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Unit Plan: Drama-Improv Grade Ten
Winston Churchill High School
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Rationale

“The end product of improvisation is the experience of it...Very simply, it means putting yourself into other people’s shoes and, by using personal experience to help you understand their point of view, you may discover more than you knew when you started.” Dorothy Heathcote

I have chosen to include the improv unit because I believe it is one of the most vital aspects taught in drama and school overall. Improv to me is a way of helping one discovering who they are but also giving them the freedom to play in a safe environment. Improv teaches us how to think on our feet, stay focused, be creative/spontaneous and bring something new every time that you do it. Improv enables us to look at people, situations, settings etc. through a different set of eyes. This skill is useful cross curriculum because it encourages metacognition, boldness, listening/speaking skills, being open and improving students confidence. I believe that all of these skills are useful across the curriculum from mathematics to music.

Unit Objective and Skills

This unit is working towards the students being able to improvise and perform a multitude of different activities and games to do with spontaneity, the culmination being that they successful perform a game of 'Argue & Makeup'. I expect that after this unit the students will be able to: Maintain concentration during exercises, create experiences through imaging, visualizing and fantasizing, demonstrate heightened sensory awareness, initiate a dramatic situation in response to a given stimulus, make logical choices spontaneously within the boundaries of situation and character, demonstrate the ability to accept, advance, offer or block thought and action, quickly and effectively, extend the illusion of the onstage environment by creating an offstage reality, demonstrate techniques for creating effective entrances and exits, consistent with character.

Improv Unit Overview

Objective	Games/Activities	Learner expectations
TSW play a game of one word story correctly	Walking, point correct, point wrong, I spy, change and one word stories	Movement: 3-4,10 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18
TSW perform a Tableau story correctly	Walking, walking like different animals, pirate ship, one tableau story, multiple tableau story	Movement: 3-4,6-8,10 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18-21,23, 31-32
TSW perform a game of telephone charades correctly	Walking, walking & freezing, tableaus, mirror in a circle, Mother goose, telephone charades	Movement: 3-4,6-8,10,11-18 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18-21,23, 31-32
TSW will play a game of blind line offers correctly	Walking, pruii, sculptures, Yes I did, open offer, blind line	Movement: 3-4,6-8,10,11-18 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18-21,23, 31-32
TSW correctly play a game of typewriter	Walking, Simon says, human props, group environment, real estate broker, typewriter	Movement: 3-4,6-8,10,11-18 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18-21,23, 31-32
TSW play a game of party quirks	Walking, space jump, bus stop, lets not, yes lets—or rather not, party quirks	Movement: 3-4,6-8,10,11-18 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18-21,23, 31-32
TSW correctly play a game of “Argue/Makeup”	Walking, waiting for Charlie, foils, Argue & Makeup groups of three, groups of five	Movement: 3-4,6-8,10,11-18 Speech: 13-14 Improv: 1,3-8,11-13,16-18-21,23, 31-32

COURSE OUTCOMES
<p>General Learning Outcome: The students will develop an awareness of and respect for potential excellence in self and others through improvisation activities. Students will demonstrate how to focus during exercises and be spontaneous.</p> <p>Specific Learning Outcome: The students will develop and extend the ability to recall and sequence events, develop empathy through experiencing thoughts and feelings of other people and other cultures, as expressed through their stories, appreciate and use the possibilities of a story line in sequence, and recognize dramatic elements; e.g., conflict, tension, resolution, characterization, environment. The students will correctly play a game of one word story.</p>
LEARNING OBJECTIVES
<p>The students will: correctly perform a game of one word story</p>
ASSESSMENTS
<p>Written/Performance Assessments: formative assessment based off of the rubrics suggested by the Alberta Teacher resource manual as well as assessed on their ability to remain focused on the activity.</p>
LEARNING RESOURCES CONSULTED
<p>Alberta drama curriculum</p>
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT
<p>Theatre space</p>
PRIOR TO LESSON
<p>Make sure all of the chairs are pushed to the sides</p>
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
<p>Gifted/Talented: Have these students pick a new theme for I spy apart from shapes or colour.</p> <p>Disabilities: Students can work with the teacher and help them during the game of “change”. Have these students call out change or give the theme of a “one word story”</p>
PROCEDURE
<p>—Intro: Start by having the students walk around the classroom and explain the objective: the students are going to correctly play a game of one word story. Continue to have the students walk around the space, say hello to their neighbor, hi-five their neighbor, start to walk together as a group, walk like they are in the wizard of OZ, have them sing “We’re off to see the Wizard”. (3-5 Minutes)</p>
<p>—Body: Activity #1: Point correctly: have the students continue to walk around the space but now have them point at different objects in the room and call out what they are. All of the students can do this at the same time and encourage them to be confident with what they see and say to improve their focus. (3-5 Minutes)</p>

