

Guide for Facilitators

## 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 the children’s book by Maurice Sendak, *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 follow 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.

Kindergarten and fourth-grade students at Lusher Alternative Elementary School in New Orleans similarly review four stages of the process they went through to create their own 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 called “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 applying the journey story structure, 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 for the piece.
- Create and perform a musical score for the piece.
- Understand choreographic principles and processes in creating, performing, and responding.

### Guiding Questions

These 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 is often 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

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- *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 cell 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

## **4-Hour Workshop Session**

Please note that times are approximate. Actual length of sessions may vary, depending on the size of the group and the length of discussions.

### **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
- Handout: Elements of the Hero's Journey
- Orff instrumentarium (if classroom instruments are not available, use alternate sources of sound, such as body percussion, wood blocks, and spoons)
- Tape recorder and tape
- Costuming supplies
- Art supplies
- Scenic and set pieces
- Props
- Butcher paper and markers

### **Introduction**

#### *Discuss*

*(15 minutes)*

Participants discuss their experiences with having their own students create costumes for characters from history or literature:

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

Distribute the handout, Elements of the Hero's Journey.

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

### **Step 1: Outlining the Story**

#### *View and Discuss*

*(30 minutes)*

Watch the introduction to Program 4 and the first step, "Outlining the Story," on the Program 4 videotape.

While watching Step 1, consider the following focus questions:

- 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?

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Pause the tape when you see the title “Developing Ideas” (running time approximately 20 minutes).

Discuss the responses to the focus questions.

**Step 2: Developing Ideas**

*View and Discuss*

*(30 minutes)*

Watch the second step, “Developing Ideas,” on the Program 4 videotape.

While watching Step 2, consider the following focus questions:

- 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?

Pause the tape when you see the title “Rehearsing” (running time approximately 14 minutes).

Discuss your responses to the focus questions.

**Step 3: Rehearsing**

*View and Discuss*

*(30 minutes)*

Watch the third step, “Rehearsing,” on the Program 4 videotape.

While watching Step 3, consider the following focus questions:

- 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?

Pause the tape when you see the title “Reflecting, Refining, and Performing” (running time approximately 18 minutes).

Discuss your responses to the focus questions.

**Step 4: Reflecting, Refining, and Performing**

*View and Discuss*

*(15 minutes)*

View the fourth step, “Reflecting, Refining, and Performing,” on the Program 4 videotape (running time approximately 6 minutes).

While watching Step 4, consider the following focus questions:

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

Discuss your responses to the focus questions.

### **Create Your Own Multi-Arts Performance Piece**

(1 hour, 50 minutes)

#### *Outlining the Story*

(20 minutes)

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, 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 inside Max during each part of the story?
- What is he thinking?
- What is he feeling?
- How might you show this in your story?

In each group, construct a storyboard, with six to eight cells 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 your 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?

#### *Developing Ideas*

(30 minutes)

Groups incorporate criteria from each of the four art forms into their multi-arts performance pieces.

Theatre criteria:

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- Each story contains at least four characters: Max, the mother, and two or more “wild things.”
- All characters engage in dialogue that guides the audience to understand both the journey and individual character traits.
- The dialogue does not need to be realistic and should account for differences and similarities among characters.
- Create still images or tableaux to represent and extend individual storyboard cells.
- Explore transitional movement, action, and dialogue among still images.

Dance and choreography criteria:

- Communicate through movement the energy qualities of the characters as they move from the realistic world to the fantasy world and back again.
- Explore movement energy qualities to express and support the ideas of the characters.
- Establish a set phrase of movement for each character illustrating that character’s unique qualities.

Music criteria:

- Establish a short musical theme for each character to assist the audience with understanding individual character moods and transformations.
- Use available instruments. If classroom instruments are not available, use alternate sources of sound, such as body percussion, spoons, and found objects.

Visual art criteria:

- Each group develops a visual symbol that provides a transitional device from one story part to another. The visual symbol will pass through each of the four parts of the group’s story, altering its physical appearance as the story progresses. For example, discuss what the hat Quidam gives to Zoe might symbolize.

In selecting a transitional device, groups should respond to the following questions:

- What is a symbol?
- How might a symbol transform?
- What might cause a symbol to return to its original form?
- How might a symbol used as a transitional device act as a unifying element in the story?

*Rehearsing*  
(30 minutes)

Take time to rehearse the stories. Work on your feet rather than on paper. Work improvisationally, progressing from individual still images (tableaux) to completed scenes.

*Reflecting, Refining, and Performing*  
(20 minutes)

Perform the multi-arts pieces. Use the criteria described above to evaluate the pieces.

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*Reflect*

*(10 minutes)*

Use the following question to focus a closing discussion:

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

## **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/xxx](http://www.learner.org/channel/workshops.artsineveryclassroom/xxx) . 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.

See the handout, Teacher Notes for Program 4, at the end of this document for ideas and observations to help you apply the lessons from this program in your classroom.

If you are able to apply these ideas in your classroom, please be prepared to share your lesson plans and student responses to this framework at the next workshop session.

### **Optional Activities**

Other enrichment activities can significantly boost your learning between workshop sessions. Consider the recommended activities below and choose those that best meet your needs. Time permitting, you might plan to share the results of your homework with other participants informally 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*:

- 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.

