# ARTS IMPACT LESSON PLAN

Theater and Writing Infused Lesson

Lesson One: The Super Expressive Body – Actions and Setting

Author: Dave Quicksall Grade Level: Third

Enduring Understanding

Using exaggerated and dynamic physical expression can convey emotion, character attributes, states of

being, and setting in order to tell stories.

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

Students use their bodies to make statues and move as specific characters. Working with the exercise

“I Wish I Had a Picture,” students will work with group tableaux to communicate a specific setting.

Students reflect by recording the actions they see in the tableaux and write sentences that

communicate the who, what, and where of the presented settings.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target: Understands and demonstrates an active freeze.

Criteria: Holds a frozen position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being.

Target: Makes a specific physical choice to convey character.

Criteria: Uses posture, movement, and facial expression choices to communicate a specific person

or animal.

Target: Makes a specific physical choice to convey setting.

Criteria: Uses posture and gesture to communicate a specific place/time.

Target: Describes the actions seen in tableau.

Criteria: Uses specific words to tell whom the characters are, what they are doing, and where they

are based on what is seen.

Vocabulary

Arts Infused:

Action

Character

Setting

Writing:

Specific words

Arts:

Active freeze

Body

Gesture

Movement

Neutral

Physical choice

Posture

Super Expressive Body

Tableau

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

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

1.1.1 Concepts: Identifies character, feelings,

setting in a performance

1.2.1 Skills and techniques: Creates facial

expressions, gestures, body movement/stance for

a character

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

Early Learning Guidelines (Pre-K – Grade 3)

(Age 4-5) 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and

moving around: Using the large muscles (gross

motor skills).

continued

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(Age 4-5) 5. Communicating: Speaking and

listening: use words to describe actions and

emotions.

(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 (Writing

and Language)

For a full description of CCSS Standards by grade level

see:

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

W.3.4. produce writing appropriate to task and

purpose.

W8: Recall information from experience.

L.3.1. Conventions of grammar: nouns, verbs,

adjectives, adverbs.

L.3.2. Conventions of spelling

L.3.5. Identify real-life connections between

words and use.

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Pre-Teach

This is the first writing infused lesson in a series of three.

LESSON PREP: Create a Drama Word Wall to compile the different action words,

descriptive words, and settings that the students come up with during the course

of brainstorming ideas.

Lesson Steps Outline

1. WARM UP. Review neutral and character through the game of “Statues”.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Holds a frozen

position that represents a character, emotion, or state of being.

2. After several statues, lead group as the students put a couple of statues into

motion.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Uses posture,

movement, and facial expression choices to communicate a specific person or

animal.

3. Divide class in half for I Wish I Had a Picture exercise and class reflection,

giving each group several opportunities to create frozen tableaux of given

locations. The audience reflects on what they see the other group doing and

record their observations in their Arts Impact journal.

Criteria-based teacher checklist; peer reflection; group-reflection: Uses

posture and gesture to communicate a specific place/time.

4. Guide reflection.

Criteria-based self-reflection.

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

Gather Information

• From WHAT you know

• From WHO you know

• Brainstorm

• Create drafts

• Organize ideas

• Make a choice

• Check in with self

• Check in with others

• Refine work

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

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.

For the I Wish I Had a Picture exercise there will need to be room for a “stage” and room for the

audience to sit and observe.

1. WARM UP. Review neutral and character through the game of “Statues”.

• 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.

• We will walk around the room in neutral – remember neutral means movement without any

character added to it.

• I will shout out “Freeze!” Freeze wherever you are.

• I will then call out a character or feeling. Turn your body into a statue of what I call out.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Holds a frozen position that

represents a character, emotion, or state of being.

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2. After several statues, lead group as the students put a couple of statues into motion.

• When you make your statues you are generating ideas in a few secondsYou are able to make

a choice from what you already know, we call this background knowledge – actors rely on this

all the time.

• Now let’s construct meaning with your bodies by putting these statues into motion.

• This time, after you make a statue, I will say, “MOVE!” Then you will move as that character.

No voices, just movement.

Criteria-based teacher checklist—room scan, reverse checklist: Uses posture, movement, and facial

expression choices to communicate a specific person or animal.

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3. Divide class in half for I Wish I Had a Picture exercise and class reflection, giving each

group several opportunities to create frozen tableaux of given locations. Guide students in

brainstorming other settings for tableaux. Lead the audience-half of the class in a group

reflection of what they see.

