

## Acting Lesson Plan – Hannah Formella Zdroik Residency Summer 2024

*SLO: In what ways will the student enhance their performing skills by their sense of hearing to engage in auditory awareness, emotion, and active listening?*

<b>VITAL INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Subjects (s) &amp; Topic(s) Covered</b>	Theatre – Performance (P) & Production (D)
<b>Grade/Level</b>	6-12 (Middle and High School, the ages I work with the most for our nonprofit children’s theater.)
<b>Standard(s)</b>	<p>Content Area Standard (Based on the Wisconsin Academic Standards for Theatre):</p> <p>Standard 1 - CREATE: Students will generate, develop, and refine artistic work. TD.Cr.16.h: Collaboration Collaborate as a creative team with specified roles to make artistic, interpretive choices in a devised or scripted work.</p> <p>Standard 4 - CONNECT: Students will relate prior knowledge and personal experience with theatre to cultural and historical contexts. TD.Cn.16.h: Cross Disciplinary Evaluate the historical and cultural relationships between theatre and other disciplines and how it can impact society.</p>
<b>Objective(s) (I can)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I can use sound and music as a way to exercise my cognitive function and enhance sound awareness while performing.</li> <li>• I can use visual imagery to imagine a soundscape scene that invokes emotion and atmosphere.</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>Assessment/Rubrics</b>	See below. Assessment is based on effortful participation and contribution to the lesson.
<b>Collaboration</b>	Students have the ability to collaborate with a partner for the emphasis activity, as well as for the in-class project. Throughout the lesson, students will be able to contribute towards discussion with one another.
<b>Time Allotment</b>	60 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	<p><u>Teacher Materials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speaker, music, packet (handouts), musical instruments, phrases to pick for emphasis activity</li> </ul> <p><u>Student Materials:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pen/Pencils, journals</li> </ul> <p><u>Space:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large open workspace, chairs</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wisconsin Academic Standards for Theatre Education</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://brainvolts.northwestern.edu/wp-content/uploads/boxtrx/KrausNicol_NHB_2017.pdf">https://brainvolts.northwestern.edu/wp-content/uploads/boxtrx/KrausNicol_NHB_2017.pdf</a></li> <li>• Research by Dr. Nina Kraus</li> <li>• <i>Of Sound Mind</i> book by Dr. Nina Kraus</li> <li>• <i>The Stanislavski System</i> book by Sonia Moore</li> <li>• <i>To the Actor on the Technique of Acting</i> book by Michael Chekhov</li> <li>• <i>The Rainbow of Desire</i> book by Augusto Boal</li> </ul>
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	
<b>Prior Knowledge</b>	Understanding of the basics of sound, projection, volume, emotion
<b>Focus of Lesson</b>	<p>This lesson is meant to be one in a series of lessons regarding acting and the senses including movement, voice, and sound from a bottom-up approach. This deep exploration of sound will help the actor to navigate their performance skills by increasing their awareness of sounds around them, how sounds emotionally impact their world, and the importance of listening to others during scene work and in life. Using multiple acting techniques inspired by Stanislavski, Meisner, Michael Chekhov, Boal, and the science of hearing, students will engage in activities that will enhance their sonic world.</p> <p>This lesson can be done with a focus/emphasis on a specific play or work or can be left open-ended. For the purposes of this lesson, it will be open-ended in the interest of the summer residency. Students in the residency will be given a packet to follow along, but that is optional depending on the resources.</p>
<b>Discussions &amp; Topics to Explore</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound</li> <li>• Cognition</li> <li>• Active Listening</li> <li>• Atmosphere</li> <li>• How sound, emotion, and listening affect an actor's performance</li> </ul>
<b>Student-Centeredness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students have the opportunity throughout the lesson to speak up, engage, and share their own perspective.</li> <li>• Students</li> <li>• Students have autonomy over the final "in-class" project and can choose which option they would like to do.</li> </ul>
<b>Introduction/Anticipatory Set – 10 minutes</b>	<p><u>Making Connections:</u>  <b>Game of Telephone</b>  The instructor will provide a prompt and each person will pass it along to the next person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I returned to the store because my eggs were misshapen, and I didn't want to get sick.</li> <li>• My garden was full of cucumbers, tomatoes, peppers, radishes, and carrots until a rabbit ate them all.</li> </ul> <p>Verbal Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is important about sound in our world? What about listening?</li> <li>• In what ways can actors use sound to their advantage?</li> <li>• In what ways does sound enhance the storytelling in scenes or within a theatrical production?</li> </ul>

