



# Leaping Toward Dreams Teacher's Guide

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This guide helps teachers **PREPARE** for the Crayola Creativity Week daily theme *Leaping Toward Dreams*. Make copies of the two related Thinking Sheets: *Collage Connections* and *Firebird Soaring* for students or use this guide and plain paper to guide them through the creative experiences. Gather art supplies including scissors, glue, and brightly colored paints, oil pastels, or markers for the collages. Colors of the World® markers and crayons can help children draw themselves leaping toward their dreams.

Misty Copeland was the first African American to be promoted to principal ballet dancer with the American Ballet Theater. She is also a mother, mentor, activist, and author of *Firebird*, the award-winning book which was illustrated by Christopher Myers—artist, illustrator, sculptor, and theater performer. Through her determination and the help of mentors, Misty uses creativity to overcome challenges and achieve her goals.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES—Students will:

- be inspired by a young dancer who persevered to achieve her dreams,
- articulate their dreams and aspirations,
- identify a mentor who supports them and helps them reach their full potential,
- create a collage as a form of visual storytelling, and
- build upon the metaphor of a bird soaring over challenges and leaping toward higher personal goals.



Using the *Collage Connections* Thinking Sheet have students **RESPOND** to a collage as a form of visual storytelling. The layers of vibrantly colored shapes overlapping like puzzle pieces tell a story differently than words do, allowing viewers to bring their own experiences and emotions to mind. Encourage students to think of several possible story themes conveyed by a collage. Some might say this example radiates energy with a sense of hope and optimism and visual clues of being overwhelmed. Others may see this collage's story theme as overcoming challenges and facing each new hurdle with confidence.



Students will articulate their dreams and aspirations then **CREATE** a collage that tells a story based on those goals. As students design their collages, point out that collage tends to be an abstract art form rather than a realistic image. They can use shapes, colors, patterns, and textures to evoke emotions or represent an environment or character without a lot of details.



Students will **CONNECT** the collage genre to other types of storytelling such as mime, music, creative movement, and dance. Have a class discussion about the parallels between dance and collage. Provide some basic information about choreography and planning a sequence of creative movements or dance steps. Help students form small groups and have each team choreograph a dance that aligns with the stories their collages tell.



Students will **PRESENT** their collages and choreographed movement sequences. Provide time for students to share their personal aspirations with the audience and have a group conversation about how creativity helps people imagine and achieve their dreams.



*Firebird*  
Text copyright 2014 by Misty Copeland  
Illustration copyright 2014 by Christopher Myers  
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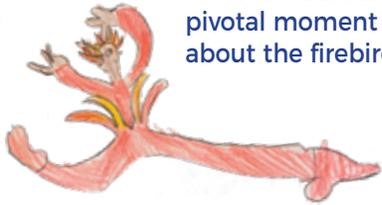


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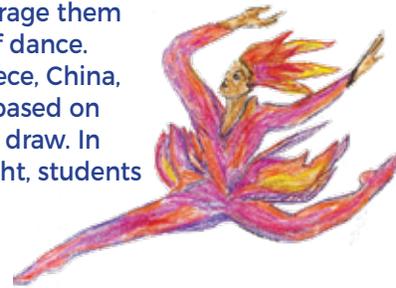
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Using the *Firebird Soaring* Thinking Sheet have students **RESPOND** to the image of the ballet dancer soaring through the air like the firebird. Ask students to examine this portrait—which shows a person in mid-air, arms and legs outstretched as if in flight. Have students reflect on how the colors, shapes, and overall scene communicate a message and set an exhilarating mood. This image represents a pivotal moment in the book and in Misty Copeland's career. Have a class discussion about the firebird, a mythical creature from ancient folklore.



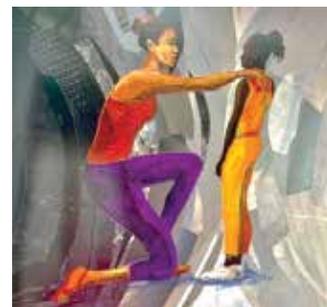
Students will **CREATE** their own sketch of a dancer soaring toward dreams. Encourage them to show motion and emotion in their art. They may choose to illustrate any style of dance. Birds have inspired innumerable human dances including those from ancient Greece, China, Japan and Australia. Native American pow wows often feature traditional dances based on bird movement. The Firebird ballet is a classic example that students may want to draw. In addition to planning how the parts of the body will be positioned to represent flight, students should plan the dancer's costume and the background or setting, as time permits.



To prepare their presentations, students should **CONNECT** their personal aspirations to the dance style and dancer they sketched. Using the bird metaphor, they can identify who has helped them *stretch their wings*, take their *first flight*, and inspired them to *soar even higher*. Many dancers and other successful individuals have mentors or teachers who help them set goals and reach their dreams. Ask students to connect the mentors in Misty's story with those who have helped build their personal confidence.



Students will **PRESENT** their art and discuss their mentors. Ask them what it means to achieve goals and stretch themselves to their full potential. Extend the bird metaphor to discussions about what it means to *leave the nest*, *soar to new heights*, and *have a birds-eye point of view*.



At the end of the activity, ask students how they might keep track of their goals and record when they reach new milestones as they leap toward their dreams. What additional projects could the class do to help them boost their confidence and learn about role models who overcame life challenges?

### Note for teachers and parents:

For more creative inspiration and hands-on explorations go to [Crayola.com/CreativityWeek](https://www.crayola.com/CreativityWeek)  
To share student artwork on social media please post using [#CrayolaCreativityWeek](https://twitter.com/CrayolaCreativityWeek)  
We can't wait to see what they create.



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