

**Improvisation Unit**

**Grade 10**

**Improv and Acting**

**Drama**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Week September – 2<sup>nd</sup> Week October**

**Centennial High**

**Jeff Charlton**

**Table of Contents:**

**Title Page..... 1**

**Table of Contents..... 2**

**Rationale..... 3**

**Unit Objectives and Skills Required to Complete the Objective..... 4**

**Unit Overview..... 5**

**Sample Lesson Plans..... 6-9**

**Assessment..... 10**

**Bibliography..... 11**

## **Rationale:**

Improvisation is a useful tool for professions of all types, even those that have nothing to do with drama. Mastering this skill will help students become able to think quickly, on their feet, and practice forming ideas on the spot. This can help with any job and social context. Not only are improv's abilities good for a career, but for life, and as Irish playwright Sean O'Casey said, "All the world's a stage, and most of us are desperately unrehearsed."

Drama in the classroom is an invaluable tool as it not only is an expression of art, emotion, and the human consciousness, but also can be used to teach life lessons, social experiences, historical and fictitious moments, and collaboration with others, just to name a few things. As a student grows they will tap into their ability to act and portray emotions and therefore not only reflect on their own development and life but assist in paving the way for who they will become.

Fostering these skills in a cooperative environment where students can safely work with one another is key to unlock an individual's potential. As the class becomes closer and more open to students experimenting and trying new things, the skits they perform while practicing improve will become more rationale, more emotionally driven, and more explorative into the nature of themselves.

The successful result of this unit will end with students being more confident and able to react faster than they originally did on and off the stage.

**Unit Objective and Skills Required to Achieve the Objective:**

By the end of the unit students will be able to demonstrate the ability to perform an un-rehearsed scene on the spot using: specific drama techniques, the body and language to portray character, entering and exiting, and displaying motivation.

- 13. Recognize the techniques of offering, accepting, advancing and blocking.
- 15. Use the body and body language to enhance characterization.
- 19. Discover how feelings affect a character.
- 20. Enter and exit a character.
- 23. Demonstrate understanding of character motivation

## **Unit Overview:**

Lesson 1 –

**TSW use character foils.**

Walk, Freeze, Accepting blocking and wimping, accepting scene, Partner Practice, Character Foils.

*Improvisation/Acting (High School) 13, 14, 21*

Lesson 2 –

**TSW do Five Up Five Down.**

Walk, Waiting for Charlie, Bus Stop, Five Up Five Down.

*Improvisation/Acting (High School) 15, 16, 20*

Lesson 3 –

**TSW play the game ‘Ding’.**

Walk, tennis ball, Status Pictures, questions game, To Heck With Your Fear, Ding.

*Improvisation/Acting (High School) 13, 16, 24*

Lesson 4–

**TSW perform a thirty second long improvised skit.**

Walk, 5 second solo skits, 10 second solo skits, 15 second solo skits, Character Foils, 10 second Character Foils, 15 second Character Foils, 30 second skit.

*Improvisation/Acting (High School) 19, 22, 23*

Lesson 5 –

**TSW perform a timed minute long improvised skit.**

Walk, Second solo skits, Gibberish, Five Up Five Down, 60 second skit.

*Improvisation/Acting (High School) 17, 18, 25*

Lesson 6 –

**TSW perform a summative two minute improvised skit that is timed.**

Walk, tennis ball, Five Up Five Down, Ding, Bus Stop, 2 minute skit.

