

Dr. Debrah C. Sickler-Voigt Presents...

Laughter IS Contagious: A Puppet Theatre Production

Middle Childhood: 3rd – 5th Grades

Big Ideas

- Performance and Comedy

Learning Targets

- I can create a puppet for my group's comedic puppet production.
 - I can select an art method and materials to form my puppet.
 - I can construct a sturdy and well-balanced puppet.
 - I can design a comedic set for my puppet production that is unified with the show's characters and script.
- I can identify at least three different examples of how international puppeteers have entertained their audiences through comedic puppet productions in paragraph form.
- I can perform a comedic puppet production before an audience.
- I can develop at least one different sound effect and two props for my group's performance.

Vocabulary

Puppet, Fairy Tale, Performance, Comedy, Comedic, Script, Magic, Construct, Balance, Unity

(Students may need ongoing practice and teacher guidance to learn advanced terminology. The focus is for students to develop exposure to new words.)

Essential Questions

1. Why do people perform?
2. Why is it important for people to laugh?
3. How and why do puppeteers incorporate comedy into their performances?

Overview

This lesson focuses on ICEFA's theme "the theatre and the puppet." When artists and puppeteers create puppet theatre productions they link the fine arts with the performing arts to entertain and inform their audiences. Cultures from around the world have developed comedic performances to invoke laughter. Puppeteers know that laughter is contagious during a performance. People consider laughter to be the world's best medicine because it causes a physiological change in our bodies that make us feel good. Expert puppeteers are highly skilled in manipulating their puppets' actions to produce visual interest and inspire their audiences to laugh and feel happy. They move the puppet's bodies into various contortions, repeat motions, and design likeable characters. Students will design individual puppets and work in teams to create an original puppet show focusing on comedy. They will include sound effects and props to enhance the entertainment value of their performances and make their audiences laugh.

Materials

Invite students to select among age-appropriate materials such as heavy papers, papier-mâché (newspaper, glue, tape, water), markers, tempera paint, socks, clay, and/or assorted fabrics as part of a choice-based curriculum.

Procedures

Presenting, responding, and connecting...

1. The teacher will (TTW) present the big ideas performance and comedy, as well as the lesson's essential questions to the students. TTW identify and explain the lesson's objectives, vocabulary words, and assessment criteria and check for student understanding. *The students will (TSW) engage in the class discussions about comedic performances and puppetry. TSW repeat the lesson's objectives. TSW answer the essential questions orally as part of a class discussion. TSW ask questions if there is something they do not understand and acknowledge understanding at the appropriate time(s).*
2. TTW present students with videos of comedic puppet performances and discuss their qualities, including the puppeteers' choices of costumes, sound effects, and props to induce laughter. TTW brainstorm various strategies for the groups of students to develop puppet characters and write comedic scripts for their puppet shows. *TSW actively watch the video presentations. TSW identify the qualities of comedic performances. TSW brainstorm ways to include relevant sound effects, props, and other unique features into their comedic puppet productions.*

Creating and connecting...

3. TTW demonstrate how to design a set and form sturdy, durable puppets safely using various art media and methods. TTW explain to students the writing assignment on international puppeteers and comedic puppet productions. *TSW identify the storyline, media, and methods they will use to create their comedic puppets and set design. TSW will form a script, puppet, and set that meet the class objectives. TSW write in paragraph form at least three different examples of how international puppeteers have entertained their audiences through comedic puppet productions.* TTW monitor and assist the students throughout the learning process. TTW facilitate students' final edits to their puppets, scripts, and backdrops and provide them with feedback as they practice performing their puppet shows. TTW oversee student cleanup activities. *TSW collaborate with the teacher and their peers to produce a comedic script for their performance. TSW make final revisions to their puppets, scripts, and sets. TSW practice performing their puppet productions. TSW be responsible and follow class procedures safely throughout the lesson, including cleanup.*

Presenting and connecting...

4. TTW facilitate the class puppet productions and closure activities. *TSW perform their puppet productions with their groups. TSW explain what they learned by studying and performing a comedic puppet production during a final critique. TSW complete the checklist.*

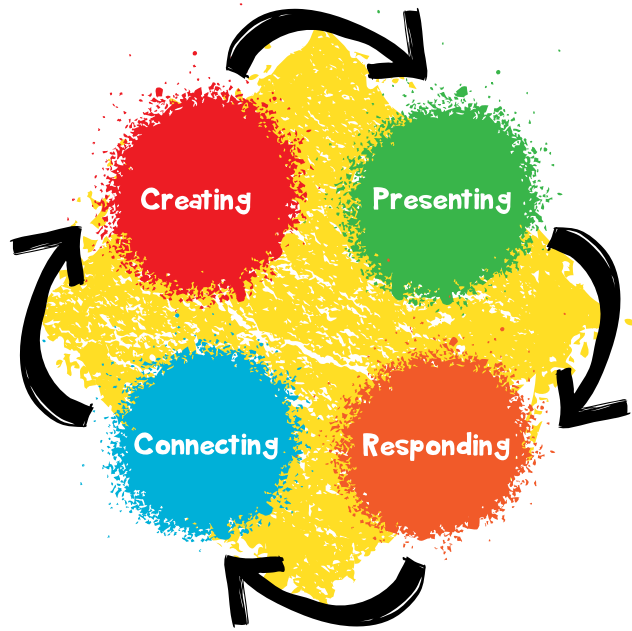
Accommodations

The teacher will:

1. Break down academic vocabulary and the steps necessary for students to participate in all class activities.
2. Provide hands-on demonstrations to show students how to participate in the choice-based puppet production and comedic performance.
3. Meet with students individually to review key information and check for understanding.
4. Brainstorm possible ways to augment the puppet production and performance with advanced learners.

National Visual Arts Standards

- Standard #1—**Creating**: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Standard #5—**Presenting**: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.
- Standard #8—**Responding**: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Standard #11—**Connecting**: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.



Inspiration Artists

- Jim Henson
- Jiří Trnka
- Pablo Cano
- Alice Wallace
- Liz Joyce
- Javanese Wayang Kulit: Shadow Puppet Theatre
- Bunraku: Japanese Puppet Theatre
- Yaya Coulibaly (Bambara puppetry)
- Grimm Brother's Illustrated Fairy Tale Books
- ICEFA Lidice 40th Exhibition Children's Artworks



- (Left) Honourable mention: common work of children (6 - 9 years), ZUŠ, Praha 10 - Strašnice, Czech Republic.
- (Middle) Medal: Škripeňová Hanka (10 years), ZUŠ, Dunajská Lužná, Slovak Republic. ICEFA Lidice, 40th Exhibition
- (Right) Honourable mention: Zedek Maya (9 years), Alger, Algeria. ICEFA Lidice, 40th Exhibition

Assessment: Checklist

The student will meet all six criteria.

- I created a puppet using the art method and materials of my choice for my group's comedic puppet production.
- I constructed a sturdy and well-balanced puppet for my puppet production.
- I designed a comedic set for my puppet production that is unified with the show's characters and script.
- I identified at least three different examples of how international puppeteers have entertained their audiences through comedic puppet productions in paragraph form.
- I performed a comedic puppet production before an audience.
- I developed at least one different sound and two props for my group's performance.

Group and Self-Assessment

The students will participate in a class critique on their finished puppets and comedic performance. They will discuss the process of making their puppets and sets. They will identify the most successful components of their comedic puppet production. They will identify if there were any aspects of their production that they would have changed and how they would do them differently.

References

ICEFA Lidice. (2015). *International Children's Exhibition of Fine Arts Lidice*. Retrieved from <http://www.mdvv-lidice.cz/en/>

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Acknowledgements

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