Course 2, Unit 1: Scope, Genre, Structure, and Elements

Content Area: **Performing Arts**
Course(s): **English Language Arts, Performing Arts**
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **7 Days**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In Course 2, the introductory unit will name additional and specialized genres (romantic comedy, farce, satire, tragedy, theater of the absurd, theatrical realism) as well as introducing possibilities for teleplays and screenplays. Students will also view an exemplar film while reading along in the original written screenplay. An additional text will serve as an exemplar for a television episode. The teacher will declare the scope of work for the course and establish parameters for work in further units.

Standards

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.1	Analyze the structural components of plays and performances from a variety of Western and non-Western theatrical traditions and from different historical eras.
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.1.4.8.A.5	Interpret symbolism and metaphors embedded in works of dance, music, theatre, and visual art.
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 can we explore specialized genres of the broad categories of drama covered in Course 1?
2. How does composing for the screen affect the structure and elements of a unified story?
3. How do advanced literary devices such as symbolism, irony, and metaphor develop differently on screen as

opposed to the page and the stage?

4. What additional possibilities or restrictions apply with regard to setting, characters, and events when depicted on-screen?

5. What terms apply to all of the techniques, skills, and elements I will employ as a playwright or screenwriter?

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.
- Conventions, techniques, and elements have names that effective playwrights know and use.
- Integral, unified plots have specific components and elements.
- Plays, as works of literature, contain themes that develop with the plot.

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

- Analyze and discuss themes as they develop with a plot.
- Distinguish between genres of plays (drama, comedy, and history).
- Explain the need for conflicts to drive the plot.
- Identify and analyze character motivations and attributes revealed through dialogue and action.
- Identify components in a plot sequence.
- Identify, analyze, and discuss the conventions, elements, and techniques employed in writing a play.
- Recognize advanced literary devices such as symbolism, irony, and metaphor in a play.

Assessments

Literary Note Sheets

As students watch the course exemplars, (*Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House* and *iCarly*) they will review various literary elements: genre, setting, primary and secondary conflicts, major concepts, themes, and literary devices. They will also map out the plot components and list conflicts, noting the differences between the media of stage, large screen, and small screen.

Class Discussion

Students' questions and contributions will provide critical information as to understanding of the concepts

covered in this introductory unit.

Future Units' Work

The plays, scripts, and performances of later units will indicate the depth to which students internalize and apply concepts from this unit.

Suggested Activities

Introduction: Scope, Genre, Structure, and Elements

Day 1—Review of Course I, genres, experiences, reflections; scheme for Course II: Screenplays, Teleplays, and Specialized Genres of Stage Plays

Day 2—Extended possibilities based on Course I: sub-genres (romantic comedy, farce, satire, tragedy, theater of the absurd, theatrical realism)

Day 3—Screenplays: *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House*, written by Norman Panama and Melvin Frank; anatomy and structure, viewing of Act I

Day 4—Viewing of Act II

Day 5—Viewing of Act III

Day 6—Teleplays, *iCarly* Spec Script, "iWanna Gold Medal"

Day 7—Student projects for Course II: a full-length screenplay, multiple episodes for a television series, or a stage play in a specialized genre

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

This introductory unit will review literary concepts learned in ELA classes over the past several years. Given the brevity of this unit and its basic concepts, little differentiation is necessary. All the same, various activities enable a broad appeal to a variety of learners.

The overview of the course lists basic genres and the written formats of plays with visual samples and

reinforcement through extended class discussion.

Viewing of the course exemplars on video ensures that students of all abilities see the unit concepts at work.

The Literary Note Sheet enables the teacher to verify that students on a basic academic level have a working familiarity with all concepts.

Students on higher academic levels will exhibit greater depths of analysis and synthesis during class discussion.

Course projects allow for significant flexibility by subject matter, genre, and medium, accommodating students' interests and abilities.

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

Three media are covered in this course: stage plays, television episodes, and screenplays. This will connect on an essential level with media studies topics taken up in social studies classes. Additionally, the literary nature of this work has a correlation to ELA classes.

Resources

Course exemplar:

Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House (1948), dir. H.C. Potter

Script of *Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House:* (http://www.imsdb.com/scripts/Mr-Blandings-Builds-His-Dream-House.html)

Script for iCarly, "iWanna Gold Medal" (http://www.simplyscripts.com/scripts/iCarly--iWannaGoldMedal.pdf)

Additional resources:

Course overview handout

Literary Note Sheet

Freytag's Pyramid (http://www.ohio.edu/people/hartleyg/ref/fiction/freytag.html)