

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

Theater and Writing Infused Lesson

Lesson One: *The Super Expressive Body – Using Actions*

Author: Dave Quicksall Grade Level: Second

Enduring Understanding

Using exaggerated and dynamic physical expression can convey emotion, character attributes, states of being, and actions in order to tell stories.

Lesson Description (Use for family communication and displaying student art)

Students explore the fundamental tools an actor uses to create a character. Students start out by understanding the concept of "neutral" (moving without any characterizations). Students then make physical choices with their bodies and faces to create statues of a given character or feeling, then enlarge those choices using exaggeration. In groups, students perform environmental conditions (hot, cold, windy, etc.) and the audience reflects by creating a list of verbs they saw in action. The entire class then writes sentences correctly using verbs from the list.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target: Recognizes and uses actor neutral.

Criteria: Moves and freezes normally.

Target: Understands and demonstrates an active freeze.

Criteria: Holds a frozen position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being.

Target: Understands and uses exaggeration.

Criteria: Shifts frozen position to increase the size/dimensions of a specific physical choice.

Target: Makes a specific physical choice to convey action.

Criteria: Uses posture, movement, and facial expression choices to communicate a specific behavior.

Target: Understands how action words fit in a sentence.

Criteria: Writes two sentences that correctly use two different verbs.

Vocabulary

Arts Infused:

Action
Character

Writing:

Sentence
Verbs (action words)

Arts:

Active freeze
Body
Exaggeration
Movement
Neutral
Physical choice
Posture
Super Expressive Body

Materials

Museum Artworks or Performance

Seattle, WA

Book-It Repertory Theater
Seattle Children's Theatre

Tacoma, WA

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

Materials

Whiteboard or chart paper & markers;
Arts Impact journal; Pencil

Tools

Body, voice, imagination

Learning Standards

For the full description of each WA State Arts Grade Level Expectation, see:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/Standards>

Arts State Grade Level Expectations

1.2.1 Skills and techniques: *Facial expressions, gestures, movements*

1.4.1 Audience skills

2.1.1 Creative process

2.2.1 Performance process

2.3.1 Responding process

3.1.1 Communicates through the arts

Early Learning Guidelines (Pre-K – Grade 3)

(Age 4-5) 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around: Using the large muscles (gross motor skills).

continued

(Age 4-5) 5. Communicating: Speaking and listening: use words to describe actions and emotions, recall details of recent event in sequence.

(Age 4-5) 6. Learning about my world: Arts: Show creativity and imagination; perform elements of drama; participate in dramatic play.

**Common Core State Standards in ELA
(Writing and Language)**

For a full description of CCSS Standards by grade level see:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CoreStandards/ELAstandards/>

W.2.3. Write/recount short sequence of events, include details, actions, feelings.

W.2.5. Focus on topic to strengthen writing.

W.2.8. Recall information from experience.

L.2.1. Conventions of grammar: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs

L.2.2. Conventions of spelling

L.2.5. Understanding word relationships and nuance: real-life connections between words and use

ICON KEY:

 = Notes specific *Writers Workshop* Curriculum strategies addressed

 = Indicates note or reminder for teacher

 = Embedded assessment points in the lesson

COLOR CODING for ARTS AND LITERACY INFUSED PROCESSES:

GENERATE IDEAS	CONSTRUCT MEANING	SELF-REFLECT
<p>Gather Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• From WHAT you know• From WHO you know• Brainstorm	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create drafts• Organize ideas• Make a choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check in with self• Check in with others• Refine work

Pre-Teach

This is the first writing infused lesson in a series of three.

LESSONS PREP: Create a Drama Word Wall to compile the different action words and descriptive words that the students come up with during the course of brainstorming ideas.

Lesson Steps Outline

1. Introduce concept of neutral. Instruct students to walk around the class in *neutral*. Introduces the concept of a *Freeze*.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Moves and freezes normally.

2. Guide directional change while walking in neutral.

3. Introduce the concept of an *Active Freeze*: students turn their bodies into statues of a given character/feeling.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Holds a frozen position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being.

4. Introduce the concept of exaggeration.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Shifts frozen position to increase the size/dimensions of a specific physical choice.

5. Divide class in half: audience/performers. Students perform conditions and reflect as audience members.

Criteria-based teacher checklist; group-reflection: Uses posture and movement choices to communicate a specific behavior.

6. Assign the same group a condition in secret (it's windy) and ask the audience to guess the condition—conditions lead to actions. Repeat activity with second group.

Criteria-based teacher checklist; peer reflection; group-reflection: Uses posture and movement choices to communicate a specific behavior.

7. Guide students in copying down action words from the word wall and creating simple sentences with those words.

Criteria-based teacher checklist: Writes two sentences that correctly use two different verbs.

8. Guide self-reflection.

Criteria-based self-reflection.

LESSON STEPS

▣ Pre-determine how the room will be set-up for students to move through space – desks moved to the side or students moving among the desks.

1. Introduce concept of neutral. Instruct students to walk around the class in neutral. Introduce the concept of a Freeze.

- *In theater, we call movement without character added to it as neutral. When you are acting as yourself, you are neutral.*
- *Walk around the room as yourself.*
- *FREEZE! You should be frozen in neutral.*
- *Continue to walk around the room as yourself.*

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Moves and freezes normally.

2. Guide directional change while walking in neutral.

- *Now, when I clap my hands—change direction.*
 - *Change direction quickly and sharply without thinking about it.*
 - *Change direction without speeding up. Neutral also means that you are in control of your body and your movements.*
 - *Change direction every time I clap.*
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3. Introduce the concept of an Active Freeze (Statue).

- *We're going to be actors and writers. Actors and writers often think and work the same. We'll be learning ways in which actors and writers generate their ideas, construct meaning and reflect.*
- *We will walk around the room in neutral. I will shout out "Freeze!" Freeze wherever you are.*
- *I will then call out a character or a feeling. Turn your body into a statue of what I call out.*
- *Focus on your own work instead of looking around to see what everyone else is doing.*

▣ Scan for comprehension while students practice freezing into a statue that represents a character/feeling/state of being: policeman, teacher, pirate, rock star, tiger, astronaut, wizard, monkey, etc. Emotions/states of being: happy, sad, angry, frustrated, etc.

- *What amazes me is that you are able to make statues so quickly! I call out a word and you know what to do! You are able to generate an idea in a few seconds! You are able to make a choice from WHAT you already know. Actors use their own background knowledge just like writers do.*

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Holds a frozen position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being.

4. After guiding the students in creating a few statues, introduce the concept of exaggeration.

- *When I clap my hands I want you to exaggerate your statue.*
- *Whatever you are doing with your body, make it more.*
- *Use your Super Expressive Bodies to exaggerate the statue you already have.*

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Shifts frozen position to increase the size/dimensions of a specific physical choice.

5. Guide class in using physical choices to communicate specific environmental conditions or behaviors. Divide class in half: audience/performers to facilitate careful observation and reflection. Write student generated verbs on word wall.

📖 Mini lesson: Small moments; looking closely – observing, labeling, and listing

- *Now, we are going to look at how actions can communicate ideas and tell stories.*
- *Performers, I want you to walk around the performance area in neutral. You are constructing meaning as an artist when you brainstorm for ideas and make a choice.*
- *Now, keep moving but it's starting to get hot. Show us that it's getting hotter. Even hotter! It's like a desert! I see you are exaggerating and making some of your first ideas even bigger.*

📖 Instruct actors to stop and take a seat on the floor. Lead audience reflection, writing action words on the board.

- *Now, audience, let's reflect on what we saw. What actions did you notice the actors using to communicate that it was hot? Don't show me, give me a verb – an action.*

📖 Continue the exercise. Guide the actors to move around as if the floor is sticky. Lead quick reflection, asking for specific actions and writing them on the word wall.

☑ Criteria-based teacher checklist; group reflection: Uses posture and movement choices to communicate a specific behavior.

