

## **ARTS IMPACT—ARTS-INFUSED INSTITUTE LESSON PLAN (YR2-AEMDD)**

LESSON TITLE: Building Original Narratives

Theater and Writing Lesson

**Artist-Mentor** - Dave Quicksall

Grade Levels: Fourth Grade

Examples:



### **Enduring Understanding**

Parts of a story build cumulatively from the beginning through a sequence of actions to the climax and resolution.

**Target:** Knows and identifies the parts of a story.

**Criteria:** Records the introduction, rising action and climax, and falling action and conclusion of an original story on the Narrative Volcano Worksheet.

**Target:** Understands and demonstrates the cumulative actions that move the story through its different parts.

**Criteria:** Creates a series of short scenes that incorporate sequential key events from the recorded information and build action.

**Target:** Applies understanding of the story's structure to a presentation/performance.

**Criteria:** Shows rising and falling action through presentation/performance.

**Target:** Uses information on the Narrative Volcano Worksheet and feedback from performance to refine/revise/edit the story.

**Criteria:** Writes a final draft of the story with transitions between the sequential key events.

### **Teaching and Learning Strategies**

#### **Introduction to Arts-Infused Concepts through Classroom Activities:**

**Arts-Infused Concepts:** Character Objective; Action: Rising/Falling; Climax; Introduction; Conclusion

#### **Day One: Class Introduction to the Narrative Volcano.**

**Warm-up: The I'm Trapped exercises. Introduces the concept of "character objective."**

Defines character objective (what a character wants) and action (what a character does to get what he/she wants). Leads students in the I'm Trapped exercise. *Prompts: When actors are preparing for a play, they identify their character's objectives and actions. A character's objective is something the character wants. A character's action is something they do to fulfill that objective. When I say "go," I want you to walk around the space in neutral. Remember that actor "neutral" means that you are simply being yourself as you walk about. I will say "freeze." I will name a place or situation in which you are trapped. Your objective is to do everything you must to get out of the trapped situation you*

are in. You must act alone and in your own personal space. As you struggle to free yourself, try to remember the actions you use to get what you want—freedom! Different “trapped” situations can be: caught in a bear-trap, stuck in an elevator, a box and/or bag, tied up with rope, tied to a tree, trapped in a hole in the ground, etc. *Prompts: Name some actions that you found yourself doing as you tried to escape from your situation.* Lead quick reflections on different actions chosen.

**1. Introduces the “Narrative Volcano” Worksheet to the class.** Hands out a copy of the worksheet to each student. Uses document camera/overhead to present worksheet and model filling out the boxes along with the students *Prompts: This is a lesson that is a theater lesson and a writing lesson at the same time. If you look on this worksheet, you will notice that the structure of a story could be thought of as a VOLCANO. The action of a story is like the molten lava in a volcano: it keeps rising until it explodes at the top. Once the explosion happens, the lava pours out and flows down the other side. The two sides of the volcano are called the RISING ACTION and the FALLING ACTION. We will be using this worksheet to develop our own story based on the following prompt:* (presents prompt to the class).

Student: Follows the introduction to the worksheet.

**2. Guides the students in brainstorming/recording information for the INTRODUCTION box.** *Prompts: Think of the beginning of the story as an introduction to the characters. Who are they and what do they want—what are their objectives? Let’s brainstorm some ideas for some main characters that would be appropriate for the prompt that we have. Also, what is our setting? Where does this story take place?*

Student: Brainstorms with the class to determine main characters, objectives and setting. Records this information on the worksheet.

**3. Guides the students in brainstorming/recording information for the two PROBLEM boxes.** *Prompts: As the story heads up the slope of the volcano there are spots where the action grows in strength or intensity. These are the problems or situations that arise for the characters. The problem could be between characters, i.e. their different objectives colliding. It could be something presented to a character that he/she must overcome. The rising action keeps moving up the side of the volcano from problem #1 to problem #2. In our story, what might the first problem be? What is the second problem? Could there be more than two problems in a story? Of course, but right now we are focusing on just two.*

Student: Brainstorms with the class to identify two problems in the rising action in sequence. Records the information on the worksheet.

**4. Guides the students in brainstorming/recording information for the CLIMAX box.** *Prompts: Now, we are at the top of the volcano and the explosion that is caused by the rising action. We call this explosion the climax of the story. It is usually the biggest moment in the story where everything turns around or changes, for better or worse. What big explosion might our story have? What happens in the story that makes everything unravel or change?*

Student: Brainstorms with the class to identify the climax and records it on the worksheet.

**5. Guides the students in brainstorming/recording information for the RESOLUTION box.** *Prompts: Now we are heading down the falling action side of our volcano to the resolution and conclusion. Another word used for resolution is the French word denouement, which means “to untie.” If we think of the climax as the story getting all tied up, how does the action begin to untie? Is it a quick resolution or a long, drawn out one? What do the characters do? What do they want? Have they changed since the beginning? What are the actions that start to bring our story to its conclusion?*

Student: Brainstorms with the class and records the story’s resolution on the worksheet.

**6. Guides the students in brainstorming/recording information for the CONCLUSION box.**

*Prompts: Now we are at the end of our story, the conclusion. How does the story end? Are all the problems worked out? Is it a happy ending? A sad ending? Are there any lessons learned? The conclusion is a great place for the writer to share any final thoughts or feeling with his/her reader.*

Student: Brainstorms with the class and records the story's conclusion on the worksheet.

**7. Leads student groups in creating 10- to 15-second scenes that communicate a section**

of their worksheet. Divides the class into six groups. Each group is assigned one of the six boxes on the volcano worksheet to dramatize. The students should use words and/or dialogue as they create the scenes. The teacher floats through the room and touches base with each group as they rehearse and refine their choices. Each member of the group should perform in some capacity. *Prompts: Each group has to create a small 10- to 15-second scene that incorporates all the key information of their section. Remember to always think about the actions of the characters as they go after what they want.*

Student: Using the information on the worksheet creates a scene with his/her group. Rehearses and refines the scene in preparation for sharing it with the class.

**8. Guides the students in presenting their scenes** to the class. *Prompt: Now each group will show us their part of our story volcano.*

Student: Performs scenes with the group.

### **Day Two: Individual Application of the Narrative Volcano.**

**1. Divides class into groups** (no more than 4 groups recommended). The entire class is provided with a new writing prompt, and each individual is given a Narrative Volcano graphic organizer.

*Prompts: Now, in small groups, you are going to use the volcano structure to create, act and write a story of your own. Remember that the action of a story is like the molten lava in a volcano: it keeps rising until it explodes at the top. Once the explosion happens, the lava pours out and flows down the other side. The two sides of the volcano are called the RISING ACTION and the FALLING ACTION. Another way to think about the sides of the volcano is this: the rising action side represents the PROBLEMS the character(s) have; the falling action side represents the OUTCOME to the problems.*

Student: Gets into his/her group and receives the writing prompt and worksheet.

**2. Guides the student groups in recording the information needed on the worksheet.** Floats through the room, assisting as needed, as the groups brainstorm and record ideas for their version of the story. *Prompts: As you create your story, make sure that you have a setting. What are the objectives of your characters? Be sure to have two problems before you reach the climax of the story. How does the action "untie" in the resolution? What lessons might be learned in the conclusion?*

Student: Brainstorms/records with the group all the boxes on the volcano worksheet.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based teacher checklist

**3. Leads the students in creating 10- to 15-second scenes that communicate each section**

of their worksheet and builds cumulatively through points of conflict to climax and resolution. There should be an introduction in which the characters and their objectives are presented, followed by two short scenes demonstrating the problems, followed by the climax, the resolution and ending with the conclusion. Guides students to use words and/or dialogue as they create the scenes. Floats through the room and touches base with each group as they rehearse and refine their choices. Each member of the group should perform in some capacity. *Prompts: Each group has to create a small 10- to 15-second scene that incorporates all the key information. There should be an introduction scene, two problem scenes that build to a climax scene, a resolution scene and a conclusion scene. Remember to always think about the actions of the characters. We need to see the story action BUILD from point to point,*

so make that clear to us. Also, each person in the group needs to have something to do in the presentation—but no narrators.

Student: Using the information on the worksheet creates the scenes with the group. Rehearses and refines the scenes as they work on them showing how the story builds, guided by the teacher.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based checklist

**4. Guides the students in presenting their scenes to the class.** *Prompt: Now each group will show us their version of the story.*

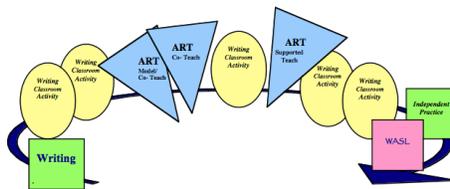
Student: Performs scenes with the group.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based checklist; peer reflection

**5. Instructs the students to write a story based on their Volcano Narrative worksheet AND the performance they created from it.** *Prompts: Now, each of you are going to write a story based upon the scenes you just presented. You should use your "volcano" worksheet to structure the beginning, middle and end of your story. Also, think back to your performance. What were some key actions your characters acted out? What dialogue can you use in your written story? Be sure to include setting and character objective in your writing.*

Student: Writes a story based on the work previously written and acted.

Embedded Assessment: Criteria-based checklist using written story



### **Before next THEATER lesson:**

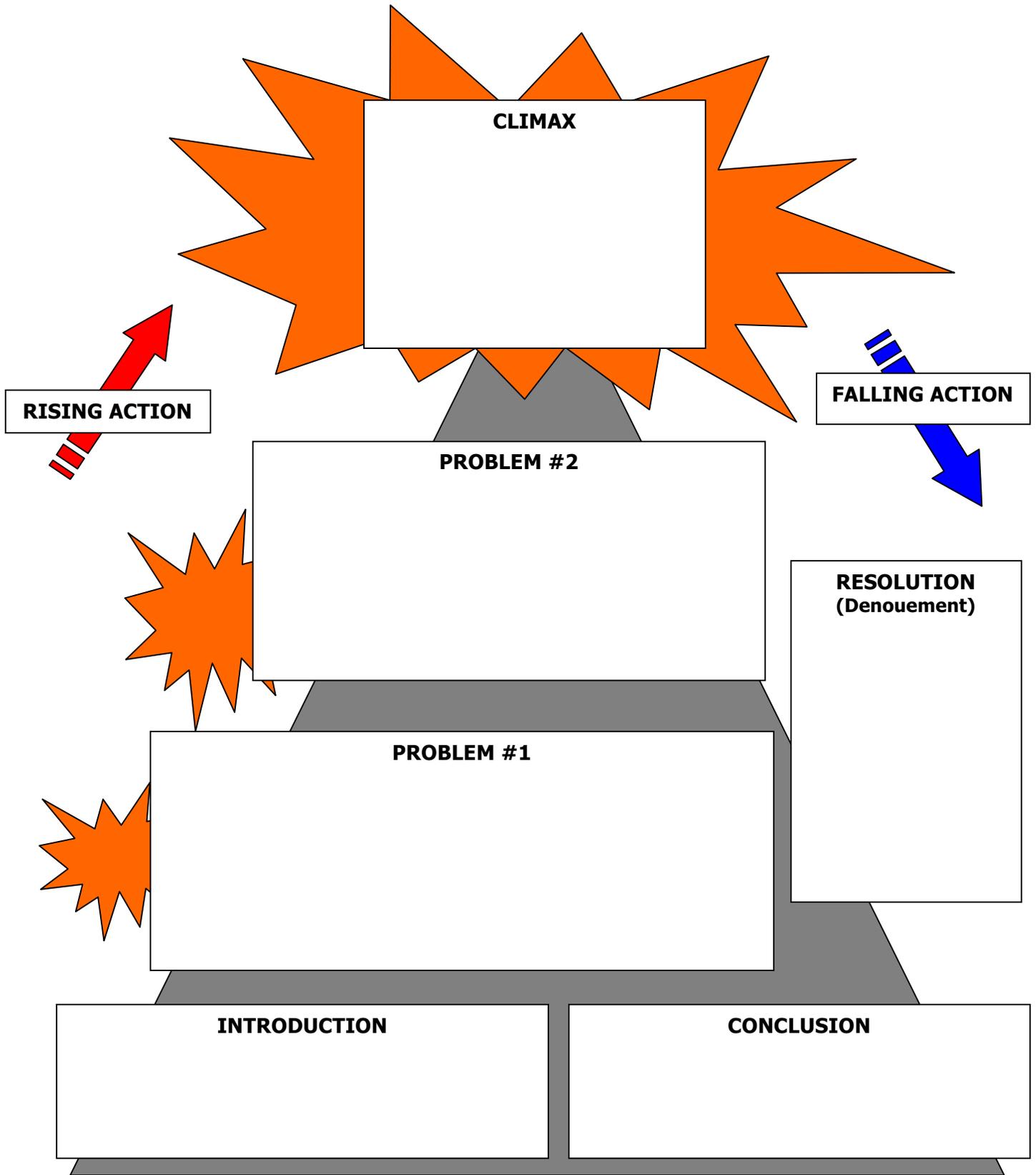


1. Guides students as they complete their stories. Prompt students to think back to their 10-15 second scenes. You may want to support them by reminding them that each part of the story relates to a section of the Volcano Narrative worksheet. Prompt them to include key actions, dialogue, a clear setting and the character's objectives—tying it all up with a strong conclusion.

