



Theatrefolk®



WRITING LESSON PLANS FOR THE DRAMA CLASSROOM

TOOLKIT



Drama Teacher
ACADEMY

by Matt Webster

Writing Lesson Plans for the Drama Classroom by Matt Webster
Copyright © 2019 Theatrefolk Inc.

CAUTION: This book is fully protected under the copyright laws of Canada and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

No part of this book covered by the copyrights hereon may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means - graphic, electronic or mechanical - without the prior written permission of the author.

Published by:
Theatrefolk Inc.

e-mail: help@theatrefolk.com
website: www.theatrefolk.com

Photocopying / Multiple Copies

The sole owner of this book may copy the Toolkit for his or her class for educational purposes. All other purposes for duplication and/or distribution are prohibited.

OVERVIEW AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

Lesson planning is the foundation of teaching. Lesson plans are maps, mission statements, launching pads, and contracts. Lesson plans help keep everyone working together toward the common goals of learning and understanding. When lesson plans are well crafted and executed, the classroom functions smoothly. When lesson plans fall short, learning comes to a grinding halt.

In this toolkit, you will learn the structure and terminology of a standard lesson plan and how that lesson plan can be adapted in the theatre classroom. You will learn how to identify and utilize Bloom’s Taxonomy in the creation of your lesson plans and explore the National Standards for Theatre with an eye toward including specific state standards in your completed plans.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. What Goes in a Lesson Plan?.....	4
2. Lesson Plan Example	9
3. Introduction to Bloom’s Taxonomy	12
4. Aligning Standards to Lesson Plans.....	16
5. Culminating Activity.....	20

WHAT GOES IN A LESSON PLAN?

There is no universally accepted template for lesson plans. Each school, and school district, will have different requirements, structures, and formats for what they expect to see in a standard lesson plan. The expectation of lesson plan content will vary based on such things as general state requirements, a particular administrative regime, or how long a teacher has been in the classroom. Some schools will require lesson plans with great detail while others will accept a general outline. However, you can expect to include the following information in any lesson plan you write.

NAME/CLASS/DATE (OPTIONAL)

As a beginning teacher, you will be expected to submit samples of your lessons to administrators for periodic review. It will be helpful to the people observing your lessons to easily identify the creator of the lesson. After a few years of teaching, it may no longer be necessary to include your name, but the class information and date will be useful for future organization and reference.

SUBJECT/TOPIC

As much as this seems obvious, this is a valuable heading for organizing your lessons, for both you and your administration. Your subject is always theatre or drama, but the topic changes based on the specific material you are covering with this lesson plan. For example, your Subject/Topic can read Theatre/Pantomime or Technical Theatre/Color Wheel. Be as specific as possible. The more precise you are, the more focused the lesson for both you and your students. This will allow you to file your lesson plans according to the specific topics covered in the lesson and will allow your administrators to quickly reference your work.

OBJECTIVE

This is where you articulate the educational outcomes you are defining for yourself and your students. Usually these objectives are framed by the phrase “Students will be able to” followed by a detailed description of what students should demonstrate when the lesson is successful. This is also where you will apply Bloom’s Taxonomy to your stated outcomes. For example, “Students will be able to **identify** the locations of the stage (upstage, downstage, etc.)” or “Students will **develop** a short monologue and perform it from memory.” As you articulate your objectives, utilizing Bloom’s terminology will give structure to your lesson and provide insight into what the final outcome of your lesson will look like.

STANDARDS ADDRESSED

Most school districts requires that lesson plans be aligned with state standards of education. Theatre is no exception. You must identify what standards your lessons cover and document them here. To do this, you will need to be familiar with your state’s Theatre Education standards, and if your state does not have specific standards for theatre, you can align your lessons to the [National Theatre Arts Standards \(nationalartsstandards.org/\)](http://nationalartsstandards.org/). However, when you reference the applicable standards,

you do not need to copy down the standard in its entirety. You can simply reference the standard(s) addressed in this lesson by their alphanumeric heading and add a short description. For example, in North Carolina, a “standards addressed” statement for a Beginning Theatre lesson on improv would look something like this:

NCES B.C.2.1 and B.CU.2.1 – *Students will perform short improvised scenes for their peers.*

It will be helpful to come back and fill this section out **AFTER** you have articulated the details of your lesson. Use the standards to justify the work, not the other way around.

MATERIALS

This is a list of the materials required to execute this lesson. Do students need printed scenes? Monologues? Vocabulary sheets or other handouts? Do you need scenery boxes? Costume pieces? Furniture? Large sheets of butcher paper and colored markers? List these items in this section. Being prepared will save time and keep discipline on track.

PRE-CLASS PREPARATIONS

What planning or set up do you need to complete before teaching this lesson plan? How do you need to prepare? What needs to happen to your space? Do you need to cue up any technology? Planning now will prevent chaos and disruption in your class.

VOCABULARY

If there is any new vocabulary being introduced in the lesson, it is advisable to include those words or phrases separately under this heading. This allows you to emphasize these words and provide specific context and usage. It is also valuable when you are reviewing content and creating assessments for the lesson.

INSTRUCTION

This is the instructional interaction with your students. Under this heading is where you detail your instructions step-by-step, writing out the information and instructional details you will provide to your students, as well as providing a general timeline. This section can be broken down into various sub-sections including:

- **Bell Work/Check-In**

This is the standard, everyday activity that begins your class. It can be journal writing, responding to a question to recall information from the previous class, responding to a prompt as an introduction to the lesson coming up. It could be a circle check-in moment where students identify how they’re feeling that day.

- **Warm-up**

A quick game or task that focuses your students and introduces them to the concepts of the lesson. Always choose a warm-up with purpose.

- **Teacher Input/Lecture/Introduction**

This is where you provide content information to the students. If this is a lecture-based class, put your notes in this section. This will also be where you identify for students the **Objective**. What is being covered in the lesson and what are they doing in class?

- **Guided Practice: Group Work, Application, Activities, or Exercises**

Guided practice is where students apply the concepts of the lesson. This may be through group work, handouts, rehearsal, independent work, research, or any other activity that students practice under your supervision.

- **Closure/Check-Out**

How will you close out the lesson? Some options include an exit slip response, a check-out circle where students identify one thing they've learned or one question they have, or a recap of the lesson concepts and a teaser for the next class.

- **Independent Practice**

Also known as homework! If there is additional after-class work that students will be accountable for, make sure to document it here.

You may know these sections under different titles. The titles themselves don't matter, so long as your instruction is organized, easy to read, and, most importantly, easy to follow. You want to be as detailed and specific as possible when writing out this information. A good standard to follow is to write your instructions so clearly that a substitute could teach the lesson exactly as you would.

The general content structure of a standard lesson plan typically follows this format:

JUGGLING LESSON

- **BELL WORK:** Write in journals from the following prompt. (5 minutes)
 - What is the best juggling you have ever seen?
- **WARM-UP:** (5–10 minutes)
 - **Scarf Juggling:** *A detailed description of the warm-up, including how it is executed and any variations to the activity that might be utilized.*
- **TEACHER INPUT:** Lecture on "A History of Juggling" (15 minutes)
 - Your notes on this lecture/topic
 - Prompts for any visuals such as PowerPoints, slides, or video
 - Highlighted vocabulary words
 - Throw
 - *Explain*
 - Catch
 - *Explain*
 - Drop
 - *Explain*

- GUIDED PRACTICE: Group Work – Learning to Juggle (30 minutes)
 - Students will work together to practice juggling skills.
 - Details on the specific steps students will need to follow in order to successfully juggle
 - *Step 1*
 - *Step 2*
 - *Step 3*
 - Students will attempt 3 different throws.
 - Standard
 - *Step 1*
 - *Step 2*
 - *Step 3*
 - One-handed
 - *Step 1*
 - *Step 2*
 - *Step 3*
 - Partners
 - *Step 1*
 - *Step 2*
 - *Step 3*
 - Sharing (10 minutes)
 - Students will show their progress at the end of class.
- CLOSURE: (5 minutes)
 - Students are given an exit slip where they rate their effort from 1 to 5 and explain their ratings.
- INDEPENDENT PRACTICE: Homework
 - Students will continue to practice juggling at home and will be ready to demonstrate at least two different throws by the next class period.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment allows you to measure your students' understanding of the lesson. In this section of your lesson plan, you will describe the assessment tool(s) you will use to gauge the success of your lesson. There are a variety of ways to assess the success of the lesson for yourself and your students, but there are three main assessment tools used in drama:

1. Rubric

- The rubric is a scoring sheet that measures the level of success for a number of different features of the lesson. This type of assessment can be used for a grade or to help students focus on areas that need improvement. Rubrics also provide data as to how well your class understands concepts or expectations and allows you to loop back and provide additional instruction as needed.

2. Reflection

- In a reflection, students write down, with specific guidance from you, their thoughts and ideas of the lesson to articulate their understanding of the materials.

3. Exit Slips

- These are simple one- or two-line answers to a topic-specific question you present students at the end of class. As they exit class, they literally hand you the slip of paper with their answer on it.

ADDITIONAL LESSON PLAN SECTIONS

Depending on your state or district, you may be required to include additional information in your lesson plans. These may include the following:

- Differentiations/Accommodations: How will you alter the lesson to accommodate students outside of the mainstream? These may include students with special needs, non-native speakers, students with a targeted educational plan (a 504 plan), and students with physical challenges.
- Self-reflection: Some states and districts require new teachers to provide a section on self reflection during the first three years of their teaching careers. This section allows new teachers to reflect on their lessons and teaching strategies and provide documentation in annual reviews.
- Pre-assessment: Pre-assessment is important when beginning a new topic or unit. Pre-assessment allows teachers to gauge the existing level of knowledge in their classes and adjust their lessons accordingly.

LESSON PLAN EXAMPLE

Name: Angel Borths	Date: March 15, 2016
Class: Grade 6 Drama	
Subject/Topic: Defining Pantomime: Day One	
Objective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To define pantomime, build a working class definition, and introduce the pantomime concept through class games
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TH:Cr1.1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work TH:Cr2.1: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work TH:Pr6.1: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drama notebook and writing utensil Comfortable clothing for ease of movement Game Log (to be collected at the end of the unit)
Pre-Class Preparations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write the bell work prompt on the board. Photocopy Game Log handouts.
Vocabulary	Pantomime: a way of expressing information or telling a story without words by using body movements and facial expressions

Instruction	
Bell Work	Students respond in their journals: How would you define pantomime?
Time: 5 minutes	
Warm-up	<p>Magic Clay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students stand in a circle. Reach into your pocket and pull out a ball of magic clay (just air). Walk around the circle and ask each student to describe its color, shape, texture, etc. When you move to another student, encourage them to change the colour, shape, and texture. Explain to students that they are going to turn this clay into an everyday object they can actually use. Model the activity by molding the clay into an everyday object. For example, mold the clay into a sink and then wash your hands. When the task is achieved, return the clay to a ball and pass it to the student beside you in the circle. Identify that it's their turn to turn the clay into an everyday object and then use that object. Encourage students not to yell out during the activity ("it's a sink!"). Instead, let them focus on the detail of the task. Can they see the object? What actions help to see the object?
Time: 20 minutes	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Side coach students during the activity to be specific with the details. The more details, the easier it is to see the object. • Go around the circle so that each student has the opportunity to take the clay, make an object, and use it. • Discuss afterward. What was easy about the exercise? What was challenging? Which object was most believable? Why?
<p>Teacher Input Time: 5 minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss: Come up with a working class definition of pantomime. Share the vocabulary definition. • Introduce the Game Log: After each activity and game, students will describe the steps in the activity and their experience with the activity. The completed log will be due along with their final showing.
<p>Guided Practice Time: 20 minutes</p>	<p>Guided Pantomime</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students stand in a circle. • Ask them to pantomime brushing their teeth. Tell them they have thirty seconds. • Guide them through the game again, only this time, break down the activity into much smaller steps. <p>Guided Pantomime Script</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imagine your bathroom sink at home. Point on your body to the area where the counter would hit you—how high is it? • Look at the faucet. How does it work? Are there separate taps for the hot and cold water? Turn the sink off and on. • Where do you keep your toothbrush? Look at it. Is it on the counter? Is it at eye level? Pick it up. • How long is your toothbrush? Feel the bristles. • Where is your toothpaste? What kind is it? How does it open? Does it have a flip top or a screw cap? • Put some toothpaste on your toothbrush. Close the toothpaste. Put it down. • Start brushing—make sure you don't brush too hard. • Turn on the sink again and rinse your toothbrush. Put the toothbrush back where it belongs. • Spit, then rinse your mouth. • Turn off the faucet. • Find your towel—where is it? Wipe your face and return the towel to the rack. • Check out your teeth in the mirror. • Option: You can keep going (add flossing, finding a blemish, plucking a hair, etc.). <p>Discussion: At the end of the activity, have students describe their experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask them to describe how their pantomime was different the second time. Hopefully, students will identify the specificity of the second time and the length of time it actually took. • Ask students why this is important when learning pantomime.

<p>Closure</p> <p>Time: Work until bell</p>	<p>Game Log</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have students fill out an entry in their Game Log for Magic Clay and the Brushing Your Teeth Pantomime.
<p>Independent Practice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No homework for this lesson
<p>Assessment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation: How do students participate in the pantomimes? Who is engaged? Who is focused? Who disrupts the exercise? ● Give an engagement and effort grade for the lesson. ● Game Log: Check at the beginning of the next class to see which students have completed their entries.

INTRODUCTION TO BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Understanding Bloom's Taxonomy in Lesson Planning

If you have ever taken a college level education or curriculum class, or participated in professional development focused on lesson planning, you have most likely heard of Bloom's Taxonomy. The language of Bloom's Taxonomy is traditionally placed as the backbone of a standard lesson plan. But what is Bloom's Taxonomy, and why is it so important to lesson planning? Here is a quick primer on what Bloom's Taxonomy is and how to use it.

WHAT IS BLOOM'S TAXONOMY?

The key to using Bloom's Taxonomy is understanding Bloom's Taxonomy. Unfortunately it is hard to get a grasp on what Bloom's Taxonomy is, and how to use it, based solely on its definition. For example, here is a typical definition you would find if searching for Bloom's:

Bloom's Taxonomy is a hierarchical ordering of cognitive skills that can, among countless other uses, help teachers teach and students learn.

And another:

Bloom's taxonomy is a classification system used to define and distinguish different levels of human cognition—i.e., thinking, learning, and understanding.

These definitions are impressive and accurate, but they don't really explain what Bloom's Taxonomy is, or more importantly, how to use it! In the name of a better understanding Bloom's, allow me to suggest a simpler definition:

Bloom's Taxonomy is a list of action words that can be used to clarify and specify educational learning objectives into varying levels of complexity.

Or to make it simpler still - Bloom's gives you the tools to help clearly articulate the fundamental building blocks of curriculum and lesson planning. Most importantly, using the words in Bloom's Taxonomy helps define the questions of: "What skills are we trying to teach?" and "How will we identify success?"

HOW DOES BLOOM'S TAXONOMY WORK?

Not all lessons are created equally, and it is important to identify where a lesson falls on the scale of learning and comprehension. Some are basic and introductory and others are thought provoking and challenging. Recognizing these differences, and using Bloom's to categorize where a lesson falls on the scale, allows you to craft lesson plans that meet your students where they are and gives you a higher level of success in achieving the intended outcome.

Therefore, Bloom's is divided into two categories with regards to understanding and complexity of thought: lower level and higher level.

The lower levels of thinking include

- Remembering
- Understanding
- Applying

The higher levels of thinking include

- Analysing
- Evaluating
- Creating

By separating these outcomes, we can begin to recognize specific learning objectives and identify how to create lesson plans that have the greatest impact on students.

HOW DO YOU UTILIZE BLOOM'S TAXONOMY?

Once you understand what Bloom's Taxonomy is (i.e., a highly specific list of words designed to focus the scope and understanding of your lessons), you can begin to incorporate Bloom's Taxonomy in your lesson plans. And it all comes together in your **Objective**.

As a part of basic lesson planning, every lesson plan must include an **Objective**. In a lesson plan, the objective is where you clearly articulate your intended educational outcomes. In other words, "What do I want my students to achieve?" To identify the objective, many standard lesson plans will use the phrase "Students will be able to . . ." or "Students will . . ."

So what is it that we want our students to do? That is the **Objective**, and that is where Bloom's comes in. You can now pull from the list of action words in Bloom's Taxonomy to construct the next part of the phrase, thereby defining the intended outcome of the lesson. For example, "Students will be able to *identify* the parts of the stage" or "Students will *write* a monologue based on a personal event."

The real value of Bloom's Taxonomy can be measured when you begin to see how subtle (and not-so-subtle) differences in the stated objective of a lesson will change the ultimate outcome of the lesson. We can see this in action with the example objective statements above.

Let's change "identify" to "teach" in the first objective example and see what impact this has on the lesson. Now, instead of "Students will be able to *identify* the parts of the stage," our objective is that "Students will be able to *teach* the parts of the stage." This automatically moves up Bloom's scale from "Remembering" to "Applying" and creates an entirely different set of outcomes and assessments. Instead of simply identifying the areas of the stage on a piece of paper, students must now interpret information and provide context that will promote understanding for themselves and their peers.

In the second stated objective, let's change "write" to "develop." So now, "Students will *write* a monologue based on a personal event" becomes "Students will *develop* a monologue based on a personal event." Both of these words come from the highest level of Bloom's, but there is a substantial difference in the interpretation of the process of the lesson based on this simple word change. Saying students will "write" a monologue can be interpreted as a "one-off" assignment. Once students have written a monologue, they are done. However, "developing" a monologue can be seen as more of a process—a process that can include such things as research, early draft sharing, and peer feedback as well as numerous revisions and re-writes. In either version, students will have written a monologue. But by using Bloom's to change the **Objective**, you end up with a much more nuanced and comprehensive lesson. This is why Bloom's Taxonomy is so valuable in lesson planning.

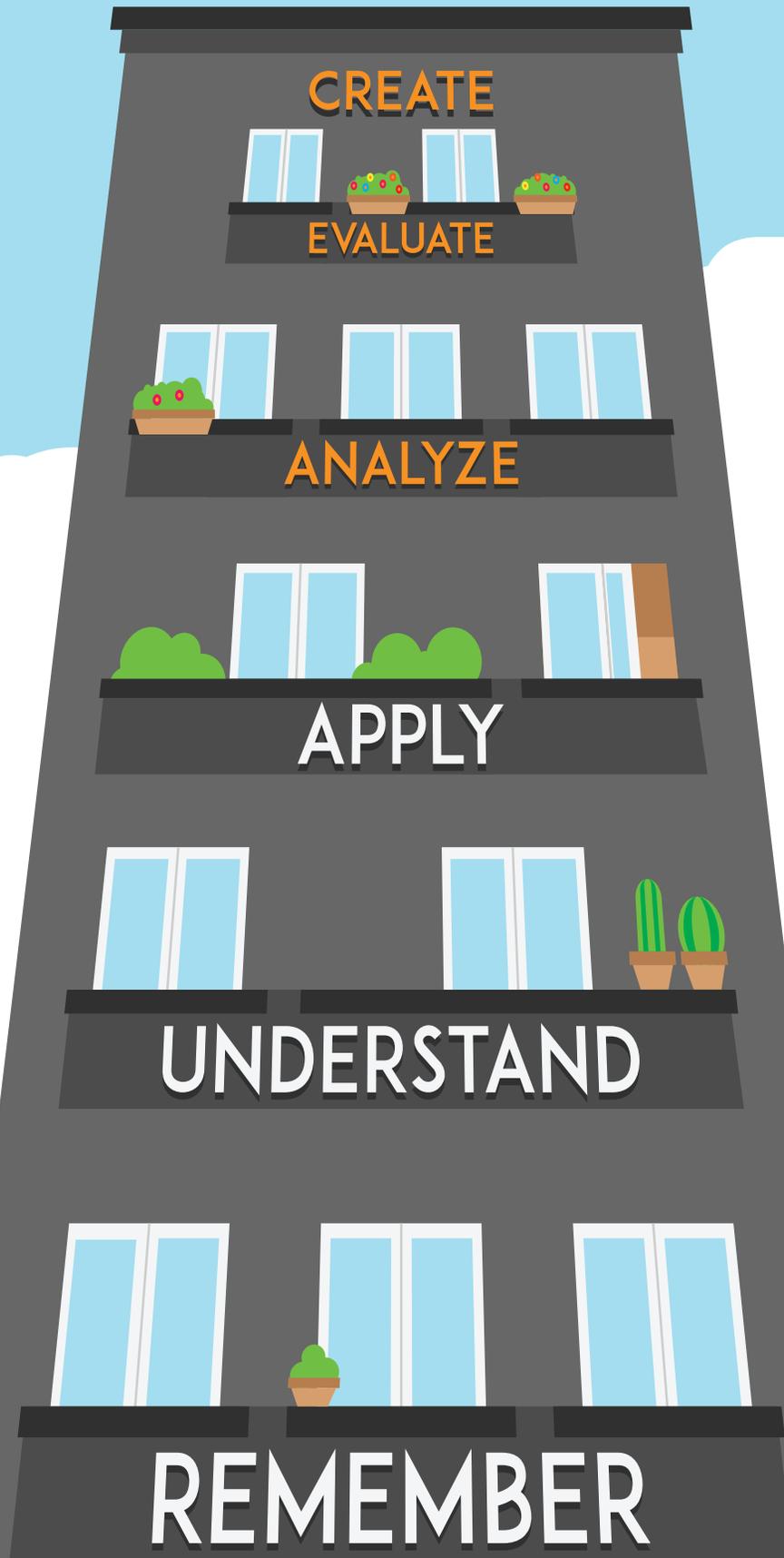
BLOOM'S TAXONOMY ACTION WORDS

LOWER-ORDER THINKING

HIGHER-ORDER THINKING

Remembering	Understanding	Applying	Analyzing	Evaluating	Creating
Arrange	Ask	Act	Analyze	Appraise	Adapt
Define	Associate	Apply	Appraise	Argue	Arrange
Describe	Cite	Articulate	Arrange	Assess	Assemble
Duplicate	Classify	Carry out	Attribute	Check	Collaborate
Examine	Compare	Chart	Breakdown	Choose	Collect
Find	Contrast	Collect	Categorize	Compare	Combine
Identify	Convert	Complete	Compare	Contrast	Compare
Label	Defend	Construct	Conclude	Convince	Compile
List	Demonstrate	Change	Classify	Conclude	Compose
Locate	Differentiate	Choose	Contrast	Criticize	Construct
Match	Discover	Demonstrate	Deduce	Decide	Create
Memorize	Discuss	Determine	Devise	Defend	Design
Name	Distinguish	Develop	Diagram	Describe	Develop
Order	Estimate	Discover	Dissect	Detect	Devise
Outline	Explain	Dramatize	Distinguish	Editorialize	Do
Quote	Express	Employ	Estimate	Estimate	Express
Recognize	Extend	Establish	Focus	Evaluate	Finish
Recall	Generalize	Examine	Identify	Explain	Form
Repeat	Give	Experiment	Illustrate	Hypothesize	Formulate
Reproduce	examples	Explain	Infer	Judge	Generate
Retrieve	Group	Execute	Organize	Justify	Imagine
Review	Illustrate	Implement	Outline	Interpret	Infer
Select	Indicate	Interpret	Pattern	Recommend	Integrate
State	Infer	Interview	Plan	Reframe	Invent
Trace	Interpret	Judge	Question	Relate	Make
	Model	Manipulate	Relate	Persuade	Modify
	Order	Modify	Select	Predict	Plan
	Outline	Operate	Separate	Rate	Prepare
	Paraphrase	Paint	State	Select	Produce
	Predict	Practice	Survey	Summarize	Propose
	Relate	Predict	Test	Support	Relate
	Research	Prepare		Value	Revise
	Retell	Produce		Weigh	Rewrite
	Rewrite	Relate			Role-play
	Show	Report			Set Up
	Summarize	Schedule			Simulate
	Tell	Show			Solve
	Transform	Simulate			Speculate
	Translate	Sketch			Structure
		Solve			Substitute
		Teach			Suppose
		Use			Tell
		Write			Write

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY



ALIGNING STANDARDS TO LESSON PLANS

WHAT ARE “STANDARDS”?

Most every subject taught in a modern school setting is governed by a set of standards that define the scope, scale, and content of what must be included. This includes theatre/drama. These standards exist on both a state and national level, and there is a great deal of overlap between these levels. In fact, in the United States, most state standards are based in one way or another on the National Standards. These standards ensure that core concepts, terminology, and best practices are used within a particular field of study, and again, theatre/drama is no exception. Therefore, it is important to not only take standards into account when you are creating your curriculum, but to also thoroughly incorporate the standards into your lesson plans as you write them.

WHERE DID THE THEATRE/DRAMA STANDARDS COME FROM?

In the United States, the standards were created in 1994 in response to a national examination of educational policy. They were updated in 2014 under the title of National Core Arts Standards. It is important to note that the creation of the Theatre/Drama Arts Standards, on both the national and state levels, was facilitated by theatre artists and theatre educators. Remember this as you are interpreting the standards and how best to utilize them in your classroom.

INTERPRETING THE STANDARDS

Once you start to delve into educational standards, it is easy to get bogged down in the language, phrasing, and terminology. They are written in that most complicated of languages—“Edu-speak.” At first glance, it can be difficult to interpret what is required and how best to accomplish the standard. But remember, they were written by theatre people!

Because the standards were created by theatre people, they were written with theatre teachers in mind. That means that even though the specific language and phrasing of any particular standard may be convoluted and dense, it is simply written that way to appease legislators and administrators who expect to see that kind of language in a formal “Content Standard” document. But the standards were written to reflect the educational content and best practices of an average drama class. That means the underlying course work addressed by the standard is going to be something you are typically already doing in your classroom. You just call it by a different name.

Let’s look at an example:

In the *National Core Arts — Anchor Standard 2: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work*, under the *High School – Accomplished* heading, in *section b*, it articulates the following standard: “Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.”

This sounds complicated and intense, and it may cause anxiety and distress when it comes to applying this standard to your daily classroom routine. So allow me to interpret this standard for you:

“Have rehearsals.”

Both of these sentences achieve the standard; it’s just that one of them was written for administrators and one was written for drama teachers. To address this standard, you could also just as easily say, “Have a production meeting” or give the assignment, “As a class, take turns being characters and

read aloud from a script.” In each of these examples, “creative teams” are making “interpretive choices” for some piece of “drama/theatre,” and therefore, each of these examples have achieved the standard.

Once again, keep in mind that the standards were written by theatre people for theatre people. They were written by people who understand what you do, because they do it too. They are not trying to make more work, new work, or difficult work for you. They are simply defining the work that you do in the most intensely educational way possible for the benefit of people who do not see the value of what you do. So as you look at applying standards to your lesson plans, remember that 99 percent of your established curriculum is already covered by the standards. They were simply written in a way that leaves a lot of room for interpretation and gives teachers the benefit of the doubt.

UNDERSTANDING THE ANCHOR STANDARDS

There are four core **Anchor Standards** in the U.S. National Core Arts Standards: **Creating, Performing/Presenting/Producing, Responding, and Connecting**. As you look at the sheer number of standards with the various class levels and subjects they cover, it seems like there is no way you could ever incorporate them all into your curriculum. Between the major topic headings and the specific sub-headings, it is hard to see how you could possibly apply each standard over the course of a single semester or year.

Fortunately, you don't need to. You need only to address the standards that apply to the specific course and grade level you are teaching. In addition, the standards are intended to be interpreted based on quality over quantity, so a single lesson can address multiple standards with the same content. Therefore, instead of building your curriculum to fit the standards, it is much easier to reverse engineer the process and let the standards fit your lessons. Most standards—national, state, and local—will be based on some variation of the four basic categories, (**Creating, Performing/Presenting/Producing, Responding, and Connecting**) because these categories are universal to the drama/theatre curriculum. The categories may go by different names, but they all cover the same basic content. Let's break down each category of the Anchor Standards and see where they fit into a typical curriculum.

- **Creating:** This category covers the development of new work from inception to conception, refinement, and creation. It applies to script work, design work, character work, and directing work.
 - Subjects include playwriting, devising, design, analysis, directing, acting, and improvisation.
- **Performing/Presenting/Producing:** This trio encompasses all aspects of production, including script analysis, production meetings, the acting process, the design process, rehearsals, and performances.
 - Subjects include script analysis, rehearsal, design application and build, running crews, acting, directing, and performance.
- **Responding:** Responding covers the areas of context and criticism with regards to all aspects of theatre, including text, performance, and aesthetic.
 - Subjects include script analysis, performance review, design review, compare and contrast papers, and written and oral critiques of work.

- **Connecting:** This final category includes the personal, cultural, and global connections to theatre, as well as other artforms.
 - Subjects include research, dramaturgy, world theatre, history, theatre history, and personal aesthetics.

As you can see, subjects at the core of the drama curriculum, such as script analysis, acting, history, design, and production, are all covered by the Anchor Standards. In order to be in compliance with the standards, all you need to do is connect the dots between your existing class subjects and the correlating core standards.

ALIGNING YOUR LESSONS TO THE STANDARDS

By organizing the Anchor Standards into categories that are more easily recognized, you can begin to see how the standards easily align to your base curriculum. Here's how to align your lessons to the standards.

Let's choose an assignment that you can expect to find in any drama curriculum in one form or another—performing monologues. When you assign your students monologues, you assign them the process of reading, choosing, analyzing, rehearsing, critiquing, refining, presenting, and performing a scripted piece of work. (If it is an original work, there are even more steps!) Therefore, when you write your lesson plans, you will break down each of these steps into either a single class or multi-class series of lessons. You can then identify each of the standards that is addressed by these lessons.

To begin with, when students are *reading* monologues in order to *choose* one for performance, they are **Responding** and **Connecting**. Next in the monologue process comes *analyzing* and *rehearsing*. These tasks fall under the **Creating** and **Producing** headings. After that comes *critiquing* and *refining*. These revisit the standards for **Responding** and **Creating**. Finally, the students will *perform* their monologues, and this work aligns with **Performing/Presenting**. The performance is also covered by **Responding** when they *critique* (and *are critiqued by*) their peers.

In order to align your lesson plans to the standards, look at the descriptions of the standards that are provided under each of the four major headings (**Creating**, **Performing/Presenting/Producing**, **Responding**, and **Connecting**) and choose the specific standard that best describes the work your students are doing. You can then identify the specific standards addressed in your lesson and include them under the "Standards Addressed" heading on your written lesson plans. And that is how you align your lessons to the standards!

One more note: As you are aligning your lesson plans, you may find that a lesson plan addresses only a single standard across its entire execution, while other lessons span multiple categories, with specific standards addressed multiple times across the entire lesson plan or unit plan. This is nothing to worry about. Once again, the standards are more concerned with quality over quantity, and as long as you can identify that a single standard is being met by a single lesson plan, then that lesson plan is valid.

ACCESSING THE STANDARDS

The National Core Arts standards can be easily accessed and browsed online, or you can choose to print the PDF booklets available.

The website: <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/> is the place to start. Easily navigate to Theatre standards by clicking 'Standards at a Glance' and choosing 'Theatre'. Extensive descriptions of the anchor standards and headings are provided here as well.

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Developing and Drafting a Standard Lesson Plan

As the capstone activity of this toolkit, you will complete a lesson plan using the blank template provided. This is your opportunity to think through the lesson planning process and apply the information covered in this toolkit to a completed lesson plan.

To help guide your work, refer back to Section 1 for descriptions of the following sections:

- **Subject/Topic:** Subject is always theatre/drama, but the Topic will change depending on the content of THIS lesson. Be as specific as possible.
- **Objective:** Utilize the verbs in Bloom's Taxonomy to zero in on the active content of the lesson, as well as the expected outcomes.
- **Standards Addressed:** Do this section after you have articulated the details of the lesson. Use the standards to justify the work, not the other way around.
- **Materials:** What materials do students need to successfully execute the lesson?
- **Pre-Class Preparations:** What planning or set up do you need to complete before teaching this lesson plan?
- **Vocabulary:** Are you introducing or reviewing any vocabulary words?
- **Instruction:** How will you break down the individual sections of instruction?
 - **Bell Work:** This is the standard, everyday activity that begins your class.
 - **Warm-up:** A quick game or task that focuses your students and introduces them to the concepts of the lesson.
 - **Teacher Input:** Content information. This will also be where you identify for students the **Objective**.
 - **Guided Practice:** How do students apply the concepts of the lesson?
 - **Closure:** How will you end the lesson?
 - **Independent Practice:** Is there any homework?
- **Assessment:** What assessment process will you provide for this lesson?

A FINAL THOUGHT

The lesson plans you write are the roadmaps that guide your curriculum and the signposts that keep everyone on the same path. When a lesson plan is well thought out and clearly articulated, it allows both teacher and student to stay focused on the journey at hand and reach their destination together.

They are also a contract between you and your administrators. Administrators use lesson plans to gage the quality and content of the information being presented to students. They will also judge a new teacher on the quality of their lesson plans.

Therefore, your lesson plans should be as detailed as possible, especially in the first few years of your teaching career. While writing detailed lesson plans is time consuming and can feel like a chore, it is a necessary step in your teaching journey. It can also feel unfair compared to veteran teachers who get to write their lessons in shorthand. But remember, they have earned the right to shortcut plans by constantly refining those lessons over many years. Over time, when you have refined and re-taught these lessons, you can begin to shortcut this process as well, but for now, the more information, the better.

LESSON PLAN TEMPLATE

Name:	Date:
Class:	
Subject/Topic:	

Objective	
Standards	
Materials	
Pre-Class Preparations	
Vocabulary	

Instruction	
Bell Work Time:	
Warm-up Time:	
Teacher Input Time:	

Guided Practice Time:	
Closure Time:	
Independent Practice	

Assessment	
------------	--

Want more?

Check out the New Drama Teacher Website
with articles, exercises, and podcasts
chosen specifically for you.

newdramateacher.com



Theatrefolk®



WRITING LESSON PLANS FOR THE DRAMA CLASSROOM

◆ T O O L K I T ◆



Drama Teacher
ACADEMY

theatrefolk.com