

JOURNEY IN... YEAR ONE DIVINE WITHIN DRAMA

This lesson's Big Ideas:

- All human beings are a union of flesh and spirit. There are many words and metaphors that help us talk about the soul as *enfleshed* or flesh as *ensouled*.
- Within every human being, there is something of the Divine. **All** bodies and minds house a holy spark.

Lesson Materials

- Sundry prop and costume pieces for the kids to choose from
- Five custom-made dice each with options for a particular element of a creation myth

TEACHER REFLECTION AND PREPARATION

🕒 Ahead of time

Our body is precious. It is a vehicle for awakening.

- Buddha

Nobody knows what the soul is.

It comes and goes

like the wind over the water ~

sometimes, for days,

you don't think of it.

- from "Maybe" by Mary Oliver

Each person is born with an unencumbered spot, free of expectation and regret, free of ambition and embarrassment, free of fear and worry, an umbilical spot of grace where we were first touched by God. it is this spot of grace that issues peace.

Psychologists call this spot the *psyche*. Theologians call it the *soul*. Jung calls it the *seat of the unconscious*. Hindu masters call it the *atman*. Buddhists call it the *dharma*. Rilke calls it *inwardness*. Sufis call it *qalb* and Jesus calls it the *center of our love*.

To know this spot of inwardness is to know who we are, not by surface markers of identity, not by where we work or what we wear or how we like to be addressed but by feeling our place in relation to the Infinite and inhabiting it.

- from Mark Nepo, as quoted in
Laura Remen's *Knowing God*

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES: FEEDBACK AND NOTES

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WARMING UP AND FOCUSING THEATRE GAME: SPIRIT AND BODY

🕒 10 minutes or so

- In this warm-up game, we pretend that all of the spirit and will in our body gets drawn into one part of our body. That body part has all the energy and motivation. We imagine how we would move around and how we would greet people.
- You'll need open space for this game. Have an area clear of chairs and obstacles.
- Start with the right elbow. Invite the kids to imagine that all their life energy has gone into their elbow. When they move, the elbow is the boss and the rest of the body just tags along. When we say 'hi' to people, we might 'shake elbows'.
- Try this for a few minutes and then switch body parts. Try the nose, the left knee, the belly button, the right ear.

PRIMARY ACTIVITY MIX AND MATCH CREATION SKITS

🕒 10-15 minutes

- You will use several custom made dice to play this skit game. The dice will give the kids prompts in the following categories:
 - # of Players
 - Creator
 - Material
 - Soul
 - Trouble
- Each dice will be labeled with elements of the stories we're exploring about how human souls and bodies come together. For example, the Creator die might have on its six sides: Raven, One God, Mother Earth, Many Gods, Nothing, Many Animals. The Materials die might have: wood, clay, dust, corn, other animals, rock.
- The teacher will roll the "number of players" die. This makes it fun because you'll sometimes have kids have to play double roles or invent a role for someone. The rule of the game is that every player has to have a part in the skit.
- Then, the kids roll the rest of the dice. They take their prompts from the dice. They then have 4 or 5 minutes to prep their skit: the acting will be mostly impromptu, but they might need to collect costumes and props.
- You can choose whether to have two teams prepping at a time or just

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL LESSON

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one. Each team will need a quiet and attentive audience when it's their turn to perform.

- After each performance, do a quick 'talkback', allowing audience members to ask why things happened the way they did.
- Take as many turns at skitmaking as are necessary to satisfy the children's desire to act.

Wondering Together

- I wonder which of these little skits you liked best?
- Do you think an idea from any of these might have been something true?
- Why do people make up stories about how our bodies come alive?
- I wonder why different peoples' stories are so different...?
- Do you think of people as having God make them alive? Tell us what you think.
- What do you enjoy about having a body? How do you think you 'got' this particular body?

CLOSING AND LEAVE-TAKING

🕒 2 minutes

Teach the children the greeting word, *namaste* (pronounced evenly: nah-mah-stay). This Pali word translates as, "The Divine within me sees and greets the Divine within you." Generally, the word is spoken with a gesture which the Thai culture names *wai*: the hands, pressed together, are held just above the heart and the head is bowed to meet the tips of the fingers.

Give the children time to say goodbye to each other and their Guide with this beautiful gesture.