

National Standards

SOCIAL STUDIES

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

- 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



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ArtsNow
Teaching and Learning Across the Curriculum

Curriculum guides provide differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. The guides do not necessarily imply mastery of standards, but are intended to inspire and equip educators.

Perspective • Expository Writing • World War II •



Embody the character with monologue and improvisation!

Students use photos of people in real life World War II events as a springboard to write dialogue between the people in photograph. Students are paired up and create a scene that addresses the issues surrounding World War II. Working as an ensemble to write the scene allows opportunities for collaboration and compromise. After the scenes are written, students bring the photos to life in front of the class in a theatre format. This allows the students to see other's point of view while digging deeper into the events and life of World War II. By allowing your students to explore their knowledge of World War II through the eyes of someone who was there, they learn empathy and better embody the subject matter. This exercise is a wonderful tool to increase presentation skills, empathy and ensemble in your classroom.

Essential Question

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

Process

- Begin by reviewing World War II with your students.
- Creating Characters
- Pass out photo pages
- Have students write their name on the top right hand corner of the visual.
- Explain that these photos were taken during the time of World War II.
- Ask the students to closely observe the person that is circled in the top photo.
- Ask students to identify the historical figure pictured in the middle photo and study the person.
- Ask students to identify the historical event pictured in the bottom photo and study it.
- Based on the circled person in the top photo's point of view, have them list the following on the paper:
 - Character's name
 - Character's age
 - Where do they live?
 - How does he/she feel about the historical person in the middle picture?
 - How did the historical event in the bottom picture affect their life?
 - What is the character's greatest fear?
 - What is the character's greatest dream?
- Play music from the World War II era while students are writing. Give them time to finish, about 5 minutes.

Character Grounding

- Using a voice different than your own, the voice of the character circled in the picture, on a count of three, softly but aloud, tell me what you had for dinner last night.
- Now sit like your character sits, different than yourself.
- Imagine your character is wearing an article of clothing that you don't have on. On a count of three adjust that article of clothing.

Dialogue Example

- So, you have brought your character to life by using your voice, mind and body. Very cool!
- What if two of the characters in the top picture started to talk to each other?
- What would we call this? A monologue? (dialogue)
- What do we put around the words or sentences that a person says? (quotation marks)
- Let's explore and see what a dialogue might sound like between two WWII American soldiers in this picture.
 - Look at picture in Power point.
 - Have the class create dialogue with these elements as a group:
 - Where are they?
 - Which two soldiers are going to talk?
 - What do they think about Hitler?
 - What do they think about Pearl Harbor photo?
 - What is their greatest dream for their country?
 - Who is going to talk first?
 - Demo and create about 4 lines of dialogue between the two characters pictured.
 - Writing dialogue is that simple! Just writing down what two people are saying to each other.
 - Let's try it with the pictures of the statues that you have in front of you.

Materials

- WWII Handout Visuals
- Blank Paper and Pencils
- Music and Sound Source

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.

Scene Writing

- Pair the students up to fit the characters depicted in the scenes on the photo pages.
- Pass out one blank piece of paper per group and ask them to use only one pencil.
- Now you have the other person in the statue.
 - Introduce yourself as your character.
 - Share the details that you wrote down on your paper.
 - Character's name
 - Character's age
 - Where do they live?
 - How does he/she feel about the historical person in the middle picture?
 - How did the historical event in the bottom picture affect their life?
 - What is the character's greatest fear?
 - What is the character's greatest dream for their country?
- Excellent work! Now just start talking to each other as if the picture came to life. Make sure to talk about these things:
 - Your relationship.
 - Where you are in the picture.
 - How you feel about the person in the middle picture.
 - How has the event in the bottom picture changed your lives?
 - How WWII it is going to change your lives.
- Allow students some time to talk through this.
- Now let's write down what you said or the dialogue between the two of you.
- Turn on music and let groups write dialogue.
- When they are finished talk about how they have actually written a scene. They have told part of a story in playwriting format.

Presenting Scenes

- Today we are going to learn about how World War II changed so many lives around the world by hearing from real people. Let's bring these photos and their stories to life!
- Ask each group to walk up to the front of the room, in character, and assume the positions they have in the photo.
- When you call "action" they need to bring the photo to life.
- Clap when they are finished and give them one specific piece of positive feedback.

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.
- Scenes accurately reflect historical understandings of WWII.

Common Core Georgia Performance Standards

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

GRADE 5

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

ELACC5SL1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

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, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

ELACC6SL1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 6 topics, texts, and issues*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

ELACC6SL2: Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

ELACC6SL6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

Georgia Performance Standards

SOCIAL STUDIES

GRADE 5

SS5H6: The student will explain the reasons for America's involvement in World War II.

GRADE 6

SS6H7: The student will explain conflict and change in Europe to the 21st century.

b. Explain the impact of WWII in terms of the Holocaust, the origins of the Cold War, and the rise of Superpowers.

THEATER

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

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