

# Program 4

## Creating a Multi-Arts Performance Piece

### Description

In Program 4, Learner Teams apply knowledge gained in Programs 1–3 to create a multi-arts performance piece based on *Quidam*. You will use what you have learned to create, critique, and revise a similar piece based on Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*.

In *Quidam*, a young girl follows a guide on a journey through a fantasy world. Learner Teams and students create their own journey stories that depict the thoughts and feelings the young girl might have while on her fantastic adventure. Performance pieces created by the Learner Teams and students are structured using elements of the classic hero's journey.

In this program, the Learner Teams participate in a series of lessons that result in a completed work of art. Through large- and small-group interactions, you will see the Learner Teams:

- create a story line based on the stages of a journey,
- develop their ideas into complete plots,
- rehearse music and action for the story and critique their progress,
- communicate their stories in a multi-arts medium, and
- perform their piece and reflect on the process.

The students, who are in kindergarten and fourth grade at Lusher Alternative Elementary School in New Orleans, Louisiana, review four stages of the process they went through to create their multi-arts performance piece, which is based on Zoe's "inner journey" in *Quidam*. The students:

- review the feelings that Zoe and other characters had during the three stages of their story,
- demonstrate how movements and voices changed in each stage,
- discuss the costume pieces they created for their characters, and
- perform their piece, which they call "Zoe's Journey."

In this session, you will begin the collaborative process of developing a multi-arts performance piece based on Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*, in which the character Max makes a journey similar to that of Zoe in *Quidam*.

You will brainstorm how you would dramatize Max's story by applying the journey story structure. You also will construct a storyboard and indicate the role each of the art forms might play in telling the story.

## Learning Objectives

- Develop a plot structure for a multi-arts piece.
- Plan and implement a dramatization for the piece.
- Create and perform movement and costumes for the piece.
- Create and perform a musical score for the piece.
- Understand choreographic principles and processes in creating, performing, and responding.

## Guiding Questions

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

- What are the steps in the process of creating a multi-arts performance piece?
- How does a teacher effectively guide the development of a student-created work?

## Key Concepts/Vocabulary

- *Choreographer*: someone who plans the movements of a dance
- *Choreography*: a sequence of movements planned for a dance performance
- *Dialogue*: the conversation between characters in a drama or narrative
- *Energy qualities*: types of “muscle” energy, used to describe movement qualities
- *Leitmotif*: a musical fragment, related to some aspect of the drama (character, emotion, or event), that recurs in the course of the plot
- *Orff instrumentarium*: standard instruments used in the method of teaching music developed by composer Carl Orff (1895–1982); these instruments include xylophones, metallophones, glockenspiels, recorders, and a wide variety of unpitched percussion instruments
- *Ostinato*: a short musical pattern that is repeated persistently throughout a composition or one of its sections
- *Pentatonic*: a simple scale, based on five tones, that often is used when preparing students for success in musical composition; the teacher may elect to use this scale without student input, depending on the previous learning and abilities of the students
- *Sound carpet*: a subtle foundation of sound intended to provide musical support to a piece of music; the sound carpet often establishes a tonality and mood over which prominent themes or melodies are played
- *Storyboard*: a graphic, sequential depiction of a narrative, such as a comic strip; storyboards are commonly used to map out animation and film productions with each “cel,” or frame, illustrating an event
- *Symbol*: something that stands for something else
- *Theme*: a musical idea, usually a melody, that forms the basis or starting point for an entire composition or a major section

# Workshop Session (On-Site)

---

## Materials and Resources

- Videotape or broadcast of Program 4—Creating a Multi-Arts Performance Piece
- *Where the Wild Things Are*, a book by Maurice Sendak
- Paper, pencils, and markers
- Handout: Elements of the Hero’s Journey
- Reading: Orff Instrumentarium

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 4, explore the alternative Extended Session featured on the workshop Web site at [www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom). This four-hour extended 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 (10 minutes)

Discuss your experiences with having your students create costumes for characters from history or literature.

- How effectively did the students represent artistic and historical elements in their design choices?

Discuss the classic hero’s journey in myth and folklore and the prevalence of the journey structure in literature.

