

A National Core Theatre Standards Exercise at the 2014 EdTA Conference

This exercise was conducted during a ninety-minute luncheon at the 2014 EdTA Conference. Each lunch table was given a complete set of two Artistic Process standards (Creating, Performing, Responding, Connecting) and asked to create a standards-based lesson that answered three questions.

Does your lesson:

- 1. Include important knowledge and skill?*
- 2. Feature a measureable outcome?*
- 3. Align with one or more Artistic Process and standard?*

Below is a selection of lessons that were created. The first was selected as the best lesson; team members were each awarded a PDI at EdTA Conference 15.

Conference Table 24

Core theatre standards: TH:Cr.1.1.I, TH:Cr.2.1.IIb

Lesson title and description: *A Picture is Worth a 1,000 Words—Storytelling Narrative through Tableau*

Students will be shown the Edward Hopper picture “Nighthawk” using Google Art Project as a resource. Using Google forms, the students will be given a pre-assessment. They will respond to the following questions:

1. What do you see?
2. Describe the setting (time of day, place, year, etc)
3. What do you think are the relationships between the characters?

The teacher will define and demonstrate examples of tableaux. Divide the class into groups. Students will create three tableaux showing Nighthawk fifteen minutes prior to image, the actual image, and fifteen minutes post image. Utilizing three sound effects as transitions between the tableaux (a breaking plate, sizzling bacon, siren), students will film the tableaux in class and upload to Ed Puzzle. Students will be asked the pre-assessment questions about each other’s work and provide feedback to the tableau performances.

Grade level: HS Proficient

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Work collaboratively and creatively with other to develop a narrative using composition and sound.

- Develop a narrative through tableaux with a clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Make strong and effective choices to demonstrate character relationships, mood and narrative.
- Write and/or verbalize quality evaluations of each group's use of composition and sound to show the relationship, story, and mood.

Team members: Danielle Filas, Jeff Hall, James Crow, Jennifer Forrest-James, Corbin Abernathy, Carol Hovey, Krista Carson-Elhai, Nick Cusumano, Kathleen Wood.

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Conference Table 11

Core theatre standards: TH:Pr4.1.1a/b, TH:PR5.1.1b, THCn10.1.1a, TH:Cn11.1.1a

Lesson title and description: *What Would the Greek Do Today?—Modernized Greek Theatre History in Mask*

Following a lecture on the purpose, structure, and history of Classical Greek Theatre, student groups will create, present, and perform an original theatrical piece that includes all elements of Greek theatrical practice. The piece will address a current issue or problem, but will be handled in style of a Greek playwright. Identifiable elements to include:

- Playwrights emulated (Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes).
- Style (tragedy, comedy).
- Theme (nature of the Gods, human and divine responsibility, growth of civilization, etc)
- Elements of plot (Parados, Prologue, Episode, Stasimon [Strophe/Antistrophe]).
- Technical elements (masks, music, dance).
- Presentation standards (enunciation, projection, blocking, etc).

Grade level: HS Proficient

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Use ancient Greek dance.
- Use a Greek chorus.
- Adhere to the Greek Theatre structure, including the use of masks to create character.
- Use proper theatre vocabulary and terminology.
- Investigate and include culture perspectives from their brainstorming and discussion into their performance.
- Identify four Greek playwrights.

Based on a lesson plan by Scott Walker, Milwaukee, Oregon, Troupe 75

Team members: Julie Woffington, Elaine Malone, Charlene Thomas, Kelley Carlson, Scott Walker, Lauren Hess, Jo Strom Lane.

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Conference Table 12

Core theatre standards: TH:Cr.1.1.Ib, TH:Cr.2.1.II, TH:Cr.1.II, TH:Cr3.1.5, TH. Cn11.1.II, TH.Cn11.2.I, TH.Cn11.2.III

Lesson title and description: *Putting Words in Their Mouths*

The teacher will provide animated 2-3 minute video clips; in small groups, students write scripts that correlate to characters, motions, and interactions within the clip. Using iMovie, students record audio voice-overs of their scripts in character, share electronically with one another, and peer critique.

Grade levels: HS Proficient, Accomplished, Advanced

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Collaborate with others.
- Write a script with a beginning, middle, and end that is appropriate for the world of the video clip.
- Use believable character appropriate voices and sound effects for the world of the video.
- Use good dialogue articulation and volume.
- Use technology to assemble the final product.
- Evaluate each other’s work as well as their own.
- Justify creative choices.
- Write and/or verbalize quality evaluations of each group’s use of composition and sound to show the relationship, story, and mood.

Team members: Martha Loudon, Ann Hileman, Ray Palasz, Carolyn Little, Ryan Moore, Aaron Kelsey, William Myatt, Eugene Garritt, Tania Ayoub, Francesca Sobrer.

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Conference Table 14

Core theatre standards: TH:Re8.1.Ia, TH:Re7.1.1a, TH:Pe5.1.Ia, TH:Pe4.1.Ib

Lesson title and description: *“Supercut” video montage*

The teacher shows a “supercut” video montage of the same line of dialogue by different performers. Students are challenged to create their own live supercut by performing the same line in several different ways. The students also submit their multiple line approaches to the teacher in writing. Students will then observe and analyze one another’s performance to determine how effective each presentation was and how it could have been done differently to strengthen it. Students will decide which cut was most effective and why in a creative writing exercise (through a Tweet, haiku, limerick, etc).

