Georgia Performance Standards Framework for ELA Unit 7-8th Grade

Grade: 8
Topic: Signing a Poem
Instructional unit: Poetry/Drama
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The task:
Interpreting a poem through movement is one strategy to increase comprehension of the poem. Students are able to engage more parts of their brain; therefore, they are able to understand the poem’s meaning. The following task is adapted from Georgia Heard’s Awakening the Heart: Exploring Poetry in Elementary and Middle School and can be used with any descriptive poem.

The teacher will choose a poem that the class has read and discussed previously. He or she will dissect the poem sentence by sentence and will create arm movements or gestures to accompany each line. A sample poem to use for this activity is the poem “Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout” by Shel Silverstein:

Line:
Sarah Cynthia Sylvia Stout would not take the garbage out

Interpretive Movement:
As teacher says the line, she places her hands on her hips, shakes her head no, and pinches her nose.

In pairs, students choose a previously read and discussed poem and determine gestures for each line, groups of lines, or stanza. As they present, one student should read the poem orally as the other student acts out the gestures.

Differentiation:
The teacher will provide a poem prior to assignment so that the student can practice prior to participating in the group

Focus Standard:
ELA8LSV2 The student listens to and views various forms of text and media in order to gather and share information, persuade others, and express and understand ideas. The student will select and critically analyze messages using rubrics as assessment tools.
When delivering and responding to presentations, the student:
a. Gives oral presentations or dramatic interpretations for various purposes.
c. Shows appropriate changes in delivery (e.g., gestures, expression, tone, pace, visuals).