

Recommended  
Grade Levels:  
4-5

# Educate. Inspire. Connect.

ARTS INTEGRATION LESSONS



## Juneteenth for Mazie

WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY  
FLOYD COOPER

# Who is Arts for Learning WNY?

Formerly Young Audiences of Western New York, Arts for Learning WNY is the leading arts education organization in Western New York seeking innovative ways to integrate the arts into learning. For more than 60 years, Arts for Learning has empowered teachers to inspire young people through meaningful creative experiences, seamlessly integrating the arts into the classroom.

## WHAT IS ARTS INTEGRATION?

Arts integration is an approach to teaching where the arts (e.g., music, dance, drama, or visual arts) are woven into lessons from other subject areas such as math, science, language arts, or social studies. The goal is for students to learn both the art form and the academic content at the same time.

## WHY IT WORKS!

Arts integration is a powerful educational tool because it unlocks how kids naturally learn. This type of instruction utilizes the whole brain and hands-on experiences connect academic content to real-life. It supports different learning styles, bolsters relationship-building skills, and naturally boosts motivation.

# How to Use this Arts Integration Guide

**THE ARTS ARE ALL AROUND US** and everyday moments can become creative adventures when we pause to look, listen, and imagine together.

Whether you are dancing in the kitchen, drawing your favorite story characters, or acting out scenes from a book, you are using the power of the arts to make learning stick in joyful, meaningful ways.

This guide is designed to help you and your family dive deeper into the story, beyond just reading the words on the page. With this book, the suggested art supplies, and a little imagination, you will explore the characters, setting, and themes in a whole new way.

You do not need to be a trained artist or teacher – just be willing to play, create, and explore. Along the way, you will support your child’s learning, build memories, and maybe even discover your inner artist!



Visit our website to explore more arts integration ideas!



# Visual Arts meets Science

Author and artist Floyd Cooper used a special art technique called the subtractive process to create his beautiful illustrations. Let's try a similar method – while learning about light, shadow, materials, and observation like a scientist!

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ *Juneteenth for Mazie* book
- ▶ Paper
- ▶ Pencil
- ▶ Charcoal
- ▶ Eraser (a kneaded eraser works best, but any kind will do)
- ▶ Tape (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. In the story, Mazie learns that some people who were enslaved followed a bright star to find freedom.** With an adult, go outside at night and observe the stars. How many can you see? Are some brighter than others? Which one is the brightest? Do they look like tiny dots or glowing shapes? Can you see the moon? Using pencil and paper, document your observations of the night sky. Try to be as accurate as possible, noting the positions of the stars and moon.
- 2. Once you are back inside, look at the illustration where enslaved people are traveling north toward freedom.** Notice how the star isn't a typical five-pointed star – it glows like a circle of light. How does this illustration compare to what you observed and documented in the night sky?
- 3. Using your night sky observation, practice a new artistic technique – erasure. Prepare a new piece of paper by laying it flat.** You can tape the corners to a table to keep it from moving. Draw a large square on your paper. Fill your square in with charcoal or pencil until it is full of color. This is your “surface layer”.
- 4. Grab your eraser and knead it until it is soft and shapeable.** With your night sky documentation for inspiration, begin carefully erasing parts of the surface layer to reveal light shapes like the stars or the moon. The more color you erase, the brighter the stars in your night sky will appear.

## INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED

**5. Think about this: Mazie's great-grandfather Moses didn't let himself be “erased” by society.** As you use erasure to create your art, ask yourself: How do I want to be seen? What makes my story shine bright like a star?

## VOCABULARY

- Erasure** – Taking something away or removing it completely.
- Knead** – To stretch and soften something by pressing and folding it.
- Light** – A form of energy that travels in waves to let us see.
- Shadow** – A dark area created when something blocks the light.
- Observation** – Looking closely at something to see what is happening or how it has changed.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**On a clear night, go on a stargazing adventure with a trusted adult.** Can you find the North Star? Can you use the North Star to find the Little Dipper or Big Dipper (Orion)? Do you see patterns or shapes in the star? Think like a storyteller: the shapes can be real or imagined constellations. Tell a story about the shapes and patterns you observe.

# Dance meets Social Studies

Dancing is one way people celebrate Juneteenth. Mazie's great-great-grandfather might have danced in a Ring Circle or performed Cumbia. Let's learn a popular Juneteenth dance called Step Dance to celebrate and remember.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ *Juneteenth for Mazie* book
- ▶ A Friend or Caregiver
- ▶ A space where you can stomp and make loud sounds

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. In the story, Grandpa Mose gathered with loved ones to hear the declaration in Galveston, Texas.** In celebration, the community broke out into song and dance throughout the night. Many would have celebrated by doing a **Freestyle** Step Dance. Discuss how you felt reading this part of the story.
- Let's learn some basic moves of the Step Dance:
  - **THE CLAP**
    - Clap your hands together or slap your chest or thighs. This makes a sharp, exciting sound.
  - **THE STOMP**
    - Stomp your feet to make a loud, deep sound.
- 3. Let's put these moves together!** One person creates a rhythm by clapping, stomping, or counting to 8 over and over. The other person uses claps and stomps to make their own rhythm and patterns over that beat. Use all of our space and move around the room!
- 4. Stay in the same tempo but make up your own moves.** After two 8-counts, switch roles.

