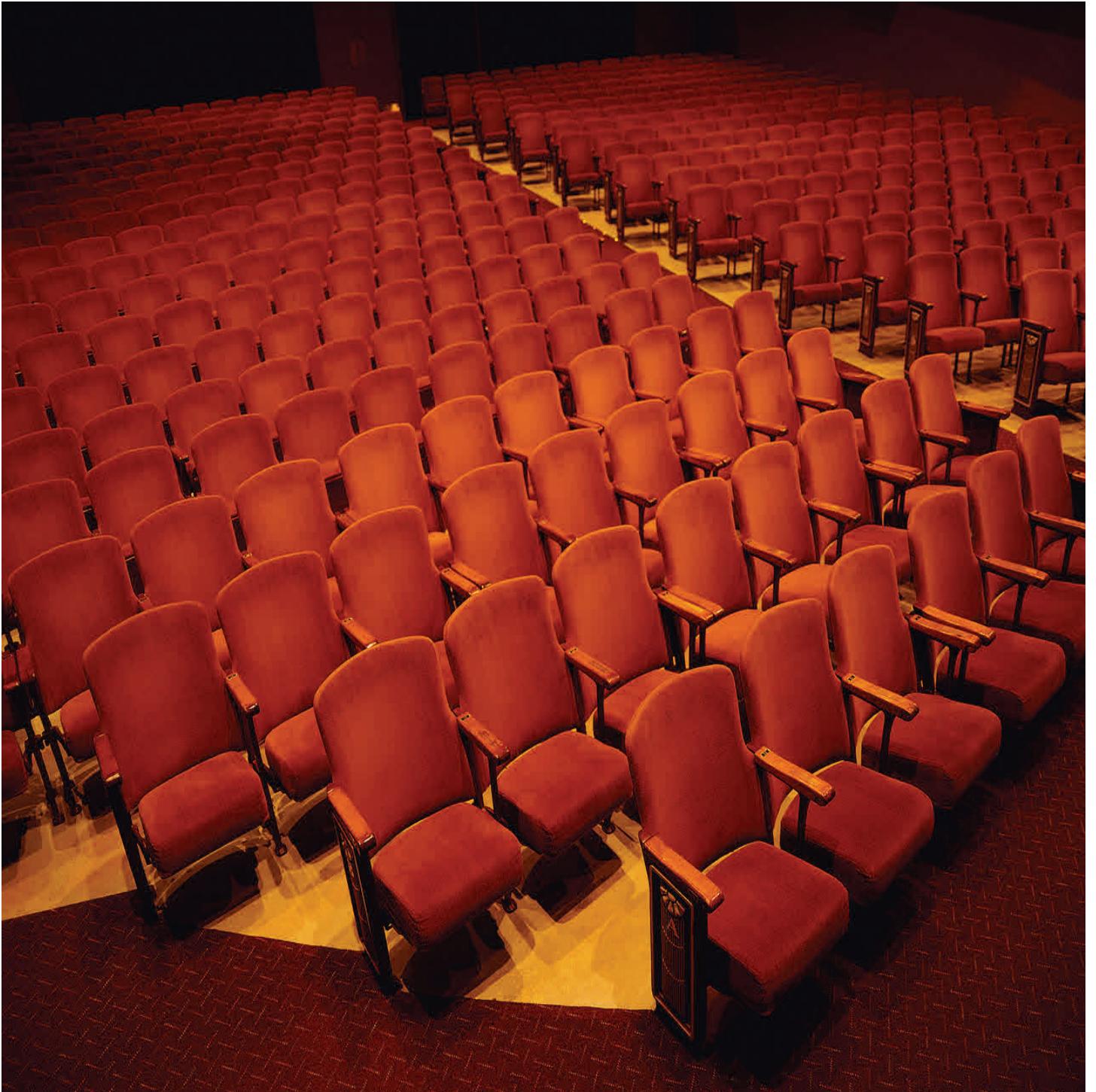


Notes/Reflections:

Conflict Resolution • Culture • Expository Writing • Mon-



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Cultural Characters - The Great Depression

This lesson invites students to derive inspiration from photographs (portraits and people, historical events and images depicting strife or struggle, etc.) based around a given time period. These images serve as impetus to write monologues and create improvisational skits engaging students in a brand new way!

Essential Question

What impact does a photograph have on our perception of a society and/or historical event?

