

Water Dance

Combining the elements of dance to create quality

Lesson Designer: Diana F. Green @2020

Time: Four 15-30 minute sessions recommended

Target Age Group: Grade 3 (May be adapted K-12)

Enduring understanding: It is important to find ways to illustrate ideas in order to communicate clearly and create deep understanding.

Essential Question: Why do writers and dancers use qualities to communicate information?

Arts Discipline Standards: Dance

Grade 3: Creating 2: Select and demonstrate a movement solution for a given movement problem

Grade 3: Performing 9: Change the degree of energy used in a movement to heighten the effect of the intent

Non-Arts Discipline Standards: English Language Arts

Grade 3:1 - Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Requirements: Materials and Supplies

- Book (provided): **Water Dance** by Thomas Locker, Copyright © 1997 by Thomas Locker, Published by Harcourt Brace & Company, ISBN: 0-15-201284-2
- Water Journey Sequence Cards (a set of index cards for each student, or each group working together)
- Water forms list in book sequence (Example follows with artificial sections assigned to create manageable blocks)

Section I (Beginning)

1. Rain: fall (dab)
2. Mountain Stream: cascade, tumble (slash)
3. Waterfall: leap, plunge (punch)
4. Lake: still (float)

Section II (Middle)

5. River: growing, widening, deepening
6. Sea:
7. Mist: rise, drawn upwards
8. Clouds: float, drift

Section III (End)

9. Storm Front: carried (by winds), heavy
10. Thunderhead: rise, power filled
11. Storm: rage, drench
12. Rainbow: floating, reflecting

Prerequisite Knowledge – Arts:

Dance elements of space, time and energy
Form – beginning, middle, end

Prerequisite Knowledge – Non-Arts:

Figurative language, action verbs, adverbs, adjectives

Procedures

Introductory Activity: Warm up

Review and practice:

Strong energy movement: press, wring, punch and slash

Light energy movements: glide, float, dab and flick

Sequence of Activities: Exploring the Material

1. Gather information (source material) Read one page at a time. Find the correct card that identifies the form water takes on that page, write the movement words on the front of the card with the name of the water form (form - rain; movement word - fall)
2. Plan choreography – assign a quality (rainfall – dab) to the movements found
3. Perform – perform the quality - dab (not the form)

Repeat all three activities with each page in the book; when you get to “Perform” go back and perform the previous qualities and add the new ones so you keep rehearsing everything.

Culminating Activity: Creating

Performance Task.

Perform all sections as one dance, with an obvious beginning, middle and end, and logical transitions. Consider whether each transition should be smooth or abrupt. Be ready to explain your choices. You may want to have a narrator read the water forms as they are being performed, or perhaps read all the text on each page while it is being performed.

Critique/Reflective Questions: What did you see or feel that was interesting? What was your favorite part? What one suggestion for change can you make? What ideas does dance communicate well? What parts of the book does dance not communicate well? Why do you suppose we decided to combine dance and words to express the ideas in this book?



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Students can do these activities individually or in groups. If you have four groups you can give each group one page to perform and then they can spend more time choreographing and rehearsing, and creating more variations of movement. When you have a group of dancers they have the option to dance independently or in unison. This creates an opportunity to discuss why they would choose one over the other. For example: unison tends to communicate order and calm, whereas different movement happening at the same time may communicate disorder and chaos. Have them consider the journey water is making and how it organizes itself for each part of that journey.

If you do this for three days to cover the entire book, the 4th day could be planning a final production with the entire book performed through dance. Consider using this as a showcase at a parent meeting. Ask the students to explain the process of their work. You can also use any book for this process. Look for words that naturally express emotion, movement, and qualities. Science text books are full of vocabulary that can be danced.

Adaptations For Different Grade Levels:

K-Grade 2: Connect figurative language to emotion. Add science: Select excerpts and focus on water cycle. Use A-B-A while improvising movement to illustrate the water cycle.

Grades 4-5: Select additional explanations from the back of the book to discuss ground water, ice caps. Add these to the journey. Add science: focus on changing landforms using shapes in dance. Select additional explanations from the back of the book to discuss ground water, ice caps. Add these to the journey.

Grades 6-8: Have students consider how each water form occurs (discuss the transition required of each change (suggesting more words perhaps) and have them perform these transitions with subtle variations in degrees time and energy to blend the choreography into a whole.

Grades 9-12: Performance Task: create a piece of choreography based on the constructive and destructive processes that shape the earth, personifying the forces and resultant landforms involved and translating them to choreography with emotional intent. Have other students (audience) determine the perspective of the choreographer(s) concerning these forces (particularly concerning man-made forces).

*For more ideas for exploring dance: consult *Choreographing From Within, Developing the Habit of Inquiry as an Artist* by Diana F. Green, published by Human Kinetics (www.HumanKinetics.com)*

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