

Learning Plan

Date: Week 1 Day 1 Class 1

Title of Lesson: What I Love About Directing!

Subject Matter: Student Directed Plays

Brief description of learners, the school, course and context of this lesson within the course curriculum: Students in grades 10-12 are in an advanced theatre course with access to iPads, a computer lab, and the school library for research during class time. The classroom is a black box theatre with moveable chairs in the space for an audience. Unit 3 focuses on giving the seniors an opportunity to direct the juniors in their class. This is the first day of the unit, focusing on introducing the role of the director and what I personally love about directing.

Materials/Media/Guests:

- Butcher paper (white) for 3 groups
- Markers
- Video links/ personal portfolio or research
- Blindfold
- Speaker/Phone for music

Goal(s): I want to give students examples of the various ways in which the director's role can be interpreted in order to stimulate their thinking about what their own viewpoints are in regards to directing. I want to share my personal perspective and passions concerning directing in order to excite them about the process and the directing project they are about to embark upon.

Essential Questions:

- Why is collaboration in theatre important?
- What is the role of a director?
- What are the roles of the production team in a hierarchical versus non-hierarchical theatre making process?
- How can you share power as a director in a production process?

Objectives:

- Identify directing techniques and choices that they relate to
- Identify the various traits of a director

TEKS:

- T4.1.D The student is expected to: compare the dramatic structure of theatre, film, television, and electronic media
- T4.1.F The student is expected to: evaluate the interdependence of all theatrical elements
- T4.3.B the student is expected to: analyze and evaluate dramatic texts [...]

- T4.3.F The student is expected to: conduct concentrated studies in one or more areas of theatre production, demonstrating responsibility, artistic discipline, and creative problem solving

Preset:

- Background music playing
- Supplies ready for group work
- Presentation, computer, projector ready

Lesson Scaffold and Sequence and Time Frames: (Sequence may vary)

Engagement(s): *Music playing as students walk in*

:02-:03 Bell Work: (respond in journals unless otherwise stated) Briefly describe a time in your life when you were a leader. What were your responsibilities? How did you treat those you worked/interacted with?

Transition→ Let's popcorn key words or phrases bubbling up from your journal entries in relation to leadership. Let's have 2 volunteers (assign traffic control and airplane). The rest of you please spread out in the space between this starting point and this ending point in the room.

Activities (Scaffolded instruction strategies, engagements, reflections)

:20 **Airplane Tower**

- TSW spread their bodies out in the classroom as obstacles (the airport), staying frozen in 1 place/position. The Airplane Tower traffic controller will guide a blindfolded student (the airplane) only using their voice through the obstacle course made up of student bodies from one end of the room, to the other end (the landing strip)

DAR

- What was it like being the air traffic controller? The airplane? The obstacle/airport itself?
- What did you have to do to be the controller/airplane?
- Describe the power dynamic between the two roles.
- How might this exercise relate to directing in theatre?

Transition→ Find a group of people who have similar shoes as yours (create 3 groups).

:25 **Poster Dialogue**

- Outline of a human body (3 groups)

- TSW write what the director does inside the body outline and how they work with other people/ outside influences on director outside the outline of the body
- TSW travel to different group's posters and add or check mark to words/phrases they agree with

DAR

- Popcorn out some words/phrases you see on the posters
- What are some common themes?
- What questions do you have about what you see?
- Do these tasks relate or challenge your experience working with directors or being a director?

Group Director Traits

- TSW come up with 5 traits of a director in poster groups
- TSW share choices
- TSW narrow down choices as a class (list of no more than 8)

Transition→ In a moment I am going to share with you the things about directing that inspire and excite me the most both from my own experience and from others that have influenced me. As we watch videos or look at pictures, keep in mind the director traits you've come up with in your groups. Maybe a trait you've thought of didn't make it on the board. Begin to think about what your own ideas are about directing throughout this presentation. Let's take seats in front of the projector quietly in less than 30 seconds.

:25

Videos/Pictures of favorite Plays/Musicals in relation to directing choices

- Point out specific moments that show different directing choices/styles
- Talk about local directors work
- Visual research collection
- Personal sketches
- Quotes
- My director tips
- 1 Director story

DAR (after presentation)

- What parts of my directing choices are sticking with you?
- Did anything you saw remind you of something you've experienced?
- How did this presentation relate to the directing traits you came up with in your groups?

Transition→ *For homework* bring a video link from a performance video of your choosing. This can be a music video, play or musical performance, a TV clip, any type of performance as long as it is appropriate for class. Be ready to talk about a 20-30 second clip from the video about why you chose it and the directing choices made. In a moment we will move the desks back and you will each find a partner, and one group of 3 with people who have a similar hand size as you. Find these partners as fast as you can but without talking in 10...9...8...

