

GHOSTCATCHING

CHOREOGRAPHED AND PERFORMED BY BILL T. JONES

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MIDDLE SCHOOL GRADES 6-8

Dear Educator:

The design and content of these Imagination Lesson Plans represent LCI's inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning. This approach develops in the learner the Capacities for Imaginative Learning*, defined outcomes for your students' work that align with the national Common Core Standards. The Capacities and Common Core Standards listed at the beginning of each Lesson Plan are the ones addressed in the plan.

Imagination Lesson Plans are initially rooted in the study of works of art and employ four main concepts: art making, questioning, reflection, and contextual information and research. Each is based on a specific line of inquiry, which is a guiding question that gives the Lesson Plan its framework. Plans were developed for Elementary, Middle, and High School levels, and can easily be adapted for the specific grade you teach. They are intended for you to use as written or modified—used as a springboard for new ideas and further development, depending on your interest and curricular goals. You can complete the whole Lesson Plan in the course of several days, or spread it out over a number of weeks. As well, depending on the duration of your classroom period, any one lesson may be completed within a period or carried over to another day.

However you choose to adapt the lessons to your needs, we encourage you to conduct experiential lessons before you engage your students with the work of art; ask open-ended questions to guide students' noticings throughout the Lesson Plan; and teach further experiential lessons after you have viewed the work of art—the goal of these post-viewing lessons is to lead students to a synthesis that helps them acquire a deeper understanding. The Imagination Lesson Plans are designed to develop imaginative thinking abilities and creative actions that lead to innovative results for all students, and prepare students for greater in-depth learning in all subject areas.

We are eager to support imaginative learning in your classroom, and participate with you and your students in the joy of learning.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Noppe-Brandon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Scott Noppe-Brandon
Executive Director

**Please refer to the PDF of the Capacities that accompanies this Lesson Plan.*

COMMON CORE STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS LESSON

NOTE: These connections to the Common Core Standards are based on the general 6-8 Standards. Identify the grade-specific Standard that is appropriate for your class that also relates to the general Standard numbers below.

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

Standard 1

Standard 3

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

Standard 7

Speaking and Listening Standards

Comprehension and Collaboration

Standard 1

Standard 2

CAPACITIES FOR IMAGINATIVE LEARNING ADDRESSED IN THIS LESSON*

Noticing Deeply

Questioning

Embodying

Making Connections

Creating Meaning

Reflecting/Assessing

**For the definitions of the Capacities, refer to the PDF that accompanies this Lesson Plan.*

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Learn to work collaboratively
- Deepen their skills of observation, analysis, and description
- Gain an understanding and create meaning for *Ghostcatching*, a digital work of art, by exploring its elements through the use of multiple modalities
- Enhance their understanding of concepts found in other subject areas by connecting them to concepts that they will explore during the study of *Ghostcatching*

PREPARING FOR GHOSTCATCHING LESSONS

SUPPLIES AND CONTEXTUAL MATERIALS

Lesson One

Supplies:

White unlined 8.5 x11 paper (three for each student)

Pencils (one for each student)

Chenille sticks (two for each student)

Small pieces of plasticine or other soft molding clay (one for each student), or small pieces of Styrofoam (one for each student)

Small piece of Kraft paper or newspaper (one for each student)

Lesson Two

Supplies:

Black construction 8.5 x 11 paper (one for each student)

A selection of colored chalk, including white chalk (3 pieces per student)

Lesson Three

Contextual Materials:

- **Definition of Motion Capture Technology:**

Motion capture, or mocap, is a technique of digitally recording the movements of real things—usually humans— it originally developed as an analysis tool in biomechanics research, but has grown increasingly important as a source of motion data for computer animation. In this application, it has been widely used for both cinema and video games.

—Shelley Eshkar, the Lincoln Center Institute interview, 2008

- Did Paul Kaiser and Shelley Eshkar create the title *Ghostcatching*?

No. That came from me, indirectly. I was trying to explain to them some imperfectly remembered reference to aboriginal people, who didn't like their picture taken because they believed that the photograph captured their souls, their spirit. I know the Native Americans felt this way when they first encountered photographers. So when Paul and Shelley said that they wanted to “take it away from my personality,” I wondered, what was the it that they wanted to take? What was this difficult-to-describe essence that they were trying to capture? I said, “Oh, it's like a ghost,” and that is how “ghostcatching” came about.

