

Little People, BIG DREAMS™

TEACHERS' GUIDE



Prince

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Prince Rogers Nelson was born into a musical family in Minneapolis, Minnesota and started dreaming of making his own music from a very early age. He saw movement as the perfect partner to music and played an impressive number of instruments. His stage performances were legendary, and he impressed everyone with not just his sounds and not just his moves, but with how he was always uniquely himself. Prince inspires us all to be unique, follow our passions, and live a life with no limits!

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. As a child, who were some of the people who influenced Prince's love of music?
2. What dreams did Prince have?
3. How can you tell that Prince loved performing?
4. What was the name of one of Prince's songs that became a popular movie and soundtrack?
5. How did Prince show the world that we don't need limits or labels?
6. Why is Prince's music still popular today?

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Prince's parents were both musicians, and his stepfather took Prince to concerts because he loved music too. How do the grown-ups in your life help you?
2. Prince often wore high heels and other clothes that were thought at that time to be exclusively for women. He celebrated being unique and just wanted to do things that made him happy without caring what others thought about it. Ask the students, "What is something about you that makes you unique?" If they struggle to come up with an answer, you can ask, "What is something about yourself that makes you happy?"

3. Explain to the students, “‘For Prince, everything was music’ (p. 23), so let’s listen to the music in our classroom.” Have half the class sit in one area with their eyes closed while the rest of the class moves around the classroom normally. The group that is sitting with their eyes closed will listen to the sounds around them. Maybe someone is tapping...or water is running...a friend is laughing... Have the groups switch and then bring everyone together to discuss what “music” they heard.

4. Personality traits are words we can use to describe people based on how they act. For example, we might say that Prince was brave because lived a life “free from limits” (p. 27), whether that was with the kind of music he made or how he dressed. Ask students what other words they could use to describe Prince. Can they find an example in the book to support their word? What words would they use to describe themselves?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Prince made his first studio album when he was only 19. “...he did everything: writing, composing, singing, arranging...even playing all 27 instruments!” (p. 12). With a partner, have students see how many instruments they can list. If you don’t have a variety of musical instruments in your classroom, ask the school’s music teacher to help you showcase some for the students. See if students can recall which ones Prince was shown playing in the book and if anyone wants to attempt playing them.

2. “Prince loved moving like a cat in high heels...” (p. 15), so let’s take a cue from him and have some fun playing animal charades. Before playing, create cards with animals on them. Students will be divided into two teams and will have to pull a card and act like that animal to get their team to guess correctly. For a more advanced game, create phrase cards like the book’s description; for example, “an elephant on skis” or “a fish in a bow tie.” Follow the same procedures to play this version.

3. For a time in his life, Prince changed his name to a symbol (p. 26). Have the students design a symbol that represents them. It could include symbols for things they like: a music note or star or heart. Provide a variety of art materials so that the students can really be creative with their creation. Have each student explain their symbol and how it represents them.

4. Prince Party - Ask students to dress in their favorite outfit---perhaps the one that makes them feel the most unique. On the selected day, play “Let’s Go Crazy” or “1999” (check to ensure any other selections are appropriate first) and allow students to express themselves through movement just like Prince did. For those students who are uncomfortable doing so, they can draw pictures using various shades of purple while listening to the music, since that was the color featured in “Purple Rain” and one that Prince wore often.



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