



PERFORMING SHAKESPEARE

By MATT WEBSTER

In this unit, students are introduced to a series of lesson plans that explore non-traditional approaches to performing the works of William Shakespeare. By the end of the unit students will be exposed to a unique set of tools they can utilize as the foundations for analyzing, staging and performing a scene from Shakespeare's canon. Students will then rehearse and perform a two-person Shakespearean scene.

1 - Shakespeare: Finding Emotion and Action in Text

Students will analyze a Much Ado About Nothing monologue to identify clues about emotion and action. Students can then use the Shakespeare tools to analyze and present assigned Shakespeare monologues.

2 - Shakespeare: Tableaux

Students will create stage pictures in tableaux as a way to interpret the stories of Shakespeare. By putting their analysis into action, students will lay the foundation for simple blocking of their Shakespearean scenes.

3 - Acting Shakespeare Style

Students will explore the historically accurate way that scripts were distributed, rehearsed, and performed in Elizabethan times. Students will then perform a short script in this style of "rolls" and "sides."

4 - Shakespeare Setting and Soundscape

Students will use found and common objects to create an obstacle course setting for a Shakespearean play based on sounds.

5 - Culminating Project: Performing Shakespearean Scenes

Students will perform two-person Shakespeare scenes using the concepts introduced over the course of the unit, to enhance the performance and staging of the scenes.

Standards Connections

National Core Arts Standards

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - Grade 6

TH:Cr1.1.6.c - Explore a scripted or improvised character by imagining the given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - Grade 7

TH:Cr1.1.7.c - Envision and describe a scripted or improvised character's inner thoughts and objectives in a drama/theatre work.

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - High School Proficient

TH:Cr1.1.HSI.c - Use script analysis to generate ideas about a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

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.

TH:Pr4.1.HSI.b - Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - High School Advanced

TH:Cr1.1.HSIII.c - Integrate cultural and historical contexts with personal experiences to create a character that is believable and authentic, in a drama/theatre work.

Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade 6

TH:Pr5.1.6.a - Recognize how acting exercises and techniques can be applied to a drama/theatre work.

Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade 7

TH:Pr5.1.7.a - Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade 8

TH:Pr5.1.8.a - Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

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.

Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Pr5.1.HSII.a - Refine a range of acting skills to build a believable and sustainable drama/theatre performance.

Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Advanced

TH:Cr2.1.HSIII.a - Develop and synthesize original ideas in a drama/theatre work utilizing critical analysis, historical and cultural context, research, and western or non-western theatre traditions.

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.

Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding -

Grade 6

TH:Cn11.2.6.b - Investigate the time period and place of a drama/theatre work to better understand performance and design choices.

Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade 7

TH:Cr3.1.7.a - Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process to analyze and refine choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding - Grade 7

TH:Cn11.2.7.a - Research and discuss how a playwright might have intended a drama/theatre work to be produced.

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.1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.2 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

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.

Reading: Literature

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1 - Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2 - 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; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3 - Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4 - Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Language

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

California VAPA Standards (2019)

6.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

6.TH:Cr1.b - Explore a scripted or improvised character by

imagining the given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

7.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

7.TH:Cr1.b - Envision and describe a scripted or improvised character's inner thoughts and objectives in a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

Prof.TH:Cr1.b - Use script analysis to generate ideas about a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

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.

Prof.TH:Pr4.b - Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

Adv.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Adv.TH:Cr1.b - Integrate cultural and historical contexts with personal experiences to create a character that is believable and authentic, in a drama/theatre work.

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

6.TH:Pr5.a - Recognize how acting exercises and techniques can be applied to a drama/theatre work.

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

7.TH:Pr5.a - Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

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

8.TH:Pr5.a - Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

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.

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

Acc.TH:Pr5.a - Refine a range of acting skills to build a believable and sustainable drama/theatre performance.

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

Adv.TH:Cr2.a - Develop and synthesize original ideas in a drama/theatre work utilizing critical analysis, historical and cultural context, research, and western or non-western theatre traditions.

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.

6.TH:Cn11.2 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

6.TH:Cn11.2.b - Investigate the time period and place of a drama/theatre work to better understand performance and design choices.

7.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.

7.TH:Cr3.a - Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process to analyze and refine choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

7.TH:Cn11.2 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

7.TH:Cn11.2.a - Research and discuss how a playwright might have intended a drama/theatre work to be produced.

Florida Sunshine State Standards

Critical Thinking & Reflection

TH.912.C.1.2 - Create, refine, and sustain complex and believable characters for performance through the integration and application of artistic choices based on research, rehearsal, feedback, and refinement.

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.1.6 - Respond to theatrical works by identifying and interpreting influences of historical, social, or cultural contexts.

TH.912.C.2.1 - Explore and describe possible solutions to production or acting challenges and select the solution most likely to produce desired results.

Historical & Global Connections

TH.912.H.1.1 - Analyze how playwrights' work reflects the cultural and socio-political framework in which it was created.