	<p><u>Agenda for today:</u>          We will learn about sound and do a few activities as to how it affects mood and atmosphere. We will also learn how sound and perception affect a scene and how it might change how we listen and respond in a theatrical work. After the activities, I will turn it over to you and a partner to choose an in-class project that excites you! You will then present your sound project to the class.</p> <p>Expectations: You will be graded based on participation, motivation, and effort today. Let's make this a fun class!</p>
<p><b>Procedures ~ 40 minutes</b></p>	<p><b>1) <u>Auditory Awareness</u></b>          How Sound Works – The Ear Diagram with Brain</p> <p>Hearing is an essential part of life for most people. Our hearing mechanism is always “ON,” working consciously and subconsciously around the clock.</p> <p><u>Activity: Sound ID ~5 minutes</u>          Sit for one minute and identify sounds around you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you notice that you didn't notice before?</li> <li>• What has and what does sound awareness do for humanity?</li> </ul> <p><u>Discussion/Writing:</u>          Write these down in the “brain” portion of your ear diagram.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What types of sounds are your favorite, and why? What sounds make you feel “alive”?</li> <li>• What sounds make you feel uneasy (share as much as you are comfortable with).</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Segue to 2) Emotion</u></b>          Music can provide emotion in ways that words and environmental sounds cannot. Sounds and music can also provide a theatrical scene with atmosphere. Sonia Moore states in <i>The Stanislavski System</i>: “<i>Stanislavski believed in two sources of material for an actor's creative work: the inner life of an actor [themselves] and [their] observations of the outside world – an inexhaustible source. To enrich emotional memory, the actor must observe what is happening around [them]; [They] must read, listen to music, go to museums, water people. Well-developed emotional memory is the most important requirement for the actor's work in the theater of living experience.</i>”</p> <p><u>Activity: Emotional Memory &amp; Musical Influence ~ 5 minutes</u>          The instructor will pick a sample photo (or a video, if applicable).</p> <p>Take a few seconds to look at this photo. Now, close your eyes and imagine you are walking through this scene.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What sounds are around you?</li> <li>• How do these sounds make you feel?</li> </ul>

- Which sounds do you imagine are loud/soft?

Open your eyes. Who would like to share?

This can also be done with videos, movies, and more. How would you pick and choose a sound for a particular scene if it is not written in the script?

Instructor chooses new photo. While looking at this scene, I want you to listen to these two samples of music.

- How did the music influence the atmosphere of the scene?
- How do environments shape our emotions through sound and/or music? How do our emotions shape our environments?
- How do emotions help us relate to characters in a theatrical work?

(Time permitting, a student can pick a photo from the options and do the exercise again).

### **3) Active Listening**

Let's discuss as a class:

- What are some verbal and non-verbal cues of listening?
- How can listening affect a scene?

Active listening goes hand in hand with voice, including inflection, emphasis, and tone. Through active listening, we can also pick up on emotion and intention. Dr. Nina Kraus, a neuroscientist of sound, states: *"It is now accepted that cognition, once thought to play no role in hearing, has a dramatic influence on hearing and subsequent communication. Our approach—the convergent study of cognition, perception, and biological processing—is one means of understanding the mechanistic bases of cognition's role in auditory processing."*

#### Activity: Emphasis ~5 minutes

With a partner, you will be assigned a phrase by picking one from a bag. Read the phrase out loud. Each time you read your phrase, emphasize the next word of the sentence.

#### Examples:

- Can you help me please?
- I am trying to fix it.
- What are you doing?
- I never said she stole my money.
- I didn't tell her you were angry.
- That old man can't understand you.

You will fill out the graph provided in your packet. How does the emphasis change the meaning of the phrase?