:15

Class Closure

- TSW get with a partner and talk about 1 thing about class sticking with them
- TSW share with the class what their partner said

Contingencies→

If there's extra time have students discuss what videos they're thinking about bringing in to next class and give them time on their phones to start searching.

If short on time, cut one or more of my personal sharing of directing information. Only share most memorable or compelling examples.

Teacher's reflections and ideas to re-teach or carry over to next lesson:

Learning Plan

Date: Week 7 Day 3 Class 18

Title of Lesson: All in a Day's Reflection

Subject Matter: Student Directed Plays

Brief description of learners, the school, course and context of this lesson within the course curriculum: Students in grades 10-12 are in an advanced theatre course with access to iPads, a computer lab, and the school library for research during class time. The classroom is a black box theatre with moveable chairs in the space for an audience. Unit 3 focuses on giving the seniors an opportunity to direct the juniors in their class. This lesson is the final day of unit 3 in which we reflect on the class, where I provide feedback and give students the opportunity to voice their feedback as to how the process for next year can improve.

Materials/Media/Guests:

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Goal(s): I want to discuss and reflect upon the experience of the class in terms of student growth, how the Student Directed unit can improve, and what the student's major takeaways happen to be after taking this class. I want the student's to recognize personal growth, growth in their peers, and lessons or points of impression based off of their fellow classmates.

Essential Questions:

- Why is collaboration in theatre important?
- Do artists have a responsibility to their audiences and vice versa?
- What is the role of a director?
- What are the roles of the production team in a hierarchical versus non-hierarchical theatre making process?
- How can you share power as a director in a production process?

Objectives:

- Work collaboratively as a director with production members i.e. working with actors on blocking and character choices, and working with actors/designers on overall vision of the play
- Direct a segment from a full length play or a 20 minute play using directing techniques i.e. stage picturization, unified technical design (costume, light, sound, set), planned rehearsal schedule
- Identify the relationship between the play and the expected or intended audience
- Critique each other's work in a professional manner throughout the production process and during post-production feedback

TEKS:

- T4.1.F The student is expected to: evaluate the interdependence of all theatrical elements

- T4.3.B the student is expected to: analyze and evaluate dramatic texts [...]
- T4.3.E the student is expected to: cast and direct a long scene or short play, producing a unified theatrical production
- T4.3.F The student is expected to: conduct concentrated studies in one or more areas of theatre production, demonstrating responsibility, artistic discipline, and creative problem solving
- T4.5.B The student is expected to: apply evaluation concepts to performances and compare and contrast literary and dramatic criticism of theatre, film, television, or electronic media.

Preset:

- Background music playing

Lesson Scaffold and Sequence and Time Frames: (Sequence may vary)

Engagement(s): *Music playing as students walk in*

:05 Bell Work: (respond in journals unless otherwise stated) In what ways have you celebrated something coming to an end? In other words, what rituals or practices have you participated in that celebrate the ending of an event, moment, project, etc.?

Transition→ Let's popcorn out some people's entries. Sum up your entry in 2 sentences or less.

Activities (Scaffolded instruction strategies, engagements, reflections)

:15 **Class WU Who Started the Motion**
TTW choose a student to step out of the room or close their eyes while a leader is chosen in the circle. The goal of the leader is to not be detected as the leader. The goal of the group is to keep the leader's identity a secret. TSW stand in a circle and follow simple motions or gestures that the leader implements, all the while keeping these goals in mind. The blindfolded student will stand in the middle of the circle observing the group and has 3 chances to guess who the leader is. Can do with a few rounds of different leaders/ guessers.

DAR

- What did you have to do as a leader to participate? Group member? Guesser?
- What were some strategies used to play?
- How might this game relate to the relationship between the director and their cast and production team?
- How might this game relate to the process of producing the plays you've been working on?

Transition→ Stay standing in a circle. In a moment I am going to ask you a series of questions. Moving into concentric circles, you will answer the questions with your partner. After both people have shared, both circles will turn, inside left outside right, to partner with a new person for the next question. Everyone understand?

:20

Concentric Circles- Role of the Director/Relationship between Actor-Director (<http://dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/node/26>)

- Is it a director's responsibility to have a unified vision of the play?
- Are actors responsible for character choices?
- Was there was a clear relationship between the play you were cast in/directed and the audience?
- How was time managed in rehearsal? Was there room for improvement?
- Overall, how would you describe this experience?
- By the end of the process did you understand the themes of the play? What about for shows you watched?
- Did you find yourself adapting to challenges throughout the rehearsal process? What challenges did you overcome that you're proud of?
- Describe moments when you made clear decisions in the process.

