



# IMPROV

By ANNA PORTER

Improv is a fantastic method to engage your students; this 3 lesson mini unit is a great way to introduce improvisation.

This unit focuses on learning the rules of Improv, trying games to build improvisation skills, and developing conflict and story line. Through the three lesson series, students will use journals, participate in class discussions, learn six different improv games, and perform for their peers.

Assessment tools include both informal assessment as well as a formal quiz that's included in the unit.

## **1 - Introduction to Improv**

Students explore how to trust themselves and work with others in improvisation through activities as well as playing games - Story Game, What are you doing?, and Press Conference.

## **2 - Characterization and One Focus**

Students explore Characterization and One Focus by participating in activities and playing Ding, Emotional Waiter and Party Quirks.

## **3 - Conflict and Tell a Complete Story**

Students explore the importance and types of conflict as well as the importance of telling a complete story. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the rules of improvisation through their final performance in Freeze as well as a written quiz.

# Standards Connections

## National Core Arts Standards

### Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation - Grade HS Proficient

TH:Pr4.1.HSI.a - Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.

### Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - High School Accomplished

TH:Cr1.1.HSII.c - Use personal experiences and knowledge to develop a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

### Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade HS Proficient

TH:Pr5.1.HSI.a - Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Cr2.1.HSII.b - Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Advanced

TH:Cr2.1.HSIII.b - Collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade HS Advanced

TH:Pr5.1.HSIII.a - Use and justify a collection of acting exercises from reliable resources to prepare a believable and sustainable performance.

### Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade HS Proficient

TH:Cr3.1.HSI.b - Explore physical, vocal and physiological choices to develop a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant to a drama/theatre work.

### Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Pr6.1.HSII.a - Present a drama/theatre work using creative processes that shape the production for a specific audience.

## Common Core

### Speaking and Listening

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 - Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### Language

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3 - Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

## California VAPA Standards (2019)

### Prof.TH:Pr4 Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

Prof.TH:Pr4.a - Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.

### Acc.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Acc.TH:Cr1.b - Use personal experiences and knowledge to develop a character that is believable and authentic in a

drama/theatre work.

### Prof.TH:Pr5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Prof.TH:Pr5.a - Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

### Acc.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Acc.TH:Cr2.b - Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

### Adv.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Adv.TH:Cr2.b - Collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### Adv.TH:Pr5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Adv.TH:Pr5.a - Use and justify a collection of acting exercises from reliable resources to prepare a believable and sustainable performance.

### Prof.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.

Prof.TH:Cr3.b - Explore physical, vocal and physiological choices to develop a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant to a drama/theatre work.

### Acc.TH:Pr6 Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Acc.TH:Pr6 - Present a drama/theatre work using creative processes that shape the production for a specific audience.

## Florida Sunshine State Standards

### Critical Thinking & Reflection

TH.912.C.1.5 - Make and defend conscious choices in the creation of a character that will fulfill anticipated audience response.

TH.912.C.2.5 - Analyze the effect of rehearsal sessions and/or strategies on refining skills and techniques by keeping a performance or rehearsal journal/log.

TH.912.C.2.7 - Accept feedback from others, analyze it for validity, and apply suggestions appropriately to future performances or designs.

TH.912.C.2.8 - Improve a performance or project using various self-assessment tools, coaching, feedback, and/or constructive criticism.

### Innovation, Technology & the Future

TH.912.F.3.3 - Exhibit independence, discipline, and commitment to the theatre process when working on assigned projects and productions.

### Skills, Techniques & Processes

TH.912.S.1.6 - Respond appropriately to directorial choices for improvised and scripted scenes.

TH.912.S.2.4 - Sustain a character or follow technical cues in a production piece to show focus.

TH.912.S.2.8 - Strengthen acting skills by engaging in theatre games and improvisations.

TH.912.S.3.2 - Exercise artistic discipline and collaboration to achieve ensemble in rehearsal and performance.