Vocabulary	Materials and Community Resource	WA Essential Learnings & Frameworks
<p><u>Arts:</u> objective</p> <p><u>Arts Infused:</u> character climax denouement falling action point of conflict resolution rising action setting sequence</p>	<p><b>Performance:</b> Broadway Center for the Performing Arts, Tacoma, WA: <i>Mad Science: CSI Investigation, Show Way on Tour, Spirit Horse, Blues Journey, The Phantom Tollbooth, Red Riding Hood and Other Stories</i></p> <p><b>Performance Materials:</b> Volcano worksheet</p>	<p><i>AEL 1.1 concepts:</i> character, parts of a story, plot, resolution, conflict  <i>AEL 1.2 principles of organization:</i> sequence of actions  <i>AEL 1.2 skills and techniques:</i> movement, feelings of characters  <i>AEL 2.2 artistic process:</i> working to solve a dramatic problem conceptualization</p> <p><i>WEL 1.1.1 Applies more than one strategy for generating ideas and planning writing:</i> generates ideas prior to organizing them and adjusts prewriting strategies accordingly (e.g., brainstorms a list, selects relevant ideas/details to include in piece of writing, uses a story board)  <i>WEL 3.1.1 Analyzes ideas and elaborates using specific details:</i> selects details to extend ideas and develop elaboration (e.g., specific words and phrases, reasons, descriptions), develops character, setting, and events within plot when writing a narrative, varies method of developing character (e.g., dialogue) and setting (e.g., through the eyes of a character) in narratives  <i>WEL 3.1.2 Organizes writing using a logical organizational structure:</i> writes in a logically organized progression of unified paragraphs, constructs a recognizable introduction and conclusion, structures plot in narratives using problem-solution-outcome  <i>WEL 3.2.2 Uses language appropriate for a specific audience and purpose:</i> uses precise language (e.g., powerful verbs, specific descriptors), selects words for effect</p> <p><b>Writing State Frameworks</b>  <i>Grade 4:</i> develops characters, setting, and events with a plot when writing a narrative</p>

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### THE NARRATIVE VOLCANO



# **ARTS IMPACT—ARTS-INFUSED INSTITUTE LESSON PLAN (YR2-AEMDD)**

## **LESSON TITLE: BUILDING ORIGINAL NARRATIVES**

### **ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

Disciplines	WRITING			THEATER			THEATER PERFORM	WRITING WRITE	Total
Concept	PARTS OF A STORY: Identifying/Recording (VOLCANO WORKSHEET)			PARTS OF A STORY: Creating Sequential Key Events (REHEARSAL/REFINEMENT)					8
Student	Introduction	Rising action, climax	Falling action, conclusion	Introduction	Rising action, climax	Falling action, conclusion	Shows rising and falling action through presentation/performance	Writes a final draft of the story with transitions between the sequential key events	
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26.									
27.									
28.									
Total									
Percentage									

**Criteria-based Reflection Questions:** (Note examples of student reflections.)

**Self-Reflection:** *How did your story untie? Was it a quick resolution or a long, drawn out one?*

**Peer to Peer:** *How did one of your classmates' story untie? Was it a quick resolution or a long, drawn out one?*

**Thoughts about Learning:**

*Which prompts best communicated concepts? Which lesson dynamics helped or hindered learning?*

**Lesson Logistics:**

*Which classroom management techniques supported learning?*

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ARTS IMPACT—ARTS-INFUSED LEARNING FAMILY LETTER**

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### **THEATER AND WRITING LESSON – Building Original Narratives**

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Dear Family:

Today your child participated in a **theater and writing** lesson. We talked about how a dramatic story is like a volcano.

- We used the “Story Volcano” worksheet to create a story with **rising and falling action**, along with several **points of conflict** for the **main character** to confront.
- We acted out our stories before we wrote them.
- We learned that the action in a story is like the molten lava in a volcano: it bubbles up, erupts and flows back down the other side.

You could create your own “volcanic” stories and act them out.

#### **Enduring Understanding**

Parts of a story  
build cumulatively from the beginning through a sequence of actions to the climax and resolution.