*Improvisation/Acting (High School) 25, 20, 21*

Unit: Drama	Grade: 10	<b>Jeff Charlton</b>
Subject: Improvisation	Length: 40 mins	Date: Sept. 14 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	<b>Assessments:</b>
1. Use warm-up techniques effectively.	1. Demonstrate the ability to take part and understand the importance of warm up activities.	L.O.1: Demonstrate the ability to be still when told to 'freeze' by either teacher or fellow actors.
2. Tell a story Spontaneously.	2. Demonstrate the ability to create a beginning, middle, and end with others.	L.O.2: During Character Foils create a scene that has two opposite characters.
3. Demonstrate the ability to accept and advance effectively.	3. Demonstrate the ability to accept and advance with other actors in a scene effectively.	L.O.3: Demonstrate the ability to accept and advance a scene with another partner during scene activities.
<b>Learning Resources Consulted:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alberta Programs of Study –Drama 10-20-30</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials and Equipment:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White board.</li> </ul>		
<b>Procedure:</b>		
<b>Introduction (min 2):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome class with the class agenda written on the board.</li> <li>Go through agenda and then talk about the coming lesson:</li> <li>"Welcome to the Improvisation unit. Let us begin."</li> <li><b>What traits does an actor need to possess to perform an interesting improv scene?</b></li> <li>Walk through space.</li> </ul>		
<b>Body (min 36):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk through space, don't bump into anyone, and try wandering to all places in the room.</li> <li>"When I say freeze you must completely freeze in whatever position you are in doing nothing but breathing."</li> <li>Say freeze a few times bringing focus to those that are completely frozen or in an interesting position.</li> <li>"Find your way into a circle."</li> <li>Make a circle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Accepting, wimping, and blocking.</b></li> <li>"A strong actor will always accept. This is accepting:"</li> <li>Tell a student to come up and ask me to do something. Anything. Accept. Reciprocate.</li> <li>"Now turn to the person next to you and accept back and forth until I tell you to stop.</li> <li>Proceed with it.</li> <li>Recall students and now proceed with a short scene by only accepting back and forth.</li> <li>Demonstrate a short scene with a student.</li> <li>Students will perform the accepting scene.</li> <li>Find a new partner.</li> <li>Perform new scene.</li> <li>Sit and discuss why this is an effective trait of an actor.</li> <li>Share results and return to circle.</li> <li>"If that's accepting, what do you think wimping is?"</li> <li>Demonstrate wimping with a student.</li> <li>Students perform short scene with wimping.</li> <li>"So if accepting is 'yes', and wimping is, 'I don't know', what do you think blocking is?"</li> <li>Perform short blocking scene with partners.</li> <li><b>Assessment:</b></li> <li>Observe which students grasp the concept of all three concepts by judging how well they accept and if they demonstrate a wimp and block.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Walk.</li> </ul>		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find a partner.</li> <li>• “Now we will use accepting in a longer improvised scene.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Accepting in a longer improvised scene.</b></li> <li>○ Partners will create a scene in which they can traverse the room creating a scene with only accepting.</li> <li>○ After a minute freeze and discuss how accepting made their scene stronger.</li> <li>○ Find a new partner and repeat.</li> <li>○ <b>Assessment:</b></li> <li>○ Observe which students ‘go all the way’ with accepting, doing more than saying yes – following through with the proposed actions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to circle.</li> <li>• “Now that we understand accepting, wimping and blocking, let’s discuss a character foil to make things interesting.”</li> <li>• Teach about character foils and ‘opposite’ characters.</li> <li>• Provide a demonstration with a student with a character foil.</li> <li>• “The person you’re next to is your partner.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Character Foils.</b></li> <li>○ In partners create scenes with character foils.</li> <li>○ Call freeze and have them discuss how character foils made their scene stronger.</li> <li>○ Find new partners.</li> <li>○ Perform a new scene.</li> <li>○ Call freeze and ask, “Think about your last scene. Did you accept everything your partner said?”</li> <li>○ <b>Assessment:</b></li> <li>○ Make note of the students that create a strong alternative to their partners character and accept.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Closure (min 2):</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to circle.</li> <li>• “So accepting is when you say: (Yes), Wimping is when you say: (I don’t know), Blocking is when you say: (No).”</li> <li>• Share strong character foils.</li> </ul>
<b>Sponge Activity:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeat Character Foils with groups of three.</li> </ul>

Unit: Drama	Grade: 10	<b>Jeff Charlton</b>
Subject: Improvisation	Length: 40 mins	Date: Sept. 16 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Outcomes:</b>	<b>Learning Objectives:</b>	<b>Assessments:</b>
1. Demonstrate the ability to be still.	1. Demonstrate the ability to be still in warm-ups and improvisational scenes.	L.O.1: Demonstrate the ability to be still when told to 'freeze' by either teacher or fellow actors.
2. Tell a story Spontaneously.	2. Demonstrate the ability to create a beginning, middle, and end with others.	L.O.2: During Bus Stop demonstrate the ability to form a scene with another in less than thirty seconds.
3. Apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax, and plot in planned and unplanned scenes.	3. Demonstrate the process of creating character and setting in an unplanned scene.	L.O.3: Demonstrate the ability to create a new character and scene quickly and efficiently in the Five Up Five Down improve game.
<b>Learning Resources Consulted:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alberta Programs of Study –Drama 10-20-30</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials and Equipment:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White board.</li> </ul>		
<b>Procedure:</b>		
<b>Introduction (min 2):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome class with the class agenda written on the board.</li> <li>Go through agenda and then talk about the coming lesson:</li> <li>"Improvisation requires a certain set of skills that help an actor."</li> <li><b>What type of people and places are interesting? What are some boring places?</b></li> <li>Discuss characters, settings, entrances and exits, and improvisation basics.</li> <li>Walk through space.</li> </ul>		
<b>Body (min 36):</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walk through space, don't bump into anyone, and try wandering to all places in the room.</li> <li>"Think of any character in your head. It can be from a movie, a play, a book, wherever. Once you have it slowly change your body to become that character and walk around."</li> <li>Interact with other characters briefly with a nod or a wink.</li> <li>"Find your way into a circle."</li> <li>Review blocking, wimping, and accepting.</li> <li>Improvise a 100% accepted scene with partners for 40 seconds.</li> <li>Choose new partners and perform a 'foil' scene, where the two characters are opposites.</li> <li>Make a circle. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Waiting for Charlie.</b></li> <li>Group students into groups of three, and then choose who is an A, B, or C.</li> <li>A and B will improvise a scene together discussing "Charlie". They must describe aspects of his character, mannerisms, body, and background.</li> <li>After sufficient time (roughly 30 seconds) actors C will enter as Charlie and act how the other two had just been describing them.</li> <li>They continue the scene until one of the actors finds a reason to leave.</li> <li>Once they're gone they restart a whole new scene, with the person who left as the new Charlie.</li> <li><b>Assessment:</b></li> <li>Observe which groups supply information to help 'Charlie' make an interesting character.</li> <li>Note which partners work together to bring about the end of a scene.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Walk.</li> <li>Find a partner.</li> <li>Discuss interesting things people did to make their scenes more interesting.</li> <li>Discuss entrances and exits and how they can be used without breaking flow. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Bus Stop.</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>		



