



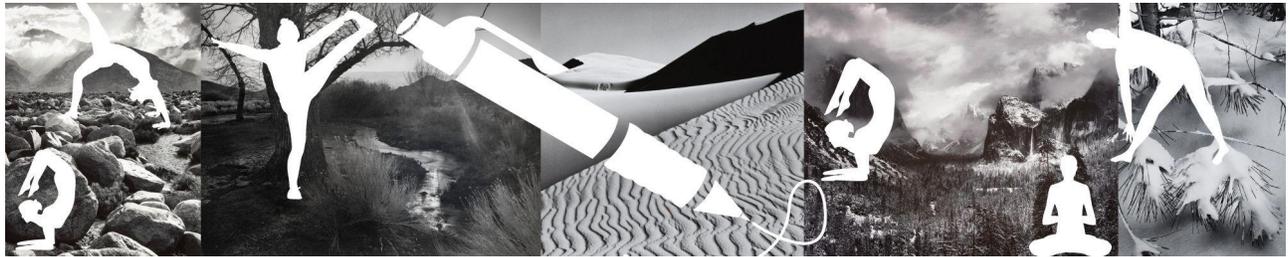
artsNOW

Integrated learning solutions

DRAMATIC WRITING WITH ANSEL ADAMS

Grade Band: 2-3

Content Focus: Theatre & ELA



LEARNING DESCRIPTION

Using Ansel Adams photographs for inspiration, students will explore creative writing, directing, and acting.

LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
How can visual art be a catalyst for writing and acting?	<p>I can use a photograph as inspiration for creative writing and acting based in a particular setting.</p> <p>I can work with a group to bring to life a scene inspired by a photograph.</p>



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GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 2: ELACC2W3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.</p> <p>ELACC2SL4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.</p> <p>Grade 3: ELAGSE3W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.</p> <p>ELAGSE3SL4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.</p>	<p>Grade 2: TAES2.2 Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods.</p> <p>TAES2.3 Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.</p> <p>VA2.RE.1 Discuss personal works of art and the artwork of others to enhance visual literacy.</p> <p>VA2.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p> <p>Grade 3: TAES3.2 Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods.</p> <p>TAES3.3 Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.</p> <p>VA3.RE.1 Use a variety of approaches for art criticism and to critique personal works of art and the artwork of others to enhance visual literacy.</p> <p>VA3.CN.1 Investigate and discover the personal relationships of artists to community, culture, and the world through making and studying art.</p>

SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 2: ELA.2.C.3.1 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences. When writing: a. establish and describe character(s) and setting; b. sequence events and use temporal words to signal event order (e.g., before, after).</p>	<p>THEATRE Anchor Standard 3: I can act in improvised scenes and written scripts.</p> <p>VISUAL ARTS Anchor Standard 5: I can interpret and evaluate the meaning of an artwork.</p>



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Grade 3:

ELA.3.C.3.1 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences. When writing:

- establish a setting and introduce a narrator or characters;
- use temporal words and phrases to sequence a plot structure;
- use descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop characters.

KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<p><u>Character</u> - Actor or actress in a specified role.</p> <p><u>Setting</u> - Environment or place of action.</p> <p><u>Plot</u> - List, timetable, or scheme dealing with any of the various arrangements of a story or play.</p>	<p><u>Theater</u> - Dramatic literature or its performance; drama.</p> <p><u>Photography</u> - the process of capturing an image – a photograph – with a camera, either on paper or through a digital medium.</p>

MATERIALS

- Index cards and lined paper
- Pencils
- Copies of Ansel Adams photographs (old calendars are great sources for these)

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN**Opening/Activating Strategy****Settings**

- Have students stand by their desks, or in open space.
- Call out a setting (e.g., desert, baseball stadium, birthday party, or under the ocean), and have students enact a person or thing in the environment. As appropriate, allow students to use voices and make sounds, or instruct them to be in the setting in silence.
- Use observational language to comment on student choices (e.g., “I see Sara has her arms to be a cactus” or “Dylan is wiggling his body as a snake on the rug.”)
- Continue to call out a variety of settings. Alternate between natural settings and human settings. Allow students to be objects or natural forces in the settings, or people interacting with the settings.