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**Reading Assignment**

To support your understanding of Workshop Program 4, see the following book:  
The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers, by Christopher Vogler. Michael Wiese Productions; ISBN: 0941188701; 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.acsd.org/frameedlead.html](http://www.acsd.org/frameedlead.html)) by Linda Nathan, Educational Leadership, Volume 60, October 2002.

In integrating their study of art, academics, and life, Boston Academy students experience the joys and responsibilities of becoming citizens of the world.

“In Their Owen 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 more related to their individual approaches to learning than to the integrated curriculum.

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Handout

To be distributed at the end of the session

### Teacher Notes

*Body percussion:* Using the body as a percussive instrument can be an alternative to traditional instruments when they are not available.

*Creative work:* When students are asked to make creative decisions and collaborate in creative tasks, it is important for them to know what outcomes are expected before they begin their work. At the beginning, provide students with specific criteria, such as those outlined in Section 7 of this Program, as well as the amount of time allotted.

*Restating questions:* When students have difficulty responding to initial questions, problems often are resolved by restating the question. It also might prove helpful to break down a complicated question into smaller parts.

*Space and sound:* When students work in collaborative groups, noise often is created, and limited space can contribute to behavioral problems. It may be necessary to seek alternative space for movement-based activities. Advising adjacent classroom teachers of planned activities may prove beneficial.

*Tableaux:* Frozen or still images physically prepared and presented by small groups of students can work like a “snap shot” to effectively focus attention on details.

## Elements of the Hero's Journey

Joseph Campbell (1904 – 1987) was an American author who wrote extensively about mythology and its influences in modern times. Campbell held that certain archetypal images, themes, and patterns are repeated in virtually all of the world's best-known myths and stories. Major ideas from Campbell's work will be used as a framework in the creation of this multi-arts performance piece. In this series, participants will refer to four parts of what Campbell called "the hero's journey":

- 1. The Call** — The call is the invitation to an adventure. The hero may embark on a quest willingly or out of necessity. Sometimes, there is a sudden, shocking event, leaving the hero with no choice but to engage in the situation. At other times, the call is a subtle invitation and the hero has time to decide whether he/she is going to get involved.
- 2. The Challenges** — The challenges are fears, obstacles, and trials during a journey. Having accepted the call and started on the journey (which may be physical, psychological, or spiritual), the hero encounters a series of increasingly difficult challenges. Assumptions and beliefs are questioned and temptations threaten to divert the hero from the path.
- 3. The Transformation** — The transformation is a change in way of thinking and way of viewing life. In the process of dealing with the challenges, the hero experiences a revelation about life, which changes the way he/she thinks and behaves.
- 4. The Return** — The return to everyday life is the final stage of the journey. The hero returns a changed person, possessing new awareness and skill. The hero seeks to share his/her newfound understanding for the greater good of society. Sometimes, if people are not ready to change, the hero may face further trials and others may be called to undertake their own journeys.

## Orff Instrumentarium

The Orff approach to music education uses a variety of percussion instruments. Along with vocal exploration, instruments provide the means from which students can experience musical inquiry, exploration, improvisation, and composition. The instrumentarium provides students the ideal medium for the exploration of timbre and texture in music, as well as the aural and visual reinforcement of pitch relationships.

*Unpitched percussion instruments* (those that do not function melodically) engage students in a variety of rhythmic experiences. These instruments are grouped into four categories: wood, metal, rattles and scrapers, and membrane (or skin). Playing of these parts is often prepared through body percussion. Students are first taught rhythmic phrases through word patterns that are also expressed with body sounds like clapping, snapping, and patting. They then make the same sound patterns using percussion instruments. Some familiar unpitched percussion instruments are wood blocks, claves, jingle bells, triangles, tambourines, hand drums, and bongo drums. The variety of unpitched percussion instruments is vast, and provides students a rich and engaging sound palette from which to make music.

*The barred instruments* of the Orff instrumentarium were developed in the 1920s by Carl Orff himself. These are the “melody-making” percussion instruments of the Orff orchestra, capable of both melodic and harmonic elements. These instruments are constructed for child-friendly use. They are sized for smaller hands and arms and are designed with removable bars, enabling the students to take off bars that aren’t necessary for a given work. Student success is instantly heightened when all the “wrong” notes are unavailable!

The xylophones have bars made of rosewood or fiberglass, and are voiced in three sizes — soprano, alto, and bass — covering a three-and-a-half octave range from c to a<sub>2</sub>. These instruments are modeled after their African counterparts.

The metallophones are voiced like the xylophone family, but the bars are made of metal, which likens their sound to elements of the Indonesian gamelan.

The glockenspiels are the smallest and highest members of the Orff orchestra. They are modeled after Orff’s own (German) glockenspiel, and are voiced in only two ranges: alto and soprano. Their combined range covers a two-and-a-half octave range from c<sub>1</sub> to a<sub>3</sub>.

To purchase instruments for your students’ use, see [www.westmusic.com](http://www.westmusic.com).

To learn more about the Orff approach, go to the American Orff-Schulwerk Association Web site, [www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org)