



Lesson: Language Arts Grades K-3

Topic: A New Way to Comprehend and Communicate

A Night at the Improv: Casey at the Bat

Introduction: Students will use their improvisation skills to explore and experience the point of view of the characters in The Children's Theater musical, "Casey at the Bat."

Learning Outcomes:

National Learning Outcomes:

1. Read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres.
2. Apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate text.
3. Communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.

Ohio Learning Outcomes:

1. Students learn to apply the reading process to the various genres of literature, including fables, tales, short stories, novels, poetry and drama.
2. Strategic readers learn to explain, analyze and critique literary text to achieve deep understanding.

Getting Started:

Materials:

- An open space for student to move.

Vocabulary:

- Improvisation

Lesson:

Orientation Activity:

1. Warm-up and visualization exercise:
 - Students will lay outstretched on the floor with the lights turned off. Count slowly from one to ten, four times, and ask students to focus on their breathing. Next, ask students to envision themselves in the baseball stadium.
 - Say: Listen to all of the sounds in a baseball stadium: the crowd, the hot dog salesperson, the music, the announcer, etc. Put yourselves in the body of Casey as he got up to bat. Think about how he was feeling. How did he act to those who watched? Then put yourself in the shoes of the pitcher, Kid Baldwin. How was he feeling?
 - Have students get up and gather around in a circle. Ask them to share what feelings Casey might have had. How might have Casey acted?
 - Say: What reactions and feelings did Kid Baldwin have. Did they feel the same, or different? Why?
 - Ask: What is improvisation? Improvisation is when you make up or create a scene off of the top of your head. We are going to learn to improvise today so that we can understand the characters better. Improvisation is a form of

acting. We are not going to learn with a pencil and paper today, we are going to learn through movement.

Learning Activity:

1. Baseball Machine
 - Ask students to think of a movement that baseball players make during a game. Ask one student to get up and make that movement repeatedly over and over again until you tell them to stop.
 - Next, have a second student somehow lightly touch the first student and perform his/her motion.
 - Then, ask a third to join in, and so on and so on, until all of the students in the classes are connected like a machine, performing their movements. They have just performed an improvisation.

2. Ask students to name characters in the musical Casey at the Bat.
 - Make a list of those characters on the board.
 - Then ask students to come up with a list of actions that the characters made during the musical and list them on the board.
 - Ask for volunteers to come up and pick a character and an action and act it out for the class.
 - Discuss the expectations of an audience and the behaviors that an audience should exhibit during a scene. The character and actions do not have to match what was actually in the musical. Have the audience try to guess which character and which action the student was portraying. How might the character be feeling?

3. Break students into groups and have them improvise the last scene in the musical. They can improvise the scene to end how it actually did in the musical- with Casey striking out, or they can create a different ending.
 - Give them time to practice.
 - Then, come back to the circle to act out the scenes and discuss their choices.

Evaluation and Follow-Up:

Assessment Tools and Methods:

- See Handout A - Improvisation Rubric

Interdisciplinary Connections:

- Reading and Social Studies- Read a biography of other famous athletes and have students improvise events in their lives.

“A Night at the Improv: Casey at the Bat”
Handout A
Improvisation Rubric



Name _____

Outcome	Beginning	Secure	Outstanding
Student actively participated in improvisation.			
Student actively participated in shared discussion.			
Student actively listened to the ideas of others.			
Student behaved appropriately as an audience member.			
Student thought about and explored the character(s).			
Student showed creativity.			