

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

Theater and Writing Infused Lesson

Lesson One: *Persuasive Physical Actions & Objectives*

Author: Rachel Atkins

Grade Level: Sixth

Enduring Understanding

Characters, actors, and writers can use a variety of actions to achieve an objective or support an argument.

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

In this theater and writing lesson, students explore character objectives as they relate to a written argument. They use facial expression and physical gestures to make statues of different actions characters might take to get what they want. They work with a partner to create tableaux (frozen stage pictures) to show a specific action and response. They write an argument in which they identify a specific action and then support that claim with evidence from the statues and tableaux.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target: Demonstrates character objective and tactics through statues and tableaux.

Criteria: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions.

Target: Thinks creatively.

Criteria: Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

Target: Writes an argument supported by evidence.

Criteria: Identifies an action and explains it through description of specific physical choices.

Vocabulary

Arts Infused:

Action
Character
Creative Thinking
Emotion
Objective
Relationship
Tactic

Writing:

Argument
Claim
Evidence
Reason

Arts:

Actor Neutral
Contact
Facial Expression
Gesture
Levels
Statue
Tableau

Materials

Museum Artworks or Performance

Seattle, WA

Seattle Children's Theatre

Tacoma, WA

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

Materials

Arts Impact journals; Class
Assessment Worksheet

Learning Standards

WA Arts State Grade Level Expectations

For the full description of each WA State Arts Grade Level Expectation, see:

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

- 1.1.1 Concepts: character
- 1.2.1 Skills and Techniques: movement/stance, gesture, facial expression
- 1.4.1 Audience Skills
- 2.1.1 Creative Process
- 2.2.1 Performance Process
- 2.3.1 Responding Process
- 3.1.1 Communicates through the Arts
- 4.2.1 Connects Theater and Writing


Common Core State Standards in ELA

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

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

- CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- WHST.6-8.1 Write arguments focused on *discipline-specific* content.
- SL.6.1.C Pose and respond to specific questions with elaboration and detail by making comments that contribute to the topic, text, or issue under discussion.

ICON KEY:

 = Indicates note or reminder for teacher


 = Embedded assessment points in the lesson

Lesson Steps Outline


1. Define the terms *objective* and *tactic/action*.

2. Guide students to brainstorm a list of actions/tactics. Introduce the 21st century skill of creative thinking.

3. Guide students to create statues of different actions/tactics by calling out words from the brainstorm list.


 Criteria-based process assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

4. Guide students to create statues of responses to different actions/tactics.


 Criteria-based process assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

5. Introduce and model tableau.

6. Guide students to create a pair of tableaux of actions and responses with a partner.

 Criteria-based process assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

7. Guide pairs to show their tableaux to the rest of the class. Ask audience to explain what they see by giving evidence.

 Criteria-based teacher checklist and peer assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

8. Instruct students to write a persuasive argument that explains how they were able to identify a specific action in a tableau.

Criteria-based teacher checklist: Identifies an action and explains it through description of specific physical choices.

LESSON STEPS

1. Define the terms *objective* and *tactic/action*.

- *An objective is something a character wants.*
 - *A tactic/action is what the character does to get what they want.*
 - *A character often has to try multiple tactics or actions to achieve their objective.*
 - *In theater, there are many different kinds of character objectives. Because we're using theater to help prepare us to write arguments, we'll narrow our focus on the kinds of objectives that are most similar to an argument.*
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2. Guide students to brainstorm a list of actions/tactics. Introduce the 21st century skill of creative thinking.

▣ Students write lists in their Arts Impact journals and share ideas. Write list of actions/tactics on board.

- *One objective that's similar to an argument in persuasive writing is to get someone else to do something. For example, my objective right now might be: I want you to give me your full attention. If that's what I want, what might I do? I might beg for your attention. What else? Yes—ask, demand, threaten. These are actions or tactics.*
 - *Another kind of objective that's similar to an argument is to change someone's point of view or get them to accept an idea. For example, I want you to believe that the earth is flat, or to agree that school should be year-round. Would some of those same tactics work? What else might I do? Yes—convince, prove. Would those tactics also have worked when I was trying to get your attention?*
 - *Most of the time, when we have an objective, we have to try more than one action or tactic to get what we want—just like when we write an argument, we have to give more than one reason to support our idea. It helps to have many different actions to try, and even different ways to try the same action, just like it will help to have many different reasons to support our written arguments.*
 - *Write in your journal some other actions/tactics you might use when you want someone to do, believe, or accept something and then we'll share them.*
 - *Brainstorming these ideas is part of the 21st Century Skill of thinking creatively: gathering ideas; trying out multiple solutions; and making artistic choices.*
 - *As we continue this lesson, notice when you are using one of these three habits of mind, as well as any other ways that you think creatively.*
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3. Guide students to create statues of different actions/tactics by calling out words from the brainstorm list.

▣ Repeat for a variety of words.

- *Now we'll use our faces and bodies to show what some of these actions look like, and practice trying things in multiple ways in theater. This is also thinking creatively.*
- *Stand the way I am: feet underneath you, arms at your sides, face and shoulders relaxed, not leaning against anyone or anything. You should be in control of your own body—it's one of your tools as an actor. This position is actor neutral.*
- *I'll call out an action on our list, and then give you a 1-2-3-Freeze. Create a statue of how you think a character would look doing that action. Use your whole face and body.*
- *Show me a statue of "beg." 1-2-3-Freeze! Use your creative thinking to show me a different statue of "beg." What's another way you might show begging with your face and body? 1-2-3-Freeze! Actor neutral.*
- *Show me a statue of "bargain." 1-2-3-Freeze! Now think creatively and show me a different statue of "bargain." 1-2-3-Freeze! Now show me another different statue of "bargain." Actor neutral.*

Criteria-based process assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

4. Guide students to create statues of responses to different actions/tactics.

▣ Repeat for a variety of words.

- *In theatre, and in real life, there would be someone else responding to these actions. Our objective is in relationship to someone else—getting that person to do, believe, or accept something. Let's think creatively about what some of those responses might look like. I'll call out an action and a 1-2-3-freeze. Then I'll give you another 1-2-3-freeze to change your statue into a response to that action.*
- *Show me "demand." 1-2-3-Freeze. Now think creatively about what the other person would do in response. Let's try a negative response first: what does it look like if you refuse to accept the demand? 1-2-3-Freeze. Now try a positive response: what does it look like if you agree to the demand? 1-2-3-Freeze. Actor neutral.*

Criteria-based process assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

5. Introduce and model tableau.

■ Put students into pairs in their own space, in a large circle around the perimeter of the room. Display or write the Tableau Checklist on the board (see back of lesson).

- *You've been making statues on your own. When you put two or more statues together to create a frozen stage picture, that's called a tableau. Now you'll work with a partner to put some of these actions and responses together.*
 - *A tableau uses a checklist of four basic elements. Let's all do one together, and I'll review the checklist as we go. With your partner, show me a tableau of two people having an argument.*
 - *First, each actor creates an exaggerated statue, using their whole face and body to show who they are, what they're doing and how they're feeling. I'll give you a count to get into position. 1-2-3-Freeze.*
 - *Second, actors in a tableau should be at different levels (low, medium or high) and depths (front or back of the stage). Adjust your tableau so you and your partner are at different levels, and not in a straight line. 1-2-3-Freeze.*
 - *Third, tableaux show connections between characters by making choices about how near or far you are to each other, and through physical contact (touching or almost touching— positive or negative space) or eye contact. Adjust your tableau so you're near and almost touching. 1-2-3-Freeze. Now adjust so you're far from each other. 1-2-3-Freeze.*
 - *Finally, actors in a tableau cheat out so they can be seen. Angle your body so your front can be seen. Check your positions and adjust your tableau. 1-2-3-Freeze.*
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6. Guide students to create a pair of tableaux of actions and responses with a partner.

- *You and your partner will choose a specific action and response. Decide who will be which character. If it helps, you can keep an objective in mind. Work together to create a tableau that clearly shows the action and response.*
- *Use the Tableau Checklist as you work, and rehearse your tableau the way you'll show it to the class. Practice it so that your audience is in the center of the circle.*
- *You've all created one tableau. Now think creatively to create a different tableau of the same action and response. You can play the same characters, or you can switch, but you must use the same action and response. What's a different way to show it?*

Criteria-based process assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

7. Guide pairs to show their tableaux to the rest of the class. Ask audience to explain what they see by giving evidence.

- *You now have two tableaux. Let's do a final rehearsal, an all-play. Everyone will make their tableaux at the same time. First tableau, 1-2-3-Freeze! Second tableau, 1-2-3-Freeze! Actors relax.*
- *Now we'll go around the circle. Each pair will tell us their action and response, and then show their tableaux one at a time. I'll prompt you the same way.*
- *Audience, notice what the actors are doing with their faces, bodies or relationships that helps you understand. After each pair shows, I'll take one or two pieces of feedback. Give evidence about how you know what you see. For example, "I could tell that the action was "explain" because she was making eye contact and had her hands out like she was showing something."*
- *After this lesson, you'll write about one statue, identifying the action and giving evidence about the actor's facial expression and physical gesture, so use your journal to take notes.*

Criteria-based teacher checklist and peer assessment: Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions. Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.

POST LESSON WRITING

8. Instruct students to write a persuasive argument that explains how they were able to identify a specific action in a tableau.

- *A persuasive argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that your position or belief is valid.*
- *You can choose an action you saw in someone else's tableau, or you can use your own.*
- *The claim you are trying to argue will be the identification of the action.*
- *Your evidence will be a description of the facial expression and body gesture the actor used to show the action.*
- *Remember, an argument always needs multiple pieces of evidence. Use the following sentence starter to give at least two reasons for your claim:*

The action was _____
because (describe the facial expression) _____
and because (describe the body gesture) _____.

Criteria-based teacher checklist: Identifies an action and explains it through description of specific physical choices.

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Theater and Writing Infusion

Sixth Grade Lesson One: *Persuasive Physical Actions and Objectives*

STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Disciplines	Theater	Theater/Writing/ 21 st C. skills	Writing	Total 3
Concept	Statue/Tableau	Creative Thinking	Argument	
Criteria	Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions.	Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.	Identifies an action and explains it through description of specific physical choices.	
Student Name				

ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Theater and Writing Infusion

Sixth Grade Lesson One: *Persuasive Physical Actions and Objectives*

CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Disciplines	THEATER	THEATER/WRITING/ 21ST C. SKILLS	WRITING	Total 3
Concept	Statue/Tableau	Creative Thinking	Argument	
Criteria	Shows facial expression and physical gestures to match character actions.	Gathers ideas; tries multiple solutions; and makes artistic choices.	Identifies an action and explains it through description of specific physical choices.	
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Percentage				

What was effective in the lesson? Why?

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

What were the strongest connections between theatre and writing?

Teacher: _____ Date: _____

THEATER AND WRITING LESSON – *Persuasive Physical Actions and Objectives*

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an **Arts and Writing** lesson. We talked about how some character objectives in theatre (what a character wants) are connected to written arguments.

- We discovered that certain kinds of objectives (getting someone else to do, believe, or accept something) are similar to an argument (stating a position or belief).
- We figured out that characters use multiple actions to get their objective, and writers use multiple reasons to support their argument.
- We used creative thinking to develop multiple versions of statues and tableaux to show character actions and responses.
- We wrote an argument about a statue we made or saw, and supported it with evidence.

At home, you could notice and discuss what you do (actions) to get what you want (objective): for example, when you want your child to clean his/her room, or when they want you to take them somewhere. You could both practice creative thinking by giving multiple reasons for what you want: why the room should be clean, or why you should go.

Enduring Understanding

Characters, actors, and writers can use a variety of actions to achieve an objective or support an argument.

Elements of Tableau Checklist

- 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
 - Physical contact using positive or negative space (touching or not touching)
 - Proximity or distance

- Open to the audience (cheat out)
 - Audience awareness