Activity #2: Point wrong: the students will continue to walk around the room and point at objects but now they will point at something and call it incorrectly. For example: if it is a telephone the student will point at it and say “Gas station” or if it is a curtain: “Arm Chair” etc. This exercise is great for to work on their spontaneity and their imagination, the goal is to just get them to shout out anything to really focus their minds. (5 minutes)

Activity #3: I spy: place the students into groups and number them off. One will start by saying “I spy with my little eye-the colour of an object.” It is then up to the rest of the group to guess what that object is that has that colour. This game can be modified to have students spy a shape instead that the others have to guess. This activity encourages focus, spontaneity and instinct for the students to go with their initial reaction. (7-10 Minutes)

Activity #4: Change: The purpose of this game is to have the students think quickly on their feet and change the motivation behind what they just said. Two students start the scene by having a simple conversation: “Hi”. “How are you?” and continue having a conversation. However, the teacher has the option to say Change! The student that said the last line must then change the tone behind what they said to change the intention. The game continues until the students find a reason to exit. This game is great to have students experiment with how they communicate, use their expressiveness, body language and encourages creativity. A great exercise when a scene or a monologue has gone stale. (7-10 Minutes)

Activity #5: One word story: The purpose of this game is to have the students successfully tell a story with each individual only saying one word at a time. One student starts: “Once” then the student to their right says: “Upon” and so on. This game is great because it can be done in small groups to the whole class participating at once. I believe that you should start out in smaller groups to work up their confidence and then move into a larger group. (7-10 Minutes)

—**Closure:** Have the students’ walk/stretch around the room and ask them something new that they learned about improv? What did they enjoy? What would they try for next time?

SPONGE ACTIVITIES

Put the students into different groups (bigger or smaller etc.) for one word story

Reflection:

COURSE OUTCOMES
<p><u>Subject:</u> Drama 10</p> <p><u>Time:</u> 50 minutes</p> <p><u>General Learning Outcome:</u> The students will develop an awareness of and respect for potential excellence in self and others through telling a story through the use of tableaux. Students will demonstrate what a tableaux is and tell a story.</p> <p><u>Specific Learning Outcome:</u> The students will develop and extend the ability to recall and sequence events, develop empathy through experiencing thoughts and feelings of other people and other cultures, as expressed through their stories, appreciate and use the possibilities of a story line in sequence, and recognize dramatic elements; e.g., conflict, tension, resolution, characterization, environment. The student will successfully perform an individual tableau and tableaux in a story sequence.</p>
LEARNING OBJECTIVES
<p>The students' will: Present a story to the teacher and their peers using an assortment of unique tableaux. The students will create poses in peer groups using a theme that the teacher gives to them.</p>
ASSESSMENTS
<p>Written/Performance Assessments: The students will be formatively assessed based off of the rubrics suggested by the Alberta Teacher resource manual. As well the students will be formatively assessed on the contrast between their tableaux: does each picture look different than the ones presented before? The students will be assessed on the different levels being presented: is everyone standing or is there a variety of kneeling, sitting, lying down etc. Does the picture reflect the story that the students are trying to present or is it difficult to understand. Are the students able to demonstrate what a tableaux is?</p>
LEARNING RESOURCES CONSULTED
<p>Alberta Drama Curriculum</p>
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT
<p>Acting space.</p>
PRIOR TO LESSON
<p>Have all the chairs moved to the sides of the classroom.</p>
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
<p>Gifted/Talented: Gifted students will be given the opportunity to choose the topic that their group is going to present and direct their tableaux.</p> <p>Disabilities: Students will assist the teacher in deciding themes for the tableaux given to the groups.</p>

PROCEDURE

—**Intro:** The teacher will get the students up and walking around the room. While they are walking tell the students the objective for the day: they are going to perform a story tableau. Have the students continue walking, focus on their breathing, say hello to their classmates etc. (3 minutes)

—**Body: Activity #1:** The teacher will now tell the students to begin walking like different animals around the room: Monkeys, Chickens, Antelope, Elephants etc. While the students are doing the exercise continue to stress that they move together as a herd and that they must be silent. This exercise is to get the students focused on their bodies and creating an image without using their voice. (7 minutes)

Activity #2: The teacher will now have the students come to the centre of the classroom and play a game of pirate ship. The rules are there are four spaces for the students to move to-top right, bottom right, top left, bottom left etc. The students must move to the space the teacher calls out. As the game progresses if the teacher calls out Actors top right-then the students must stand, if the teacher calls, techies-the actors must kneel, and if the teacher calls directors-the students must lie down. Whoever is last to the spot or using improper positioning they are out. This exercise is to teach the students to listen, react quickly, learn levels and move confidently. (5-7minutes)

Activity #3: The teacher will place the students around the room into groups and explain what a tableau is. Then ask them to create a family portrait (2 parents & 2 siblings). Then each group will have a turn to present to the other groups their family portrait (5 minutes)

Activity #4: The teacher will now have the students in their groups create two unique tableaus that present a beginning and end around the theme of winning a bowling match. After creating the pictures the groups will present to the class. The teacher will make sure to stress the importance of different levels within the pictures. Remind the students to be varied in their positioning. (5-7 Minutes)

