

AARON F. BRATEMAN

**THE ACTOR'S ROLE IN
CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN THEATER**

FALL SEMESTER CURRICULUM

Context for Learning

Setting: This curriculum is designed for the fall semester of a year-long class at a specialized performing arts public high school in a large urban area. The school serves grades 9-12 and Special Education students. Students audition to get into the program and take several classes a day in their desired concentration in addition to core curricular subjects. The school has 853 students. The student body is diverse--11% Asian, 13% Black, 33% Hispanic or Latinx, 36% White, and almost 6% American Indian. It should be noted, that this school contains a much higher percentage of white students than is represented in the city's school system at large. 1% of the students at the school are English Language Learners, and 19% are students with Special Needs. The student body is about 31% male and 69% female.

The Intended Audience and Background: Students in this class meet for 45 minutes, twice a week. The class has 20 students in it. Though this is not an introductory class, the content represents a more primary level of training within the broader scope of this sort of performing arts program. Therefore, it is best suited as a required class for sophomores who have significant prior theatrical experience. It is expected that students have participated in multiple theatrical productions and have a working knowledge of basic script analysis skills, acting techniques, and theater vocabulary. Students are also expected to have a basic understanding of the theatrical landscape as a whole—familiarity with Broadway, general theater history, and the various different jobs that exist in theater, both onstage and off. In the spring semester, students will explore acting technique, develop a new play with a contemporary playwright, and produce a one-act festival.

The Space: Instruction for this curriculum will take place in a black box theater space. The space has a totally flexible floor plan, theatrical lights, plenty of chairs, acting blocks, tables, and standard rehearsal props. Risers can be set up to create audience stadium seating if desired. Students have access to laptop computers for research and the room has a smartboard that can be stored away as needed. There is a large theatrical library that features numerous plays and a variety of contemporary theatrical texts. The school also has teachers that specialize in other areas of theatrical creation and who provide assistance on student productions in their areas of expertise.

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Unit Title: Longform Improvisation (Unit 1 of 2)

Focus of the Unit: How do we apply improv skills and an understanding of improv’s historical evolution to the successful performance of longform improvisation?

Overarching Unit Objectives	Summative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of the <i>Harold</i>.</p>	<p>Performance Task: <i>Harold</i> Performance Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens “game” of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Tick List with Comments</p>
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess how improv’s historical evolution has shaped its modern performance.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Research Project Presentation Criteria: Provides detailed accounting of research topic, Articulates implications on modern improv performance, Research presented in a clear and engaging way Documentation: Rubric with teacher comments</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess their understanding and implementation of improv skills and <i>Harold</i> structure.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher comments on journal</p>

A. Relevant Learning Standards:

Relevant New York State Standards for the Arts:

TH: Cr.2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

1. Theater artists work to discover different ways of communicating meaning.
 - HSIIa. Refine a dramatic concept to demonstrate a critical understanding of historical and cultural influences applied to a dram or theater work.

TH: Cr.5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentations.

1. Theater artists develop personal processes and skills for a performance or design.
 - HSIIa. Refine a range of acting skills to build a believable and sustainable performance.

Relevant Common Core ELA Learning Standards:

NYS Common Core ELA 9-10th Grade Speaking & Listening Standards

1. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NYS Common Core ELA 9-10th Grade Writing Standards

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

NYC Blueprint Strands:

Students increase their ability as imaginative and analytical actors while continuing to participate as collaborative ensemble members.

Students demonstrate the ability to reflect on and think critically about their work.

Through sequential and sustained activities in various theater forms, students improve upon and gain new performance skills.

Modifications:

Learning Disability— Multi-step instructions will be broken down as needed.

Speech and Language Learning Disability— Written agenda, scaffolding, redirection, prompting, kinesthetic components to the lesson.

English-Language Learners— Pre-teach key words and phrases through examples; use physical demonstrations and visual illustrations.

Previous Knowledge: Students have completed a year of theatrical training. They are experienced performers and have a working knowledge of character analysis and acting technique. They have received physical and vocal training and are expected to commit to strong physical and vocal choices in all acting work, as well as continue to work on listening and responding to their scene partners. Students are familiar with the basic concepts of improvisation and are used to participating in theater games. Students regularly keep a journal to reflect on their learning and complete research projects for their core curricular classes.

Materials: Sketch Comedy Scripts, Improv History Research Project Handouts, Improv History Research Project Rubrics, *Improv Nation* by Sam Wasson, *Improvisation at the Speed of Life* by T.J. Jagodowski and David Pasquesi with Pam Victor, *How to Be the Greatest Improviser on Earth* by Will Hines, *The Upright Citizens Brigade Comedy Improvisation Manual* by Matt Besser, Ian Roberts and Matt Walsh, *Harold* Video, *Harold* Performance Tick Lists

Lesson Title: An American Artform (Lesson 1 of 26)

Focus Question: How did the evolution of improv performance in America during the 20th Century contribute to the creation of the *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess different ways improvisation was used leading up to the creation of the <i>Harold</i> .	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: References key artists, theaters, and uses Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze changing trends in improv performance in America over the course of the mid-20 th century.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Articulates ways in which improv has evolved, Articulates reasons for <i>Harold</i> creation Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the unit and lesson with students. The teacher then facilitates a group discussion as a diagnostic assessment, encouraging students to share what they already know about improv and its history in America. The teacher explains the difference between longform and short form improv and briefly explains the *Harold*. The teacher then explains that students are going to explore some of the ways improv was used before the creation of the *Harold* and encourages students to think about why the *Harold* might have been created in response to these uses.

Main Activity: The teacher introduces Viola Spolin and provides some background information about her work. The teacher then leads students in the Viola Spolin game, “Spacewalk”. Students move around the space, following the prompts from the teacher’s side coaching. After the game is over, the teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experience participating in the game and how they think Viola Spolin might have used improv in her work. The teacher then introduces Paul Sills, David Shepard, and The Compass Players, explaining their connection to Spolin. Afterwards, the teacher introduces Bernie Sahlins, Howard Alk, and The Second City, explaining their connection to The Compass Players. The teacher explains that performers at The Second City would use improv to improve their prewritten sketches. The teacher breaks students into groups and provides them with a short sketch comedy script. Students rehearse the script and use improv to change and improve the script as they see fit. Students perform their altered versions of the sketch for each other. The teacher then facilitates a discussion with students about their experience using improv this way and how it was different from the way Spolin used improv.

Closing: The teacher introduces Del Close and The Committee and based on their experience with improv during the lesson asks students why they think Close created the *Harold*. The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about the reasons the *Harold* was created. The teacher then explains and assigns the Improv History Research Project.

Homework: Students request a topic for their research project from the list of options or by suggesting one of their own choosing and read Chapters 1-7 of *Improv Nation*.

SAMPLE SKETCH COMEDY SCRIPT

Substitute Home School

LIGHTS UP on Dennis, sitting patiently with his books in front of him. Mr. Glipnicky enters the room and throws his back onto the table.

Mr. Glipnicky: Alright everyone, take your seats please. I want to start on time. I know I'm a substitute teacher. I ask that you treat me with the same respect you would treat your regular teacher. My name is Mr. Glipnicky, you can call me Mr. G. Yes, question?

Dennis: This isn't a question, but...I'm homeschooled.

Mr. Glipnicky: Yeah?

Dennis: Where's my mom?

Mr. Glipnicky: Yeah, as a substitute they don't tell me everything. I just have the lesson plan for the day. So, first things first. Roll call. Ummm, Dennis McMillan?

Dennis: P—present.

Mr. Glipnicky: (*searching*) Dennis, got it. Ok, I'm gonna try to remember that. I'm not good with names. You have a nickname you'd rather go by?

Dennis: Where is my mom?

Mr. Glipnicky: Ok, again I know it can be a little disruptive to the class having a substitute teacher. I just ask you treat me with the same respect you do Mrs. McMillan.

Dennis: I usually just call her mom. So, do you want that?

Mr. Glipnicky: Ok, so there's a note here. It says you guys are on chapter 6. Osmosis? Is that what Mrs. McMillan assigned you all?

Dennis: Yeah, we read it together last night.

Mr. Glipnicky: Ok, great.

Dennis: She was here last night.

Mr. Glipnicky: Ok, so who can tell me about osmosis?

Dennis: Umm, I can?

Mr. Glipnicky: Raise your hand please.

Dennis raises his hand.

Mr. Glipnicky: Yeah, David?

Dennis: It's Dennis.

Mr. Glipnicky: Dennis, sorry.

Dennis: Osmosis is the movement of solvent molecules through a semi-permeable membrane. Also, what happened to my mom?

Mr. Glipnicky: Right, but *remember*: it's only into a region of higher solute concentration. Which is very important.

Dennis: I don't mean to be insubordinate, but I'm having a hard time focusing on biology right now.

Mr. Glipnicky: Ok, look, I know it's confusing. I'm a substitute. But there's only 47 more minutes in this period. So, how about we both just try to get through this together.

Dennis: It's just –

Mr. Glipnicky: And maybe not disrupt the rest of the class.

Dennis: It's just is she sick or something? Do you know if she's in the house?

Mr. Glipnicky: Oh, ok. I get it. Play a joke on the substitute. You and all your little friends gonna have a good laugh?

Dennis: No, it's just usually if mom's sick I don't have class. So I'm wondering who contacted you, or how you got into the house.

Mr. Glipnicky: *(slow clapping)* Ohhh, look at you ringleader. Big class clown. What, you think all the girls in here gonna think you're cute or something cause you're mouthing off to the substitute?

Dennis: There are no girls in here.

Mr. Glipnicky: Well guess what Donald?

Dennis: Come on.

Mr. Glipnicky: I've been a substitute for 15 years, and that ain't gonna work on me. But if this is how you treat Mrs. McMillan, I understand why she left.

Dennis: Did she leave? Is she here?

Mr. Glipnicky: Look, I'm a substitute teacher, ok? I only know what my piece of paper says, and my piece of paper says she's on sabbatical and I'll be covering the class for the next three weeks, at least.

Dennis: Is this just for school stuff or – where is my mom?!

Mr. Glipnicky: Look, Dylan, all I know is that Mrs. McMillan has had some stuff going on at home.

Dennis: Here?

Mr. Glipnicky: Apparently, her marriage is falling apart.

Dennis: *(overlapping)* Oh my god.

Mr. Glipnicky: And I'm just here to help in any way that I can.

Dennis: Are my parents getting divorced?

Mr. Glipnicky: People grow apart, Drew! And what started as just a shoulder to cry on in the teacher's lounge has blossomed into maybe a little something more between me and Mrs. McMillan.

