

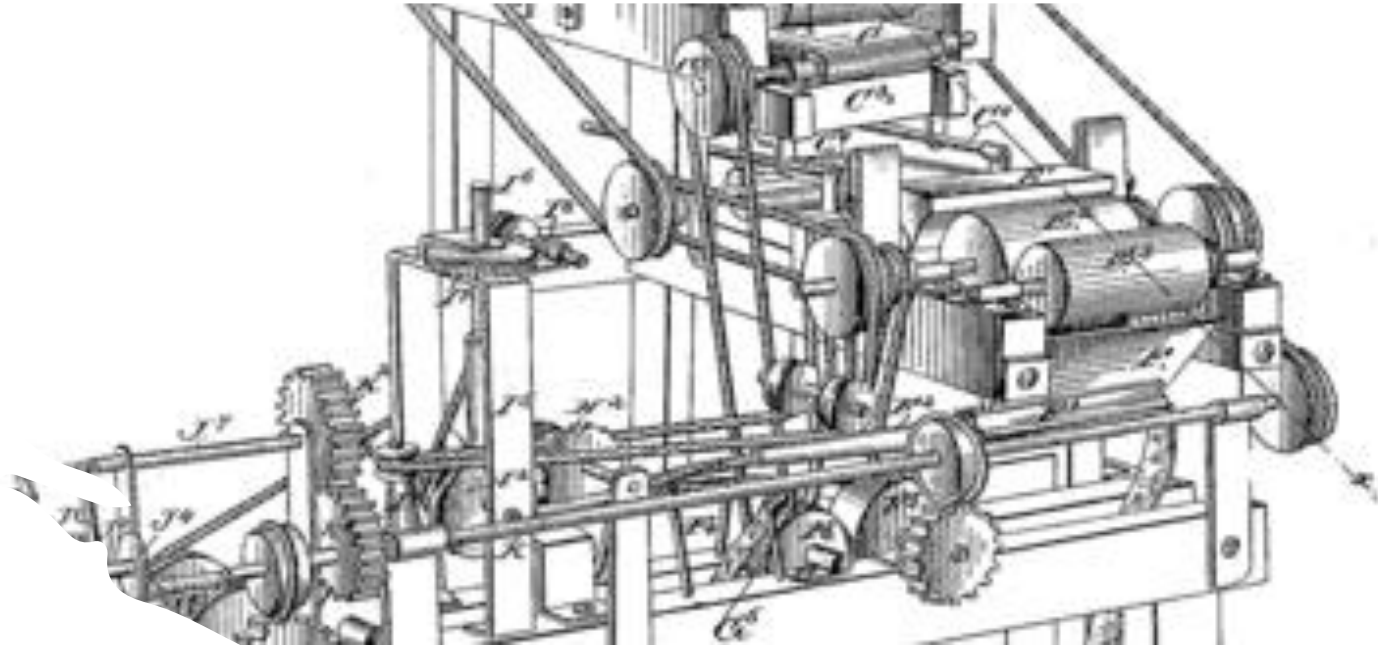


Fairytale Given Circumstances

TH 589 Kallie Marrison's
Demo Acting Class

The Machine: Discussion Questions

- 1) What did you imagine the machine you created was?
- 2) What was your part in making it?
- 3) How could we make the machine better?
- 4) Was it difficult to keep your concentration until everyone was creating the machine?



New Word of the Day: GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES

Given Circumstances: “the plot of the play, the epoch (time in a person’s life), the time and place of the action, the conditions of life, the director’s and the actor’s interpretation, the setting, the properties, lighting, sound effect – all that an actor encounters while he creates a role” (pg. 26 “The Stanislavski System” by Sonia Moore)

Stanislavski’s Given Circumstances Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-tcPRWgwKI>.



Given Circumstances: General vs Specific



General Given Circumstance of Where “Place”: Farm

Specific and Detailed Given Circumstance of Where “Place”: 100-year-old unkempt farm in rural Missouri that has been passed down for generations

General Given Circumstance:



It's All
About
Details

Specific and Detailed Given Circumstance:



And now it's your turn!



Let's Practice:

Can you name a general place (or choose another Given Circumstance question), then a detailed specific one?



FAIRYTALE EXAMPLE: CINDERELLA



Cinderella Being Bossed
Around by her Stepmother
Scene:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urGE_tcx9JA.

Given Circumstances in Cinderella Scene:

- *What's the character's name?* Cinderella
- *Scene?* Cinderella cleaning and being bossed around by her stepmother/stepsisters
- *What are their favorite things?* Daydreaming and her mouse friends
- *What are they wearing?* Old blue and brown rag dress with white dirty apron.
- *Who makes up their family?* Evil Stepmother and Stepsisters (mother and father died), Lucifer the cat, and Jaq and Gus the mice
- *Do they have any friends?* Jaq and Gus
- *How have they found themselves in the situation they are in?* Both her parents died and now she lives with her evil stepmother/stepsisters, who are mean to her and force her to do all the housework.
- *Are they cold, hot, hungry, in a rush or in any pain?* She is in a big rush to fulfill the nonstop demands of her stepmother and stepsisters. She seems to be quite upset by the long to do list her stepmother gives her.





How Given Circumstances Help Us Understand and Create Characters

Essential Question: How can the Given Circumstances of the Cinderella scene help us understand and create how the character of Cinderella would move and speak?

- Example 1: Since Cinderella is in a rush to fulfill all her stepmother and stepsisters demands, would she be moving slowly or quickly?
- Example 2: Since Cinderella's stepmother is mean to her and gives her long lists of chores to do, do you think Cinderella would talk softly or loudly to her stepmother?

Knowing Given Circumstances can help us as actors make choices on how to move and talk like our characters!



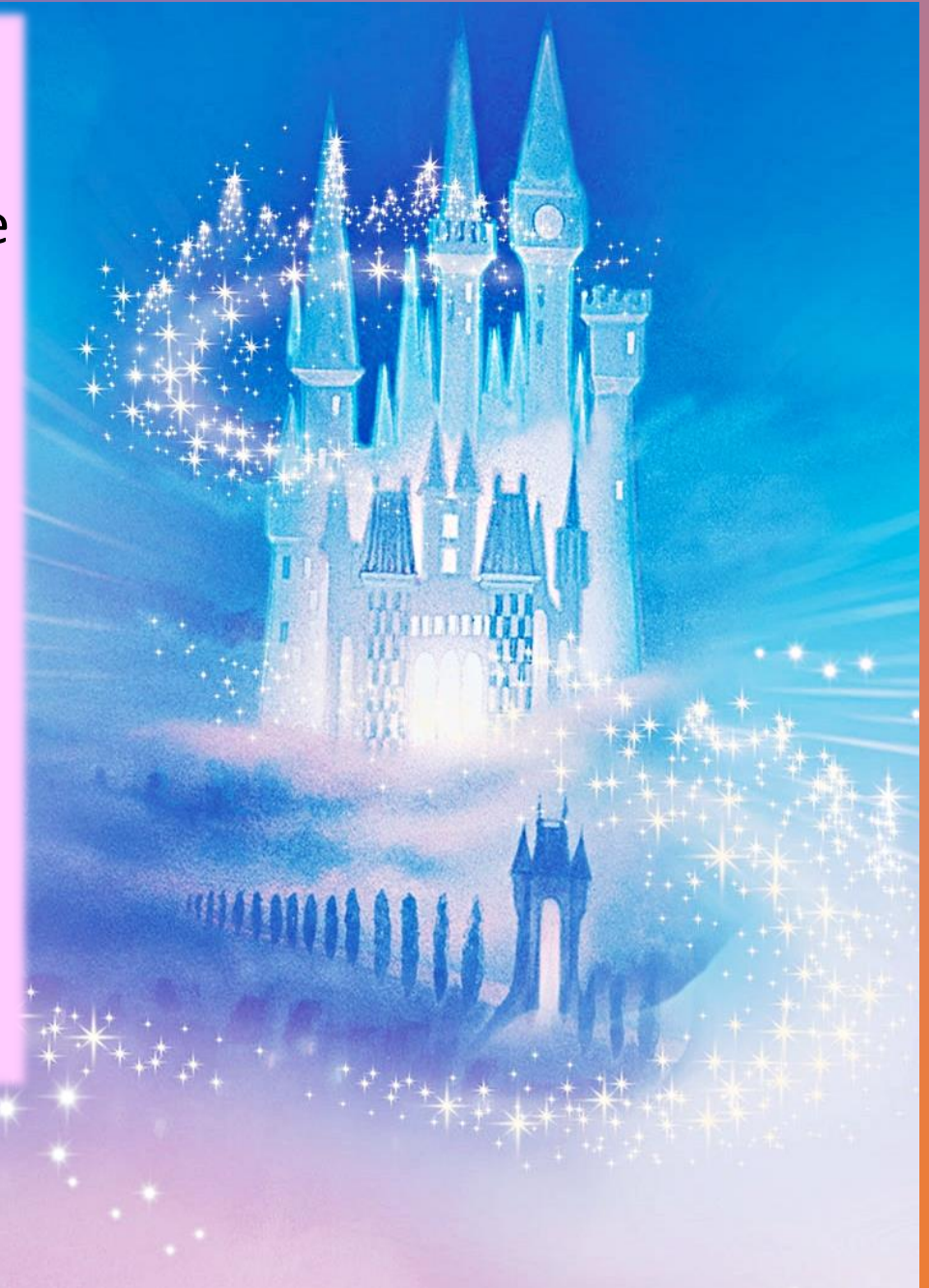
Break off into small groups to discuss the following to share with the class:

- 1) What are “Given Circumstances”
- 2) Give a specific example of a type of Given Circumstance
- 3) Pick a well-known character and name some specific, detailed given circumstances of that character as well as how that character could potentially move and speak as a result of knowing some Given Circumstances of the character.

LET'S TRY IT OUT!!!

Steps for Success:

- 1) Pick a character and scene from your favorite fairytale and write down answers to questions on your handout based on the character/scene you chose
- 2) Once you find all the information on your character/scene, you will be split into groups of 2-3 and discuss how your chosen characters might move/speak based on your chosen scene and Given Circumstances
- 3) You will then take a few minutes to walk around the room as your character, then perform a 3–5-minute improvisation with your group using your chosen character/scene





Write down the following in your journal to share with the class:

- 1) Write down what “Given Circumstance” means
- 2) Give one new example of a general Given Circumstance and one new example of a specific Given Circumstance

Then write the following in your journal:

- 1) Write down one thing you learned
- 2) Write down one thing you’re not sure of
- 3) Write down one thing you don’t understand



What
questions
do you
have?

Homework Assignments



Pick a short scene from a book or movie and write down 15 specific Given Circumstances of your favorite character; be ready with your character and their Given Circumstances next class for a small group discussion and improvisation.

References

Cinderella scene: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urGE_tcx9JA

“Fairytale Given Circumstances Game” <https://theatrenerds.com/five-acting-exercises-for-8-18-year-olds/>

“Given Circumstances Video” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-tcPRWgwKI>

“The Machine” Game: <https://bbbpress.com/2013/04/the-machine/>

The Stanislavski System (Moore) book

