

# Dance a Poem

Fifth Grade + ELA

## CORE SUBJECT AREA

ELA

## ART FORM + ELEMENTS

Dance  
Energy

## DURATION

2-3 class periods of 75 minutes

## OBJECTIVE

TSW identify and interpret metaphors in the context of a poem.

TSW use figurative language and poetry to choreograph a dance.

TSW record changes in a dance sequence through writing.

TSW interpret meaning of a dance based on a dancer's movement.

## MATERIALS NEEDED

Paper  
Pencil  
Teacher-made metaphor vs. simile anchor chart

## VOCABULARY

Poem  
Simile  
Metaphor  
Harlem Renaissance  
Langston Hughes  
Stanza  
Tone  
Theme

## MSCCR STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- a. Interpret figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.R.5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.

## MSCCR CREATIVE STANDARDS

DA:Cr1.1.5. a. Build content for choreography using several stimuli (for example, music/sound, text, objects, images, notation, observed dance, experiences, literary forms, natural phenomena, current news, social events).

DA:Cr3.1.5 b. Record changes in a dance sequence through writing, symbols, or a form of media technology

DA:Re8 Interpret meaning in dance based on its movements. Explain how the movements communicate the main idea of the dance using basic dance terminology

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Copies of Langston Hughes' poems found at Group assessment sheet found at Energy infographic found at <https://www.elementsofdance.org/energy.html>

## LESSON SEQUENCE

### Introduction

- TTW ask TS if they have ever had a dream of something they want to happen in their life.
  - TTW allow various students to answer this question.
- TTW display the poem "Dreams" by Langston Hughes.
  - TTW explain to TS that Langston Hughes was an African-American poet and author who was part of the Harlem Renaissance.
  - TW explain that the Harlem Renaissance was an artistic and intellectual movement in the 1920s in Harlem, New York.
- The teacher and the students will engage in a discussion about the poem using the following questions:
  1. What is the poem about?
  2. What does the poet mean when he says, "Hold fast to your dreams?"
  3. What happens if you "let dreams go?"
  4. What is the theme of the poem? How do you know this?
- TTW review the meaning of theme
- TTW engage the students in a whole-class creative dance warm up using lines from the poem.
  - TTW read the poem out loud to the students, and the student will use movement to depict the different lines of the poem (ex. ..."for if dreams die life is a broken-winged bird," The students could move like a bird with broken-wings cannot fly.)

### Transition

- TTW introduce TS to metaphor vs simile using the metaphor vs. simile anchor chart on the board.
  - TTW explain to TS that a metaphor is a comparison of two unlike things in which the subject of the metaphor is said to be something it is not.
  - TTW explain that unlike similes, metaphors do not use like or as to compare.
- TTW explain that metaphors are used to paint a picture in the reader's mind.
- TSW participate in a one-minute metaphor challenge in small groups of 3-4 in which they try to come up with as many metaphors as they can within the time limit.
  - TSW record their answers on paper.
  - TTW allow groups to share with the class.
- TTW display "Dreams" again.
  - TS and TTW work together to identify the metaphor in the first stanza (Life is a broken-winged bird/ That cannot fly.)
- TSW work in their groups to determine the metaphor in the second stanza.

- TT and TSW discuss the meaning behind these metaphors and what Hughes wanted his reader to visualize when reading these metaphors.
  - TTW explain to the students that metaphors can help determine the theme of a poem.
- TTW explain to the students that metaphors can affect the tone of a poem, a dancer's use of energy can affect how the dance makes the audience feel.
  - TTW explain that dancer's can also use energy to represent the theme of their dance, just like metaphors represent the theme of the poem.
- TTW use the "Energy" infographic found at <https://www.elementsofdance.org/energy.html> to review energy in dance with the student (TS).
- TTW lead TS in a whole-class movement activity in which TT tells TS a different kind of energy (ex. Free-flowing, sharp, heavy, light, etc.) and TSW create a dance movement for the type of energy.

## Description

- TTW distribute to each group a different copy of one of the Langston Hughes poems found at <https://schools.nyc.gov> (link not working)
- TSW work in their groups to identify the different metaphors they find in the poem and will discuss within their groups the meanings behind the metaphors in the poems.
- TSW collaborate to choreograph a dance routine of the poem they read.
  - TSW use their bodies and movement to represent the action and metaphors of the poem and will use the element of dance energy to guide their movements and set the tone of their dance.
  - TSW record the dance moves they plan to use on paper.
  - TSW practice their dances within their groups.
- TSW perform the dances of their poems for their classmates.
  - TTW read the student's poems out loud as they dance.
- TSW complete the group and dance assessment found at <https://schools.nyc.gov/oces/teachlearn/arts/les/Blueprints/Dance/Unit%20Book%20Jan16.pdf>

## EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- TS may complete a personal narrative on their dreams for their life as part of this unit.
- The poems can also be used to identify verbs which could in turn be added to the dance routine as part of an extended unit on action in dance.

## SOURCES

Original lesson plan found at <https://schools.nyc.gov/oces/teachlearn/arts/les/Blueprints/Dance/Unit%20Book%20Jan16.pdf>

## TIPS + FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Give TS a time limit on choreographing, practicing, and presenting their dancers.



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