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UNIT ONE: ENSEMBLE BUILDING AND CLASS NORMS

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This unit has six lessons that you can use in the first week of your middle school program. What do you do in the first week? The most important elements are creating routines such as journal prompts, opening and closing circles, and giving strong feedback; creating an ensemble and ensemble-building games; and introducing a Weekly Ensemble Rubric.

Students will define and build ensemble as a group, learning specific ways they can SAY YES and BE SAFE in class. They will understand the daily grading system and the basic routines of class. Finally, students will learn to give strong feedback by connecting specific evidence from performance to the Rubric language.

1 - Ensemble Building

In this first lesson at the start of a new year, students learn daily classroom routines, participate in a name game, and complete a successful journal entry reflecting on circle discussion. They will begin to interact with the Weekly Ensemble Rubric through the journal element.

2 - Review Journal and Intro to Say Yes Rubric

In this second lesson, students continue to practice classroom norms and interact with a second element of the Weekly Ensemble Rubric: SAY YES. Students will role-play a column of the SAY YES category of the Weekly Ensemble Rubric in small groups via a performance task.

3 - Review Journal, Say Yes Rubric, and Intro to Be Safe Rubric

In this third lesson, students continue to practice classroom norms and interact with a third element of the Weekly Ensemble Rubric: BE SAFE. Students will role-play a column of the BE SAFE Rubric in small groups via a performance task.

4 - Intro to Feedback

In this fourth lesson, students continue to practice classroom norms and are introduced to the concept of feedback. In the performance task, students will give peers strong feedback by using language from the Weekly Ensemble Rubric.

5 - Feedback Continued

In this fifth lesson, students continue to practice classroom norms and continue to practice giving strong feedback. In the performance task, students will practice giving strong feedback by giving a specific suggestion for improvement.

6 - Feedback Continued and Feedback Quiz

In this sixth lesson, students continue to practice classroom norms and continue to practice giving strong feedback. In the performance task, students will give peers strong feedback through using body language and vocal tone to encourage and show eagerness for peers to improve.

7 - Posters

3 Posters designed for the drama classroom, to support the Ensemble Building and Class Norms objectives.

Standards Connections

National Core Arts Standards

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.

Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade 7

TH:Cr2.1.7.b - Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

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.

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: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.

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

7.TH:Cr2.b - Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

Florida Sunshine State Standards

Critical Thinking & Reflection

TH.68.C.1.3 - Determine the purpose(s), elements, meaning, and value of a theatrical work based on personal, cultural, or historical standards.

TH.68.C.1.5 - Describe how a theatrical activity can entertain or instruct an audience.

TH.68.C.2.1 - Use group-generated criteria to critique others and help strengthen each other's performance.

TH.68.C.2.2 - Keep a rehearsal journal to document individual performance progress.

TH.68.C.2.3 - Ask questions to understand a peer's artistic choices for a performance or design.

TH.68.C.3.3 - Determine personal strengths and challenges, using evaluations and critiques to guide selection of material for a portfolio.

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.

Historical & Global Connections

TH.68.H.1.2 - Analyze the impact of one's emotional and social experiences when responding to, or participating in, a play.

TH.68.H.1.5 - Describe one's own personal responses to a theatrical work and show respect for the responses of others.

TH.68.H.2.8 - Identify and describe theatrical resources in the community, including professional and community theatres, experts, and sources of scripts and materials.

TH.68.H.3.1 - Identify principles and techniques that are shared between the arts and other content areas.

TH.68.H.3.3 - Use brainstorming as a method to discover multiple solutions for an acting or technical challenge.

TH.68.H.3.5 - Describe how social skills learned through play participation are used in other classroom and extracurricular activities.

Organizational Structure

TH.68.O.1.4 - Discuss how the whole of a theatre performance is greater than the sum of its parts.

Skills, Techniques & Processes

TH.68.S.1.1 - Describe the responsibilities of audience members, to the actors and each other, at live and recorded performances and demonstrate appropriate behavior.

TH.68.S.1.3 - Describe criteria for the evaluation of dramatic texts, performances, direction, and production elements.

TH.68.S.3.1 - Develop characterizations, using basic acting skills, appropriate for selected dramatizations.

Georgia Performance Standards - Theatre Arts

Grade 6 - Responding

TA6.RE.1 - Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member., a. Identify the role of the audience in different environments., b. Analyze the relationship between an audience and a performer., c. Create guidelines for behaviors appropriate to a theatre experience., d. Model appropriate audience behaviors.