" Mini lesson: Tableau, using schema, small moments, looking closely – observing, labeling, and listing

• Actors tell entire stories with just their bodies–their actions can tell us who the characters are,

what they are doing and where they are. What word do we use to describe the “where” in a

story? Right, the setting.

• In groups you are going to create what we call a tableau. Tableau is French for “painting.” Your

group will present a frozen picture of a scene.

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• I am going to say. “I wish I had a picture of…” and I will name a location that you have to

communicate through a frozen physical choice.

• Think about what a character may be doing in the place I name and make a statue of that

character. I will say “3,2,1, Click!” By the time I get to “click,” you have to make your statue.

• Generate an idea in a few secondsYou are constructing meaning as an actor when you

brainstorm for ideas and make a choice.

• First, let’s generate ideas for different settings.

Brainstorm with the class and generate a list of different settings – keeping the locations based

in reality (e.g. the beach, a grocery store, a gym, a classroom, etc). Record settings on the word

wall. Lead the groups through a series of tableaux that communicate the different settings. The

audience reflects on what they see the other group doing and record their observations in their Arts

Impact journal.

Copies of the observation organizer for I Wish I Had a Picture can be handed out to the students or

they can be copied it into their journals.

• Get out your Arts Impact journals. Turn to the next empty page. I want you to draw an

organizer that looks like this: (see diagram in this lesson).

• I want you to write down the setting for each tableau.

• When the tableau is set, I want you to write down the characters that you see.

• Next, write down all the different actions that you see the characters doing – use descriptive

words and verbs to explain what you see. Be specific. What do you see the actors doing that

show us where we are? What specific physical choices do you see that communicate an action?

• 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 setting.

• Let’s reflect again. Turn to a friend and share your observations with him/her. Did he/she see

the same thing that you saw?

• Record any observations your neighbor had that are different from yours – don’t erase what

you saw, add to your list!

If time permits, facilitate as groups present a tableau of a secret setting and see if the audience can

identify it.

Criteria-based teacher checklist; peer reflection; group-reflection: Uses specific words to tell whom

the characters are, what they are doing, and where they are based on what is seen.

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4. Guide reflection.

• How were you able to make a character choice based on SETTING alone?

• What is an example of how SETTING effects the actions of a character?

Criteria-based self-reflection.

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EXTENSION: Pick specific moments in a story being read in class and create tableaux of those

moments. What details can be taken from the text of the story? What details need to be inferred?

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The Super Expressive Body – Actions and Setting Worksheet

ORGANIZER FOR “I WISH I HAD A PICTURE”

Name: Date:

SETTING CHARACTER ACTION

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STUDENT SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

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

Disciplines THEATER WRITING

Concept Characterization Posture and Movement

Facial Expression

Descriptive Language

Criteria

Student Name

Holds a frozen

position that

represents a

character, emotion,

or state of being

Uses posture,

movement

and facial

expression

choices to

communicate

a specific

person or

animal

Uses posture

and gesture

to

communicate

a specific

setting

Uses

specific

words to

tell who the

characters

are

Uses

specific

words to

tell what

they are

doing

Uses

specific

words to

tell where

they are

Total

6

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CLASS ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Disciplines THEATER WRITING

Concept Characterization Posture and Movement

Facial Expression

Descriptive Language

Criteria

Student Name

Holds a frozen

position that

represents a

character, emotion,

or state of being

Uses posture,

movement and

facial

expression

choices to

communicate a

specific person

or animal

Uses posture

and gesture to

communicate a

specific setting

Uses specific

words to tell

who the

characters are

Uses specific

words to tell

what they are

doing

Uses specific

words to tell

where they

are

Total

6

1.

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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?

What were the strongest connections between theater and writing?

Teacher: Date:

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ARTS IMPACT FAMILY LETTER

ARTS AND WRITING LESSON: The Super Expressive Body – Actions and Setting

Dear Family:

Today your child participated in an Arts and Writing lesson. We talked about how actors use their

bodies to make characters and show emotions. We learned about how our “Super Expressive Bodies”

can be used to tell stories.

• We made our bodies into “statues” to show a frozen picture of a character or an emotion.

• We moved around the room as different kinds of characters.

• We used “tableaux” to show a frozen picture of a particular place.

• We used specific words to describe WHO we saw, WHAT we saw, and WHERE we saw it.

You could create “tableaux” of scenes from a story or something that happened in your own life.

Enduring Understanding

Using exaggerated and dynamic physical expression can convey emotion,

character attributes, states of being, and setting in order to tell stories.