

Program 2

Responding to the Arts

Description

How is our perception of a work of art influenced by what we know about the time and place in which it was created? How does music establish a mood or atmosphere? How do you evaluate a work of art?

In Program 2, you will:

- come to understand how social and historical context can affect the creation and perception of art,
- recognize the creative intentions behind works of art and discover techniques artists use to carry out their intentions,
- explore how form and style help shape a work of art, and
- master and apply a process of critical evaluation to decide whether the work of art successfully carries out the artist's intention.

In this program, Learner Teams and students examine two multi-arts performance pieces from different eras, *Quidam* (1996) and *Parade* (1917), to identify and examine elements that audiences might perceive as art. In four hands-on lessons, they:

- research *Quidam* and *Parade* to learn more about the characters, imagery, and context in these productions, and about the art forms used to express these elements;
- study the concept of “program music” to explore how composers express ideas and images;
- investigate the early-20th century theatrical form of vaudeville to see its influence on the creators of *Quidam*; and
- assume the role of critic and learn to evaluate works of art.

In this session you will write, share, and discuss your own critiques of the opening sequence of *Quidam*.

Learning Objectives

- Investigate *Parade* and *Quidam* through individual and group research to understand the social and historical settings in which these works were conceptualized and produced.
- Recognize melodic themes and nonmusical sounds in *Parade* and *Quidam* and discuss their significance within the dramatic context of each piece.
- Perform a piece of music using body percussion and percussion instruments.
- Explore the theatrical traditions of vaudeville and create a performance piece in the style of vaudeville.
- Understand the purpose of criticism and a process for performance criticism.
- Analyze written criticism to identify the purpose and the author's process. Respond to *Quidam* in-role as a critic.

Guiding Questions

The following are questions for your group to consider as you work through the session.

- What does "multi-arts" mean?
- What is criticism?

Key Concepts/Vocabulary

- *Body percussion*: using the body as a percussive instrument; in the music lesson, Susanne uses different parts of the body to introduce parts that will be played on specific instruments, preparing students to be successful when they transfer to instruments
- *Listening map*: a simple picture representation of what is being heard; it is a useful visual reinforcement to help students with auditory focus
- *Solfège*: general music training to help develop sight-reading skills; the term also refers to hand signs that help singers learn pitches (Susanne uses these signs when she teaches the melody for "Rolling in the Grass")
- *Tuning fork*: a small, two-pronged, steel instrument that gives a fixed tone when struck and is useful for tuning musical instruments or setting a vocal pitch

Workshop Session (On-Site)

Materials and Resources

- Videotape or broadcast of Program 2—Responding to the Arts
- Handout: Criticism: Purposes and Process
- Handout: Jean Cocteau's Scenario for *Parade*
- Reading: Cirque du Soleil (from Program 1)
- Reading: *Quidam* (from Program 1)
- Reading: Criticism
- Reading: *Parade*
- Reading: Vaudeville
- Reading: Listening Map for *Quidam*
- Reading: Listening Map for *Parade*
- Reading: Setting Up Your Discovery Stations

Handouts and readings are available in the Appendix of this guide or on the workshop Web site.

Optional: Extended Session

Like all of the activities described in this guide, the activities described below are designed to guide participants in a two-hour workshop session. For a more in-depth experience of Program 2, explore the alternative Extended Session featured on the workshop Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom. This four-hour session includes expanded on-site activities that will enhance significantly your understanding of the material presented in the workshop.

Facilitator: If you have elected to explore the Extended Session featured on the workshop Web site, do so now. Refer to the Web site for required materials, handouts, and instructions.

Getting Ready (20 minutes)

Discuss reactions to the opening three minutes (or the entire performance) of *Quidam*.

- In what time and place does the action appear to occur?
- How do these cultural clues affect your experience of the performance?

Workshop Session (On-Site), cont'd.

Watch the Workshop Program (60 minutes)

View Program 2—Responding to the Arts.

As you watch the program, consider the following focus questions.

