# ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

Arts Foundations Theater Lesson

Creating Tableau

Author: Rachel Atkins

Enduring Understanding

A variety of levels, proximity, facial expressions, and body shapes can show character relationships in

a frozen moment.

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

Students collaborate in groups to create frozen stage pictures that are called “tableaux.” Using the

“Elements of Tableau Checklist,” students work together in statues to express specific shapes, ideas, or

dramatic scenes.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target: Uses body and face to show character and action.

Criteria: Holds a statue using specific facial expression and body shape.

Target: Uses range of physical space within a tableau.

Criteria: Varies level and depth in relation to other characters.

Target: Creates a character relationship within a tableau.

Criteria: Establishes intentional physical and/or eye contact and nearness/farness (proximity)

with other characters.

Target: Opens tableau to audience.

Criteria: Angles body between facing other characters and audience.

Target: Collaborates with others.

Criteria: Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises; and incorporates input/feedback.

Vocabulary

Arts:

Action

Audience

Body Shape

Character

Cheating Out

Collaboration

Communication

Compromise

Depth

Eye Contact

Facial Expression

Feedback

Freeze

Gesture

Levels

Physical Choice

Physical Contact

Reflect

Relationship

Setting

Statue

Tableau

Materials

Museum Artworks or Performance

Seattle, WA

Seattle Children’s Theatre

Tacoma, WA

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

Materials

Chart paper or whiteboard and markers;

Arts Impact journal; pencil; “Elements of

Tableau Checklist” from lesson;

Collaboration Self-Assessment

Worksheets Classroom Assessment

Worksheet

Tools

Body, voice, imagination

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: Character, Setting, Action,

Movement, Gesture, Facial Expression)

1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

3. Refine and complete artistic work.

Performing/Presenting/Producing

4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for

presentation.

5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for

presentation.

6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic

work.

Responding

7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.

8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

Connecting

10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal

experiences to make art.

continued

ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

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/p

ublications/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; tell some details of a

recent event; listen to others.

(Age 4-5) 6. Learning about my world: Arts: Show

creativity and imagination; 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/

R.CCR.3. Analyze how and why individuals, events,

and ideas develop and interact over the course of a

text.

R.CCR.6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes

the content and style of text.

RL.3.3. Describe characters in a story (e.g. their traits,

motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions

contribute to the sequence of events.

RL.3.6. Acknowledge differences in the points of view

of characters in a story or poem.

College and Career Ready Students in Reading

Demonstrate independence.

Build strong content knowledge.

Respond to the varying demands of audience, task,

purpose, and discipline.

Comprehend as well as critique.

Value evidence.

ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

Pre-Teach

Teach the Arts Foundations Theater Lesson, The Expressive Body , before

teaching this lesson.

Lesson Steps Outline

1. Introduce the activity Silent Negotiations. Introduce the characteristics of

effective collaboration.

2. Lead students in Silent Negotiations. Divide the class into groups of three-five

students each, giving each group a space to work together. Call out a series of

shapes and pictures.

3. Call out a series of locations, events, and/or concepts, asking students to

create stage pictures that satisfy the elements from the Tableau Checklist one by

one, still working silently.

4. Review the “Elements of Tableau Checklist”.

5. Model using the “Elements of Tableau Checklist” with student volunteers.

6. Facilitate groups creating tableaux independently.

ﬂ Criteria-based teacher process assessment, peer reflection: Holds a statue

using specific facial expression and body shape. Varies level and depth in relation

to other characters. Establishes intentional physical and/or eye contact and

nearness/farness (proximity) with other characters. Angles body between facing

other characters and audience. Communicates ideas to others; makes

compromises; and incorporates input/feedback.

ICON KEY:

3 = Indicates note or reminder for teacher

ﬂ = Embedded assessment points in the lesson

ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

7. Facilitate as groups perform their tableaux for the class.

ﬂ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Holds a statue using specific facial expression

and body shape. Varies level and depth in relation to other characters.

Establishes intentional physical and/or eye contact and nearness/farness

(proximity) with other characters. Angles body between facing other characters

and audience.

8. Guide self and peer reflection. Guide students to complete their Collaboration

Self-Assessment Worksheets.

ﬂ Criteria-based teacher checklist, self and peer reflection and assessment:

Describes how Tableau Checklist was used in own and other students’ tableaux.

Describes collaboration: Communicates ideas to others; makes compromises;

and incorporates input/feedback.

ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

LESSON STEPS\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3 Pre-determine how the room will be set-up for students to move through space – desks moved to

the side or students moving among the desks.

3 Students have multiple opportunities to meet the various criteria throughout the lesson. Assessments

on the elements of tableau can be made at any time in the lesson when the individual student fulfills a

specific criterion.

1. Introduce the activity Silent Negotiations. Introduce the characteristics of effective

collaboration.

• This activity is called Silent Negotiations. What do you think that means? Silent means no

talking--whispering counts as talking. What does it mean to negotiate?

• You’ll be working in small groups to create different shapes and pictures with your bodies. All

groups will be working at the same time. Everyone in the group must be in every picture. Your

group must figure out how to make each shape or picture together, but without talking.

• What are some ways we can communicate with each other without talking?

• Be aware of the ways you collaborate with your group. Collaboration means

1. You communicate your own ideas, but you also listen to other people. How do you “listen”

when someone isn’t talking?

2. You compromise with one another.

3. You incorporate each other’s input and feedback.

• I’ll be asking you to reflect on how you collaborated at the end of the lesson.

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

2. Lead students in Silent Negotiations. Divide the class into groups of three-five students

each. Call out a series of shapes and pictures.

3 Give each group a space to work together.

3 The following are suggestions for shapes and pictures (adjust based on age and ability of group):

􀀀 Circle

􀀀 Square

􀀀 Triangle

􀀀 Star

􀀀 Letters of the alphabet A, B, C, D (as many as there are students in the group; one

per letter)

􀀀 Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (as many as there are students in the group; one per number)

􀀀 Slogan (for example, I LOVE NEW YORK)

3 Allow all groups to complete each image before moving on to the next.

• I see lots of different ways to make these shapes. Some groups are using the floor.

• Remember, no talking—find another way to communicate. Make sure everyone in your group

is involved.

• When you’ve created your picture, just hold it so I can see.

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

3 Pre-determine if the “Elements of Tableau Checklist” is on a large chart or projected with a

document camera (a copy of the checklist can be found in this lesson).

3. Call out a series of locations, events and/or concepts, asking students to create stage

pictures that satisfy the elements from the “Elements of Tableau Checklist” one by one,

still working silently.

3 Once an element has been introduced, guide groups as they incorporate the element into all the

following tableaux. Allow all groups to complete their image before moving on to the next. Cues may

include: wedding, funeral, baseball game, playground, school hallway, cafeteria, dungeon, love, hope.

• You will hear me guiding/directing your efforts so listen carefully. Create a picture of a baseball

game. 5-4-3-2-1—Freeze!

• Make sure you’re using your facial expressions and body shape in a statue to show who your

character is and what he or she is doing.

• Now adjust your position so that you’re not at the same level as anyone else in your group.

Think about using depth too. Some actors should go into high space and some go into low

space—don’t lose your facial expression and body shape as you adjust! Freeze!

• For all the rest of the pictures you make, include different levels while holding your statues.

• Create a picture of the school playground. 5-4-3-2-1—Freeze! Use your whole face and

body, and remember your levels and depth! I see some actors are playing objects or parts of

the environment.

• Now adjust your position and add physical and/or eye contact with at least one other character.

Physical contact can use positive space, where you are touching, or negative space, where you

are almost touching, with a little bit of space between you.

3 Demonstrate positive/negative space with a handshake if needed.

• Find a way to be in relationship to another character—how close or how far away should one

character be from another? This is another way of showing a relationship between two

characters. Freeze!

• For all the rest of the pictures you make, include relationships as well as levels and depth, using

physical and/or eye contact. Remember that actors in tableaux can play inanimate objects or

parts of the environment, as well as people or animals.

• Remember to collaborate with your group members by sharing an idea – even when you do it

silently – compromising or changing one of your ideas, and incorporating feedback.

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

4. Review the “Elements of Tableau Checklist.”

• When we use our bodies alone to show a character, that’s a statue.

• When we put two or more statues together to create a picture, it’s called a tableau (taa-blow)—

a frozen stage picture. You’ve just been making tableaux with your groups.

• A tableau uses certain elements to make a really strong picture, and I’ve just introduced those

to you. You can use this checklist anytime you’re making a tableau.

Statue: Individual facial expression and body shape/gesture

• Use whole face and body

• Show character

• Show action (body)

• Show emotion (face)

Levels and depth

• Low/medium/high, left/right/center, downstage, upstage, near/far

• Three dimensional use of stage or playing space

Character and spatial relationships/connections

• Eye contact or point of focus

• Physical contact, using positive or negative space (touching or not touching)

• Proximity or distance

Open to the audience (cheat out)

• Audience awareness

• Make sure all actors can be seen (no blocking—use levels & depth)

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5. Model using the “Elements of Tableau Checklist” with student volunteers.

3 Direct actors in model tableau as needed to demonstrate all tableau elements clearly.

• I’d like one of the groups to recreate the last tableau you made to show the rest of the class.

Audience, where do you see different levels and depth? How can you tell what this character is

doing or feeling—what is the actor doing with her face and body to show it? Where do you see

relationships between characters? How are they using their eyes? Their proximity in space?

• Are there any changes that we need to make to this tableau to make sure we’re using all of the

elements? Can you see all of the actors in this tableau?

• Actors, now that you have an audience, you need to cheat out so you can be seen. Angle your

body between the audience and the other actors on stage so more of the front of your body

can be seen to the audience. Use your levels and depth to make sure you’re not being blocked

or blocking anyone else. If you’re closer to the audience, you should be in low space. If you’re

farther from the audience, you should be in high space.

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

6. Facilitate groups creating tableaux independently.

• I am going to assign your group a nursery rhyme. Your job is to work together to show the

story of the rhyme in one or two tableaux. This time, you will be allowed to talk to plan how to

create your tableaux. Remember that you may choose to have some actors playing objects or

parts of the environment, like trees or tables, to help show where you are or what’s happening.

• Don’t forget to use the checklist to make sure you incorporate all the elements.

• Before you start, decide where your audience is for your rehearsal space so you can all make

sure you stay open.

• Be aware of the ways you collaborate with your group now that you can talk to each other.

Collaboration means:

1. You communicate your own ideas, but you also listen to other people.

2. You compromise with one another to come up with your tableau.

3. You incorporate each other’s input and feedback as you develop your tableau.

• I’ll be asking you to reflect on how you collaborated at the end of the lesson.

3 Options: Instead of a nursery rhyme, groups could be assigned other grade level-appropriate

locations, events, etc., generate their own idea for a tableau subject, and/or create only one tableau.

ﬂ Criteria-based teacher process assessment, peer reflection: Holds statue using specific facial

expression and body shape. Varies level and depth in relation to other characters. Establishes

intentional physical and/or eye contact and nearness/farness (proximity) with other characters. Angles

body between facing other characters and audience. Communicates ideas to others; makes

compromises; and incorporates input/feedback.

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

7. Facilitate as groups perform their tableaux for the class.

• This group is showing us Little Miss Muffet. Tableau #1, 1-2-3—Freeze! (Repeat for

each tableau.)

• How did this group use the tableau elements of levels/depth, facial expression, body shapes

and relationships to show its story?

• How did you know it was Little Miss Muffet? What did the actors do with their bodies and faces

to show the characters and what they were doing?

• Where did you see the group cheating out?

ﬂ Criteria-based teacher checklist: Holds statue using specific facial expression and body shape.

Varies level and depth in relation to other characters. Establishes intentional physical and/or eye

contact and nearness/farness (proximity) with other characters. Angles body between facing other

characters and audience.

