

Lesson Plan Week #6 – Refining the Drama: Character and Sound Definition WNYC Audio Theater Residency – The Sound

Blueprint Markers:

- Theater Making: Acting, Playwriting/Play Making, Designing and Technical Theater, and Directing
- Developing Theater Literacy
- Making Connections

NY State Educational Standards for Theatre Arts:

Art Standard 1 - Creating, Performing and Participating in the Arts

- 1.1 Use improvisation and guided play writing to communicate ideas and feelings
- 1.2 Imitate various experiences through pantomime, play making, dramatic play, story dramatization, storytelling, role-playing, improvisations and guided play writing
- 1.3 Use language, voice, gesture, movement and observation to create character and interact with others in improvisation, rehearsal and performance
- 1.5 Identify and use, in individual and group experiences, some of the roles, processes, and actions for performing and creating theatre pieces and improvisational drama within the school/community, and discuss ways to improve them

Art Standard 3 – Responding to and Analyzing Works of Art

- Use the techniques and vocabulary of theatre criticism, both written and oral, to discuss theatre experiences and improve individual and group performances

Art Standard 4 – Understanding the Cultural Contributions of the Arts

- 4.11 Improvise scenes based on information about various cultures
- 4.12 Explain how drama/theatre experiences relate to themselves and others

Objectives/Outcomes

Participants will:

- Perform improvised scene for theatre critique
- Analyze through questioning the definition of character choices and sound choices
- Use creative writing to refine their scenes

Materials Needed:

CD/Audio Tape Player

Large Poster Board

Markers

Typed copies of each group silent scene writing from previous week (1 for each group member)

Lesson Plan:

▪ A Vocal Warm-up Exercise

Building on previous week's vocal warm-up exercise, every week the workshop will begin with a new solicited vocal warm-up exercise added to the previous week's solicited vocal warm-up exercise so the class can create their own ensemble vocal warm-up regiment.

▪ The Main Activity

A refinement activity to justify and validate character and sound choices An example is below.

Character/Sound Definition

*Teaching Artist should type each group's silent scene writing from the previous week and provide copies to each member of the group. Therefore, providing the "scripts" the groups will be working with.

- *Have each group reflect on their silent scene writing from the previous week and rehearse the scene as written.
- Each group performs their scene while the audience listens with their eyes closed.
- After the performance, audience shares what they are able to "see" in the scene. Teacher or another participant can write audience observations for each group on large poster board.
- After each group has been observed, instruct participants to turn over their scripts and write their character name/sound name at the top of the page. Participants should write their answers to the following questions on the back of their scripts. Answers should be in relation to their character or sound.

Character Questions	Sound Questions
1. Who is this person? (Age, Occupation, General Biographical Information)	1. What is this sound?
2. What is special about this character? (The way he/she talks, walks, dresses, etc. Flesh out a personality)	2. What is special about this sound? (The weight of the sound, light or heavy, volume. Flesh out the personality of the sound)
3. Where is the character? (Get students to be specific about the location. For example: Restaurant – expensive or cheap? What food?)	3. Where is this sound happening? (Get participants to be specific about sound location. For example: Restaurant – At the bar, in the Dining Room, in the Kitchen? Waiters calling out orders?)
4. How does the character feel about being in this location? Happy, Sad, Angry, etc.	4. How does this sound affect the scene? Noisy, Distracting, Ambient Sound, etc.
5. What does this character want?	5. Is the sound affected by the environment? (Weather, People, etc.) How might this change the tone of the sound?
6. What is stopping this character from getting what they want?	6. Does the sound stay constant in the scene or does it fade in & out?
7. What does the character need to say?	7. How does the sound reflect the action of the dialogue?
8. Who is this character talking to?	8. Can this sound be effectively in this scene in a silent form? How?
9. Why is this day different from any other day? Why must they say what they are saying?	9. Why is this day different from any other day? Why must this sound be heard today?

- Explain to participants that characters in plays talk because they have a "need to speak" and sounds have a "need to be heard". Explain that each participant has the right to define what their character needs to tell or what their sounds need to express.
- Once the character/sound profile has been created, using these profiles and the audience observations, each group assembles to re-work their scenes to clarify the intentions of their character and sound choices. Each group should write their re-worked scene on large poster board.
- After re-working the scene, each group should select 2-3 songs/sound effects from the CDs/tapes they brought in that they may want to incorporate into their scene. They should work together to design how the music/sound effects can be used to strengthen/embellish the scene (i.e. prelude, foreshadowing, climax, resolution).

▪ **Closing Discussion/Activity**

- Have participants sit in circle on floor and inquire about: “What did we do today?” and/or “What’s something you discovered today?”
- Share with participants that this workshop was an exercise in character and sound definition. Explain that in radio drama, what the audience hears creates the imagery in their mind to tell a story. This is why it is imperative that everything that is heard is a radio drama has to have a purpose.
- Share with participants that next week’s workshop, using our re-worked (refined) scenes, we will explore the elements of time in relation to radio drama.
- **Closing exercise** - to seal in the ensemble energy we’ve created. An example is below.

Ensemble Agreement

- Group stands in a circle, holding hands with eyes closed
- Group repeats after the Teaching Artist
- Teaching Artist says, “Using our creativity, our awareness, and each other we make art. Therefore, we are artists.”
- On the count of 3, as a group we inhale and exhale.

Vocabulary:

Improvisation, Theme, Character Definition, Setting, Objective, Scene, Text (Lines), Sound Definition, Prelude, Foreshadow, Climax, Resolution

LESSON PLAN WEEK #6 – REFINING THE DRAMA: CHARACTER AND SOUND DEFINITION

Assessment Indicator	25% of students successful	50% of students successful	75% of students successful	100% of students successful
Students are able to differentiate between what was intended vs. what was conveyed				
Students are able to make specific choices and justify the choice in relation to characters and sound				
Students are able to incorporate feedback and specific choices into their scene revisions				
Students are able to work cooperatively as an ensemble unit				