Title/Description of Lesson
Who Said Giraffes Can’t Dance?

This lesson complements the Book, Giraffes Can’t Dance. It can be integrated with Social Studies or Language Arts.

Grade Level:
3rd Grade

Lesson Links
Objectives/Outcomes
Materials and Resources
Vocabulary
Procedures
Criteria for Assessing Student Learning
California Standards in Visual & Performing Arts
California Standards for Integrated Subject
Other Resources

Objectives/Outcomes  (Return to Links)

• To recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication.
• To know and apply visual-arts materials, tools, techniques and processes.
• To use paints to create a watercolor wash and wet-on-wet technique.
• To represent an imaginative dancing giraffe in an African setting based on literature.

Materials and Resources  (Return to Links)

• Watercolors (yellow, brown),
• #12 brushes,
• Student-grade watercolor paper,
• Blue Construction paper,
• Black fine-tip markers, Pencils, Scissors, Glue,
• Oil pastels,
• African animal pictures, and
• Book, “Giraffes Can’t Dance” by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees

**Vocabulary** *(Return to Links)*

**Watercolor wash** – A watercolour term for a flat layer of very diluted colour laid across the paper. It can either be an even layer of colour or a graded layer which gets lighter.

**Wet-on-wet** - Quite literally, painting with fresh paint onto wet paint rather than onto paint that has dried.

**African plains** – Also known as the savannah, is a grassland ecosystem characterized by the trees being sufficiently small or widely spaced so that the canopy does not close. It is a grassland area. Savannas are frequently in a transitional zone between forest and desert or prairie.

**Procedures** *(Return to Links)*

Working with the classroom teacher, students take an imaginary trip around the world as part of their classroom studies. One exciting destination is the continent of Africa. Ask students to recall different African animals. Discuss what makes each animal unique. Kids spend art period drawing African animals including the giraffe. The next art class the teacher will load the brush with bright yellow color to demonstrate a wash. Cover the whole paper. While the paper is still damp, drop brown paint onto the wet wash, creating random spotted patterns. This resembles a pattern on some African animals.

Read the book “Giraffes Can’t Dance.” This story features a giraffe who proves he can move to the beat of his own music. Discuss the physical qualities of the giraffe: long legs and neck, oval body shape, pear shaped head, short paint brush like tail and a yellow body with rich, brown spots. (African drum music could be playing in the background.) Draw a dancing giraffe onto the yellow spotted watercolor wash the students previously made. Cut out giraffe.

Create an oil pastel drawing of the African Plains. Each giraffe is glued to the pastel background.

**Criteria for Assessing Student Learning** *(Return to Links)*

• Is the giraffe dancing?
• Did the student use yellow and brown to create a wet-on-wet?
• Does the background resemble the African plains?
California Standards in Visual & Performing Arts  (Return to Links)

Art
1.1 Perceive and describe rhythm and movement in works of art and environment
1.2 Identify and describe how foreground, middle ground and background are use to create illusion of space
2.3 Paint or draw a landscape that shows an illusion of space

California Standards for Integrated Subject  (Return to Links)

3rd Grade Social Studies

3.3 Students draw from historical and community resources to organize the sequence of local historical events and describe how each period of settlement left its mark on the land.

1. Research the explorers who visited here, the newcomers who settled here, and the people who continue to come to the region, including their cultural and religious traditions and contributions.

Other Resources  (Return to Links)