**Facilitator:** Distribute the handout, Elements of the Hero’s Journey.

## Watch the Workshop Program (60 minutes)

View Program 4—Creating a Multi-Arts Performance Piece.

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

### Lesson 1: Outlining the Story

- How is outlining a multi-arts performance piece similar to or different from outlining a literary piece?
- How does an understanding of the journey structure facilitate the story-writing process?

### Lesson 2: Developing Ideas

- How does setting structural guidelines assist students in the creative process?
- How can the characters and plot of one story inform the development of a new story or a story extension?

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

---

## Lesson 3: Rehearsing and Refining

- How do the outcomes of active rehearsal differ from those expected or experienced in classroom discussion?
- What are the similarities and differences between a visual symbol used in a performance piece and a literary symbol used metaphorically in a written work?

## Lesson 4: Performing and Reflecting

- How do students' reflections on a performance piece affect their understanding of the creative process?
- How can you meaningfully facilitate reflection and refinement of student work?

## Suggested Activities and Discussion (50 minutes)

### Storyboarding (40 minutes)

In each group, think about how you would dramatize *Where the Wild Things Are*, which shows Max's journey into a fantasy world.

Identify the classic journey structure (the call, the challenge, the transformation, and the return) in *Where the Wild Things Are*. Use the following questions to drive your brainstorming:

- What do you think is going on in Max's mind during each part of the story?
- What is he thinking?
- What is he feeling?
- How might you show this in your story?

**Facilitator:** Organize participants into groups of five or six to engage in the first step of the collaborative process of developing a multi-arts performance piece based on *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak.

In each group, construct a storyboard with six to eight cels total, illustrating what Max is thinking and feeling during the four parts of his journey. Indicate the role each of the art forms might play in telling the story.

Share and discuss the storyboard outlines with the entire group, using the following questions.

- How effectively does the storyboard encompass each part of the journey?
- Where is each of the art forms employed?

### Reflection (10 minutes)

- How does refining and replaying contribute to student understanding of an arts production process?

**Facilitator:** Use the following question to focus a closing discussion.

# Between Sessions (On Your Own)

---

## Homework Assignment

You can find the complete lesson plans and handouts on the workshop Web site at [www.learner.org/channel/workshops/artsineveryclassroom](http://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.

Based on the lesson plans and handouts for Program 4, think about how you might adapt these lessons in your own teaching and write some notes in your journal. If possible, introduce the concept of the classic journey to your students and use it as a tool for analyzing the structure of a piece of literature you currently are studying.

If you are able to apply these ideas in your classroom, please be prepared to discuss student responses at the next workshop session.

## 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, before or after your next workshop session, you might share with participants what you find out.

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

- Teaching Dance
- Teaching Music
- Teaching Theatre
- Teaching Visual Art
- Expanding the Role of the Arts Specialist
- Developing an Arts-Based Unit
- Working With Local Artists
- Collaborating With a Community Resource
- Bringing Artists to Your Community

Research resources on performance art, theatrical instrumentation, and heroic quests in literature at your school or public library or on the Web.

Attend a show at a museum, theatre, dance company, or orchestra in your community. Consider how the work of various kinds of artists and others contributed to your overall experience 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 4, see the following reading:

- Orff Instrumentarium

You also may see the following book:

- *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers* by Christopher Vogler, Michael Wiese Productions; ISBN 0941188701; 2nd edition (November 1998). Referencing Carl Jung and Joseph Campbell, the author asserts that most stories consist of a few structural elements found universally in myths, fairy tales, dreams, and movies.

## Suggested Additional Readings

The following articles can help you prepare for Program 5:

- "Through the Lens of Art" ([www.ascd.org/frameedlead.html](http://www.ascd.org/frameedlead.html)) by Linda Nathan, *Educational Leadership*, Volume 60, October 2002. By integrating their study of art, academics, and life, Boston Academy students experience the joys and responsibilities of becoming citizens of the world.
- "In Their Own Way" ([www.ascd.org/frameedlead.html](http://www.ascd.org/frameedlead.html)) by Nicola Findley, *Educational Leadership*, Volume 60, September 2002. The connections that students make may be related more to their individual approaches to learning than to the integrated curriculum.