

Historical Figures Come to Life: Integrating Social Studies and English Language Arts with the Monologue Drama Strategy Grades 1-5

Description: Historical Figures Come To Life allows students to research a selected historical figure, write a monologue in first person, design a costume, develop voice and movement tools of the actor, and then perform the monologue in-character. The teacher also develops his or her own drama integrated strategies that can be replicated in other classrooms or subjects.

Teachers will –

- Experience and implement arts integrated instructional strategies.
- Establish their own best practices based on learned drama strategies.
- Develop research tools and graphic organizers that merge into monologue writing.

Students will-

- Develop actor's tools of voice, body and imagination.
- Research a historical or literary figure.
- Write a monologue, a dramatic speech in first person.
- Imagine a design for a costume using a costume rendering page.
- Create a voice and body movements for the historical figure.
- Memorize the monologue
- Rehearse
- Perform the monologue applying the tools of the actor (body, voice and imagination)
- Optional: The monologue can be audio recorded to fulfill grades 2-5 standards or videotaped for a more dramatic presentation.

Essential Question:

What steps does an actor/playwright need to take to write and perform a monologue based on a character from history?

Georgia Standards of Excellence for Social Studies and Language Arts:

See additional pages for grade specific standards

GPS Fine Arts Standard Theatre Anchor Standards:

TAES.2 Developing scripts through improvisation and other theatrical methods

TAES.3 Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments

TAES.4 Designing and executing artistic and technical elements of theatre

TAES.7 Integrating various art forms, other content areas, and life experiences to create theatre.

Addendum:

- Standards
- Sample Rubric/Assessment

Lesson Overview

10 Residency Sessions and 2 Planning Sessions

Session 1: Tools of the actor

- Introduce the tools of the actor (body, voice, and imagination) using a story selected by the TA/teacher

Session 2: Tools of the actor

- Continue building acting tools of body, voice, and imagination

Session 3: Introduce the monologue project

- Teaching Artist performs a monologue to model (in a simple costume)

Suggested 2 week interval for research time

Session 4: Writing Exercises – Descriptive Language

- Students brainstorm adjectives and descriptive language to describe the historical figures being researched.

Suggested 1 week interval for detailed research

Session 5: Writing Exercises – Hook

- Historical characters have been selected
- Students devise a ‘hook,’ an opening sentence that grabs the audience’s attention
- Begin creating their monologues based on knowledge from research

Suggested 1-2 week interval for writing. The monologue should include an opening ‘hook’, interesting details, facts, a story, quotes, and/or a closing.

Session 6: Writing Exercises – Closing

- Write a closing for monologue
- Begin developing body and voice for the character

Session 7: Refine writing (as needed) and monologue presentation of the historical figure.

Optional – Design a costume using the provided costume rendering page. Encourage costumes to be created using materials/clothing already owned by the student. Originality and low-cost costuming is encouraged, with the clothing of the historical figure ‘indicated’ but not necessarily exact.

Session 8: Rehearse monologue

Session 9: Final rehearsal

Session 10: Performance of the monologue for peers, family, etc.

Note: While research can be conducted collaboratively in groups, the monologue itself is solo work, creating a dual learning environment and skill development of collaboration and personal creativity.

Grade 1: American Heroes

Social Studies

SS1H1: The student will read about and describe the life of historical figures in American history.

a. Identify the contributions made by these figures: Benjamin Franklin (inventor/author/ statesman), Thomas Jefferson (Declaration of Independence), Meriwether Lewis and William Clark with Sacagawea (exploration), Harriet Tubman (Underground Railroad), Theodore Roosevelt (National Parks and the environment), George Washington Carver (science).

b. Describe how everyday life of these historical figures is similar to and different from everyday life in the present (food, clothing, homes, transportation, communication, recreation).

SS1H2: The student will read or listen to American folktales and explain how they characterize our national heritage.

The study will include John Henry, Johnny Appleseed, Davy Crockett, Paul Bunyan, and Annie Oakley.
(Note: Several of these will be deleted during the 16-17 school year)

Language Arts

ELAGSE1W2: Write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure.

ELAGSE1SL4: Describe people, places, things, and events with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly.

Theatre

TAES1.2 Developing script through improvisation and other theatrical methods

d. Uses the playwriting process: pre-writing/pre-play; preparation to write/dramatize; write/dramatize; evaluate and edit; re-write/re-dramatize

TAES1.3: Acting by developing, communicating and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.

a. Makes vocal choices in assuming roles

b. Makes movement choices in assuming roles

c. Uses body and voice to communicate ideas, emotions, and character actions

e. Assumes roles in a variety of dramatic forms such as narrated story, pantomime, puppetry and role play

f. Demonstrates skills of the mind: listening, observing, problem solving, imagining, concentrating