6. Assign the same performing group a condition in secret (it's windy) and ask the audience to guess the condition—conditions lead to actions.

- *Let's reflect as peers. What did you see? How did you know the condition?*

📖 Write actions on the word wall. Switch groups (now the audience group will perform). Repeat the sequence using cold and the floor is slippery. Lead quick reflection for action words after each performance, record new actions on the word wall. Assign actors the "secret condition" and – the room has filled up with water.


- *Let's reflect again. Turn to a friend and tell them what you saw. See if they saw the same thing that you saw.*
- *Report out to the class to see if everyone saw the same conditions and actions. How did you know?*
- *What action did you see? Don't show me, tell me.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist; peer reflection; group-reflection: Uses posture and movement choices to communicate a specific behavior.


7. Guides students in copying down action words from the word wall and creating simple sentences with those words.

 Small moments, guided writing, independent writing, conferring

- *Now, I want you to copy down any five (exact number at teacher's discretion) of these action words (verbs) that we generated during this lesson into your notebook.*

 Students choose verbs and copy them down.

- *Now, we are going to write two sentences. Each sentence must use one of the five words you just copied down.*
- *I want you to underline the word you choose in the sentence.*
- *Let's do one together first. Let's pick the word "fanned". We saw actors fanning themselves when it was hot. What sentence could we write using the action word "fanned"?*

 Students give ideas for sentences.

- *Great ideas! Let's go with this sentence: "The young lady fanned herself because it was hot." Notice that I underlined the word "fanned" because that is the special action word – verb – I am using.*
- *Go ahead! I am here to help whoever needs it.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist; written words and sentences: Writes two sentences that correctly use two different verbs.

8. Guide self-reflection.

- *Did your body know what to do when you were pretending to be hot or cold?*
- *Why? Why not?*
- *Do you think that your body has memories, like your brain?*
- *What memories might your body carry? Who would like to share with the class a sentence that they wrote?*

Criteria-based self-reflection.

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Theater and Writing Infusion

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STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Teachers may choose to use or adapt the following self-assessment tool.

Disciplines	THEATER				WRITING	Total 5
	Characterization				Verbs	
Concept	Freeze/ Movement	Statues	Exaggeration	Expressive Physical Choices	Verbs	
Criteria	Moves and freezes normally	Holds a frozen position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being	Shifts frozen position to increase the size/dimensions of a specific physical choice	Uses posture, movement and facial expression choices to communicate a specific environmental condition or behavior	Writes two sentences that correctly use two different verbs	
Student Name						

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CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Disciplines	THEATER				WRITING	Total 5
	Characterization				Verbs	
Concept	Freeze/ Movement	Statues	Exaggeration	Expressive Physical Choices	Verbs	
Criteria	Moves and freezes normally	Holds a frozen position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being	Shifts frozen position to increase the size/dimensions of a specific physical choice	Uses posture, movement and facial expression choices to communicate a behavior	Writes two sentences that correctly use two different verbs	
Student Name						
1.						
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28.						
29.						
30.						
Total						
Percentage						

What was effective in the lesson? Why?

What do I want to consider for the next time I teach this lesson?

What were the strongest connections between theater and writing?

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

ARTS AND WRITING LESSON: *The Super Expressive Body – Using Actions*

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an **Arts and Writing** lesson. We talked about how actors use their bodies to make characters and show emotions. We learned about how our “Super Expressive Bodies” can be used to tell stories.

- We made our bodies into “statues” to show a frozen picture of a character or an emotion.
- We increased the size of our gestures—made them bigger to exaggerate our statues.
- We moved around the room as different kinds of characters.
- We showed with our bodies how actions can be communicated with specific behaviors and facial expressions.
- We wrote sentences correctly using verbs that we chose from a list created by the class.

You could move around the house as your favorite characters from stories that you know.

Enduring Understanding

Using exaggerated and dynamic physical expression can convey emotion, character attributes, states of being, and actions in order to tell stories.