



**Educational
Theatre
Association®**

Grade Level: 5th
Time to Teach: 50-60 Minutes

It Looks Like All My Dreams: Exploring The Big Orange Spot Through Drama

By Alicia Lark Fuss



DESCRIPTION

In this creative drama lesson, students will engage in drama structures to explore the picture book [The Big Orange Splot](#). As they dramatize sections of the story, students will reflect on their own future hopes and share those with the group.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will explore the personal value of dreams as goals and/or inspiration.

Students will explore what it means to respect and appreciate the goals of others as a community.

Students will demonstrate a character's inner thoughts through physical choices as communication tools.

Students will explain personal reactions to artistic choices to deepen understanding.

SEL COMPETENCIES TAUGHT

Self-awareness, which is the ability to recognize one's emotions and know one's strengths and limitations

Social awareness, which is the ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others

2014 NATIONAL CORE THEATRE STANDARDS

TH:Cr.1.1.5.c Imagine how a character's inner thoughts impact the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr4.1.5.b Use physical choices to create meaning in a drama/theatre work

TH:Re7.1.5.a Explain personal reactions to artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation.

MATERIALS REQUIRED FOR INSTRUCTION

- [The Big Orange Splot](#) by Daniel Manus Pinkwater
 - For reference, you can view a read-aloud here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iRL8d_6FEHw
- Drawing paper (enough for each student)
- Crayons or markers (enough for students to share)

OPENING (5 MIN)

SEL SKILLS: ACHIEVE ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION; RECOGNIZE STRENGTHS, NEEDS, AND VAULES

1. Direct students to find their own space in the room and sit with eyes closed.
2. Ask students to silently brainstorm for 30 seconds, thinking of some of their personal dreams. Clarify that you are asking them to think about hope/goal dreams, not the kind they have in their sleep. These dreams can be practical, outlandish, wishful...
3. Ask students to select one of these dreams to work with for the lesson. Students should choose a dream that they are comfortable sharing with the rest of the group.
4. Ask students to stand and create a still image (or statue) with their bodies that represents their dream. This image may or may not be literal.
5. Ask students questions about their dream and encourage them to make changes to their statues accordingly. For example, you might ask students, “Where do you feel tension in your body? Make a physical adjustment to your statue to either release or intensify this tension.” “Keeping your dream in mind, consider what parts of your body you aren’t thinking about or engaging. Make a change to your statue to engage your whole body.” “What level are you using for your statue? Try creating a still image on another level that still reflects your dream.”
6. Finally, ask students to think about all the adjustments they have tried, and direct students to settle on one statue that will represent their dream. Ask students to hold this statue in their memory—to remember how each muscle feels. They will be re-visiting these statues later in the lesson.

Instructional Procedures

SECTION 1 (5 MIN)

SEL SKILLS: RECOGNIZE DIVERSE THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND PERSPECTIVES

1. Ask students to relax from the statues and come sit on the floor in front of you.
2. Explain that students will be working with [The Big Orange Splot](#) in today’s lesson. Read through page 13, paragraph 1 (up until “The people said”), modeling vocal expression for the group.

3. Ask students to stand and begin walking through the space. Ask them to imagine that they are walking through a neighborhood they live in. Guide students to begin imagining typical neighborhood sites, i.e. neighbors walking the dog; the beautiful garden of Mrs. So-and-So; they toys in the yard of the Whosit twins, etc.
4. Tell students that when you say, “Freeze,” students should stop and shape their bodies as though their character* has just seen Mr. Plumbean’s house.
**Using the word character will give students permission to give a reaction different from what their own might have been.*
5. Explain that in a moment, you’ll begin tapping students on the shoulder. Once tapped, students should vocalize a thought that matches their still image. Give students a few seconds of thinking time, and begin tapping students to share their thoughts.

POSSIBLE EXTENSION (5 MIN)

6. Ask students to relax. Explain that when you say, “Begin,” students will move in role as a neighbor to find a partner. In pairs, students will begin to discuss the sight of Mr. Plumbean’s house. Move through the group, sidecoaching as needed. It’s helpful to sidecoach by joining the conversations in role, asking questions and guiding students to new perspectives by participating as a character.
7. After about a minute of dialogue, ask each pair to match up with another. Continue discussion in a group of 4. Encourage students to share their opinion with the group. Will they try to convince others to share their view? Will they be swayed by another’s opinion?