Grade level: HS Proficient

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Use clear objectives, obstacles, and tactics in their improvisation work.
- Identify ways to enhance an actor’s portrayal of a character
- Use facial expression and movement.
- Write a quality critical evaluation of a drama work.
- Use constructive criticism to evaluate and improve work.
- Use proper theatre vocabulary.

Team members: Kit Rogers, Jen LaFrance, MaryDell Merrill, Rick Osann, Bob DiMartino, Betty Lent, Jess Harms, Liz Mahon.

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Conference Table 17

Core theatre standards: TH:Cr.1.3, TH:Pr.4.1.3b

Lesson title and description: *Improvising a Character*

After students have learned the lessons of improve, they will each pick a character and an occupation and answer three questions: What is the gender of your character?; What is his/her location?; and What is one random object the character might possess? Based on their answers, the students will improvise a well-developed character that includes physicalize and vocalize characteristics, including a master gesture. They will return to a semi-circle and will present their characters in sets of two, with the teacher providing suggestions, such as “at the bus stop,” “in the emergency room,” “on a sinking ship,” etc. A discussion will follow in which the students analyze what they see and hear. They will also write a reflection about their experience, that answers teacher prompts such as, What was difficult for you to do or

understand?; How was the character different from you?; What surprised you about this exercise?

Grade level: 3

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Create a new character based on specific criteria.
- Make choices to embody the character physically and vocally.
- Investigate their characters and those of classmates.

Team members: Carol Lommen, Elise Boyd, Ray Cambell, Rosemary Marston, Craig Branch, Alica Tully.

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Conference Table 19

Core theatre standards: TH:Cn.10.i.I, TH:Pr.6.1.II

Lesson title and description: *Laraming “The Laramie Project”*

Students will be divided into groups and explore the following topics in the play *The Laramie Project*: community and background; play structure; history of the event; bullying and the law; the play’s history, including censorship issues. Each group will use Google VoiceThread for audience interaction and improvise a scene from the information presented, using authentic artifacts from original source documents (e.g. news reports, court transcripts, etc).

Grade level: HS Proficient/Accomplished

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Research and organize information and present it to the class.
- Respond to research via Google VoiceThread (text, audio, video).
- Devise a piece of theatre that addresses a divisive community or school issue.
- Present a performance that includes authentic characters.
- Understand how community norms and peer pressure impact a character.
- Write a personal reflection, using the format of a character arc that describes their journey through the process.
- Share personal reflections with classmates.

Team members: Linda Phillips, Joni Koehn, Kaleroy Zervos, Pam Csaky, Dan Barrett, Melissa Carroll-Jackson, Andrea Roney, Becky Bell.

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Conference Table 20

Core theatre standards: TH:Re7.1.I, TH:Re8.1.1b, TH:Cr3.1.Ib

Lesson title and description: *Script Study and Character Development*

Students will complete a script study of *Good People*, by David Lindsay-Abaire (or another suitable script), and respond to the script's central conflict of "What happens when someone can't move away from their past and must seek help from someone who has moved on?" Students will do so by writing a monologue written from the perspective of a character from the play or a personal piece that they have already written. Students will engage in a Socratic seminar to explore the ideas, characters, motivations, and actions. After the discussions students will draft a monologue. A rubric will be used to peer evaluate the draft. The students will then revise the draft for a teacher edit. Once the teacher edit is complete, students will rehearse the monologues with a partner to evaluate diction and character and use the feedback to revise the monologues prior to performance.

Grade level: HS Proficient

"Look for" measureable traits of success: *The student will...*

- Write a monologue in response to a character in a selected play.
- Participate in a peer-editing and evaluation process using a response rubric.
- Explore, through rehearsal, creative choices, incorporate feedback, and revise their monologues for final performance.

Team members: Jane Hiett, Adam Moreno, Gloria McIntyre, Corey Ragan, Lyndsay Bassett, Rob Lazar, Tobie Henline.

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Conference Table 23

Core theatre standards: TH:Cr3.1.I, TH:Re9.1.I

Lesson title and description: *Silent Symphony*

Students are presented a brief piece of music with 5-6 distinct moments defined by rhythm, tone, volume, instruments, etc. (e.g., movie score); piece should be 1-2 minutes in length. The students are to respond to the music individually. They then share in small groups and compose a story based on connections of their stories and images. Each group creates a series of five

tableaus which visually interpret the story. The groups rehearse, using the music to create transitions from tableau to tableau, and create a ground plan of their story on paper. Each group presents their tableaus, with the other students serving as an audience. The audience evaluates the aesthetics of the presentation using a rubric and oral feedback. Based on the evaluation and response, the groups revise their tableaus and restage.

Grade level: HS Proficient

“Look for” measureable traits of success: *The students will...*

- Demonstrate clarity and utilize dramatic elements within the story/tableau development.
- Create believable characters through the use of facial expressions, gestures, movement, and spatial relationships.
- Rehearse and make appropriate revisions to refine their performance.
- Write a quality critical evaluation of each tableau.
- Use proper stage movement terminology and body orientation in evaluations.
- Understand personal and cultural values that influence stories.

Team members: Ruthie Pincus, Kimberly Staples, Susan Pierce, Megan Wilkey, Laura Ackerman, Lana Thompson, Joan Stefenhagen, David, Zulkookey, Bilge Y. Kilgore, Beth Edmondson.