

# Kennedy Center Partners

## Arts Integration

### Lesson Plan

**Lesson Name:** Making Genre Expressions

**Goal:** To integrate and perform appropriate music with movement, and a Readers Theater experience with a historical novel previously read by a fifth grade class.

#### **Objective:**

- Students will be able to explain the significance of code songs used by African-American slaves.
- Students will learn and perform the song mentioned in the novel.
- Students will learn and perform movements to the song, understanding the practice of movement while singing in the African culture.
- Students will share an excerpt from the novel, through Readers Theater, and the song/movement in a performance for the school.

**Grade Level:** 5

#### **Arts Standards addressed:**

- (Dance) CS1:6 – Demonstrate kinesthetic awareness, concentration, and focus in performing movement skills.
- (Music) CS1:9 - Sing expressively on pitch and in rhythm with appropriate timbre, diction, posture, and tempo.
- (Music) CS1:10 - Sing from memory music representing genres and styles from diverse cultures.
- (Theater) CS1:20 Assume roles that exhibit concentration and contribute to dramatizations based on literature and history.

#### **Other Subject Areas Standards addressed:**

See lesson plan from classroom (literature) teacher.

#### **Goals Related to Eight Habits of Mind:**

- Engage and Persist - Develop focus to learn a song and movement and coordinate the two while expressing the emotional content.
- Express - Learn to perform expressively a song, dance, and Readers Theater related to emotional social issues of the 1800's.
- Understand Art World: Community - Learn to interact with other singers/dancers and/or with Readers Theater actors within the class to create works of musical, dance, and dramatic arts. Encourage them to watch future performances with an

eye toward the effort it took to rehearse, to cooperate with other artists, and to produce quality performances.

## **Instructional Outline:**

### **Classroom Management Strategy:**

Usual classroom management techniques.

### **Prep Activity:**

- Students will list the various literary genres studied with a brief description of each.
- Students will review section of the historical fiction book they read that makes reference to the song, "Go Down Moses" through an impromptu reading of the Readers Theater by five volunteers.
- Tell students that they have the opportunity to perform both the Readers Theater and the song, along with the dance and tableaux that they have learned from another teacher as they present their integrated study of literary genres.

### **Main Activity:**

#### **Lesson One:**

- Using a visual of the lyrics, teacher and students discuss the meaning of each phrase in the Calls and Responses.
- Students are taught to sing the Responses and the Refrain.
- Teacher sings the Calls and students respond with the parts they know.
- Sing the song again, this time with students singing the Calls and teacher singing the Responses. Students sing Refrain.
- Work on expressive qualities - tone, phrasing, crescendos, accents, etc.
- Ask for volunteers to sing solos, duets, or trios for the Calls and for the Readers Theater parts. Audition later, if necessary.

#### **Lesson Two:**

- Review entire song.
- Assign students to sit in two curved rows with soloists at one end of the front row.
- Assign parts to soloists/duets/trios. Rehearse with them briefly, including telling them when and how to move in and out of the line.
- Teach movement for the Call and Response section
- Teach movement for the Refrain
- Rehearse as necessary.
- Add final ending, with tempo change and movement change. Rehearse as necessary.
- Perform entire song.
- Assign parts for Readers Theater. Arrange separate rehearsal times.

#### **Lesson Three:**

- Arrange singers and actors on stage. Practice moving to places.
- Review movement for the song.
- Practice the song, as needed.
- Practice entire program, beginning with Readers Theater and including transitions.
- Discuss performance tips: sing and speak loudly and directly into the microphone, watch the director, focus on the task not the audience, concentrate, enjoy sharing what you have learned.

**Performance Day:**

- Review performance tips and express confidence

**Additional Information:**

**Materials Needed:**

Piano, sheet music for "Go Down, Moses," a copy of *Freedom Crossing* by Margaret Goff Clark, copyright 1980 by Scholastic, Inc.), Readers Theater scripts.

**Outcomes/Assessment:**

- Students will perform the Readers Theater and the song for the school at an assembly where the entire Genre project will be presented. Videotape performance, if possible.
- Students will watch the video and discuss their performance and learnings during the next music class.

**Potential Challenges:**

- Determining soloists for the song and participants for Readers Theater. Auditions might need to be held.
- Scheduling time for music rehearsals in music classroom and on the stage.
- Scheduling time, outside of music class, for Readers Theater rehearsals.
- Students not remembering to speak or sing loudly and clearly into the microphone. Will need several rehearsals with mic.
- Possible necessity to give extra help to students having difficulty with the movement..
- Student stage fright might interfere with the quality of performance. Discussion of this ahead of time might alleviate some nervousness.

**Appendix:**

**Lyrics selected for use in performance of "Go Down, Moses"**

Calls

When israel was in Egypt land,  
Oppressed so hard they could not stand,

REFRAIN: Go down, Moses,

Responses

Let my people go!  
Let my people go!

