



Sample Lesson: Poetry Play

School/Grade/CT(s): 1st/2nd grade

Date: November 20th, 2014

Teaching Artists: Amanda LaPergola, Frank Moran, Ally Tufenkjian

Lesson #: 3

Theme of Lesson: Bringing Shel Silverstein poetry to life

Restating of Inquiry Question:

-How do we use gesture and physical play to create images?

-How can we incorporate multiple artistic disciplines to respond to poetry?

Objectives:

-To foster community in the classroom and provide a safe space to explore and celebrate individual self-expression and identity.

-To use improv, physical exploration, sound, and visual art to challenge students to try different ways to express themselves and collaborate in a group.

Materials:

-Handout with Shel Silverstein poem

-Index cards (for buzz words)

-Paper and markers (for drawing in the main activity)

1. Opening Ritual

Objective: To get students physically warmed up, comfortable in their bodies, and ready to move. To get students listening and responding to each other in the group.

Activity Name(s): Gesture warmup, machine game, actor shakedown

Brief Description:

-Physical warmup:

-Have each student say their name while doing one gesture that represents how they're feeling. After each student says their name and performs their gesture, the whole class will repeat that person's name and gesture as identically as possible.

-Actor Shakedown(shaking arms and legs one at a time, counting down from 8).

2. Intro Activity



Objective: To introduce the piece of poetry. To prepare students for group collaboration. To have students consider ideas and images that will be the foundation for their group presentations.

Activity Name: Gestures and Images

Brief Description:

- The whole group will receive one Shel Silverstein poem.
- Brief Shel Silverstein bio will be shared.
- Have the students take turns reading different lines of the poem.
- Have a mini discussion, i.e. what is this poem about? who is speaking? how does it make you feel?
- On your index card, take 1 min to write five “buzz words” on a piece of paper in response to the poem. These words could be specific, strong words from the poem or things that the poem makes you think of (maybe it reminds you of your parent or sibling, or you hear the sound of birds, etc.)
- Now, pick your favorite line from the poem and pick a gesture to go with it. Explore this gesture on your own. Now we’re going read the line and perform the gesture altogether as a group.

3. Main Exercise

Objective: To explore visual art, sound, and movement. To use multiple artistic forms to respond to poetry. To collaborate as a group.

Activity Name: Responding to poetry

Brief Description:

- Split into smaller groups (4-6 groups)
- Split the “Whatif” poem into smaller sections of 4-5 lines and assign groups different sections.
- We’re going to bring the “Whatif” poem to life by using at least one of the following artistic methods:
 1. Visual art (drawing)
 2. Sound
 3. Movement
- You can use all three at once. Whatever you decide, each member of the group must have a job.
- As you craft your performance, think about incorporating the buzz words you wrote down and the gestures you created.
- The poem must be read aloud in the performance, but all other elements are up to you.

4. Closing Ritual (in two parts)



Part 1:

Objective: To share and respond to each other's work.

Activity Name: Group share

Brief Description:

-Now we're going to share our work with the whole class. To make sure everyone is ready, let's give the group a "3-2-1-action!"

-Each group will share their poem however they have decided to present it.

-After each group performs, ask the group:

1. Which artistic method(s) did you see? (visuals, sound, or movement?)
2. What was your favorite part about their performance?
3. Did anything about their performance surprise you?

Part 2:

Objective: To end class on a positive note. To hear everyone's voice one final time.

Activity Name: One-word feelings

Brief Description:

-Go around and use one word to express how you're feeling right now.

Multiple Intelligences Addressed:

Logical-mathematical; Musical; Spatial; Linguistic; Bodily-kinesthetic; Interpersonal; Intrapersonal; Naturalistic; Existential

Classroom Teacher Role: Principal role is to manage student behavior. Support Teaching artists during VTS. Circulate the room during main activity and help students brainstorm. Participate in closing ritual.

Creative Elements (skill and theme; i.e. ensemble and love)

Skill(s): Reading, metaphor, color, image, gesture, sound, collaboration, improvisation



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Theme(s): Play, Collaboration, Expression, Poetry, Imagery

Artists/ Authors/ Works of Art (to be presented as models for skills/themes identified above): Shel Silverstein poems

Reflective Anecdotes/Student Development:

Outcomes: Leaders, [Emotionally Intelligent/Expressive](#), [Literate](#), Critical Thinkers, [Citizenship](#), [Culturally Aware](#), [Creative Thinkers/Imaginative](#)

Indications:

- Students are exploring their emotional experience by writing down words they notice and connect to about the poetry.
- Students are literate by reading the poem silently and aloud, making their own word associations, and making physical associations to a piece of writing.
- Students are cooperating and sharing in a group and sharing with their whole class.
- During group work and group sharing, students must be conscious and respectful of other students' ideas and backgrounds.-Students invent their own gestures, sound, and visual art to respond to poetry.