Unit 03: Alexander Technique and Meditation

Content Area: **Performing Arts**
Course(s): **Performing Arts**
Time Period: **Week 7**
Length: **3 classes**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In this unit, students will explore the Alexander Technique and the utilization of meditation in acting. They will research and apply these skills resulting in a thoughtful, more relaxed, and developed character.

Standards

VPA.1.1.8.A.4	Integrate a variety of isolated and coordinated movements in dance compositions and performances, making use of all major muscle groups, proper body mechanics, body patterning, balance, and range of motion.
VPA.1.1.8.A.CS4	The quality of integrated movement depends on body alignment and the synchronized use of major and minor muscle groups. Variety in body patterns, range of motion, application of the elements of dance, and skill level enhance dance compositions and performance.
VPA.1.1.8.C.2	Determine the effectiveness of various methods of vocal, physical, relaxation, and acting techniques used in actor training.
VPA.1.1.8.C.CS2	Actors exercise their voices and bodies through a wide variety of techniques to expand the range and the clarity of the characters they develop.

Essential Questions

- How can the Alexander Technique benefit a performer?
- Does a relaxed mind and body lead to a better performance?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- benefits of the Alexander Technique are: improved posture, ability to deal with stressful situations, skill enhancement
- Frederick Matthias Alexander was a Shakespearean actor
- many different people study the Alexander Technique: singers, dancers, actors, public speakers, athletes, people who work with computers
- The Alexander Technique has been used over for 100 years worldwide
- the basic concepts of Alexander technique are: habit, faulty sensory appreciation, inhibition, direction, primary control

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

- coach peers through an Alexander lesson
- identify famous individuals who utilize the Alexander Technique
- identify what parts of the body the Alexander Technique is affecting
- learn basic Alexander Techniques and apply them to class activity

Assessments

- written assessment of Alexander Technique
- self demonstration of Alexander Technique
- peer coaching of Alexander Technique
- information from this unit will be included on a locally developed, end of course benchmark assessment that may take the form of a test, performance based project, or other summative assessment

Suggested Activities

- teacher demonstration of the Alexander Technique
- practice the Alexander Technique during a lesson
- peer practice of techniques in class
- creation of a simple Alexander Technique lesson to share with other classes

Activities to Differentiate Instruction

Differentiation for special education:

- General modifications may include:
    - Modifications & accommodations as listed in the student's IEP
    - Assign a peer to help keep student on task
    - Modified or reduced assignments
    - Reduce length of assignment for different mode of delivery
    - Increase one-to-one time
    - Working contract between you and student at risk
    - Prioritize tasks
    - Think in concrete terms and provide hands-on-tasks
    - Position student near helping peer or have quick access to teacher
    - Anticipate where needs will be
    - Break tests down in smaller increments
- Content specific modifications may include:

- work with Theatre Buddy to create an Alexander Lesson

Differentiation for ELL's:

- General modifications may include:
  - Strategy groups
  - Teacher conferences
  - Graphic organizers
  - Modification plan
  - Collaboration with ELL Teacher
- Content specific vocabulary important for ELL students to understand include: Alexander Technique, inhibition, sensory, primary control

Differentiation to extend learning for gifted students may include:

- research famous people who utilize Alexander Technique and describe results

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Performing Arts can work with Technology and Music classes to create a basic Alexander Technique lesson that will benefit all classes

Resources

The Alexander Technique: How to use your Body without Stress, by Wilfred Barlow M.D.

amstatonline.org

teacher generated handouts/worksheets

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP3.1	Career-ready individuals understand the relationship between personal health, workplace performance and personal well-being; they act on that understanding to regularly practice healthy diet, exercise and mental health activities. Career-ready individuals also take regular action to contribute to their personal financial well-being, understanding that personal financial security provides the peace of mind required to contribute more fully to their own career success.