Way down in Egypt land  
Tell old Pharaoh.  
"Let my people go!"

You need not always weep and mourn,  
And wear these slav'ry chains forlorn,

Let my people go!  
Let my people go! (Refrain)

Your foes shall not before you stand,  
And you'll possess fair Canaan's land,

Let my people go!  
Let my people go!

Sing refrain, then repeat: Tell old Pharaoh,  
"Let my people go!"

Soloists are in the front row, SL, and come to center stage with microphone, sing, then return to their place in line and hand the mic to the next soloist. Last soloist places mic on mic stand, located just SL of singers

### **Movement**

Calls and responses - slight body movement to the slow beat of the music by lifting heels up and down one at a time, putting weight on right heel, then left, etc. on capitalized words:

"When IS-rael was in E-gypt land, LET my people GO . . ."

Responses - add arms:

"Let . . ." bend right elbow and bring closed fist to shoulder height (strong movement)  
"Go" slowly open hand, palm up, stretch out arm and bring it down to side.

Refrain:

On same slow beat as before, change feet to step R, touch L, step L, touch R until end of refrain.

Final ending: Feet freeze. Tempo slows.

"Tell old" - both fists high over head

"Pharaoh" - open and shimmer both hands

"Let" - both fists at shoulder height, elbows bent

"Go" - open hands, palms upward, slowly stretching arms up at level just in front of ears (not covering face) while counting 4 slow beats. On beat 5, close fists as if "grabbing freedom" and stomp right foot. Freeze. Slowly lower arms and bow from waist.

### **Reader's Theater**

Freedom Crossing by Margaret Goff Clark\*

Narrator 1: Another genre of literature that we studied was historical fiction.  
Historical fiction is a fictional story set in a time that really existed. The book we

read, Freedom Crossing, took place in the mid-1800's in America when many slaves were trying to escape to freedom. We would like to share a bit of this story with you through Readers Theater. I am Narrator 1.

Narrator 2: I am Narrator 2. In this section of the book, Bert and his sister Laura are hiding Martin, a runaway slave, who is being chased by slave catchers.

Laura: I am Laura.

Martin: I am Martin, the runaway.

Bert: I am Bert, Laura's brother. And now we'll begin.

Narrator 1: Laura and Bert hid the runaway slave, Martin in a secret compartment under the floor in Laura's room just as the slave catchers arrived. Laura pulled the rug over the compartment and sat in a rocking chair on top of the rug, coolly answering the slave catcher's questions.

Narrator 2: Laura, having just moved up from the south, wasn't sure she approved of hiding a runaway, but her brother was so convincing that she had agreed – for now. After the slave catchers left, she made lunch for her brother, Martin, and herself. They ate with their feet dangling in the hole of the secret compartment.

Laura: Weren't you scared I'd tell on you?

Martin: I was praying you wouldn't. Nobody who took me in told on me ever since I ran away. Lots of folks hid me, black folks and white ones. They could've sent me back to my master for the big reward, but they didn't.

Laura: So lots of people helped you.

Martin: Yes'm. I couldn't even count how many. Moses, she said people who help the poor runaway slaves are the kindest people in the world.

Bert: *Moses?* Moses was a *man* and he lived hundreds of years ago.

Martin: Not the Moses I mean. She's a woman, all right, and she's black, and she led a whole lot of slaves to the Promised Land.

Bert: Oh! I know who you mean. Her name's Harriet Tubman, isn't it? She was a slave, herself, and she escaped to Canada. Then she went back down south and helped other slaves to get away.

Martin: Miss Tubman, that's her name. Only everybody calls her Moses. My pappy talked to her and he told her how his master was going to sell him down south and split up our family. So when Miss Tubman was ready to go north, she came outside our cabin and sang, "Go Down, Moses." My pappy heard her, and he said, "There's Moses. It's time for us to go."

Bert: Can you sing it? Let's hear that song "Go Down, Moses."

Narrator 1: Martin appeared glad to oblige. He rocked back and forth as he sang the words softly:

[READ THIS – DON'T SING:]

Go down, Moses,  
Way down in Egypt land,  
Tell old Pharaoh,  
Let my people go.

Narrator 2: Laura's eyes felt misty. Martin's high, sweet, young boy's voice was appealing. Though she had heard Uncle Jim's slaves sing the same song, she had never guessed its hidden meaning.

Laura: The slaves must think of themselves as the Israelites, but who was Pharaoh? Their master? Moses leads the slaves to the Promised Land?

Martin: That's right, Miss Laura. She takes them to Canada. That's the Promised Land where we can be free.

Narrator 2: And now we'd like to sing the code song that Harriet Tubman and the slaves sang: "Go Down, Moses."

\*(all dialogue is directly quoted from Freedom Crossing by Margaret Goff Clark, copyright 1980, Scholastic, Inc.)