Sidecoaching

- After responding to each question, ask people to share what their partner said or something standing out to them.
- Remember, this is about your opinion. There is no right or wrong response to the statements.
- Remember to be respectful of each other's opinions and positions.
- No one has to speak. People can say "pass" or "it's been said."

DAR

- What did you notice about the responses in the room?
- What did we learn about the group from this activity? Where we most in agreement? Why?
- How might these statements make us think differently or understand more about our larger inquiry?

Transition→ Everybody cross your arms. Find people who have their arms crossed the same way you do.

:15

BME Tableaux

TTW divide the class into two groups. TSW have 5 minutes to create 3 tableaux that represent the beginning, middle, and end of

their experience working in the class on these plays. This can be interpretive or literal representation of the process.

DAR

TTW ask these Qs after each presentation:

- What did you see?
- What changed from one tableau to the next?
- What resonated with you?
- Did it remind you of anything?

Transition→ Let's sit in a circle on the ground in 10...9...8...

:12

Round Table Discussion

- Opportunity for students to tell me how the process can be done better for the next class (:04 min). What should I definitely keep? What should I add or change? TSW facilitate this sharing and I will not speak, only take notes. Timed.
- Ask questions they still have about directing (:04).
- Give each group specific positive feedback reflective of process from start to finish. Questions I have for students that might still be lingering (:04) (based on performances).

:08

Overview of Black Box Performance Logistics

Parking, seating, set up, call times, strike

Transition→ Let's all stand up and shake it off.

:15

Class Closure

Compliment Circle Modified

TSW stand in a circle. TTW have a ball of yarn and the first person to start will name a specific incident in which they learned something from another classmate or were impressed/moved by another classmate. The person they speak about will retrieve the yarn, creating a line between the 2 people. Eventually this will create a learning/compliment web. TTW emphasize that the last person chosen is last but not least.

Contingencies→

If there's extra time, either spend more time on an existing activity that hasn't been reached OR do a viewpoints exercise in which I see personal growth over process: TSW walk about the space in neutral. Find own actor studio. On an 8 count, show your growth through the physicalization of your body from start to finish on 1...2...3....

Teacher's reflections and ideas to re-teach or carry over to next lesson:

Elevator Pitch Presentation Guidelines

- Each director is placed in a group with 4 other juniors.
- As a group, find 2-3 plays that interest or excite all members. Choose 1 play for your pitch scene.
- Each *group* submit a brief summary covering the scene points for the play pitched and the 1-2 other play choices in a Google doc. List plays in numerical order beginning with your favorite as "1". If members of the group differ in opinion in terms of ranking, list each member's preferences in the doc.
- As a group, create an elevator pitch scene that is 60 seconds or less. There will be elevator music with your performances.

The scene must include:

- Title of play & if it's a 20 minute excerpt or a short play
- Why you want to produce this play
- The director's vision for the play

On the day of performance, your Google doc summary is due. The purpose of this project is for me to get an idea of what plays the class wants to produce. Considering your written summaries and pitches, I will choose which plays each director will work with. Additionally, I will consider the big picture factors: how the plays fit together as a whole, casting, and technical elements.

Please note: All students are welcome to discuss the play choices with me if they have a differing opinion regarding the final decision on my part. My goal is for you to have as much ownership during this project as possible.

Rubric for Student Directed Play Performances

Directors

	2	1	0
Stage Pictures	Easy for all actors on stage to be seen. Communicate inherent tension of each scene.	Most actors are visible when necessary. Most pictures communicate inherent tension of each scene.	Many actors difficult to see. Almost no pictures match inherent tension of scene.
Transitions	Scenes/stage pictures flow from one to the next seamlessly.	Most scenes/stage pictures flow from one to the next seamlessly.	Overall lack of flow from one scene/stage picture to the next.
Character Relationships	Clearly communicated relationships between characters through strong character choices, connection to the partner, reactions in the moment.	Mostly clear relationships between characters through somewhat strong character choices, some connection to the partner, some reactions in the moment.	No clear relationships between characters.
Time	20 minutes	Somewhat more than or less than 20 minutes	Well over or under 20 minutes

Actors

	2	1	0
Characterization	Clear and strong choices related to text.	Some clear and strong choices related to text.	No clear choices related to text.
Diction/Volume	Understood from start to finish of play.	Somewhat understood from start to finish. Stronger volume than diction or vice versa.	Difficult to understand throughout whole play.
Partner Connection	Reacting to the moment based off of partner throughout entire play.	Reacting to the moment based off of partner throughout some of play.	No reactions based off of partner.