Dennis: What teacher's lounge?

Mr. Glipnicky: Look, I know I'm not your teacher. I'm not trying to be your teacher. I'm just asking that you treat me with the same respect that you treat your father.

Dennis: What does this mean?

Mr. Glipnicky: Let me put it this way, Dirk. I saw the semi-permeable membrane that was your parent's marriage. I took the solvent particles of my love and understanding and moved in to your mother's generous solute concentration. Now, what might you call that?

Dennis: Osmosis?

Mr. Glipnicky: Yes! But also, divorce. I'm your new dad.

BLACKOUT

IMPROV HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT HANDOUT

Improv History Research Project

Over the course of our improv unit, you will complete a research project on American improv history—it may be about an organization, a person, a technique, etc. In addition to sharing information about your topic, you should articulate the way that it has shaped modern improv performance. You may present your findings in any way you choose—a written report, a video, a PowerPoint presentation, a song, a visual art piece, a participatory experience, etc. but you will need to share your research with the class. Think about what you might have fun watching. Below is a list of potential research topics, or feel free to propose your own:

The Annoyance	Nichols and May
Charna Halpern and The Improv Olympic	Paul Sills
ComedySportz	The PIT
The Compass Players	Playback Theatre
Del Close and The Committee	The Second City
The Groundlings	SCTV
Improv Everywhere	TJ and Dave
The Magnet	Upright Citizens Brigade (UCB)
Middleditch and Schwartz	Viola Spolin
Neva Boyd	Whose Line Is It Anyway?

Research topic proposals are **DUE BY OUR NEXT CLASS**. Your project presentations will occur in our **15th and 16th lessons**.

Please refer to the attached rubric to help guide you as you structure your presentation.

IMPROV HISTORY RESEARCH PROJECT RUBRIC HANDOUT

Improv History Research Project Rubric

NAME:

DATE:

Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess how improv’s historical evolution has shaped its modern performance.

Criteria	Needs Improvement	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
Provides detailed accounting of research topic	The presentation does not adequately cover the scope of the topic and we are left with holes in our understanding of it.	The presentation is informative, but mainly surface level. Further research could have helped tell a fuller story.	The presentation is extremely thorough, covering the full scope of the topic with a wealth of specific details.
Articulates implications on modern improv performance	The presentation does not illustrate the topic’s influence and ramifications on modern improv performance.	The presentation hints at the topic’s influence and ramifications on modern improv performance, but does not draw a clear line for us.	The presentation clearly articulates the topic’s influence and ramifications on modern improv performance.
Research presented in a clear and engaging way	The presentation is hard to follow or unengaging in a way that inhibits our ability to understand it.	The information is presented in a way that is easy to follow and keeps our interest, but lacks creativity. The presenter could have found a way to share the information that made the topic more engaging.	The presentation is exciting and interesting. It tells a clear story which is presented in a creative way that leaves us wanting to learn more.
Cites Sources	The presenter either does not provide or fabricates sources for their presentation.	The presenter provides a list of sources that demonstrates surface level research.	The presenter provides a list of sources that demonstrates extensive research.

TOTAL:

FEEDBACK:

Lesson Title: Yeah, I’m Listening...Part 1 (Lesson 2 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we work as a team to perform together?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to employ listening skills and an awareness of the group to work collaboratively with their peers.	Performance Tasks: Hide the Body Criteria: Successfully conceals classmate, Works with other group members, Actively participates in group effort Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of collaborative skills employed in improv games.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of collaborative skills on an in improvised performance, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of collaborative skills to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus for the lesson and facilitates the game “Blackout New York”, prompting students with different instructions that they need to follow. Students work collaboratively to follow the prompts.

Main Activity: The teacher transitions to the next game called “One at a Time”. The teacher explains the game and students play, with only one student moving around the space at a time. After students have played for a bit, the teacher transitions to the next game called “Zombie Tag”. The teacher explains the game and students play, working together to keep one student (the zombie) from getting to sit in an empty chair. After students have played for a bit, the teacher transitions to the next game, “Hide the Body”. The teacher explains the game and students work in a group to hide another student from being seen by the audience.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experience playing the games and what led to success in those games. The teacher responds to students and notes evolving understandings. The teacher explains the journal assignment, prompting students to take notes as needed throughout the unit, and answers questions about it.

Lesson Title: Yeah, I’m Listening... Part 2 (Lesson 3 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we work as a team to perform together?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to employ listening skills and an awareness of the group to work collaboratively with their peers.	Performance Tasks: Ad Exec Criteria: Celebrates suggestions, Shares the scene, Actively participates in scene Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of collaborative skills employed in improv games.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of collaborative skills on an in improvised performance, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of collaborative skills to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and explains and facilitates the game “Pass the Face”. Students copy and pass a physical pose and noise to each other. After students have played for a bit, the teacher transitions. They explain and facilitate the game “Modified Zip-Zap-Zop”. Students play “Zip-Zap-Zop”, modifying the sequence by copying the physicality and vocal qualities of their peers. After students have played for a bit, the teacher facilitates a group discussion about the students’ experiences with the games and strategies for success in the game.

Main Activity: The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Ad Exec”. Students participate in the game, working together to create an ad campaign for a fictional product.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion about students’ experiences playing “Ad Exec” and strategies for success in the game. The teacher prompts students to draw conclusions about how they have worked together as a group in the week’s lessons.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings using the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of the work? Did you learn anything new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Why might the focus of this week’s activities be useful in creating an improv scene with a partner? Students also read Chapters 3-6 and 8 from *Improvisation at the Speed of Life*.

Lesson Title: ACTIVATION COMPLETE Part 1 (Lesson 4 of 26)

Focus Question: What does it mean to accept and activate someone else’s idea?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to accept and activate each other’s ideas in an improvised performance.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Tableaux Criteria: Makes choices that contribute to larger picture, Works collaboratively with group, Shares focus with others Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of “Yes, anding” on an improvised performance.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of “Yes, anding” on an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of “Yes, anding” to their performance of an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Pass the Clap”. Students play by passing a clap around a circle. After students have played for a bit, the teacher transitions, explaining and facilitating the game “Thank You Statue”. Students play, working together to form complementary poses.

Main Activity: After students have played for a bit, the teacher transitions. They explain and facilitate the game “Tableaux”. Students work together as a group to create tableaux with their bodies of different suggestions the teacher provides.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences playing the games. The teacher prompts students to articulate moments of success and analyze what made those moments successful.

Lesson Title: ACTIVATION COMPLETE Part 2 (Lesson 5 of 26)

Focus Question: What does it mean to accept and activate someone else’s idea?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to accept and activate each other’s ideas in an improvised performance.	Performance Tasks: Slideshow Criteria: Makes choices that build on known information, Works collaboratively with group, Shares scene with others Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of “Yes, anding” on an improvised performance.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of “Yes, anding” on an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of “Yes, anding” to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and recaps the previous lesson. The teacher then explains and facilitates the game “So I’ll...Pass the Card”. Students play the game in pairs, passing a playing card back and forth as they create a simple improv scene.

Main Activity: After students have played for a bit, the teacher transitions. They explain and facilitate the game “Alibis”. Students work in pairs to create a scene in which they work together to provide a plausible alibi that holds up to teacher or peer interrogation. The teacher then leads a group discussion with students about the game, asking students to articulate their experiences playing the game and outlining ways to play the game successfully. The teacher explains and facilitates the next game, “Slideshow”. Students work in groups to present photos from a fictional vacation, with some students giving the presentation and others creating tableaux of the photos with their bodies.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about the day’s and week’s activities. The teacher highlights responses about building on each other’s ideas and prompts students to articulate how the skills they have been working on will inform their improv scene work.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings using the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of this week’s work? How did it build on last week’s work? What did you need to do to successfully work with your groups this week? Why might that be important to improv? Did you learn anything new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment.

Anything else you want to share? Students read “Be Present”, “Be Changeable”, “Be Brave”, “Be Authentic” in *How to Be the Greatest Improviser on Earth*.

Lesson Title: Honestly, I’m Glad You’re Here Part 1 (Lesson 6 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we bring ourselves to improvised performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to perform a grounded improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes Criteria: Integrates acceptance, activation, and grounding Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of grounding on an improvised performance.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of grounding on an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of grounding to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students. The teacher then facilitates students performing simple conversations in which they must be completely honest. The teacher then facilitates a group discussion about the performances asking students about their experiences performing and watching the conversations, and encouraging them to outline criteria for creating “real” performances.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing simple scenes in which they try to be as honest as possible.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students to evaluate if students met the criteria they outlined for creating “real” performances in the scenes they just watched and performed in.

Homework: Students read Chapters 12 and 13 in *Improvisation at the Speed of Life*.

Lesson Title: Honestly, I'm Glad You're Here Part 2 (Lesson 7 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we bring ourselves to improvised performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to perform a grounded improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes Criteria: Integrates acceptance, activation, and grounding Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of grounding on an improvised performance.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of grounding on an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of grounding to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and recaps the previous lesson.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing scenes in groups based on various scenarios. Students play the scenarios as realistically as possible. After students perform each scenario, the teacher facilitates a brief group discussion, highlighting moments students believe met the criteria for “real” performances they outlined in the previous lesson. The teacher then explains the concept of heat (the intensity of a relationship) and weight (the heaviness of the moment before). The teacher facilitates students practicing sensing these ideas at the beginning of a scene with a partner. After a bit of practice, the teacher facilitates students performing practice scenes in which they try to balance the ideas of acceptance, activation, and grounding.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a discussion about students’ practice scenes, encouraging students to articulate ways in which “playing it real” affected their performances.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings using the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week’s work? What was your experience being honest in your scenes or watching others be honest? Did that affect the way you connected to the scenes? Why might that be important to improv? Describe the concept of heat/weight. How do we utilize this in improv? Did you learn anything new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share? Students read Chapters 1-2 in *The Upright Citizens Brigade Comedy Improvisation Manual*.

Lesson Title: Rules Help Us Play Part 1 (Lesson 8 of 26)

Focus Question: How does structure provide freedom in an improvised performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to dramatize the “What” and the “Why” of a base reality in an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes Criteria: Demonstrates acceptance, activation, grounding, incorporates strong “What” and “Why” Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to describe the purpose and components of a base reality in an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Accurately describes purpose and components of base reality Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of base reality to their performance of an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and explains the concept of “base reality”, highlighting that students will focus on the who, what, where, and why of a scene.

