

LESSON PLAN

TEACHER: Kate Varner	GRADE: 4th-6th
SUBJECT: Theatre	DATE: 6/6/25
UNIT: So You Think You Can Improv	LESSON TITLE: Character Frenzie

UNIT DESCRIPTION:

This 5 day mini camp will teach elementary schoolers all about improv through the use of teamwork, bold choices, and creativity.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS NOTED THROUGHOUT:

Metacognition M (working memory, attention, attention shifting, sequencing)

Emotional Regulation ER (Emotion in self/others, ability to express, modify, suppress emotion)

Behavioral Regulation BR (Recognition of behavior choices, ability to express, modify, suppress a behavior)

OVERVIEW OF LESSON (Instructional Strategy):

During this lesson plan: Students will practice making three dimensional characters, working on character voices, objectives, and tactics. Students will also learn tableau work.

OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
1) Students will learn to respect the boundaries of others. 2) Students will learn how to work as a group. 3) Students will learn how to problem solve as a group 4) Students will become unafraid to make big physical choices 5) Students will begin to incorporate words into Improv games 6) Students will learn to create 3 dimensional characters 7) Students will work as a team to create tableau	1) Students will participate in a daily check in. 2) Students will participate in ensemble building games 3) Students will problem solve in order to win Chair Chess 4) Students will participate in physical improv games that involve pantomiming skills (What are you doing, Machine, Magic Ball of Clay, Freeze, Late to Work) 5) Students will play Alien Interview and HitchHicker 6) Students will discuss the importance of "Yes,And" and character objectives and tactics

	7) Students will play Fairytale Tableau and Instagram
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GUIDED PRACTICE This is an outline of the lesson	1) Daily Check in 2) Character Superhero/Villain worksheets 3) Worksheet presentation through interview 4) Intro to tablo work 5) Fairytale tablo 6) Snack Break 7) Instagram Story 8) Game Review 9) Water break 10) Game Review 11) End of Day Discussion 12) End of Day
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SCHEDULE Includes timed segments	● 9:00 am- Daily Check in ● 9:10 am - Fill out Character worksheets ● 9:30 am - Character Interviews ● 9:50 am- Introduce students to the tableau work ● 10:00 am - Fairytale tableau ● 10:25 am - Snack Break ● 10:40 am - Instagram Story ● 11:00 am - Begin Game Review ● 11:20 am - Water Break ● 11:25 am- Continue Game Review ● 11:50 am - End of Day Discussion ● 12:00 pm - End of Day
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MATERIALS All items you need to make the lesson happen	● Big piece of Paper ● Markers ● Super Hero / Villain Character Creation Worksheet ● Fairytale title page
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OTHER RESOURCES	
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Additional resources such as a way to play amplified sound	● speaker (not required, but could be nice to play music during breaks, or the morning craft)
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STANDARDS These are age appropriate State Standards	AE17.TH.6.5 Contribute ideas and accept and incorporate the ideas of others in preparing or devising drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.7.5 Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.8.5 Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.6.10 Experiment with various physical choices to communicate character in a drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.6.7 Identify effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.7.3 Envision and describe a scripted or improvised character's inner thoughts and objectives in a drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.8.10 Use various character objectives and tactics in a drama/theatre work. AE17.TH.6.7 Identify effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted drama/theatre work.
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PROCESS “Hello and welcome to the third day of Camp! Let's do our daily check in. How are you feeling today? Is there anything specific that the class should know about you today?” As a class, complete an Actor's V.I.B.E Check! Go over the actor tools: voice, imagination, body, and ensemble. “ Now that we are checked in, you can grab a Character Worksheet! Fill this out to the best of your ability, make a big bold creative choice. The sillier the better.” Students can use markers and crayons to complete the worksheet. The worksheet is attached below. Once the worksheets are completed, it's time for the students' newly created characters to be interviewed! As the instructor you act as the host of this interview; make the host silly,
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to encourage students to be silly as well. This “interview” can take place on any TV channel of your choosing. Let students volunteer one at a time to get interviewed in front of the class; if students are nervous, they can go up with a partner at first. Ask the students silly questions about their character, some questions can be from the worksheet, and others can be random questions to allow them to exercise their Improv muscles. Encourage students to walk and talk like your character.

Once the interview is over, it's time to learn about tableaux. Tableaus are a frozen picture made with the actors body used to tell a story. Have a couple of volunteers help you make an example tableau. Then split the class into groups of 4ish people. Once the groups are created, the Instructor can walk around the room and have each group pick out a piece of paper. Use the worksheet below to cut out the names of different fairytales, and fold the pieces of paper up so the students can't see what fairytales they are choosing. Once each group gets a piece of paper, have each team work together to tell their story in 5 tableaux. Give the groups 5 minutes to practice their tableaux. Once time is up, have each group perform their tablos for the rest of the class, letting the rest of the class guess which fairytale they are performing. If time permits, let each group pick a new fairytale, and challenge them to perform the story in 3 tableaux instead of 5. This activity will end when the Instructor decides to end it.

Take a 15 minute snack break. You can take the students outside if that option is available for a change of scenery. Before the camp week begins, make sure to note any allergies, to ensure everyone brings appropriate snacks.

After snack break, it's time to play an improv game that focuses on tableau work:

- INSTAGRAM STORY: Choose two actors and have them establish a relationship (EX: cousins, best friends, enemies, etc). Then choose a small group of students to act as the “pictures.” The Instructor will interview the first two actors about their vacation they just went on, and then prompt that actors to show us a “picture/instagram story” from their vacation. Countdown 3, 2, 1- the picture characters create a tableau of them on that specific vacation. Make bold choices, and create an interesting tableau for the actors to work off of. The two vacationers will then have to tell us about what is going on in the image as it pertains to their vacation. The Instructor can end each story when they feel it is necessary, giving them a few chances to tell their story through tablos. Play this game for a few rounds, giving students the opportunity to try something new. A challenge that can be added is the addition of a “boomerang” to the instagram story, allowing the tableau artists to create a moving picture.

After this new game, meet up as a class and discuss the games learned throughout the week. These are the games that they can potentially share in the showcase on Friday. Have them review and practice these games, telling them to make a mental note of which games they may want to perform. Make sure to take time during this review to take a 5 minute water break.

Here is a List of games that can be played during this time:

- MAGIC BALL: Have the class stand in a circle. Hold an imaginary ball in front of you, and describe it as if it were clay or play dough. It stretches and can grow to be as big as you need it to be. Shape the ball into something you can use (EX: a horse, vacuum, or something physical). Encourage the students to create something they have to pantomime for us to guess what it is. If they create something that just sits there, we'll never guess it. Once they sculpt the ball into something they use, the group takes turns guessing what they turned it into. They may have to repeat their gestures until the group guesses. Encourage them to be more specific with their movement and sounds. The person who guesses gets to be the next person to use the Magic Ball of Clay. Repeat until everyone gets a turn, or until the Instructor ends the game.
- WHAT ARE YOU DOING?: Have the class stand in a circle. In the circle, the first person does a physical activity. The next person says, "What are you doing?" The first person says an activity that they are NOT doing and the second person does that activity. The third person asks, "What are you doing?" and the second person says something they are NOT doing. Continue around the circle. No activity can be repeated. Encourage bold choices, and no hesitations; say the first thing that comes to mind. Try to play two rounds if time permits.
- FREEZE: Have the class stand in a circle. Have two people go into the middle of the circle. In the middle the student will complete an improv scene focusing on making big physical choices. Refrain from simply standing and talking. Make big characters with big personalities, the sillier the better. Let the scene in the middle play out for about 30 seconds, and then a student can call out "Freeze!" At that phrase the scene in the middle will freeze in whatever position they were currently in, and the student who called "Freeze" will walk into the circle and tap on one of the actor's shoulders. This will tap that actor back to the outside of the circle, and the freezer will take that actor's physical position. Once the new actor is in the pose, the actor will take that pose and start a brand new scene. This pose should initiate the scene, don't just drop the pose at the beginning of the scene. This game will continue in this fashion until the Instructor decides to end it. Encourage everyone to try to take a turn in the middle of the circle.
- ALIEN INTERVIEW: This game involves three people: the alien, the interpreter, and the host. The host will ask the Alien questions, and the Alien will respond in their own made up "alien language". The interpreter will then translate the Aliens response, using their imagination and creativity to translate. Begin the game with the Instructor acting as the host, and once the students get more comfortable a student can try to be the host. This game can play in multiple rounds, giving students the opportunity to try new things. The game will end when the Instructor ends it.
- HITCH HIKER: 3 chairs = 3 seats in the cab of a semi truck. 3 players start in chairs. Far left is the "driver". The 4th player sticks out a thumb. When the driver sees the "Hitchhiker" they must put on the imaginary brakes and open the door while also making an excuse to exit the stage. Hitchhiker will enter the cab of the truck as a distinct character with the middle passenger now the driver. The other 2 in the truck

take on the personality traits of the hitchhiker. It is repeated when another hitchhiker sticks out a thumb and enters with a new character.

- **LATE TO WORK:** Have everyone stand in a circle. In the circle, select one person to leave the room as the late employee, one person to be the boss, and 4 co-workers. If a student is not chosen to be the boss, a co-worker, or late to work, the students will be a part of the audience. The audience will get to choose why the person is late to work. This example can take place in 3 parts: Why were they late to get out of the house? What happened on the way to work? How did they get to work? Once the audience makes their decision, they will call in the “late” students from the other room. The boss will then question the “late employee” on why they were late. The four students pantomime why they are late in the back. If the boss turns around to look at the co-workers, they must stop pantomiming and pretend to work. If the student guesses closely, the students will snap. If they guess it correctly, the students will clap. If the late employee gets the final answer correct after 3 minutes of guessing, they are welcome back to work! If they get it partially right in 3 minutes, they are on probation. If they do not have an answer or get it wrong, they are fired. This game can have many rounds, giving students the opportunity to play many different roles. This game will end when the Instructor decides to end it.
- **MIND MELT:** Have everyone in the class stand in a circle. The purpose of this game is to get the two people in the middle of the circle to say the same word. This game works by having two people in the class walk into the circle, the Instructor will countdown from 3; at the end of the countdown, the two people in the middle of the circle will say the first word that pops into their mind. After they say their word, they go back to the outside of the circle, and two new people walk into the middle. The new people will think about the words previously said, and think of a word that they think makes sense. The Instructor will countdown again, and the new people will say a word. This process will continue until the people in the center say the same word! This game can be repeated until the Instructor decides to end it.
- **MACHINE:** Start with one student making a noise and a simple repeatable gesture. When the student has a rhythm and another student has an idea for a movement which connects to the first gesture that student joins the first student by making a new noise and movement which connects to the original gesture. Each student joins in with a new noise and gesture and connects to the others in some way until all students are involved in creating the machine. Make the Machine once this way; then to spice it up you can add challenges (EX: having them create a specific theme machine, controlling their volume, or having them dismantle one by one). This game ends when the Instructor ends it.

Take the last 10 minutes of class to debrief the day. “What was the best part of the day?” “Were there any challenges?” “What are you looking forward to?”

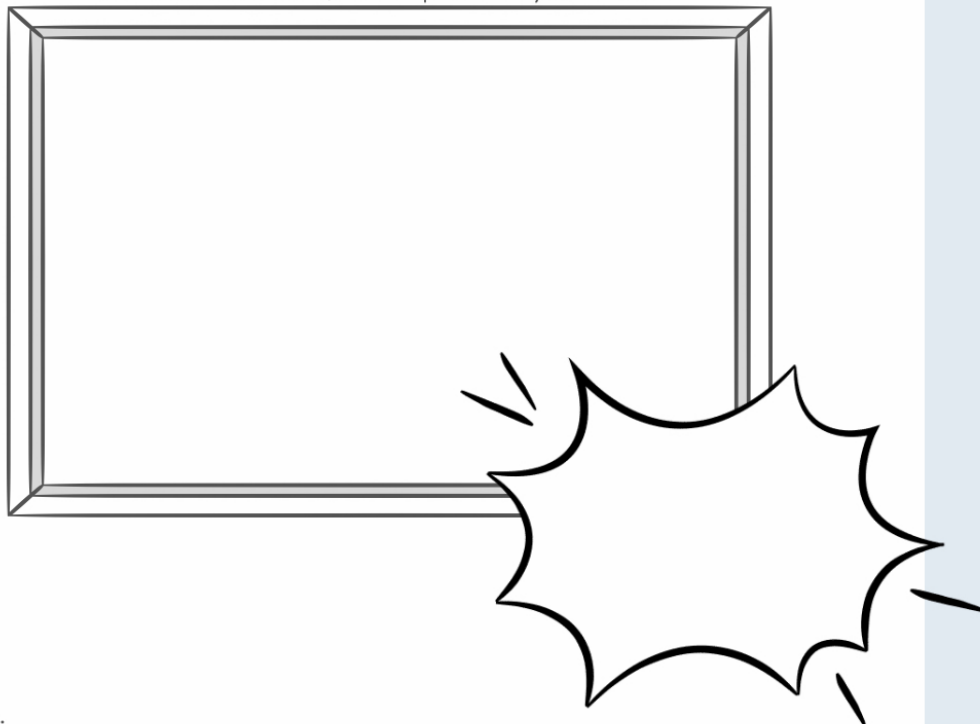
Time for dismissal! Take your class to their carpool or directly to their caregivers



Name: _____ Grade _____

DESCRIBING MY SUPERHERO / VILLIAN

Draw a picture of your superhero / villain
In the second bubble, draw a picture of your sidekick!



NAME:

SUPER POWERS

SUPER ENEMY

MAJOR WEAKNESS



Fairytale Title Sheet

Little Red Riding Hood	Little Miss Muffet	Tangled
The 3 Little Pigs	Jack and Jill	Lion King
Goldilocks & The 3 Bears	The Little Mermaid	Peter Pan
Humpty Dumpty	Frozen	Beauty and the Beast