TH.912.H.2.5 - Apply knowledge of dramatic genres and historical periods to shape the work of performers, directors, and designers.

Skills, Techniques & Processes

TH.912.S.1.7 - Interpret dramatic texts, organize and conduct rehearsals, and justify directorial choices for formal and informal productions.

TH.912.S.1.8 - Use research to extract clues in dramatic texts to create performances or technical elements, choosing those that are most interesting and that best convey dramatic intent.

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.3.3 - Develop acting skills and techniques in the rehearsal process.

North Carolina Essential Standards

Beginning High School Standards - Communication

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

B.C.2.2 - Interpret various selections of dramatic literature through formal and informal presentations.

Beginning High School Standards - Aesthetics

B.AE.1.2 - Explain how the major technical elements, such as sound, lights, set, and costumes, are used to enhance formal or informal productions.

Beginning High School Standards - Culture

B.CU.2.1 - Illustrate appropriate theatre etiquette as a member of an audience, as a performer, and as a technician.

B.CU.2.2 - Use acting conventions, such as stage presence,

subtext, style, and ensemble work, to perform formal or informal works.

Intermediate High School Standards - Communication

I.C.2.2 - Interpret scenes through formal and informal presentations.

Intermediate High School Standards - Analysis

I.A.1.1 - Analyze the plot structure and the thematic, technical, and dramaturgical elements within plays.

Intermediate High School Standards - Aesthetics

I.AE.1.2 - Use the major technical elements, such as sound, lights, set, and costumes, for formal or informal audiences.

Advanced High School Standards - Communication

A.C.2.2 - Interpret scripts through formal and informal presentations.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Theatre Arts

MS 117.211 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.E - identify theatrical vocabulary and terminology, including basic anatomy of theatre spaces.

C.1.F - identify the structure and form in examples of dramatic literature.

MS 117.211 LI - Creative Expression: performance

C.2.B - imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships, and their surroundings.

C.2.F - create environments, characters, and actions.

MS 117.211 LI - Critical evaluation and response

C.5.A - identify and apply audience etiquette at all performances.

MS 117.212 LII - Creative Expression: performance

B.2.B - define characters by what they do, what they say, and what others say about them.

MS 117.213 LIII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

B.1.B - explore preparation and warm-up techniques.

B.1.E - apply knowledge of theatrical vocabulary and terminology.

B.1.F - explore and evaluate the structure and form of dramatic literature.

MS 117.213 LIII - Creative Expression: performance

B.2.C - create characters, dialogue, and actions that reflect dramatic structure in improvised and scripted scenes, individually and collaboratively.

MS 117.213 LIII - Historical and cultural relevance

B.4.A - demonstrate theatre as a reflection of life in particular times, places, and cultures through performance.

HS 117.315 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

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

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

HS 117.315 LI - Historical and cultural relevance

C.4.B - relate historical and cultural influences on theatre.

HS 117.316 LII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.D - analyze dramatic structure and genre.

HS 117.317 LIII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.A - apply theatre preparation and warm-up techniques effectively.

HS 117.317 LIII - Creative Expression: production

C.3.D - perform a role such as actor, director, designer, technician, or editor in production decision making and collaborate with others to tell a story through live theatre or media performance.

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

HS 117.318 LIV - Creative Expression: performance

C.2.C - analyze and interpret characters from various genres and styles, describing physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions.

C.2.D - interpret scripted scenes of various styles to portray believable characters.

HS 117.318 LIV - Historical and cultural relevance

C.4.A - evaluate historical and cultural influences on theatre.

Alberta, Canada

Acting Drama 20

1 - analyze a script for explicit character clues

2 - create, select and sustain physical details of the character from scripted material

3 - demonstrate understanding of and identify motivation and objectives (overall, main and immediate).

4 - demonstrate understanding that a character's behaviour is motivated by past, present and anticipated future experiences

5 - demonstrate a character's main objective within a scene

6 - demonstrate a character's immediate or moment-to-moment objectives within a scene

7 - demonstrate the ability to play a character from the character's point of view

9 - demonstrate the ability to pick up cues effectively

Theatre Studies Drama 10 (Greek, Medieval or Elizabethan, and Canadian)

1 - recognize theatre has evolved as a traditional art form

2 - recognize innovations in the theatre

Theatre Studies Drama 30 (Early or Middle or Late drama)

5 - recognize elements of tragedy and comedy

Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Management - Sound

1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of stage sound

2 - recognize the importance of illusion in sound design

3 - recognize the importance of artistic unity in sound design

7 - create live sound effects

Improvisation/Acting Level III - Advanced

26 - pick up cues effectively

Junior Goal II Objectives

become familiar with dramatic terminology and script format
develop belief in, identification with, and commitment to a role

Junior Goal III Objectives

develop awareness of various conventions of theatre

Junior Orientation

demonstrate awareness of the multidisciplinary nature of drama/theatre
generate imaginative and creative solutions to problems
listen effectively
meet deadlines and follow through on individual and group commitments
recognize that there is an historical and cultural aspect of drama/theatre
recognize the purposes of and participate in warmup activities
share ideas confidently with others
support positivity the work of 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

