



## Expression

Underground Railroad Fine Arts Unit:  
to accompany the content unit  
Includes: Art, Music, Dance, and Drama

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## Hidden Expression

### Quilts-Art

#### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the conclusion of the lesson, students will be able describe how slaves used quilts to communicate to one another
- Affective: At the conclusion of the lesson, students will feel empathetic for the slaves and feel proud of the quilt that they made
- Psychomotor: During the lesson, students will be actively listening to a story and then creating a quilt

#### Materials:

- [Sweet Clara Book](#)
- Paper
- Markers
- Colored Pencils
- Crayons

#### Lesson Plan:

Anticipatory Set: Have you ever sent messages in a secret code? what have you seen or used to write in code?

Transition: Slaves used quilts to speak in code about when they would escape. Today we are going to learn about how they embedded codes into their quilts

#### Instruction:

- Read "Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt"
- Class discussion
  - what were slaves lives like?
  - why would they want to escape?
    - why couldn't they leave when they wanted too?
      - why were codes then important for them to use?
  - In the book did you see a secret code that they slaves used?
    - what was it?
    - How did they use it?

Transition: we are going to make our own quilts with a hidden map inside of it

#### guided Practice:

- Students will make a quilt (that they draw) out of paper and other mediums

- Teacher will have a pre-made quilt and explain how they made their quilt and what the secret code was
- They will start their map from the classroom and then make a path to anywhere in the school that they deem to be a safe place for them
  - They will create their design using the same strategies that were used in the book
  - Students will have 30-45 minutes
- Students will then be split into groups and present their quilts to their peers with an explanation of why they made it

Independent:

- Students will write on a separate piece of paper an explanation of their quilt

## Spirituals-Music

### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will understand the concept and historical context of spirituals and identify the secret messages found in the lyrics.
- Affective: Students will feel empathy for the slaves and amazement at the secrecy of the lyrics.
- Psychomotor: Students will create a personal spiritual that includes a line from a known spiritual

### Standards:

- 4.4.2.4.1 4. The differences and similarities of cultures around the world are attributable to their diverse origins and histories, and interactions with other cultures throughout time.

### Plan:

- watch the \_\_\_\_\_ on spirituals
- Talk about the differences between hymns and spirituals
  - They were a way for the slaves to communicate and express themselves
- Play the song [Swing Low Sweet Chariot](#)
- Periodically stop the video to discuss what the spiritual means
  - As you do this, students will fill out a worksheet that breaks the lyrics down and they can write the meaning next to them
- Play the song again uninterrupted
- Distribute a piece of the song lyric to each student (see attached document)
- Students will use this lyric to compose their own spiritual
  - Spirituals should reflect the life of a slave or impending travel on the underground Railroad
  - Students should include a "code" with their song, so the teacher can see the meaning of the song
    - Historical facts can be included but must be accurate
- See if anyone is willing to share their songs

### Formative Assessment:

- Students identifying hidden meaning in "Swing Low Sweet Chariot"
- The spiritual they composed

### worksheets:

- [Coded Lyrics worksheet](#)
  - [Answer Key](#)
- [Distribute these lyrics](#)

## Revealed Expression

### Dance

#### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to identify ways in which the Quakers and Harriet Tubman worked together. Students will also be able to explain how dance helps one express themselves.
- Affective: Students will find new ways to express their emotions through dance and will feel appreciative of the work that Harriet Tubman and the Quakers did.
- Psychomotor: During the lesson, students will use dance to express their emotions.

#### Materials:

- [Harriet Tubman and the Quakers Dance](#)

**Anticipatory Set:** Play the video without asking any questions or prepping them for it.

#### Lesson:

Start with a conversation with the class asking these prompting questions:

- what are you observing? (a dance)
- who are the characters being portrayed? (Harriet Tubman and the Quakers)
  - This question may need some help using reminders of previous lessons taught
- what did Harriet Tubman and the Quakers do? (work together to form the Underground Railroad)
- In the dance, what are Harriet Tubman and the Quakers doing? (Answers will vary)
- These dancers are not using words to tell you what they are using. what do they use instead of words to express themselves? (Dance)
  - Keep using prompts to get students to say "bodies"
    - "Tell me more"
    - "what do we use to dance?"
- Does anyone know what kind of dance these people are using? (a combination of ballet and modern dance)
- How do the costumes help you to understand what is happening? (Answers will vary)

- How and why did the director use locomotor movement (walking, running, skipping), non-locomotor movement (bending, stretching), and non-movement? ( )
  - Explain what locomotor and non-locomotor mean
- What emotions do you see through their movements? (Answers will vary)
- What props are used and why? (Answers will vary)
- How does the set influence the production?

Play the video again and tell students to notice all the things that we just talked about

### Guided Practice

- Students will be divided up into two teams to recreate a dance to the song "[Harriet Tubman](#)"
  - Things to be considered
    - Students will need to use the concepts talked about in class
- Students will have thirty minutes to create their dance
- Each group will perform their dance in front of their peers
  - Classroom management will be utilized to explain to students proper etiquette when watching their peers dance
- The class will then have a discussion of how the dances were similar and different

### Independent work

- Students will be asked to draw their favorite scene from a dance that they saw during the lesson. On the back of the paper, they will write what about the dance was significant to them

## Drama

### Objectives:

- Cognitive: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will be able to explain how the Underground Railroad was used and the risks taken
- Affective: At the conclusion of this lesson, students will feel empathetic for the slaves
- Psychomotor: Students will follow the teacher around the room as their guide and make decisions about how to get to freedom

### Materials:

- Rope
- Letters from Harriet
- Two sacks
- Tape
- Refer to: [Drama question activity](#)

### Lesson

Anticipatory set: The desks and chairs will be pushed aside. There will be a pile of sacks in one corner, a box taped on the floor in the middle of the room, and a ribbon placed on the floor in another corner. Students will be instructed to sit in the "time machine" (box taped on the floor).

Transition: Explain to the students that we will be going back to the year 1885 to help one of Harriet's friends escape.

### Instruction/guided Practice:

- In order to make the time machine work, the students must repeat 1,8,8,5 five times
  - The teacher needs to seem really excited in order for the students to be engaged
  - "Did you feel the that thud? we must be here"
- The teacher will then pose as "Emily," Harriet's friend
  - She explains to the students that we need to be extra quiet and sneaky because there are people out to get the slaves and those that help them
- Explain that there are a number of safe houses we have to go to and Harriet told them her where the first one is.
  - Guide students to the first house
- Have students look for a letter and chose a student to read it
  - Students will then volunteer ideas of what to do
- Have another student lead them to the second safe house
- Chose a student to read the letter

- Students will again volunteer ideas of what to do
- when they help Emily cross the ribbon to freedom, students will then return to the time machine
- Repeat 2,0,1,6 five times

### Closing

- Class discussion
  - who created the Underground Railroad?
    - why?
  - when you were there, was it dangerous?
    - why?
  - was the Underground Railroad actually underground?
  - How did it work?

### Independent:

- Have students journal: why did some slaves not want to cross the border to freedom?