## VOCABULARY

- Rhythm** – A steady beat or pattern of sounds or movements.
- Tempo** – How fast or slow the rhythm is.
- 8-Count** – Counting the beat from one to eight, then repeating.
- Freestyle** – Making up your moves in the moment.
- Step Dance** – With origins in West Africa, Step Dance was created when drums were not allowed or were not available. Dancers and musicians used their bodies and nearby objects to make sounds and keep rhythm. Imagine the joy that would have been felt during this celebration of freedom.
- Community** – A group of people who live, work or play together.
- Declaration** – An official statement that makes something known to a lot of people

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

- Add sharp, strong arms to your dance.** Point one arm straight out to the side. Bend your other arm so it points toward your straight arm. Look in the direction of your straight arm. Try it on both sides, moving up, down, or diagonally. Keep your arms strong and your moves sharp!
- Mazie learns that dance can be a celebration.** Play your favorite music and let your body move however it wants—movement is joy!
- Make an instrument with recycled materials around the house.** You can make a tambourine, shaker, or tin can drum. Use your homemade instrument to set the rhythm for your dance.

# Music meets English Language Arts

**Mazie’s great-grandfather might have used call and response songs to share his feelings. Let’s work with a partner to write and sing our own call and response songs!**

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ *Juneteenth for Mazie* book
- ▶ Paper
- ▶ Pencil
- ▶ A Singing Partner
- ▶ Egg Shaker (optional)

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1. While reading the story, pay attention to two parts from Mazie’s story: when Maize is told “no” and when Mazie learns to “remember and celebrate” Juneteenth.** Look for how many times you see the words “celebrate” or “celebration.” We will use one of these as our **refrain**—the part that repeats—in our song.

**2. By the end of the story, Mazie learns to celebrate!** Think of things you are proud of or want to celebrate. Using a pencil and paper, each partner will write your own call-and-response song. Examples:

- “When it’s my birthday.”
- “When I get a good grade.”
- “When I help someone.”

After each one, add: **“We remember and celebrate!”**

**3. Now it is time to put the song together with your partner!**

Start your song by saying what you celebrate and your partner will respond with “We remember and Celebrate!”. Take turns singing and answering each other. Try to say your lines with expression and feeling!

## VOCABULARY

**Call-and-response** – Singing where one person sings and another answers back.

**Refrain** – The part of the song that repeats.

**Celebrate** – To do something fun and special for a happy day or important event.

**Remember** – To keep something in your mind/memory.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**Add rhythm by clapping your hands and tapping your knees to make a beat.** Can you sing your song in rhythm?

**Make your own shaker using a plastic egg, rice, and tape.**

Add plastic spoons on the sides as handles. Shake your instrument while you sing!

# In the Community

Mazie learns that Juneteenth is about remembering the struggles and victories of Black Americans who fought for freedom and equality. Let's help others learn about Black leaders in your community by creating special bookmarks that share important facts and stories.

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ **Juneteenth for Mazie book**
- ▶ **Library Card or Internet Access**
- ▶ **Bookmark** (2"x6" paper strip)
- ▶ **Red, Green, and Black Decorative Paper**
- ▶ **Glue**
- ▶ **Crayons, Pens, or Markers**

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1. In the story, community members celebrate and remember the leaders and heroes that came before them to pave the way for their future successes.** With the help of an adult, visit the library or search online to learn about Black authors, artists, or community leaders who have created books, music, art, or made a difference in the fight for freedom and equality in your own community.

**2. Draw or trace a picture of the author, artist, or a local community leader who has made a difference.**

**3. On a small piece of paper (smaller than your bookmark), write one fact about the person you researched who helped shape Black American history in your community or one fact about Juneteenth you learned in the story.**

**4. Now it's time to create your bookmark.** On the same side of the bookmark glue your fact and picture. Using crayons, markers, or pens as well as colored scraps of paper, decorate your bookmark.

## INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED

**5. Use your bookmark or give one to friends, family, or community members.** When you give it to someone, talk about the leader you choose and the impact they had on your community.

## VOCABULARY

**Ancestor** – A member of your family from long ago, usually before your grandparents.

**Community leader** – Someone who helps guide and organize people to improve their neighborhood or community.

**Trace** - To follow the path of something, like a line on paper.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**With help from an adult, visit a community site that celebrates Black leaders in your community.** Here in Buffalo, you can visit the Freedom Wall, Michigan Street African American Heritage Corridor, Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center, and many more!

**With an adult, go to City Hall and talk to local leaders about why Juneteenth matters to you.** You can use your bookmarks to help explain what you've learned and why this history is important.

Scan the QR code to  
learn more about  
*The Freedom Wall, 2017*



**Education** ▶ For over 60 years, we have been the leading arts education organization in Western New York seeking innovative, equitable, and inclusive ways to integrate arts into learning.

**Inspiration** ▶ We are committed to empowering local artists to teach and inspire young people and educators through new and meaningful creative arts experiences.

**Connection** ▶ By serving as a reliable connector between artists and organizations and providing high-quality education, we seamlessly fill a need to integrate arts into the classroom.



2495 Main Street  
Suite 443  
Buffalo, NY 14214  
[artsforlearningwny.org](https://artsforlearningwny.org)



*Affiliated with the national Young Audiences Arts for Learning*