

Running Head: LESSON PLAN VIDEO

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Lesson Plan Video

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EDTE 689: Advanced Seminar in Teaching

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| ITEM | PAGE |
|-----------------------|------|
| Needs Assessment | 3 |
| Lesson Plan | 5 |
| Handouts | 9 |
| Film Scene | 16 |
| Videotape Explanation | 18 |
| Reflection | 19 |
| References | 22 |

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The School

The Chelsea School is a middle and high school for students with language based learning disabilities. The students are of average or above-average intelligence, but most read and/or write below grade level, along with varying degrees of executive functioning deficits. Chelsea School is 90% percent African American, 9% Caucasian, 1% Asian/Hispanic/other. The school is 75% male, 15% female.

Program

The class that this lesson will be administered in is a Television Production 1 class, which is the first level of two Video Production classes that Chelsea offers. The class is part of the Technology Department at Chelsea. The program that the class is part of is the Media Productions program which also includes the Music Appreciation and Principles of Recording classes.

Students

The students in the class that I will be administering this lesson to are in grades 9 through 12. There are seven total students, all male. All but two are reading below grade level. All are writing below grade level, at varying degrees. Four are African-American, three are Caucasian. All of the students are of a lower to average middle class socioeconomic status. One student is from Washington, DC and the rest are from Prince George's and St. Mary's counties. All students are native English speakers; all speak at an above average level of English proficiency. All students have transferred to Chelsea from public schools in DC or MD at various ages. One student transferred into Chelsea during the middle of our first semester.

Special Learning Needs: General

All students are at various levels and degrees of LD, all have various reading and writing deficits. So far, the whole class has benefited most from having directions broken down into small steps. The students respond best to having information given both orally and visually, and then hands-on reinforcement of any given information is key. The class has also benefited as a whole from having in-class folders to store notes and other paperwork, from which they can easily retrieve papers and information quickly while class is in session.

Learning Needs: Language Development

All of these students are below grade level in both reading and writing except the one of the seniors and a junior, who reads on level. In this class in particular, with the exception of the new student, the reading levels are not significantly low (most are two or three levels lower than grade). The new student is reading on a kindergarden/1st grade level. It is the writing, particularly spelling, grammar, and syntax, where the deficits largely lie.

Learning Needs: Language Functions

These students are more or less on the right level in order to describe, inform, and clarify, but in terms of the more complex skills of analyzing, informing, debating, and justifying,

they do need to develop their language skills further. For example, with this class in particular, we often debate relevant production issues and though they have many insightful things to say, they have a hard time specifically justifying themselves or making analogies to explain their point. More often than not, I get a “I feel that just *because*” kind of answer.

Learning Needs: Learning Strategies

Metacognition is the largest area of need. This class works well as a socio-affective group/team, and cognitively they grasp concepts fairly quickly, but in terms of reflection of their work and what they can do to improve on subsequent work, they need more strategies to enhance this skill.

Learning Needs: Content Area Knowledge

This lesson is appropriate for their grade levels, especially when considering that Chelsea is college preparatory institution because, though I gear the material for high school, I often pull from a college-level curriculum. This is possible because Chelsea has more leeway with MD and DC curriculum being a non-public school.

Implications of Lesson

This lesson will meet the learning needs of the discussed students because, first, it adheres to multiple learning styles. There are several types of instruction here (visual, oral, tactile, spatial) and the very nature of production is ideal for learning disabled students because though it does require a certain amount of basic literacy, it also greatly emphasizes practical hands-on skills that LD students thrive with. Production also helps to teach and enforce other skills outside of literacy including organizational skills and metacognitive skills in that it is largely project-based, which requires practical organization to complete. Also, when reviewing one’s work, the student must be metacognitive about their project so that they can improve on the next one. This lesson will meet the required content area instruction because it deals with a specific production technique that effective productions cannot do without while also enhancing the above mentioned skills. Also, being that Chelsea is a college preparatory school, my content and this lesson is geared specifically with this in mind. My content is at a college level and if (hopefully) any of my students major in media productions in college, much of what they learn in this area in college should be a review.