Activity #5: The teacher will ask the students to perform a three-picture story with a beginning, middle and end around a theme of their choosing. A good strategy is to ask the students to pick a story in their groups, share it with the class and the teacher to make sure that everyone has an idea of what the story is and as the teacher give the okay if the story is suitable. The teacher will explain to the groups that they can chose any part of the story to begin but that the middle and end will follow from that point so they must make sure to be clear in their pictures where they are starting. The students will have 3-4 minutes to come up with their story tableaus (8-10 minutes)

—**Closure:** The teacher will formatively assess the students: The teacher will have the students' walk/stretch and ask the different groups why they chose the images that they did. Ask the students something new that they learned today. (5 minutes)

SPONGE ACTIVITIES

If there is still time left over ask the students to create a four-picture tableau around the theme of the four seasons.

Reflection:

Assessment Overview

I have included sample rubrics from the Alberta high school curriculum that I will be using to formally assess and summatively assess the students at the end of the unit. It is important for me as a new teacher to have a guide of what to look for and I found that these rubrics helped to make things clearer for me on what to look for during every lesson. Through lessons one through four I will use formative assessment and tools such as paraphrasing to assess if the students are grasping concepts. For the final two lessons of the unit I will be using rubrics based off of the examples found below in the teachers manual. Example:

Lesson 6 – Rubric

SLO:

- Sustain a character throughout a scene or exercise
- Maintain concentration during exercises
- Use varied stimuli for character development
-

Lesson 7 – Rubric

SLO:

- Tell a story spontaneously
- Demonstrate the ability to accept, advance, offer, or block thought and action quickly and effectively
- Make logical choices spontaneously within the boundaries of situation and character
- Sustain a character throughout a scene or exercise
- Maintain concentration during exercises
- Apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax, and plot in planned and unplanned scenes

IMPROVISATION SAMPLE EVALUATION CHART

Sample evaluation statements have been provided below. For explanation, and possible column headings, see pp. 241–242.

The student demonstrates the ability to:						Comments
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. willingly participate in improvised activities 2. be still 3. maintain concentration during exercises 4. achieve heightened sensory awareness 5. create experiences through imaging, visualizing and fantasizing 6. think divergently 7. examine and express feelings 8. tell a story spontaneously 9. use stage directions correctly 10. practise appropriate rehearsal methods 11. apply the essential elements of a story (character, setting, conflict, climax and plot) to planned and unplanned scenes 12. tell a polished, improvised story 13. communicate meaning without words 14. articulate and show how various emotions affect one vocally and physically 15. initiate a dramatic situation in response to a given stimulus 16. make logical choices spontaneously within the boundaries of situation and character 17. accept, yield, and block thought and action 18. extend the illusion of the onstage environment by creating an offstage reality 						

BEGINNINGS (continued)	A L R E A D Y	T A U G H T	C O V E R E D	A D E Q U A T E L Y	N E E D S	M O R E T I M E	N O T T A U G H T	PERIOD _____ NOTES
MOVEMENT Learner Expectations (continued) 3. recognize the necessity for physical warmups			x					
4. perform a physical warmup					x			Give focus in creative movement.
5. demonstrate effective breathing techniques							x	Evaluate in theatre history — stress in warmups.
7. display proper body alignment			x					
8. extend flexibility					x			Add to creative movement.
9. display increased ability to balance			x					Move to creative movement.
11. demonstrate the ability to move isolated body parts			x					Reinforce in Mime.
13. use levels (high, medium and low)			x					
15. use basic locomotor movements ; (e.g., walking, running, crawling, etc.) to explore space			x					
17. demonstrate freezing of movement in space			x					
SPEECH Learner Expectations								
1. demonstrate vocal relaxation and warmup techniques					x			Keep in warmups.
2. apply effective breathing techniques					x			Keep in warmups.
6. perform exercises to relax and improve the movement of the articulators							x	Hand out sheet.
9. use and practise levels of pitch			x					Apply in radio play.
10. demonstrate safe and appropriate projection			x					
13. speak spontaneously with a given context			x					
14. demonstrate effective narrative techniques							x	Move to radio play.

BEGINNINGS (continued)	A L R E A D Y	T A U G H T	C O V E R E D	A D E Q U A T E L Y	N E E D S	M O R E T I M E	N O T T A U G H T	PERIOD _____ NOTES
<u>IMPROVISATION Learner Expectations</u>								
1. use warmup techniques for preparation of body, voice and mind			x					
2. demonstrate the ability to be still			x					
3. maintain concentration during exercises	x							
5. create experiences through imaging, visualizing and fantasizing				x				Work again in preparation for creative movement.
8. tell a story spontaneously					x			Move to spontaneous improvisation.
12. create, relate and polish a story			x					
15. initiate a dramatic situation in response to a given stimulus			x					Will add music as stimulus in creative movement.

Bibliography

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