

Lesson Plan

Jazz It Up

Book: *Jazz Dance*

Series: Shall We Dance?

Level: Beacon

Objective

To help students practice choosing vivid verbs.

Supplies

- *Jazz Dance* book
- Whiteboard
- Jazz It Up worksheet (attached)
- Pencils

Before the Activity

Read through the *Jazz Dance* book, or assign it to students to read on their own. Print a Jazz It Up worksheet for each student.

Activity

Vivid verbs are an important part of writing. They help keep readers interested by making text exciting. Plus, they are more specific, which helps make writing more concrete. Weak verbs do not describe action or tell the reader much about the sentence. Passive verbs and linking verbs are common weak verbs. Write the following examples of weak verbs on the whiteboard:

- The red coat **was** what James had forgotten.
- The dancer **was noticed** by the audience.

In the first sentence, *was* is a linking verb. In the second sentence, *was noticed* is a passive verb. Linking verbs and passive verbs can often be replaced by action verbs. The sentences still mean the same thing, but they are more exciting to read. Write the following examples on the whiteboard:

- James **forgot** the red coat.
- The audience **noticed** the dancer.

Give each student a Jazz It Up worksheet. Explain that this worksheet contains a passage from the *Jazz Dance* book. But the verbs have been removed. Students should fill in the blanks to complete the sentences, making sure to choose active, vivid verbs.

After students have added their verbs, they should choose a partner. Partners should read their revised texts out loud to each other. Then collect the texts.

Evaluation

Use the attached answer key to grade the students' worksheets. The answer key includes the original verbs from the text, but any verbs that convey the correct meaning are acceptable. Give the students one point for each vivid verb, for a total of 36 points.

Standards

This lesson may be used to address the Common Core State Standards' language standards, grade 5 (L 5.3).

Jazz It Up

Fill in the blanks with strong, vivid verbs.

The curtain _____. Five dancers _____ still. Then a lively song _____ . The dancers _____ to the side, snapping their fingers. Suddenly, they _____ into the air. They _____ like cats. Their jazz dance _____ started.

Jazz dance _____ jazz music. This music _____ around 1900 in New Orleans, Louisiana. But people did more than just _____ to jazz. They also _____ to it. They _____, _____, and _____ to the peppy music. This _____ new dancing styles, including tap and swing dancing. At first, these dances were all called jazz dance. That _____ in the 1950s. Jazz dance _____ a smoother style. It became a performance dance. That's why jazz dance _____ in Broadway shows and movie musicals.

On stage, jazz dancers _____ in costumes. They _____ hats, gloves, canes. Sparkles and glitter _____ the dancers' moves. Jazz dance is a high-energy style. Dancers _____ their whole bodies. They _____, _____, and _____. These moves _____ jazz dance exciting to watch. Today's jazz dance _____ movements from other dance styles, too. It _____ movements from ballet, tap, and modern dance.

Jazz dancers _____ many hours practicing. Young dancers _____ at local studios. Serious dancers _____ to bigger studios. Studios often _____ against each other. The best dancers even _____ in professional shows. To get a job in a show, dancers _____. They _____ a short performance for the people running the show. If a dancer passes the audition, he or she _____.

Jazz It Up ANSWER KEY

Fill in the blanks with strong, vivid verbs.

The curtain **rises**. Five dancers **are standing** still. Then a lively song **begins**. The dancers **step** to the side, snapping their fingers. Suddenly, they **leap** into the air. They **land** like cats. Their jazz dance **is just getting** started!

Jazz dance **is based on** jazz music. This music **began** around 1900 in New Orleans, Louisiana. But people did more than just **listen** to jazz. They also **danced** to it. They **hopped**, **twisted**, and **twirled** to the peppy music. This **led to** new dancing styles, including tap and swing dancing. At first, these dances were all called jazz dance. That **changed** in the 1950s. Jazz dance **became** a smoother style. It became a performance dance. That's why jazz dance **is most often seen** in Broadway shows and movie musicals.

On stage, jazz dancers **perform** in costumes. They **may use** hats, gloves, canes. Sparkles and glitter **show off** the dancers' moves. Jazz dance is a high-energy style. Dancers **move** their whole bodies. They **turn**, **jump**, and **leap**. These moves **make** jazz dance exciting to watch. Today's jazz dance **uses** movements from other dance styles, too. It **uses** movements from ballet, tap, and modern dance.

Jazz dancers **spend** many hours practicing. Young dancers **train** at local studios. Serious dancers **move on** to bigger studios. Studios often **compete** against each other. The best dancers even **perform** in professional shows. To get a job in a show, dancers **audition**. They **give** a short performance for the people running the show. If a dancer passes the audition, he or she **is hired**.