perception

the workshop out of school

conception

expression

reflection

revision

perception

conception

expression

reflection

revision

PERFORMING ARTS WORKSHOP

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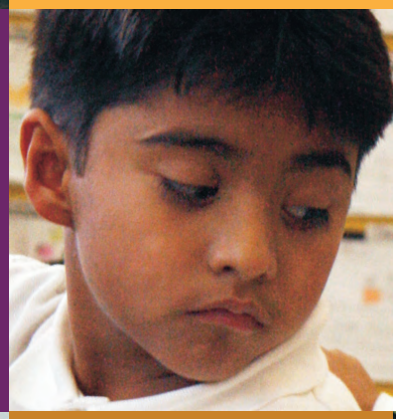





arts engagement

an introduction

4:15 p.m. on a sunny Tuesday afternoon in the Bayview-Hunters Point District of San Francisco—an "up-and-coming" neighborhood that has seen vast transformations over the past few years due to gentrification, city planning, and community activism, but is still known for its toxic waste sites, prostitution, drug trade, gang warfare, and high murder rate.

School has been out for over an hour, but it will be hours before dinner, hours before curfew, and hours before young people are asked to be anywhere. Ten grade school students, boys, fourth and fifth graders, energetic and boisterous, are sitting at a table in a recreation room at the neighborhood youth center.

They could be out on the street, throwing dice or in danger of getting into trouble. They could be safe inside playing pool or video games, or fighting over candy. They could be at home passively watching television.

But they're not doing any of those things.

Instead, they're discussing recent shootings in their neighborhood. They are talking about the boys—the murderers and the murdered, just slightly older than themselves, their friends, their older brothers, their cousins. They are writing monologues exploring the drama of these tragedies. Who are the characters involved? What happened exactly? What were their motivations? What are the consequences, the givens, and the stakes? They are using the latest technology to create beats to go with raps they've written on the subject of violence and how it affects their hearts, bodies, and minds. Downstairs in a dance studio, twelve girls are learning the history of hip hop, putting together improvised sequences, and articulately critiquing each other on their moves, energy levels, and creative choices.

All of these young people are absorbed in an artistic process, one that emphasizes critical thinking and reflection on their own lives. If they keep up with the program, is it possible they will become more thoughtful and engaged citizens than if they spent their afternoons "hanging out"—without structure, without intention, and without the opportunity to engage with each other and with society?

At Performing Arts Workshop, we think so. This is why for over forty years our mission has been to create these experiences for young people. But how, exactly, do you get young people to engage in the arts when the school day is over? What does an excellent after-school curriculum look like? What is the role of the teaching artist in creating an environment that is both challenging and inviting to young people who have already spent an entire day in school?

This guide is for teaching artists and arts providers interested in partnering with schools and community centers to deliver quality arts programming to young people during out of school time. The authors have garnered promising practices from more than forty years' experience working in community settings. Adding to their research is the input and field research of five members of the Performing Arts Workshop artistic staff, who embarked on a project in January 2007 funded by the San Francisco Department of Children, Youth and Their Families to provide excellent after-school programming to some of San Francisco's most "at-risk" youth.

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this guide is divided by discipline into 5 chapters:

Creative Movement
World Dance
Theater Arts
Creative Writing
Music

each chapter covers:

Qualities of the Discipline
Planning the Curriculum
Composition and Improvisation in the Discipline
Behavior and Content Management
A Sample 15-Week Curriculum
Plus an in-depth Breakdown of One to Four Lesson Plans

We believe that early cultivation of imaginative work and critical-thinking skills will launch young people on a journey of lifelong learning, curiosity, and civic engagement.

The History Behind Performing Arts Workshop

One of the oldest nonprofit arts education organizations in San Francisco, Performing Arts Workshop (the Workshop) was established in 1965 to provide a creative outlet for inner-city teenagers. Using the school and community centers as her laboratory, Workshop founder Gloria Unti developed a teaching method based on the conviction that the creative process is a dynamic vehicle for learning, problem-solving, and communication. Working originally at the Telegraph Hill Community Center, and later, at the Buchanan Street YMCA, Gloria led a group of youth—chiefly gang members, high school dropouts, and youth on probation—in creating a vibrant dramatic workshop. These youth explored the creative process through improvisational dance and theater, channeling their ideas and experiences into highly charged satires and social commentary. By 1968, enrollment in the "Teen Workshop" reached over 600 students while performances drew an audience of nearly 10,000 in a single year.

After experiencing firsthand that art can transform the lives of young people, Gloria and the Workshop staff began to test, develop, and refine a teaching methodology aimed at reaching "at-risk" youth. In 1974, the Workshop launched its flagship program, Artists-in-Schools, and became one of the first nonprofit arts organizations in San Francisco to place trained artists in public schools. The Professional Development Program followed in 1975 with workshops and on-site trainings of school teachers, principals, and artists. The Artists-in-Communities program formalized in 2003 to offer tailored arts instruction in after-school programs, housing facilities at homeless shelters, and schools for at-risk youth outside of the school districts.

Our Approach in After-School Programs

In our after-school programs, we remain committed to delivering quality arts education to young people. Our classes after school are consistent with our in-school methodology. Our goal is to instruct young people in the artistic process and to give them the materials and guidance they need to create original works of art, as well as to nurture their analytical skills through the reflection, revision, and development of their work. We believe that early cultivation of imaginative work and critical-thinking skills will launch young people on a journey of lifelong learning, curiosity, and civic engagement.

Why Should Artists Teach?

Artists have a unique way of seeing the world. The work of the artist is in the imaginative, kinesthetic, musical, aesthetic, visual, and emotional terrains. Artists can be fiercely intellectual, but they are not interested in answers or solutions as much as they are in asking questions and formulating creative responses that lead to more questions. They are interested in gray areas, in silences and ellipses, and in the places where standard language fails. The arts are our way of communicating to each other what is incommunicable in any other form. Art can inspire ideas and

The Workshop defines critical thinking as a process that challenges an individual to use observation, reflection, synthesis, and inquiry in order to derive meaning from an event, text, or artwork.

can even be ideas. There is not much space within the regular school day and in leisure time where students can develop an artistic sensibility, or where students who innately have that sensibility can really shine. This is a serious loss both for the students and for society as a whole. Learning this new way of seeing, thinking, and expressing can be exciting for youth. They can begin to look forward to the program rather than having nothing to do, and in the best cases, they can begin to see their lives from a new perspective. But this change in perspective does not occur magically. The artist must be prepared to teach. This requires preparation by the artist in curriculum and pedagogy before coming to the site. Teaching artists must think seriously about their teaching philosophy. He or she must ask: What do I want my students to walk away with? How will my presence in the classroom benefit their minds? What will be the lasting impact? What do I want my students to understand? What will they do to understand it? How will I know that they have understood it?

Your goal in the after-school program should not be to train professional artists the way you would train students in a conservatory, relying heavily on technical fluency (how dexterously the fingers move on the piano, how precise are the brushstrokes, how perfectly are the lines memorized.) Instead your objectives should have to do with using the process and the craft of the art to inspire critical thinking and creative response.

What is Critical Thinking?

In the United States, no arts organization or artist is likely to claim that they are against critical thinking. But what is critical thinking? How do you know it when you see it? What is it useful for? Is it something you can learn once in an afternoon of training and relax for the rest of your life? Could there really be a "framework" for critical thinking?

The Workshop defines critical thinking as a process that challenges an individual to use observation, reflection, synthesis, and inquiry in order to derive meaning from an event, text, or artwork. In this way, the art piece does not exist in a vacuum, but is a medium for connection between the individual and the collective. By thinking about what a piece means, by using the evidence in the text, on the stage, in the movement, by responding creatively, the young person becomes involved in the art. Being a good critical thinker has nothing to do with knowledge acquisition or achievement. Rather, it is a habit of mind that encourages inquiry, sound reasoning, and creative response. Our goal as teaching artists is to cultivate this practice so that students are capable of making well thought-out choices based on true understanding and of using their own voices in their academic work, in their own lives, and in society.

If in our lessons and classes we do not ask students to think about their personal relationship to the world through the craft, is what we are teaching important and essential? Or are we simply testing their ability to follow directions? While a lot can be said for the skill of following directions, and of giving young people sanctuary from the streets, the possibility for growth, deep understanding, and change that is only available through the arts cannot be accessed unless the teacher sets an intention to do so—and designs a curriculum that inspires curiosity and analysis, and that gives young people the opportunity to develop their own voices. It is not enough to hope that by simply doing the art, the student will gain that inspiration—teaching artists must cultivate it in every class.

Teachers must ask good questions and persuade students to come up with their own questions to help them discover their own voice. Teachers must also constantly place students in the position of having to make choices in the artistic process. These can be conceptual or structural choices about their own work. How will you contrast the next body shape with your previous one? Will you describe your neighborhood as a paradise or as a hell? Is your signature hip hop move staccato, or flowing? What beat works best for the intro to your song? Will the character in your scene succeed in attaining his or her objective? What consequences will it bring?

the Performing Arts Workshop methodology

In order to ensure a high standard of excellence in our programs, we have articulated a Cycle of Artistic Inquiry based on the research and study of our most successful classrooms throughout the years. The methodology is not a curriculum, nor does it prescribe a specific way of conducting a class. It is simply an organizational tool that teaching artists can use to help ensure that students are approaching the art form in a way that fully immerses them into the artistic process.

Perception

First, the class experiences an example of the art through the senses. They observe, they listen, they read, they notice, they feel, they allow the piece of art to exist before them without judging or evaluating it. Only if the artwork is presented to them without stagnant preconceptions can it be open to new criticisms, new interpretations, and new feelings.

Conception

The conception component of our methodology is the translation of the sensual perception of the art into a mental concept. It is the labeling process, giving meaning to what we see, hear, or feel. On the micro level the transition from perception to conception in the student's mind can occur very quickly. We hear a Bach invention and we recognize it as classical music, or at least as "old" music. Then an instructor can ask, "What is there? What do you hear or see?" Always emphasize the power of the particular. Ask the students for specific details. The skill of sensual perception and mental conception is essential in developing critical-thinking skills and artistic skills. We cannot contribute to a world we do not see.

Expression

There is a tremendous amount of emotional risk in making art. The artist takes something from inside him or herself—a feeling, a sense, an idea, usually something private, abstract, and unformed, sometimes pleasing, sometimes ugly—and places it concretely into the public realm in the form of language, story, brushstrokes, movement, or sound. If the world accepts it, embraces it, gives it praise, the artist is a star. If the world hates it, ridicules it, is confused or bored or offended by it, then the artist risks being a failure. Anyone who has ever spent time making art understands how the process can be both terrifying and exhilarating. In other words, the stakes are high for people asserting themselves as artists (and by that we mean anyone creating the arts).

The stakes for those who learn about the artistic process only by reading about it or by listening to it are extremely low: they never have to enter the process themselves. Advocates and practitioners of that learning method view the imagination as something divorced from the self and "the arts" as something unattainable, only to be revered by the rest of society.

The expression component of our methodology reinforces the value of individuality and voice in education. We encourage original composition because we believe this is the best structure in which a student can access his or her own personal voice and engage in a dialogue with the world through the arts.

Reflection

When the students have created something, it is not enough simply to applaud them or to hang what they have painted on the refrigerator. It is important for the students to look at what they themselves and their peers have made and to analyze it. This does not necessarily mean that they need to give formal critiques, but they do need to recognize and articulate qualities of each other's work.

When the students have created something, it is not enough simply to applaud them or to hang what they have painted on the refrigerator. It is important for the students to look at what they themselves and their peers have made and to analyze it.

When the students are discussing any work of art, ask them to articulate what they notice about details. Ask them to be as specific as possible in describing what is before them. It is important, however, to set guidelines for appropriate peer-feedback. Students need to feel that they are being supported and are supporting each other, and that the goal in the classroom is for everyone to improve, not to hurt feelings or to use the opportunity to insult the other students in the class. The quality of feedback should be evaluated based on how useful it is to the artist, not on how articulately the critic can pan the work.

With at-risk students, the reflection section is particularly tricky and particularly necessary. Students who are inhibited by low self-esteem and unstable emotional lives might find it difficult to hear anything reflected about their work. Whether the feedback is positive or negative, what they are simultaneously craving and fearing is the serious attention you give to anything they produce.

Allowing what they create to float away without shared reflection is exactly what they are used to in life. Many of their problems are rooted in a society that, for a variety of complicated reasons, has allowed their lives to go unexamined. In the process, the children have learned to live their lives without reflection, which leads to making poor choices. What is the point of making a good choice if no one (including myself) is looking at my life?

Engage in the reflection process by asking students questions about their work, by throwing variables into the scene, by asking them why they made a particular choice. They will begin to pay attention to the choices they make. This will improve their analytical skills and will sharpen their skills in the particular form.

Revision

The only way to make use of whatever is gained from the reflection piece is for students to rework what they've done. It's important for students to try what they've done in a different way to reinforce the variety of choices they have in art. "Revision" simply means "to see again." So once they have reflected upon the original work, they may reconstruct it in a new way. Revision is an integral part of the artistic process. It is the bulk of the work for any artist, and students should learn the value and practice of it as early as possible.

the after-school challenge

The challenge for the teaching artist is to find the balance between sustaining rigorous instruction and adapting to the more casual and relaxed environment of after-school.

