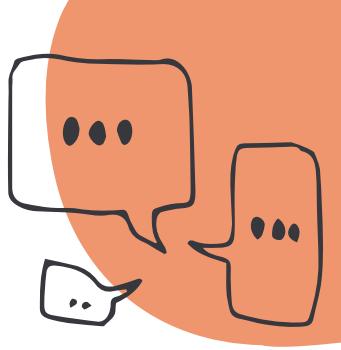


UNIT PLAN BRAINSTORMS



Putting the Unity in Community (English Language Arts, Visual Art)

What does the word “community” mean to your class? Investigate by sourcing a list of what your class thinks of when they consider community. Next, prompt them to think of where they find community: *Is community a place for you? Is it a certain person? If so, where or who?* Afterwards, ask your students to go into their community and observe what makes it unique! Ask them to write down their findings in the form of words, phrases or quotes they hear people say to create a unique poem. Afterwards, invite students to share their journal entries about their communities aloud. As they listen, students will start creating a communal city landscape on a large piece of butcher paper. They can draw buildings from their communities, sketch people they know or write down words from everyone’s poems. Students can even lay down on the butcher paper and strike a pose, letting others outline them, so they are a part of the landscape! When you’ve created your city landscape, hang it in your classroom or the hall to celebrate the community around you!

Celebrating Your Inner Child (Theater, Visual Art, English Language Arts)

You’re never too old to be a kid! With your class, explore all the best parts from your childhoods by creating a giant capsule of all your favorite memories. Start the unit off by sharing a photo of you as a child and sharing a memory that accompanies it. Then, prompt your students to find memorabilia from when they were younger, like a picture, toy or memento. If students can’t find any physical objects from their past, they may choose a song they used to listen to or a dance they used to perform with their friends. In groups, ask students to share what they brought and connect it to one memory from their childhood. After students have shared, choose a space in the room to assemble everyone’s memories. Ask students to glue, tape or place their memorabilia next to each other on a giant poster board or write down words that evoke what they shared. Next, decorate the station with markers, cutouts, fabric or pictures that you print out from online that remind you of nostalgic times. Afterwards, do a gallery walk of your class’s childhood capsule and have each student write about how looking at these memories makes them feel. This spot in your classroom will represent everyone’s inner child. Revisit it throughout the year by playing music and games from different students’ pasts!

A Handful of Hand Games (Dance, Music, History)

You may play hand games out on the playground, but it’s time to bring them into the classroom! Introduce the concept of hand games by singing and clapping a popular tune that you know, like “Miss Mary Mack,” to your students. Explain that many rhythmic hand games originated in Black and African cultures and have origins in Pattin’ Juba, a type of body percussion that was created when enslaved people were banned from using drums in the 1700s. After investigating their roots, prompt a student to bring in a different hand game each week to teach to the class. Encourage them to discover new hand games by connecting with their community. This may be at school, on the playground or with adults after school, so they can learn games from different generations. As you learn more and more hand games, keep track of them with a giant list in your classroom and use them during transitions or as a classroom management tool. At the end of the year, throw a social dance festival where you play your favorite games to celebrate and invite another class to join in on the fun!