Main Activity: The teacher explains that the first activity will focus on the “What”. The teacher facilitates the game “7 Things”. Students play the game, providing categories for each other and listing 7 things that fit into those categories. After the game, the teacher asks students to articulate how knowing what their characters are doing in a scene might help them to perform it. The teacher explains that the next game will focus on the “Why”. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Secret Mission”. Students play the game in pairs, each student trying to get their partner to complete a secret goal. When the game is complete, the teacher facilitates a discussion with students, asking them to articulate how knowing why their characters are doing what they are doing in a scene might help them perform it.

Closing: The teacher facilitates students performing practice scenes that focus on the “What” and the “Why”. The teacher encourages students to incorporate their understanding of acceptance, activation, and grounding into their scenes, as well. After students have practiced for a bit, the teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experiences performing and watching the scenes and how their focus on the “What” and the “Why” affected their performances.

Lesson Title: Rules Help Us Play Part 2 (Lesson 9 of 26)

Focus Question: How does structure provide freedom in an improvised performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to dramatize the “Who” and the “Where” of a base reality in an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes Criteria: Demonstrates acceptance, activation, grounding, incorporates strong base reality Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to describe the purpose and components of a base reality in an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Accurately describes purpose and components of base reality Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of base reality to their performance of an improv scene.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and recaps the previous lesson.

Main Activity: The teacher explains that the first game will focus on the “Who”. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Gossip”. Students play the game, with two students playing gossipy characters talking about an over-the-top third character who will be played by another student who enters the game later on. When the game is complete, the teacher facilitates a discussion with students, asking them to articulate why knowing who the characters are in a scene might help them to perform it. The teacher explains that the next game will focus on the “Where”. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “From Dawn ‘Til Dusk”. Students play the game, scene painting different environments and interacting with their locations to fight off other students who play vampires in the scene.

Closing: The teacher facilitates students performing practice scenes that focus on the “Who” and the “Where”. The teacher encourages students to incorporate their understanding of the “What”, the “Why”, acceptance, activation, and grounding into their scenes, as well. After students have practiced for a bit, the teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experiences performing and watching the scenes and how their focus on “base reality” affected their performances.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings using the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week’s work? Define the concept of “base reality”. Why do you think that concept helps us perform improv scenes? How does “base reality” affect a scene? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a

specific moment. Anything else you want to share? Students read Chapters 3-4 in *The Upright Citizens Brigade Comedy Improvisation Manual*.

Lesson Title: It’s All Fun and Games...Part 1 (Lesson 10 of 26)

Focus Question: How does playing the “game” of a scene help activate an improv performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to establish patterns together as a group.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Pointies Criteria: Plays as strong member of the team, Creates strong patterns that support the group Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of establishing patterns on the “game” of a scene of an improvised performance.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of establishing patterns on the “game” of a scene of an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of patterns in the “game” of a scene of an improvised performance.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and explains what the “game” of a scene is, especially as it stands in contrast to the “base reality” of a scene. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Red Ball”. Students play the game, once by passing invisible balls of differing colors and then again with a variety of unique invisible objects. The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experiences playing the game and what considerations were necessary for them to make in order to play it successfully.

Main Activity: The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Paper Clips”. In small groups, students create verbal patterns. Each student in the group contributes to and defines the pattern. Afterwards, the teacher facilitates a discussion with students, highlighting student responses about what successful participation in the game looked like. The teacher then explains and facilitates the game “Pointies”. Students work together as a group to create several patterns that they will repeat in tandem.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about the games they have played and asks students to articulate how pattern making might help them implement “game” in their improv scenes.

Lesson Title: It’s All Fun and Games...Part 2 (Lesson 11 of 26)

Focus Question: How does playing the “game” of a scene help activate an improv performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to play the “game” of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: On Brand Criteria: Suggests appropriate ideas that fit with the celebrity or character Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of playing the “game” of a scene on an improvised performance.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of playing “game” on an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of “game” to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and recaps the previous lesson. The teacher facilitates the game “Duck, Duck, Goose”. The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about what general rules apply to the structure of children’s games.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students improvising brand new children’s games in small groups. Students play the games they have created, while others serve as an audience and watch. The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about what mechanics made for successful and fun games. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “On Brand”. Students play the game, suggesting things that would be “on brand” for different celebrities and characters and focusing on the question, “If this is true, what else is true?”

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about “game” and how it can be used in improv scenes.

Homework: Students read Chapter 5 in *The Upright Citizens Brigade Comedy Improvisation Manual*.

Lesson Title: It’s All Fun and Games...Part 3 (Lesson 12 of 26)

Focus Question: How does playing the “game” of a scene help activate an improv performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to frame and play the “game” of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens “game” of the scene, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the purpose and effect of framing and playing the “game” of a scene on an improvised performance.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Makes insightful conclusions about the purpose and effect of playing “game” on an improvised performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their application of “game” to their performance of an improv scene.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and recaps the previous lesson. The teacher explains the concepts of “framing” (calling out the “game” of a scene) and “heightening” (increasing the intensity of the “game”).

Main Activity: The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Heightening Circle”. Students play the game, copying each other’s physicality and vocal choices and increasing their intensity as they pass them around a circle. The teacher then facilitates a discussion with students about how they successfully and satisfyingly heightened. The teacher then explains and facilitates the game “I Am a Tree”. Students play the game, creating and heightening tableaux. The teacher prompts students to frame the “game” of each tableau as they play. Afterwards, the teacher facilitates a discussion about the game, asking students to articulate strategies they used to heighten. Next, the teacher facilitates practice scenes with students in which they are encouraged to call attention to unusual moves that stray from the “base reality” and are encouraged to play and heighten “games” that come up in their scenes. The teacher side coaches, fielding possible “game” moves from students watching the scenes.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about how framing and heightening contribute to successful “games” in improv scenes.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings based on the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you

get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week's work? Define the concept of "game". Why do you think that concept helps us play improv scenes? How does "game" affect a scene? How does it affect you as a performer? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share? Students read Chapters 6-7 in *The Upright Citizens Brigade Comedy Improvisation Manual*.

Lesson Title: Scene Practice Part 1 (Lesson 13 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we practice performing improv scenes?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to practice performing improv scenes.	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes</p> <p>Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens “game” of the scene, Commits to performance physically and vocally</p> <p>Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their performances of practice improv scenes.	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion</p> <p>Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions</p> <p>Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the components of improv scenes that students have focused on in previous lessons. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Hotspot”. Students play the game, supporting each other by singing or dancing along to each song that comes up.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing practice improv scenes, side coaching as needed. The teacher solicits feedback from students who were watching after each scene is over.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing the practice improv scenes, asking students to analyze their performances and articulating pieces of advice they can give themselves and others for future performances.

Homework: Students read “Fight Well”, “Top of the Scene”, and “Be Funny” in *How to Be the Greatest Improviser on Earth*.

Lesson Title: Scene Practice Part 2 (Lesson 14 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we practice performing improv scenes?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to practice performing improv scenes.	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice Scenes</p> <p>Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens “game” of the scene, Commits to performance physically and vocally</p> <p>Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their performances of practice improv scenes.	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal</p> <p>Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions</p> <p>Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and explains and facilitates the game “Pass the Clap”. Students play the game, passing a clap around a circle, eventually moving freely around the space to pass the clap. Afterwards, the teacher facilitates students setting rehearsal goals for the day’s practice scenes.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing practice improv scenes, side coaching as needed. The teacher solicits feedback from students who were watching after each scene is over.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing and watching the practice improv scenes, asking students to analyze their performances in relation to the goals they set at the beginning of class and articulating pieces of advice that they can give themselves for future performances.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings based on the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week’s work? What goals did you set for yourself in this week’s practices and how did it go for you in trying to reach them? What will you take forward with you as we start to engage with *Harolds*? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share?

Lesson Title: How'd We Get Here? Part 1 (Lesson 15 of 26)

Focus Question: What did the historical evolution of improvisation look like and what are its implications on modern improv performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess how improv's historical evolution has shaped its modern performance.	Performance Task: Research Project Presentation Criteria: Provides detailed accounting of research topic, Articulates implications on modern improv performance, Research presented in a clear and engaging way Documentation: Rubric with teacher comments, Peer feedback in discussion
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to respond to presentations about improv history to articulate implications on modern improv performance.	Performance Task: Group Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful discussion, Draws connections between presentations, Articulates implications on modern improv performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and articulates ways in which students can engage in the lesson.

Main Activity: Students present their research projects to the rest of the class. The teacher facilitates students giving feedback to their peers after each presentation and articulating new understandings or areas of interest that emerged from watching the presentation.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about emerging understandings from the research projects and the implications of those understandings on their own improv performances.

Lesson Title: How'd We Get Here? Part 2 (Lesson 16 of 26)

Focus Question: What did the historical evolution of improvisation look like and what are its implications on modern improv performance?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess how improv's historical evolution has shaped its modern performance.	Performance Task: Research Project Presentation Criteria: Provides detailed accounting of research topic, Articulates implications on modern improv performance, Research presented in a clear and engaging way Documentation: Rubric with teacher comments, Peer feedback in discussion
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to respond to presentations about improv history to articulate implications on modern improv performance.	Performance Task: Group Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful discussion, Draws connections between presentations, Articulates implications on modern improv performance Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews ways in which students can engage in the lesson.

Main Activity: Students continue to present their research projects to the rest of the class. The teacher facilitates students giving feedback to their peers after each presentation and articulating new understandings or areas of interest that emerged from watching the presentation.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about emerging understandings from the research projects and the implications of those understandings on their own improv performances, building on the previous lesson's discussion.

Lesson Title: Hello, Harold (Lesson 17 of 26)

Focus Question: What is the structure and purpose of the *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to examine the structure and purpose of the <i>Harold</i> .	Performance Tasks: Group Discussion Criteria: Provides accurate description of structure, Uses research to inform understanding of <i>Harold</i> purpose Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to examine the structure and purpose of the <i>Harold</i> .	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Provides accurate description of structure, Uses research to inform understanding of <i>Harold</i> purpose Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and explains the structure of the *Harold*. Based on their research and participation in improv performances, the teacher reviews reasons why the *Harold* was created with students.

Main Activity: The teacher shares a video (https://youtu.be/O5_SGH_0qIc) of a *Harold* performance. The teacher highlights the lack of diversity amongst the performers and briefly discusses the lack of diversity overall in the improv community, articulating the barriers that theaters have historically erected that limit entry. Students watch the video and examine how they see the *Harold* structure come to life in a real performance.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion about what students saw in the video, asking them to share reactions and to articulate ways in which they saw the structure of the *Harold* hold up and ways in which they saw it changed. The teacher answers questions as necessary.

Homework: Students read Chapter 11 in *The Upright Citizens Brigade Comedy Improvisation Manual*.

Lesson Title: Branching Out (Lesson 18 of 26)

Focus Question: How do we apply improv skills to the successful performance of *Harold* Openings and 1st Beats?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the performance of a <i>Harold</i> opening.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Documentary Opening Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames and plays game of the scene, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the performance of a <i>Harold</i> 1st Beat.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice 1st Beats Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames and plays game of the scene, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to describe the purpose of the Opening and 1st Beats within the <i>Harold</i> structure.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Provides accurate description of structure and purpose Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their performance of the Opening and 1st Beat of a <i>Harold</i>.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*.

Main Activity: The teacher explains the “Documentary Opening” and facilitates students practicing it. The teacher then explains how students might pull inspiration for 1st Beats from the opening. The teacher facilitates students performing an opening and fields suggestions for possible 1st Beats. The teacher facilitates students performing the 1st Beat suggestions. Students practice an opening and 1st Beats.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing the opening and 1st Beats, encouraging students to analyze ways in which their performances were successful.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings based on the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week's activities was? What did you get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week's work? What do you think of the *Harold* structure? Are there parts that you've enjoyed or parts that you have found challenging? What has your journey been like as you start to balance your improv skills with the demands of the form? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share?

Lesson Title: Double Down (Lesson 19 of 26)

Focus Question: What are 2nd Beats of a *Harold* and how do we apply improv skills to successfully perform them?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of <i>Harold</i> 2nd Beats.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice 2nd Beats Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Plays and heightens game of the scene, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to describe the purpose of 2nd Beats within the <i>Harold</i> structure.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Provides accurate description of structure and purpose Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their performance of the 2nd Beats of a <i>Harold</i>.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*, with a special focus on the Opening and 1st Beats. The teacher then explains 2nd Beats and defines the two types of 2nd Beats—"time jump" (same characters, different time) and "analogous" (same game, different characters). The teacher highlights that 2nd Beats heighten the "game" of the scene and are not used to advance the "plot".

Main Activity: The teacher explains and facilitates the game "Poke the Beast". Students play the game, finding ways to activate and heighten a character "game". After the students have played a few rounds, the teacher facilitates students performing an Opening and 1st Beats based off a suggestion. The teacher then fields ideas from students for potential 2nd Beats based off of those scenes, asking them to articulate which type of 2nd Beat they are suggesting and how it heightens the "game" of the 1st Beat scene. The teacher facilitates students trying out those ideas on their feet.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experiences performing 2nd Beats, encouraging students to analyze ways in which their performances were successful.

Lesson Title: Get It Together (Lesson 20 of 26)

Focus Question: What are 3rd Beats of a *Harold* and how do we apply improv skills to successfully perform them?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of <i>Harold</i> 3rd Beats.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice 3rd Beats Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Plays and heightens game of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to describe the purpose of 3rd Beats within the <i>Harold</i> structure.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Provides accurate description of structure and purpose Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their performance of the 3rd Beats of a <i>Harold</i>.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*, with a special focus on the Opening, 1st Beats, and 2nd Beats. The teacher then explains 3rd Beats and their purpose—to further heighten the “game” of the scene and to make cross connections between scenes.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing an Opening, 1st Beats, and 2nd Beats. The teacher then fields student suggestions for possible 3rd Beats based on these scenes. The teacher facilitates students performing the scenes they’ve suggested.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experiences performing 3rd Beats, encouraging students to analyze ways in which their performances were successful and how they can move between the different building blocks of the *Harold*.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings based on the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week’s work? How are you thinking about the relationship between Openings, 1st Beats, 2nd Beats, and 3rd Beats? Are there parts that you enjoy or parts that you have found challenging? What has your journey been like as you start to balance your improv skills with the demands of the form? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share?

Lesson Title: Cleansing the Palette (Lesson 21 of 26)

Focus Question: What is the purpose and structure of *Harold* Group Games and how do we apply improv skills to successfully perform them?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of <i>Harold</i> Group Games.	Performance Tasks: Practice Group Games Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Plays and heightens game of the scene, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to explain the purpose and structure of <i>Harold</i> Group Games.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Provides accurate description of structure and purpose Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their performance of <i>Harold</i> Group Games.	Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion and on journal, Brief notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*, with a special focus on what students have practiced so far. The teacher then explains Group Games and their purpose in the *Harold*. The teacher highlights that all characters in Group Games must adhere to one of two points of view in the scene. The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Follow the Follower”. Students play the game, all mirroring each other’s vocal and physical choices with no one in the group leading.

Main Activity: The teacher explains and facilitates the game “Group Flocking”. Students work as “one voice” to rant or rave about different topics. The teacher then explains and facilitates the game “Cocktail Party”. Students play the game, with only one student speaking at a time. Next, the teacher facilitates students performing an Opening and then fields student suggestions for possible Group Games based on the Opening. The teacher facilitates students performing the scenes they suggested.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a discussion with students about their experiences performing Group Games, encouraging students to analyze ways in which their performances were successful and to articulate how group games differ from regular scenes.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings based on the following prompts: How are you thinking about the relationship between Openings, 1st Beats, 2nd Beats, 3rd Beats, and Group Games? Are there parts that you have enjoyed or parts that you

have found challenging? What has your journey been like as you balance your improv skills with the demands of the form? What strategies can you use to successfully play a Group Game? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share?

Lesson Title: Team Practice Part 1 (Lesson 22 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we practice performing a *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to practice performing a <i>Harold</i> .	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice <i>Harolds</i></p> <p>Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens game of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally</p> <p>Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their <i>Harold</i> practice.	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion</p> <p>Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions</p> <p>Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*. The teacher then explains Sweep Edits and how to use them to end scenes.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing practice *Harolds* in different teams.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing the practice *Harolds*, asking students to analyze their performances and articulating pieces of advice that they can give themselves for future performances.

Lesson Title: Team Practice Part 2 (Lesson 23 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we practice performing a *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to practice performing a <i>Harold</i>.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice <i>Harolds</i> Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens game of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their <i>Harold</i> practice.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*. The teacher facilitates students setting goals for their practice based on what they learned from their work in the previous lesson.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing practice *Harolds* in different teams.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing the practice *Harolds*, asking students to analyze their performances, to assess how they did in meeting the goals they set, and to articulate pieces of advice that they can give themselves for future performances.

Lesson Title: Team Practice Part 3 (Lesson 24 of 26)
Focus Question: How do we practice performing a *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to practice performing a <i>Harold</i> .	<p>Performance Tasks: Practice <i>Harolds</i></p> <p>Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens game of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally</p> <p>Documentation: Side coaching, Brief notes</p>
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze their <i>Harold</i> practice.	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion and Journal</p> <p>Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions</p> <p>Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson with students and reviews the structure of the *Harold*. The teacher facilitates students setting goals for their practice based on what they learned from their work in the previous two lessons.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students performing practice *Harolds* in different teams.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing the practice *Harolds*, asking students to analyze their performances, to assess how they did in meeting the goals they set, and to articulate pieces of advice that they can give themselves for future performances.

Homework: Students complete a journal entry to articulate emerging understandings based on the following prompts: What do you think the focus of this week’s activities was? What did you get out of the work this week? How did it build on last week’s work? How are you thinking about the relationship between all the parts of the *Harold*? Are there parts that you’ve enjoyed or parts that you have found challenging? What has your journey been like as you balance your improv skills with the demands of the form? What progress have you seen yourself make? Where do you still have room to grow? What goals do you have for your final performance? Did you learn anything else new? What spurred that learning? Cite a specific moment. Anything else you want to share?

Lesson Title: The Harold Part 1 (Lesson 25 of 26)

Focus Question: How do we apply improv skills to the successful performance of the *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Summative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of the <i>Harold</i> .	Performance Task: Harold Performance Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens “game” of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Tick List with Comments
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess their understanding of improv skills and <i>Harold</i> structure.	Performance Task: Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher comments on journal

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and facilitates students playing “Follow the Follower” in their teams. The teacher prompts students to set goals for their performances with their teammates.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates each *Harold* team performing a *Harold*.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing and watching the *Harolds*.

Homework: Students who have performed complete a final journal entry reflecting on their final performance and their learning in the unit as whole.

HAROLD PERFORMANCE TICK LIST HANDOUT

Harold Performance Tick List

NAME:

DATE:

Learning Objective	Criteria	No	Yes
Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of the <i>Harold</i> .	Demonstrates Use of Improv Skills:		
	Strong Agreement		
	Activation		
	Grounding		
	Plays Base Reality		
	Plays as Strong Member of the Team		
	Frames, Plays, and Heightens "Game" of the Scene		
	Makes Cross Connections		
	Adheres to Harold Structure		
	Commits to Performance Physically and Vocally		
	TOTAL:		
COMMENTS:			
<p>✓+ = 3 ✓ = 2 ✓- = 1</p>			

Lesson Title: The Harold Part 2 (Lesson 26 of 26)

Focus Question: How do we apply improv skills to the successful performance of the *Harold*?

Lesson Objectives	Summative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to apply improv skills to the successful performance of the <i>Harold</i> .	Performance Task: Harold Performance Criteria: Demonstrates use of improv skills (Strong Agreement, Activation, Grounding, Playing base reality), Plays as strong member of the team, Frames, plays, and heightens “game” of the scene, Makes cross connections, Adheres to <i>Harold</i> Structure, Commits to performance physically and vocally Documentation: Tick List with Comments
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to assess their understanding of improv skills and <i>Harold</i> structure.	Performance Task: Journal Criteria: Engages in meaningful reflection, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher comments on journal

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and facilitates students playing “Follow the Follower” in their teams. The teacher prompts students to set goals for their performances with their teammates.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates the remaining *Harold* teams performing their *Harolds*.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their experiences performing and watching the *Harolds*.

Homework: The remaining students who have now had a chance to perform complete a final journal entry reflecting on their performances and their learning in the unit as whole.

Unit Title: Contemporary Theater (Unit 2 of 2)

Focus of the Unit: How can an examination of contemporary theater works and exploration of production design inform our own creative pioneering?

Overarching Unit Objectives	Summative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to articulate a personalized and timely artistic vision for the piece.	Performance Task: Production Proposal Criteria: Articulates clear vision of piece, Justifies personal connection to the piece, Articulates timeliness of vision, Supports vision with specific evidence from the script Documentation: Rubric
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic production design for a theater piece.	Performance Task: Production Proposal Criteria: Defines clear scenic design, Defines clear lighting design, Defines clear sound design, Defines clear costume design, Supports design with specific evidence from script, Design elements work together to support production design concept Documentation: Rubric
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze a piece of theater to assess the execution of its creator’s intent.	Performance Task: Peer Evaluation Criteria: Successfully articulates creator’s intent, Engages in insightful analysis about the execution of those idea, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback on Peer Evaluation Feedback Form

A. Relevant Learning Standards:

Relevant New York State Standards for the Arts:

TH: Cr.3 Refine and complete artistic work.

1. Theater artists refine their work and practice their craft through rehearsal and active participation.

HSIIa. Analyze the dramatic concept and technical design elements of a devised or scripted drama or theater work.

TH: Cr.5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentations.

1. Theater artists develop personal processes and skills for a performance or design.

HSIIb. Apply research of technical elements to create a design that communicates a theatrical concept.

TH: Cr.9 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

1. Theater artists apply criteria to investigate, explore, and assess drama and theater work.

HSIIb. Draw on personal aesthetics and technical elements to construct meaning in a drama or theater work.

Relevant Common Core ELA Learning Standards:

NYS Common Core ELA 9-10th Grade Reading: Literature Standards

1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

NYS Common Core ELA 9-10th Grade Writing Standards

2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provides an objective summary of the text.

NYS Common Core ELA 9-10th Grade Writing Standards

7. Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

NYC Blueprint Strands:

Students work in groups and independently as designers, applying a multi-faceted understanding of design concepts and processes.

Students develop the communication and organizational skills to effectively realize a design project.

Students refine their abilities to develop, articulate and realize a directorial concept.

Students develop their communicative, personal, imaginative and analytical skills while investigating the role of the director.

Students engage in research and analysis as dramaturges to distinguish similarities and differences in diverse theater forms.

Modifications:

Learning Disability— Multi-step instructions will be broken down as needed.

Speech and Language Learning Disability— Written agenda, scaffolding, redirection, prompting, kinesthetic components to the lesson.

English-Language Learners— Pre-teach key words and phrases through examples; use physical demonstrations and visual illustrations.

Previous Knowledge: Students have completed a year of theatrical training. They are experienced performers and have a working knowledge of character analysis and acting technique. They have received physical and vocal training and are expected to commit to strong physical and vocal choices in all acting work, as well as continue to work on listening and

responding to their scene partner. Students have experience reading plays and have basic familiarity with the various technical elements of theatrical production.

Materials: *She Kills Monsters* scripts, “EF’s Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play” Handouts, *Hardware* by Jess Honovich scripts, Production Proposal Project Guidelines Handouts, Production Proposal Project Rubric Handouts, *An Octoroon* scripts, Spongebob Squarepants: The Musical design video, Flashlights, Gels, Sound design video, Costume photos, Peer Evaluation Form Handouts

Lesson Title: Holding the Mirror Up to Nature (Lesson 1 of 14)

Focus Question: How have contemporary theater artists engaged with the world around them?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to identify common themes and forms in contemporary theater works.	Performance Tasks: Group Discussion Criteria: Identifies common themes and forms in various works, Articulates connections/differences between various works, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate common themes and forms in contemporary theater works.	Performance Tasks: Group Discussion Criteria: Articulates personal response to work, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the unit and the lesson with students. The teacher then splits the class up into small groups and assigns each group a recent theater season to research.

Main Activity: Students work in groups to research their assigned theater season. Each group selects three productions that they feel are representative of the season and investigates them further, exploring stories, themes, and forms used in those productions.

Closing: Each group presents their findings to the rest of the class. The teacher facilitates a group discussion, asking students to identify common stories, themes, and forms they have heard about in the presentations and to synthesize them to create a working understanding of how contemporary theater artists are engaging with the world around them.

Lesson Title: What Are You Saying? Part 1 (Lesson 2 of 14)
Focus Question: How do we read a script with a critical eye?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to determine authorial intent.	<p>Performance Tasks: Play Reading and Discussion</p> <p>Criteria: Successfully articulates authorial intent, Provides specific evidence for conclusions</p> <p>Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes</p>
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to articulate personal responses to a theater script.	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion</p> <p>Criteria: Successfully articulates personal response, Provides specific evidence for conclusions</p> <p>Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and fields definitions from students for the term “authorial intent”. The class creates a definition and articulates why the concept would be important for theater artists to understand.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students reading a play, like *She Kills Monsters* by Qui Nguyen, out loud. The teacher engages students in discussion and answers questions as necessary.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their emerging understandings of authorial intent in the play and their personal reactions to the text.

Lesson Title: What Are You Saying? Part 2 (Lesson 3 of 14)
Focus Question: How do we read a script with a critical eye?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to determine authorial intent.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Play Reading and Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates authorial intent, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to articulate personal responses to a theater script.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates personal response, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and recaps with students what has happened in the play so far.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students continuing to read the play out loud. The teacher engages students in discussion and answers questions as necessary.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their emerging understandings of authorial intent in the play and their personal reactions to the text.

Lesson Title: What Are You Saying? Part 3 (Lesson 4 of 14)
Focus Question: How do we read a script with a critical eye?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to determine authorial intent.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Play Reading and Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates authorial intent, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to articulate personal responses to a theater script.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates personal response, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and recaps with students what has happened in the play so far.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students finishing reading the play out loud. The teacher engages students in discussion and answers questions as necessary.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about their understandings of authorial intent in the play and their personal reactions to the text having completed it. The teacher asks students to articulate how the play connects to their understandings of the work of contemporary theater artists.

Lesson Title: In the Mind’s Eye (Lesson 5 of 14)

Focus Question: How do we create a clear, personal, and timely vision for a piece of theater?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to articulate a clear, personal, and timely directorial vision.	Performance Tasks: Vision Statement Draft Criteria: Statement is clear, Articulates personal connection to vision, Articulates vision’s connection to world at large Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to justify artistic choices using textual evidence.	Performance Tasks: Vision Statement Draft Criteria: Uses specific textual evidence to justify artistic vision Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and introduces the Production Proposal Project. The teacher answers questions about the project, as needed. The teacher then fields student suggestions for what a directorial vision statement might include. Students read “EF’s Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play”. The teacher then facilitates a group discussion about new understandings of considerations that might be made in creating a directorial vision.

Main Activity: Working in small groups, students read a short play like *Hardware*. Using the criteria they laid out in the previous discussion and working as a group, students formulate a directorial vision for a production of the script they read.

Closing: Each group presents their directorial vision for the play and the teacher facilitates student feedback on the presentations.

Homework: Students select a play for their Production Proposal Project, read it, and create a Vision Statement Draft for their proposal.

EF'S VISIT TO A SMALL PLANET HANDOUT

EF's Visit to a Small Planet: Some Questions to Ask a Play

Elinor Fuchs

Since its origination as a classroom tool in the early 1990s, Elinor Fuchs's essay has acquired a devoted following, with tattered photocopies circulating in literary offices and university departments. More recently it has inspired discussions in Internet chat rooms and garnered citations in scholarly journals, despite remaining unavailable to a broad readership. The time has come to publish "EF's Visit to a Small Planet," an essay that widens our perception of dramatic worlds. Like good plays, it grows more meaningful with each reading.

— *Editors*

The following walk through dramatic structure is a teaching tool. For the past several years I have used it at the Yale School of Drama as an entry to Reading Theater, a critical writing course for students in the MFA Dramaturgy Program.

The "Questions" below are in part designed to forestall the immediate (and crippling) leap to character and normative psychology that underwrites much dramatic criticism. Aside from that corrective bias, the approach offered here is not a "system" intended to replace other approaches to play analysis; I often use it together with Aristotle's unparalleled insight into plot structure. Rather, it could be thought of as a template for the critical imagination.

In a fine article on *Hedda Gabler*, Philip E. Larson described the nature of "a genuine performance criticism." If criticism "is unwilling to rest content with the evaluation of ephemera," he wrote, "[it] must attempt to describe a potential object, one that neither the dramatist, the critics, nor the reader has ever seen, or will see."¹ These "Questions" are intended to light up some of the dark matter in dramatic worlds, to illuminate the potentialities Larson points to. No matter what answers come, the very act of questioning makes an essential contribution to the enterprise of criticism. —*Elinor Fuchs*

We must make the assumption that in the world of the play there are no accidents. Nothing occurs "by chance," not even chance. In that case, nothing in the play is without significance. Correspondingly, the play asks us to focus upon it a total awareness, to bring our attention and curiosity without the censorship of selective interpretation, "good taste," or "correct form." Before making judgments, we must ask questions. This is the deepest meaning of the idea, often-repeated but little understood, that the study of art shows us how to live.

I. The World of the Play: First Things First

A play is not a flat work of literature, not a description in poetry of another world, but is in itself another world passing before you in time and space. Language is only one part of this world. Those who think too exclusively in terms of language find it hard to read plays. When you "see"

this other world, when you experience its space-time dynamics, its architectonics, then you can figure out the role of language in it.

If too tight a focus on language makes it hard to read plays, too tight a focus on character creates the opposite problem: it makes the reading too easy. To look at dramatic structures narrowly in terms of characters risks unproblematically collapsing this strange world into our own world. The stage world never obeys the same rules as ours, because in its world, nothing else is possible besides what is there: no one else lives there; no other geography is available; no alternative actions can be taken.

To see this entire world, do this literally: Mold the play into a medium-sized ball, set it before you in the middle distance, and squint your eyes. Make the ball small enough that you can see the entire planet, not so small that you lose detail, and not so large that detail overwhelms the whole.

Before you is the “world of the play.” Still squinting, ask about the space. What is space like on this planet? Interior or exterior, built or natural? Is space here confined or wide open? Do you see a long passage with many “stations”? Do you see a landscape of valleys and mountains? Sea and land? Are we on an island? In a cave? In a desert or a jungle? On a country road?

Now ask about the time. How does time behave on this planet? Does “time stand still”? Is time frantic and staccato on this planet? Is it leisurely, easy-going time? How is time marked on this planet? By clock? By the sun? By the sound of footsteps? What kind of time are we in? Cyclical time? Eternal time? Linear time? What kind of line? One day? One lifetime?

Ask about the climate on this planet. Do we have storms? Eclipses of the sun and moon? Do we have extreme heat? Paralyzing cold? Is the environment on this planet lush and abundant, serene and life-denying, airless and suffocating? What is the seasonal “feel” of this world? Autumnal? Wintry?

What is the mood on this planet? Jolly? Serious? Sad? Ironic? Sepulchral? The mood is not just a question of plot (comedies are “happy,” etc.), “tone” also contributes to mood. What is the tone of this planet? Delicate or coarse? Cerebral or passionate? Restrained or violent? How are mood and tone created on this planet? Through music? Light, sound, color, shape? What shapes? Curves? Angles?

Remember, you can’t just decide the planet is wintry or dark because you think it would look more interesting in snow or smog, at least not yet. Make sure you’re alert to what’s there; there should be actual evidence on the planet for what you report.

You’re not done. In most dramatic worlds there are hidden, or at least unseen, spaces. Ask questions about them as well. What are their characteristics of space, time, tone, and mood? How do they relate to the represented world, the world you can see?

Finally, while you’re looking at this planet, listen to its “music.” Every dramatic world will have, or suggest, characteristic sounds—of mourning, celebration, children’s patter, incantation. It will

alternate sounds of human and landscape, or sound and silence. Listen for the pattern of the sound.

II. The Social World of the Play: A Closer Look

You are still not ready to examine the beings who inhabit this world. Before you inquire into their individual traits and motives, there are other things you need to know.

Keep squinting at the planet. Is this a public world, or private? What are its class rules? Aristocratic? Popular? Mixed?

In what kinds of patterns do the figures on this planet arrange themselves? Do you see groups in action, isolated individuals, both? Is there a single central figure, surrounded by a group? Are figures matched off in conflicting pairs? Are you seeing (and feeling) the tension of interlocking triangles?

How do figures appear on this planet? Are they inward or two-dimensional? Subtle? Exaggerated? Are they like puppets? Like clowns? Like you? (Are you sure?)

How do figures dress on this planet? In rags, in gowns, in cardboard cutouts? Like us? (Are you sure?)

How do figures interact? By fighting? Reasoned discussion?

Who has power on this planet? How is it achieved? Over whom is it exercised? To what ends is it exercised?

What are the language habits on this planet? Verse or prose, dialogue or monologue, certainly. But also, what kinds of language predominate—of thoughts or of feelings? And what kinds of feelings? Is language colorful or flat, clipped or flowing, metaphorical or logical? Exuberant or deliberate? And what about silences?

III. What Changes?

You have gotten a feel for this world. Now look at it dynamically, because it moves in time. Within the “rules” of its operation, nothing stays the same. What changes in this world?

Look at the first image. Now look at the last. Then locate some striking image near the center of the play (the empty box in Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy* is a good example). To give an account of destiny on this planet range over these three markers. Why was it essential to pass through the gate of the central image to get from the first to the last?

What changes in the landscape of this world? Does it move from inside to outside? From valleys to mountains? From town to wilderness?

What changes in time? Does time move from dusk to night? Night to dawn? Morning to midnight? Through four seasons of a year? Through the stages of a human life? Or the stages of eternal life, from Creation to Last Judgment?

What changes in language? In tone, mood, dress?

All of the changes you discover will of course contribute to and reflect on character, but each trajectory should be seen as a signifying system on its own.

What changes in the action? Have we moved from confusion to wedding (the basic plot of romantic comedy)? From threat to peaceful celebration (the basic plot of [traditional] tragicomedy)? From threat to disaster (the basic plot of tragedy)? From suffering to rebirth (the plot of the Passion play)? From threat to dual outcome, suffering for evil persons and vindication for good (the basic plot of melodrama)?

What doesn't change? Is there a stable or fixed point in this world? An absolute reality? God? The grave?

Squint one last time. Putting together space, time, the natural world and the social world, elements that change and those that don't, you are discovering the "myth." Plays are full of archetypal places — castles, gardens, forests, roads, islands, green worlds, dream worlds, storms, night scenes, and on and on. If the play starts in a palace, goes on to a moonlit forest, and returns to the palace the next day or night (which is it? day or night?), what does that progression tell you? How is the final palace scene conditioned by the night journey into the forest? Is the world of the play at the end of the play a transformed world? Or is it the same world returned to "normal," with minor adjustments? Worlds stand or fall on your answer.

IV. Don't Forget Yourself

Seeking what changes, don't forget to ask what changes in you, the imaginer of worlds. Ask, what has this world demanded of me? Does it ask me for pity and fear? Does it ask me to reason? To physically participate in the action on the stage? Does it ask me to interact with other spectators? To leave the theater and take political action? To search my ethical being to the core? Maybe this world means only to entertain me, why not? But how does it make this intention known?

V. Theatrical Mirrors

Important as these internal systems are, dramatic worlds don't just speak to and within themselves; they also speak to each other. How many performances are signaling to you from inside this world? How many echoes of other dramatic worlds do they suggest? How do these additional layers of theatricality comment on what you have already discovered?

VI. The Character Fits the Pattern

Only now are you really ready to examine the figures who inhabit this world. Every assumption you make about a character must reflect the conditions of its world, including the way psychology functions in that world. You can arrive at the most interesting version of any question about character by first exploring the features of her theatrical planet. Characters *mean* only as they inhabit, enact, fulfill, engage a succession of sites, actions, and objects under a specific set of conditions. They are constituents of a complex artistic pattern. Find the pattern first!

Warning: Don't permit yourself to construct a pattern that omits "singularities," puzzling events, objects, figures, or scenes that "do not fit." Remember, there is nothing in the world of a play by accident. *The puzzles may hold the key.* Assume that the dramatic world is entirely conscious, determinate, limited. Give an account of that world that attempts to consider the role of every element in that world — visual, aural, temporal, tonal, figural. Become curious as each element is revealed as a player in the play. *Be someone who is aroused to meaning.*

Of course you can construct meaning in this world in many different ways. Construct it in the most inclusive way you can. There will still be more to see.

Note

1. Philip E. Larson, "French Farce Conventions and the Mythic Story Pattern in *Hedda Gabler*: A Performance Criticism," in *Contemporary Approaches to Ibsen* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget AS, 1985), 202.

HARDWARE BY JESS HONOVICH SCRIPT

HARDWARE
By Jess Honovich

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CHARACTERS

RAYNE — early-mid 20's, tech store employee

LEAH— early-mid 20's, tech store employee

SETTING

A B-list computer repair store close to closing time

LEAH examines the parts of a dissected computer at a workstation. RAYNE enters and stands next to her with a different computer. She begins taking it apart. After a moment—

RAYNE
hey
you here until close?

LEAH
Yeah

RAYNE
Yeah cool me too

The girls work.

RAYNE
Do you have any other appointments for the rest/of the night or are—

LEAH
Uh no
yeah no
We try not to schedule anyone after 9

RAYNE
Oh yeah okay good to know that's
That's good to know
I'm still figuring out the, like—
yeah
...
Is it just you me and and Megan or—

LEAH
No just you and me
Megan's leaving early

RAYNE
Oh Megan's leaving early?

LEAH
Yeah uh she
She has a
It's her cousin's—

RAYNE
Oh yeah her cousin's party yeah
She was saying it's
It's her birthday?

LEAH
 No it's a, uh
 A Quinceañera

RAYNE
 Oh yeah right yeah she was
 I heard h—
 She was talking about it on her lunch break and I just totally forgot

LEAH
 Yeah

RAYNE
 We had the same break today and she was telling me about it she was saying
 She said it's this huge thing and she showed me her dress, uh
 The dress she's wearing not the dress her cousin's wearing
 It's super pretty

LEAH
 Yeah she showed me too

RAYNE
 Yeah it's super pretty
 ...
 It's been like crazy here today right?
 Like am I crazy or is it like kind of super busy?

LEAH
 No yeah it is

RAYNE
 It's like
 I think every student in Pittsburgh started school and just dumped a can of soda on their computer
 Like "oh whoops" or like—
 Like it's a ceremonial act or something it's just
 How can there be so much fried hardware in one week?

LEAH remembers something. She laughs to herself.

LEAH
 Oh oh oh um
 Megan said something before about
 Ah—

RAYNE
 Oh yeah about, uh—

LEAH
 “We can’t be”—
 “We aren’t”—

RAYNE
 We’re not a “fried hardware store”

LEAH
 Yeah yeah

RAYNE
 “There’s a KFC in Wilkinsburg if you want something fried!”

LEAH
 Yeah yeah that was it, that was—*ha*—
 Megan’s funny sometimes

RAYNE
 Yeah she is—
 Oh! uh
 ...
 huh
 nevermind

LEAH
 What

RAYNE
 No I just
 I was gonna ask you something but it’s gone now

They both tinker with the computers. LEAH cuts herself.

LEAH
 Ah oh crap
 Shoot /ow ow ow ow

RAYNE
 Oh did you—
 How did you do that

LEAH
 this thing is really sharp, uh—
 My backpack is under me in the cabinet can you just—
 Do you mind—

RAYNE
 Oh yeah/ yeah

LEAH
 In the front
 I have a
 I have like a “to-go” thing

RAYNE grabs LEAH's bag and puts it on the desk.

RAYNE
 This pocket?

LEAH
 Yeah no
 No the front
 Yeah that one

LEAH points to the pocket.

RAYNE
 Here lemme see
 Ah here yeah

RAYNE removes a container of Band-Aids. She opens the container, takes one out, replaces the container in the backpack, and puts the backpack back on the floor. With great care, RAYNE peels the Band-Aid out of its packaging and flicks the trash away.

Here I got it lemme see it

LEAH holds out her finger. RAYNE squats so she is eye level with LEAH's finger and wraps it in the Band-Aid.

better?

LEAH
 Yeah
 I mean it is what it is but yeah

RAYNE
 Cool

LEAH
 Thanks

RAYNE
 Don't mention it
 ...
 you know uh
 ...
ha

When I was a kid I went to this summer camp outside of the city for like 8 years and it was a day camp, not a sleepaway camp, and it was only for like campers up to age 13 and so when I was 13 I became a CIT—that's like a "counselor in training"— and I was a CIT for like 9-year-olds and we had to go through First Aid training and get a certificate and everything, and like, I paid attention, but then we were on The Rocks and I had a camper actually— we had all these different activities and one of them was fishing and there are two sections to the fishing area, a dock that's sort of super old and creaky and covered in sun or this secret rock path that leads into the water that is technically in the fishing department and it feels kinda badass and fun to fish there so I had these girls, and we had fishing that day, and I told them about it—the secret rock path— and they went without me to go check it out, and one of the girls slipped on a rock and fell and cracked her knee like, broke it, and she was screaming in pain and I didn't know what to do and I just remember being like
Like

What the fuck is the point of first aid training because it's taught in such a rush so that 99% of the time when something happens you have no idea what to do to help that person who needs you

...

...

it was really weird

LEAH

Was she, uh—

Was she okay?

RAYNE

Huh?

LEAH

The girl the—

Uh

You're camper?

RAYNE

Oh yeah yeah she was fine

I mean she had to go to the hospital and she came back on crutches so she had to hobble around camp for the rest of the summer and she wasn't allowed to swim which sucks because it is hot as fuck and we have swimming at least twice a day between the pool and the lake so like, why bother coming to camp at all, but like, she was fine.

I think she's in high school now

...

If she didn't like

RAYNE makes a sloppy noise.

...

it wasn't my fault if that's what you're asking

LEAH

What? No

No no I just

I was just wondering

RAYNE
No yeah no I didn't mean
Yeah

They continue to tinker with the computers. A long moment.

This bitch is not getting her pictures back

They work longer on the computers.

If there's no one else coming for the rest of the night can't we just lock up early?

LEAH
No

RAYNE
Cool cool
...
oh oh right
I remember uh
The thing I was gonna ask
Did that guy ever come back?

LEAH stops working. She locates a water bottle in her backpack and takes a sip.

LEAH
Which guy?

RAYNE
The guy you know
That one guy who
That guy

LEAH
Oh yeah uh
no
No he didn't

RAYNE
Oh
Maybe that's good?

LEAH
Maybe I dunno

RAYNE
Is his
Is it still here?

LEAH
Yeah I mean he left it, it's in the back

RAYNE
It's in the back right now??

LEAH
Yeah I mean I wasn't gonna—
Yeah it's in the back

RAYNE
Oh
...
is it still on your docket? Or—

LEAH
I haven't been thinking about it really
I think I'm just gonna let it be for now like, ah—
...
no, not right now
it's not on my docket right now

RAYNE
But it's in the back?

LEAH
I mean as of now it's still his property so
Yeah it's like
It's with the other stuff that needs work that was brought in today

RAYNE
Right right
...
Did you uh
Did you talk to him?

LEAH takes a sip of her water. She gulps and closes the lid.

LEAH
Uh yeah I dunno
For a minute or two?
Not for any longer than I'd talk to anyone else I guess

RAYNE
Yeah that makes sense
...
What was he wearing?—

LEAH
I don't really wanna uh
Can we not—

RAYNE
Oh no sorry yeah

LEAH
I'd rather not—

RAYNE
I'm sorry no yeah

LEAH
I don't want to think about that.

A long pause.

RAYNE
Sorry

LEAH
No you didn't do anything wrong
It's okay

RAYNE
...
It's weird thinking that it's still back there with all the stuff on it
It's weird that like
...
did you...? I mean there's a serial number

LEAH
Oh no yeah I like
I have the serial number and his name and like
Yeah

RAYNE
Oh good call yeah good call
You're like
You're really good at—
I don't know what I would've done
Showed it to Bruce? Or would that have been

RAYNE puts her head in her hands and makes an indistinguishable noise.

It's so
Sorry

LEAH
It's okay
...
I called the police

RAYNE
You did???

LEAH
Yeah I mean uh
Just incase

RAYNE
Whoa
This is so real

LEAH drops her things and buries her head in her hands.

RAYNE
Oh hey hey don't
It's okay it's okay

LEAH
I don't know what to do

RAYNE
Yeah it's okay
Hey

LEAH
That's like, his property and—
I shouldn't have looked I really shouldn't have but I was just
It wasn't supposed to be, like—
He had stuff and he wanted me to fix it and
I shouldn't have looked
And now like
...
I can't like
I can't erase what I saw you know?
Like is this an "if you see something say something" moment because I thought it was so I just
I feel so weird and dirty and uhhhh

RAYNE

...

Look I mean
He gave you the computer to look at and he didn't like
He didn't try to—
He didn't hide anything
It was all—
All the illegal
It was just *there* so like
I dunno like maybe he
Maybe he wanted you to see it?

LEAH

What?

RAYNE

Just like maybe like
We dunno what was going through his sick sick head
I dunno maybe he wanted
Maybe he wanted someone to see it
And know it was his

LEAH shakes her head.

RAYNE

You did the right thing

LEAH

I fucking hope so

RAYNE

We never really know until after right? If this was the right call?

LEAH

Yeah yeah

...

RAYNE

How much longer?

LEAH

Ten more minutes

RAYNE

Ok cool

*The girls continue working.
End of Play.*

PRODUCTION PROPOSAL PROJECT GUIDELINES HANDOUT

Production Proposal Project Guidelines

In this project you will create a production proposal for a play of your choosing. You can either pick a play from the list below or find one that we agree to. Please come talk to me if you need help searching or making a selection.

- *The Wolves* by Sarah DeLappe
- *Bike America* by Mike Lew
- *A Bright New Boise* by Samuel D. Hunter
- *The Cake* by Bekah Brunstetter
- *She Kills Monsters* by Qui Nguyen
- *An Octoroon* by Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins
- *The Flick* by Annie Baker
- *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* by Anne Washburn
- *Failure: A Love Story* by Philip Dawkins
- *Choir Boy* by Tarell Alvin McCraney
- *Oslo* by J.T. Rogers
- *Flyin' West* by Pearl Cleage
- *Eurydice* by Sarah Ruhl
- *Dark Play, or Stories for Boys* by Carlos Murillo
- *Hir* by Taylor Mac
- *Defacing Michael Jackson* by Aurin Squire
- *Guards at the Taj* by Rajiv Joseph
- *Notes from the Field* by Anna Deavere Smith
- *In the Heights* by Lin Manuel-Miranda and Quiara Alegria Hudes
- *Fun Home* by Jeanine Tesori and Lisa Kron

Read your play a few times—first for fun, next to see what themes and stories feels relevant to you and our world, and then a third time to see if you can start to imagine what the play might look like on its feet. Finally, read it once more with a critical eye to determine its writer's intent and how that intent lines up with what you found interesting in the piece.

You will formulate a directorial vision for your play and decide how to execute that vision through a production design that will include sets, lights, sound, and costumes. Upon completing the project, you will have the opportunity to pitch your proposal to the rest of the class and we will vote on one proposal to “produce”.

As we work on the project, you will have the ability to submit draft versions of each section. I will give you feedback on your drafts and you will be able to make changes to them so that by the time you pitch your project to the whole class, you will be articulating the fullest version of your ideas. Let this be an opportunity for your imagination to run wild. I hope you create something that is meaningful and exciting. Why not make this the production of your dreams?

The final project will contain:

1. Written Directorial Vision Statement (3-4 Pages, Double Spaced, 12 Pt. Font)

- a. This statement will be your compass in approaching this project and will guide every other decision you make. Start by articulating the story of the play as you understand it. This does **NOT** mean you should summarize the plot. Rather, tell us what themes, ideas, characters, and messages resonate with you. What did you get out of reading the play and what is your personal connection to it? In other words, what lens do you look at this play through? Your ideas about the play must be supported by the author's intent and you must provide textual evidence for your conclusions. This statement is basically your opportunity to tell us what *your* version of this play is going to be about and how it will be different from someone else's version.

2. Production Design Board

- a. This is where you will *show* us what your production will look like. From looking at your board, we should be able to picture the experience an audience member might have watching your play. Therefore, your production design should make your directorial vision statement come to life. Start by figuring out a concept that can turn the theories you laid out in your vision statement into something tangible. Next, decide how each element of this board can be used as a tool that fleshes out that concept. How do these elements work together to create that full idea?
 - i. **Scenic Design**—You will create basic sketches or a model of what the sets will look like for your production. In addition, you should provide images that you use as inspiration for your design. These might be set designs from a previous production, textures or patterns that might appear on the set or were informative to the way you conceived the world, or pictures that capture the mood of the piece. How does your set contribute to your production concept? You will need to annotate how your design supports your directorial vision and is supported by the text.
 - ii. **Lighting Design**—You will create images of a few moments in your piece, showing us what the stage might look like in those moments. What colors might you use? How might the actors and sets look in these moments? You should also provide images that have inspired either the color, mood, or feel of your design. How does this look contribute to your production concept? You will need to annotate how your design supports your directorial vision and is supported by the text.
 - iii. **Sound Design**—You will decide what your play sounds like. What music or sound effects support your concept? Why? How does the sound you are picking contribute to your production concept? You

will need to annotate how your design supports your directorial vision and is supported by the text.

- iv. **Costume Design**—You will create costume designs for the characters in your play. You can either create sketches or assemble a collection of images to create the wardrobe you will present. How do the costumes contribute to your production concept? You will need to annotate how your design supports your directorial vision and is supported by the text.

You will pitch us your production design at the end of the unit. Be prepared to answer questions about it and to defend your choices. Most importantly, though, create the kind of theater that you would want to see! Think about what your play means to you and how it engages with your world.

PRODUCTION PROPOSAL PROJECT RUBRIC HANDOUT

Production Proposal Project Rubric

NAME:

DATE:

Written Directorial Vision		
How You Can Strengthen Your Work	Criteria	Strong Aspects of Your Work
	Articulates clear vision of piece	
	Justifies personal connection to the piece	
	Articulates timeliness of vision	
	Supports vision with specific evidence from the script	

Production Design Board		
How You Can Strengthen Your Work	Criteria	Strong Aspects of Your Work
	Defines clear production design concept	
	Defines clear scenic design	
	Defines clear lighting design	
	Defines clear sound design	
	Defines clear costume design	

	Supports design with specific evidence from script	
	Design elements work together to support production design concept	

COMMENTS:

Lesson Title: What Can We Make of This? Part 1 (Lesson 6 of 14)

Focus Question: How do we engage with a script in order to bring it to life?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to determine authorial intent and to develop a directorial vision.	Performance Tasks: Play Reading and Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates authorial intent, Defines pieces of directorial vision, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to articulate personal responses to a theater script.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates personal response, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and introduces the play students will read. The teacher recaps with students what they might think about in crafting a directorial vision statement and encourages students to focus on how they might bring this script to life as they read it.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students reading a play like, *An Octoroon* by Brandon Jacobs-Jenkins, out loud. The teacher engages students in discussion and answers questions as necessary. As students read, the teacher periodically asks students about their evolving understanding of a directorial vision for the piece.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about the piece's authorial intent, their directorial vision for it, and their personal reactions to the text.

Lesson Title: What Can We Make of This? Part 2 (Lesson 7 of 14)

Focus Question: How do we engage with a script in order to bring it to life?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to determine authorial intent and to develop a directorial vision.	Performance Tasks: Play Reading and Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates authorial intent, Defines pieces of directorial vision, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to articulate personal responses to a theater script.	Performance Tasks: Discussion Criteria: Successfully articulates personal response, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback in discussion, Brief Notes

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and recaps what has happened in the play so far. The teacher reminds students to focus on thinking about how they would craft an artistic directorial vision statement for the play as they read.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates students continuing to read the play. Like in the previous lesson, the teacher engages students in discussion and answers questions as necessary. As students read, the teacher periodically asks students about their evolving understanding of a directorial vision for the piece.

Closing: The teacher facilitates a group discussion with students about the piece's authorial intent, their directorial vision for it, and their personal reactions to the text having completed reading it. The teacher asks students to articulate strategies for crafting a directorial vision from reading a script.

Lesson Title: Building Blocks (Lesson 8 of 14)

Focus Question: How do different theatrical production elements work together to tell a story on stage?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to evaluate the different ways theatrical production elements can be used to tell a story on stage.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Production Design Concept Draft Criteria: Articulates clear design concept, Articulates ideas about the ways different production elements might be used to tell story, Production design concept connected to directorial vision Documentation: Teacher feedback on board</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to justify artistic choices using textual evidence.</p>	<p>Performance Tasks: Production Design Concept Draft Criteria: Provides justification of design in accordance with artistic vision, Provides textual evidence to justify design Documentation: Teacher feedback on board</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and shares a video about the design of the Spongebob Squarepants musical: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spPzfHTEbCQ>. The teacher asks students to examine what considerations the designer made when creating his design and how they saw those considerations play out in the design.

Main Activity: The teacher introduces the idea of a “production design concept” and asks students to identify the concept that was used in Spongebob. Students break out into their groups and using their directorial vision statement they created together, define a production concept that supports the story they outlined. The teacher then asks students to make an initial exploration into how sets, lights, sound, and costumes might be used to realize their concept.

Closing: Each group shares their design concept, tying it to how it supports their directorial vision, and the teacher facilitates other students giving feedback on the concept.

Homework: Students complete a Production Design Concept Draft that fleshes out a production concept for the play they have picked for their proposal project.

Lesson Title: Ready...Set...Go! (Lesson 9 of 14)

Focus Question: What considerations go into creating a basic scenic design for a production?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic scenic design.	Performance Tasks: Scenic Design Draft Criteria: Provides sketch or model for the set, Design reflects setting of piece, Provides inspirational images to support design, Design is in line with production design concept Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to justify artistic choices using textual evidence.	Performance Tasks: Scenic Design Draft Criteria: Provides justification of design in accordance with production design concept, Provides textual evidence to justify design Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and fields suggestions from students about criteria they might use to create a set design.

Main Activity: Using the criteria outlined by the class, students return to their groups to create scene design sketches for their short plays. Students are asked to find justifications for their choices in the text and to make sure their designs support their design concept.

Closing: Each group shares their scenic design sketches, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how they support the design concept. The teacher facilitates other students sharing feedback on the designs.

Homework: Students complete a Scenic Design Draft for the play they have picked for their proposal project, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how their choices support their design concept.

Lesson Title: Let There Be Light! (Lesson 10 of 14)

Focus Question: What considerations go into creating a basic lighting design for a production?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic lighting design.	Performance Tasks: Lighting Design Draft Criteria: Provides sketches of key moments, Articulates color palette, Provides inspirational imagery, Design enhances scenic design, Design is in line with production design concept Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to justify artistic choices using textual evidence.	Performance Tasks: Lighting Design Draft Criteria: Provides justification of design in accordance with production design concept, Provides textual evidence to justify design Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and explains that students will experiment with flashlights in order to explore how lighting changes the way we interpret a story.

Main Activity: Students try lighting each other from different angles (high, low, front, back, side, in a spot) with the flashlights and they articulate how making this change affects how we feel about the subject the light is hitting. The teacher then has students add gels (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) to the flashlights and students experiment with how color affects our interpretation of a story, as well. The teacher facilitates students sharing discoveries they have made from this process. The teacher then asks students about other considerations that go into creating a lighting design like the time of day and season in which the story is set and how a lighting design might be used to enhance a scenic design. Working in their groups, students outline a basic lighting design for their short play, explaining how it is supported by the text and supports their design concept.

Closing: Each group shares their lighting design, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how they support the design concept. The teacher facilitates other students sharing feedback on the design.

Homework: Students complete a Lighting Design Draft for the play they have picked for their proposal project, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how their choices support their design concept.

Lesson Title: I Can't Hear You! (Lesson 11 of 14)

Focus Question: What considerations go into creating a basic sound design for a production?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic sound design.	Performance Tasks: Sound Design Draft Criteria: Provides music and sound effects for design, Design enhances scenic and lighting designs, Design is in line with production design concept Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to justify artistic choices using textual evidence.	Performance Tasks: Sound Design Draft Criteria: Provides justification of design in accordance with production design concept, Provides textual evidence to justify design Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and shares a video that underscores the same film clip with different music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc6XO6e1r50>. The teacher asks students to identify how the different music shifted the story of the clip.

Main Activity: The teacher facilitates the class creating a list of other ways sound can be used to enhance a story in a theater piece and how a sound design might be used to enhance the scenic and lighting design of a piece. The class then works in their groups to create a sound design for their short play, proposing music and sound effects that can be used, articulating ways the design supports their design concept, and justifying their choices with textual evidence.

Closing: Each group shares their sound designs, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how they support the design concept. The teacher facilitates other students sharing feedback on the design.

Homework: Students complete a Sound Design Draft for the play they have picked for their proposal project, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how their choices support their design concept.

Lesson Title: What Are You Wearing?! (Lesson 12 of 14)

Focus Question: What considerations go into creating a basic costume design for a production?

Lesson Objectives	Formative Assessment Strategies
Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic costume design.	Performance Tasks: Costume Design Draft Criteria: Design (sketch or images) provided for each character and scene, Costumes reflect character, Costumes reflect setting, Design enhances scenic, lighting, and sound designs, Design is in line with production design concept Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft
Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to justify artistic choices using textual evidence.	Performance Tasks: Costume Design Draft Criteria: Provides justification of design in accordance with production design concept, Provides textual evidence to justify design Documentation: Teacher feedback on draft

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and shows students pictures of the same person in different outfits. The teacher asks students to describe the person’s personality and life based on their clothes and fields responses to this prompt. The teacher then facilitates students creating a set of criteria they might use in thinking about designing costumes and articulating how a costume design can enhance a scenic, lighting, and sound design.

Main Activity: The class works in their groups to create preliminary costume designs for their short plays, describing costumes for their characters, articulating ways the design supports their design concept, and justifying their choices with textual evidence.

Closing: Each group shares their costume designs, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how they support the design concept. The teacher facilitates other students sharing feedback on the designs.

Homework: Students complete a Costume Design Draft for the play they have picked for their proposal project, justifying their choices with textual evidence and articulating how their choices support their design concept.

Lesson Title: Here’s What I’m Proposing... Part 1 (Lesson 13 of 14)
Focus Question: How do we create and present a production proposal?

Lesson Objectives	Summative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to articulate a personalized and timely artistic vision for the piece.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Production Proposal Criteria: Articulates clear vision of piece, Justifies personal connection to the piece, Articulates timeliness of vision, Supports vision with specific evidence from the script Documentation: Rubric</p>
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic production design for a theater piece.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Production Proposal Criteria: Defines clear scenic design, Defines clear lighting design, Defines clear sound design, Defines clear costume design, Supports design with specific evidence from script, Design elements work together to support production design concept Documentation: Rubric</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze a piece of theater to assess the execution of its creator’s intent.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Peer Evaluation Criteria: Successfully articulates creator’s intent, Engages in insightful analysis about the execution of those idea, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback on Peer Evaluation Feedback Form</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and organizes what order students will present in.

Main Activity: Students present their Production Proposal Projects, outlining their directorial vision and production design concept for the piece and articulating the ways they have used their production design elements to support that vision. The rest of the students watch and evaluate the presentations, assessing how their peers have articulated their proposals and justifying which one they would select to produce. Students complete Peer Evaluation forms about each other’s presentations.

Closing: The teacher facilitates feedback from students on the day’s proceedings.

PEER EVALUATION FORM HANDOUT

Peer Evaluation Form

NAME:

DATE:

NAME OF PRESENTER:

PLAY:

WHAT IS THE ESSENCE OF THE DIRECTORIAL VISION FOR THIS PRODUCTION?

WHAT IS THE ESSENCE OF THE PRODUCTION DESIGN CONCEPT?

HOW DID THE PRESENTER USE THE DESIGN ELEMENTS TO SUPPORT THIS CONCEPT? BE SPECIFIC.

WERE THOSE USES SUCCESSFUL IN SUPPORTING THE DESIGN CONCEPT? WHY OR WHY NOT?

Lesson Title: Here’s What I’m Proposing… Part 2 (Lesson 14 of 14)
Focus Question: How do we create and present a production proposal?

Lesson Objectives	Summative Assessment Strategies
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to interpret a theater script to articulate a personalized and timely artistic vision for the piece.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Production Proposal Criteria: Articulates clear vision of piece, Justifies personal connection to the piece, Articulates timeliness of vision, Supports vision with specific evidence from the script Documentation: Rubric</p>
<p>Drama-Based Objective: Students will be able to create a basic production design for a theater piece.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Production Proposal Criteria: Defines clear scenic design, Defines clear lighting design, Defines clear sound design, Defines clear costume design, Supports design with specific evidence from script, Design elements work together to support artistic vision Documentation: Rubric</p>
<p>Language-Based Objective: Students will be able to analyze a piece of theater to assess the execution of its creator’s intent.</p>	<p>Performance Task: Peer Evaluation Criteria: Successfully articulates creator’s intent, Engages in insightful analysis about the execution of those idea, Provides specific evidence for conclusions Documentation: Teacher feedback on Peer Evaluation Feedback Form</p>

Warm Up: The teacher shares the focus of the lesson and organizes what order students will present in.

Main Activity: Students present their Production Proposal Projects, outlining their directorial vision and production design concept for the piece and articulating the ways they have used their production design elements to support that vision. The rest of the students watch and evaluate the presentations, assessing how their peers have articulated their proposals and justifying which one they would select to produce. Students complete Peer Evaluation forms about each other’s presentations.

Closing: The class votes on which proposal they would “produce”. The teacher shares the winner of the vote and facilitates student reactions to the winning proposal and the unit as a whole.