

Theory uses music, movement to teach math

BY BRETT BENNETT Northwest Arkansas Times

Posted on Saturday, October 6, 2007

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/nwat/News/57922/>



Linda Fritz's third-grade students at Happy Hollow Elementary learned how to squat, twist and point their way to figuring out some multiplication problems this week.

Marcia Daft from the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, in conjunction with the Walton Arts Center in Fayetteville, visited the class to demonstrate techniques for incorporating rhythm and movement in mathematics lessons.

Teachers from Happy Hollow and other schools in Fayetteville sat in on the sessions as part of a professional development opportunity.

“Each one of the teachers (watching) will go back to his or her classroom,” said Pat Relph, arts learning specialist with WAC.

Relph said the idea behind the techniques is to show the teachers an interactive method they can use while teaching the students.

On Friday, Daft covered multiples of the number three with the students by showing them a three-part movement phrase that involved squatting, twisting and pointing.

After a few students seemed disappointed they weren't picked to participate on Friday, Daft pointed out their classroom teacher could use the techniques they learned in future lessons.

“I'm writing it all down,” Fritz said.

Happy Hollow Principal Sharon Pepple said the visit coincides with curriculum, with third-grade students beginning to learn multiplication.

“They build on it every day,” Pepple said.

Starting out with three moves by one person, Daft then asked other students to join in by doing the same movements. The students counted the number of moves by each additional person, working their way up to “ $5 \times 3 = 15$.”

Daft also showed how the multiples add up using different cards of different colors and discussed terms used for

multiplication problems.

“ Groups of is just like the word times, ” she noted.

Daft also worked with multiples of the number four, going up to $4 \times 3 = 12$, and she discussed the differences between 3×4 and 4×3 . The students then divided into two groups practicing chants with multiples of three until they added to 12 and multiples of four until they reached 12.

Speaking to a group of teachers after the classroom session, Daft said she probably would have spaced out the lessons a little more under most circumstances, but she was trying to cover as much as possible Friday since it was her last day to visit the school.

Copyright © 2001-2008 Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, Inc. All rights reserved. Contact: webmaster@nwanews.com