

Post-Visit Activity

Title: <i>Dance as Visual Movement</i>
Subjects: <i>Language Arts, Visual Arts</i>
Grade: <i>7-12</i>
Time: <i>2 class periods</i>

Introduction:

Historically, “visual artists have long been fascinated by dance...painters and sculptors have attempted to capture the essence of this most elemental and ephemeral form of human expression.”

The collaboration between Jamie Wyeth and Rudolph Nureyev represents the will of two extraordinary artists to explore, in paintings and studies, the transformation, illusion and reality of the dance.

The dance must be choreographed, the stage sets and costumes designed and made, and the music chosen and rehearsed.

This activity will allow students the opportunity to design and choreograph a dance of their own keeping in mind the artistic quality of the movement.

Objectives:

The student will:

- view ballet/dance video(s) if accessible.
- draw several gestures from the video and reference material provided in this packet , in order to become somewhat familiar with the forms that the body takes in a dance.
- write a brief outline for the dance that you will be performing, with at least 7 different movements.
- consider the cause and effect of each major movement
- perform a short dance sequence using either the **classical style** of dance, known as the **codified movement** or the **modern expressive** dance .

Materials:

- computer and internet connection
- paper and pencils
- materials found at home from which to fashion simple costumes: eg tights, tunics, hats, toe shoes. (This could also

be a spoof on dance with crazy costumes)

Vocabulary:

ballet d’action
character dancing
classical ballet
contemporary dancing
modern ballet
modern dance
codified movement

Teachers Motivation:

The students will have studied the **web site**, if possible, and viewed the reproductions of the Wyeth drawings and paintings of Nureyev. They will have seen the Nureyev exhibition which includes over 100 paintings, drawings, photos and costume items to use as references for their own gesture drawings and designing movements. They will be encouraged to think about what movement would come before and after the moment that they are seeing frozen in time.

Procedure:

Ask Students to:

- consider the different movements that would accompany the following contrasting situations:
Codified Movement vs. Modern Expressive
Classical vs. Expressive
Plotted vs. Abstract
Ballet vs. Modern
Curved Lines vs. Sharp Angles
- while watching a video on dance do several gesture drawings. Gesture drawings are done by artists to catch the general movement of the subject, before going on to more complete studies.
- after studying the collective gesture drawings and choosing a theme, design a short dance sequence.

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- design simple costumes that will most effectively convey the dance.
- plan a performance of your dance sequences, perhaps on your school stage.

Evaluation:

Did students:

- research the differences between classical ballet and modern dance.
- understand and experience the value and purpose of gesture drawing.
- design a short sequence of at least 7 movements and show as gesture drawings.
- perform the dance.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

Ask students to:

Language Arts:

- Write up a short research paper on the differences between classical ballet and modern dance.

Visual Art:

- Compile a group of gesture drawings from the video and produce another sequence of 7 gesture drawings for the new dance.