

## ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

### Theater and Writing Infused Lesson

#### Lesson Three: *Using Actions to Communicate Characters*

Author: Dave Quicksall      Grade Level: Third

#### Enduring Understanding

Characters and emotions can be communicated through the physical expression of specific actions.

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

*Students explore how actions are used to communicate characters and their feelings. They pantomime verbs and emotions. Working with partners, the students create and perform short scenes that successfully convey specific characters and feelings.*

### Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

**Target:** Identifies the physical attributes of a specific action.

**Criteria:** Uses movement, posture, and gesture to convey the meaning of a verb.

**Target:** Identifies the physical attributes of a specific emotion.

**Criteria:** Uses movement, posture, and gesture to express a feeling.

**Target:** Identifies actions specific to a character.

**Criteria:** Uses movement and gestures to show activities/feelings that are associated with a specific person.

**Target:** Describes the actions seen in a scene.

**Criteria:** Uses specific words to tell whom the characters are, what they are doing, and how they are feeling.

#### Vocabulary

##### Arts Infused:

Action  
Attribute  
Character  
Emotion

##### Writing:

Descriptive words

##### Arts:

Gesture  
Pantomime  
Posture

#### Materials

##### **Museum Artworks or Performance**

##### **Seattle, WA**

Book-It Repertory Theater  
Seattle Children's Theatre

##### **Tacoma, WA**

Broadway Center for the Performing Arts

##### **Materials**

Whiteboard or chart paper & markers;  
Arts Impact journal; Lesson worksheet;  
Pencil; White cardstock: 8.5x11", copy  
character cards from lesson, cut into  
individual cards

##### **Tools**

Body, voice, imagination

#### 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>

- 1.2.1 skills and techniques: *facial expressions, gestures, movements*
- 1.2.3 skills and techniques: *creates a character*
- 1.2.4 skills and techniques: *creates relationships between characters*
- 1.2.6 skills and techniques: *creates a scene*
- 1.4.1 Audience skills
- 2.1.1 Creative Process
- 2.2.1 Performance Process
- 2.3.1 Responding Process
- 3.1.1 Expresses feelings and presents ideas

##### **Early Learning Guidelines (Pre-K – Grade 3)**

(Age 4-5) 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around: Using the large muscles (gross motor skills).  
(Age 4-5) 5. Communicating: Speaking and listening: use words to describe actions and emotions.

*continued*

(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 in ELA  
(Language)**

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

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

W.3.8. Recall information from experience.

L.3.1. Conventions of grammar: verbs, adjectives, adverbs.

L.3.2. Conventions of spelling

L.3.3. Conventions when writing: choose words and phrases for effect.

### ICON KEY:

 = Notes specific *Writers Workshop* Curriculum strategies addressed

 = Indicates note or reminder for teacher

 = Embedded assessment points in the lesson

### COLOR CODING for ARTS AND LITERACY INFUSED PROCESSES:

GENERATE IDEAS	CONSTRUCT MEANING	SELF-REFLECT
<p>Gather Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• From WHAT you know</li><li>• From WHO you know</li><li>• Brainstorm</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create drafts</li><li>• Organize ideas</li><li>• Make a choice</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Check in with self</li><li>• Check in with others</li><li>• Refine work</li></ul>

### Pre-Teach

This is the third writing infused lesson in a series of three. The first two infused lessons, **The Super Expressive Body – Actions and Setting** and **Tongue Twisting Diction**, should be taught before this lesson.

LESSON PREP: Prepare a short list of vivid verbs for the students to pantomime for the warm up. Prepare Character Cards for distribution to the students.

### Lesson Steps Outline

**1. WARM UP.** Lead the students as they act out selected verbs.

Criteria-based checklist; room scan; reverse checklist: Uses movement, posture, and gesture to convey the meaning of a verb.

**2.** Lead the students as they act out selected emotions.

Criteria-based checklist; room scan; reverse checklist: Uses movement, posture, and gesture to express a feeling.

**3.** Lead **group reflection** on the use of actions to communicate ideas.

Criteria-based reflection.

**4.** Divide students into pairs; each pair draws a Character Card (from deck at the end of lesson). Allow students a few minutes to **generate ideas** and develop actions needed to portray their character.

**5.** Present organizer (see end of lesson) for the students to copy down into their journals; or distribute copies of the organizer to students.

**6.** Guide students as they present their scenes. Guide students as they write down their reflections.

Criteria-based teacher checklist: Uses movement and gestures to show activities/feelings that are associated with a specific person.

Criteria-based teacher checklist; written reflection: Uses specific words to tell whom the characters are, what they are doing, and how they are feeling.

**7.** Leads a **group reflection** after all the scenes have been presented.

Criteria-based reflection.

## LESSON STEPS

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▣ 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.

▣ Cut out the Character Cards for use by the students.

### **1. WARM UP. Lead the students as they act out selected verbs. Instruct students to walk in neutral. Call out verbs for the students to act out without any vocalizations. Repeat the process for several different verbs.**

▣ When assessing the criteria in this lesson, any students who are not meeting criteria will be very clear to you, so you may want to use a reverse checklist, putting a "0" where students have not met criteria, rather than trying to notate every single one who has met criteria. You can go back later and give those who have met criteria a "1." This information will let you know who needs more practice to guide your future instruction.

- *When I call out "freeze," freeze. I will then call out an action for you to act out—"pantomime" without using any words.*

☑ Criteria-based checklist; room scan; reverse checklist: Uses movement, posture, and gesture to convey the meaning of a verb.