SECTION 2 (10 MIN)

SEL SKILLS: RECOGNIZE DIVERSE THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND PERSPECTIVES

8. Direct students to return to their seated positions on the floor in front of you.
9. Pick up where you left off and read through page 19.
10. Ask students to form two straight lines (A & B) facing each other. Each student should be facing
11. Ask all the students in line A to step into role as a reporter. The students in line B will step into role as either Mr. Plumbean, or an angry neighbor.
12. Direct the reporters to begin interviewing their subject, gathering as much information as possible. After students have had a minute or so to interview, ask reporters to keep what they learned stored in their brain.

13. Next, ask line B to step into role as a reporter. The students in line A should take one whichever role their partner did not (so if their partner was Mr. Plumbean, they will be an angry neighbor).
14. Give students a minute or so to interview. Then, ask students to raise their hands from their places in line and share some of the interesting facts they learned as the reporter.
15. Explain that next, each student (or a few that you select, if the group is large) will take a turn walking between the two lines as Mr. Plumbean. As they walk down the “street,” the neighbors on each side should speak aloud a piece of advice they think it is important for Mr. Plumbean to hear. Encourage students to listen to the other advice being given, and try to share a different thought or perspective. The idea is to give Mr. Plumbean as much information as possible to consider.

SECTION 3 (10 MIN)

SEL SKILLS: ACHIEVE ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION; RECOGNIZE STRENGTHS, NEEDS, AND VALUES

16. Direct students to return to their seated positions on the floor in front of you.
17. Pick up where you left off and read through the middle of page 25.
18. Distribute paper and crayons. If the floor is hard, students can remain seated on floor.
19. Ask students to draw a house that is based on the dream they chose at the beginning of the lesson. Let them know that they won’t have to show their drawing to anyone, but encourage them to add as much detail as possible.
20. Give a minute or two of drawing time, and then continue reading through page 29.
21. Explain that now, each student (or selected volunteers if class is large) will give a guided tour of the exterior of their home. As the leader, give the first tour as a demonstration. Lead students to the part in the room where your “dream house” lives. Using gesture and descriptive language, take about 30 seconds to help students to visualize the unique aspects of your home. Help them to imagine that it is right there in the room with you all.
22. Next, ask for student volunteers and take tours as time allows. Model giving reactions to the tours to keep all students engaged in the process, and to encourage them to be active participants as tour guests.

SECTION 4 (10 MIN)

SEL SKILLS: ACHIEVE ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION; RECOGNIZE STRENGTHS, NEEDS, AND VALUES; RECOGNIZE DIVERSE THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND PERSPECTIVES; RESPECT OTHERS

23. Guide students back to their seated story-time positions. Show students the pictures of the dream houses in the book, and finish reading the story.
24. Direct students to form two lines as in the previous activity. Ask them to quickly work together to create a physical representation of a “Neat Street.” Give students about 30 seconds to a minute to work.
25. Encourage students to observe the Neat Street from their current place.
26. Explain that when you tap students on the shoulder, they will shape their bodies into the still image of their dream, created at the beginning of the lesson. Student by student, transform the “Neat Street” into a “Dream Street.”
27. Explain that this time, when you tap students on the shoulder, they will say their dream aloud.
28. Finally, by taps, allow each student to walk through the street and observe the “Dream Street” created by the group. If group is large, ask students to observe from their current position.

ASSESSMENT

FORMATIVE

1. Observe student responses to dramatic prompts and side coaching throughout the lesson. Are students generating independent responses? How are they engaging their bodies, voices, and imaginations in the drama?
2. Observe for demonstrations of self and social awareness. In the sections focused on personal dreams, are students able to identify and share something that’s important to them? Do they give space for other students to share and participate as active, supportive listeners?

SUMMATIVE

	WOW!	GOT IT	ALMOST	LET ME HELP YOU
<p>Creating Contrasting Images</p> <p>TH:Pr4.1.5.b Use physical choices to create meaning in a drama/theatre work</p> <p>“I can use my body in many different ways to communicate contrasting ideas.”</p>	<p>Creates contrasting statues that show dynamic emotion, communicating ideas and subtext.</p> <p>Statues demonstrate strong understanding of body’s range of motion (levels, shape, tension) and incorporate nuanced facial expressions.</p>	<p>Creates contrasting statues that communicate recognizable ideas.</p> <p>Statues demonstrate understanding of body’s range of motion and physical expression, including some difference between facial expressions.</p>	<p>With coaching, students are able to create contrasting statues that communicate recognizable ideas.</p> <p>With coaching, student creates simple poses, and expands the range of body motion. Poses may or may not include facial expressions.</p>	<p>Student statues lack intention; ideas are unclear. Statues may show very little contrast.</p> <p>Poses use very little of the body’s range and/or facial expressions.</p>
<p>Bringing to Life the Character’s Thoughts</p> <p>TH:Cr.1.1.5.c Imagine how a character’s inner thoughts impact the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.</p> <p>“I can use the clues from a story to imagine what a character might think, say or do.”</p>	<p>Student connects deeply to the character’s perspective, extending the story in new and interesting ways while remaining appropriate to the character.</p>	<p>Student uses clues from the story to respond in role and accurately portray a character’s perspective.</p>	<p>Student responds in role; however needs some help or coaching to respond from the character’s perspective.</p>	<p>Student responses are hard to connect to the story or character perspectives.</p>

Using the anecdotal assessment form, take notes on student responses during the closing reflection to assess the progress toward meeting the learning objectives. Include any other relevant notes on the formative assessment, including student quotes that stand out.

CLOSING (5 MIN)

SEL SKILLS: ACHIEVE ACCURATE SELF-PERCEPTION; RECOGNIZE STRENGTHS, NEEDS, AND VALUES; RECOGNIZE DIVERSE THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, AND PERSPECTIVES; RESPECT OTHERS; COMMUNICATE RESPECTFULLY

Ask students to sit in a circle. Facilitate a short discussion, asking participants to reflect on their experiences. This is also an exercise in explaining personal reactions to artistic choices.

What do they think the author was trying to communicate? What was it like sharing their dreams with the class, and seeing the dreams of others? What did you notice about the way we used our bodies and voices to communicate in this lesson? What will students take away from this experience? What will you take away as their leader?

LEARNING FOR ALL

PLEASE USE THE SPACE BELOW FOR SUGGESTIONS FOR ANY SPECIFIC ADAPTATIONS OR ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDED FOR NEURO-DIVERSE OR ATYPICAL LEARNERS.

Movement limitations: modify movements as needed, considering how floor sitting and moving to different arrangements (pair work, line ups) may need adjustments

Vision limitations: ensure proximity to book illustrations/drawings/physical work, provide a braille copy and/or audio description as needed. Describe physical movements and drawings to include all.

Hearing limitations: ensure proximity to read aloud sections and verbal directions; provide a pre-recorded version of book

ELL/ESL students: provide a pre-recorded version of book in their primary language

Neurodiverse learners: provide a chill-out corner and support breaks as needed; think about proximity in group activities (circles/lines) and adjust for comfortable personal space as necessary; consider a pre-lesson conversation about the way we use the word “dreams” in an abstract sense to ensure understanding.

HOW DOES THIS LESSON'S CONTENT MODEL INCLUSIVITY AND HONOR DIVERSITY?

This book visually represents people of different ethnicities and the dream houses reference different cultures and parts of the world. Perhaps this goal could be more explicitly investigated by wrapping this lesson into a unit exploring other books with similar themes by a diverse range of authors. Suggestions might be: *The Almost Impossible Thing* by Basak Agaoglu; *Dreamers* by Yuyi Morales; *What Do You Do With a Chance* by Kobi Yamada. Music from cultures representing the group could also be used to underscore entrance to the space and the opening activity.

WORKS CITED

The Big Orange Splot by Daniel Manus Pinkwater

This lesson is inspired by Dr. Megan Alrtuz, who introduced me to The Big Orange Splot and the concept of exploring picture books through drama structures.

ANECDOTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Lesson Title:

Objectives:

Observations:

This can include student quotes, photos or short video clips of lesson segments for future reference, or samples of student work.

Student Skills Assessment	
Strengths/Demonstrated Skills	Challenges/Growth Areas

Future Focus	
Adaptations to consider for this lesson with future groups:	Ideas to further the skill development of this group: