

## Semester Introductions

### Day 1: Syllabus Review and Class Introductions

#### Standards Addressed:

- **9-12.RT.3** – Follow precisely a complex multistep procedure when performing technical theatre tasks, attending to special cases or exceptions defined in the text.
- **H.10.2: PROFICIENT** – Recognize the responsibilities and the importance of individual theatre patrons in the community.
- **H.8.1: PROFICIENT** – Recognize and develop the voice and body as the actor's primary instruments.

#### Objectives:

- The students will have an understanding of the goals and requirements of the course.
- The students will be able to identify their classmates by name and face.
- The students will be able to memorize a conversation and have it with each other in a focused and engaging way.

#### Materials Needed:

- Projector and Screen
- Rubber Duck (optional)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Period: Intro to Theatre Syllabus

#### Outline of Class:

- **Brief Introduction of Myself – the 5 W's**
  - **Who am I?** – Ball State Graduate, Theatre Education and Honors College
  - **What do I do?** – Theatre teacher and director
  - **Where am I from?** – Fort Wayne/Indianapolis, IN
  - **When did I start?** – Graduated in Spring of 2020 (first year of teaching, yay!)
  - **Why do I do what I do?** – Storytelling (everyone has one, that's all that theatre is, so I'm here to help you tell yours)
- **Syllabus Review – projected onto screen so that students can follow along**
  - Stress performance requirement – this is a THEATRE class; you should expect to be doing Theatre
  - Briefly introduce the textbook and plays we will be reading
  - Discuss any significant assignments or projects due over the course of the semester
  - THE SYLLABUS HAS BEEN POSTED ON THE CLASS WEBSITE, FIND IT THERE FOR REFERENCE.
- **Introduction/Name Games**

- **Alliterative Adjectives**

- The students get into a circle around the room so that they can see everyone.
- One student begins with their name and an alliterative adjective or phrase (i.e. Vicky Vanquisher of Worlds, Bubbly Betsy, Morgan the Mom Friend).
- The next student repeats the prior student's (or students') adjective(s) and name(s) and then introduces themselves in the same way.
- This continues around the circle until every student has introduced themselves.
- The last person to go should be the teacher, who then goes around the whole circle and does exactly as the students have just done, identifying everyone with the correct adjective/phrase and name.

- **Do You Want to Buy a Duck?**

- The students stand in a circle and learn the following conversation before beginning the game:

- 1: "Do you want to buy a duck?"
- 2: "A what?"
- 3: "A duck!"
- 4: "Does it quack?"
- 5: "Of course it quacks!"

*\*\*\*Tip: Project this conversation onto the board for reference during the game.\*\*\**

- Once the students have learned the conversation and are comfortable and able to repeat it on their own, have one student begin to send the conversation around the circle.
- The **first student** should turn to the **person on their right** and say the first phrase, the student that was just spoken to (Student 2) should then turn to the person to THEIR RIGHT (Student 3) and say the second phrase. Student 3 should then turn to the person on THEIR RIGHT and say the third phrase.
- This pattern repeats for the next two phrases in the conversation.
- When Student 5 has said the fifth phrase to Student 6, Student 6 should then turn to Student 7 and say the first phrase.
- The pattern established before will then repeat.
- The conversation should be sent around the circle in this fashion until it comes back around to Student 1.
- Once you have gone around the circle once or twice for a practice, have the students do a competitive round. In this round, if someone hesitates or says the wrong word, they have to sit down.
- Keep going in this way until you are down to a group of about 3-5 students. If at this point it seems like the game will take too long to do a final showdown, declare this group the winners!

- If time allows, do a round of this where instead of moving around the circle in a linear pattern, the students have to throw the rubber duck to pass the conversation around the room.

### Evaluation:

- Did I get through everything that I had planned? If not, what took too long? If yes, was there too much time leftover?
- Did I manage to get everyone's name right when it came to me in the name game?
- How long did it take them to pick up the conversation and rhythm of "Do You Want to Buy a Duck?"

### Notes:

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## Day 2: Building a Safe Space

### Standards Addressed:

- **H.1.1: PROFICIENT** – Discover how our individual cultural experiences affect an artist’s work in the theatre.
- **H.8.1: PROFICIENT** – Recognize and develop the voice and body as the actor’s primary instruments.

### Objectives:

- The students will be able to enter class with the knowledge that they will be accepted for who they are.
- The students will begin to be able to be open and vulnerable with their classmates and instructor.
- The students will be able to push the boundaries of their comfort zones and begin to be comfortable with close physical proximity to their classmates.

### Materials Needed:

- Projector and Screen

### Outline of Class:

- **Introduction of Safe Spaces**
  - What is it?
    - **Student Responses FIRST – but if they do not hit these points:**
    - You can be your complete self and no one will judge you for it.
    - Anything that is shared in this classroom, stays in this classroom.
    - Your drama from your personal life (with each other, other students, other teachers, etc.) stays outside my classroom doors.
  - **How do we make this class a safe space?**
    - Raise your right hand and repeat after me (this will be projected in phrases so that they can all read it as they say it):
      - “As a student in Introduction to Theatre, I, (state your name), promise to be a kind and compassionate person in this class. I promise that I will not be judgmental, snarky, spiteful, or hateful toward my classmates, scene partners, and/or group members. I will respect the physical and emotional boundaries of my classmates and teacher. I promise to go to Ms. Buescher if I have a problem with another student rather than try to handle the issue on my own. I understand that Theatre is about building community, and that community is bigger than myself and my feelings.”

- Trust is not built in a day, but it can be destroyed in less than a minute.
- You will have to work together to maintain the community of trust and growth that we have begun to create today.
- Take care of yourselves and each other.
- **Trust Building Exercises**
  - “I am...”
    - Have students stand in a circle around the room with you in the center.
    - Begin by introducing yourself and saying one thing that applies to you and others in the circle.
    - Explain to the students that anyone to whom your statement about yourself applies now has to find another place in the circle.
    - There will be one fewer spots than there are students (including yourself), so there will be someone left in the middle of the circle.
    - The student in the middle will then do the same thing with something that applies to them, and the game keeps going in that pattern until almost everyone has introduced themselves.
  - **The Human Knot**
    - Break the class into groups of about 6 (count off so that we have slightly more random groups of people).
    - Have each team stand in a circle and instruct everyone to lock right hands with someone on the other side of the circle.
    - Have them lock left hands with someone else on the other side of the circle.
    - Then have the students try to unlock the knot of arms and hands that they have just created without releasing their hands.
    - Follow this activity with a discussion about what made the activity more or less difficult and what it reveals about working as a team.
  - **Trust Circle**
    - **FIRST AND FOREMOST – quick discussion about how theatre is a very physical art and will require them to be in very close physical proximity to their classmates.**
    - Form a circle around the room and have the students turn so that they almost look like a conga line that closed in on itself.
    - Then ask the students to move closer together, so close that they are practically touching the people both in front of and behind them.
    - The students should then sit **very slowly and carefully** on the lap of the person behind them. **\*\*\*THE WHOLE CLASS MUST MOVE AT THE SAME TIME FOR THIS TO WORK\*\*\***
    - If we don't have time for this today, move to tomorrow's class.

### Evaluation:

- Did I get through everything that I had planned? If not, what took too long? If yes, was there too much time leftover?
- How engaged was the class in “I am...” activity? How can I improve it if it was difficult for them to understand or do themselves?
- Was every group successful in untangling their human knot? How long did it take for the first group to become untangled? How long did it take for the last group to get untangled?
- Did anyone fall during the Trust Circle? How could I better prepare the class for this activity?
- Did the Trust Circle cross too many personal space lines too early in the semester? Would this activity fit better in the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of school?

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### Day 3: The Mechanics of Ensemble Work

#### Standards Addressed:

- **H.8.1: ADVANCED** – Convey a character through specific physical and vocal choices.
- **H.8.3: ADVANCED** – Create a character by combining, modifying, or adapting various observations.
- **H.8.4: PROFICIENT** – Build characters and portray situations through improvisation.

#### Objectives:

- The students will be able to define ensemble work as its interdisciplinary significance to Theatre and life in general.
- The students will be able to recognize their role in making an ensemble successful and foresee the consequences of not being a contributing ensemble member, not only to themselves but to their classmates and the production itself.

#### Materials Needed:

- Projector and Screen
- Laptop (preferably Mac) hooked up to projector

#### Outline of Class:

- **IF NOT DONE LAST CLASS, begin with Trust Circle**
  - **FIRST AND FOREMOST – quick discussion about how theatre is a very physical art and will require them to be in very close physical proximity to their classmates.**
  - Form a circle around the room and have the students turn so that they almost look like a conga line that closed in on itself.
  - Then ask the students to move closer together, so close that they are practically touching the people both in front of and behind them.
  - The students should then sit **very slowly and carefully** on the lap of the person behind them. **\*\*\*THE WHOLE CLASS MUST MOVE AT THE SAME TIME FOR THIS TO WORK\*\*\***
- **The Machine**
  - **Discussion Question: What makes an ensemble effective?** (i.e. How can we succeed as a team? – if a sports metaphor is needed)
    - Everyone has to work together.
    - The whole thing could fall apart if one person doesn't show up or do their part of the work.
  - **Building “The Machine”**

- Start with a volunteer to start the machine. They will stand in the center of the room and make a repetitive sound and movement simultaneously in some kind of pattern.
- Invite the students to add to the first person in some way, building upon what the person ahead of them did (ex. If the person before was moving something up and down, maybe the next student can take it from where it lands (up or down) and move it side to side.)
- Keep adding students until the entire class has joined into the machine.
- Take a video of the machine throughout the game to show the class how much one person can change the whole thing.
- Repeat this process with a different person starting and this time, give them a specific task that their machine must accomplish such as “The machine must get an imaginary object from one corner of the classroom to the other.”
- Take another video of this building process.
- After you have done this round, watch the videos as a class and answer the discussion questions.
- **Discussion Question: How would the machine have looked if (enter student name here) hadn’t added what they did when they did?**
  - Drive home the ability of ONE PERSON to change the environment
  - One attitude can throw off the whole class
  - “Be where your feet are” – be present with your classmates, scene partner, group, etc.
- **Discussion Question: How was the building process different when you had a specific goal in mind? What changed between the first machine and the second one?** *(after a few student responses, lead into metaphor below)*
  - Putting together a production (doing a group assignment, strategizing in a game, etc.) is like building a machine with a goal in mind.
  - You start with one thing – the script (first person) and a limited number of resources to make it into a complete production (the rest of the class).
  - The script cannot do anything on its own. It needs all of the rest of the resources available – actors, costumes, lights, sound, a director – to make it to the other side where it comes to life onstage.
  - In order to do anything in theatre, we need everyone to do their part because without that person, something would not get done.

### Evaluation:

- Did I get through everything that I had planned? If not, what took too long? If yes, was there too much time leftover?
- How long did it take for the machine to get built the first time? Is there a way that I can speed up that process if it is taking too long?



- Was showing the video an effective teaching tool? Is there a better way to show the students the process of building the machine?
- Did the students seem engaged in the discussions about the machine after the activity? If not, how might I make this more engaging?

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### Day 4: Warming Up the Actor's Body

#### Standards Addressed:

- **H.8.1: PROFICIENT** – Recognize and develop the voice and body as the actor's primary instruments.
- **H.8.1: ADVANCED** – Convey character through specific physical and vocal choices.
- **H.8.4: PROFICIENT** – Build characters and portray situations through improvisation.

#### Objectives:

- The students will be able to recognize ways of warming up their bodies and voices before diving into the work of Theatre.
- The students will be able to improvise and communicate a phrase or name without speaking.

#### Materials Needed:

- Timer
- Bucket
- Several small scraps of paper

#### Outline of Class:

- **Party Time**
  - Have the students stand in a circle around the room and ask if anyone has played this game before. If there is someone who has, ask them to explain it. If not, teach the call and response listed below:
    - *All: "Because you know it's P-A-R-T-Y. It's party time and you know why! It's P-A-R-T-Y. It's party time and you know why!"*
    - *Student 1: "Hey (Student 2)!"*
    - *Student 2: "Hey what?"*
    - *Student 1: "You know you lookin' mighty fine. I said hey (Student 2)!"*
    - *Student 2: "Hey what?"*
    - *Student 1: "You know you blow this class' mind!"*
    - *All: "You've got to freeze, OH – and boogie on down! You've got to freeze OH – and turn yourself around!"*
  - This series of phrases repeats with the person who was Student 2 leading the next round of calls and responses.
  - When you have gone through about 5-6 rounds of call and response, the leader (instructor) steps in to do the final round of calls as such:
    - *Leader: "Hey class!"*
    - *Class: "Hey what?"*
    - *Leader: "You know you lookin' mighty fine. I said hey class!"*
    - *Class: "Hey what?"*

- *Leader: "You know you blow my dang mind!"*
- *All: "You've got to freeze, OH – and boogie on down! You've got to freeze OH – and turn yourself around!"*
- **Get Down, Get Funky, Get Loose**
  - This is a camp song, so one or more of the students may know it already. If they know it, have them lead the group. If no one knows it, you can lead it as follows:

*Get down, get funky, get loose  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
and start with your feet  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

*Get down, get funky, get loose  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
and start with your knees  
Your knees, 2-3-4  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

*Get down, get funky, get loose  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
and start with your hips  
Your hips, 2-3-4  
Your knees, 2-3-4  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

*Get down, get funky, get loose,  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
And start with your 'bows (elbows)  
Your 'bows, 2-3-4  
Your hips, 2-3-4  
Your knees, 2-3-4  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

*Get down, get funky, get loose,  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
and start with your shoulders  
Your shoulders, 2-3-4  
Your 'bows, 2-3-4  
Your hips, 2-3-4  
Your knees, 2-3-4  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

*Get down, get funky, get loose,  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
and start with your grill (face)  
Your grill, 2-3-4  
Your shoulders, 2-3-4  
Your 'bows, 2-3-4  
Your hips, 2-3-4  
Your knees, 2-3-4  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

*Get down, get funky, get loose,  
and move to the beat  
Get your whole body movin'  
and start with your dome (head)  
Your dome, 2-3-4  
Your grill, 2-3-4  
Your shoulders, 2-3-4  
Your 'bows, 2-3-4  
Your hips, 2-3-4  
Your knees, 2-3-4  
Your feet, 2-3-4*

- **Movie and TV Charades**

- Have each student write down 2 of their favorite television show names or movie titles on the provided slips of paper and put the papers into the bucket.
- Split the class into two teams and ask for a volunteer to go first.
- Each turn will go like this:
  - *A student from one team will go up to the front of the group and pull a paper from the bucket.*
  - *The student will then be tasked with portraying the television show or movie that they pull so that their teammates can guess it.*
  - *Each team will have 1 minute to guess at which time, if they haven't figured it out, the other can steal.*

**Evaluation:**

- Did I get through everything that I had planned? If not, what took too long? If yes, was there too much time leftover?
- Was the class excited when they got into "Party Time" and "Get Down, Get Funky, Get Loose"? How can I make this more engaging?
- Did the Charades exercise keep the students' attention?

**Notes:**

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## Day 5: Touring Our Theatre Spaces

### Standards Addressed:

- **9-12.RT.4** – Determine the meaning of symbols, key terms, and other domain-specific words and phrases as they are used in a specific technical theatre context relevant to grades 9-12 texts and topics.
- **H.8.1: PROFICIENT** – Recognize and develop the voice and body as the actor's primary instruments.

### Objectives:

- The students will be able to navigate our theater and auditorium spaces.
- The students will be able to easily locate anything they would need to complete any assignment in this class or for a production.

### Materials Needed:

- None

### Outline of Class:

- **Tour of Theatre Spaces**
  - **Auditorium Tour**
    - No balcony
    - Tech booth – sound and lighting board
    - Stairs to a spotlight booth
    - Fly system – for lights and drops (more than dead-hanging!)
    - Apron on the proscenium and orchestra pit – cannot be covered (so be careful!)
    - Significant amount of space in the wings – storage on one side
    - Prop Shop – some storage but also a working shop
    - Dressing rooms – directly backstage (no green room)
    - Possibility for 3 projector screens and projectors – cameras in the theatre
  - **Safety Information**
    - There is a basement but it is not utilized – so don't even try
    - Fly System – calls "Line 1 flying in" / "Line 1 flying out"
    - Prop Shop – if you don't know how to use the tool, don't touch it
    - If it's not your prop, don't touch it.
    - If it seems like you shouldn't be there, don't be there.

- **“Who just did that?”**
  - Have the students stand in a circle and explain the game.
  - One student will go out into the hall while another student volunteers to be the “leader” in the game.
  - The leader will begin to do a repetitive action (i.e. snapping, clapping, patting your legs, etc.) and when there is a steady pattern established, the person in the hall will be brought back into the room.
  - The person out of the hall is now tasked with the job of figuring out who the leader is in the room.
  - The leader’s task is to change the action without the person in the center of the circle figuring out who is changing the action.
  - The person in the center can guess several times, but they have to keep guessing until they guess correctly. The group should continue the action through the person guessing.
  - When the person in the center has guessed correctly who the leader of the group is, the leader will then be the person who goes into the hall and the game begins again. This can go for as many rounds as you would like/have time for.

### Evaluation:

- Did I get through everything that I had planned? If not, what took too long? If yes, was there too much time leftover?
- Was I clear enough in my explanations of all the elements of the game? Did the students ask any questions that I did not know the answers to? How can I find the answer for them?
- How long did it take for the students to pick up on the game? How long did it take to get through one round of the game?

### Notes: