

# CONCEPT-BASED LESSON PLANNING PROCESS GUIDE

## Friday Afternoon Live: Improvisation and Sketch Comedy

### Drama – High School, Fundamental Pathway

#### *(Integrated Dance – creative movement through improvisation)*

**Note:** The shaded areas indicate the shifts from more traditional lesson planning to a concept-based instructional design and asks teachers to metacognitively reflect on their planning. The red cells and shading indicate the primary focus of our work at the Institute. **The process guide is to help make visible “the invisible thinking” in which teachers engage as they plan lessons.** The guide is not intended to suggest that templates in use by teachers or in districts should be replaced; in fact, the process guide may be a valuable tool when used “side-by-side” with other lesson planning templates or tools. The intention is to illustrate the type of questioning that should occur consistently with any planning process when considering the instructional shifts implicit in the Colorado Academic Standards.

<i>Shift in</i>  <i>Instructional Design</i>	<i>Lesson Elements and Design</i>	<i>Metacognitive Reflection</i>
<i>The Unit Generalization and Focusing Lens asks students to ...</i>	<p>Lesson Focus:</p> <p><b>Focusing Lense:</b> Play/Exploration</p> <p><b>Key Generalization - Fundamental:</b> Investigation and discovery through improvisation and original scriptwriting (<i>choreography</i>) will bolster knowledge of human expression and emotion.</p>	<i>How does this specific lesson advance the big idea or generalization of the unit? What connections might be made between other content areas?</i>
<i>This lesson objective / learning target is critical to student understanding because...</i>	<p><b>Objectives / Learning Targets:</b></p> <p>The teacher may introduce short form improv games (<i>Sportscaster</i>) for performance, such as those showcased on <i>Whose Line Is It Anyway?</i>, so that students can understand character (“<i>and movement</i>”...<i>added for integration with dance</i>) choices in improv. (LE#3)</p> <p>Short form improvisational exercises help students understand the importance of making character and movement choices while exploring, (or playing) with dramatic content in an improvisational format.</p>	<i>In what ways does the learning target support the generalization?</i>

<p><b>Instructional strategies</b></p>	<p><b>Instructional Strategy Menu (not exhaustive):</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Direct Instruction</i></li> <li>• <i>Teacher-provided inquiry question</i></li> <li>• <i>Think- aloud</i></li> <li>• <i>Close reading protocol</i></li> <li>• <i>Collaborative groups</i></li> <li>• <i>Improvisation</i></li> <li>• <i>Performance</i></li> <li>• <i>Reflective discussion</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>Which instructional strategies will foster learning the lesson’s skills, processes, or content?</i></p>
<p><b>In the first 3-7 minutes of the lesson,</b></p>	<p><b>Opening (hook / anticipatory set / lesson launch)</b></p> <p>Instructional Strategy chosen: Inquiry Question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can writers (<i>dancers</i>) utilize improvisation to develop sketches (<i>movement phrases</i>)?</li> </ul> <p><b>Why is this strategy impactful:</b> Asking the conceptual inquiry question keeps students focused on the “big picture” during the lesson, it also aids in making connections from artistic intent, to improvisation, to dramatic (<i>choreographic</i>) structure, to written documentation in a dramatic sketch (<i>or movement phrase</i>).</p> <p><b>How does this strategy support meeting the “just-right challenge,” or “building relationships,” or “creating relevancy,” or “fostering disciplinary literacy”?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the learning experience through a lesson plan that focuses on the improvisational exercise “<i>Sportscaster</i>” illustrates a “just-right challenge” because it will illustrate for students the final expectation of developing a written structure which “creates relevancy” for the subsequent improv exercise.</li> <li>• The initial improv instructional strategy will illuminate the need for deeper understanding so students are more effective as experts in the improv, which fosters “discipline literacy” skills.</li> <li>• The initial exercise should “build relationships” and spark an intrinsic need within the students to want to explore deeper for the next iteration of “<i>Sportscaster</i>” so each</li> </ul>	<p><i>In what ways does the chosen strategy work toward a larger purpose at the beginning of the lesson (e.g., engaging students, increasing curiosity, stimulating student-generated questions, etc.)?</i></p> <p><i>In what ways does the chosen strategy(ies) work toward a larger purpose (e.g. increasing collaboration; interacting with complex texts; situating students in real-life, relevant experiences; increasing student agency; stimulating student discourse; etc.)?</i></p> <p><i>In what ways does the chosen strategy cement the learning?</i></p> <p><i>What evidence will show that the strategies impacted student learning? Were the strategies effective through the learning process?</i></p>

	<p>student is aware that they are strong contributors within the ensemble.</p>	
<p><i>The Learning Experience will</i></p>	<p><b>Learning Experience / Lesson (#3 in the unit)</b></p> <p>The teacher may introduce short form improv games (<i>Sportscaster</i>) for performance, such as those showcased on <i>Whose Line Is It Anyway?</i>, so that students can understand character (“<i>and movement</i>”...<i>added for integration with dance</i>) choices in improv.</p> <p><b>Instructional Strategies chosen:</b> Direct Instruction, Hands-on, Collaborative Groups, Performance Application</p> <p><b>Why are these strategies impactful:</b></p> <p>These instructional strategies are used to assist students in understanding the nucleus of the improv game, to work collaboratively in a small group to execute the meaning of the improvisational situation, and finally perform the improvised scene together as a cohesive ensemble.</p> <p>How does this strategy support meeting the “just-right challenge,” or “building relationships,” or “creating relevancy,” or “fostering disciplinary literacy”?</p> <p>The initial improv relies upon building relationships and will generate student questions and reflections prompting the need for deeper exploration to be more effective in the next iterations of the game. This also develops discipline literacy skills.</p>	
<p><i>The closing activity reinforces the learning.</i></p>	<p><b>Closure</b></p> <p><b>Instructional Strategy chosen:</b> Reflective Evaluation</p> <p><b>Why is this strategy impactful:</b></p> <p>Once the improvisation exercise is completed the students can take part in a reflective</p>	

	<p>discussion that focuses on character and movement choices made during the game. They may evaluate the effectiveness of these choices and how such decisions affected the performance of the group.</p> <p>How does this strategy support meeting the “just-right challenge,” or “building relationships,” or “creating relevancy,” or “fostering disciplinary literacy”?</p> <p>The reflective discussion should reveal how improv can lead to more artistic choices, how writers (<i>choreographers</i>) can utilize improv to foster disciplinary literacy, as well as building stronger relationships among ensemble members.</p>	
<p><b>Technological resources that will support student learning and move students toward the learning target.</b></p>	<p><b>Technological Resource and application:</b></p> <p>Direct instruction will be supported by showing video excerpts of professional actors performing improvisational games, as well as the Sportscaster game. Direct instruction can also be supported by reading instructions from a collection of improv games.</p> <p>Video of Whose Line Anyway - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGLnFjJelBM">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tGLnFjJelBM</a></p> <p>Video of Sportscaster - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhBWADSCOXc">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lhBWADSCOXc</a></p> <p>Improvisation Through Theatre Sports – L. Belt and R. Stockley</p> <p><b>How:</b> In what ways does this chosen resource support meeting the “just-right challenge,” or “building relationships,” or “creating relevancy,” or “fostering disciplinary literacy”?</p> <p>The comparative evaluation that occurs when students reflect upon improvisational game play will demonstrate discipline literacy skills as well as creating relevancy that will culminate in a final written script or final movement phrase.</p>	<p><i>How will my students and I strategically use technology resources to enhance the learning experience (and support “meetingthe just-right challenge,” “building relationships,” “creating relevancy,” and/or “fostering disciplinary literacy”)?</i></p>

<p><i>Formative assessment will be a quick Check for Understanding in which students will demonstrate they are or are not on track.</i></p>	<p><b>Formative Assessment</b></p> <p>Formative Assessment tool/method: Reflective Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can writers (<i>choreographers</i>) utilize improvisation to develop sketches (<i>movement phrases</i>)?</li> <li>• What ways can feedback be delivered effectively to an improvisation performer?</li> <li>• <b>Extended:</b> How do members of an ensemble function within the parameters of a given form of improvisation?</li> </ul> <p>Learning indicators of success:</p> <p>Students will be able to articulate (knowledge):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The expectations of their own behavior and decision making within the improv as it relates to others</li> <li>• The importance of artistic choices and exploration in developing sketches (movement phrases)</li> </ul> <p>Students will demonstrate fluidity and confidence with (skills):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvisation</li> <li>• Commitment to character</li> <li>• Working together defining and valuing each member of the ensemble</li> </ul>	<p><i>What “indicators of success” will show that the students are gaining mastery?</i></p> <p><i>How will I use that evidence in a feedback loop?</i></p>
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<p><b>Reflection:</b> The strengths in this lesson plan were the aspects of ensemble building between the actors and the dancers. There are not too many changes I would make to the overall plan. It worked well.</p>
<p><b>Connection to Performance Goal:</b> The student’s journals are excellent artifacts that illustrate the connection of learning from the improvisational activity to the completion of the written script. I would use student journals as examples for my professional growth plan.</p>
<p><b>Student Feedback:</b> Student feedback was favorable. The actors and the dancers understood the correlation of movement and improv for character development and scene building.</p>

<b><i>Time Suggested</i></b>	45-90 minute class period
<b><i>Materials Needed</i></b>	Student journals
<b><i>Co-teaching Opportunity</i></b>	Theatre, Dance, English teachers could collaborate using this lesson for creative writing purposes
<b><i>Cross-Content Connections</i></b>	This lesson could be used as an exercise in a creative writing classroom