

COVID Adaptation: VERBATIM THEATRE

Secondary Drama - Senior - Public

General Tips for Safety in our Classrooms:

- ❖ Stay home if you are feeling ill or showing signs of COVID 19
- ❖ Avoid contact before, during and after school hours with people who are sick
- ❖ Wear a mask and/or a shield. All teachers and students in grades 4 to 12 must wear them.
- ❖ Although the Ontario government allows people in classes with mandatory masks to work 1 metre apart, CODE recommends that all dance and drama work be done with 2 metres of social distancing in effect to maximize safety.
- ❖ Practice mask wearing etiquette (see [infographic posted](#))
- ❖ Because students are not touching one another, masks should not be a safety problem in dance or drama work.
- ❖ Ensure students are hydrated at all times as masks can be hot.
- ❖ If you have more than one classroom door, designate an in & out door
- ❖ Greet each other with a smile, bow or nod
- ❖ Agree with the students on a signal or word they will use if they feel others are getting too close to them. Practice it to normalize its use.
- ❖ Open doors and windows to allow air flow
- ❖ Work outside whenever possible
- ❖ Wash your hands with soap and water frequently
- ❖ If soap and water are not available, sanitize your hands at the beginning and end of class
- ❖ Post info-graphics about coughing, sneezing and mask wearing etiquette
- ❖ Practice good cough and sneezing etiquette (see [infographics posted](#))
- ❖ Avoid touching your face
- ❖ Use assigned seating
- ❖ Class circle should be larger than normal or staggered to accommodate physical distancing
- ❖ Use more groups with smaller numbers of group members
- ❖ Project or send electronic versions of handouts & course outlines rather than using paper
- ❖ Post or project handouts and success criteria on the wall

Drama Specific Tips:

- ❖ Avoid the use of costumes and props.
- ❖ If used, never share them.
- ❖ Store individual costumes and props in a separate plastic or garment bag
- ❖ Clean equipment and props (e.g. lighting and sound) before and after use
- ❖ Avoid the use of equipment.

- ❖ If used, limit the number of people using each piece of equipment
- ❖ Use disposable (one-time use) or personal gloves only while using sound & lighting equipment
- ❖ Roll-up carpet if that is possible.
- ❖ Wall-to-wall carpeting will require regular disinfecting. Use chairs that are more easily disinfected, ensuring students use the same chair the entire class. Chairs may have to be disinfected between classes.

Safety Adaptations specific to the instructional strategies and drama conventions are embedded in green throughout the lessons.

UNIT OVERVIEW

Context:

This unit explores a genre of theatre that has gained importance and popularity in recent theatre history. Verbatim Theatre involves the creation of theatre that is drawn from word-for-word interviews with real people. It has been used to explore events in recent history such as 9/11, the murder of Matthew Shepard, and the race riots in Los Angeles. It also documents the voices of people from the margins, such as homeless youth or caregivers from the Philippines. Students might be familiar with the genre of the docudrama from prior drama courses, but they will certainly be familiar with reality television that has exploded in the last decade. Verbatim Theatre is designed to deepen their encounter and exploration of reality-based dramas. The unit could be used as the groundwork for the creation of a Verbatim theatre performance piece around a theme that is loosely explored in the unit: the theme of change.

Summary:

The Verbatim Theatre unit will be scaffolded through voice, movement, storytelling and interviewing activities to invite students into the process of recreating 'reality' both as an actor and as a writer. The unit will culminate in a polished classroom performance piece that was developed from earlier lessons.

Curriculum Expectations

A1. The Creative Process: use the creative process and a variety of sources and forms, both individually and collaboratively, to design and develop drama

works;

A2. Elements and Conventions: use the elements and conventions of drama effectively in creating individual and ensemble drama works, including works based on a variety of global sources;

A3. Presentation Techniques and Technologies: use a variety of presentation techniques and technological tools to enhance the impact of drama works and communicate for specific audiences and purposes.

B1. Critical Analysis Process: use the critical analysis process to reflect on and evaluate their own and others' drama works;

B2. Drama and Society: demonstrate an understanding of how societies present and past

use or have used drama, and of how creating and viewing drama can benefit individuals, groups, and communities;

B3. Continuing Engagement: identify knowledge and skills they have acquired through drama activities, and ways in which they can apply this learning in personal, social, and career contexts.

C1. Concepts and Terminology: demonstrate an understanding of the nature and functions of drama forms, elements, conventions, and techniques, including the correct terminology for the various components;

C3. Responsible Practices: demonstrate an understanding of safe, ethical, and responsible personal and interpersonal practices in drama activities.

Unit Guiding Questions

What is Verbatim Theatre? Why is it important and compelling?

What are the challenges of creating Verbatim Theatre? What tools are available to the artist to create Verbatim Theatre?

What ethical considerations must be demonstrated when creating Verbatim Theatre?

How can a Verbatim Theatre piece be edited?

What happens to the 'truth' when it is shaped, revised and interpreted through an actor?

What can we learn about ourselves through telling and listening to personal stories?

What can we learn about our society?

How can we use Verbatim Theatre to educate and eventually change social views and practices?

Lesson Guiding Questions

Lesson 1-Telling Other People's Stories

How can we share and re-tell our stories in a way that feels safe and respected?

Whose stories in our society get told? Whose stories do not get told?

How can theatre tell other people's stories without exploiting or appropriating them?

Lesson 2-Defining the Genre

What does the word Verbatim mean as applied to theatre? What are the basic principles that define the genre?

Why might this be a compelling style of theatre for an artist and audience?

Lesson 3-The Overheard Conversation

What's it like to 'listen in' on other people's conversations and how can we do that respectfully?

What can you gain as a theatre artist by observing interactions in the 'real world'?

How can the artist mold and shape reality through editing while still honouring the truth?

Lesson 4-The Composite Character Monologue

How do you create questions and conduct interviews in Verbatim Theatre? How do you record your data?

What written cues can you give the actor about the way your character speaks?

What does it feel like to hear your answers spoken in the composite character monologue?

Lesson 5-Polishing and Performing the Verbatim Text

How can the written verbatim text be interpreted by the actor?

What is lost in the translation from the page to the stage? What is gained?

How is your understanding of reality television different from when we started the unit?

What have you learned about the topic of change? How have you deepened our understanding of change?

Assessment and Evaluation: How will students demonstrate their learning?

Assessment of Learning:

1. Students will be evaluated on their rehearsals using the Creation Process Checklist [shared online](#).
2. Students will be evaluated on their polished (written) Verbatim text.
3. Students will be evaluated on the performance of the monologue using the Verbatim Theatre Monologue Performance Rubric that was co-constructed by the class.
4. Students will be evaluated on their Verbatim Theatre Reflection.

Assessment for Learning:

Check Point #1/Lesson 1

Feedback on written version of stories

Check Point #2/Lesson 2

Group Self-Evaluation [online](#) using the Creation Process Checklist

Check Point #3/Lesson 3

Teacher Feedback on Creation Process

Check Point #4/Lesson 4

[Online](#) written teacher feedback on Composite Character Monologue

Oral feedback from teacher and class on Composite Character Monologue

Check Point #5/Lesson 5

Peer Feedback on Performance using Co-constructed [online](#) Rubric

Unit Lessons: How will assessment and instruction be organized for learning?

Lesson 1:	Telling Other People's Stories	2 classes
Lesson 2:	Defining and Creating within the Genre	3 classes
Lesson 3:	The Overheard Conversation	1-2 classes
Lesson 4:	The Composite Character Monologue	1-2 classes
Lesson 5:	Polishing and Performing the Verbatim Text	3 classes