INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Still Pictures

Integrating the arts into education supports diverse learning styles. This strategy blends creativity and critical thinking as students use frozen gestures and minimal words to embody powerful ideas from given images and texts.

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STILL PICTURES

Summary

Students demonstrate their understanding of a topic through a series of three rounds. During the first round, groups share a unified gesture that represents a given image. During the second round, groups read a corresponding passage, and then each individual within the group shares a unique gesture representing their understanding of both the image and the added passage. During the final round, groups choreograph and then give their group performance. For example, when studying the Selma to Montgomery marches, a group performance might include a pair of students locking arms and looking straight ahead, symbolizing solidarity, while another student may be kneeling with a fist raised to represent peaceful resistance and courage in the face of injustice.

Procedure

1. After selecting a topic, have students form groups of 4–5.
2. Begin round one by displaying or providing an image/art/graphic related to the topic.
3. Allow students to discuss the image briefly within their groups. Students should come up with a single group pose or gesture they could do to represent the image.
4. Have groups hold their poses. Each member of a given group should hold the same pose as their group members.
5. Unfreeze one student from each group to explain the group's chosen gesture. Everyone else should remain frozen.
6. Begin round two by displaying or providing a passage related to the topic. Allow students time to read through it.
7. This time, have students discuss both the image and passage. Instead of coming up with a single pose, each student in the group should come up with a unique gesture that represents both the image and the passage.
8. Unfreeze one student to explain their group members' gestures.
9. Begin round three by giving students time to choreograph a group performance that summarizes their learning. Students should come up with a unique gesture, a single word to say, as well as a final group phrase to say all together. The group may wish to play soft background music during this time to enhance creativity or to emphasize their message.
10. Call on groups to perform. One by one, students walk on stage, say their word, and freeze in their gesture. When all are frozen, the group speaks their shared phrase in unison, then exits for the next group.

Carter, J. (2025, February 24). Defining arts integration: The what and why (K-12) [Conference workshop]. BLAC, Inc. 2025 Professional Development Conference Oklahoma City, OK, United States.