Course 1, Unit 4: Scenes in Performance

Content Area: **Performing Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts, Performing Arts**
Time Period: **Marking Period 2**
Length: **14 Days**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

This unit is the culmination of the course. Students will select scenes from the plays they worked on in Unit 3, and they will put on a staged performance to be videotaped. This may include very basic costumes, props, and scenery, and all performances will be recorded on video as part of a digital class portfolio. The messy process of rehearsals and technical preparations will expose the need for revision and changes. It will also put on display mastery in a variety of categories from concept to writing to performing. Additionally, students may spend time further developing the projects they undertook in Unit 3.

Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3.a	Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3.b	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.3.e	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.5.a	Interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns) in context.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.L.8.6	Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.
LA.8.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.2	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
LA.8.CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.3	Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
VPA.1.1.8.C.4	Define the areas of responsibility (e.g., actor, director, producer, scenic, lighting, costume, stagehand, etc.) and necessary job skills of the front and back-of-house members of a theatre company.
VPA.1.3.8.C.1	Create a method for defining and articulating character objectives, intentions, and subtext, and apply the method to the portrayal of characters in live performances or recorded venues.
VPA.1.3.8.C.2	Create and apply a process for developing believable, multidimensional characters in scripted and improvised performances by combining methods of relaxation, physical and vocal skills, acting techniques, and active listening skills.
VPA.1.4.8.B.1	Evaluate the effectiveness of a work of art by differentiating between the artist's technical proficiency and the work's content or form.
VPA.1.4.8.B.2	Differentiate among basic formal structures and technical proficiency of artists in works of

dance, music, theatre, and visual art.

Essential Questions

1. How will I work with others to bring my creation to the stage?

2. What contribution can I make as the work of other playwrights is brought to the stage?

3. How might I evaluate the technical structure, the content, the form, and the performance of not only my own work but that of others?

4. What do I expect from people as they stage my work?

5. How does the process of staging a performance of one scene inform my assessment of my play as a whole?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Advanced literary devices such as symbolism, irony, and metaphor add depth and meaning to a play.
- Characters have motivations and attributes that are revealed through dialogue and action.
- Characters, setting, events, and circumstances interrelate in order to exert an effect on an audience.
- Conventions, techniques, and elements have names that effective playwrights know and use.
- Evaluation of a play's techniques, content, form, and performance on a formative basis will yield a more artistic and effective final product.
- Integral, unified plots have specific components and elements.
- People carry out various functions on stage and behind the scenes in order to bring a play to performance.
- Plays, as works of literature, contain themes that develop with the plot.
- Short plays, sketches, and skits--while providing new playwrights the advantage of a simple format--possess the challenge of a tight workspace where essential dramatic elements are concerned.
- The vital work of a playwright is subject to interpretation by performers, directors, crew, and the audience.

Application of Skills: Students will be able to...

- Analyze and discuss themes as they develop with a plot.
- Apply dramatic elements and literary devices as they compose an original dramatic work.
- Bring about an interrelation of characters, setting, events, and circumstances as they compose a play.
- Compose a play that reflects the effect it will have on the audience, while making the most of prospective actors, directors, and crew.
- Develop characters and reveal their motivations.
- Identify and analyze character motivations and attributes revealed through dialogue and action.
- Identify components in a plot sequence.

- Recognize advanced literary devices such as symbolism, irony, and metaphor in a play.
- Refer by name to dramatic elements, literary devices, theatrical techniques, and technical capacities carried out in the creation and performance of a play.

Assessments

Formative

Self-assessment by checklists of elements of concept, composition, and performance

Peer assessment using similar checklists and engaging in discussion

Periodic consultation with the teacher

Evaluative discussions during rehearsals

Summative

Student self-assessments based on a rubric for concept, composition, and performance

Peer assessments based on a rubric for concept, composition, and performance

Evaluation by teacher based on a rubric for concept, composition, and performance

Suggested Activities

In addition to brief presentations and activities related to the topics below, students will receive extended time during each class meeting for the purpose of composing and consulting.

Day 1—Class Conference: goal setting and topics for further instruction

Days 2-4—Extensions of earlier mini-lessons on topics requested by students on the Class Conference day; continued composition and revision of plays

NOTE: These mini-lessons are hard to prescribe in advance. They will come about as students express their needs and self-generated objectives.

Days 5-8—Rehearsal process review, rehearsals, technical preparations

Days 9-11—Performance of scenes

Days 12-13—Video assessment, peer and teacher evaluation

Day 14—Self-assessments and goals that extend beyond this course

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Mini-lessons arise based on needs as the teacher assesses them and as students state them.

Students of higher levels of ability and insight have the opportunity to include more elements and to deepen or expand the application of their skills.

Nonverbal elements of performing engage speech-impaired and LEP students. Additionally, the rough performance of select passages provides an added dimension of consideration as playwrights make adjustments to their composition.

In compliance with 504 plans and IEP's, teachers will review applicable documents, consult appropriate personnel connected with special-needs students' cases, work closely with inclusion teachers and classroom aides, and communicate with parents in an effort to see to the specific needs of all students.

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Staging and recording of scenes will be a highly diversified effort from student to student. All students will participate in multiple capacities (playwright, director, actor, evaluator), and some students will take on additional dimensions of work as they manage production and assist with recording, editing, and posting video footage. Some correlations to various disciplines:

- stage management (leadership learning)
- set design (visual art)
- musical scoring and performance (music)
- video production (technology)

Resources

Youtube.com (private class account, video editing tools)

Directing Young People in Theatre: A Guide to Staging Plays with Young Casts by Samantha Lane

Peer and self-evaluation rubric and commentary sheet (scenes in performance)

Peer, self-, and teacher evaluation summative rubric (scenes in performance)