—Bill T. Jones, the Lincoln Center Institute interview, 2008

- What was the idea behind adding human sounds—singing and text—after abstracting the human body, to create a ghost-like figure?

That was a question that Bill had, too. We wanted to do that from the start, but Bill was very dubious about it. He felt that after taking away the specifics of his identity, we were re-imposing it through his voice, which carries with it many signs of his presence. But we wanted to marry the idea of a "neurally," abstracted figure with the physical presence of voice. At one point, when he breaks free and starts dancing his solo, he's humming Beethoven. He thought there should be actual Beethoven music playing. We said, "Absolutely not." So we had him hum Beethoven; if he wanted Beethoven in it, he would have to hum it.

The idea was that everything in the piece had to come from his body. We all wanted sound, so his voice would have to produce it.

—Paul Kaiser, the Lincoln Center Institute interview, 2008

Lesson Five

Supplies:

White lined 8.5 x 11 paper (1 for each student)

Pencils (1 for each student)

The work of art, *Ghostcatching*, is available on Curriki. To view *Ghostcatching*, see instructions under "Online Access" on page 7.

NOTES TO TEACHERS

Wall Journaling

We encourage you to write on large paper posted on walls (vs. on a less permanent black board or smart board) when documenting during your study of the work of art. This way, wall journaling can be brought forward and referenced in subsequent lessons throughout the plan. As well, students can reflect on their past experiences, responses, connections, and questions as they enter each new experience.

NOTE: Some lessons may specifically reference past wall journaling.

Portfolios and Displayed Student Work

We recommend that all student-generated art, writing, and other evidence of their process and learning be posted in the classroom throughout the duration of the plan—or, if there is a lack of space in the classroom, that student work be saved in a portfolio or container (large folder or binder) to reflect on during the plan, and even after the Imagination Lesson Plan is completed, if you like. As with wall journaling, this is another way for students to reflect on their experiences and learning.

NOTE: Lessons may revisit prior art-making. The “Celebration and Self-Assessment” lesson at the end of the plan, can involve a reflection on all wall journaling and student-generated materials as a way of honoring student work and reflecting on the learning and connection-making.

What You Will Need to View *Ghostcatching*

- Laptop computer with Internet access
- Projector
- Speakers

Extension cords (may not be needed depending on your set-up)

Large (6' x 9') screen, blank wall, or SmartBoard

NOTE: You may also need an additional SVGA or DVI cable to connect the projector to the laptop computer. As each computer and projector is different, please refer to your equipment's specifications.

If your facility has an auditorium in which you can project *Ghostcatching* using existing projector equipment, or a projector and laptop computer (or similar setup), this is ideal. In the classroom, we recommend projecting onto a large screen, a SmartBoard-type device, or a blank wall. *Ghostcatching* should be viewed on a media cart-type setup only as a last resort. Whatever the venue, it should be dark. In a classroom, it may be useful to put brown paper over the classroom windows to further darken the room.

Online Access

You may access *Ghostcatching* by clicking [here](#) or entering the following URL:

http://www.curriki.org/xwiki/bin/view/Coll_Group_LincolnCenterInstitute/1_0?bc=;Coll_Group_LincolnCenterInstitute.LincolnCenterInstituteImaginationLessonPlansGhostcatching;Coll_Group_LincolnCenterInstitute.GhostcatchingWorkofArt_0. It is prudent to test the video on the equipment you will be using prior to the viewing.

THE GHOSTCATCHING LESSONS

Line of Inquiry*: In the digital work of art, *Ghostcatching*, how do the collaborating artists combine the elements of line and sound to create and connect human figures, and to visually represent their movement through closed and open spaces?

* A line of inquiry is an open, yet focused question that incorporates elements and concepts found in a specific work of art, and is related to the concerns of students and teachers. It invites questioning, guides our exploration throughout, and serves as the framework for constructing experiential lessons.

LESSON ONE: Exploring Lines and Creating Human Figures with Lines

Activity #1. Identifying and Drawing Different Kinds of Lines

Each student is given a piece of 8.5 x 11 unlined white paper and a pencil.

Ask students to look around the classroom and to silently and carefully observe, guided by the following question:

- What different kinds of lines do you notice in the objects or architecture of our classroom? (Examples: Straight, curvy, zigzag, dotted, thick, thin, etc.)

Then, on chart paper posted on the wall, document a list of responses to your following questions:

- Where do you see lines?
- How would you describe the lines?
- What are some of the names for these lines?
- Are there any lines that do not have a formal name? What would you name them?

Ask students to select four different kinds of lines they see in the classroom and draw them on the paper provided.

Select two different student line drawings and, focusing on them one at a time, ask the following questions:

- What do you notice in this drawing?
- Do you notice any of the lines we wrote down earlier?
- Are there any new lines we see that we would like to add to our list?
- Do you notice anything new about the lines in the room now that you have drawn them?
- Do any of the lines remind you of something else you have seen?
- Looking closely at the shape of the lines, what sound might accompany one of the lines? Or, if that line could make a sound, what might it be?

NOTE: You can collect the line drawings or post them on the wall.

Activity #2. How Can Simple Lines Be Used to Draw Human Figures?

Ask one student to stand in an open area of the classroom and assume any kind of distinctive standing pose, paying particular attention to where he or she places arms, legs, body, and head.

Guide the class to look carefully at the pose and imagine drawing it using different kinds of lines.

Then, instruct students to trace the pose in the air with one finger, using only simple lines and paying close attention to each part of the body.

Ask:

- What do you notice as you try to trace the pose using only lines?
- What kinds of lines are you drawing to record the details of the pose?
- Is there anything different about the lines you just traced in the air and the lines we listed and drew (in Activity 1)?

Each student is given two additional pieces of paper and asked to draw simple line drawings of the pose, paying close attention to the different kinds of lines he or she is using in the drawing to represent the different parts of the body.

This is repeated with another student, who takes a different pose while the rest of the class does the same kind of drawing on their other paper.

Activity #3. Creating Line Figures with Chenille Sticks

Each student is given two chenille sticks.

Ask them to reflect on one of the drawings they just made in Activity 2, and to use the chenille sticks to re-create the pose of their selected drawing. (The students who posed will only have one drawing.)

NOTE: Teachers and students may develop their own way of using the two chenille sticks to create a human figure. One suggestion is as follows: bend one of the chenille sticks in half. Twist the folded end once to create the head of the figure while the bottom two ends of the folded chenille stick become the legs. The second chenille stick is wrapped around the first chenille stick just below the head area to create the arms. The ends of the arms may be folded in to create the look of hands.

When students are done, they are given small pieces of plasticine or other soft molding clay to put onto a small piece of Kraft paper or newspaper, or small pieces of Styrofoam (one piece for each student) to serve as a base for their figure, placing the legs of their figure in the base.

All figures are then displayed on a table.

After the students have had an opportunity to observe all the chenille stick figures, ask:

- What do you notice about the figures?
- How would you describe the lines you see?

Instruct students to physically embody the pose and then ask:

- Which lines did you notice in the figure that helped you to "become" the pose yourself?
- Are you noticing anything new about the pose now that you are imitating it with your body?

NOTE: Keep chenille stick figures with each student's name attached in preparation for Lesson Two.

LESSON TWO: How Can We Create a Sequence of Poses? In What Ways Can Lines Represent Movement? What Happens when Sound is Combined with Movement?

Activity #1. Creating a Sequence of Poses

In groups of three: Each student is given his or her own chenille stick figure created in Lesson One.

Ask students, working as a group, to create a sequence of three poses, deciding which of their figures is "A" (the beginning pose), "B" (the middle pose), and "C" (the third pose).

Students then place the three figures on their desks, in their sequence.

Ask one member of each group to embody the sequence and to speak out loud "A," "B," "C," as he or she goes through it.

The whole class views at least two embodied sequences to compare and contrast.

Ask:

- What do you notice?
- Can you describe the poses?
- How would you describe the movement between the poses? What kinds of lines do you see?
- How do the spoken letters (A, B, C) affect the meaning of the sequence?
- How would you describe what happens or changes from the beginning to the end of the sequence?

Activity #2: Creating and Observing Different kinds of Movement Through Space. Exploring the Combination of Sound and Movement.

Ask one of the students who embodied his or her group's sequence to show the three poses again, but this time each pose is done in three different parts of the room.

(Example: the first pose is near the door, the second is near the teacher's desk, and the third

is in the corner near the windows.)

Ask the observers:

- How is the student moving through space between the poses to the different places in the room? Describe their movement.
- What are some other possibilities? (Examples: walk, run, leap, jump, go backwards, crawl, etc.)
- What sounds do you imagine might accompany the movement between the poses? Why?

Ask the student who is demonstrating to now make deliberate choices as to the different ways he/she wants to move *between* each pose.

Instruct the rest of the students to hold a finger up in the air and trace imaginary lines that represent only the movement *between* the poses.

The student then goes through their movement sequence a second time. This time, another student is asked to create vocal sounds that accompany the movement between the poses.

NOTE: To give the first student an opportunity to observe, you can repeat the above process with another student demonstrating and another student making sound.

Ask the following questions and document responses on chart paper on the wall:

- How would you describe the lines that you drew in the air to represent the movement between the different poses? (Note: Responses to this question will be referenced in Activity 3)
- Were some lines easier to draw than others? If so, why do you think that was?
- What did you notice about the combination of the movement and sound?
- How did the sound affect your perception of the movement?

Activity #3. Using Lines to Represent Movement

Students sit in their groups of three with their chenille-stick sequence. Each student is given a piece of black construction paper (8.5 x 11) and selects three different pieces of colored chalk, including white.

Students are working individually, but are using their group's chenille-stick figure sequence as a guide.

Instruct students to look closely at the three figures, and, using simple lines, draw each of the three figures' poses, one in each of three different places on the black paper.

Encourage them to allow for open space between each figure, and to use a different color chalk for each one.

After they have drawn the three figures, have students reflect on the different kinds of lines they noticed their classmates made *between* the poses in Activity 2 (documented above).

Ask the following questions:

- If the three figures on your black paper represented one person, how do you imagine that person might move from one pose to another?
- What kinds of lines are going to help you show the movement between the poses?
- Might any of the lines we talked about or drew in the air earlier, help you show what you are imagining?
- What color(s) do you want to choose to show those movements?

Students then work on their drawings.

After the drawings are completed, post them on the wall to view as a class.

Ask:

- What do you notice about the different lines in these drawings?
- What is the difference between how the drawings show a still pose and how they show movement?
- What colors do you see?
- In what ways do the color choices for the movement help us to see those lines as movement?
- Can you imagine sounds that would go along with the movement of one of the drawings?
- What happens to our perception of the drawing when the element of sound is added?

Write responses to the following question on chart paper on the wall:

- Reflecting back on our last two lessons, what are some of the things we have been exploring or studying?

LESSON THREE: Viewing the Digital Work of Art, *Ghostcatching*

Activity #1: View *Ghostcatching*

Activity #2: What do You Notice? What Choices did the Artists Make? How Were Lines and Sound Used?

Immediately following the first viewing, have students talk to a partner about what they noticed in the work of art.

Then, lead a whole-group discussion about what students noticed and experienced.

Introduce the title, “*Ghostcatching*,” and ask the following questions, documenting on the wall, in particular, things students noticed about sound (to be referenced in Lesson Four):

- What did you notice in *Ghostcatching*?
- How would you describe the lines you noticed?

- How did the lines show movement?
- What colors did you see?
- What different sounds did you hear?
- In what ways did the sound relate to the movement?
- How would you describe the beginning, middle, and end of the piece? Did anything change?
- Why do you suppose it is called *Ghostcatching*?
- If you were to give it another title, what would it be?
- What connections are you making between *Ghostcatching* and the things we have been exploring in class?
- What connections are you making between what we have been exploring with *Ghostcatching* and the things you are studying in the other subject areas?
- What questions do you have about the work of art?

Activity #3: Identifying a Personal Curiosity

Ask students to write a question they have about *Ghostcatching*.

Activity #4: Second Viewing of *Ghostcatching*

Activity #5: Reflection on Second Viewing and Introduction of Contextual Information

On the reverse side of the paper with their questions, which the students wrote in Activity 3, ask them to write personal responses to the following prompts, based on their second viewing of *Ghostcatching*:

- What are two or three new things you noticed?
- If you can, how would you answer or respond to the question you posed prior to the second viewing (on the reverse side of your index card)?
- What new questions do you have?

NOTE: Younger students might share their responses verbally and sketch a moment from *Ghostcatching* that they remember.

Introduce and lead a whole class discussion based on one or all three of the contextual information items listed under Lesson Three on pages 4–5 :

LESSON FOUR: Creating a Storyboard and Sound Score

Activity #1: Creating a Storyboard Sequence

Students get into groups of five and are given their individual chalk drawings on black construction paper (from Lesson Two, Activity 3).

Guide the students to study their drawings in their groups by asking the following questions:

- What do you notice about your group's drawings?
- Where do you see similarities? Where do you see significant differences?
- If you were to sequence all the drawings to create a story or other kind of meaning, what things might you need to consider?
- Which one of the drawings do you see as a possible beginning point? Why?
- How can you sequence the drawings into a beginning, middle and end?

In their groups, students work on sequencing their individual drawings into a “storybook” and decide its meaning.

Then, lay the sequences out on the desks and have students silently view all of them.

After, have students gather around one of the storyboard sequences and ask the following questions:

- What do you notice as you look at this sequenced storyboard?
- What choices stand out to you?
- Who would like to offer an interpretation of the beginning, middle, and end of the storyboard?
- Does anyone have another interpretation of the sequence?
- Are you relating this story in some way to *Ghostcatching*? If so, how?

Ask the creators of the storyboard you are focusing on:

- How would you describe the process you went through creating your storyboard?
- What meaning did you give it? What story does it tell?

Activity #2: Creating a Sound Score for the Storyboard

Groups return to their own storyboard.

NOTE: For the questioning below, you may wish to reference any documentation on sound gathered in Lesson Three, Activity 2

Ask:

- Reflecting back on the viewing of *Ghostcatching*, what are some of the things that stand out to you about its use of sound?
- What were the different uses of the voice? Other sounds?

- What sound choices would best support the beginning, middle, and end of your storyboard?

Instruct groups to discuss the various vocal choices (examples: humming, singing, vocal sound effects, silence, and/or words) they might make to accompany their storyboard sequence based on the meaning they have created for it to create its sound score.

Have several groups share their storyboard with its sound score, and ask the following questions:

- What different sound choices did this group make?
- In what ways does their sound score relate to their movement drawings?
- What story do the two together tell? What meaning can we create? (Invite multiple interpretations.)
- Is there anything about their drawings and sound choices that reminds you of *Ghostcatching*? Why?

LESSON FIVE: Reflections and Creating Concrete Poetry

Activity #1: Identifying Personal Learning

Guide students in a reflection discussion of the entire *Ghostcatching* plan, reviewing the following:

- the students' line drawings (Lesson One)
- the students' chenille figures in poses (Lesson One)
- the students' chalk drawings on black paper—showing poses and movement (Lesson Two)
- the questions students asked between viewings and after the second viewing (Lesson Three)
- the students' storyboards and sound scores (Lesson Four)

Ask:

- What was most meaningful to you about *Ghostcatching* that you will always remember?
- What questions do you have? What are you still curious about?

Activity #2: Creating Written Reflections in the Shapes of Different Types of Lines

Each student is given a white lined piece of 8.5 x 11 paper and pencil.

Ask students to write three to four sentences about the following: *Reflections on the different ways lines and sounds were used in Ghostcatching.*

Ask them now to re-write their sentences in the shape of one of the lines they remember

from *Ghostcatching*. (The shape of the writing on the page might be straight, curvy, zigzag, etc.)

Post these completed writings on the wall and give students a moment to view them all.

Ask:

- What do you notice?
- How would you describe the different lines you see?
- In what ways are you relating the lines to *Ghostcatching*?

Have one student show his or her writing and then read it to the class.

Ask the class:

- What stands out to you about what you just heard?
- In what ways are you relating the words to the shape of the writing on the page?

LESSON SIX: Celebration and Self-Assessment

NOTE: You may want to invite parents for this celebration and self-assessment. During this event, students can ask their parents “noticing” questions about their artwork, as well as speak to their own work and describe for the parents what they were exploring.

Celebration

Display all student art and wall documentation from the plan.

Lead a walk-through, and at each area, have students speak about their memory of that moment and/or the different things they learned, explored, and experienced.

At the end of this walk-through and discussion, ask:

- What will you remember and take with you from your study of *Ghostcatching*?

Self-Assessment

Ask students to write three “What I learned...” statements and share them with the class.

Lead a discussion about the different things learned.

Then, lead a discussion prompted by the following question:

- In what ways are you connecting the different things you learned during our study of *Ghostcatching* with things you are learning in other subject areas?



Bill T. Jones

Cover photo: *Ghostcatching* © 1999 Bill T. Jones, Paul Kaiser & Shelley Eshkar
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