*Time permitting, each group can share one version of their phrase and how it changes meaning with emphasis.*

	<p><u>In-Class Project Prep ~10 minutes:</u>  Students will showcase a sound/listening game of their choice. They can choose from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Soundscape:</u></b> With a partner or group, choose a scene from a play, musical, poem, movie, or other work and create their own soundscape using musical instruments or their body. Get creative with sound! The soundscape should last for 20-30 seconds or more. Examples could be a campfire scene, a thunderstorm (Wizard of Oz, etc.)</li> <li>• <b><u>Playlist of Life:</u></b> With a partner, each of you will create a playlist (or write a list of songs) for yourself, each other or a specific character from a play/musical. The music can be from any time. Think about how instrumentals or lyrics could add or take away from their character. Provide at least 5 songs. Compare your lists. For example: Sharpay from HSM may have “Barbie Girl,” “Girls Just Want to Have Fun,” and others.</li> <li>• <b><u>Active Listening Scene:</u></b> Perform a scene with a partner. I will provide you with a scene. This will require you to pick and read a part but read your part quietly to yourself. In partners, decide who will be reading each part. However, read the scene silently to yourself and not with your partner. Make choices on the inflection and emphasis of the delivery of your lines. When you present to the class, it should be the first time you read it aloud with your partner which will require active listening to each other. If your partner delivers a line a certain way, you may want to respond differently than planned. You will present to the class facing away from each other, just focusing on listening and delivery.</li> </ul> <p>Students will briefly showcase their project to the class! ~10-15 minutes</p>
<p><b>Check for Understanding</b></p>	<p>Students are able to ask questions throughout the lesson plan.</p> <p>The instructor will provide prompts as to if anyone has questions or needs clarity.</p>
<p><b>Closure ~5-7 minutes</b></p>	<p><u>Group Circle Time:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What part of today’s lessons stood out to you? What was your favorite part?</li> <li>• Do you take your hearing for granted? Imagine how life would look different without your sense of hearing.</li> </ul> <p>Closing with quote from Dr. Nina Kraus: <i>“Making sense of meaningful sounds has a positive effect on how we think, feel and move. And, in turn, auditory learning takes place not in a vacuum, but with the engagement of the cognitive, reward and sensorimotor systems. We learn best when attention and memory are engaged, when we are motivated and we care about what we are learning, and when our motor systems are involved. We would do well to pay more attention to the invisible, powerful sounds around us and appreciate the amazing network of neurons that brings our auditory world to life — appreciate how the sounds of our lives change our brains, as an ally or enemy.”</i></p>

<p><b>Differentiation: Remediation &amp; Enrichment Activity</b></p>	<p><u>Remediation:</u> Students will never be asked to do anything that they are uncomfortable with. <i>*This lesson plan is not meant to be discriminatory to those who have hearing loss or identify as d/Deaf. Communication focused on ASL and body movement and language are covered in the Body Movement &amp; Expression lesson plan.</i></p> <p><u>Enrichment:</u> A fun audiology-related activity is using my video otoscope, where students can see the inside of their ear including their eardrum on my screen!</p> <p>If there is time, the instructor may introduce the Meisner Repetition Exercise.</p> <p>Time permitting, the instructor may introduce “Musical Direction”: Volunteer is needed to direct instrument playing.</p>
<p><b>Homework Assignment(s)</b></p>	<p>Create a “Sound Journal”: A journal that encompasses all the sounds you encounter, the sounds you love, what sounds you always want to remember. This is a cumulative journal that you can build as you continue into the performing arts field, or as you encounter the many experiences of life! You could start by going on a “sound walk” and identifying sounds around you. Examples could be specific music, songs, bird sounds,</p>
<p><b>Students’ Questions</b></p>	<p>Clarification Questions from students:</p> <p>Questions during Discussion:</p>
<p><b>Resources/Ideas from Students</b></p>	
<p><b>To Note for Next Year (or the next time the lesson is done)</b></p>	

Assessment:

**Participation /10 Points:** I participated in each activity regarding sound awareness, emotion, and active listening.

**Discussion /10 Points:** I made connections through partner collaboration and through effortful discussion.

**In-Class Project /25 Points:** With a partner, I created an in-class project that reflected my learning of these topics and presented my work to the class.

**=45 Points**