The task of teaching the arts in after-school settings comes with its own particular set of advantages and challenges that differ from teaching during the regular school day. The constraints of the setting may be different. Some programs take place in classrooms with desksand whiteboards while others take place in gyms, libraries, lounges, or "rec" rooms. The atmosphere may seem more relaxed in some ways, because the students have more ownership of the space, and they may not feel the same kinds of academic or social pressures they feel during the regular school day. But because students have been in school all day they may find the task of focusing and concentrating even more difficult. The challenge for the teaching artist is to find the balance between sustaining rigorous instruction and adapting to the more casual and relaxed environment of after-school.

The Behavior Management Challenge in After-School Settings

By choosing to work with youth, and especially at-risk youth, you must accept that a certain percentage of your job will involve behavior modification and redirection. Because you're an artist, you will most likely not have had years of experience in the field of social or behavioral psychology. This is fine. The best way to gain skill at managing behavior is to spend time doing it and figuring out what methods and modalities work best for you. Fortunately, there are some practices and configurations that seem to work better than others and we will outline them in this section.

Because you will be coming in after school, the site may not be required to provide a staff member in the room while you teach. The burden of behavior management may fall largely (though it should never be entirely) on you. You may have to be in the class alone with the students, which means your consistency and vigilance in regards to behavior management must be sharper than during the regular school day. (There will be a section later in this book about managing behavior specifically in the context of the artistic discipline, as each discipline requires different classroom configurations.)

behavior management tips

Community Rules

Establish community rules on the first day. Encourage student participation in the design of these rules, but make sure you include and highlight your own rules. These do not have to be approved by students (you are in charge), and students do not have veto rights on them, but allow them to sign a contract showing that they have read and understood the expectations. Keep the community rules visible at every class—remind students of them when necessary. Remind them that this is an after-school program and that they may quit voluntarily or be asked to not return at any moment. Have three alternate lesson plans ready in case chaos ensues.

Consistency and Rewarding Positive Behavior

A rule is only useful if it is enforced consistently. Be as vigilant as you can about enforcing all rules with all the youth all the time. That said, there are times when it will be appropriate to focus on rewarding positive engagement rather than constantly redirecting particular individuals. "I like how Elizabeth is sitting, completely focused and ready to work" and "I appreciate how carefully Thomas is listening to my directions" are good lines. Negative behavior can often be nipped in the bud if you don't give it the attention it seeks. However, if there is any risk of physical injury as a result of a student's behavior, take direct action.

Communication

Even if a staff member from the site is not available to be in the room with you and the young people while you teach, you should know where someone will be, and how to get in touch with them if you need them. Establish a protocol. Find out if there is a phone in the room or in the hallway. Whom should you contact and what is their extension? If there is no phone in the vicinity or if the site does not provide walkie-talkies, ask them to purchase them.

Rituals

The success of your class largely depends on the configuration and structure of activity. Young people feel safe and perform better when they know exactly what is expected of them. It helps if

you have rituals for beginning and ending the class. (*Example: "First, we take our shoes off and line them up by the radiator. Then we sit in a circle and do a warm-up game, then we break into our groups, etc."*) This does not mean you can't be wildly surprising and encourage the unexpected within those rituals, but the constraints are set up so that both you and your students feel safe enough to take risks. Rituals also help establish the rules of engagement while practicing the art form, which eliminates chaos and confusion and reminds students of the "sacredness" of the artistic space—and the respect that it demands from the group.

Sustaining and Rewarding Engagement

Because this program takes place after school, you can assume the students have some interest in the activity, or they would choose to spend the afternoon elsewhere. However, because your class takes place at the end of the school day, students may be sick and tired of being in school. While you want to maintain a high level of instruction, it helps if your class is as un-school-like as possible. This means as physical and as fun as possible. If it is a writing class, make sure you plan for activities out of the desks. If the site has comfortable chairs or couches, encourage students to use them. If healthy snacks are available, and you have permission from the site administrators, feed your students. (Avoid feeding them sugar, as this will excite them for twenty minutes and make them crash in an hour.)

Reigning in the Focus

In many recreation rooms there are computers, televisions with video games, pool tables, air hockey tables, foosball tables, erector sets, ping-pong tables, basketball hoops, and other games. These games and activities are excellent for creating a safe environment where young people can hang out and stay off of the streets. Unfortunately, at first glance, engaging in these activities may seem more exciting to a twelve-year-old than a class on the basics of theater. Set boundaries about what activities are allowed during your class. Check with the site administrator to see if these activities can be prohibited during your instruction. If at all possible, use the activities as rewards. *(Example: "If you work on your song lyrics for forty minutes straight, you can play a video game for fifteen minutes.")*

Checking Your Frustration

There will be times when you will be frustrated and irritated with your students and you will wonder why you have earned a master's degree in your field and have spent years honing your craft essentially to babysit hormonal middle schoolers. It is normal to feel this from time to time and you shouldn't give up if you have days like this. Sometimes a brilliant lesson plan will turn into a disaster because of the baggage and chaos the young people happen to bring to class that day. A good strategy to avoid burnout is to step back from what is occurring and to be as objective about it as possible. Laugh at it. Look at it as an interesting phenomenon. Empathize with your students. Remind yourself that you get to go home in the evening and have dinner while they are often stuck inside of their frustration and chaos twenty-four hours a day. Avoid showing that you are angry or frustrated. If the day is really bad, arrange a meeting with the site administrator and make decisions on what needs to change.

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Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivators

Because there are no grades or passing or failing in after-school settings, you may sometimes have to rely on extrinsic motivators in order to get students to perform their best. Some educators feel extrinsic motivators (like stickers, behavior thermometers, movie tickets, chocolate, ten minutes of free time at the end of a period, pizza parties) are wrong because students should be intrinsically motivated by the lushness of the material. But always relying on the young person's innate desire to learn is unrealistic. Grades and report cards exist in school as extrinsic motivators, and although too much emphasis on these can have a negative effect on children's education, in most cases, they motivate young people to perform as best they can. Use prizes and points in moderation. If you dole out "points" every time a student does anything he or she is asked, earning a point loses meaning. However, if you make it difficult to earn points, then when they do win them, they'll feel like they have accomplished something and they'll have a reason to feel proud and rewarded.

You know your point system is failing when students ask for them, or when they indicate they feel like points are "owed" to them. If this begins to happen, adjust the system.

Classroom Chaos Theory

Remember that there is a distinct difference between good chaos and bad chaos. In any good arts class, especially in the performing arts where there is a strong component of improvisation, there will be a certain amount of chaos. A good class will sometimes feel chaotic. A dynamic improvisation is taking place, there are many student actors on stage, you are stopping and starting,

asking the audience to respond, the students are listening but also responding, there is laughter (responsive, not ridiculing), there is energy in the air, you and the students do not know exactly what is going to happen next. There is an element of danger and risk in the chaos: the students are exploring new territory, they might fail or they might succeed. It may be loud and quite unlike other subjects, but everyone is focused and everyone is thinking, engaged, and trying their best. Although you do not know exactly what is going to happen, you are still in control of the classroom.

This is good chaos and being able to orchestrate this kind of energy can have excellent results. This is especially true if after the exercise you ask the students to reflect and respond in a quiet way to what they have just experienced.

Changing the pace of the class is key. Have a discussion or have them write in journals. With these changes within the period, you are modulating the class, allowing the students to engage with the material in a variety of ways.

Bad chaos occurs when no one is engaged in the activity or when there is no clear activity; students are branching off into their own groups, they are bored, misbehaving, or refusing to participate. Bad chaos can occur even if you have fully prepared for the lesson and can be the result of many factors. But not preparing the lesson plan carefully will almost always guarantee bad chaos. At worst, bad chaos can result in a student mutiny or someone getting hurt because you have lost control of the classroom. At best, bad chaos wastes the valuable time set aside for your lesson.

Ultimately, you should decide what is appropriate or not and enforce your own rules consistently...as long as they are consistent with the rules, culture, and expectations of the site.

Managing Content

Because of the personal nature of the arts, it is hard at times to distinguish between "acceptable" and "unacceptable" content in original student work. At what point should students be censored for sexually explicit or violent material? If we are asking them to delve into their lives and if their daily realities involve gangs, drugs, and guns, is it fair to tell them not to include those elements? Are they only to discuss and present "positive" aspects of their lives? If the arts are about conflict, relationships, power, tragedy, exhilaration, desire, how can we ask students to engage only in positive messaging?

There are different theories about how teaching artists should manage these questions. Some people think that by handling those issues, by having them out on the table, by discussing them and analyzing them, students become distracted and think only of violence, sex, and getting high. The idea is that if young people don't think about those things, they won't be compelled by them.

There is an element of truth to that theory. If students are allowed to present whatever they feel like at whatever moment, they can be distracted by the titillation of being permitted to do so, and by the power they can gain from making their teachers and other classmates feel uneasy, or excited. Often students will use the opportunity of unlimited freedom to test the boundaries of their relationship with figures of authority, and will be genuinely curious about how far they can go, and how much is too much. Others may simply be in pursuit of whatever attention they can get. While it is unlikely that this behavior will in actuality introduce negative elements into their lives, this dynamic is not particularly useful to you as a teacher and should be avoided. Ultimately, your goal in the class is to get students to think seriously and somewhat objectively about the craft and content and not to focus on their dynamic with the teacher.

So how do you avoid it? First, set up as many constraints and rules of engagement as possible so that students are made to handle one particular problem with not a lot of room for silliness. If you think it's appropriate, set up specific parameters that give them a little bit of room *(Example: "You are permitted one curse word per ten pages of writing, so use it wisely.").*

Don't get excited by inappropriate content. For a young person who is seeking attention, a response like "How dare you write such a disgusting poem!" is a dream response. Praise the aspects of the material that do handle some of the craft issues you are trying to teach. Responses like, "Your imagery is very detailed" or, "This character is very honest" are useful.

While much of negative content is about "getting a rise" out of the class, there are times when students use the arts class as a way to express something traumatic that is truly occurring in their lives. That trauma has artistic potential and it can be channeled by being seen through the objective artistic lens, as the dramatic artist in the introductory paragraphs does with violence. Know that you are legally responsible for reporting any work that suggests the student is being abused, or has hurt or plans to hurt themselves or others. Tell the site administrator and follow through with legal procedures.

Remember that you are NOT a therapist. Do not attempt a psychological dialogue with the students that delves deeply into their personal emotional lives. Recommend professional counseling if you feel the child needs it.

Ultimately, you should decide what is appropriate or not and enforce your own rules consistently… as long as they are consistent with the rules, culture, and expectations of the site.

building a positive relationship with the site

Site Culture

Each site is like a family with its own culture, systems, qualities, and dysfunctions. As an artist in residence, you are sort of a long-term guest, and you will have to learn to adjust to the particularities of the environment. This is true when making choices around behavior management and content appropriateness. What might be completely acceptable content at an after-school program for homeless youth may merit expulsion from a program for youth-on-probation. Because you are a guest at a program, you (sometimes unfortunately) are not responsible for changing the norms and values of that site. You may completely disagree with decisions made by administrators, security guards, and other staff members. Sometimes it is possible to negotiate, but you are there to provide a service for that site, and so the decision about what flies and what does not is ultimately theirs.

That said, if you firmly disagree with the way things are handled, arrange a meeting to discuss your point of view. Also, remember that you are legally and ethically responsible for reporting any sort of abuse that you witness to Child Protection Services.

The best way to prepare for the adjustment is to meet as many people as possible and keep communication open. Talk to other providers working at the site. Ask questions. Ask for feedback. If you need support, ask for it.

Communication Strategies

It is important to be aware that the after-school site which is hosting your residency may have a range of experience with the arts. Some are used to art programs that provide materials but very little instruction; others may be used to particular arts providers and their methods. It is important to have open communication with the site administrator on issues of scheduling, space, materials, behavior management, and curriculum content. Schedule a meeting before, in the middle, and at the end of the residency period.

Here is a good script that can be used to guide the agenda of your meeting, and to make sure all the important issues are touched upon.

meeting script

- How many students should I expect each week?
- Will there be someone in the room when I'm instructing?
- How do you handle students who misbehave or who are rude?
- Do you have a boom box, DVD player (or any other equipment you may need)?
- Can I expect to be in the same room each week?

Strategies for Outreach

Rarely are after-school programs mandatory, so your class may require some advertising and talking up. A good way to begin is to keep in good contact with site administrators, talk to young people who are eligible to enroll, and create an electronic and hard-copy flyer that can be posted on bulletin boards.

Understanding the Population

Before you begin planning the curriculum and teaching, it is important to understand the population you are about to teach. Remember that in an arts program, the most important subjects are the young people themselves: ultimately, they will be focusing on their lives, on their daily realities, on their dreams and hopes and fears. In a good arts curriculum, the students' lives are central to the work. Find out what kind of young person comes to the program.

While this guide focuses on after-school programs for young people who are "at-risk," it is important to remember that this phrase is an umbrella term for an enormous variety of youth. There is no "at-risk" culture. Poor urban youth living in San Francisco's Chinatown will face different issues from youth living in the projects in the South Bronx. Homeless queer youth in Minneapolis will face different issues from Hurricane Katrina transplants in San Jose or youth from rural communities in Montana. There will always be some of the same issues, but there will also be problems and talents specific to each population.

Before designing the curriculum, do your research. Who are these people? Why do they go to this site? Are they recent immigrants? Will there be language barriers? Have these young people endured particularly traumatic situations? What is the reading level of most participants? Are there talents you should know about? Are there particular issues that have come up? Are there behavior management challenges? Have some of the students been involved in criminal activity? Is there drug- and alcohol-abuse and addiction? Are there conflicts between the students around gang territories, race, or sexuality? What is the gender breakdown of the population? How involved are the parents in their lives, and if they are involved, what kinds of positive or negative influences do they have? What aspect of your art form would be most beneficial to them?

