

Title: Planting a Garden Through Dance

Grade Ranges:

K-4

5-8

9-12

Subject Tag:

Art and Music: Dance

Science: Biology

Synopsis:

Students will explore the growth cycle of a flower through movement improvisation. They will create a dance study based on this cycle, and they will cooperate in the staging of a performance that combines several of their studies. As recent brain research has shown, learning is most powerful when it is active. Therefore, this activity integrates well with science units on plant growth. To add another arts element to the lesson plan, students can create artwork on the growth cycle of a flower.

Keywords:

improvisation; choreography; plant growth cycle; flowers; shapes; dance phrases

Body:

1. Display a picture of a flower. Students should identify the stages of its growth (seed; roots; stem; bud; flower.) Older students can also include wilting and dying.
2. Students should individually improvise shapes for each stage and then improvise movements that relate to each stage. This step helps students warm up, while also helping them prepare for creating their own dances.
3. Have each student choose a specific flower as the basis for his or her dance study. You can either have a variety of pictures of flowers posted in the room, or students can provide their own. (Original artwork is ideal.)
4. Students should choreograph a movement study that illustrates the growth of their flower from seed to full bloom. Attention should be given to level, direction, size, and tempo in addition to sequence and shape.
5. In pairs, students should share their flower study and provide feedback to one another.
6. Individually, students should revise their choreography as necessary to achieve greater clarity of image.
7. In groups of four or five, students should arrange their studies for performance. They should focus on the creation of a movement “garden,” determining their spacing and timing within the larger group.
8. Each “garden” should perform for the class, with discussion following. Students in the audience should be able to identify the individual flowers within each group.

9. Note: videotaping the performances allows students to assess their own work more accurately.

Related links:

Plant Life Cycle

<http://www.passionflow.co.uk/flower.htm>

This site provides a brief overview of the plant life cycle, from a British site about passion flowers.

Plant Life Cycle

http://www.fastplants.org/Introduction/LifeCycle_body.htm

This site includes photos of the growth stages of the life cycle of some quick growing plants.

Features:

- ___ Contains special education tips
- ___ Quick Activity (less than 30 minutes; story starter)
- ___ Requires Internet access for students to complete

Objective:

Students will use basic dance elements to create a movement version of the growth cycle, thereby deepening their understanding of both the biological process of growth and the use of movement as an expressive form.

Standards:

NY: 1: Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Arts. Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the arts (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts) and participate in various roles in the arts. **2:** Knowing and Using Arts Materials and Resources. Students will be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in arts in various roles. **3:** Responding To and Analyzing Works of Art. Students will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.

NYC: A4 c. Identify strengths and weaknesses in his or her own work. **A5a.** Work with others to complete a task.

CT: 1. Elements and Skills. Students will identify and perform movement elements and dance skills. **2.** Choreography. Students will understand choreographic principles, processes, and structures. **3.** Meaning Students. will understand how dance creates and communicates meaning. **4.** Thinking Skills. Students will apply analytical evaluative thinking skills in dance. **7.** Connections. Students will make connections between dance, other disciplines and daily life.

NJ: 1.1: All students will acquire knowledge and skills that increase aesthetic awareness in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. **1.2:** All students will refine perceptual,

intellectual, physical, and technical skills through creating dance, music, theatre, and/or visual arts. **1.3:** All students will utilize arts elements and arts media to produce artistic products and performances. **1.4:** All students will demonstrate knowledge of the process of critique.

Prerequisite Skills:

No previous dance experience is required. More detailed dance studies do result if students bring to this activity an understanding of shape, level, and sustained movement.

Time Required:

90 to 120 minutes

Technology and Materials Needed:

1. pictures of flowers, or original student artwork
2. suggested music: the adagio section of “Autumn” from *The Four Seasons* by Vivaldi.
3. audio system
4. optional: video camera and playback system
5. optional: students can dress in appropriate colors for the final performance

Assessment Criteria:

Peers can assess each other on the basis of accuracy of image, originality, and performance skill. Students can evaluate their own work. You may also choose to evaluate either the individual studies or the group structures, or both.

Recommended Lesson Plan Review Date:

Review Comments:

Check Web sites.