



It's Music Time!

Giraffes Can't Dance – Cross-Curricular Arts Lessons

MATERIALS

- Book: Giraffes can't Dance by Giles Andreae, Guy Parker-Rees
- Photocopied pages of key parts of the story to distribute to groups
- Overhead or photocopies, 1 per group, of Choral Reading Group Reflection

BOOK SUMMARY

Gerald is a clumsy giraffe that learns to dance to his own special music after being teased.

TEACHING POINTS

All grades-character building, diversity, learning new skills, confidence, perseverance, teasing

K-3-exploring rhyming words, chanting, animal movements, specific movement vocabulary, body parts, feelings, expressions, role playing

3-5's-choral reading exploring elements of music, soundscapes using specific parts of the book, writing in role, tableaux

DETAILED LESSON 3-5 CHORAL READING

Before Reading

Explain to the class that they are going to listen to a story about a giraffe named Gerald, who gets teased because he is clumsy and unable to dance like the other animals. However, Gerald meets a special friend who helps him. Ask the children if someone has ever helped them learn how to do something new. How did they feel when they could not do what everyone else was doing? How did they feel once they learned how to do it?

After Reading

Encourage the students to discover the meaning of the story. What did Gerald have to do in order to become a dancer? Is it important that everyone is able to do the same thing well? Ask the class why they think the author wrote this story. What did he want children to learn from Gerald's experience? (3 min)

Choose the page "Hey, look at clumsy Gerald", the animals all sneered "Giraffes can't dance, you silly fool! Oh, Gerald, you're so weird."

Review the meaning of the words.

Select a few students to work with you in front of the class. Tell students that in groups, they will work on a choral reading of a specific page in the book.

Experiment with a tempo, loud and soft voice, repetition, echoing (refer to Choral Reading Group Reflection).

Choose another group of students to just use movements, take suggestions from the class to depict their page.

Divide groups, have students use at least three options for their chant and hand out selected pages from the story along with the choral reading group reflection.

Work in groups, monitor progress.

Present at the end of class. Have the audience guess which options the group focused on. Invite the students to give feed back by providing 2 stars and a wish (two things they liked, one thing the group could improve upon).