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Process

- Pass out Ansel Adams photos to the students. Explain that Ansel Adams was a famous American photographer known for his photos of American outdoor landscapes including Yosemite, Big Sur, the Sierras.
- Ask the students to study their photo and examine the visual details: “What is the first thing your eye is drawn to? What lines and shapes do you see in the photo? Did Adams take it from near or far? How do the light and dark areas work together? Where is the light source in the image, and which areas are in shadow? Why do you think Adams chose to take this photograph?”
- Have students imagine/visualize details about the setting in the photo, saying: “Where is this place? You can make it up. It can be anywhere in the world. What season is it--winter, early spring, etc.? What time of day is it - early morning, high noon, sunset? What sounds and smells are there? Is the wind blowing? Are birds chirping or other animals making sounds even though you can't see them? Can you smell pine trees, flowers, or the ocean? If you could place yourself in this picture, where would you be?”
- Tell the students: “Place the picture in front of you and stand or sit as you imagine you would be in the picture. Now, close your eyes and take a deep breath of the clean air in this place. Listen to the sounds in your environment. Take another deep breath and smell the beautiful aromas.”
- One at a time, ask each student to make a sound that they hear in their environment.
- Ask students to think of 3 descriptive phrases about their environment. For example, instead of saying, “the wind,” describe “the loud blowing wind”, “the fierce cry of an eagle,” or the “steep, snowy mountainside.” Even though the pictures are black and white, encourage students to feel free to use color in their descriptive phrases. Have the students write down their phrases on a card or piece of paper. Ask them how they can expand or add to their phrases to make them more descriptive – suggest including texture, color, size, shape, temperature, or other qualities or details.
- Have students practice using their descriptive phrases in sentences to describe their settings. Instruct them to speak as if they are in the setting (e.g., “I am standing with my feet on the edge of the babbling stream. The water is as cold as ice and shiny like a mirror. I see silvery fish swimming by with lightning speed.”) Coach and assist students as needed.
- Ask student volunteers to come up and present, imagining themselves in the setting in the photograph. They should use their voices and bodies to express the feelings and elements in their writing.

Bringing the Photograph to Life

- Select a student and guide them to cast three classmates as elements in their setting. The student should announce the element and then choose a classmate to portray it. (E.g., “Someone will be the grass blowing in the wind.”) Once chosen, the classmate should come to the front and view the photograph.
- Guide the student to direct the elements, telling each classmate where they will be in the live picture, how they will stand or move, and what sounds they will make.
- Once the setting is established, have the student walk/hike/swim into their environment, take their place, use their body and voice to inhabit the setting (e.g., shivering for a cold setting, speaking loud for a distant setting, walking carefully over sharp stones, using a



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hand to block out the bright sun) and then describe their setting using their descriptive phrases.

- Show the photograph around the room, and solicit comments from the class on how the students brought the setting to life.
- Have additional students volunteer to cast, enter, and describe.

Possibly: once the process is established, allow the students to work in groups in different areas of the room, taking turns to use their group-mates to create their settings.

Closing/Reflection

Ask: "How did we get ideas of what to act from the photos? How did we use our voices and bodies to become elements of the different settings in the photos? Also: How would you describe Ansel Adams's photos to someone who hasn't seen any of them?"

ASSESSMENTS

Formative

- Students created and used three descriptive phrases..
- Students effectively communicated their ideas.
- Students responded appropriately to the Adams images.

Summative

- Students cast and directed their scenes effectively
- Students enacted their roles in the scenes effectively.
- Students' written phrases show awareness of the senses and evocative details.

DIFFERENTIATION

Acceleration:

- Have students write out their ideas in full paragraph format.
- Allow students who are playing elements of the setting to speak from the viewpoints of those elements: "How does the tree feel? What is the lake thinking?"

Remediation:

Use a single photograph with the entire class, and model the process all together. Cast a small group as elements in the setting, and then model being the person entering and inhabiting the setting. Repeat the process with a second photo, drafting a student to be the person entering the setting. You may want to use a photo and have the entire class become elements in the photo, allowing multiple students to be the same thing: mountains, rocks, trees, clouds.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <http://www.anseladams.com>
- <http://www.archives.gov/research/anseladams/>
- “Ansel Adams Original Photograph - Black & White Photography.” *The Ansel Adams Gallery*, shop.anseladams.com/collections/original-photographs-by-ansel-adams. Accessed 28 June 2023.

**This integrated lesson provides differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. Standards referenced at the time of publishing may differ based on each state’s adoption of new standards.*

Ideas contributed and updated by: Susie Spear Purcell and Barry Stewart Mann

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