Having an understanding about students' culture, backgrounds, and values, especially when different from your own, will allow you to create lesson plans that have a stronger impact on the students, especially "at-risk" students.

At-Risk Students

Performing Arts Workshop has discovered and developed a number of techniques for teaching artists that are useful in teaching "at-risk" students. The use of a variety of arts media and learning techniques in the classroom ensures that students with different learning styles will have a chance to learn the main themes of the subject.

The incorporation of concepts from a variety of cultures (and this includes subcultures) not only adds relevancy to the curriculum, but is the bedrock of any whole and worthwhile curriculum. It is also important for the teacher and teaching artists to draw the connection between the curricula and the students; this means choosing anchoring texts and art works that have substance.

This does not mean we exclude people and cultures from the syllabus that are not immediately relevant to our students. It does mean that we choose texts that are deep enough, that ask questions broad enough to have the potential to connect to the students' lives. Most of Shakespeare's works have this potential, as do the plays of many contemporary playwrights. However, it is up to the teacher to present these works in a way that can excite students and engage their minds. This means understanding the population and understanding the art form well enough to ask questions and present examples that draw connections from the students' lives to the texts and vice versa.

With all this said, do not shy away from exposing students to forms and styles of art outside of what is familiar to them. Use the opportunity of the class to challenge what they already know and to introduce them to new ways of looking at the world.

Keep in mind the reading level of the students you are teaching. While it is important to always challenge them, choosing texts that are too far above their reading level will frustrate them and take the focus away from the artistic objectives. While increasing literacy is important—and the performing arts can be very helpful in developing literacy skills—it is equally important to keep the focus of the class on the larger intellectual and artistic concepts. Many "at-risk" students would prefer to see a dramatic scene unfold physically before them than sit in an English class decoding the words of a play. "Picking the scene up," moving it onto the classroom stage will make the words come to life and will help students to visualize the dramatic concepts inside the text. It will also change the pace of the class and keep the students on their toes—an important tool in managing the "at-risk" student who can easily be emotionally and intellectually disengaged.

With "at-risk" students, improvisation and original composition ensure that students will use the structure of the art form to raise questions about their own issues and concerns, and therefore they will be invested in the quality of the work.

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Content Opportunities

The after-school environment can be an exciting place to teach because you have an opportunity to explore areas that might not be considered academic enough for the regular school day. You can take more risks with material and focus on issues that are central to the students' lives. You can ask the students what issues they want to explore. For his theater and spoken word class, one Performing Arts Workshop artist has created a curriculum centered around the issue of violence because this is the theme his students wanted most to explore—the issue that impacts their lives most. During the regular school day, classroom teachers may not have time (or permission) to include the violence discussion in their curriculum. In after-school, there is time to really examine the issue personally, and to use the art form as a vehicle to express and explore various aspects of it.

Challenges in the Curriculum

A big challenge for teaching after school is the lack of consistent attendance in your class. You may have students who drop in for the first three weeks and participate enthusiastically and who don't come back for the rest of your residency. This is common and poses a problem for curricula that rely heavily on a cumulative arc. Self-contained lessons are best for after-school, but you have to make sure the material isn't repetitive for the students who do show up regularly. It is helpful to start the class with a review of what went on in the previous class, and then build upon those skills.

teaching artists should:

- design curriculum with the students in mind;
- incorporate what the students know (culture, background, values) into the curriculum;
- make the students feel that who they are is represented in the curriculum; and
- be unafraid to broach topics that might raise conflicts in a diverse class.

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It is helpful to start the class with a review of what went on in the previous class, and then build upon those skills.

Varying Ages, Grade Levels, and Abilities

Another challenge of teaching in after-school settings is the varying ages, grade levels, and abilities of your students. While most sites are good about grouping the youth appropriately, you may be in a situation where your class has a wide range of knowledge, maturity levels, and abilities. If this is true, structure the class in a way that takes advantage of the situation. If the age gap between students is significant, assign older students to mentorship roles for younger ones. Keep the curriculum simple and clear. Even seasoned artists benefit from a good review of the fundamentals.

Inclusive Instruction

Regardless of when and where they instruct, all good teachers should be aware of students with special needs. If you have students with special needs in your class, or if you are not sure if you do or do not, plan lessons with activities that can be adjusted for children with disabilities. It is beyond the scope of this guide to go into detail about each variety of disability and how to make adjustments for each one.

a good lesson plan

A good lesson plan needs to include the following features:

THE BIG IDEA Why are you teaching this lesson? What do you want the students to know? Why should anyone care about the topic?

OBJECTIVE What explicit behaviors should you be able to observe in our lesson? "Know," "Learn," and "Understand" are NOT educational objectives because they are passive responses to the material (Bloom, 1956). "The child will select," "the child will demonstrate," "the child will synthesize" are examples of education objectives. These are active responses to the material. If a child can select, demonstrate, and articulate, you will have proof of her knowing, learning, and understanding. Depending on what happens during the class, the objective of a lesson can shift within a class period; but every lesson still needs to have an objective.

PROCEDURES What is the planned sequence of events? How will the class be paced? What materials are needed to complete the lesson? What role will the classroom teacher and/or teacher's aide play?

ASSESSMENT How will you assess your students' learning? You should assess every learning objective.

your performance in the classroom

No matter how brilliant your lesson plan is, no matter how well you know your art form, no matter what amazing projects and performances you have planned, the real art of teaching—your level of skill and talent, your intuition, instincts, guts, awareness, focus, observational powers, curiosity, passion—will be apparent the moment you step foot in the classroom.

Good teaching is ultimately a social and performative act. When you walk into the classroom, you must understand that you are performing. This does not mean you should adhere to a script, or that you need to put on airs, shout, behave in an unnaturally excited or eccentric way, or pretend to be someone wildly different from yourself. (A good actor does none of those things.) What you do have to do is have a tremendous amount of focus and awareness of what is occurring in front of you, around you, and behind you. You must be present to what your students are giving you, and you must pursue your objective with intensity and determination. This does not mean that the objective can't change at any moment during the lesson—on some days, for whatever reason, it will and that is to be expected.

The worst kind of teaching in our view occurs when there is absolutely no tension in the room. Some teachers shy away from the feeling of tension because they fear creating an uncomfortable or unsafe space, or of "putting kids on the spot." In fact, by not creating any tension in your classroom, you are opening the possibility for boredom, distraction, side conversations, and bad chaos. Creating tension does not mean you tense up yourself, or that you purposely make students feel anxious or embarrassed. It simply means that you create an interaction that is different from the interactions that students have in the hallway, at home, or on the bus. The interaction is heightened and focused on a particular objective that you and the class are pursuing together.

tips on creating good tension

- Modulate your voice.
- Freeze activity frequently to ask questions.
- Move around. Use the entire depth of field of the classroom—don't just use the horizontal line at the blackboard.
- Give positive and specific feedback to a particular person and point him or her out to the rest of the class.
- Pursue your objective.
- Use humor: don't tell dumb jokes or make fun of people, but be alive to opportunities for everyone to laugh, for lightness and physical comedy.
- Sustain eye contact with your students.

The thrust of classroom activity is to generate a thrill in exhibiting one's creative effort with commitment and energy. If the child has the energy and the commitment, you'll sense a poetic kernel in the action—sometimes transparent and emotionally moving. Catch it. Speak about it—often the child hardly realizes what he or she has done, but, on being told, will begin to discern the "how" of creativity. The clearer you are about what you want, the more flexibly you can react to these signals of creative potential because whatever comes up can be manipulated toward your objective. Don't get so locked into "your way" of achieving your objective that you can't adjust to something creative happening right in front of you. See it, build on it, link it to what you want to achieve…or change course—flow with the child's feeling and invention. Encourage the students to take risks, to trust their intuitive impulses, not to shun the absurd.

Always encourage artistic honesty—selections, movement, and voice springing from the child's own authentic feelings, not from imitation.

Develop an eye for the theatrical effect. What this really means is: learn to shut out momentarily the problematic specifics and be alert and sensitive enough to be touched by certain effects. Actively watch for them.

Channeling Energy

Gathering and directing youthful energy is a classroom challenge. Energy exists in two forms: potential (waiting to take action) and kinetic (the energy of motion.) Classwork needs both. Gross motor activity releases kinetic energy; the only problem is that occasionally it generates a kind of wild group excitement that gets out of hand. When that happens, cut the activity short and do a low-energy exercise (breathing, yoga poses, meditation).

Concentration is the organizer of potential energy. The student is waiting, alert, ready to move on cue (signal or command). This is the ideal classroom state. At the beginning of each class, find a moment to emphasize focus and concentration. Some lesson plans are dedicated entirely to the practice of focus and concentration, but you should have at least a few minutes of practice at each of these.

"Teachers basically must draw from themselves. It's your creativity, the specifics and the imagery you dream up that evokes creativity from the children."

Gloria Unti
The Workshop's Founder

Warm-ups

Remember that the purpose of warm-ups is to center your students and to set an intention for the class. Choose warm-ups that suit the particular needs of your students on that day. You should have a variety available to you in your repertoire. If you arrive at class and the students are restless, choose an activity that is calming, preferably one that involves imaginative work and slow breathing. If students seem sluggish, choose something fast-paced and energetic that works on reflexes. When in doubt, lead an exercise that gets their heart rates up—this will galvanize the sleepy and tire out the hyperactive.

Work Them Hard: The Discipline of the Discipline

Always come to class with the aim to work hard, and with the aim to have your students work hard. "Hard Work" of course can be defined in a variety of ways, but the key is to always push your students to do better, to go further, to be even more specific, take bigger risks, make unexpected choices. Do not assume they are not ready for challenges and for intensity, and do not be afraid to tell them when their choices are weak or passive or sloppy. This is probably one of the biggest mistakes of novice teachers: they feel that everything that comes from the imaginations of their students is pure and that by giving a correction or suggestion or direction with conviction they are somehow killing their students' artistic impulses. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the opposite is true—by allowing students to think of the arts class as a structured recess, we are passing over their potential to grow.

Setting Constraints

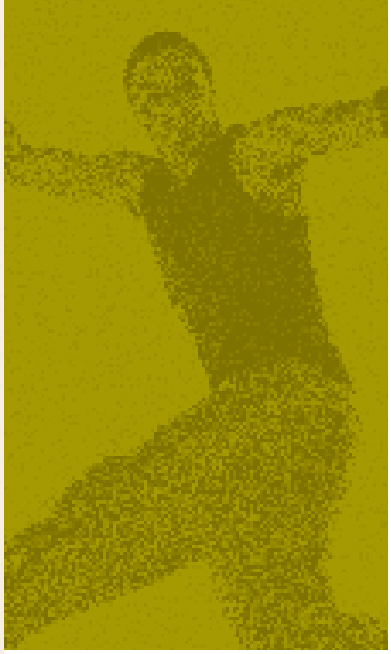
While it is important for students to have the opportunity to make choices, remember creativity flourishes best within constraints and limits. Young people need defined goals and ways to handle the creative problems they encounter. Offering a wide open field of choices often overwhelms and inhibits them. They avoid problem-solving, and instead try to get a clue from the teacher, a hint of what's wanted. State the area of exploration, specify the purpose of the problem, and get the focus narrowed down to a specific limited field. Then the child can make choices within that field.

your artistic voice in the classroom

It is important for students to understand that you are a practicing artist for a variety of reasons.

- **It makes students aware that becoming an artist is legitimate work. (Some students may have never met a working artist, or may have a vision of artists being famous people or dead people.)**
- **It shows students that you struggle with the same problems in process as they do.**
- **It gives you permission to work on your art when you are not teaching and to hold on to your identity as someone who makes art consistently, rigorously.**

In the next few chapters, we will introduce the disciplines and offer sample curricula that we feel have engaged and challenged students. However, we strongly value the teaching artists' individual voice. So use these as blueprints and make up your own curriculum. Make sure the lesson you deliver to your students is yours, that you have ownership and deep understanding of the content. In other words, don't assume you can get away with using a lesson plan that is divorced from who you are. As Performing Arts Workshop founder Gloria Unti puts it, "Teachers basically must draw from themselves. It's your creativity, the specifics and the imagery you dream up that evokes creativity from the children."



why creative movement?

Creative movement is the precursor to dance composition. The objective in creative movement is to discover the possibilities of movement, to compose original dance pieces, and to analyze the world in terms of how and why people, animals, and objects move in different ways at different moments. It is to connect the landscape of the imagination to the physical landscape, the mind to the body, the dream to the stage.

In creative movement, our aim is to select, extend, vary and modulate everyday movements and develop them through the use of imagery…and later, to set them in a sequence and to give that sequence a structure, a form of some kind, and link them to language. As the young person takes a step forward in this process, he or she also begins to observe what is happening inwardly and emotionally. This self-observation is crucial for pro-social development and is often not touched upon in the regular school curriculum, or in family life. With a structured place for physical expression, young people can begin the process of finding their kinesthetic voices. The discovery of this voice can be very important in developing emotional intelligence and appropriate physical expressions of emotions like love, attraction, sorrow, and rage. So what does creative movement have to do with the youth in our neighborhoods who show up for after-school programs? Why would any young person want to learn about different ways of moving, or think about objects or people in the world in terms of their shape, or energy, or the tempo of their movements? This might not be immediately obvious.