LESSON PLAN – ACTING TECHNIQUES

LESSON OVERVIEW

Subject Area: Video Production

Grade Level: 9-12

Lesson Topic: Acting Techniques

Content Standard Addressed: Student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of industry terminology and basic equipment used in the A/V Technology Career Pathway (Maryland Standard 2.0.4).

Lesson Rationale: As part of our Narrative Production unit, the students have completed a Chase Sequence project that did not involve an exchange of dialogue or acting. Now the students will embark on their “Dialogue Project,” which will involve these aspects. They must learn some acting techniques to better prepare themselves for this involved project. This is also an ideal lesson for LD students because it appeals to several different learning styles including visual, tactile, spatial, interpersonal, and it only requires a minimal amount of grade-level literacy, while still supporting literacy skills.

Lesson Purpose: To prepare students for their upcoming Dialogue Project and enhance their overall roster of media production skills.

Lesson Objectives: The student will be able to...

- Understand the three stages of production (State Standard 2.1.1)
- Exhibit an understanding of production team roles (2.1.3)
- Demonstrate basic operation and maintenance of video equipment (2.0.4)
- Exemplify narrative video production by producing narrative projects.
- Utilize the acting techniques of improvising, monologuing, and speaking lines by acting out given scenes and conducting monologue and improvisational sessions.

Lesson Outcomes: After this lesson the students will be able to utilize certain acting techniques to assist them in constructing an effective scene involving the delivery of dialogue.

Duration: 1-2 45-minute class session(s).

Materials Required: Video production equipment, projector, video/film examples, character bio handouts (attached), script handouts (attached), whiteboard.

Advance Set-Up: I will need to make copies of the handouts, have the video production equipment ready for use, have the video/film examples ready to be shown, and have the projector warmed up and ready.

ANTICIPATORY SET

Lesson Purpose/Objective: The objectives will be on the board and I will explain to the students that the reason we are having this lesson today is to prepare them for their upcoming Dialogue Project as part of their Narrative Production unit.

Scaffolding: I will explain that this lesson builds on past lessons in that the students have been working on the basics of video production: they have used the equipment, created a news report, and a narrative chase sequence. Now it is time to get more specific of how movies get made and what the cast and crew does to make the movies appealing to an audience.

Why Worthwhile: This kind of production knowledge will help the students produce videos in a professional way that will outdo any of the amateur videos they see on YouTube. It also teaches and enforces important skills like organization, spatial orientation, and working as a team (which are especially vital to LD students). Lastly, these same techniques are taught and used in similar college programs, which will give the students a head start should they choose to pursue this field.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. We will begin with a discussion about acting: acting is much more than simply reading lines from a script. The audience has to believe that the person they are watching is actually the character they are portraying. So much more can be said by an actor's body language and facial expressions, though this is much different than acting for theater. The camera picks up on subtleties very well so there is no need to overact as is done with purpose in theater. I will bridge the students' experience with theater acting by mentioning their Friday sessions at the Roundhouse Theater.
 - a. I will illustrate this point by first showing the extremely well acted scene from *Terminator 2* (approximately 1:38:00 – 1:40:30), pinpointing how much more is said about these characters and the scene from the actors' faces and what they *don't* say, and when they do deliver their lines, we buy their characters completely.
 - b. Then I will discuss with the students how an actor must know who their character is before they can deliver their dialogue properly.
 - c. I will introduce the students to the idea of monologuing and improvisation as a means to get into character and understand the subtext of a scene before they actually read the specific lines from the script.
 - d. I will also discuss the importance of setting to a scene.
 - e. Lastly I will discuss the idea of a director suggesting his or her actors "play" the scene a certain way; the director might ask the actors to play it excited in one take, but depressed in another. The dialogue and characters stay the same, but the way the actors express themselves and deliver their lines alters, which gives the editor different choices of how to edit the scene.