Improvisation/Acting Level II - Intermediate

20 - enter and exit in character
21 - sustain a character throughout an exercise or scene
23 - demonstrate understanding of character motivation

Junior Goal I Objectives

develop a positive self-image
develop a sense of responsibility and commitment
develop self-confidence
develop self-discipline
develop the ability to initiate, organize and present a project within a given set of guidelines
develop the ability to interact effectively and constructively in a group process
develop the willingness to make a decision, act upon it and accept the results
extend the ability to explore meaning through abstract concepts
extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively
strengthen powers of concentration

Theatre Studies Level III - Advanced (The script)

10 - demonstrate understanding of the concept of dramatic convention
11 - demonstrate understanding of plot structure
7 - define the elements of script, dialogue, directions, characters and settings

Senior Goal I Objectives

apply imaginative and creative thought to problem-solving situations
demonstrate a sense of inquiry and commitment, individually and to the group
demonstrate the ability to contribute effectively and constructively to the group process
develop a sense of inquiry and commitment to learning
extend the ability to concentrate
increase self-confidence
increase self-discipline

Senior Goal II Objectives

explore various approaches to analyzing a script for purposes of study and/or presentation

Senior Goal III Objectives

explore various conventions and traditions of theatre

Orientation Drama 10

concentrate on the task at hand
demonstrate behaviour appropriate to given circumstances
demonstrate self-discipline, self-direction and a sense of responsibility
listen to self and others
make effective decisions or choices
positively support the work of others
share ideas confidently
solve problems imaginatively and creatively
work with abstract concepts

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

Intentionally select and apply materials, movements, technologies, environments, tools, and techniques by combining and arranging artistic elements, processes, and principles in art making

GRADE 6 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting

Interpret works of art using knowledge and skills from various areas of learning

Research, describe, interpret and evaluate how artists (dancers, actors, musicians, and visual artists) use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments in the arts

GRADE 6 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Describe, interpret and respond to works of art and explore artists' intent

Express, feelings, ideas, and experiences through the arts

Take creative risks to express feelings, ideas, and experiences

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Exploring and creating

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

Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of personal, social, cultural, historical, and environmental contexts in relation to the arts

GRADE 7 - 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

Interpret works of art using knowledge and skills from various areas of learning

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

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

Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of

personal, social, cultural, historical, and environmental contexts in relation to the arts

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

Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of personal, social, cultural, historical, and environmental in relation to drama

Explore relationships between identity, place, culture, society, and belonging through dramatic experiences

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

Develop and refine ideas and technical skills to improve the quality of performance pieces

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

Experiment with a range of props, processes, and technologies

Explore and create dramatic works to express ideas and emotions

Explore dramatic works through presentation or performance

Improvise and take creative risks to express meaning

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

Experiment with a range of materials, props, processes, and technologies to create and refine performances

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

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

Purposefully select and combine dramatic elements and conventions

GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect

Demonstrate awareness of self, others, and audience

Examine the influences of social, cultural, historical,

environmental, and personal contexts on dramatic works

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

Experiment with a range of props, processes, and technologies to create and refine innovative dramatic works

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

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

Intentionally select and combine dramatic elements and conventions

GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect

Evaluate the social, cultural, historical, environmental, and personal contexts of dramatic works

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

GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and audience

Examine the impacts of dramatic works on culture and society

Ontario, Canada

Grades 9 & 10 - Foundations - Responsible Practices

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 - Foundations - Context and Influences

C.2.1 - identify ways in which dramatic expression and performance reflect communities and cultures, past and present (e.g., the prominence of socially and/or politically powerful characters in the drama of pre-industrial societies; the use of boy actors for female roles in Shakespearean theatre; the emphasis on religious themes in the drama of many cultures in different eras)

C.2.2 - describe how drama is used for various purposes in a range of social contexts (e.g., to express or celebrate group or community sentiments or values in street theatre or parades; to mark important historical or religious anniversaries of a country or culture; to raise awareness of social, environmental, and political issues; to explore personal relationships or social arrangements)

Grades 9 & 10 - Foundations - Concepts and Terminology

C.1.1 - identify the drama forms, elements, conventions, and techniques used in their own and others' drama works, and explain how the various components are used, or can be used, to achieve specific effects, with a focus on ensemble drama works (e.g., how a comic drama form can be used to convey a serious message, how setting and time period can

be used to sharpen the focus on a moral dilemma, how characters can be used to vary the mood within a drama)

C.1.2 - demonstrate an understanding of and use correct terminology to refer to the forms, elements, conventions, and techniques of drama, with a focus on ensemble drama works (e.g., chorus, protagonist, ingénue, supporting role, act, scene, climax, resolution, improvisation, mask, freeze-frame image)

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

A.3.3 - use a variety of technological tools (e.g., light, sound, set design, props, models) to enhance the impact of drama works