

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

Theater Foundations Theater Lesson

Expressive Voice

Authors: Lisa Norman, Dave Quicksall, and Rachel Atkins

Enduring Understanding

Projecting sounds from the body center produces a loud and clear voice.

Lesson Description (Use for family communication and displaying student art)

Students explore the methods by which actors use their voices in the theater. Through humming they learn about how their diaphragm is an important part of a projected voice. They will speak a line of dialogue with articulation, vocal expression, and different vocal qualities. They will use the 21st Century Skill of perseverance to work through any challenges of speaking in front of a group.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target: Identifies and isolates personal body center (the diaphragm).

Criteria: Hums vocal vibrations from the diaphragm.

Target: Creates vocal sounds and words without stress or tension.

Criteria: Uses a clear, open sound.

Target: Applies articulation to speaking.

Criteria: Presents a spoken line in clear pronunciation that can be understood.

Target: Applies vocal expression to speaking.

Criteria: Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre.

Target: Applies projection to speaking in an auditorium.

Criteria: Presents a spoken phrase in a loud, clear voice heard throughout a large space.

Target: Demonstrates perseverance.

Criteria: Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.

Vocabulary

Arts:

Articulation

Center

Diaphragm

Enunciation

Expression

Expressive Voice

Perseverance

Pitch

Projection

Tempo/Speed

Timbre/Quality

Vibration

Volume

Materials

Museum Artworks or Performance

Seattle, WA

Book-It Repertory Theatre

Living Voices

Seattle Children's Theatre

Tacoma, WA

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

Materials

Peer Assessment Worksheet, one per student; Class Assessment Worksheet

Resource: Kristen Linklater, *Freeing The Natural Voice*

Learning Standards

WA Arts Learning Standards in Theatre

For the full description of each standard, see:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/Standards>

Creating (Concepts: Voice, Projection)

1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Performing/Presenting/Producing

4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Responding

7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.

9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

continued

Early Learning Guidelines (Pre-K – Grade 3)

For a full description of Washington State Early Learning and Child Development Guidelines see: <https://www.del.wa.gov/sites/default/files/imported/publications/development/docs/guidelines.pdf>

(Age 4-5) 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around: Using the large muscles (gross motor skills); move with purpose from one place to another using the whole body.

(Age 4-5) 5. Communicating: Speaking and listening: use words to describe actions.

(Age 4-5) 6. Learning about my world: Arts: show creativity and imagination; hum; perform elements of drama; participate in dramatic play.

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in ELA

For a full description of CCSS Standards by grade level see:

<http://www.k12.wa.us/CoreStandards/ELAstandards/>

SL.CCR.6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks.

SL.K.6. Speak audibly and express thoughts, ideas, and feelings clearly.

College and Career Ready Students in Speaking and Listening

Demonstrate independence.

Build strong content knowledge.

Respond to the varying demands of audience, task, purpose, and discipline.

Comprehend as well as critique.

Value evidence.

ICON KEY:

 = Indicates note or reminder for teacher

 = Embedded assessment points in the lesson

Pre-Teach

Teach the Arts Foundations Theater Lesson, *The Expressive Body*, before teaching this lesson.

Lesson Steps Outline

1. Lead students in an exploration of vibrations that are created from the center of the body (the diaphragm) through humming and feeling for vibrations in the face, throat, neck, chest, back, ribcage, and lower back. Introduce perseverance.

 Criteria-based teacher checklist: Hums vocal vibrations from the diaphragm. Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.

2. Introduce projection. Divide students into pairs and leads them in the “HEY!” exercise, which “frees” the voice from the body.

 Criteria-based teacher checklist, peer assessment: Uses a clear, open sound.

3. Introduce articulation. Assign a simple line such as “My name is...” or “What do you want?” For more of a challenge, use a tongue twister or a longer sentence with more difficult consonants.

 Criteria-based teacher checklist, self-assessment: Presents a spoken line in clear pronunciation that can be understood.

4. Introduces vocal expression: volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and quality/timbre.

 Criteria-based teacher checklist: Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre.