Process

PART 1

- Begin by playing music from the Depression era quietly as you present the focus images to students. Each student should have one sheet of paper housing two or three images, an index card, and pencil.
- The first picture depicts two or more people from the Depression era engaged in an activity. (One of the people should be circled so you can easily pair students to act out the scene later.)
- The second picture depicts an Depression era event or historical figure with a title or name to be used as a reference for students.
- After students have written their names on the index cards, ask them to carefully observe the person circled in their photo. Ask questions to help them more deeply embody their character.
- Have students list the following on the left hand side of the index card:
 - Character's name
 - Character's age
 - Character's home country or defining characteristic
- Direct students to use descriptive language to write about how the character feels about what is happening in the second picture and how it is affecting their lives. Inquire, "What is the character's greatest fear? What is the character's greatest dream?"
- Say to students, "Turn the card over and write a monologue in first person introducing yourself. Include all of the information written on the front side of the card."
- When all students are finished writing, introduce the next step by saying, "Today we are going to learn about the Depression Era through the eyes of its people. Each of you have been brought here to help us explore and understand this time in American history. Welcome!"
- Next, say to students, "Using a voice different than your own (the voice of the character in the picture), on a count of three, softly tell me what you had for breakfast this morning. Now sit like your character sits, different than yourself! Imagine your character is wearing an article of clothing different from what you are wearing. On a count of three, adjust that article of clothing."
- Choose a student and ask him/her to walk to the front of the class as their character would walk.
- Once the student gets to the front of the classroom, have him/her choose a peer to which to tell the character's story (in first person). Ask the student to look at this person as they are telling the story; eye contact is important!
- Next, ask that student to read his/her character's monologue aloud.
- If time permits, facilitate a question and answer session, allowing students to interview the focus character and gain additional insight into the character's life.

PART 2

- Distribute the sheets housing two images and corresponding character monologue index cards to students.
- Pair students to correspond with the characters depicted in the scenes on the image pages. Distribute one blank index card per team.
- Ask pairs to discuss and list the following prompts on the blank index card:
 - Who – who are you and what is the nature of your relationship?
 - What – what are you doing? (action)
 - Where – where are you? (setting)
 - When – what year, month, time of day is it?
 - Why – why are you there?
 - Want – what do you want from the other person?
 - Conflict – is there a disagreement between you?
 - Discuss your individual dreams and fears...
 - Write the first line said if the photo were to come to life

Materials

- blank index cards
- clipboards and pencils
- photos of images based around The Great Depression era
- sound source (e.g., CD player)
- audio recordings

Vocabulary

Theater

Dramatic literature or its performance; drama

Expository Writing

Serving to set forth, demonstrate, or explain

Ensemble

All the parts of a thing taken together, so that each part is considered only in relation to the whole

Improvisation

A creation that is spoken or written without prior preparation

Classroom Tips

This activity works best in an open space with room for students to move.

- Next, allow these photographs to come to life! Ask each team to walk to the front of the room, in character, and assume the positions pictured in the photographs.
- When you say "action," students bring the photo to life!
- Students should begin with the first line they previously generated and clearly portray their identity and source of conflict. Once the conflict is evident, say "freeze!"
- Ask the team how they could resolve this conflict. Once they articulate a rational solution, tell them you will call "action" again and they can resolve the conflict on their feet! (Note: you can also survey other students in the classroom to help come up with a resolution to the conflict and then ask the partners to embody that resolution.)

Assessment

- Students use descriptive language in the generated monologues and expository essays.
- Monologues and expository essays are free of grammatical errors, contain thoughtful insights, and express feelings/emotions while relating to focus images.
- Improvisational skits accurately portray rational scenes from focus images.
- Articulated resolutions to conflicts are practical solutions for proposed conflicts.

Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

GRADE 3

ELACC3W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences:

ELACC3SL2: Determine the main ideas and supporting details of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ELACC3L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELACC3L6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific vocabulary, including words and phrases that signal spatial and temporal relationships (e.g., After dinner that night we went looking for them).

GRADE 4

ELACC4W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences:

ELACC4SL2: Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ELACC4L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELACC4L6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific vocabulary, including words and phrases that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and words and phrases basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

GRADE 5

ELACC5W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences:

ELACC5SL2: Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ELACC5L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELACC5L6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific vocabulary, including words and phrases that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

GRADE 6

ELACC6W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences:

ELACC6SL2: Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

ELACC6L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELACC6L6: Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific vocabulary, including words and phrases that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition).

Georgia Performance Standards

SOCIAL STUDIES

GRADE 3

SS3H2: The student will discuss the lives of Americans who expanded people's rights and freedoms in a democracy.

SS3G2: The student will describe the cultural and geographic systems associated with the historical figures in SS3H2a.

SS3CG2: The student will discuss the character of different historical figures in SS3H2a.

GRADE 5

SS5H5: The student will explain how the Great Depression and New Deal affected the lives of millions of Americans.

THEATER

GRADE 3

TAES3.2: Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods

TAES3.3: Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments

TAES3.7: Integrating various art forms, other content areas, and life experiences to create theatre

GRADE 4

TAES4.2: Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods

TAES4.3: Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments

TAES4.7: Integrating various art forms, other content areas, and life experiences to create theatre

GRADE 5

TAES5.2: Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods

TAES5.3: Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments

TAES5.7: Integrating various art forms, other content areas, and life experiences to create theatre

National Standards

SOCIAL STUDIES

NSS-USH.5-12.8: The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945):

- Understands the causes of the Great Depression and how it affected American society
- Understands how the New Deal addressed the Great Depression, transformed American federalism, and initiated the welfare state
- Understands the causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs

THEATER ARTS

Standard 1: Script writing by the creation of improvisations and scripted scenes based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history

Standard 2: Acting by developing basic acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes