**Drama 10:   
Improvisation**

**February 4, 2014 – February 14, 2014**

**High School**

**Ian Cooke**

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**Rationale:**

Improvisation is essentially the building blocks for other drama units such as movement and acting. The reason for this is due to the fact we learn in this unit how to be spontaneous, narrative and character development. As well the characters a student creates could be a manifestation of themselves or might potentially give the student an insight on the person they want to be. This is due to the nature of improvisation and how it has the ability to explore a number of different settings while developing self-confidence and teamwork. It can be a unit where the students experience a lot of self-discovery. An improvisation unit is also beneficial because in a lot of scripted performances things go wrong due to an actor forgetting their lines. Improvisation helps develop an actor’s ability to maintain focus and spontaneity to get the performance back on the right pace. The ability to improvise and quickly think on ones feet is a tool every student can use in their everyday lives. This tool and be utilized in the work place to everyday relationships. Improvisation gives the student the ability to communicate better, and the capability to express their opinions and emotions in a healthier format.

Finally, the unit is structured the way it is because I wanted to build each day on the foundational skills of improv to create a multi-person scene and for the students to grasp an understanding of C.R.O.W. Each lesson focuses on a particular skill and improving that skill. However, each lesson compounds with the next until the students put it all together and then perform the multi-person scenes on the final day.

**Unit Objective and Skills Required:**

Objective: The students will be able to sustain a four-person, two-minute scene that follows the conventions of storytelling, has dynamic characters, and is coherent.

Skills:

1. Use warm-up techniques for preparation of body, voice, and mind. (SLO 1)

Lessons: 1 – 6

2. Maintain concentration during exercises (SLO 3)

Lessons: 1 – 6

3. Tell a story spontaneously (SLO 8)

Lessons: 2, 3, 5, and 6

4. Apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax, and plot in planned and unplanned scenes (SLO 11)

Lessons: 3, 5, and 6

5. Make logical choices spontaneously within the boundaries of situation and character (SLO 16)

Lessons: 2 – 6

6. Demonstrate the ability to accept, advance, offer, or block thought and action quickly and effectively (SLO 17)

Lessons: 1 – 6

7. Use varied stimuli for character development (SLO 23)

Lessons: 4 – 6

8. Sustain a character throughout a scene or exercise (SLO 32)

Lessons: 4 – 6

**Unit Overview:**

Lesson 1

**TSW have a two-person scene with accepting and advancing and no blocking or wimping**

Warm-up (7s, Flamingos, Slomo Tag), Blocking Party, Make a sound, yes and, Two Person Scene

*Improvisation (Senior High) 1, 3, 17*

Lesson 2

**TSW play the game The Party**

Warm-up (Barn Yard, Bippity Bop, Tongue Twisters), Accepting circle, Name the monster, Lines from a Hat, Word Tennis, The Party

*Improvisation (Senior High) 1, 3, 8, 16, 17*

Lesson 3

**TSW play the game Slideshow**

Warm-up (7s, Flamingo, Slomo Tag), None Stop Story Time, Telephone Charades, Yes Lets, Gift Giving, Slideshow

*Improvisation (Senior High) 1, 3, 8, 11, 16, 17*

Lesson 4

**TSW play the game Park Bench**

Warm-up (Barnyard, Bippity Bop, Tongue Twister), Atoms, Let me In, Prop Stories, Items Imagining, Park Bench

*Improvisation (Senior High) 1, 3, 16, 17, 23, 32*

Lesson 5

**TSW play the game Director’s Cut**

Warm-up (7s, Flamingo, Slomo Tag), Story Element, Bus Stop, Once Upon a time, Mime Story, Director’s Cut

*Improvisation (Senior High) 1, 3, 8, 11, 16, 17, 23, 32*

Lesson 6

**TSW sustain a four-person two-minute scene that follows the conventions of storytelling, has dynamic characters, and is coherent.**

Warm-up (Game of Many Things, Get Down, Tongue Twisters), The Party, Park Bench, Lines from a hat, 2 person scenes (ask for: object), 3 person scenes (ask for: relationship), 4 person scenes (ask for: location)

*Improvisation (Senior High) 1, 3, 8, 11, 16, 17, 23, 32*

**Lesson Plan 1**

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| Name: Ian Cooke | Grade/Subject: Drama 10 | Unit: Improvisation |
| Topic: Blocking/Accepting | Date: February 2013 | Length of Lesson: 80 minutes |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **General Learning Outcomes (P.O.S.)** | **GOAL II - To develop competency in communication skills through participation in and exploration of various dramatic disciplines.** | |
| **Specific Leaning Outcomes (P.O.S.)** | **1. Use warm-up techniques for preparation of body, voice and mind.**  **3. Maintain concentration during exercises.**  **17. Demonstrate the ability to accept, advance, offer or block thought and action, quickly and effectively** | |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will:   1. Demonstrate appropriate warm-up techniques 2. Maintain concentration during exercises 3. Demonstrate the ability to “accept”   Demonstrate the ability to “block” | |
| **Materials** |  | |
| **Procedure** |  | **Assessment Methods** |
| **Introduction**  (27 mins.) | * Tell students that we will be starting the improvisation unit * Tell students that the goal of the day is to create and perform a Two person scene   **Activity #1 – Warm-up: Sevens (7 min.)**   * Split class into groups of 7 – 8 * Groups stands in a circle * One person taps their right shoulder with their left hand to pass onto the next person * In order to change direction you must tap the shoulder opposite of the current motion twice * Adding onto this is that each person says a number when they tap their shoulder * The numbers go up to seven and when a person says “seven” they take one arm and pass it over their head instead of tapping a shoulder * Once the group gets to seven they go back to one * Want to go as fast as possible without messing up * If someone messes up everyone squats down and says “awwwweeeeYA!” as they jump up * Modifications: number of students in circle, can continue to count after seven and pass over the head every time you get to a multiple of seven or a number with a seven in it, can do a number other than seven (especially good when students are learning their multiplication tables, focus on going up as high as possible instead of as fast as possible (in the case of doing multiplication), not allowed to change directions   **Activity #2- Warm-up: Flamingo (10 mins).**   * Start the class by having them randomly move around the room. Ask them to ‘freeze’ and take the shape of a flamingo. Tell them they must remember where they stopped as a flamingo, because whenever ‘flamingo’ is called, they must return to that exact spot and take the flamingo position. * Continue and add more freezes (trees, animals, vehicles etc) and in pairs, groups and the whole class. Speed up the command calling. * To end the warmup, call out numerous commands (some that were not previously called). It will end the activity on a frantic and funny note, with their energy levels high.   + begins with something they are willing to do   + cooperation: moving around and with each other   + listening to instructions: making sure to follow the correct command   + awareness: moving safely around the space   + heightens energy   **Activity #3- Warm up: Slomotag (10 mins).**   * Play tag, but in slow motion. Immensely entertaining if played well; players are not to escape the tagger by making a sudden movement, and the tagger cannot lash out to tag another player. Tell players to breathe, scream and groan in slow motion. * You may want to have the players exercise walking in slow motion first, to make sure they are aware of how they (naturally) move, and learn how to stick with that in slow motion. | * Observe students during activities for focus, concentration, and spontaneity. |
| **Body of Lesson**  ( 48 min.) | **Activity #1- Block Party(10 mins):**   * In this game the class will be separated into pairs * The focus of this game is on the technique of “blocking” in improv * One partner will be the “bouncer” and say NO to everything that is said * The other partner will be trying to get into the block party, using numerous different excuses as to why the bouncer should let them in. * When the student trying to get in can’t think of anything else to say or after 10 different attempts the partners switch * Bring the class back together in a circle. * Ask for a group to volunteer * Discuss with the class **“What is blocking?”** and how it can affect improv   + Does the scene go anywhere? How long can it last before the audience is bored? How does it feel for the actors? * Modifications: number of students, length of scene, calling a new student or the same student   **Activity #2 - Make a Sound (8 min.)**   * A group of 5 – 6 students line up on stage * The teacher calls out a name * That student comes forward making a sound (can be animal, human, robot, etc.) * The student must then begin a scene that others can join or develop a character * When the teacher calls a new name, that student now comes forward   **Activity #3 -Yes and…(10 mins):**   * Again break the class into pairs, but this time with a new partner * The focus of this game is on the technique of “accepting” * One partner begin by making a suggestion, the other partner will say “yes” and then make another suggestion   + “We should go to the park” – “Yes and then play on the swings” – “yes and…” etc. * Remind the class that at anytime during the exercise they can reset and start over.   **Activity #4- Two person scene(20 mins):**   * Break the class into pairs, but this time with a new partner. * The focus of this exercise is to see if the students can create and perform a 60 sec two person scene. * Discuss with the students the notion of C.R.O.W * Give ten mins to rehearse than have all the students perform their scene. | * Observe student’s participation in activities * Observe student’s wait-time to determine spontaneity |
| **Closure** (5 min.) | * Bring the class together in a circle * Ask for a group to volunteer * Discuss with the class **“What is accepting?”** and how it can affect improv   Does the scene go anywhere? How long can it last before the audience is bored? How does it feel for the actors?  I’ll hand out the quiz give the students three minutes to write it. Tell them it’s not for grades. | * Question the students and observe answers and participation * Formulative Pre-assessment quiz |
| **Sponge Activity** | Yes Let’s:   * The class is in a circle and the teacher initiates an action by saying “Let’s hop on one foot.” * The class replies “yes let’s” and they all hop on one foot. * The next student player continues by saying "let`s ..." filling in what ever they want the group to do. * The class replies “yes let’s and carries out the action. This continues around the circle until everyone has suggested something. | * Observe the students participation |

**Lesson Plan 2**

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| Name: Ian Cooke | Grade/Subject: Drama 10 | Unit: Improvisation |
| Topic: Spontaneity | Date: February, 2013 | Length of Lesson: 80 minutes |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **General Learning Outcomes (P.O.S.)** | * To acquire knowledge of self and others through participation in and reflection on dramatic experience. * To develop competency in communication skills through participation in and exploration of various dramatic disciplines. | |
| **Specific Leaning Outcomes (P.O.S.)** | * Use warm-up techniques for preparation of body, voice, and mind. * Maintain concentration during exercises. * Tell a story spontaneously * Make logical choices spontaneously within the boundaries of situation and character. * Demonstrate the ability to accept, advance, offer or block thought and action, quickly and effectively | |
| **Learning Objectives** | Students will:   * Play the game The Party * Demonstrate their ability to come up with new ideas quickly and effectively * Demonstrate their ability to warm-up body, voice, and mind * Demonstrate their ability to maintain focus and concentration | |
| **Materials** |  | |
| **Procedure** |  | **Assessment Methods** |
| **Introduction**  (25 min.) | * Tell the students that today we will be working on spontaneity. The game we are working up to is The Party.   Activity #1- Vocal Warm-up: Barn Yard( 10mins)   * Have students form a circle. * Each student is given the name of an animal with approximately three-five people having the same animal. * Now have the students spread out across the room. No one is allowed to tell what animal they are. At the signal each student makes the noise of the animal that they have been given. The first group to find all of their animals and sit down wins.   Activity #2- Physical Warm up: Bippety Bop ( 10 mins)   * Have students form a circle. Teacher assigns one student to be in the middle. * The student in the middle closes their eyes, holds right hand pointing in front of them, and spins around. When done spinning, they open their eyes and say, as fast as they can `Bippety Bippety bop`. * The student they point to, and their 2 neighbors, need to build an elephant in less than the time the student in the middle needs to say `Bippety Bippety Bop`. An elephant consists of a trunk, made by the middle student, by holding your nose with one hand, and extending your other arm through the arm that holds the hand that holds the nose. The neighboring students each form a big ear, using both arms. Don`t forget to attach the ears to the elephant`s head. * Any student that cannot get his/her part done by the time the student in the middle says `Bippety Bippety Bop` becomes `it` and takes place in the middle of the circle.   Activity #3- Vocal Warm-up: Tongue Twisters (5 min.)   * Have the students repeat tongue twisters after you * Unique, New York * Red Leather, Yellow Leather * The Tip of the Tongue, the Teeth, the Lips | * Observe students during activities for focus, concentration, and spontaneity. |
| **Body of Lesson**  (22 min.) | Activity #1 - Accepting Circle( 5 mins)   * Get everyone in a big circle. * One student starts by making a little gesture, perhaps with a little sound. His or her neighbor then tries and does exactly the same. And so on. Although we expect the gesture/sound not to change, it will. * Look for movements that suddenly change left/right arm or leg. This is not really supposed to happen, but it will. Once happened, it should be accepted by the next player. * Also watch/listen for little moans or sighs that players might make before or after their turn - these should also be taken over by the next player.   Activity #2- Name the Monster(5 mins)   * Play in pairs, one word at a time. * Choose a location (e.g. walk in the forest). * Players must meet a monster; give it a name, and run away from it. The `monster` can be anything: an evil witch, a dragon, a frog with a machine gun, a smelly French cheese, anything. * Modifications: ask the players not to run away from the monster, but do something. Fight it, beat it, get eaten, make friends with it, tame it, capture it, ride it, whatever.   Activity #3 – Lines from a Hat (15 min.)   * 2 – 3 students onstage * Each student gets 3 slips of paper with sentences already written down (to be written and put in the hat before the game begins * The students are given a location and begin a scene * When the teacher calls out an actor’s name they must take one of their slips of paper and read what is written for their next line * They must then somehow justify what they wrote to make the scene make sense. * Modifications: number of students on stage, number of pieces of paper, the students decide when to read their paper   Activity #4- Word Tennis(5 mins)   * Group is split into two groups * A topic is decided upon (Ex. fruit) * Each group has a member take a turn naming fruit * If a person stalls or gives an incorrect answer then they go to the back of the line for their group and a new person goes   Modifications: number of groups, topic, time allotted for answering  Activity #5- The Party ( 20 mins)   * 5 students will play at time. * One player plays a character that is having a party. The other players will be the guests, and the audience provides us with who the guests might be. * Of course the host does not know who the guests are. His task is to guess who the guests might be, based on hints the guests offer. * The game is over as soon as the host has guessed all guests. | * Observe student’s participation in activities * Observe student’s wait-time to determine spontaneity |
| **Closure** (5 min.) | * Have students form a circle. Ask the students how we could utilize the concept of improvisation and being spontaneous in our everyday lives? | * Question the students and observe answers and participation |
| **Sponge Activity** | Yes Let’s:   * The class is in a circle and the teacher initiates an action by saying “Let’s hop on one foot.” * The class replies “yes let’s” and they all hop on one foot. * The next student player continues by saying "let`s ..." filling in what ever they want the group to do.   The class replies “yes let’s and carries out the action. This continues around the circle until everyone has suggested something | * Observe the students participation |

**Assessment Overview:**

Lesson 1 – Pre-assessment quiz

SLOs: 1 and 17

Lesson 2 – Checklist

SLOs: 8 and 17

Lesson 4 – Checklist

SLOs: 3, 23 and 32

Lesson 6 – Checklist

SLOs: 3, 8, 11, 16, 17 and 32

**Sample Assessments:**

Lesson 1 Pre assessment Quiz:

Answer the following questions.

1. What are the three IMPORTANT areas we addressed when warming up?

2. What was important about Block Party?

3. What’s the most important component to yes and ?

Lesson 2 Checklist:

\_\_\_\_1. Shows creative improvisation

\_\_\_\_2. Accepts offers made from other classmates during scene

Lesson 4 Checklist:

\_\_\_\_ 1. Maintains concentration during Park Bench

\_\_\_\_ 2. Incorporates stimuli into character

\_\_\_\_ 3. Sustains character through entrance, interactions, and exit in Park Bench

Lesson 6 Checklist:

\_\_\_\_ 1. Maintains concentration during scene

\_\_\_\_ 2. Story is created spontaneously

\_\_\_\_ 3. Scene contains problem

\_\_\_\_ 4. Scene contains rising action

\_\_\_\_ 5. Scene contains resolution

\_\_\_\_ 6. Character fits into the world of the scene

\_\_\_\_ 7. Accepts offers

\_\_\_\_ 8. Advances the scene

\_\_\_\_ 9. Sustains character throughout the scene

**Materials:**

http://Improv Encyclopedia.org

Program of studies Drama 10,20,30

Teacher Resource Manual

**Bibliography:**

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