But as a teaching artist working in an after-school setting, you will have to find ways of drawing a bridge between the concepts you are trying to teach and the students' lives. The good news is this: whether they know it or like it, everybody's world is physical. Your students live in a rich kinesthetic world. The people around them move in particular ways for particular reasons. They see a variety of movements waiting for the bus in the morning. They already associate movements with feelings: the clutch of a fist, the collapse of the shoulders, the celebratory skip across the basketball court. They know the difference between a threatening posture and a defensive one. So what if they begin to articulate those particularities, and to distill the movements onto a stage, and then begin to analyze and uncover them? Could this process bring about keener observation and deeper analysis of the physical world around them? Could the analysis of the physical world lead to the analysis of emotions, politics, socio-economics, religion, sexuality, and oppression? Could our students begin the process of connecting the self to the world?

…as a teaching artist working in an after-school setting, you will have to find ways of drawing a bridge between the concepts you are trying to teach and the students' lives…

qualities of the discipline

When structured correctly, a Creative Movement residency can:

- **fine-tune kinesthetic awareness and hone somatic forms of expression, which can be extremely useful to a child's emotional and intellectual development;**
- **build problem-solving skills and help young people to develop imaginative reasoning with the sequencing and arranging of phrases;**
- **develop pro-social skills such as taking risks, respecting one's own body as well as the bodies of others, working in groups, physical trust, and focus and concentration.**

The body is the most constant thing in the young person's environment and consciousness. Nothing is more natural than moving the body, and the body's natural movements and sensory apparatus are the basis of the child's creative experience and learning. It is the medium through which the young person encounters the world.

Children learn by moving and they are explorers by nature. The more experiments they do, the more stimuli they receive, the more rapid is their cognitive growth—the faster they discover their own capabilities and limitations and how things and relationships work. Your function as a teacher is to provide the experiments and the stimuli.

planning the curriculum

The broad objective of your curriculum is to instill certain basic skills, the foremost of which is focus and concentration. Get the students comfortable with their bodies. For warm-ups, use motor-skills problems—especially those dealing with awareness and energy flow (inward concentration), and focus. Get the students involved with body shapes. Do things with rhythm. Begin quite early to insert creativity problems, such as animating the inanimate and other problems calling on the imagination. Begin from the outset the practice of brief post-problem discussions. Lay the groundwork for the habit of analysis.

Once you have established focus and concentration and the students are used to using their bodies, you may proceed to the rudiments of drama. Introduce the students to the concepts of objectives, obstacles, and givens.

After you have constructed your curriculum, you may want to ask: Does it ask the right questions? Have you created the opportunity for creative selections? Are the students engaged in problem-solving? Are they using their heads?

One can work off a good class plan for a long time—deleting, adding, returning to repeat with variations those problems that seem most to stimulate the children. Cognitive activity is promoted by the unexpected, but it isn't necessary to be continuously novel in each session. Young people do need repetition to absorb things conceptually and physically. The sense of repetition can be avoided by changing the class form.

space

Divide your given area into the following spaces:

HOME SPACE For assembly, physical quiet, intimacy between students and teacher, previews of what's about to happen, concentration, small isolation exercises, quieting after excitement, departures and returns.

DANCE SPACE The greater part of the room, the area of action, of trials and efforts, chiefly in motor control and traveling movements—usually the whole class but with personal inward concentration.

THEATER SPACE For problem-solving—the first step towards communication in an art form. Those onstage are PLAYERS.

AUDIENCE For observation and analysis, encouragement, applause. Those in the audience are WATCHERS.

composition & improvisation

Begin the residency with simple problems within the child's capabilities—problems that are fun to solve and that contain the basic elements of dance: the body, energy, space, and time. Although you will do various exercises for specific reasons (motor skills, concentration, and rhythm) the core of your work is to provide actual experiences in creativity. Plan these experiences in sequences of related exercises. Young people will learn better from a variety of problems in a single category than from fewer problems in more categories.

If you invent your own situations, devise them for fluctuation among individual, small group, or large group formats. For young children, plan simple situations, like a hunting animal, or a child entering an imaginary rope swung by two others. If the young person is to be an inanimate object, be sure to make a selection he or she can identify with. Food is a good example. Any child who's tried to eat spaghetti has vivid feelings about its "quality of movement."

Other examples are… a feather floating in the wind… a rope slithering down off a table… a sheet flapping in the breeze on a clothesline.

A bulk of the creative movement class will come from the spontaneous choices of action, shape, or movement the child comes up with. The key is to structure the class so that students have the opportunity to express themselves through their shapes.

Remember that children are stimulated by the unexpected, the incongruous. It excites and provokes investigation. Avoid the predictable, the routine. But use the bizarre with discretion; that which is totally without reference points in the child's experience may create anxiety and become a source of impotence.

6 steps in composition & improvisation

Animals provide for a favorite series of problems. Some teachers, however, do no better with animals than with clouds. One teacher asked her children to "be a snake." The children did the obvious: lay on their bellies and wriggled. There was no creativity involved, merely a formless stereotype.

The teacher then, quite rightly, tried to stimulate her students with more information. She discussed different kinds of snakes—rattlers, cobras, garter snakes, pythons. Once again she offered the problem: "Be a snake." Once again they lay down and squirmed on their bellies.

What was wrong? The teacher hadn't given the children information about the behavior of the snake, of an individual specific snake in a specific place in a specific condition. "The snake is hanging from a low tree branch, hungry, waiting for a victim. A little bird flies in and perches on a twig just above. Carefully, smoothly the snake curls its body back up to prepare for an attack. Just when it's ready to strike, the bird flies off. The snake drops back down to wait…"

STEP 1 **"Be a Cloud" or "Be a Snake" is not bad if it's Step 1, followed by these steps:**

STEP 2 **Verbalize. Talk about the quality of the animal's movement. Use words like "lumbering," "slinky," and "lithe," "vibrating" and "darting."**

STEP 3 **Assign a body part whose motion typifies the animal, a part that expresses the whole or serves as a metaphor for the creature. "Be the ear of an elephant," or the trunk, tusks, foot. "Feel like part of that huge elephant body when you move." If the child is quite creative he or she will mentally add a fly or wasp to motivate an ear motion, but if help is needed, the teacher should give such details.**

STEP 4 **Think of the environment, a major given. It will affect movement. Is it day? Night? Dusty? Windy? Raining? Steep? Dense Foliage? Stony?**

STEP 5 **Give the animal an objective: to hunt, catch, eat, hide, rest, preen, and an obstacle to hamper the pursuit of that objective (usually something in the environment—or danger of attack, sometimes a physical disability, an injury… etc.).**

STEP 6 **Devise a scenario with a beginning, middle, and end.**

Express the general through the particular. Basic qualities are best suggested by specific, purposeful actions. The child's creative task, given the parameters of objectives, obstacles and givens, is to invent those actions.

Once students have grasped the idea of seeking particulars, they can advance to problems that demand more independent creativity—problems of this sort, for example: "Be two different animals and take actions that will give the feeling of their body weights." A constraint: they must be two heavy animals, rather than an elephant versus a chipmunk. This constraint makes cartooning hard. To make the distinction between a bear and a gorilla, a moose and a rhinoceros, it is necessary to be specific and precise—and to invent an actual situation for each beast.

behavior & content management

Be extra vigilant in structuring a physically and emotionally safe environment for your students. As stated earlier in this manual, remind students each class of community rules. Make sure the space that you have is conducive to dancing. Contact the site administrator if you don't have enough space, of if there are objects like precariously stacked cafeteria tables leaning on the walls, or permanently opened supply closets inviting exploration.

Some groups in after-school settings may not be ready to move right away for whatever reasons. You may have to begin your curriculum with very slow and easy breathing and focus exercises.

The behavior problems that occur most often in heavily physical arts classes are the giggly-silly sort. Giggling is fine if you can pull in the focus, but if you can't, the class can quickly devolve into chaos. For younger students (K-5) the drum works well to punctuate your directions and can create healthy responsive tension.

If inappropriate content comes up in any class, make quick decisions with confidence. In most cases your choice will be to either:

- **Nip any inappropriate material (overtly sexual, violent, drug-related, or "bathroom" humor) in the bud by asking the student to have a seat or leave the room;**

or

- **Use their examples to demonstrate your concept without giving the student the negative attention he or she is most likely craving.**

Whatever you decide, avoid getting hysterical, personal, or emotionally involved with any situation.

Stop any exercise that you notice is devolving into bad chaos.

Course Objective

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the fundamentals of dance composition by composing original pieces; they will articulate elements and qualities of their own and each other's movements and movements they observe in the world.

WEEK 1 Focus & Concentration

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • demonstrate understanding of two kinds of concentration: outward and inward.**
WARM-UP	Listening to sounds of the room (how many sounds are there?).
EXERCISE	Run and Freeze (shifting points of focus and concentrating in silence and stillness).
DISCUSSION	Why do we need focus and concentration? How do we know it when we see it, do it?

Week 2 Loosening Up the Breath & Body

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • connect their own movements and breath to their own sensations.**
WARM-UP	Breath and movement work (use drum to cut off various combinations of movement and breath).
EXERCISE	Give various exercises that change movement and breath (laughing like a mechanical doll, whispering, screaming).
DISCUSSION	How does your moving change your breath and vice versa? How does your breath change your feelings?

WEEK 3 Qualities of Movement

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • perform, identify, and articulate various qualities of movement.**
WARM-UP	Run and Freeze varying qualities of movement (lumbering, wavy, staccato).
EXERCISE	Animal modeling (use qualities of movement and move to representative body parts).
DISCUSSION	What are different ways that animals, people, and objects move? What changes the quality of movement?

WEEK 4 Contour, Level, Line, Range

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • perform, identify, and articulate variety of shapes, levels, lines and range.**
WARM-UP	Run and Freeze using a variety of locomotive movements, on freeze, vary shapes, levels, lines, range.
EXERCISE	In pairs, have students come up with contrasting shapes, levels, lines, ranges.
DISCUSSION	What animals have high levels? What have low levels? What have middle levels? (Do same for contour, lines, range…use inanimate objects.)

WEEK 5 Pantomime, Animating the Inanimate,Collective Creations

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • perform and describe qualities of movements of inanimate objects. • work in groups to impersonate one object.**
WARM-UP	Students enact and vocalize various inanimate objects (leaky faucet, chair, typewriter).
EXERCISE	The Four-Part Machine (groups of four players select object with four moving parts and perform using sound effects).
DISCUSSION	What makes the machine realistic or not realistic to watch?

WEEK 6 Justifying Movements (& Stillness)

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **perform and identify various ways of justifying movements and pauses.**

WARM-UP Run and Freeze: Give students actions; they invent and perform justifications.

EXERCISE Give students scenarios in which they have to justify movements—have them invent scenarios in groups.

DISCUSSION Why do animals or characters move differently in different situations? How do you make it look like your movement is justified?

WEEK 7 Objectives, Obstacles, Givens

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **invent, identify, and perform specific objectives, obstacles, and givens, and will demonstrate understanding of concepts.**
- **solve problems in scenes with objectives, obstacles, and givens.**

WARM-UP Give various scenarios with physical objectives, obstacles, and givens.

EXERCISE In groups: students come up with endings to scenes (how will you make it across a rushing river without falling?). Givens could be: you have a rope, there are slippery rocks at the bottom of the river, etc.

DISCUSSION Which of the players were truly pursuing their objectives? How can you tell? How can we make the scenes look more realistic or believable?

WEEK 8 Composition: Movement Invention, Phrasing in Time and Space, Feeling for Phrases

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **demonstrate understanding of phrasing.**
- **compose phrases according to "inner impulses," and "inner-timing."**
- **respond to phrases of others.**

WARM-UP Students move body part in full extension as you call them out.

EXERCISE Challenge students to come up with movement combinations, phrases. Revise, stressing high-energy points. Play with energy.

DISCUSSION Was there much difference between the first and second time around? Did it get more interesting? Did it seem like a phrase with feeling?

WEEK 9 Composition: Theme & Variations

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **identify, invent, and perform phrases with themes and variations.**

WARM-UP Select music that has clear and obvious phrasing. Explain the structure of the phrases—increases and decreases in musical volume, accelerations, accents. Have students improvise freely to the music, improvising combinations.

EXERCISE In groups of three, give students a theme and have them create variations on that theme. Let each player choose any locomotive movement and invent four variations.

DISCUSSION What were the themes? Did any of the variations seem disconnected to its themes?

WEEK 10 Rhythm & Sound

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **perform and identify various rhythms and sounds.**

WARM-UP Learn a beat. Have students count aloud to a beat and accent the downbeat with various body parts. Pass drum from child to child. Child beats out the syllables of his or her name (Ga-ry-Dra-per).

EXERCISE Students walk to the music, zigzagging or improvising floor patterns, but always accenting the downbeat. Preselect music with obvious four-beat. Without coaching, let the children find the beat and clap to it. Shift to double-time. With three pairs of players: combine rhythms and perform.

DISCUSSION Did your peers keep rhythm? How would you describe the rhythm?

WEEK 11 Living Masks

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **perform variety of "masks".**
- **brainstorm stereotypes, and identify "cartoon" vs. "realistic" masks.**

WARM-UP Do variety of facial warm-ups, isolating parts of the face.

EXERCISE Set up problems that juxtapose feelings and emotions (through quality of movement) and the feelings or emotions of masks.

