The Elements of Improvisation

Content Area: **Music**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **50**
Status: **Published**

Enduring Understandings

Artists understand and have an awareness of relationships between themselves and the ensemble to inform their work.

Artists make specific choices to convey their meaning to an audience.

Theatre artists reflect and understand the impact and meaning of their performance to an audience.

Summary/Introduction

ELD standards:https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdmsiGOdCHlrjU-WPvAtENnEgi0EStZXo0uiFYv1Nu4/edit

The focus of this unit is to develop an understanding of improvisation as a building block of acting technique by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters in performance of short original scenes.

Revised: August 2024

9.2.12.CAP.6	Identify transferable skills in career choices and design alternative career plans based on those skills.
1.4.12prof.Cr2a	Explore the function of history and culture in the development and subsequent interpretations of devised or scripted theatre work.
1.4.12prof.Cr2b	Examine the collaborative nature of the actor, director, playwright, and designers, and explore their interdependent roles.
1.4.12prof.Cr3b	Practice devised or scripted theatre work using theatrical staging conventions.
1.4.12prof.Pr4a	Rehearse various acting exercises to expand skills in a rehearsal for devised or scripted theatre performance.
1.4.12prof.Pr5a	Identify and explore different pacing options per character to better communicate the story in a theatre work.
1.4.12prof.Pr5b	Explore and discover character choices using given circumstances in devised or scripted theatre work.
1.4.12prof.Pr6a	Perform devised or scripted theatre work for a specific audience.
1.4.12prof.Re7a	Utilize personal reactions and reflections to artistic choices in a theatrical work for a formal theatre critique.
1.4.12prof.Re7b	Collaboratively analyze how artistic choices in a theatrical work affect personal and peer reactions.
1.4.12prof.Re8b	Evaluate the aesthetics of the production elements in a devised or scripted theatre work

	and their ability to support or extend the storyline.
1.4.12prof.Re8c	Formulate a deeper understanding and appreciation of a devised or scripted theatre work by considering its specific purpose or intended audience.
1.4.12prof.Re9a	Analyze and compare artistic choices developed from personal experiences in multiple devised or scripted theatre works.
1.4.12prof.Re9b	Identify and compare cultural perspectives and contexts that may influence the evaluation of a devised or scripted theatre work.
1.4.12prof.Cn10	Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to create products.
1.4.12prof.Cn10a	Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas, and personal beliefs impact a devised or scripted theatre work.
1.4.12prof.Cn11	Relating artistic ideas and works within societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.
1.4.12prof.Cn11a	Integrate knowledge of cultural, global and historic belief systems into creative choices in a devised or scripted theatre work.
1.4.12prof.Cn11b	Use basic research methods to better understand the social and cultural background of devised or scripted theatre work.

Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings

- What is improvisation and why is it an essential part of the actor’s toolkit?
- What is the role of conflict in theater?
- What are the techniques to establishing given circumstances in improvisational work?
- How is improvisation used in non-improvisational work?

Objectives

Students will know:

- How to use improvisation to help define and discover the boundaries of a character.
- How to use improvisation to tap into an actor’s individuality and creativity.
- The rules of improv and how they can be applied.

Students will be skilled at:

- Embracing the rules of improv in order to create fast-paced but coherent scenes.
- Listening to their fellow actors onstage to accept and improve upon their ideas.
- Embracing their natural instincts onstage and thinking less about what they're doing.

Learning Plan

- Play a wide variety of improvisation games with students reflecting upon each to connect them to the basic skills of acting.
- Work through Uta Hagen’s nine questions for understanding given circumstances.

- Use playing cards and chance in place of volunteers to encourage participation and become comfortable with chaos.
- Ask students to provide additional games to provide student choice.
- Provide students with evaluations after each exercise and discuss each part of the exercise and what they have discovered.
- Create a lineup of games with direct input from students to encourage self-evaluation and critical thinking.
- Perform improv games at the showcase, being assessed on the rules of improv and vocal quality.
- Reflect on this performance in comparison to more advanced students involved in the showcase.

Assessments

- Students will assess each other by talking about what works and what doesn't work.
- Students will assess the value of different games through discussion and decision making.
- Students will be assessed in rehearsal and at the showcase on their ability to follow the rules of improv.

Materials

- Improv games (some should be provided by the students themselves) I.e. One Word Story, Late to Work, Survivor, Dating Game

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1A-PxTb-SqSbhdiTWm8sCR69UJhJ2Oq_ixoy_hgPpInc/edit?gid=1426178898#gid=1426178898