



Identifying Cultural and Ethnic Values - Dance Theatre of Harlem

Students compose an historical landmark dedication to the Dance Theatre of Harlem which includes some of the cultural and ethnic values of the school.

Lesson Summary

Overview

Students watch a segment about the Dance Theatre of Harlem in New York City. Based on the segment, students compose a historical landmark dedication to the Dance Theatre of Harlem which includes some of the cultural and ethnic values of the school.

Why is this an important concept?

Learners think critically and extend their comprehension of texts when they consider how cultural and ethnic values impact the content of texts.

Grade Level:

6-8

Suggested Time

40-minutes

Media Resources

- [Dance Theatre of Harlem QuickTime Video](#)

Materials

- [Dance Theatre of Harlem Notes handout](#)
- [Dance Theatre of Harlem rubric](#)

The Lesson

Part I: Learning Activity

1. Review the definitions of culture and ethnicity.

Culture - a way of life shared by members of a society. Culture maybe demonstrated through human behavior, vocabulary or language used, human emotions or perspectives, and material items. For example, our culture values the entertainment of dancing and music.

Ethnicity - a group that shares common characteristics such as religion, culture, or language. For example, Catholics, Italians, and Native Americans are ethnic groups that share common characteristics.

2. Distribute the [Dance Theatre of Harlem Notes handout](#) organizer. Show the video segment. As they watch, ask students to note two cultural values of the school using the prompts provided in the organizer.
3. Discuss with class what they noted.
4. Show the segment a second time. This time, ask students to note two ethnic values of the school using the prompts provided in the organizer.
5. Discuss with class what they noted.
6. Ask students to name some places they have visited for its historical, cultural or ethnic importance and discuss how they learned about the place or the event that took place there.
7. Discuss with students what kind of information found on historical landmark signage would communicate to the visitor or audience the significance of the place. Take several suggestions and write them on the board.

Part II: Assessment

1. Tell students that as a group they will imagine the Dance Theater of Harlem receiving a historical landmark status sometime in the near future, for example in the year 2030. In groups, ask students to write a dedication that will be posted on a sign in front of the school. Their dedication should include the ethnic and cultural values of the school as well as historical significance.
2. Students will present their landmark dedications to the class. Classmates will provide verbal feedback after the presentation. Use the [Dance Theatre of Harlem rubric](#) to assess its effectiveness.

For students who need additional teacher guidance:

- Provide opportunities for students to view segment additional times.
- Provide opportunities for students to identify and discuss historical landmarks.
- Provide assistance with writing as needed.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice presenting their landmark dedications with your coaching prior to doing it in front of an audience.

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