

# TEACHER GUIDE



## The Art of Performance Poetry

With: Eric Gabriel

Grade: 7/8

Date: Feb 12th

Artistic Discipline: Literary Arts



### OVERVIEW

What is it that makes us so nervous to be seen performing in front of other people? Join Eric Gabriel, a seasoned performance poet, as he brings out your inner performer and walks your students through the art of performance. Grow your ability to engage with an audience and have your story be heard.

### CLASSROOM SETUP

Arrange your students in a large semi-circle facing the board/projector screen

### MATERIALS

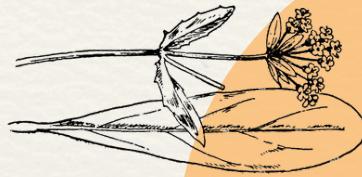
- Projector/HDMI Cable
- Pencil
- Paper to write on

### ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

With a unique poetry style described by many as celestial, Gabriel 'ArchAngel' Ehijie, is a Pan-human writer, poet, and interdisciplinary artist. A passionate student of the human experience, Ehijie believes in the psycho-social healing properties of art, and constantly seeks new ways to aid that healing process.



# Curriculum Outcomes & Indicators



## Grade Seven

CP7.5 Use drama elements, strategies, negotiation, and collaboration to help shape the direction of the drama and/or collective creation.	<i>g. Identify the objects or events in drama work that function as symbols.</i>
CP7.4 Investigate how dramatic character develops from role.	<i>a. Demonstrate confidence and imagination when working in various roles.</i>
CR7.1 Respond to professional dance, drama, music, and visual art works using analysis, personal interpretation, and research.	<i>c. Conduct research into the contexts within which selected arts expressions were created, and present findings in innovative ways (e.g., role drama, talk show from specific historical period, using presentation software).</i>

## Grade Eight

CP8.5 Investigate how theatrical elements (e.g., story, character, design, space) are combined to achieve dramatic purpose.	<i>e. Analyze the use of movement, and the use of space and time in own work.</i>
CP8.5 Investigate how theatrical elements (e.g., story, character, design, space) are combined to achieve dramatic purpose.	<i>d. Demonstrate imagination when creating imaginary places and situations in own drama work.</i>
CR8.1 Respond to professional dance, drama, music, and visual art works through the creation of own arts expressions.	<i>d. Create own work (e.g., visual or performing arts) in response to a professional arts expression, and describe how own work is inspired or influenced by the original work.</i>

# Workshop Vocabulary

## Tone

How loud/hard or soft we say something.

## Gesture

A way we move our hands to tell someone something.

## Emotion

What we feel in our hearts

## Improvise

When we make something up that we've never thought of before.

## Beatbox

When we use our mouth to make drum sounds

# Pre Workshop Exercises

Name:

Duration:

Materials:

## EXERCISE 1 - Today's Poetry

- Discuss with your students about what places they most commonly hear poetry. Talk about songwriting as poetry. Ask them what their favorite musicians are. Have a vote as a class to see what genre of music is the most popular in your classroom.
- Ask your students if any of them know the history of any of the musical genres that they like.
- Watch some of the following videos (of varying depth) to demonstrate some of the links between these musical genres:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/YbVynUMGEpQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Caxwob1iKX4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYy-6ltraVQ>

- Have each student choose a modern song with some of their favorite (appropriate) lyrics in it.
- Ask each student to place the genre of the song that they've chosen.
- Have the students take some time to research that genre of music. Have them write up a short paragraph (5-7 sentences) on the history of this genre, highlighting at least one other musician who would have been an influence for the the musician of their chosen song.
- Play show in tell in groups of 4 and have each student present their lyrics to the group.

## EXERCISE 2 - Persona Poetry

- Have your students practice perspective taking by writing a poem from the perspective of an object.

• Read them a persona poem written by some students in Chicago:

<https://www.poetrycenter.org/poems/persona-poems/>

Or show them some of the persona poems in this video (poem at 1:23 is very accessible)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gS-S87D-G4s>

- Ask each student to think about an object that they see in their every day life



# Pre Workshop Exercises



- Put the following questions on the board and have the students write their answers on a piece of paper:

1. What is something that your object sees every day? Use at least 2 words to describe what they see.
2. What is something that your object smells every day? Describe that smell in at least 2 words.
3. How does your object feel when you touch it? Soft? Smooth? Fuzzy? Heavy?
4. Does your object ever get moved around? What moves it around? Where does it go?
5. If your object had a friend that was another object? What other object would be their friend?
6. What makes your object feel happy? Is it something that it was made to do? Is it a certain color or sound?

- Have your students write out a simple little poem using the answers to their questions and inserting them into lines that generally start with 'I' statements:

*I see shiny shiny metal and soft paper every day  
I smell fresh, dark ink  
I feel smooth and heavy in your hand  
And when you press my head down I clink and clunk  
I make friends with every single staple  
And we feel happy when we bring paper together*

*(a stapler)*

# Broadcast Program

00:00 - 00:05:

- Artist Bio Video + Introduction

00:05 - 00:10:

- Check In // Ground rules (Listen, Observe, Validate, Empathize)
- Warm Up + Grounding breathing exercise
- Game (Spaghetti)

00:10 - 00:15:

- Watch Video as a class, and discuss observations afterwards
- (1:09) "To Be Or Not To Be" Unsolicited Advice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34ykFlfn1X4>

00:15 - 00:25:

- Three key features of performance poetry:

-Adding emotions to the way you speak:

<https://youtube.com/shorts/gVrR3dGuvL4?si=1oP9NjXk6dQqoSBM>

<https://youtube.com/shorts/UjjSODwM4oM?si=POcYZHzWKy24mcTW>

-Speaking with rhythm

[https://youtu.be/eFnWrj\\_IbuA?si=HP3JjkyZgNPjhonI](https://youtu.be/eFnWrj_IbuA?si=HP3JjkyZgNPjhonI)

[https://youtu.be/tR1ECf4sEpw?si=s\\_4rfFcKSayHIhX9](https://youtu.be/tR1ECf4sEpw?si=s_4rfFcKSayHIhX9) {0:30 - 2:00}

[https://youtu.be/X\\_vl1NwFaLk?si=fskvoUOTfLSnp24f](https://youtu.be/X_vl1NwFaLk?si=fskvoUOTfLSnp24f)

-Improvise as you see fit

00:25 - 00:30:

- Tips to use in performance (Eyes, Body, Voice, Space, Poem, Ending)

00:30 - 00:40:

- Writing Prompt - Write a 5-line poem about your school

00:40 - 00:45:

- Performance Prompt - Perform your poem to the class in the persona of a popular movie/cartoon character or musician (e.g. Batman, SpongeBob, Taylor Swift, etc.)

00:45 - 00:50:

- Artist's Q & A



# Post Workshop Exercises



## EXERCISE 1 - Words in Motion

- Have your students pick back up their 5 line poem from the workshop (or write a new one from a different prompt if they really want). The students will now be thinking of how to intentionally incorporate movement and timing into their performance of the poem.
- Ask the students to start by thinking about movement. What are 2-3 places in the poem where they can incorporate a specific movement? If they're still performing the poem as another persona, let that guide the movements. How can the movements be relevant to the words and help highlight an important line?
- Have the students think about timing. As they deliver the poem, what speed should they deliver it? Are there places where a pause could be used effectively?
- Have the students jot down notes on their poem to prompt them and then have them deliver their poems in pairs to practice their intentional performance.

## EXERCISE 2 - Words as Symbols

- Ask your students if they can define the word 'symbol'. Ask them if they've ever heard of the word 'simile'.
- Talk about how a word or image can sometimes be a symbol for another thing.
- Expose your students to some similes we use in common language. (ie: as quiet as a mouse, as strong as an ox, shining like the sun etc)
- Have each student choose an object in the room and have them write down a second object that the first one looks like (ie: That whiteboard looks like a thick snowfall)
- Have the students choose an object that school feels like to them. Have them come up with a list of emotions that school (or any other location like home) makes them feel. Have them come up with an image that they strongly associate with that emotion (ie: if the emotion is confusion the image could be a fog). Have them finish the sentence, 'School feels like....'
- Now choose a new topic as a class (ie: love, friendship, fun) and have them repeat the simile creation process there.
- Feel free to give the students license to write more on the topic and extend this mini poem.

# Additional Information

## Upcoming Workshops

Mar. 18-19	Ray the Nihilist – Music (Making A Hip Hop Beat)
Apr. 15-16	Kamisha Alexson – Visual Arts (Designing the 12 Tipi Teachings)
(French/English) May 5-7	Gabrielle Dufresne – Theatre (Puppetry)

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