5. Facilitates students presenting lines from the stage into the auditorium or another large space.

 Criteria-based teacher checklist, peer assessment: Presents a spoken phrase in a loud, clear voice heard throughout a large space. Presents a spoken line in clear pronunciation that can be understood. Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre. Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.

LESSON STEPS

▣ This is a voice lesson. The teacher should take into account that there is loud volume involved when exploring the concept of projection. The ideal space for this work is one that allows for some distance between students to project their voices.

▣ Step 5 involves peer assessment. Copies of the "Peer Assessment Worksheet" follow after the Lesson Steps portion of this lesson. Each student should have a copy to assess his/her partner.

1. Lead students in an exploration of vibrations that are created from the center of the body (the diaphragm) through humming and feeling for vibrations in the face, throat, neck, chest, back, ribcage, and lower back. Introduce perseverance.

- *Hum and touch your toes. Where do you feel vibrations when you hum?*
- *Unbend your body and return to a standing position, humming all the while.*
- *When you have reached your full height, release the sound by simply opening your mouth and letting it out.*

Guide the students to persevere and sustain the open sound for an extended period of time (at least 15-20 seconds).

- *Relax the body. Don't forget to breathe. Sustain the sound as though on a long sigh of relief. Don't force the sound as you open your mouth, just let it spill out.*
- *Continue to allow the sound to come out. For some of you this may be very challenging. If it is, don't quit! Keep going and use perseverance to finish the task. Perseverance means to push through challenges and adapt what you are doing to succeed, no matter how difficult the job might be.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist: Hums vocal vibrations from the diaphragm.
Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.

2. Introduce **projection. Divide students into pairs and lead them in the "HEY!" exercise, which "frees" the voice from the body.**

▣ Guide students to decide who is "A" and who is "B". Repeat as often as necessary to achieve criteria. Encourage students to give individual feedback to partners.

- *Stand across the room from your partner and take turns saying, "Hey!"*
- *Connect to your center. Feel the desire to communicate before using the voice. Don't strain or push the sound.*
- *Think of the sound coming from your center and not from your throat. This is called projection. You are projecting your voice out from your center and across the room the way a movie projector projects a movie from the back of the theater to the screen.*
- *Notice how your partner stands and breathes when he or she is projecting best. Tell your partner what you noticed.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist, peer assessment: Uses a clear, open sound.

3. Introduce articulation. Assign a simple line such as “My name is...” or “What do you want?” For more of a challenge, use a tongue twister or a longer sentence with more difficult consonants.

- *It's not only important to hear an actor's words, you need to understand all the words an actor says on stage. An actor exaggerates all the sounds in every word they say to help the audience understand. This is called articulation or enunciation.*
- *Try saying the line and really exaggerating the way you move your mouth to make all the sounds of every word.*
- *Are you articulating every word so that anyone could understand what you are saying?*

Criteria-based teacher checklist, self-assessment: Presents a spoken line in clear pronunciation that can be understood.

4. Introduce vocal expression: volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and quality/timbre.

- *An actor doesn't just want to be heard and understood. Actors use expression in their voices to give more information about a character or to show how a character feels. Different vocal expression can make the same line sound very different.*
- *As an actor, you have many choices about how to create expression with your voice. Volume means using a loud or soft voice, or you might think of it as big or small. Try saying the line in a soft voice, but still loud enough to be heard.*
- *Pitch means using a low/deep voice or a high voice. Try saying the line first with a low voice and then with a high voice.*
- *Tempo/speed is how fast or slow you speak. Try saying the line quickly, but still enunciating so the words can be understood. Now try really stretching the sounds of the words out.*
- *Timbre means the quality of your voice. Try saying the line in a voice that is gravelly, nasal, squeaky, sharp, melodious, etc. All of these different ways to use your voice combine to make vocal expression.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist: Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre.

5. Facilitate students presenting lines from the stage into the auditorium or another large space.

Assign each student a partner (or have students work with their “HEY!” partner) to observe and give feedback on the peer assessment worksheet.