## North Carolina Essential Standards

### Beginning High School Standards - Communication

B.C.1.1 - Use non-verbal expression to illustrate how human emotion affects the body and is conveyed through the body.

B.C.1.2 - Apply vocal elements of volume, pitch, rate, tone, articulation, and vocal expression.

B.C.2.1 - Use improvisation and acting skills, such as observation, concentration, and characterization in a variety of theatre exercises.

### **Beginning High School Standards - Culture**

B.CU.2.2 - Use acting conventions, such as stage presence, subtext, style, and ensemble work, to perform formal or informal works.

## **Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Theatre Arts**

### **MS 117.212 LII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

B.1.A - explore characterization using sensory and emotional recall.

### **HS 117.315 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

C.1.B - develop and practice theatre preparation and warm-up techniques.

C.1.C - develop and practice stage movement techniques such as mime, pantomime, stage combat, Laban, Lecoq, or Viewpoints consistently to express thoughts, feelings, and actions non-verbally.

C.1.D - develop and practice effective voice and diction to express thoughts and feelings.

C.1.F - demonstrate a working knowledge of the language of theatre such as stage terminology, elements of theatre, or theatrical conventions.

### **HS 117.315 LI - Creative Expression: performance**

C.2.A - demonstrate safe use of the voice and body.

C.2.D - use physical, intellectual, emotional, and social awareness to portray believable characters and convey a story when applying acting concepts, skills, and techniques.

C.2.F - create, write, and refine original monologues, improvisations, scenes, or vignettes that reflect dramatic structure to convey meaning to the audience through live performance or media forms.

### **HS 117.315 LI - Historical and cultural relevance**

C.4.A - portray theatre as a reflection of life in particular times, places, and cultures.

### **HS 117.315 LI - Critical evaluation and response**

C.5.A - analyze and apply appropriate behavior at various types of live performances.

### **HS 117.317 LIII - Creative Expression: production**

C.3.E - perform the role of actor, director, or technician, demonstrating responsibility, artistic discipline, and creative problem solving.

## **Alberta, Canada**

### **Improvisation Drama 10**

1 - use warmup techniques for preparation of body, voice and mind

11 - apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax and plot in planned and unplanned scenes

8 - tell a story spontaneously

### **Junior Goal II Objectives**

develop the ability to give form or expression to feelings, ideas and images

### **Junior Orientation**

demonstrate a willingness to take calculated and reasonable risks

demonstrate trust by becoming comfortable, physically and emotionally, with others

work cooperatively and productively with all members of the class in pairs, small groups and large groups

### **Improvisation/Acting Level I - Beginning**

1 - use warm-up techniques for preparation of body, voice and mind

6 - understand and apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax and plot

### **Improvisation/Acting Level II - Intermediate**

17 - select and use language appropriate to a given character and situation

### **Junior Goal I Objectives**

explore and develop physical and vocal capabilities

extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively

### **Senior Goal I Objectives**

demonstrate a sense of responsibility and commitment, individually and to the group

demonstrate the ability to considered decisions, act upon them and accept the results

### **Senior Goal II Objectives**

extend the ability to give form and expression to feelings, ideas and images

### **Orientation Drama 10**

listen to self and others

share ideas confidently

## **British Columbia (2018)**

### **GRADE 6 - ARTS - Exploring and creating**

Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play

### **GRADE 6 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting**

Develop and refine ideas, processes, and technical skills in a variety of art forms to improve the quality of artistic creations

### **GRADE 6 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting**

Express, feelings, ideas, and experiences through the arts

Take creative risks to express feelings, ideas, and experiences

### **GRADE 7 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting**

Adapt learned skills, understandings, and processes for use in new contexts and for different purposes and audiences

