

Grade 9 Art & Culture Worksheet

Power relations in poetry, dance

Exploring power relations in poetry and dance

Read the following poem:

Song of a German Mother
by Bertolt Brecht

My son, your shiny boots and
Brown shirt were a present from me:
If I'd known then what I know now
I'd have hanged myself from a tree.
My son, when I saw your hand raised
In the Hitler salute that first day
I didn't know those who saluted
Would see their hand wither away.
My son, I can hear your voice speaking:
Of a race of heroes it tells.
I didn't know, guess or see that
You worked in their torture cells.
My son, when I saw you marching
In Hitler's victorious train
I didn't know he who marched off then
Would never come back again.
My son, you told me our country
Was about to come into its own.
I didn't know all it would come to
Was ashes and bloodstained stone.
I saw you wearing your brown shirt.
I should have protested aloud
For I did not know what I now know:
It was your burial shroud.

Part One: Analyse the text

You are going to interpret the text in movement. It is very important that you understand the text completely.

Answer the following questions relating to the text, to demonstrate your understanding.

Questions:

1. What do the following words mean in the context of the poem?

Grade 9 Art & Culture Worksheet

- a. Hitler salute [2]
 - b. Wither [2]
 - c. Victorious [2]
 - d. Come into its own [2]
 - e. Burial shroud [2]
2. Why is this mother full of regret? [4]
3. How does the poem make you feel? [6]

Part Two: Interpret the text in movement

Now that you have analysed the text, you are ready to interpret it in movement.

You will be placed into groups.

Your group must use the text as a stimulus to create a dance sequence. Your dance sequence could tell the story of the poem, or it could focus completely on the feelings the poem explores. You could combine both of these techniques as well. The choice is yours!

Remember to use the techniques that you have learned so far in your dance sequence. The rubric below will help you to understand how you will be assessed.

Grade 9 Art & Culture Worksheet

Rubric to assess dance sequence stimulated by text

Criteria	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Use of text as stimulus	Group has clearly and creatively embraced the narrative and/or emotional message of the text in the dance sequence.	Group has embraced the narrative and/or emotional message of the text in the dance sequence in a pleasing way.	Group fairly able to embrace the narrative and/or emotional message of the text in the dance sequence.	Group unable to embrace the narrative and/or emotional message of the text in the dance sequence.
Dynamic use of space, time and force	Choreography shows excellent use of devices.	Choreography shows pleasing use of devices.	Choreography shows fair use of devices.	Choreography shows poor use of devices.
Quality of movement	Movements are fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.	Movements are mostly fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.	Movements are fairly fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.	Movements are not fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.
Performance energy and expression	Sensitive, emotional and energetic expression.	Mostly sensitive, emotional and energetic expression.	Fairly sensitive, emotional and energetic expression.	Unable to deliver sensitive, emotional and energetic expression.
Group-work	Cohesive, co-operative and mature.	Mostly cohesive, co-operative and fairly mature.	Needs to be more cohesive, co-operative and lacking in maturity.	Not cohesive and lack of co-operation and maturity.

[20 marks]

Grade 9 Art & Culture Worksheet

Suggested Solutions

Question number	Possible marks	Solution
1	20	<p>1. a. Raised hand Nazi salute. b. Waste away. c. Triumphant, conquering. d. Become something to be reckoned with. e. Garments that a body is dressed in for burial. [10]</p> <p>2. Her son has become an instrument of torture and misplaced power at the hands of the Nazi regime. She once thought that he was doing the right thing, but along with thousands of other people, she and her son were misled by the Hitler and the Nazi's. She regrets losing her son in this way. [4]</p> <p>3. Allow for personal interpretation of the poem. These answers are merely guides. [6]</p>
2	20	See rubric in Appendix of Assessment Tools.

Grade 9 Art & Culture Worksheet

Rubric to assess dance sequence stimulated by text

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Dynamic use of space, time and force	Choreography shows excellent use of devices.	Choreography shows pleasing use of devices.	Choreography shows fair use of devices.	Choreography shows poor use of devices.
Quality of movement	Movements are fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.	Movements are mostly fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.	Movements are fairly fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.	Movements are not fluid, flexible, rhythmic and meaningful.
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