GUIDED PRACTICE

1. First, will I give each student a unique character bio handout (attached) and allow them a few minutes to read it and get a grasp of who their character is. I will read, in private (so as to not give it away to the rest of the class), the bio for any student that is uncomfortable reading theirs to themselves.
2. Then I will ask each student to give an at least 30-second monologue to the class using the monologue subject given on the character bio.
3. Next, I will pair the students up (I will act as a stand-in actor if our numbers are uneven) and give them a scene scenario to improv with in front of the class. Their scene should last at least 1 minute.
 - a. SCENE SCENARIOS:
 - i. The characters are in rainy Seattle and one of the characters just got into a car accident with the other.
 - ii. The characters are in the overly crowded Times Square, New York and one of the characters believes that the other has stolen his cat.
 - iii. The characters are stranded on an frigid iceberg in the Antarctic. Both of the characters are on the verge of starvation and one is in possession of the last Snickers bar.
 - iv. The characters are fishing in the Chesapeake Bay and one realizes that he is a robot from the future programmed to paint an invisible picture of the other.

* *Note:* So that the student's can get used to acting in front of the camera, I will have students rotate the roles of camera and sound as we conduct our activities.

INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

1. I will pass out scripts with dialogue from a well-known film (attached). We will read over the script together and briefly discuss the point of the scene and who these characters are and what they are after.
2. The students will stay in pairs and will pick a character each from the scene to portray. They will have several minutes to split up and practice their dialogue, keeping their character in mind.

ASSESSMENT

1. The students will then return and will perform the practiced scene for the class. They may use their scripts. I will act as the director for this picture and will give each group a different suggestion of how to "play" the scene. I will also ask the students to improv the scene should they lose track of their dialogue or not feel comfortable saying it the way it is written.

- a. The assessment is informal; it is observational and meant for me to assess whether or not the students have grasped the concepts, not by their acting abilities, but by their effort and exemplification of attempting to become a character and “play” their scene in the suggested way.

CLOSURE

1. We will watch the actual scene from the film *Bad Boys* to see how the actors decided to play it and will discuss the choices the director may have used in giving his actors direction.

ACCOMMODATION

1. For the LD students, this lesson will not require much accommodation because it does not require much reading or writing. However, I will both read all directions and handouts out loud and will allow extra time for reading independently. I will also make sure to repeat the directions more than once to make sure I accommodate the slower processing LD students.
2. I will also have the script loaded into Kurzweil to accommodate the students who may not be able to read it independently.
3. The lesson is tactile, visual, and auditory in nature, which will accommodate any students that have a deficiency in any one of those areas by playing to their other strengths.

HOMEWORK

1. There will be no homework for this lesson.

CHARACTER BIO HANDOUTS

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Jason Howard.
- You are a brand new FBI agent.
- At work, the other agents are still hazing you and they obviously don't trust you yet, which is really getting on your nerves.
- You have a girlfriend, but you've been starting to suspect that she works for a rival agency and is spying on you.
- You love breakfast for dinner and constantly drink coffee.
- You don't sleep much.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: How you feel about the fact that the other agents at work keep hiding your files and laughing behind your back as you look for them.

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Franklin Delver.
- You are a Sophomore at Penn State.
- You are studying bat migration in college.
- You are only studying this because that's what your Dad did, and you resent that.
- You love puppies.
- You are 7 feet tall
- You long to climb mountains in Europe.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: Why puppies are so much better than bats but how you could never tell your Dad that and what he would do if he found out.

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Jeff Knightly.
- You are a sidekick to a famous superhero.
- Your power is shooting spaghetti from your fingertips.
- You wish you could also shoot spaghetti sauce from your fingertips.
- You are always hungry.
- You are in love with Salad Girl, another sidekick, who can projectile vomit salad at a moment's notice.
- You live in a pop-tent in your parent's backyard.
- You are 37 years old.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: How you are sure there are more people out there with food producing powers and how you've been devising an amazing plan to find them so you can all start a chain of restaurants.

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Pebble Mickle.
- You make posters for a living.
- You live with 17 other people in a single-family house, and you love it.
- You eat 10 pickles everyday.
- You believe that all of the eyes in the posters follow you around when you walk past.
- You believe that posters are really the missing link between the land of the living and the land of the dead.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: Why you believe that posters are the only thing that will be able to save us when the zombies finally try and take over.