- *Decide on the specific vocal expression you will use to say your line, projecting all the way across the room.*
- *Practice saying it so you are using all the parts of your expressive voice: projection, articulation, volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and quality/timbre.*
- *Each student will have a chance to say the line with his or her own chosen vocal expression.*

- *For some of you, speaking in front of a group of people may be challenging – even scary. Here is where you can practice perseverance again. Remember, to persevere means to push through a challenge and adapt what are doing to succeed. If you keep trying, you won't fail.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist, peer assessment: Presents a spoken phrase in a loud, clear voice heard throughout a large space. Presents a spoken line in clear pronunciation that can be understood. Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre. Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Arts Foundations Theater Lesson

Expressive Voice

PEER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

	Expressive Voice Peer Reflection			
Partners:	Observed by:			
What I Heard:	Projection	Articulation	Expression	Identify form(s) of expression: <i>pitch, tempo/speed, and quality/timbre</i>
Line of Dialogue				

-----✂-----Cut Here-----

PEER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

	Expressive Voice Peer Reflection			
Partners:	Observed by:			
What I Heard:	Projection	Articulation	Expression	Identify form(s) of expression: <i>pitch, tempo/speed, and quality/timbre</i>
Line of Dialogue				

-----✂-----Cut Here-----

PEER ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

	Expressive Voice Peer Reflection			
Partners:	Observed by:			
What I Heard:	Projection	Articulation	Expression	Identify form(s) of expression: <i>pitch, tempo/speed, and quality/timbre</i>
Line of Dialogue				

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Arts Foundations Theater Lesson

Expressive Voice

Teachers may choose to use or adapt the following self-assessment tool.

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Discipline	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	Total
Concept	Personal Body Center (Humming)	Projection ("HEY!")	Presentation of Line			THEATER 21 st Century Skill	6
			Articulation	Vocal Expression	Projection	Perseverance	
Criteria	Hums vocal vibrations from the diaphragm.	Uses a clear, open sound.	Presents a spoken line in a clear voice that can be understood.	Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre.	Presents a spoken line in a loud, clear voice heard throughout the auditorium or large space.	Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.	
Student Name							

PERSEVERANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Describe one challenge you faced in trying to project your line across the room with vocal expression (changing the volume, pitch, or timbre of your voice).

Explain how you persevered to solve that problem. What did you do to try to solve it?

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Arts Foundations Theater Lesson

Expressive Voice

CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Discipline Concept	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER 21 st Century Skill	Total 6	
	Personal Body Center (Humming)	Projection ("HEY!")	Presentation of Line					Perseverance
			Articulation	Vocal Expression	Projection			
Criteria	Hums vocal vibrations from the diaphragm.	Uses a clear, open sound.	Presents a spoken line in a clear voice that can be understood.	Presents a spoken line with volume, pitch, tempo/speed, and/or timbre.	Presents a spoken line in a loud, clear voice heard throughout the auditorium or large space.	Persists in adapting ideas to work through challenges.		
Student Name								
1.								
2.								
3.								
4.								
5.								
6.								
7.								
8.								
9.								
10.								
11.								
12.								
13.								
14.								
15.								
16.								
17.								
18.								
19.								
20.								
21.								
22.								
23.								
24.								
25.								
26.								
27.								
28.								
29.								
30.								
Total								
Percentage								

What was effective in the lesson? Why?

What do I want to consider for the next time I teach this lesson?

How could I connect the concepts in this lesson with other disciplines?

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

THEATER LESSON: *Expressive Voice*

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an **Arts** lesson. We talked about ways to use the voice in a theater, the way actors do.

- We discovered our center by realigning the body and using our diaphragms. We sustained sound as though it was a long sigh of relief.
- We learned to “free” the voice from the body. Instead of straining to push out sound, we connected to the body center and communicated to a partner.
- We spoke a line with articulation and vocal expression. We projected the line from a stage into an auditorium using our Expressive Voice.
- We practiced using different vocal qualities (scratchy, smooth, squeaky), using different volumes (loud/soft), and different pitches (high/low).
- We used the 21st Century Skill of PERSEVERANCE and pushed through the challenges of speaking in front of a group of people.

At home, you could project across the living room, then across the back yard. You could practice articulating your words, and speaking with different kinds of vocal expression.

Enduring Understanding

Projecting sound from the body center produces a loud and clear voice.