

Poetry as Source Material for Dance and Music

A collaborative Conversation Series

Artists: Calliope Pettis (music) and Diana Green (dance)

Source material: *Floating Island*, a poem by Dorothy Wordsworth

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This series allows you a peek into the conversation of two artists as they collaborate to create a work of art. Their conversation and resulting activities provide one sample of an artistic process and is not presented to you as the only way to create. Because you are being invited into a real time effort, we are not at all sure of the outcome. But as artists, we are willing to fail in order to accomplish something new.

These sessions align with the **Elements of Arts Literacy** (a high school course defined in the Alabama Course of Study: Arts Education 2017). The “standards explore the arts through the lenses of expression, context, tools, and reflection.”

I. Session I – Introduction

Standard # 8: Explore how and why the arts communicate meaning.

- A. Arts above language – it’s not a literal translation
 - i. Intent of this series: explore the creative process, blending artforms
 - ii. Unique voices provided by poetry, music and dance
- B. Conversation samples
 - i. music leading the conversation
 - ii. dance leading the conversation
 - iii. having a conversation back and forth
 - iv. Assignment (Read the poem provided)

II. Session II – Brainstorming, gathering, and selecting

Standard #6: Analyze the purpose and function of specific works of art and synthesize that information to infer artist intent.

- A. Identifying and selecting source material
 - i. words to use for dance
 - ii. words to use for music
- B. Creating phrases
- C. Independent forming and rehearsing (beginning-middle-end)

III. Session III – Developing the material: “having the conversation.”

Standard #1: Create an original artwork using the appropriate tools of the arts discipline.

- A. Playful combinations (options to try – there are many possibilities)
 - i. music and dance (play with sequence and timing)
 - ii. add words or entire poem
 - iii. mix and match, fragment and blend
 - iv. reflect and select

- B. Rehearse and perform

Reflective questions: What seemed to work well? What was not so successful? What suggestions might you have for these artists? What are the specific things to consider when creating a “performing art?” and how is that different from visual arts, or media arts?

What ideas do you have about how this might be used in your classroom? What questions do you have?

Vocabulary for the Creative Process:

- Collaboration
- Intent
- Brainstorming
- Source material
- Developing
- Forming



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