

BEGINNERS

Usual class set-up:

“Circle-Up” - Warm-up Games/Name Games

-examples: Cat in the Corner, Concentration, Line-ups

“Starters” - Focus exercises

-examples: Focus Walks, Mirror Exercise, Breathing Focus, Question Game

“Activity” - Acting or voice exercises

-examples: Activity Doing, Storytelling, Voice

“Follow-up” - discussion of day’s activities

-use this time to figure out what they enjoyed or didn’t and use it to shape the next class

-use this time to see if they understand the fuction of storytelling and voice in acting

Notes:

I have many kindergarteners and 1st-graders, so I try to keep this class introductory. I started a little too ambitiously on the first day and realized that I did need to start at the very beginning with them. I have approached this class from a storytelling perspective. They love to tell stories. One of their favorite activities is our Storytelling activity. This is one in which I divide them into groups of three and four and let them create a story to perform to the rest of the class at the end of the time. We talk about them when they finish to find out what they liked. We’re working basically on how to tell a good story. They understand very well the notions of beginning, middle, and ending. I keep the activities short due to their attention spans. They love to play games, too, so I try to incorporate as many theatrical games as I can. One thing I focus on with them is how to present themselves onstage with their voices and their bodies. Eventually we will begin working on a small performance piece called “Tar-heel Tales.” It’s a children’s performance piece that is a collection of stories. It fits perfectly with what we are concentrating on in class.

INTERMEDIATE

Usual class set-up:

"Starters" - Improvisational games, Focus Games

-examples: Question game, Group storytelling, Focus Walks, Focus Breathing, Mirror Game, Changes, Freeze, Party Quirks, Activity Doing

"Circle-Up" - Discussion

-We are reading and discussing Shakespeare's *As You Like It* in preparation for scenes

-Scene Study: breaking down scenes in terms of objective, obstacles, recognition/reversal

-General Theatre discussion on improvisational technique, Aristotelian technique, jargon of theatre, plays, playwriting, stage composition

"Reading/Performing" -scenes or Improv

-Right now we are reading scenes from *As You Like It*, next week we will put the scenes on their feet

-We play a lot of improvisational games

"Follow-up and Review"

-Review new terms learned and discuss day's activities

Notes:

This is an advanced group and I am pushing them forward and having them work on more difficult material. Instead of having them read several plays, we are focusing on one play in particular so as not to overwhelm them. They seem to enjoy the Shakespeare and are looking forward to putting the scenes on the stage. We have discussed audition techniques as well as a couple different acting techniques. I am prepared to slow the class down or push it further forward depending on how the class reacts to our activities and readings. So far, I have been able to continue plowing forward and pushing them. I have a good time with this group.