



# EMBRACING OUR DIFFERENCES

## Life Doesn't Frighten Me (40-50 min.)

Created by Jeff McDaniel

### Florida Standard(s):

**ELA.6[7](8).R.3.1** – Explain [Analyze] how figurative language contributes to tone and meaning [and explain examples of allusions] (and explain examples of symbolism) in text(s).

**ELA.6[7](8).C.1.2** – Write personal or fictional narratives using narrative techniques, precise words and phrases [a recognizable point of view] (varied transitions), and figurative language (and a clearly established point of view).

**ELA.6[7](8).C.2.1** – Present information orally, in a logical sequence, using nonverbal cues, appropriate volume, clear pronunciation, and appropriate pacing [emphasizing key points that support the central idea] (supporting the central idea with credible evidence).

**ELA.678.V.1.1** – Integrate academic vocabulary appropriate to grade level in speaking and writing.

### Essential Question:

How do I identify mood and tone when comparing art and poetry?

### Learning Intention(s):

- Analyze and compare art and poetry.
- Identify tone and mood in both art and poetry.
- Engage in collaborative discourse to further understanding of a topic.
- Compose poetry in the style of a given poet.

### Resources / Materials Needed:

- Life Doesn't Frighten Me lesson PowerPoint
- "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" Poem by Maya Angelou (see page 3)

### Online Video / Resource Links Used:

- "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" YouTube recording by Maya Angelou: Click [here](#)

### Before Instruction:

- Distribute a copy of the poem "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" by Maya Angelou
- Cue up the *Life Doesn't Frighten Me* lesson PowerPoint
- Clue up the "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" YouTube recording by Maya Angelou: Click [here](#)

### Direct Instruction:

#### Slide 1-3 (5 min.): View the art piece "Life Doesn't Frighten Me"

- Think-Pair-Share the following discussion questions in small groups or as a class:
  - a. What are your initial reactions?
  - b. What mood (emotion) does the piece portray?
  - c. What change does the character experience throughout the piece?
  - d. How does the tone of the colors impact the viewer's understanding?



#### **Slide 4 (5 min.): The Influence of Fear**

- Consider the impact that fear might have had on this character in the artwork.
  - a. What are the stages of fear represented in the artwork?
  - b. How does the character progress through these stages?
  - c. Think of a time when you felt like this character. How was your journey similar or different?

#### **Slide 5-7 (15-20 min.): Close Read- Maya Angelou’s poem, “Life Doesn’t Frighten Me”**

- Distribute the poem to students (see page 3). Have them do the following:
  - a. Number each line of the poem
  - b. Number each stanza with a Roman numeral
  - c. Read the poem silently, circling any unknown vocabulary terms
  - d. Underline the repetition within the poem
- Think-Pair-Share the following discussion questions in small groups or as a class:  
(Consider using the jigsaw method)
  - a. How old do you estimate the speaker to be?
  - b. What are the speaker’s fears?
  - c. What effect does the repetition have on the poem?
  - d. What is the overall mood (emotion) within the poem?
  - e. How does the poem demonstrate the speaker’s determination to overcome life’s obstacles?
- Listen to the audible reading by Maya Angelou on YouTube (Click [here](#)) while viewing the art piece.
  - a. Are there any connections that can be made between the poem and the artwork?

#### **Slide 8-9 (15-20 min.): Creative Writing**

- Write one to three original stanzas in the style of Maya Angelou to add on to the end of the poem. Use figurative language to portray the mood of your own situation.
- Present your stanza to the class. Consider revising and combining each student’s stanza, or the best stanza from every class period to create a new, unique poem.

#### **Extensions:**

##### Extension #1- Visual Representation Composition

- Create your own artistic version of *Life Doesn’t Frighten Me* that portrays your experience with fear.

##### Extension #2- Written Analysis

- The title of both the poem and the art piece is *Life Doesn’t Frighten Me*. How might they be interpreted differently from one another?
- Write one paragraph detailing how the title might be perceived differently between the art piece and the poem. Cite evidence from both creative works to support your claim.



## LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME

By: Maya Angelou

Shadows on the wall  
Noises down the hail  
Life doesn't frighten me at all  
Bad dogs barking loud  
Big ghosts in a cloud  
Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Mean old Mother Goose  
Lions on the loose  
They don't frighten me at all  
Dragons breathing flame  
On my counterpane  
That doesn't frighten me at all.

I go boo  
Make them shoo  
I make fun  
Way they run  
I won't cry  
So they fly  
I just smile  
They go wild  
Life doesn't frighten me at all.

Tough guys in a fight  
All alone at night  
Life doesn't frighten me at all.  
Panthers in the park  
Strangers in the dark  
No, they don't frighten me at all.

That new classroom where  
Boys pull all my hair  
(Kissy little girls  
With their hair in curls)  
They don't frighten me at all.

Don't show me frogs and snakes  
And listen for my scream,  
If I'm afraid at all  
It's only in my dreams.

I've got a magic charm  
That I keep up my sleeve,  
I can walk the ocean floor  
And never have to breathe.

Life doesn't frighten me at all  
Not at all  
Not at all  
Life doesn't frighten me at all.