Express, feelings, ideas, and experiences through the arts

Take creative risks to express feelings, ideas, and experiences

### **GRADE 8 - ARTS - Exploring and creating**

Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play

### **GRADE 8 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting**

Develop, refine ideas, and critically appraise ideas, processes, and technical skills in a variety of art forms to improve the quality of artistic creations

### **GRADE 8 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting**

Take creative risks to express feelings, ideas, and

experiences

### **GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Exploring and creating**

Create dramatic works both collaboratively and as an individual, using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, and purposeful play

Select and combine dramatic elements and principles to intentionally create a particular mood, effect, and meaning

Take creative risks to experience and express thoughts, emotions, and meaning

### **GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Reasoning and reflecting**

Receive, offer, and apply constructive feedback

### **GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Connecting and expanding**

Collaborate through reciprocal relationships during creative processes

Demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and the audience

### **GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Explore and Create**

Develop a repertoire of dramatic skills and techniques through presentation or performance

Develop performance skills in a variety of contexts

Improvise and take creative risks to express meaning

Intentionally select and combine drama conventions

### **GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect**

Apply feedback to develop and refine ideas

### **GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Connect and expand**

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and the audience

### **GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Explore and Create**

Create dramatic works for an intended audience

Create, rehearse, and refine dramatic works through collaborative and individual presentation or performance

Develop a repertoire of dramatic skills and techniques through presentation or performance

Develop and refine performance skills in a variety of contexts

Explore and create dramatic works to express ideas, meaning, and emotions

Improvise and take creative risks using imagination, exploration, and inquiry

### **GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect**

Demonstrate awareness of self, others, and audience

Receive and apply constructive feedback to develop and refine ideas

### **GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Connect and expand**

Demonstrate awareness of self, others, and audience

### **GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Explore and Create**

Create, rehearse, and refine dramatic works through collaborative and individual presentation or performance

Develop a repertoire of dramatic skills, vocabulary, and techniques through presentation or performance

Develop and refine performance skills in a variety of contexts

Develop dramatic works for an intended audience

Explore and create dramatic works to express ideas, meaning, and emotions

Improvise and take creative risks using imagination, exploration, and inquiry

### **GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect**

Receive, provide, and apply constructive feedback to refine dramatic works

### **GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Connect and expand**

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and audience

## **Ontario, Canada**

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Foundations - Responsible Practices**

C.3.2 - identify and apply the skills and attitudes needed to perform various tasks and responsibilities in producing drama works (e.g., use active listening and cooperative problem-solving skills; practise punctuality; use tact in suggesting changes and improvements; demonstrate willingness to accept criticism and build consensus)

C.3.3 - demonstrate an understanding of theatre and audience etiquette, in both classroom and formal performance contexts (e.g., as a performer: show willingness to take direction and behave appropriately towards other actors; as a viewer: demonstrate respect for performers and other audience members by paying attention, not interrupting or talking, and applauding when appropriate)

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing - Connections Beyond the Classroom**

B.3.1 - identify and describe skills, attitudes, and strategies they used in collaborative drama activities (e.g., brainstorming, active listening, and cooperative problem-solving skills; strategies for sharing responsibility through collaborative team roles)

B.3.2 - identify skills they have developed through drama activities and explain how they can be useful in work and other social contexts (e.g., explain in a journal how their brainstorming and negotiation skills support teamwork in a variety of contexts)

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing - Drama and Society**

B.2.2 - explain how dramatic exploration helps develop awareness of different roles and identities people have in society (e.g., explain what they learned through role playing characters from different socio-economic groups)

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Creating and Presenting - Presentation Techniques & Technologies**

A.3.2 - use a variety of voice and movement techniques to support the creation of character or atmosphere during rehearsal (e.g., use voice and movement to suggest an airport, circus, or factory environment)

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Creating and Presenting - The Creative Process**

A.1.3 - use role play and characterization to explore personal and social issues (e.g., with a partner, create or assume a role that explores an issue such as bullying; create a scenario that reveals details about a character's motivation)