Lesson 1: Researching Clues

- Based on the handout, Jean Cocteau's Scenario for *Parade* (see Appendix or Web), what kinds of images come to mind? Think in terms of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
- What are the advantages of group research, and how can students be prepared for success in this model?

Lesson 2: Musical Cues

- What is "program music," and how does the music in *Quidam* express mood?
- How have key vocabulary words been integrated into this lesson?

Lesson 3: Vaudeville

- What are the important elements in the theatrical style "vaudeville," and where do you see influences of this style in *Quidam*?
- How do the students mix elements of reality and fantasy to create their vaudeville performances?

Lesson 4: Critic School

- What are the essential elements of criticism? How is criticism useful in understanding works of art?
- How does this performance task serve to assess student understandings in dance, music, theatre, and visual art?

Suggested Activities and Discussion (40 minutes)

Writing Criticism (30 minutes)

View (or recall) the three-minute opening sequence of *Quidam*, with the purpose of writing a critique of this segment.

Divide into three groups:

- Group 1 will write a description of the opening sequence without interpretation or judgment.
- Group 2 will write an analysis of how artistic elements were employed and to what effect.
- Group 3 will write an evaluation of the opening sequence with supporting evidence for their opinions.

Facilitator: Distribute and discuss the handout, Criticism: Purposes and Process.

Share the findings with the group. Discuss points of disagreement and why people have different opinions.

Reflection (10 minutes)

- Identify the progression of Bloom's Taxonomy (knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation) in the four lessons you saw. In what ways are students challenged to synthesize and evaluate through these lessons?
- How has your understanding of "multi-arts" and "criticism" changed?
- In what ways will an expanded understanding of the criticism process lead your students to higher levels of thinking?
- How do you envision collaboration with your colleagues, as you begin to think about integrating the arts into your curriculum?

Facilitator: Use the following questions to focus a closing discussion.

Between Sessions (On Your Own)

Homework Assignment

If possible, introduce the purposes and process of criticism to your students and have them work in small groups to write a critique of a work of visual art, dance, music, or theatre with which you all are familiar. Discuss students' ideas together as a group.

Be prepared to respond to the following questions at the next workshop session.

- What knowledge base was necessary for your students to succeed?
- How did your students work together?
- With what kinds of vocabulary did they need the most help?

You can find the complete lesson plans and handouts on the workshop Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom. Audio and video demonstration materials related to these lessons can be found on the Classroom Demonstration Materials videotape, which will be provided free to purchasers of the workshop tapes.

If you are unable to explore these activities with your students at this time, think about how you could adapt this lesson for your classroom. Prepare a lesson plan in your journal.

Optional Activities

Other enrichment activities can boost your learning between workshop sessions. Consider the recommended activities below and choose those that best meet your needs. Time permitting, you might share what you find out before or after your next workshop session.

Watch some or all of these programs from *The Arts in Every Classroom: A Video Library, K-5*:

- Expanding the Role of the Arts Specialist
- Teaching Dance
- Teaching Music
- Teaching Theatre
- Teaching Visual Art
- Developing an Arts-Based Unit
- Working With Local Artists
- Bringing Artists to Your Community
- Borrowing From the Arts To Enhance Learning

Research resources on costumes, vaudeville, and criticism at your school or public library or on the Web.

Attend a show by a museum, theatre, dance company, or orchestra in your community. Write a critical appraisal of the performance. Share the experience with students in your classroom.

Between Sessions (On Your Own), cont'd.

Reading Assignment

To support your understanding of Program 2, review the following readings:

- Cirque du Soleil (see Program 1 Appendix)
- *Quidam* (see Program 1 Appendix)
- Criticism
- *Parade*
- Vaudeville
- Listening Map for *Quidam*
- Listening Map for *Parade*
- Setting Up Your Discovery Stations

To prepare for Program 3, study the following additional readings.

- Costumes Used in Program 3
- Alwin Nikolais
- René Magritte
- Role-Play
- Surrealism

These readings can be found in the Appendix of this guide or on the workshop Web site at www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom.