TALKING POINTS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION:
HANGIN’ WITH THE GIANTS

Show & Theater Company:
- JazzReach (based out of New York; they tour nationally, promoting jazz to youth)

Art Form:
- Staged as a late night talk show, Hangin’ with the Giants features animated likenesses of jazz greats as show guests using a big screen and offers numerous opportunities for students to interact and participate.

Context:

? What is jazz?
- Jazz is a popular type of music that started in New Orleans in early late 19th Century (show New Orleans on a map).

? When was the 19th Century? How long ago was that?
- Jazz is heavily influenced by African rhythms, slave spiritual songs, gospel music.
- Jazz is considered very important because it means a lot to history and also influenced other types of music like rock ‘n’ roll and hip-hop.
- Jazz is known for its improvisation
  ? What is improvisation? (making up the music as you go along; this is really hard to do when there are several musicians!)

Main Characters:

? Who can name an important jazz musician?
- During this show, we will meet: [see handouts]
  - Louis Armstrong – He has a wonderful voice and was known for playing the cornet, which is an instrument much like a trumpet.
  - Duke Ellington – He played many different instruments and wrote some of jazz’s most memorable songs; he began playing piano at age 7.
  - Charlie Parker – Known for playing saxophone, which he began at 11 years-old-old, Charlie Parker together with some other jazz greats invented the “bebop” style of jazz.
  - Dizzy Gillespie – Dizzy learned piano and trumpet at age 15; Dizzy had a unique sound, and a distinct look—when he played trumpet, his cheeks bulged out like balloons!
  - Miles Davis – He took up trumpet age 13, and was known for jazz that was low and slow; he called this music “cool jazz.”
  - Thelonious Monk – His music was known for a lot of stops, starts, turns, twists, and sudden silences; he is remembered for his unusual style and personality.

Special Things to Look and Listen For:

- How the musicians work together, especially during improvisation.
  ? How do you think they will communicate during improvisation without interrupting the music?

Theater Etiquette:

- Respect the theater, one person to a seat, limit bathroom breaks, do not kick the seats, no food or drink in the theater (bottled water okay), and turn off cell phones/no texting (even for adults!).

? How is watching live theater different than watching a movie or TV?
- Can’t pause, rewind, or fast forward with live theater. Every sound students make and moving around can affect the performers and other members of the audience.

Show info: Hangin’ with the Giants by JazzReach ●Thursday, February 12, 2020 ● 9:30am ● Grades K-4
Louis Armstrong
(1901 – 1971)
Dizzy Gillespie
(1917 – 1993)
Duke Ellington
(1899 – 1974)
Charlie Parker
(1920 – 1955)
Miles Davis
(1926 – 1991)