

Lesson Name:

Dance!

Student Objectives:

- Compare negative and positive self-image.
- Creative positive affirmations for people in your life.

Educator Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with the lesson outline and the story.
- Read "[Dance, Mama, Dance](#)" by Daniel Beaty.
- Be ready to share an example of your own affirmations.
- Prepare a graphic [organizer worksheet](#) for students.

Introduction:

Hello! Today I am sharing with you a lesson about how to create affirmations for people in your life to help them develop a more positive self-image. By developing these affirmations for others, you can begin to reflect on how you can work on developing a more positive self-image for yourself.

Instruction:

In our earlier lesson, we looked at the importance of developing positive affirmations about yourself because they help you become your more idealized self. Today, we will be exploring this concept more deeply by thinking about how to create positive affirmations for those close to us. Sometimes it is challenging to think about ourselves in a really positive way. We might feel selfish or prideful or arrogant. One helpful way to begin thinking more positively about ourselves is reflecting on how others might view us in a positive way. To begin that process, you are going to practice thinking positively about others, before you even begin thinking about how others might think positively about you.

### Interaction:

Before we read our poem today, I want to introduce you to our poet. Daniel Beaty was born in Dayton, Ohio. Both his dad and older brother were in and out of prison for most of his life for drug use. Throughout his life, Daniel struggled with low self-esteem that stemmed from a lot of the trauma he experienced as a child. He often looked down on himself, even after graduating from Yale University and finding success in the performing arts. After graduating from college, he began teaching the performing arts to high school students and found that pursuing creative endeavors were helpful for him to find a more positive view of himself.

The poem we are reading today is called “Dance, Mama, Dance.” The poem shows what a powerful figure his mother was throughout his life. It also shows the importance of learning how to view yourself in the positive way that others view you.

\* Read the poem “[Dance, Mama, Dance](#).” Slideshow is [here](#).

### Closure:

In our poem today, the author describes his mother and the hardships she has gone through as he has grown up. He acknowledges the ways in which she might view herself. But, then, he uses his poem to show her that he views her differently. Instead of seeing someone who struggles, he sees someone who thrives and is actively vibrant. I imagine that many of us know people like this. In fact, I don’t think I know anyone who thinks of themselves as being as beautiful as they truly are. Each of us often depends on people in our lives to lift us up and show us a positive view of ourselves.

This is where affirmations come in. Positive affirmations are statements we can repeat to ourselves to help us focus on the best part of who we are. By repeating these positive thoughts, we can help ourselves ignore the self-doubt and low self-worth we often feel. These affirmations can help us make positive changes in our life and find happiness in who we are.

\*Teacher goes over a graphic organizer with students and provides a modeled example.

*Activity:*

Today, we are going to be like the writer of this poem and create positive affirmations for other people in our life. We are going to create statements to help them realize their best selves. We are going to help them learn to dance!

By writing these affirmations for others, I want you to also reflect on how you can use affirmations in your own life. How can you focus on the positive? How can you use positive statements to help you discover your own beauty? How can you focus on positive statements about yourself to make helpful changes in your life?

I also encourage you to actually send these affirmations to the people in your life as a gift to them. It is such a gift to be able to know how others view us in beautiful ways. As you create these positive statements to give to others, think about what positive affirmations people would create for you? How can you focus on the positive and find a way to dance?

*Additional Resources:*

- [“Dance Mama Dance” read by the author](#)
- [Reading comprehension questions on “Dance, Mama, Dance”](#)