Grade 7 - Performing

TA7.PR.1 - Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments., a. Execute effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills in performance (e.g. rate, pitch, volume, inflection, posture, facial expression, physical movement)., b. Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or theatre performance., c. Engage in various performance styles.

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.

Intermediate High School Standards - Communication

I.C.2.1 - Use improvisation and acting skills, such as observation, concentration, and characterization, to demonstrate given situations.

Intermediate High School Standards - Culture

I.CU.2.1 - Understand theatre etiquette that is appropriate for a variety of theatrical spaces, styles, and genres.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Theatre Arts

MS 117.211 LI - Creative Expression: performance

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

HS 117.315 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

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

C.1.K - identify and recognize the importance of safe theatre practices.

HS 117.315 LI - Critical evaluation and response

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

C.5.B - recognize theatre as an art form and evaluate self as a creative being.

C.5.C - offer and receive constructive criticism of peer performances.

HS 117.316 LII - Creative Expression: performance

C.2.B - explore creativity as it relates to self and ensemble.

HS 117.317 LIII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

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

HS 117.317 LIII - Critical evaluation and response

C.5.B - recognize theatre as an art form and evaluate self as a creative being.

Alberta, Canada

Junior Orientation

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

focus concentration on one task at a time

listen effectively

meet deadlines and follow through on individual and group commitments

offer and accept constructive criticism, given specific guidelines, with a desire to improve

recognize the purposes of and participate in warmup activities

support positively the work of others

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

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 interact effectively and constructively in a group process

strengthen powers of concentration

Senior Goal I Objectives

extend the ability to concentrate

increase self-confidence

increase self-discipline

sharpen observations of people, situations and the environment

Orientation Drama 10

concentrate on the task at hand

demonstrate effective use and management of time

demonstrate self-discipline, self-direction and a sense of responsibility

demonstrate trust by becoming comfortable with others, physically and emotionally

display consideration and respect for self and others

listen to self and others

make effective decisions or choices

offer and accept constructive criticism with a desire to progress

positively support the work of others

share ideas confidently

work cooperatively and productively

British Columbia (2018)

GRADE 6 - ARTS - Exploring and creating

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

Explore relationships between identity, place, culture, society, and belonging through the arts

GRADE 6 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Interpret and communicate ideas using symbols and elements to express meaning through the arts

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Exploring and creating

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

Explore relationships between identity, place, culture, society, and belonging through the arts

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Interpret and communicate ideas using symbols and elements to express meaning through the arts

GRADE 8 - ARTS - Exploring and creating

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

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

GRADE 8 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Interpret and communicate ideas using symbols and elements to express meaning through the arts

Ontario, Canada

Grade 6 - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing

B2.3 - identify and give examples of their strengths, interests, and areas for improvement as drama creators, performers, and audience members

Grade 7 - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing

B2.3 - identify and give examples of their strengths, interests, and areas for improvement as drama creators,

performers, and audience members

Grade 8 - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing

B2.3 - identify and give examples of their strengths, interests, and areas for improvement as drama creators, performers, and audience members

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)

Virginia Standards Of Learning (2020)

Grade Six

6.1 - The student will apply creative thinking to theatre.

6.2 - The student will use a creative process to develop solo and collaborative presentations, using body, voice, and imagination.

Grade Six

6.12 - The student will demonstrate how meaning is expressed both physically (through movement, gesture, and other forms of physical expression) and verbally (through vocal choices).

6.13 - The student will identify techniques and skills for actor preparation, including memorization and warm ups for performance.

Grade Six

6.4 - The student will identify connections between personal experience and dramatizations

6.5 - The student will identify communication and collaboration skills for theatre experiences.

Grade Seven

7.1 - The student will demonstrate creative thinking by improvising scenes from given situations.

Grade Seven

7.4 - The student will justify personal responses to theatrical productions.

7.5 - The student will identify and apply communication and collaboration skills for theatre experiences.

Grade Seven

7.12 - The student will develop physical and vocal technique for theatre performance.

7.13 - The student will explain techniques and skills for actor preparation, including concentration, discipline, preparation, and imagination for theatrical performance.

Grade Eight

8.1 - The student will refine creative problem-solving, ensemble-building, and improvisational skills by devising and improvising theatrical works.

Grade Eight

8.4 - The student will explain responses to theatrical productions based on personal background and experience.

8.5 - The student will apply communication and collaboration skills for theatre experiences.

Grade Eight

8.12 - The student will develop physical and vocal technique for theatre performance.

8.13 - The student will use character analysis techniques to research, develop, and present a scripted character.