read two poems by two very famous poets – Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou – that are similar and different in both content and language. They speak about wanting freedom to be who they are.

***Relevance*:** It is important to understand a topic from many different points of view. We all have our own perspective as well and this needs to be informed. By finding different sources on the same subject, we can learn more about it and start to form our own opinion. Many texts, and the two poems we will explore today, also speak to things that are true for everyone simply because we are all human. By understanding others, we understand ourselves more. In dance, we can also dance and create movements in different ways. We do this by taking a literal or simple movement and making it abstract through the use of compositional devices. This allows a dance-maker to say something different with the same movement and bring a new look to a familiar step. It is the artists’ job – whether they are a poet, a writer, or a dancer – to share their ideas, emotions, and experiences in the world in a unique way. It allows others to see differently and also for you to do the same.

***Warm-up*: *BrainDance***

Follow my lead but feel free to explore. We will be moving in all different kinds of ways in the warm-up. Do your best to do everything clearly. We will do the warm-up in place.

* Breath – float
* Tactile – all (brush, tap, squeeze, pat)
* Core/Distal – distant
* Head/Tail – sings
* Upper/Lower – wind (upper), dips (lower)
* Right/Left – fling
* Cross Lateral – tenderly
* Vestibular – whirl

***Discussion:*** *The movements that we just did in the warm-up were inspired by two poems – “Caged Bird” by Maya Angelou and “Dream Variation” by Langston Hughes. They were both African American poets who spoke of what it was like to be black in America during their lifetime. These two poems talk about freedom and what it feels like, as well as how much they long for it. Today we will use these two poems to inspire movement and then learn a few compositional devices to help us develop these initial movements into something more.*

***Activity One (Introduction of Movement Concept): Abstract vs. Literal***

The teacher will read Hughes’ poem and then ask students to make a shape of a tall tree in their bodies. She will define this as a “literal” interpretation of the image. She will then ask students to find another way to show a tree in their bodies, suggesting that they are bark, leaves, flowers, fruit, roots. She will define this as “abstracting” movement or making it something other than the obvious or an exact visual representation.

***Activity Two (Exploration of Movement Concept): Dancing with Langston Hughes***

The teacher will set a simple movement phrase on dancers based on the Hughes poem. Once learned, she will have a volunteer read the poem while students dance the phrase.

To fling my arms wide (two wide shapes)

In some place of the sun

To whirl and to dance (turning slowly in self space)

Till the white day is done.

Then rest at cool evening (low-level resting shape)

Beneath a tall tree

While night comes on gently, (smooth movements)

Dark like me –

That is my dream! (tall strong shape)

(Overby, 101 MOVEntures, pg. 86) *(Dream Variation* by Langston Hughes)

Dance uses many different sources and subjects to inspire movement. We found abstract ways to represent the words of the poem so we don’t imitate or mimic but instead interpret and represent. There can also be room for HOW you do each movement, such as the wide shapes. It is important to be creative in dance and make the movement your own. Now that we have our movement phrase, and in order, let’s abstract it even further.

***Activity Three (Culmination of Combined Academic and Movement Concepts): Dancing with Maya Angelou***

The class will be put into groups of 3 and given one of two excerpts from Maya Angelou’s poem *Caged Bird.* The students in each group will be asked to create a movement phrase that is no longer than six actions based on the poem. They will be directed to practice this phrase until it is memorized. The TA will then read the first stanza of the poem and have the first group dance and read the second stanza for the second group. She will ask the students for feedback (what was clear, confident, creative) and then have each group repeat their performances.

***Closure***

From our dances we saw how the same source can generate very different movement. We all danced the same poem, but our dances all looked very different. Our two poems today were the same. The teacher will thank the students for their participation and creative efforts.

***Caged Bird Excerpts***

*(Print, cut out, and distribute one to each group)*

**Performance Group #1 Performance Group #2**

A free bird leaps The caged bird sings

on the back of the wind with a fearful trill

and floats downstream of things unknown

till the current ends but longed for still

and dips his wing and his tune is heard

in the orange sun rays on the distant hill

and dares to claim the sky. for the caged bird

 sings of freedom.

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