

Unit: Theater Making

Acting/ Directing

Overview

Grades:

8th

Class Sessions:

32 (40 mins/day
4 days/week)

Teacher:

Marisol Bonilla

School:

IS 180
The Daniel Hale
Williams School

Benchmarks:

- Students enhance and develop their performance skills while learning to work in diverse styles and forms, such as improvisation, theater games, spoken word, physical theater, clowning, puppetry, story theater, or musical theater.
- Students continue to develop the processes and the analytical and imaginative skills associated with acting.
- Students express personal vision and demonstrate an understanding of context through articulating directorial concepts.

Big Idea(s) of this Unit

- Self-Directing develops critical and analytical skills.
- Performance builds self esteem.
- Peer evaluation fosters an appreciation for the creative process.

Project Description

- Students will interpret and perform scenes from Lorraine Hansberry's *Raisin in the Sun*.

Instructional Goal

- To expose students to an American classic and foster an appreciation for the creative process while allowing them to interpret scenes using critical and analytical skills and build self esteem through multiple performances.

Indicators of Student Learning

Students will know:

- 1- The historical context of the play *A Raisin in the Sun*.
- 2-How to define and analyze character objectives and motivations.
- 3-What mental actions are and how to apply them in a scene.
- 4-How to direct and block yourself in a scene.

Students will be able to:

- 5- Maintain focus and concentration in order to sustain improvisations, scene work and performance.
- 6-Use research and analysis to inform an understanding of a play and character
- 7-Use the body and voice expressively in theater exercises, improvisations, scene work and performances.
- 8-Create appropriate physical gestures and facial expressions that serve a character.
- 9- Apply specific character needs, objectives, intention, obstacles, actions, emotions and relationships in the creation of roles.
- 10-Apply an understanding of action and reaction in improvisation, scene work and performance.
- 11-Demonstrate the ability to memorize spoken word and movement, and create consistent performances through reflection and self analysis.

Students will understand that:

- 12- Before you can act out a scene you must analyze the scene and the characters.
- 13- Being able to offer a peer constructive criticism is crucial to developing as an actor.
- 14-Dedication and preparation lead to a valuable theater experience.

Unit: Theater Making

Acting/Directing continued

Overview continued

Pre-Assessment/Planning

- Have I taught these students before?

This is the third year I am teaching most of these 8th grade students. I see them for one period four times a week. There are also 6th and 7th graders in the same class.

- What do students already know and understand about this area of Theater Making?

Format of a play and group read through.

Basics of good blocking and self direction.

Importance of both facial and vocal expression.

Focus and concentration are essential to productive work.

How to phrase constructive criticism when offering fellow actors feedback.

What skills related to this unit have students already developed?

Maintaining focus and concentration.

Working collaboratively to perform.

Ability to be an attentive and supportive audience while remaining critical.

The use of body and voice expressively in a scene.

- What activity might I use as a pre-assessment tool?

I would pair the students off and have them take part in a series of concentration exercises.

Improvisation exercises.

Prior knowledge of student work and performance.

- How will the students' needs be addressed?

Teacher circulates throughout the rehearsal space working with individual groups.

Before the final performance students will perform a sample of their work to check on their progress and to address any problems.

Groups will pair off to watch each other rehearse and offer feedback.

Unit Assessment Strategies: What is the evidence of student learning?

Self-Assessment

- Self Evaluation questionnaire
- Actor Evaluation Rubric

Peer Assessment

- Through observation and group discussion.
- Peer Evaluation Rubric

Teacher Assessment

- Through observations both during rehearsals and final performances.
- Completing an actor evaluation rubric.
- Viewing recorded performances and grading according to the Drama Class grading rubric.

Teacher Self-Assessment

- Through daily journaling rehearsals can be altered to make sure they remain productive. Students will be called upon to perform throughout the length of this unit plan to insure progress.

Unit: Theater Making

Acting/Directing continued

Overview continued

| Learning Experiences | Theater Strands | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------|
| | <i>making</i> | <i>literacy</i> | <i>connections</i> | <i>resources</i> | <i>careers</i> |
| Perform improvisations using mental actions. (Indicators 2, 3, 5,7,9 and 10) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Students, divided into small groups work on a dramatic interpretation of the Langston Hughes poem, A Dream Deferred. (Indicators 5, 7, 8 and 11) | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | |
| Perform their A Dream Deferred pieces for the entire class. (Indicators 3,4,5,9,11,12,13 and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Discuss the plot, setting, characters in <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> . (Indicators 1, 6 and 12) | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | | |
| Students are assigned characters for in class read through of the play. (Indicators 5,7and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Wrap up discussion about the play. (Indicators 2, 6 and 12) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Students partner up and decide on a scene from <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> to perform. (Indicators 4) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Perform mirror exercise to develop focus and concentration between partners. (Indicators 5) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Students will decide on and write in big objective, motivation and mental actions for scenes chosen. (Indicators 2,3,9 and 12) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Working in their pairs students will block their scenes. (Indicators 4, 10 and 11) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Rehearse Scenes. (Indicators 4,5,7,8,10,11 and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Pairs will decide on their costumes, props and set design for their performances. (Indicators 6 and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Pairs will perform a piece of their scene for the class and receive feedback. (Indicators 5,7,8,10,11,13 and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Final rehearsals. (Indicators 4,5,7,8,10,11 and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | | | |
| Class performances, each performing student is allowed to invite 2 guests. (Indicators 5,7,8,11 and 14) | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ | ◆ |
| Complete actor questionnaire. (Indicators 14) | | ◆ | ◆ | | ◆ |

Unit: Theater Making

Acting/Directing continued

Assessments

What do I currently do to assess student learning?

- Videotape
- Group discussion
- Journal entries
- Performance rubrics

What other assessment activities and tools might I use?

- Actor Questionnaire to be completed after the students have performed for the class.
- After each performance students receive feedback from their peers. Every student offering feedback must first mention something done well in the performance then they are to give a suggestion for improvement.
- Each performance is videotaped for future review by the teacher. The performance is then graded using an actor evaluation rubric.

Marisol Bonilla, Theater Teacher Observations

For this unit of study I really wanted the students to work with an American classic that is why I choose *A Raisin in the Sun*. I wanted my students to understand that in order to perform a scene an actor has to do their research. I also wanted the students to really develop their characters, especially their characters wants and motivation. We concentrated a lot of the acting component. Costumes and set design were minimal.

The students really did an excellent job with this unit of study. They used their rehearsal time appropriately and held each other accountable. It was great to see how much ownership they took of their scenes and how comfortable they seemed on the stage. One quality I have really tried to stress this year is that a good actor must be able to critique performances. With this unit I made sure that at the end of each performance several students were called upon to offer their peers feedback. Each student called on was required to say something specific that they enjoyed about the performance and then offer the actors a suggestion on how to improve. I was most impressed with how this unit helped students become better at critiquing.

I have realized that in teaching theater it is important to really expose our students to great plays. We need for them to see that there are universal themes that everyone can relate to. I also believe that it is important for theater teachers to create better audience members, since our students, even the talented ones, will spend more time as an audience member then they will on stage during their life.

I look forward to teaching this unit again and to implement the new ideas I have learned from this whole process.

**Please Click Below to View
Student Work**