DISCUSSION What feeling did you get from watching a face that said one thing and a body that contradicted it? Did you believe the face more than the body?

WEEK 12 The Stage, Travel Paths, Floor Patterns

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **demonstrate understanding of stage geography and will move along the floor in given and original travel paths.**

WARM-UP Simple warm-ups around above concepts.

EXERCISE Give students series of problems to solve using various floor patterns and travel paths.

DISCUSSION Why do you think it's important to know stage geography and travel paths? How do you think professionals use them?

WEEK 13 Composition: Structure

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **identify, compose, and perform simple compositional forms (A-B-A).**

WARM-UP Have players improvise a simple A-B-A piece as you call out the elements.

EXERCISE In groups, students invent compositions in the A-B-A form. Groups perform in turn.

DISCUSSION Analyze each composition in terms of A-B-A. What punctuated each section?

WEEK 14 Texts & Stories

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **interpret text and story with movement.**

WARM-UP Call out words and have student associate words with movement.

EXERCISE Have students read a story or poem. Identify possible movements that tell the story.

DISCUSSION How did the text add to the movement? Could the movement stand on its own without the text? What if we eliminated the text and added music? How does the story change when the words are added or taken away?

WEEK 15 Demonstration/Reflection

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **perform revised versions of their compositions.**

WARM-UP Students' choice/Last Run and Freeze.

EXERCISE Mini-demonstration of compositions or pieces.

DISCUSSION Analysis of each composition. Reflection on moments of surprise, lyricism, or intensity of emotion. What did I learn from this class? How did I change?

lesson title:
justifying actions

OBJECTIVE Students will

- **identify, select, and perform justifications for actions.**

MATERIALS Space, journals.

WARM-UP Emotive Actions

NOTE Conduct this warm-up with maximum voice dynamics, using contrast, anticipation, tension. Give a series of actions (sit, lie down, stretch, stand-up, walk to a new position, hold still, run-in place, stop, walk to a new spot and hold still, etc.). Have students listen and follow cue (of drum).

main activity

Problem #1

Halve the class up. Space them a few feet apart. Call out a series of simple, every day movements to do: Stretch...twist...bend...rise...turn...collapse...roll...sit...Good.

Now, stand up and stretch to get something off a top shelf...twist to see who's behind you...collapse and faint to the floor...roll and jump up, ready to dodge a ball.

Repeat with other half of the class. Call out different movements and different justifications.

Problem #2

Now have students come up with their own justifications.

Give a sequence: Lie down, stretch, bend, rise.

Tell them to perform the movements justifying the sequence.

(Come up with a variety of sequences to justify...vary level of complexity.)

DISCUSSION **What was the justification, the "why" of the sequence?**

Problem #3

Repeat sequences above, but this time, insert a pause in the middle of the sequence. Have students justify moments of stillness.

DISCUSSION **Did the pause seem justified? Why or why not?**

Problem #4

Divide the class into groups of five-seven.

SCENE COMPOSITION Character does the following:

- Walks out of restaurant
- Stops suddenly
- Looks across the street
- Turns and takes a step
- Turns either left or right
- Walks off fast

There are six small actions. Each one has a justification. (Give ten minutes to work in groups.)

REFLECTION **Who could guess why the character walked out? Why did he or she stop to look across the street? Why turn back and then turn and walk off?**

REVISION Each group revises piece.

why
world dance?

In these times, our children must grow up as global citizens. It is no longer possible to be exclusively an American, an African, an Asian, a European, or an Islander. It is important to learn to understand and respect the rich diversity of the world's cultures.

planning the curriculum

In addition to learning traditional movements, combinations, and techniques, an excellent instructor should ask: What can we learn from studying this form of dance? What philosophy or norms and values and unique aspects of the culture are evident or are consciously or unconsciously represented in the movements? What is the social history of this dance form? How did it evolve? What are its roots and influences? Who were the first people to create this dance? Is it a marginalized form? What kinds of issues or points of conflict exist in the practice of the dance? (For example, one of our after-school instructors spends an afternoon discussing the dichotomy of the glorification of violence and empowerment in popular hip hop.)

Know the Form

Make sure you know the form you're about to teach. This does not mean that you have to be an award-winning practitioner, but it does mean that you should be able to articulate and perform the fundamentals. However, don't be afraid to try new things and diversify your repertoire as a dance teacher—the more versatile you are, the more knowledge and understanding you have of the possibilities of movement, the better your classes will be for you and your students. As with all teachers, it's very important for us to frequently put ourselves in the shoes of our students by constantly learning new things ourselves. Take a class. Talk to different kinds of dancers. If possible, ask them to come in as "experts".

Media and Realia

Use visual aids, texts, stories, newspaper articles, interviews, costumes, music, and other media to discuss and bring to light various aspects of the dance and culture. Do not be shy about bringing your own work into the class (live performances or video) to use as demonstrations and/or springboards for discussion. Use music that is relevant to the dance form. If you are teaching a dance form like hip hop, try and find music that students don't necessarily hear every day on the radio—this will expand their horizons and help them see the scope and range of the form. Remember that the choice of music will inform the movements. Show how the same movement, series of moves, or choreography can change completely according to the music you choose.

composition & improvisation

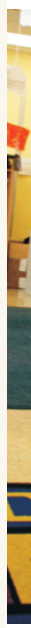
In our view, studying a specific form of dance does not have to end (or begin) at the mimicking of movements, or with a heavy emphasis on technique. Although the study of a specific kind of world dance means the serious engagement with the rules of those movements, the teacher should incorporate aspects of composition and improvisation within the structure of the form. A child's ability to perform a pastiche of a movement or phrase is a good way of evaluating his understanding of the qualities of that particular form and style, maybe even more so than his ability to memorize steps and combinations.

Whenever possible, have your students create movement phrases by selecting a series of movements and creating varying sequences of the individual's moves and exploring ideas of repetition, flow, quality of movements, and the use of emotion.

qualities
of the discipline

Body movement, along with sound-making, is the most ancient and basic mode of communication. Emerging humanity devised ways of hunting, food cultivation, warfare, individual and social behavior; dances were created out of these activities. They were functional. They taught the required skills and rehearsed the required actions. They energized, empowered, and united the dancers in pursuit of a goal or in celebration of successful outcomes.

Early humanity also invented mythologies to explain natural phenomena—the heavenly bodies that move across the sky, the rain, snow, wind and thunder, the flow of the river, the sea storm, the seasonal changes of plant life; then, too, the biological changes of the human life cycle and the mystery of death. All was attributed to numerous gods and spirits. These beliefs produced another kind of dance, oriented toward influencing the invisible beings that seemed to control human destinies. Such dances combined praise, prayer, ritual, and the beginnings of drama.



This will teach them about phrasing, punctuation, articulation, and other aspects of dance while giving them the opportunity to compose and problem-solve. Have them choose their own music and choreograph their own dances. Make sure there are opportunities for improvisation and freestyle where students have the chance to perform their own moves, or riff on pieces they have learned. Students are usually eager to "freestyle," so it's best if you use this activity at the beginning of the class as a way of creating positive energy, or at the end of class as a reward.

Reflection and Revision

Make sure the configuration of the class includes the opportunity for students to analyze and critique each other's work, whether the critique is about technique, compositional choices, or lyricism. Make sure that the audience has a specific role—to watch for attributes of their peers' work. The class can be extremely dull if the dynamic is "follow-the-leader," and the emphasis is purely on aerobics, flexibility, coordination, or the ability to imitate movements. In dance, the voice is the inner quality that motivates the movement. Watch for that inner quality in your individual students and point it out to the rest of the class when you see it.

Sometimes the culture of a site will not permit a lot of singling out of students, even if that singling is about giving praise. Discuss this issue with the site administrator and adjust the way you give praise accordingly.

In dance, the voice is the inner quality that motivates the movement. Watch for that inner quality in your individual students and point it out to the rest of the class when you see it.

Bodies

Do not leave out athleticism. Spirits, focus, and energy-levels all increase with heart rates. The instrument of dance is the body and students should learn to care for it and respect it properly. Be aware of various body issues that may be present in the class. Also, be aware of gender-dynamics and find creative solutions in case problems arise in terms of partnering and grouping. All groups are different and some classes and age levels will be more sensitive to such issues than others. Make sure you talk to your students about the benefits of healthy eating, stretching, and drinking water. Suggest healthy snack alternatives to junk food.

Performance

While it's not imperative that your class culminate in a live performance, events can motivate young people to come back every week and to keep the focus while in class. If you do decide to have a performance at some point in the residency, remind students about it every week. Many students may not have any experience in performance, and so may not have a full understanding of the importance of rehearsals and practice. Although performance is part of the learning process, a polished product should not be your main goal.

behavior & content management

Structure

It is important for all dance classes in an after-school setting to be tightly structured. The standards for behavior should be as high as you can possibly set them. As with all classes that involve an element of physical risk, set up the constraints, rituals, expectations, and rules on the first day and be consistent about enforcing them.

Although your lesson will most likely shift depending on the dynamics of the group and the day, make sure you have a goal for the class.

Experimentation

If you find your lessons are resulting in chaos or total disengagement, do not be afraid to insert other kinds of physical games and competitions into the class and introduce techniques or concepts of the dance form gradually. The first step in any dance class is to engage students physically with warm-ups. If all else fails and you are only able to get the students on their feet and moving a little, at least you are on the right path. Remember that different groups are going to respond to your lessons in different ways, so do not be discouraged if you encounter resistance. Make adjustments. Find one element or activity that students enjoy and find ways of expanding it, broadening it and transitioning it into lessons that are more central to the dance form. The most important thing is for YOU to be on task and aware, and to meet your students where they are and slowly push them forward.

Assign Roles

Place students in leadership positions. Give certain students the task of teaching others combinations or movements. This will bring the group together and will help keep the material alive, especially for the students who have been there every week and are reluctant to practice the same combinations. It will also keep those who enjoy performing visible and engaged.

Remember that by signing on to teach after school, you are signing on to teach in an environment that is anathema to the qualities inherent in a professional dance company—and to the qualities that you may be used to as a career dancer. The reality is that in these after-school sites there will be inconsistent attendance, and varying levels of focus because of the reality of violence, poverty, poor nutrition, and other trauma that many of the youth face every day. But the young people also have a visceral need to dance and to use their bodies to express themselves. Try and capitalize on that need and experiment with ways of releasing and harnessing it.
If you can get the youth to understand the power of their own artistic potential, they will eventually begin to adjust to the demands of the discipline.

sample curriculum: world dance hip hop

Course Objectives

WEEKS 1 to 15	Students will	• explore the fundamentals of hip hop dance technique.
WEEKS 1 to 4	Students will	• perform pre-choreographed dances.
WEEKS 5 to 15	Students will	• invent and perform their own combinations.
WEEKS 5 to 15	Students will	• give detailed critiques and analyses of their own work in dance class as well as the work of their peers.

WEEK 1 Why Do We Dance? Basics of a Dance Class

DISCUSSION	Introductions, clarify roles and course expectations. Define goals of warm-ups, traveling through space, and choreography.
WARM-UP	Discuss purpose and importance of warm-ups, how warming up can prevent physical injury. Basic steps: as well as warming the students up, simple side or turning steps will awaken dancers and give them the confidence they need to stay focused on the class. Keeping the first class fun and easy is crucial so that dancers get motivated.
STRETCHING	Begin working on the idea of initiation points (for example: "in a body roll, lead with the head", or "in this side stretch, lead with your finger tips"). Isolations: In the first few classes and especially with beginners, always come back to "center" during isolations. This will help align students to their "center line".
ACROSS THE FLOOR	Simply have students walk through the floor pattern of a diagonal, as well as move across the floor in parallel lines with a partner or in groups of 3 or 4. Having students respect their trajectory in order not to cross over in someone else's line is crucial to the prevention of accidents.
CHOREOGRAPHY	Choose a song that you know students will love and connect to. Teach them a simple "2 eight" count combination, then divide the class in two. Students will learn how to alternate between being an audience member and a performer. Immediately engage the audience in applause, so that dancers feel supported and motivated to perform.

WEEK 2 Delimitating Space

DISCUSSION — How to place oneself in space when moving with a group. Define floor patterns in which students will move during the various exercises.

WARM-UP — Before starting the warm-ups, you need to place the students in a logical pattern so that every dancer has space to move. Delimitating space is very necessary during the class as well as during the performance. Not only do students have a better sight of the teacher, but they also learn how to organize themselves spatially.

SIMPLE WARM-UPS — Side-to-side/turning steps with simple arm movements to get the heart pumping, isolations (head, shoulders, rib cage side to side), finishing with stretches (emphasize the toe/ankle/knee/hip alignments. Do not let students stretch over an oddly twisted ankle or knee. You may be the first person to engage the students in this kind of body awareness, so please repeat alignment advice constantly. If students are holding a shape, walk around the space correcting movers individually.

ACROSS THE FLOOR — Simple "chassés" alternating leading with the right foot then the left, reinforcing the concept of following a pre-designed floor pattern. Groups will travel across the floor in parallel lines, leaving every eight count. A double clap on the "and one" will give dancers an audio cue as to when they need to go. Keep in mind some of the movers still don't recognize their right from their left.

CHOREOGRAPHY — Add 2 eight count to the combination previously learned.

REVISION — Take a brief moment after each performing group to enhance various qualities, pushing the dancers to "step it up" every time they come back to the performing space. Work on maintaining a positive tension in the classroom.

DISCUSSION — Give dancers memory tips as to how to remember a dance sequence. Discuss "memo tips"; how they help to remember a phrase, and how these techniques can help in all other subjects too.

WEEK 3 Reinforcing Class Rules & Patterns

WARM-UP — Add new steps (ex: right foot crosses in front of left, back to center, alternate, then right foot crosses behind the left, back to center and alternate), Isolations: continue returning to center, Stretches: continue working on initiating points and students joint alignment, add push-ups and abs at the end of your warm-up.

ACROSS THE FLOOR — See if students have memorized the floor pattern that you have been following for the past two weeks. Being clear with your directions will only enhance their independence.

CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION — Review the "4 eight" combination. Add alternating skipping ("one eight") and freezing into a shape ("one eight") before starting the combination. Give some time for each dancer to find their own "cool shapes" that they will want to freeze in.

WEEK 4 Exploring Space

DISCUSSION — Explore space by the following vocabulary words: high, above, low, under, saggital, horizontal, frontal, diagonal.

WARM-UP — Steps: introduce more complicated arm/leg coordination, play with level changes (for example, shoulders swinging from side to side like a bell). Isolations: continue to return to center but diversify the pace, Stretches, Push-ups and Abs. Always keep an eye on dancers making sure they're not unconsciously harming their bodies.

ACROSS THE FLOOR — Differentiating right from left, (for example: Chassés, leading with the right leg. Chassés, leading with left leg. Chassés alternating, double to the right, double to the left.)

CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION — Review the "4 eight" combination #1. Add alternating skipping and freezing. This time you can add difficulty by asking dancers to change levels every time they freeze. You can also switch up the pace. Freeze for 4, skip for 4. Freeze for 2, skip for 2. Give a signal like the "5, 6, 7, 8!" countdown for dancers to face the audience and begin the combination.

DISCUSSION — Ask dancers to recall vocabulary to define space.

WEEK 5 Free-style

WARM-UP

Basic Warm-up, engage students in the notion of double-time, doing an eight count of slow motion before crying out "double-time!" and having dancers repeat the same movements but twice as fast. Repeat until you cannot go any faster.

This exercise will give an opportunity to students to get the movement in their bodies at a slow pace before they perform it at a fast pace. It also gives them a feel for the "eight count", and sensing "the one". This can be done with your various steps as well as with isolations. This tempo variation keeps the students alert and focused.

ACROSS THE FLOOR

Engage students in moving across the floor at different paces. "Chassés" can be done slow and heavy, and then fast and bouncy. Teach new traveling steps like the "grapevine".

CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION

Teach a new combination. Integrate different paces within the choreography: at times moving very slowly, at times moving fast.

CIRCLE

End class with an improvisation or "free-style". Give the students a specific objective (for example: "I want to see a slow motion moment and a fast motion moment in your dance"). You can do the circle at the end of all good classes as a reward to your students. Change the objective of the free-style in correlation to the elements studied in class.

DISCUSSION

Free-style dancing. Have they seen it before? Where? Why is free-style important? Why is technique important? How can they enhance one another?

WEEK 6 Quality of Movement & Pace

WARM-UP

Make the warm-up playful by having students lead. Have them recall movements learned with you, then come up with their own moves.

ACROSS THE FLOOR

Choose music that includes binary and ternary rhythms. Find adequate traveling steps like the "triplet" on the ternary beat, and the "chassé" on the binary.

COMPOSITION & COMPOSITION

Review new combination, then divide group into smaller pods and have them play with changing the pace of a sequence. Discuss how changing the duration of a movement can influence the quality of the step.

Exercise idea for a more advanced group: Select different phrases from the combination with the intent to transform its pacing. (For ex: The first eight count slow motion, taking double the time to perform a movement, so that the first eight becomes 2 eights. Then the 3rd eight could be performed double time and repeated twice. The 2nd and 4th eight would be performed as was.)

With a very beginning group, you could lead the class to performing the whole combination at a very slow pace ("like moving in mud"), then at a medium pace (the one they have been working on), and finishing with a very fast pace ("as if they were about to miss the bus and had to move as fast as possible"). You can then call out the various tempos and have the dancers respond immediately by changing the pace of their movement.

DISCUSSION

What tempo did they like best and why?

WEEK 7 Incorporating Sounds

DISCUSSION

How can sounds enhance a dance?

WARM-UP

Continue the various warm-up activities such as steps, isolations, upper/lower body coordination, stretches, push-ups and abs.

Add a rhythm sequence at the end of your warm-up which includes clapping, finger snapping, stomping and "body beats".

ACROSS THE FLOOR

Add clapping or finger snapping to your traveling steps. Or create a rhythmical pattern that can move across the floor. With some beginner classes, a simple "step right, clap, step left, and clap" sequence can prove difficult. Patience and repetition are keys to success.

CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION

Review combination. Have students create their own "sound-effect" phrase. You may be surprised with their creativity, as this activity has been very popular during school breaks for a long time. If the students are well-behaved, they can add voice effects to their "movement and sound" choreography.

DISCUSSION

The origin and evolution of body beats.

WEEK 8 Dissociation & Rhythm

WARM-UP	Lead students through a challenging rhythmical warm-up, changing pace, accentuations and levels frequently. See if you can engage students in dissociating different body parts into different tempos and at the same time. Review your rhythm pattern.
ACROSS THE FLOOR	Review all 8 weeks' traveling phrases.
CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION	Review combination #2; call it "segment A". Review your rhythm pattern, call it "segment B". Have groups review their "sound effect combo", call it "segment C". Have dancers perform their 3 segments in the order of their choice.
DISCUSSION	Synchronicity & what effect it can have on an audience.

WEEK 9 Quality of Movement

WARM-UP	In addition to all the previous steps, add the simplest forms of undulations to your warm-up, beginning with the "snake", lateral or frontal wave initiated by the head; the "worm", saggital wave initiated by the rib cage; and the "ripple", saggital wave initiated by the pelvis.
ACROSS THE FLOOR	Now that students know and have assimilated ground rules for traveling across the floor, you can engage in more physical activities, like "running and leaping", or "running and sliding". Give freedom to students to invent their own dramatic leaps. Praise the risk-takers but often reinforce security rules (Like not crossing over into someone else's line, landing with an awareness of the ankle/knee suspension system through alignment and "plié"...).
CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION	Teach new phrase. Include isolations, coordination, and undulations taught in your warm-up. Emphasize quality of movement. Different sections can be sharp, grounded, bouncy, relaxed, internally or externally projected.
DISCUSSION	Different qualities of movement: Do we all have a natural penchant towards one in particular? If yes, what would that one be? What is the benefit of working on a quality of movement that doesn't seem natural or easy?

WEEK 10 Interpretation & Creativity

DISCUSSION	Briefly discuss a dancer's personal expression within the phrase.
WARM-UP	Add to the difficulty and originality of steps. Begin to teach side to side, front to back, all around and figures of eight isolations without stopping at the center. Play with pace changes, level changes, continue working on the fluidity of the waves or undulations, add the "dolphin", make the series of stretches, push-ups and abs more challenging. Engage students in simple breaking moves.
ACROSS THE FLOOR	Put together fun and creative traveling sequences that give space to dancers own interpretation and creativity. Give multiple choices within the sequence (For example: the leap can be a "360" or an "imaginary skate board grab", or a "grand jeté", like an airplane leap).
CHOREOGRAPHY & COMPOSITION	Review combination. Go over the different qualities of each movement. Have students perform in smaller groups. Give some time to each dancer to find their own voice within the phrase. Have them perform for each other.
DISCUSSION	Discuss the meaning of "personal interpretation" of a combination. What would it be like if we all moved in exactly the same way?

WEEK 11 Partnering & Inversions

DISCUSSION	Briefly discuss elements of partnering and inversions: Counter-weight, focus, safety precautions, core-strength, trust, and letting-go.
WARM-UP	Give more personal corrections and valuable keys to dancers on how they can better their technique. If possible, integrate deriving forms of music and moving to your warm-up such as African dancing, house, and dance-hall.
ACROSS THE FLOOR	Review all traveling steps. Discuss importance of physicality and physical engagement in order to be able to perform all these moves across the floor. Put some time aside to experience with partnering and inversions. (Safety of students can be at risk during these exercises even though they seem to adore these activities. Use mats if possible and give clear directions.)

CHOREOGRAPHY Review combination #3. Go over importance of quality of movement and personal interpretation. Give some time to dancers to insert tricks such as breaking, partnering, inversions, and leaps.

DISCUSSION & COMPOSITION What is important to remember when working with a partner? When and why does it work and look good?

WEEK 12 Reviewing

WARM-UP Ask students to recall all steps, isolations, upper/lower coordination, undulations, rhythms, stretches, push-ups, abs, floor work, breaking moves, learned during the residency so that they can continue doing the warm-ups on their own time.

CHOREOGRAPHY Go directly into the review of the three combinations. Help students recall all of their choreographic input in regards to level, pace and quality of movement changes, shapes/poses, breaking moves, and partnering.

DISCUSSION What does it mean to be a professional dancer? Would anyone want to choose that career path?

WEEK 13 Composing

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **integrate focus, expression, and unity into performance and to identify it in work.**

COMPOSITION Guide and supervise students, piecing together all elements learned and rehearsed during the residency. Be sure to change/play with: different facings/ levels/qualities, interesting entries/ exits, sound effects, synchronicity/ successions.

WEEK 14 Rehearsing

Rehearse the composition piece; go over synchronicity of group moments, fluidity of entries and exits, personal interpretation of phrases and projection.

WEEK 15 What Have I Learned, How Have I Grown?

Perform and analyze compositional pieces. Discuss or write analysis of performance, including areas of strength and weaknesses.

- What did you learn, like, dislike during this 15-Week Process?
- What are you going to take home with you?
- What were your favorite moments?

world dance
discussion topics

World Dance crosses boundaries of culture and art and goes beyond technique and skill. As a result, many artists find that culturally-grounded discussions deepen student understanding of the art form that they are learning. Opportunities for such conversation often surface in class. What do you do with those opportunities? Where do you take the conversation? Below are some discussion questions that our Hip Hop artists have found useful in their work with youth.

- **What is the relationship between Hip Hop & fashion?**
- **What is the role of women in Hip Hop today? How about fifteen years ago?**
- **How has Hip Hop evolved as street culture?**
- **How is Hip Hop connected to other dance forms?**
- **What is the relationship between Hip Hop & race?**
- **Hip Hop and other Variant/Emerging Dance Forms (i.e., Break Dancing, House Dancing, Dance Hall, Crumping)**
- **Hip Hop & Community (Hip Hop's role in arts communities)**
- **What is the relationship between Hip Hop & capitalism &/or materialism?**
- **What does it mean to be a professional Hip Hop dancer?**
- **Hip hop & Social Change**

world dance

4 sample lesson plans

The following are four sample lesson plans for artist/teachers teaching World Dance. These are generic lesson plans and may be used in the curriculum of any World Dance residency.

1 introduce the culture

OBJECTIVES

Students will

- demonstrate understanding of a country—its geography, people, culture, etc.
- practice outward and inward concentration.
- tell a story through dance.
- explore movements, rhythms, and songs specific to the people and country being studied.

PROCEDURES

1. Introduce country to students. Show map of country. Discuss major landforms and how people's movement is affected by their environment.
2. Show photographs, video of country, representative regalia of the culture.
3. Demonstrate dances specific to the country.
4. Set conditions for outward and inward concentration by directing students to move, stop, start, change elevation and take direction in response to voice, music, drum, cues, etc. Use rhythms, music, cultural cues unique to the culture being studied.
5. Set specific environments from the country to be studied. Direct students to use imagery to move according to the particular constraints of these environments, e.g., walk as if carrying a load up a steep mountain; move your body as if you were on a boat rocking on the high seas; thread your way through a crowd of people without touching any of them.
6. Closure: remind students that the movements practiced are the real movements of people belonging to the culture to be studied and that dance tells a story and has its origin in ceremony and ritual.

2 introduce movement

OBJECTIVES

Students will

- demonstrate understanding of concentration both in outward and inward forms.
- isolate body parts to specific World rhythms.
- move as animals and/or human characters unique to the culture studied, with emphasis on the quality of movement generic to the character.
- discuss and explore space relationships and patterns.

PROCEDURES

1. Direct students to concentrate on various objects in the room. Define these objects as the focus. Direct students to change their focus. Direct students to change their body shapes and height levels while maintaining concentration on a focus.
2. Teachers introduce World rhythms through hands, percussive instruments, taped music, etc. Direct students to imitate the rhythms by clapping, stamping, body pulsations.
3. Direct students to isolate movement in response to rhythms using specific body parts, i.e., moving hip, head, shoulder.
4. Direct students to move in a defined space in rhythm— using specific body parts in isolation or in combination, e.g., move in a diagonal, swinging the arms and head in different rhythms.
5. Teacher introduces characters, animals or human, unique to a World folktale by using visual illustrations and by demonstrating the characters through dance. The specific qualities of each character are discussed.
6. Direct students to create movements as if they were these characters. Discuss the attributes of each character.
7. Teach students geometric patterns, e.g., zig-zag, circle, square, on the floor. Direct students to move according to specific geometric patterns, i.e., move in a square, change to a circle, now move in a zig-zag pattern, etc.
8. Direct students to assume an animal or human character. Direct individual students to move their character in a defined spatial pattern.
9. Students discuss and critique the "performances" viewed in terms of character, quality and space patterns.

3 learn a traditional dance, rhythm & song

OBJECTIVES

Students will
- perform a traditional World dance.

PROCEDURES

1. Introduce students to the origins of a specific dance. Discuss the environment and the qualities of movement born from that environment.
2. Tell the students the story line of the dance.
3. Discuss the characters represented in the story. Discuss the qualities or attributes of these characters and the reflection of these in movement.
4. Teach students specific hand gestures.
5. Teach students to hear specific rhythms. Direct students to make these rhythms with hands, feet, and/or percussive instruments.
6. Introduce traditional songs that are related to the dance.
7. Teach students the body movements and steps of the dance without music.
8. Integrate these movements into the total dance composition with music.
9. Students rehearse and perform the dance.

4 compare traditional & contemporary dance forms

OBJECTIVES

Students will
- demonstrate understanding of the concept of environment.
- analyze aspects of environment and their effect on human behavior.
- review the origins of a traditional World dance.
- demonstrate understanding of how contemporary issues give rise to contemporary dance forms.
- demonstrate understanding of the relationship between World and contemporary dance forms.

PROCEDURES

1. Discuss the elements of environment.
2. Discuss the effects of a specific environment on human behavior, e.g., overcrowding, weather patterns, housing, etc.
3. Direct small groups of students to choose an environmental situation with specific givens/ obstacles to perform in movement, e.g., a group in an overcrowded playground, a group walking in a flooded street, etc. Have the "audience" guess what environment was presented and describe what obstacles were operating in this environment.
4. Review the origins of a traditional dance that students have already learned.
5. Students explore and discuss the connections between conditions and issues that gave rise to a particular traditional dance and similar contemporary conditions, e.g., Chinese Stick Dance with its roots in people begging corresponds to contemporary homelessness.
6. Class chooses one contemporary social issue. In small groups, students select qualities of movement to express that issue and perform these for each other.
7. Students observe, analyze, and critique each other's presentations.

why theater arts?

planning the curriculum

The study of theater can create many positive byproducts. Students can learn to project their voices, work in groups, and become comfortable performing in front of others. While we would encourage these outcomes, they are not the main reason for studying theater because they do not cover the essential elements of drama.

In drama, we are mostly concerned with the actions people take, how and why they take them, and the causal effects of those actions. Your objective is to teach your students to analyze desires, objectives, obstacles, actions, conflict, tension, and character. If we do not focus on the exploration of these elements, we are circumventing the reasons for putting anything on stage in the first place.

Drama is a unique discipline because the form draws directly from the intersection of a variety of aspects of existence: the political, interpersonal, philosophical, psychological, and physical. Every experience can be grist for the dramatist's mill. Drama is all around us: in nature, in myth, in the news, in our families, at school, in our neighborhoods and kitchens. The stage becomes a place where all of these aspects of life are played out, distilled, and encapsulated in live moments onstage… moments that cannot be completely replicated, that are different each time. In this way, there is always opportunity in the theater for risk and change.

Before you begin to teach, narrow your curriculum down to several concepts or through lines that you want your students to understand despite whatever else happens in the class. A few examples of possible through lines for drama are: "Every situation has dramatic potential" or "Characters are revealed in moments of crisis." Then figure out the elements of theater that will best demonstrate those through lines and plan your lessons around those.

Warm-up

In the beginning of the course and the beginning of each session, warm your students up with physical and vocal exercises. The warm-ups should emphasize concentration and energy. The warm-ups can be in the form of theater games, focus activities, or simple stretching. Early on, get them used to the idea of pursuing objectives. This will help to eliminate stage fright and will reinforce one of the most important concepts in theater: desire and action.

composition & improvisation

One of the key aspects of composition in drama is improvisation because in this practice students continually draw on craft elements to produce work spontaneously and entirely from their own minds. The form calls upon students to solve problems quickly, to make unprepared choices, to work within given parameters, to make gross errors, and revise them. In improvisation, students risk three very important things: embarrassment, the possibility of appearing stupid, and the possibility of appearing ingenious.

The regular practice of improvisation can unblock students from artistic paralysis, and emphasizes one of the key aspects of the definition of acting: "Acting is behaving truthfully in an imaginary situation." (Stanislavsky) Improvisation creates good stress, and we reveal ourselves during moments of stress—when we are not in complete control of outcomes. Actors are less likely to "over-perform" if they do not know what they are about to say next. They act and react what they truly feel in the moment. While improvised scenes often fall flat, improvisations that are executed and directed well are extremely rewarding experiences. When there is safety surrounding this tension (i.e., you lay out parameters and you have tight control over the class), something artistic and surprising can occur. The student can really begin to understand in an experiential way the elements that make good theater.

Improvisation also builds trust between students because it forces them to interact together in an unknown terrain—to give and take and build on each other's choices. When two people are placed in tense situations and when they are forced to get out of messes together, they create a beautiful equality.

qualities of the discipline

The study of theater arts gives us the chance to reflect on life itself. In the regular school day, students do not have very many opportunities to reflect on questions that should be most relevant to their lives: Who am I? What do I want? Why do I want it? How far will I go to get it? What are the consequences of my actions and choices? What does my life have to do with the rest of the world and vice versa? How does society affect who I am? How do people see me, and how is that different from how I see myself? What does my life have to do with the lives of others? For young people in our after-school programs, these questions can be critical to the choices they make, to their understanding of their own lives, and to their success as citizens.

In an excellent theater arts program, students will directly engage with the questions of society, not as though society is something fabricated by "suits" making important decisions in boardrooms and in City Hall, but by people with unique and common dreams, visions, tastes, backgrounds, emotions, and desires.

Finally, the practice of improvisation reinforces the concept of causality in storytelling: the concept that one event or action or variable or choice or reaction affects another and has repercussions and consequences. In this way, the practice of improvisation can be a metaphor for life. The deep lesson is this: I have a variety of choices that will produce a variety of outcomes. Actually, in any given moment, I may have an infinite number of choices. If the student/actor keeps replaying the scene by varying the choice and outcome, he or she will soon see that life is full of possibility, and that he or she can create change as agents both in his or her life, and in the world.

Do not expect students to be good improvisers from the start. You will quickly learn that however innately talented some of your students are, they need very firm guidelines and parameters when they begin to improvise. Place yourself in the director's chair and guide your actors through choices. Establish strict "givens." This will eliminate the possibility of actors losing their focus. Empower yourself to start, freeze, or discontinue scenes at any moment. Always keep the emphasis on the actor's objective. Coach the actors through this. Stop the scene and say, "Are you focused on your objective right now? Remember it, pursue it harder, do not let go of it." Use the audience. When the scene is frozen, ask the audience what they notice about what their peers have revealed in the scene, and what the actors could use to create more interesting or tense drama.

In the beginning, it is best to practice improvisations by setting up scenes yourself, and asking students to solve a specific problem within a given scenario. Eventually you can give them the responsibility of inventing their own elements, settings, and givens.

Composition

When students get used to going "onstage" (in front of the class), you can build them toward composition by having them revise their scenes and shape them into structures. You can also work on structure by giving them the blocking for a short piece and have your students create a beginning, middle, and end without changing the blocking. At some point in the curriculum, try writing monologues based on character profiles. It is good to balance writing with physical activity and vice versa.

managing content

The history of theater is a history of love triangles, alienation, violence, thievery, hubris, revenge, sex, and death. It would be impossible to completely eliminate these from a good drama class. That said, there are still limits to acceptable content for children and young people, and very unpleasant and sticky situations can occur when you do not have control over the content. Use common sense. On the first day, set rules about what is allowed and what is not allowed and reinforce those rules every time they are breached. Consistency is key. Establish clear repercussions for when community rules and guidelines are broken.

Make sure you discuss with the site administrator what their limits and parameters are around content. When in doubt, ask the nitty-gritty. Cursing is generally not allowed, and often limits students more than it frees them. Situations and/or characters that will inevitably end in violence or sexually loaded outcomes should be avoided.

Unless absolutely necessary for the drama, eliminate guns: nothing will kill a student-led improvisation like a gun brought onto the scene. Limit the use of physical contact onstage. Lead an exercise in which students play a violent scene without speaking, without touching, without any sort of physical contact. Direct them to create violent tension on the stage without actually being violent. Have them restrain the violence—tell them their characters aren't even allowed to speak. What they will create onstage is a dramatic pressure cooker, visible in the actors' individual bodies, and it will be very dynamic to watch.

As the teacher, you are the director, and you are allowed to veto any of your students' suggestions, whether it's because the choice is flat and you know it will lead nowhere, or if the choice is inappropriate in your estimation or in the estimation of the administrators of the site.

Performance

There are a variety of ways to approach a cumulative experience in an after-school theater arts program. Usually full productions are unrealistic because of time and space constraints, but if you happen to have a motivated group, an end of program demonstration can be quite worthwhile. This can be a staged reading by the students or by volunteer professional actors, a theater game/improvisation night, or a video presentation of one of your successful classes. In our view, it makes more sense to try to do something very small very well than to poorly execute a chaotic, elaborate, and time-consuming production. Whatever you decide to do, try as much as possible to emphasize the process and to make the learning visible.

As the teacher, you are the director, and you are allowed to veto any of your students' suggestions, whether it's because the choice is flat and you know it will lead nowhere, or if the choice is inappropriate in your estimation or in the estimation of the administrators of the site.

WEEK 1 Introduction: What is Drama?

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • brainstorm reasons for making drama and elements of drama.**
WARM-UP	Stretching/breathing/vocal warm-ups.
EXERCISE	In pairs: tell a dramatic story, focus on details. Revise with more specific or dramatic details.
DISCUSSION	What makes a story dramatic? What do you remember from your partner's story? Why are some details memorable, others forgettable?

WEEK 2 Focus, Concentration, Energy, Breath

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • demonstrate understanding of inward/outward focus (the difference between the two).**
WARM-UP	Run/Freeze emphasizing concentration and focus.
EXERCISE	Exercises that emphasize concentration, determined focus.
DISCUSSION	Why is it important for actors to have focus and concentration? What does concentration look like onstage?

WEEK 3 Action

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • perform clear actions on stage. • identify difference between action and no action onstage.**
WARM-UP	"What are You Doing?" exercise. Students improvise clear actions. Emphasize spontaneity, clarity, and commitment to actions.
EXERCISE	Give students actions to perform. Stay away from "charades." Focus on details.
DISCUSSION	What makes a player's actions believable? What is the difference between committed and noncommitted actions?

WEEK 4 Setting & Environment

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • demonstrate understanding of the possible variables in setting and environment. • perform actions inside specific settings and environments.**
WARM-UP	Walk/Run/Freeze—into specific settings, climates, times of day. Imaginative sensory work. Focus on details and commitment to actions.
EXERCISE	In groups: students invent and perform actions in specific settings.
DISCUSSION	How do different settings change the way you perform actions? How do you show time of day, temperature, climate, terrain? How can setting change mood or character?

WEEK 5 Objectives, Obstacles, Givens

OBJECTIVE	**Students will • identify, invent, and perform realistic objectives, obstacles, and givens, and will demonstrate understanding of why those are needed in drama.**
WARM-UP	Run/Freeze: basic problem to solve with objective and obstacle.
EXERCISE	In groups: students invent scenarios in which they show who they are, where they are, what they want, and what stops them.
DISCUSSION	How do you tell when a player is committed to his or her objective? What is the difference between faking on the stage and really pursuing an objective? What's the physical evidence?

WEEK 6 Motivation

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **identify and invent motivations for actions and demonstrate understanding of the concept of motivation.**

WARM-UP Run/Freeze: vary given motivations for actions.

EXERCISE In groups: give students problem of justifying a floor pattern, making the motivations clear.

DISCUSSION How can you tell if players' actions are motivated? What is the difference between unmotivated and motivated actions?

WEEK 7 Conflict, Tension, Upping the Stakes

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **identify and create recipes for conflict.**
- **perform scenes with high tension.**
- **demonstrate understanding of "upping the stakes."**

WARM-UP "Build a Sculpture Without a Sound" Exercise. Place time constraint.

EXERCISE Basic improvisations with set objectives and relationships: students have to find ways of building tension and conflict in the scenes, of "upping the stakes."

DISCUSSION What's the evidence for tension on the stage? When are moments of high tension in your life? What are some conflicts that you've been in yourself? What were the stakes for you and the other people involved? (What did you or they have to lose?)

WEEK 8 Character: Outside-In/Inside-Out

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **invent and perform characters. Students will brainstorm and identify how physical characteristics affect personality and vice versa.**

WARM-UP Sensory/imaginative bodywork. Students "step-in" to characters of varied physicalities.

EXERCISE Students create "character profiles" based on images.

DISCUSSION How do personalities affect how characters move? How does character's physicality affect personality? What kind of person moves with their hips sticking out?

WEEK 9 Pursuing Psychological Objectives

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **invent and pursue psychological objectives (to tease, to taunt, to embarrass, to forgive, etc.).**

WARM-UP Eye-contact exercise—working with proximity and distance from scene partners.

EXERCISE Give students "open dialogue scenes" and ask students to perform psychological objectives. Show videos of movies and ask students to analyze scenes in terms of psychological objectives.

DISCUSSION How do you know a player is committed to a psychological objective? How do physicality and vocals change with different psychological objectives?

WEEK 10 Status

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **demonstrate understanding of "high" vs. "low" status characteristics.**
- **identify and describe power relationships in scenes.**

WARM-UP Split class up into "high status" and "low status" groups. Ask students to play specific behaviors. What do they notice in terms of how they feel in relationship to others?

