Unit 6: The Art of Improv

Content Area: **Performing Arts**
Course(s): **Performing Arts**
Time Period: **Week 42**
Length: **4 Classes**
Status: **Published**

Unit Overview

In this unit, students will build on previous knowledge of improv and explore companies such as Second City, The Groundlings, and Comedy Sportz. Students will divide into 2-3 groups to create their own improv groups and perform for class and possibly other members of the school community.

Standards

VPA.1.1.8.C.2	Determine the effectiveness of various methods of vocal, physical, relaxation, and acting techniques used in actor training.
VPA.1.2.8.A.1	Map historical innovations in dance, music, theatre, and visual art that were caused by the creation of new technologies.
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.

Essential Questions

- Can improv be limitless?
- How are plays and scenes rooted in improv?

Application of Knowledge: Students will know that...

- Comedy Sportz was founded in 1984 and features short games structured for a large audience participation situation similar to Who's Line is it Anyway?
- Improv is basis to most acting that leads to scene work and script development
- improvisation takes courage and the ability to risk it all
- Second City was established in 1959 ad many SNL actors started within this program
- The Groundlings were founded in 1974 and they are character-driven sketch and improv comedy featuring bold choices

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

- focus on relationship between performer and how characters interact with each other based on strong points of view
- maintain emotional commitment to a story,game or scene
- refine raw material of improv to create a character sketch
- utilize improv skill to develop a sense of self confidence in acting

Assessments

- creation of a character used in a comedy sketch (written/original)
- performance of a scripted sketch that started as an improved scene based on current events
- recreation of improv games based on Who's Line is it Anyway?
- presentation of comedy team to class or other school members set up in Comedy Sportz style
- 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

- rehearsal of various SNL skits and develop original skit copying style
- practice theatre games shown on Who's line is it Anyway?
- create comedy teams to perform for class and or school members

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:
    - select small skits which will be able to be presented
    - work with theatre buddy to develop theatre game for group

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: improv, relationship, point of view, emotional commitment, self-confidence

Differentiation to extend learning for gifted students may include:

- organize a small assembly of improv for school

Integrated/Cross-Disciplinary Instruction

Performing Arts can organize assembly for school of improv presentation so other classes can learn skill set, Performing Arts can work with Guidance to explore how theatre can enhance self-confidence in an individual

Resources

Everything About Theatre, by Robert L. Lee

Improv, by Kieth Johnstone

How to start your Own Comedy Group, by Paul J. Stokstad

teacher geerated handuts/worksheets

21st Century Skills

CRP.K-12.CRP2.1	Career-ready individuals readily access and use the knowledge and skills acquired through experience and education to be more productive. They make connections between abstract concepts with real-world applications, and they make correct insights about when it is appropriate to apply the use of an academic skill in a workplace situation.
CRP.K-12.CRP4.1	Career-ready individuals communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods. They communicate in the workplace with clarity and purpose to make maximum use of their own and others' time. They are excellent writers; they master conventions, word choice, and organization, and use

	effective tone and presentation skills to articulate ideas. They are skilled at interacting with others; they are active listeners and speak clearly and with purpose. Career-ready individuals think about the audience for their communication and prepare accordingly to ensure the desired outcome.
CRP.K-12.CRP6.1	Career-ready individuals regularly think of ideas that solve problems in new and different ways, and they contribute those ideas in a useful and productive manner to improve their organization. They can consider unconventional ideas and suggestions as solutions to issues, tasks or problems, and they discern which ideas and suggestions will add greatest value. They seek new methods, practices, and ideas from a variety of sources and seek to apply those ideas to their own workplace. They take action on their ideas and understand how to bring innovation to an organization.