Philippe Petit
OPEN PRACTICE

STUDY GUIDE

2021
A Study Guide for Determined Dreamers
Please enjoy the study guide as a menu of ideas for your classroom. We encourage teachers and students to participate and explore a variety of the activities included here. Please note that there is no one way to use this guide. As Philippe Petit reminds us in his TED talk, “look at things from a different perspective...and when you see mountains...remember mountains can be moved.” Use this study guide to ‘move mountains’ with your students, as they examine different perspectives organized by the tenets of the aerialist, artist, and author Philippe Petit.

**Bardavon ‘Philippe Petit’**

**TED TALK ‘Philippe Petit, The Journey Across the High Wire’**

**PBS ‘Philippe Petit High Wire Artist’**

**Biography “The Walk - Philippe Petit”**
Lessons & Ideas

From the book jacket:
In 1974, as the World Trade Center was being completed, a young French aerialist, Philippe Petit, threw a tightrope between the two towers and spent almost an hour walking, dancing and performing tricks a quarter of a mile in the sky.

Anticipatory Set:
Create a Jamboard or Sticky Note Web for your Students. As students enter class, ask them to add a word/phrase that describes a bird in flight.

Attention! Determined Dreamers Wanted:
Students will watch Philippe Petit’s TED Talk ‘The Journey Across the Highwire’ and document their notes for future class discussions/writing prompts.

Tips: Use graphic organizers based on grade/purpose. Pair students to capture information. Assign six small groups to focus on each of six tenets.

Go beyond the classroom:
Have students utilize the playground or outside space on which to measure the length of Petit’s wire between the towers. Let them take turns ‘balancing’ on the wire! Take photographs of your activities and send them to Philippe Petit.

Text: The Man Who Walked Between the Wires

The Man Who Walked Between the Towers by Mordicai Gerstein
*Winner of the 2004 Caldecott Medal
*Winner of the 2004 Boston Globe - Horn Book Award for Picture Books

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- Can you write in your own words...?
- What do you see as other possible outcomes?
- Can you design a ... to ...?
- What questions would you ask Philippe Petit?

Article/Rationale/Resources: Please view, discuss, enjoy the links provided under ‘Pre/Post Show Discussion Links’ in this guide with your reading of The Man Who Walked Between the Wires by Mordicai Gerstein

NCTE/IRA ELA STANDARDS:
- NCTE 1 New Information
- NCTE 3 Text Features
- NCTE 5 Writing
- NCTE 7 Research

NEXT GENERATION STANDARDS:
- Key Ideas & Details (RI2) (Theme)
- Craft & Structure (RI6) (Point of View)
- Research To Build & Present Knowledge (SW6) (Research Writing)
Lessons & Ideas

Genius Hour:
Students will research and complete an inquiry project based on their passions - really digging deep into what motivates them! Provide an hour of time (broken up throughout week for younger students or all at once for older students) over several weeks to pick a passion, conduct research, present & share!

Let Students Teach:
Give each student 20-30 minutes to teach a mini-lesson about something he or she is passionate about or to lead the class in a game, song, or other group activity.

How To Be An Inventor ~ Kid President

Go beyond the classroom:
Remember that everything you teach your students inside your classroom is in preparation for what’s outside of it. Give students a safe space to connect learning to the bigger picture.

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- Can you write in your own words...?
- What do you see as other possible outcomes?
- Can you design a ... to ...?
- What questions would you ask?

Article/Rationale/Resources: Put the ‘Awe’ Back in “Awesome”, Helping Students find their Purpose
Lessons & Ideas

Mindful Breathing & Body Scan:
Great way to open/intro or close/end a class is by bringing students’ focus into the present & helping the body relax so that new experiences can be learned.

3 Minute Body Scan

Texture Bag:
Place several small, interestingly shaped or textured objects in a bag. Have each child reach in and touch an object, one at a time, and describe what they are touching. Use only their sense of touch to explore the object.

Mindful Activities:
Examine an orange’s flavor, texture, smell, etc. up close. Examine a word. Examine your breathing. Examine a dream.

Mindfulness Exercises

Square Breathing

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- How would you feel if …?
- Which factors would you change if …?
- What’s the relationship between?
- Why did … changes occur?

Article/Rationale/Resources: Mindfulness Activities for Children + Teens
Tenacity

Text: After the Fall  Dan Santat

Lessons & Ideas

Compare & Contrast Egg Stories:
Have students engage a compare & contrast with including the reading of the original ‘Humpty’ story as well.
Lead discussions w/graphic organizers to examine perspectives & outcomes.

STEM/STEAM Animal Airplane:
Design a paper airplane that looks like a flying animal. It could be a bird like Humpty’s, a pterodactyl from the Jurassic period, or something all your own!

What is Gravity?

STEM Safety Gear:
Work in a group to engineer a device to help get Humpty up the wall safely or protect him so he doesn’t crack next time he falls. (Don’t be afraid to limit supplies the first time so students experience failure and can work to re-think their design.)

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- What was one time you were afraid to do something, but did it anyway?
- Why don’t you devise your own way to deal with...?
- How would you create or design something to...?

Article/Rationale/Resources: 7 Benefits of STEM Education
Lessons & Ideas

Author Up:
Invite students to think of additional rhyming verses for each page and/or rewrite the conclusion and/or add an epilogue.

‘Dancing with the Animals’ Interview:
Students choose their favorite/most intriguing animal at the Dance and create five interview questions to ask them/write about.

Examine Text Features:
The author uses sequencing, cause & effect, rich descriptions and comparing & contrasting to tell the story. Examine how these features help you become a better reader.

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- What did the author want children to learn from Gerald’s experience?
- Is it important that everyone is able to do the same thing well?
- How would you have handled…?
Lessons & Ideas

Michael Recycle - READ ALOUD

Combine Origami Art & Storytelling:
Students can create origami art and write their own story/fable explaining a lesson or theme they’d like to explore.

Analyze Audio Interviews of Author & Illustrator:
Students can use graphic organizer for interview notes to analyze interviews. Students can create their own questions & peer interview each other from author/illustrator perspectives.

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- Why is the unknown empowering?
- If the impossible is unknown, then does that allow you to cheat the “impossible”?
- What would happen if you had no more colors, paint, paper, or any artistic supplies?
- How and what could you create?

Article/Rationale/Resources: Drama Education and Improvisation as a resource of Teacher Student’s Creativity

NCTE/IRA ELA STANDARDS:
- NCTE 4 Communication
- NCTE 9 Diversity

NEXT GENERATION STANDARDS:
- Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas 8SL5 (Media)
- Text Types & Purposes 8W4 (Create Art Response)
Lessons & Ideas

STEM Visit a Jet Propulsion Lab!
Immerse yourself in an out-of-this-world experience with this tutorial from NASA including guiding questions for discussions & written response.

IMAGINE! You’re an Astronaut

Friendly Letter Writing:
Students write letters to the author expressing their reader’s reactions.

Introduce a Star Unit:
Use this story to jump into a unit about Stars (famous or otherwise).

Water Color Salt Solar System Painting w/ Recipe:
How to Catch a Star - Write a Recipe

Bloom’s Taxonomy
- How do things change every day? Physically, Emotionally, Spiritually?
- What do you do for fun? Why is fun important?
- How would you feel if...?

Article/Rationale/Resources:
You can also make a request for an autographed photo from current astronauts who are in training or are assigned to an upcoming flight. Any mail and photo requests can be sent to:

NASA Johnson Space Center
CB/Astronaut Office
Houston, TX 77058

Giraffes Can’t Dance
Giles Andreae


STUDY GUIDE CREATED BY HEIDI MURPHY
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PHILIPPE’S OPEN PRACTICE HIEROGLYPHICS
The two images you see on this page are Philippe’s handdrawn notes outlining his daily floor and wire practice.