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Mess Fine.
- You are a corporate CEO of a company that sells math textbooks.
- You have a wife, a 10-year-old son, and 2 dogs.
- Even though you have a groundskeeper, you obsessively cut the grass and weed your gardens around your mansion when no one is looking.
- You love to watch action movies.
- Your company sells a lot of textbooks, but you have a low profit margin because you secretly give most of your profits to charity.
- You love pancakes.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: Why you think that everyone would be happier in life if they cut their own grass more often.

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Shadow Light.
- You drive a water taxi in Baltimore’s Inner Harbor.
- You are deathly afraid of the water and panic every single time you have to do your job.
- You write a lot of letters to the president about water safety.
- You have a goldfish at home and are always scared it’s going to drown.
- You don’t cook your food in the microwave. Instead you have an open fire pit in your apartment’s living room.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: Why you think the president should put a hold on all other legislation and immediately drain all natural bodies of water on the planet and replace them with much safer sand.

CHARACTER BIO

TV Production 1 – Mr. Bell

DIRECTIONS: Your character is described below. Use that description and the subject below to conduct your monologue and remember who your character is when you improv him.

WHO YOU ARE:

- Your name is Gerald Micholson.
- You are a professional cellist in the Moscow Symphony.
- You live in France.
- You commute every week between France and Moscow because you are hoping someday you're plane will crash land on that mysterious island in the pacific where you truly belong.
- You can also play every other instrument that exists, but you chose the cello because a girl you like sits next to you in the symphony.

MONOLOGUE SUBJECT: How you just found out that flying from France to Moscow doesn't actually take you over the pacific ocean and how you need to find a new place to work that will take you over the pacific, and how you plan to kidnap the girl you like so you can crash land on the island together.

FILM SCENE FOR INDEPENDENT PRACTICE

INT. APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Burnett KNOCKS on the door.

VICTIM (O.S.)
Who's there?

BURNETT
Uh, Mike Lowrey.

VICTIM (O.S.)
Well, how do I know it's Mike Lowrey?

BURNETT
'Cause! I'm Mike Lowrey. Okay, now we ain't got much time!

VICTIM (O.S.)
Hold your badge up to the peephole. I'm not letting you in until you do!

Burnett does so. The door slowly swings open. Tentatively, Burnett edges inside...

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

VICTIM (O.S.)
No way!

Suddenly, a bat comes swinging out of the shadows towards Burnett's head. Misses by inches.

BURNETT
What was that for?!

VICTIM
You're not Mike Lowery!

Swings again. Burnett dodges it. Barely.

BURNETT
Whatcha mean I ain't Mike Lowery? You never even met him-- ME!

VICTIM
The way Max described you was different.

BURNETT
I'm undercover.

VICTIM
Prove it!

2.

BURNETT
Okay. Look, I knew Max from way back,
okay? I helped her brother get out of
jail!

VICTIM
Yeah, so?

BURNETT
So we was cool like that.

VICTIM
(swinging bat)
Wrong!

Burnett sweeps out of the way, grabbing the bat.

BURNETT
Gimme the bat! You wanna go at this?
Fine! You don't wanna believe me? You go
at this alone!
(turns away, but then turns
back)
Oh, I forgot. The bad guys probably know
where you live, which means they're
coming for you! Good luck.

VIDEOTAPE EXPLANATION

The 10-minutes that we see of my lesson in this video are about 7 to 8 minutes of my lecture from the Instructions section of the lesson plan and a 2 to 3 minute summary of the monologue and improvisation activities from the Guided Practice section of the lesson plan.

Immediately preceding my video, was our warm-up/anticipatory set activity to the lesson where I explained why we were doing this lesson (to prepare for the upcoming project) and the viewing of a film clip from *Terminator 2* as an example of effective acting.

This is where the video picks up from. I then conduct my lecture on some different acting techniques and their value and purposes. I field a few questions from my students and clarify several terms and concepts. Then I pass out a handout for the first activity, which is monologuing, and the students read over it. Then, I reduced about 25-30 minutes of the monologuing and improvisation acting activities to the 2-3 minutes that we see on the video, just to give an idea of what came immediately after my lecture.

The class period that we see in the video ended just as we were finishing up our Guided Practice section of the lesson. I had to continue with the rest of the lesson the following day.

REFLECTION

First of all, above everything else. I, and I'm certain my students did as well, had a great deal of fun with most of this lesson. And, to me, I can count that as a success. However, especially after watching the video, I have some concerns and sincere recommendations for myself as an educator.

Overall, I feel that the lesson went well and was effective. I believe that I met my standards and objectives, and that my students will be able to utilize the skills taught in this lesson for further lessons and projects. And, hopefully, my students will be able to apply some of the basic skills of self-awareness, teamwork, and interpersonal skills to other classes and their own lives. At the very least, the students were excited enough about the lesson that they showed their friends outside of class the tapes the next day.

Especially by the time the lesson led into the guided practice and the independent practice sections, the students were obviously engaged, having fun, and learning. And judging from the quality and effort put into the independent practice portion of the lesson where the students acted out a scene from a provided script during the second day of the lesson, I feel that the lesson was an overall success.

However, there were some glaring missteps and areas for improvement on my part. First of all, I realized almost right off the bat that I over-planned and over-crammed this lesson. I see now that it really should have been two separate lessons entirely. One focusing on non-scripted, improvisational acting techniques (monologuing and improv) meant to help the actor connect with their character. The other lesson that would immediately stem from this would be the scripted acting lesson, which has several new and different concepts added on (like scene structure, believable/natural dialogue, script

format, blocking, rehearsal, “playing” the scene, etc.) that I pretty much overlooked completely because I tried to pack too much into this lesson. I actually will do this second lesson soon and will plan better for it this time.

Next, I feel that the lesson may not have necessarily been “hands-on” enough, especially in terms of equipment use. Because of how much I felt I had to get through in the lesson, I definitely dropped the ball of having a rotating production team (camera & sound) shooting the actors during their activities. I did have one or two students do this, but it was inconsistent and haphazard.

I see now that I should have had all of my concepts, terms, and vocabulary words on the board for reference and visual reinforcement, especially so that these terms didn’t come across as abstract as they may have since I only spoke of them, never demonstrating or listing them. And continuing from this, I see that I should have had a demonstration or at least a video clip to illustrate each concept before I moved onto the next one. For instance, I could have discussed monologues, then shown a few or conducted one myself, then had the students do the corresponding activity for that concept, and *then* I should have moved onto improvisation. I see now that it is counter-intuitive to throw out all concepts at once verbally, then conduct activities for each at a later time. That would be like me listening to a lecture of four new math concepts, then being given an exam on them before I was ever given the opportunity to practice and review them.

I also should have focused more on having the students conduct self and class critiques regarding each other’s performances. I do do self and class critiques when we produce videos, but I see now that the same concept could be useful for informal

assessments as well. And not just assessments from me, but from one another. Often times, I've found that my students take one another's feedback much more to heart than mine. Perhaps a checklist or a rubric that the students can use to critique one another and from which they can compare their feedback to my own, and from which we can decide as a class how effective the activity was instead of only me doing so.

But the most glaring issue I saw about my own teaching style, especially from watching the video, was the way I presented the content and how I lectured. I was boring. If I were a student of mine, I'd get bored too. I actually had a student, even in the 7-some minutes that I lectured, doze off on me (he is ADHD and, as I commented in the video, either bouncing off the walls or falling asleep, but the fact still remains that I bored him to sleep). I see now more than ever that my constant desire to talk is not always a good thing, especially when I lecture without visuals or much student input or response. I believe that some of my recommendations for myself, noted above, such as breaking up my lectures with more activities as a new concept is exposed and utilizing more demonstration for concepts can and will help this drawback of mine. I am truly, though, disappointed in myself for still falling back on the teaching method of dry, direct lecturing, especially since I am not a first-year teacher and especially being that I work with LD students, many of whom have apparent attention problems. I will strive to do better and use more effective techniques in the future.

Even though I see this lesson as an overall success, I am aware that it could have been much better and I could have done a better job of presenting this lesson and following it through. And I will.

References

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