

# Haitian Language, Literature, Art & Music

## African American Voices Lesson Plan

### Language Arts

**Topic:** Literary terms using Haitian Art

**Objective:** Learns to appreciate Haitian art forms from various cultures, religions, countries, philosophies  
Understands literary devices such as tone, mood, symbolism, theme and uses the terms appropriately in oral and written analysis.

**Competency Link:** 1 Literature 2 and 7

**Materials/Resources:**

Selected art piece with biography of artist  
Student handout to study art

**Procedures/ Activities:**

1. Discuss with students the relationship of art and literature. Both are aesthetic and appeal to the senses. Writers and artists develop distinctive styles to express their ideas, emotions, and themes. Ideas are expressed through the use of colors, shapes, and symbols.
2. Disseminate student handout and review with students.
3. Display art piece for viewing.
4. Conduct a class discussion based on student responses to handout.

**Assessment:** Students should use notes from handout to address the following questions in a three to four paragraph essay.

- What do you think the artist is trying to convey?
- What tone or mood is conveyed?
- How does shape communicate?

**Resources:** Haitian Art text

Appiah, Kwame Anthony, & Gates, Henry Louis (Eds.) *Africana The Encyclopedia of the African and African American Experience.*

## Student Handout Literature and Art

Look carefully at the work of art and respond to it.

Take notes about what you see.

**Composition:** the arrangement of the parts within an area. Is the work symmetrical or unbalanced? How is the design organized?

Space and distance: the spatial limits of the work. How does the artist express distance? Is it infinite? Closely limited? Is there perspective? Is everything equally close or far away?

Rhythm and accent: the rhythmic basis of work. How does the artist use dark and light accents, line, pattern and color to keep the eye moving around the piece of art?

**Style:** the overall approach of the artist. How does the artist seem to "see" his /her subject? How does the style reflect the culture and era of the artist?

**Subject or theme:** what the artist is depicting. What is the focal point of the art? Is the art abstract meaning it is pure form? Is the art realistic, which means it has no recognizable subject?

**Symbols:** the use of various things to suggest other qualities. Does the artist appear to use anything on the symbolic level ? What is used and what does it express to you?

**Mood and tone:** the emotional impact of a work of art. How does the artist seem to feel about the subject? How does he/ she show these feelings? What in the art makes it have impact on you?

**Artist's purpose:** the objective of the artist in creating the piece of art. Does the artist have a single or multiple purposes in mind? What do you think he/she was trying to express?

**Personal response:** After having examined its form, elements, and content do you like the piece? Does it illustrate the subject as you imagined? Is it a powerful piece of art? Why? What does it make you think of?

## Language Arts

**Topic:** Haitian Music Workshop    **Grades:** 9 -12

**Objective:** Using Haitian music as a catalyst for writing poetry in identifying and employing different feelings in their poetry.

## Competency Link: II B

Materials: CD player

Assortment of Haitian songs

Haitian Troubadour Kalfou Danjere Boukman

Eksperyans

Best of Michel RAM

Marthelly Sweet Mickey

### Procedures/ Activities:

1. Select a combination of a variety of songs (8-10). Choose songs that have lyrics and instrumentals.
2. Organize song line up starting with heavy dark As gradually tone down the songs. Try to include some songs that could have been heard by students (Boukman, Sweet Mickey or RAM).
3. Students will be able to recognize how music can and does affect their mood. Encourage students to look beyond the surface of what they are associating with the song.
4. While the selections are being played students should write down the images that they can see while listening. Additionally, students should write nonstop. If they struggle with words a sketch or doodle is acceptable.
5. Their writings should record emotion, experiences, and ideas.

**Assessment:** Assign students to write a poem based on an experience or memory that moved them to an acute and powerful emotion.

## Language Arts

**Topic:** Poetic Interpretation Grades: 9 -12

**Objectives:** Determine word meanings by using context clues Use strategies for personal vocabulary growth through context Clues, structural analysis, and other sources Incorporates new vocabulary in written work Practices reading strategies in a poetry selection Monitors comprehension by asking, questioning, rereading, and paraphrasing

**Competency Link:** III A Language /Word Study and V Informational Reading/Literacy Study

### Materials:

*Open Gate: An anthology of Haitian Creole Poetry* edited by Paul Laraque and Jack Hirschman

*The Butterfly's Way: Voices from the Haitian Diaspora in the United States* edited Edwidge Danticat

## Procedures :

1. Select a familiar author that has been previously discussed in class to practice with students.
2. Students should read through the poem and underline words that are unfamiliar. Have students use context clues in the poem to define unfamiliar words in poem.
3. Discuss with students what are marginal notes and model how to make marginal notes which question the poem.
4. Instruct students to read through the poem again this time making marginal notes on copies of the poem.
5. As you review marginal notes with students have them paraphrase the information given in the text. Encourage students by asking questions about the poem or marginal notes.
6. Students should write a brief interpretation of the poem.
7. Create a packet of Haitian poems.
8. Students should select one poem from the packet to use for close reading and interpretation.
9. Allow students to repeat the process as demonstrated in the model assignment in steps 1 6.
10. In small groups students should share poetic interpretation for small group literary discussion.

**Assessment:** Using Haitian poetry student will write marginal notes, paraphrase information, define words in context, write a brief interpretation of the poem, and employ reading strategies in order to achieve comprehension.

## Language Arts

**Topic:** Poem Dramatization    Grades: 9 - 12

**Objectives:** Develops an awareness of, and sensitivity to, various dialects, accents, and speech patterns indigenous to the Haitian community Analyzes a poem Designs and delivers oral interpretation of poem Analyze a poem

**Competency:** IV: Listening /Speaking/ Viewing    II B. Composition I A. Literature

### Materials:

*Open Gate: An anthology of Haitian Creole Poetry* edited by Paul Laraque and Jack Hirschman

*The Butterfly's Way: Voices from the Haitian Diaspora in the United States* edited Edwidge Danticat

## Procedures :

1. Select a Haitian poem that expresses a theme of Haitian poetry such as migration,

religion, governmental influence, national pride in land and people. You may use the anthologies available or the internet.

2. Use the "Analyze Poetry" guidelines to help students respond and analyze poem.
3. Using notes from the "Analyze Poetry" handout students should write an essay analyzing the selected poem.
4. In order to practice oral interpretation students should mark the poem indicating pauses, words to emphasize, intonation of various to convey the essence of the poem's meaning.
5. Allow students time to rehearse with partners to provide audience and feedback.
6. Poem presentation should include gestures and movements to emphasize important lines. Students should also wear appropriate costuming and use props to set the mood of presentation.

**Assessment:** Oral interpretation and effectiveness. Write a poem analysis

## Analyzing Poetry

### Why analyze poetry?

- In order to achieve a deeper understanding and an appreciation of literature
- To develop a keen ability to use the tools of language, images, and the processes of meaning
- To teach us to be aware of the cultural context of a piece, which includes historical, social, intellectual, racial, gender, race, class, and written and read for particular times and purposes
- By providing a close reading and reflection which aids in understanding ideas and feelings in our culture or other times and cultures

### Questions for Analysis

1. Look at the title. How does it relate to the work?
2. Paraphrase the poem. In a single sentence state the theme
3. How would you describe the speaker? Look for the speaker's use of language, the topics, the choice of words (diction), and syntax (how the words are arranged in the lines).
4. Notice the tone of the poem (the attitude the speaker to its subject). Which words reveal the tone of the piece?
5. Examine the language of the poem.
  - consider the connotative meanings of words
  - unusual or special meanings of words (double meanings, puns)
  - any repeated words or phrases
  - figures of speech used in the poem and how they contribute to the tone or meaning of the poem
6. What images does the poet use? How are the images related?
7. Are there any symbols? What do they mean? Do they form a unified pattern (motif) throughout the poem?

8. How do sound effects (rhyme, end rhyme) impact the poem?
9. Consider the structure (the way in which material or argument in the poem is developed thematic structure)
10. What is the worldview of the poem? What are the basic ideas of the world does the poem express? What aspects of the human experience are expressed?

## **Language Arts**

**Topic:** Discovering the Republic of Haiti    Grades: 9 - 12

**Objective:** Using appropriate skills and resources, both textual and technological, the student will access, analyze, and synthesize information from several sources students will learn the country, geography, history, government, economy, education, family structure, language(s), the arts, religion(s), and societal mores of the various regions of Haiti.

**Competency:** V B Informational Reading/ Informational Literacy/ IV A Listening/Speaking/ Viewing

**Materials:** Selected readings from Africana **19th Century Encyclopedia of Social Work**

*In Focus Haiti Charles Arthur*

### **Procedures:**

1. Review the map of Haiti with students identifying regions of the country.
2. Students should select a region or area of focus given the following options.. Students can work in pairs for project.
3. Research:
  - o region current/earlier names of region and geography map of the region with sites of interest.
  - o the history
  - o economy
  - o government
  - o culture the arts (dress, art, dance, literature, music) and sports;
  - o religion(s) beliefs, influences, and customs practiced in region
  - o languages
  - o societal mores
4. Assist students with narrowing their research to be comprehensive yet thorough. Try to avoid students repeating the same information within the same class.
5. Research should investigate printed and technological materials.
6. Students should compile research into a powerpoint presentation that includes actual pictures downloaded from internet sites to support textual information.
7. Remind students that slides should only bullet information (two four words).
8. Complete sentences and paragraphs are not needed on slides.

9. Slides should be organized logically for presentation.
10. Presentation should provide the information they have researched about the bulleted information on each slide. Student presentations should take at least 25 30 minutes.
11. Students should create a slide of all sources (works cited). Provide guidelines for MLA format for students.

**Assessment:** Students should synthesize information into a powerpoint presentation. Students may work in pairs or groups of three's. Research information should be presented in a 25 30 minute speech presentation. Assess presentation and slides format/pictures/ works cited.

### **Research Resource List**

**Topography:** Florentin, J M. R. *Survey of the Geology of Haiti* Miami Geological Society

**Economy:** Mats, Lundahl. "The Haitian Economy." United Nations Mission to Haiti

**Art:** "Joy of Art." "Voodoo Rhythm and Structure."

**History:** Lewis, Gordon. "Main Currents in the Caribbean"." Plummer, Brenda Gayle. "The Balance Sheet." Trouillot, Michael Rolph. "Haiti's Nightmare and the Lessons of History."

**Religion:** Metraux, Alfred. "History of Voodoo." Smucker, Glenn R. "The Social Character of Religion in Rural Haiti."