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### **2. Lead the students as they act out selected emotions. Instruct students to walk in neutral. Call out emotions for the students to act out without any vocalizations. Repeat the process for several different emotions (happy, sad, angry, surprised, bored, scared, nervous, etc.).**

📖 mini-lesson, using schema

- *When I call out "freeze," freeze. I will call out an emotion; you pantomime that emotion without words.*

☑ Criteria-based checklist; room scan; reverse checklist: Uses movement, posture and gesture to express a feeling.

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### **3. Lead group reflection on the use of actions to communicate ideas.**

📖 using schema, looking closely – labeling and listing

- *What were some actions that you used to show that you were happy? Sad? Angry? etc.*
  - *How did you know what actions to do in order to communicate the emotions?*
  - *What facial expressions did you see?*
  - *You constructed meaning by basing your pantomime on your own background knowledge. You are able to organize your ideas by using your experience as a person.*
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**4. USING ACTIONS TO COMMUNICATE A CHARACTER. Divide students into pairs; each pair draws a CHARACTER CARD (from deck at the end of lesson). Allow students a few minutes to generate ideas and develop actions needed to portray their character.**

- *We're going to be actors and writers. Actors and writers often think and work the same. We'll be learning ways in which actors and writers generate their ideas, construct meaning and reflect.*
- *First, keep your character a secret from the other groups. With your partner, create a short scene (10 to 15 seconds) that communicates the character on your card. You cannot use words; you must use actions to tell us who your character is.*
- *Also, determine how your characters are feeling and how that can be presented as well.*
- *If one of you is the character on the card, who is the other character in the scene?*
- *Each pair will present their scene to the class and the class will guess who the character is.*
- *As you are working, you will be generating ideas for actions and constructing meaning by making physical choices.*

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**5. Present organizer (see end of lesson) for the students to copy down into their journals; or distribute copies of the organizer to students.**

 using writer's notebook

- *We are going to use this organizer to record our observations of each scene.*
- *As we look at what the actors are doing, we, as the audience, are constructing meaning by interpreting the actions that we see. These actions communicate character and emotions.*

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**6. Guide students as they present their scenes. Guide students as they write down their reflections. Lead a group reflection after all the scenes have been presented. Each group presents its scene; immediately afterwards, the audience members write down the characters, actions, and emotions that they saw.**

 using schema, looking closely – observing, labeling, and listing, independent writing

- *Let's reflect. Write in your organizer using descriptive words to describe what you saw.*
- *Be specific on who, what, and how.*
- *What character (who) did this group have?*
- *What actions did you see that helped you figure it out?*
- *What actions did you see that communicated how the characters felt?*

- Criteria-based teacher checklist: Uses movement and gestures to show activities/feelings that are associated with a specific person.
- Criteria-based teacher checklist; written reflection: Uses specific words to tell whom the characters are, what they are doing, and how they are feeling.

## **7. Guide reflection.**

- *Was it easy or hard to figure out what the actions of your character would be? What made it challenging? What made it easy?*
  - *How did you use collaboration with your scene partner?*
  - *How did you decide on what to present to the class?*
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***Using Actions to Communicate Characters Character Cards***

(feel free to expand)

<b>DENTIST</b>	<b>WEIGHT LIFTER</b>
<b>WAITER/WAITRESS</b>	<b>COP</b>
<b>ROCK STAR</b>	<b>DOCTOR</b>
<b>HAIR DRESSER/ BARBER</b>	<b>BUS DRIVER</b>
<b>PHOTOGRAPHER</b>	<b>COOK</b>
<b>ASTRONAUT</b>	<b>BABY</b>
<b>TEACHER</b>	<b>SCIENTIST</b>
<b>CAR MECHANIC</b>	<b>SALESPERSON</b>



## *Using Action to Create Character Arts Journal Organizer*

<b>CHARACTERS</b>	<b>ACTIONS</b>	<b>EMOTIONS</b>

**ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN Theater and Writing Infusion**

Third Grade Lesson Three: *Using Actions to Communicate Characters*

**STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

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

Disciplines	THEATER				WRITING			Total
Concept	Action	Emotion	Character		Descriptive Language			7
Criteria	Uses movement, posture and gesture to convey the meaning of a verb	Uses movement, posture and gesture to express a feeling	Uses movement/gestures to show activities associated with a specific person	Uses movement/gestures to show feelings associated with a specific person	Uses specific words to tell <u>who</u> characters are	Uses specific words to tell <u>what</u> they are doing	Uses specific words to tell <u>how</u> they are feeling	
Student Name								

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**CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET**

Disciplines	THEATER		THEATER		WRITING			Total 7
Concept	Action	Emotion	Character		Descriptive Language			
Criteria	Uses movement, posture and gesture to convey the meaning of a verb	Uses movement, posture and gesture to express a feeling	Uses movement/ gestures to show activities associated with a specific person	Uses movement/ gestures to show feelings associated with a specific person	Uses specific words to tell <u>who</u> characters are	Uses specific words to tell <u>what</u> they are doing	Uses specific words to tell <u>how</u> they are feeling	
Student Name								
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26.								
27.								
28.								
Total								
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 theater and writing?*

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

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

### ARTS AND WRITING LESSON: *Using Actions to Communicate Characters*

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Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an **Arts and Writing** lesson. We talked about how actions are used to communicate characters and their feelings.

- We acted out, or “pantomimed” verbs.
- We pantomimed emotions like HAPPY, SAD, ANGRY, SCARED, and SURPRISED.
- We created a short scene with a partner and the audience had to guess who our character was and what he or she was feeling based only on the actions we used.

You could pantomime actions for each other and try to guess what they are (like playing Charades.)

### **Enduring Understanding**

Characters and emotions can be communicated through the physical expression of specific actions.