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Essential Skills in Music
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Lesson Plan: Martin's Big Words

Grade: 1

Concepts: To demonstrate to students the importance of historical figures

Indiana State Standard: Social Studies 1.1.1-Students will identify individuals, events, and symbols that are important to our country.

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Learn who Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was
2. Discover what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is significant to our country

Materials:

-*Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*
-CD
-Piano
-Song lyrics

Procedures:

1. The teacher should inform the students that they are going to be reading an exciting book about Martin Luther King Jr. Then, the teacher should invite the students to sit with him/her in a circle in the usual place used for reading. Before reading the book, ask the students if any of them already know who Martin Luther King Jr. is and have them explain what they know.
"Alright class, I have a really exciting book to read to you now about one of our nation's historical figures. Please push in your chairs and walk over to the reading circle and join me."
"Do any of you already have an idea of who Martin Luther King Jr. is or what he did for our country?"
Transition: "Those were all good answers. Let's read the book and discover more about Dr. King."
2. Now, the teacher should read the book with enthusiasm. In the middle of the book the teacher should ask the students if they have any questions regarding Dr. King. The teacher could ask the same question at the end of the book.
"Does anyone have any questions about the book yet?"
Transition: "Now to help us remember the Dr. King had an important dream for our country, I want to teach all of you a fun song."
3. The teacher should tell the students that the song she is going to teach them sounds like a song that they might have heard before called "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." Then the teacher can play the song for the students on the music player and pass out the Dr. King song lyrics.

Dr. Martin Luther King had a dream (Song three times)
He had the whole world in his dream.

He had me and you, in his dream
He had me and you, in his dream
He had me and you, in his dream
He had the whole world in his dream.

“The song I want to teach you about Dr. King sounds almost the same as another song that you have probably heard called ‘He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.’ So I am going to play that song for you now so that you can learn the melody.”

Transition: “Now, to change this song to be about Dr. King we are going to make a few tiny changes.”

3. After the children hear the song, the teacher should explain to them that the song about Dr. King is similar and only a few words are changed. Instead of saying “hands” in the chorus, the students should say “dream.” Point out all of the differences to the students. Explain to the students why Dr. King had every person in his dream.

“Remember how in the book Dr. King had everyone in his dream? Dr. King had everyone in his dream because he wanted everyone in the whole wide world to be equal. That is why we are going to change the song just a little bit so instead of saying the word ‘hands,’ we are going to say the word ‘dream.’ Now lets try to sing the chorus with the word ‘dream.’”

Sing chorus with children.

4. Now ask an accompanist to play the piano while the rest of the class sings the chorus.

“Now why don’t we try to sing it while Professor Gindin plays the piano with us. Won’t that be fun?”

Transition: “I have a good idea! Why don’t we try and make motions for the song?”

5. Have the students stand up and spread out and ask them if they have any ideas for motions to the chorus of the song.

“Do any of you have an idea for the part of the chorus that says ‘He’s got?’ What about ‘the whole world?’” Etc.

6. Closure: Then sing the song again with the motions and accompanist.

Transition: “Now let’s try to do these motions with the song.”

“Wow! All of you did such a great job today! Why don’t you sit back in the reading circle again.”

Assessment:

What is one word to describe Martin Luther King Jr.?

What was Martin Luther King Jr.’s dream?

Who was included in Martin Luther King Jr.’s dream?