



PERPICH
TEACHING IN AND
THROUGH THE ARTS

“Juba” by Robert Battle

4th and 5th grade lesson

Shared to Perpich Center for Arts Education by Karen Campbell, NDEO member, Maryland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iTiTw1OL7o0>

"Juba, Robert Battle's first work for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, is frenetic and electrifying, a terse, powerful explosion of transformative energy. On the surface, nothing seemed to be happening as three men and a woman jumped up and down virtually nonstop while regrouping into various patterns. Yet by the end, an infernal communal round had found spiritual release through some sort of centrifugal force. Filled with fabulously high-octane stamina by the Ailey dancers, Juba should not be mistaken for a minimalist piece. Mr. Battle has hit upon an abstract signature style that is highly dramatic. Everything seems to be sustained in tone, including John Mackey's commissioned and apt, jagged score for electronic string quartet and percussion. But Mr. Battle, and this is his originality, matches this apparent evenness of tone with a sense of climax. The steps are similar and repeated but there is also mounting energy. It is an ingenious paradox, found also in old ecstatic dances." –Anna Kiselgoff, *The New York Times*, 12/13/2003

In 2011, Robert Battle became the Artistic Director of Ailey's company.

Steps to explore from Battle's choreography:

1. Heel digs and crosses
2. Jogging with arms extended up
3. Kicks, leaps, falls
4. Arm circles with pivots
5. Stomping and fist pounding on thighs

Put these five step sequences in a different order with your group and practice your Robert Battle “Juba” inspired dance phrase!