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8. Guide self and peer reflection. Guide students to complete their Collaboration Self-

Assessment Worksheets independently.

• Describe how your group used one of the elements from the Tableau Checklist to make physical

choices in your tableau.

• When you were in the audience, how did another group use the elements of tableau to help

you understand their characters and their relationships?

• Describe how you collaborated with your group. What ideas did you contribute? How did you

change your ideas to go along with the group or to use someone else’s ideas?

ﬂ Criteria-based teacher checklist, self and peer reflection and assessment: Describes how Tableau

Checklist was used in own and other students’ tableaux. Describes collaboration: Communicates ideas

to others; makes compromises; and incorporates input/feedback.

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3 Possible adjustments for Pre-K and primary grades:

• Eliminate steps 6 & 7.

• Create whole class tableaux rather than having students work in small groups.

• Use a more limited “Elements of Tableau Checklist” and/or scaffold and introduce elements over

time.

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

Creating Tableau

Elements of Tableau Checklist

Statue: Individual facial expression and body shape/gesture

q Use whole face and body

q Show character

q Show action (body)

q Show emotion (face)

Levels and depth

q Low/medium/high

q Three dimensional use of stage or playing space: Left/right/center, downstage/upstage,

near/far

Character and spatial relationships/connections

q Eye contact or point of focus

q Physical contact using positive or negative space (touching or not touching)

q Proximity or distance

Open to the audience (cheat out)

q Audience awareness

q Make sure all actors can be seen (no blocking—use levels & depth)

ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Arts Foundations Theater Lesson

Creating Tableau

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

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Discipline THEATER Total

7

Concept Tableau Collaboration

21st Century Skill

Criteria

Student Name

Holds a statue

using specific

facial

expression and

body shape.

Varies level

and depth in

relation to

other

characters.

Establishes intentional

physical and/or eye

contact and

nearness/farness with

other characters.

Angles body

between facing

other characters

and audience.

Communicates ideas

to others; makes

compromises; and

incorporates

input/feedback.

Face Body Level Depth Relationships Open to Audience

COLLABORATION SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Put a check next to each of the ways you collaborated with your group to create your tableau:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I communicated my ideas to the other members of my group.

An example of an idea I contributed to our tableau is:

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I compromised with the other members of my group.

I changed an idea I had to go along with the group by

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I incorporated feedback or input from other members of my group.

I used someone else’s idea or suggestion to adjust something I did by

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ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Arts Foundations Theater Lesson

Creating Tableau

CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Discipline THEATER Total

7

Concept Tableau Collaboration

21st Century Skill

Criteria

Student Name

Holds a statue

using specific

facial

expression and

body shape.

Varies level

and depth in

relation to

other

characters.

Establishes intentional

physical and/or eye

contact and

nearness/farness with

other characters.

Angles body

between facing

other characters

and audience.

Communicates ideas

to others; makes

compromises; and

incorporates

input/feedback.

Face Body Level Depth Relationships Open to Audience

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

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10.

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18.

19.

20.

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: Dave Quicksall Date:

ARTS IMPACT ARTS FOUNDATIONS – Theater: Classroom Assessment Worksheet

ARTS IMPACT FAMILY LETTER

THEATER LESSON: Creating Tableau

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an Arts lesson. We talked about how to collaborate with other actors

to create a frozen stage picture called a tableau.

We used the “Elements of Tableau Checklist” to make sure our tableaux had:

• Statues with specific facial expressions and body shapes to show characters and actions.

• A variety of levels and depth.

• Physical proximity (far/near) and/or contact to show relationships.

• All actors cheating out (staying open to the audience).

We used the 21st Century Skill of Collaboration as we collaborated with a group to develop our tableaux

by sharing our ideas, compromising with one another, and incorporating each other’s’ feedback.

At home, you could collaborate with your child to create a tableau of a favorite story or family event.

Don’t forget to use the checklist above!

Enduring Understanding

A variety of levels, proximity, facial expressions, and body shapes

can show character relationships in a frozen moment.