- Get into groups of four.
- Two people start sitting at a bus stop.
- Create a thirty second scene that ends where one of them leaves.
- New person comes on and they repeat.
- The person who was there first has to be the one that leaves.
- Repeat for a few minutes.
- **Assessment:**
- Make note of which students grasp the beginning, middle and end of a scene.
- Notice who leave during the end of the scene.
- Walk.
- Find a partner.
- Discuss the importance of knowing when the beginning, middle and end of a scene are taking place.
- Break into groups of five.
  - **Five up Five Down.**
  - One volunteer must improvise a solo scene on stage.
  - Once their character and plot is established, someone must call freeze, but not before their character and plot is established.
  - (This first plot should have a beginning, middle, and end all in the course of about 30 seconds)
  - Once a volunteer calls freeze the person on stage remains still and the volunteer must then create a completely new scene with new characters and plot based on the body position of that person.
  - Once they arrive and begin the two actors must then establish characters, and plot, and then another volunteer calls freeze.
  - The actors on stage freeze, and the volunteer creates a new scene with new characters and plot based on the actors body positions.
  - This repeats until five actors are on stage.
  - Once a fifth actor is on stage instead of a volunteer calling freeze they must make a 30 second scene together with a beginning, middle, and end. The scene must end with the fifth volunteer finding a reason for their character to leave the scene and go back and sit down.
  - After they leave, the scene reverts back to the fourth scene. The actors revert back to their characters and make an end to their plot, and the fourth volunteer finds a reason to exit the scene and return to their seat.
  - This repeats until only the first actor remains, and they finish their scene.
  - (This game isn't nearly as complicated as these instructions make it out to be).
  - **Assessment:** Observe which students grasp the concept of quickly switching out from each character and scene efficiently.
- Prepare for Party Quirks as a class.
  - **Party Quirks:**
  - Select a "host" to leave the room.
  - While they're gone select three volunteers.
  - The rest of the group decides a character for them that the host can guess.
  - Once ready the host is invited back into the room and one of the three characters enter every fifteen seconds.
  - The three characters must act like they're character until the host guesses who all three are.
  - After a class demonstration break into groups of four and perform the scene.
  - **Assessment:**
  - Observe who uses their body and voice to create a strong character.

**Closure (min 2):**

- Walk.
- Find a partner.
- **"What are some aspects of characters do you need to make to form an interesting character."**

**Sponge Activity:**

- Five up five down.

**Assessment:**

During this unit I will provide the class with three question quiz’s at the beginning of each class regarding the previous classes that were taught in the unit. An example is as follows:

**Drama Improvisation Quiz No.1:**

Briefly give an example of a character foil between two characters:

Two actors are improvising a scene together. One says: “Is that a plant you have?” the other says: “Yes it is, why don’t we put it in the garden?” This is an example of \_\_\_\_\_.

**Summative Assessment Rubric:**

<b>2 Minute Improvised Skit Rubric</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	<b>Unable To Assess</b>
<b>Accepting, Wimping and Blocking</b>	Student <b>consistently</b> accepts with their partner and <b>applies</b> the practice throughout.	Student <b>occasionally</b> demonstrates accepting with their partner and <b>applies</b> the practice for the majority.	Student <b>rarely</b> demonstrates accepting with their partner and <b>applies</b> the practice sometimes.	Did not perform enough to be assessed.
<b>Character Motivation</b>	Student <b>clearly portrayed</b> their characters motivation and followed through with it.	Student created character motivation that <b>occasionally</b> was identifiable.	Student’s character motivation was <b>briefly</b> identifiable during performance.	Did not perform enough to be assessed.
<b>Character Consistency</b>	Student remained in character for the <b>entire</b> performance.	Student only <b>briefly</b> broke character during performance.	Student <b>struggled</b> to remain in character for the majority of the performance.	Did not perform enough to be assessed.

**Bibliography:**

*Teacher Resource Manual Drama Junior High School*. Ed. Virginia Durksen. Edmonton: Alberta Education Cataloguing. 1989. Print.

*Drama 10 – 20 – 30 Alberta Program of Study*. Edmonton: Alberta Education.