EXERCISE Students perform basic improvisations (you set up situation) with "high" and "low" status characters. Then ask students to switch status of characters.

DISCUSSION What makes a character have high or low status? Who do you know who behaves as a "high" status person? What makes people have power in scenes? How does physicality, the way a character sits or moves or behaves, reveal his or her status?

WEEK 11 Dialogue

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **improvise and write effective dialogues.**

WARM-UP Basic dialogue improvisations around a given topic.

EXERCISE In pairs, students come up with nonexpository dialogue. (Showing, not telling.) Show, critique, revise.

DISCUSSION Why is it important for the dialogue to be nonexpository? What is the difference between flat dialogue and dialogue that propels scenes forward?

WEEK 12 Monologue

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **demonstrate understanding of monologues.**

WARM-UP Read and discuss a monologue. "Meeting by the River" by Bruce Springsteen is effective.

EXERCISE Students write monologues based on character profiles.

DISCUSSION What does your monologue reveal about your character? What is your character's objective in giving this monologue?

WEEK 13 The Short Play

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **write short plays with beginnings, middles, and ends.**

WARM-UP Students' choice of game (Zip-Zap-Zup, etc.).

EXERCISE Students write short plays showing characters in situations with clear objectives, obstacles, settings, conflict, beginning, middle, and end. Read plays.

DISCUSSION How could plays be revised so that the above is more clear or engaging to watch?

WEEK 14 Revision (Taking Critique)

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **revise plays and demonstrate understanding of why revision is important.**

WARM-UP Students' Choice.

EXERCISE Revise plays.

DISCUSSION What makes a satisfying ending? Could you make up another ending for your play?

WEEK 15 Play Reading/How Have I Grown?

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **review experience.**

WARM-UP Group theater game: "The Party Improvisation."

EXERCISE Final Reading. Discuss changes students made.

DISCUSSION What did I find difficult about the class? What did I learn? What do I take away?

theater arts
sample lesson plan

lesson title:
conflict

OBJECTIVE Students will

- demonstrate understanding of conflict.
- create short scenes with clear conflicts, objectives, and obstacles.

WARM-UP In a circle, stretches, partner eye contact, vocal warm-ups. Run/Freeze into images.

exercise
part 1

Brainstorm possible topics of potential conflicts in the community.

Vote on the juiciest, most theatrical topic. (Gently veto topics that you know will not create good theater).

IN SMALL GROUPS Discuss a possible scenario that has conflict. Remember in the scene you should demonstrate who you are, where you are, and what you want.

IMAGE THEATER In groups show image (staged sculpture) of your scenario.

Discuss each image. Who are the characters? What do they want? Where are they? What is the conflict?

IMAGE-ALIVE Each group improvises action and dialogue in the scene.

STOP, FREEZE, DISCUSS WITH AUDIENCE Was the conflict clear? Were you engaged? How could the players make the situation more dramatic?

exercise
part 2

In groups, students revise their scene, changing one to three things suggested by audience.

Show Scenes.

REFLECTION In journals, students write most memorable part of the session. Or, write another possible ending for scenes.

why
creative writing?

We teach creative writing because in this art form, young people engage directly with their own experiences, feelings, and ideas. Although the medium for creative writing is words, the purpose of writing is to explore the terrain beneath or behind the surface of what is said and unsaid. Creative writing allows young people to use language to articulate their experiences, feelings, and ideas, and to access and discover those feelings by putting them into words. In creative writing, young people can delve more deeply into their own lives and personal narratives, or escape by inventing and inhabiting new worlds.

As a writing teacher, your job is to help young people access themselves, the material of their lives, by pushing them to notice the poetry, the particularities and details that surround them immediately…the poetry of shoe laces, of waiting for the train, of their uncle yelling out his window, of a fruit stand, of a woman standing in the parking lot sobbing, or whatever images they happen to run across in their lives or in their dreams. If a young person sees the world through a poetic lens, a lens in which the images are distilled and sharp, that world becomes poetically rich and full of possibility for art. The young person will gain a better understanding of that world and will be able to contribute to it. At the same time, he or she will begin to notice his or her surroundings in greater detail. In this way, the world will become larger, more complex, and deeper.

planning the curriculum

There are many ways of planning a creative writing curriculum and what you choose to focus on will be entirely up to you. You may wish to focus on poetry or spoken word because of the close relationships of these forms to rap—which may be more appealing to your students. On the other hand, you may want to focus entirely on fiction because your students happen to be storytellers. Or you may want to blend the two, or allow your students to work in their genres of preference.

Whatever you decide to teach, make sure you allow time for students to reflect upon and respond to each other's work and that there is time to show work.

Texts

Make sure you include texts in your classrooms. It is usually unrealistic to expect that your students will read anything at home, but the only way for their writing skills to improve is if they read. So read in class. Read short poems, short-short stories, and vignettes. Read short plays and newspaper articles. Read passages and quotations. Read anything with sharp images that doesn't take too long to read aloud. Bring in audio recordings of poetry and spoken word. Use material that has cultural relevance to your students and choose dramatic, vivid, and imagistic material.

content management

As stated in other places in this book, it is always good to check with the site administrator about what is acceptable or unacceptable material. When in doubt, ask. Different sites have different policies about what students are allowed to write, even in journals. In most cases, young people can write whatever they choose in their journals and have the option of folding the page over, or "passing," if they wish to not show.

Allow passing, but discourage it by rewarding those who are brave enough to share difficult or personal material. Make sure your group understands and practices the community rule of "what is said in the room stays in the room." Because the form sometimes deals directly with autobiographical narratives, highly personal material is bound to surface in the student work. This can be exciting and wonderful and can help students express what they need to express, but be wary of becoming too deeply involved in processing emotional material. You are not a therapist and are not there to provide psychological counseling. Instead, try pulling back sensitively and focusing on the craft elements of the student's work. Point out interesting or surprising images or juxtapositions.

Improvisation

All in-class creative writing exercises incorporate an element of improvisation. In-class writes occur in the moment and require a certain amount of bravery and spontaneity. Encourage students to write automatically rather than to prepare outlines as they would during the regular school day. This will exercise their writing skills and will get them used to the action of pen-on-paper and will help them overcome any anxiety associated with writing. In communities where

many students are below their grade literacy level, there could be a lot of hesitation and fear around the act of writing. Part of your job will be to break that fear.

Warm-ups

There are many ways of approaching an engaging creative writing warm-up. Some teaching artists ask "check-in" questions to facilitate a dialogue with their students, and to create a classroom community. This is an effective way of getting students to reflect on a particular detail of their lives. Another warm-up can be physical—quiet imaginary work with eyes shut, simple breathing, or an energy passing game. Depending on the group, sometimes it's nice to switch up the warm-ups to keep students on their toes…or you may find that the repetition of a ritual reigns in the focus and gives students something to look forward to each day. It is up to you to decide what works best with each particular group.

sample curriculum: creative writing

WEEK 1 Why Write? The Power of Observation

OBJECTIVE	**Students will** • **demonstrate understanding of the importance of observation and attention to detail.**
WARM-UP	Check in: "What is was your favorite movie as a child?" or Memory Game.
EXERCISE	Detail Observation Exercise. Have students observe a strange object you bring in. Place it away from their vision and have them describe it perfectly.
DISCUSSION	Why do people write poetry or tell stories? Why do we listen? What kinds of stories or poems do you like and why? Who do you know who tells stories? Why is observation important? Why are detailed descriptions more interesting than vague ones?

WEEK 2 Describing Setting

OBJECTIVE	**Students will** • **demonstrate understanding of how details create a setting.**
WARM-UP	Check-in: "Where was your favorite place to hide as a child? What was it like?
EXERCISE	Describe your neighborhood using as many details as possible. Focus on nouns and sensual details.
DISCUSSION	How does the choice of details create the world? What do you notice about that world in your peers' work that is sensual? Why is it engaging to have sensual descriptions?

WEEK 3 I Am a Lion in the Streets (The Metaphor Poem)

OBJECTIVE	**Students will** • **demonstrate understanding of the use of metaphor**
WARM-UP	Check-in: "If you were an animal, what would you be and why?"
EXERCISE	Write a metaphor poem…(use I AM poem as example)
DISCUSSION	Why do poets use metaphors? Why are some metaphors engaging and others boring or confusing? Which metaphors created today in class were exceptional or unique?

WEEK 4 Character

OBJECTIVE	**Students will** • **create detailed characters and will distinguish between unique and stereotypic characters.**
WARM-UP	Check-in: "Who was your best friend when you were little? When you were little, if you were a cartoon, who would you be?"
EXERCISE	Using images of interesting looking photos of people (usually candid shots), have students create a character profile and tell a story in the voice of that character.
DISCUSSION	What makes a character interesting? Does an interesting character necessarily mean we would want to be friends with that person?

WEEK 5 Juxtapositions

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **identify juxtaposition of images in a poem or story and will create sentences or verses with juxtaposed images.**

WARM-UP Physical warm-up: Zip-Zap-Zup (a fast, energy passing game).

EXERCISE Take your character from last week and make up a secret about him or her that would surprise us. Write a poem in which every line contains a contradiction or juxtaposition.

DISCUSSION What's the use of juxtapositions in writing?

WEEK 6 Sound

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **identify use of sound in poems or stories and will create poems in which sound (of the words) is the most noticeable element.**

WARM-UP Put on a piece of wordless music and have students draw to the music. Change the music and see what happens to the drawing.

EXERCISE Write various words that make sounds on a note card (lightning, drum roll, refrigerator hum) and have students write poems about those sounds without using the word. The object is for the poem itself to sound like the noise the object makes.

DISCUSSION How do sounds of poems affect mood and/or meaning? What is the difference between a "quiet poem" and a "loud poem?"

WEEK 7 Rhythm

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **identify various uses of rhythm in poems and raps.**

WARM-UP Rhythm Exercise—using clapping, stomping, or beats.

EXERCISE Write a rap or a poem with a strong use of rhythm.

DISCUSSION Why do some poems have a clear rhythm and others don't? What makes a poem a poem and a rap a rap?

WEEK 8 Injustice—What's Not Fair—

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **identify and create rants.**

WARM-UP A physical warm-up.

EXERCISE Write a list of everything that isn't fair. Take ten minutes to do this. Choose one thing on your list, your favorite thing, and write a rant about it. Enjoy telling us why that thing isn't fair.

DISCUSSION What do you learn about the character of the person by having them list what isn't fair?

WEEK 9 Ego Tripping/Hyperbole

OBJECTIVE **Students will** • **connect the form of self-affirmation poetry with the larger African-American historical context.**
• **identify and create hyperbole.**

WARM-UP Write for ten minutes about what adults (or a group that has little contact with them) think of them.

EXERCISE Read Nikki Giovanni's "Ego Tripping" and Langston Hughes "My People." Students write emulations of these two poems, highlighting at least one character trait that they will brag about. These can be myths of their being, or poems just stating how amazing they really are.

DISCUSSION How can you revise your poem so that each line is hyperbolic, but affirming, not necessarily "just bragging?"

WEEK 10 My Earthquake (The Dramatic Event)

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **construct a "complete dramatic event" in their poem through the metaphor of an earthquake.**
- **demonstrate understanding of what constitutes a "complete dramatic event."**

WARM-UP Students write for ten minutes in their journals about a moment in their lives when a great shift or change occurred that had a lasting impact.

EXERCISE Read a poem in which a dramatic event occurs. Students write a poem that takes the same structure or sequence as an earthquake.

DISCUSSION Read work and respond, noting qualities of images, drama in each other's work.

WEEK 11 Perspective

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **demonstrate understanding of different points of view in poems and stories.**

WARM-UP "Wear what you're not." Students walk across the classroom in a way that is the opposite of how they normally walk.

EXERCISE Pick a character that is most unlike you in every way possible. Write a poem or story or describe an event from that person's perspective.

DISCUSSION What can you learn about yourself from writing from the perspective of someone who is not like you at all?

WEEK 12 Structures

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **identify and create haikus (or any structure of your choice).**

WARM-UP Write a grocery list that you would write at age fifty-seven. It must reveal something about who you are at that age.

EXERCISE Write a few haikus about the worst or best day in your life.

DISCUSSION What happens to the writing when we are forced to conform to a structure?

WEEK 13 Bookmaking

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **design and make books.**

WARM-UP Physical warm-up.

EXERCISE Look at various styles of books and journals. Make a book that represents your best self.

DISCUSSION What do you learn about your peers based on the books they've created?

WEEK 14 Final Revisions

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **revise their work.**

WARM-UP Physical warm-up—students' choice.

EXERCISE Revise your best piece, the one you want to perform next week.

DISCUSSION What do you have to do if you want to become a poet/writer/spoken-word artist?

WEEK 15 Final Reading

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **perform their poetry.**

WARM-UP Energy or focus-building exercise.

EXERCISE Performance/Celebration.

DISCUSSION What have you gained from this experience?

why music?

Composition

Consistent with Performing Arts Workshop's Cycle of Artistic Inquiry as applied to other art forms, the emphasis in our music residencies is composition. While we recognize the tremendous amount of value in learning to play the traditions of a specific instrument well, we believe that by creating pieces themselves, young people can gain a true understanding of the craft and express what is closest to their hearts and experiences.

Traditionally, composition is not taught until at least the intermediate level of musical education, when the beginner has grown used to playing notes and maneuvering the instrument. This has made sense because there is no use in composing pieces on the clarinet if you can't reach any notes, or in banging away at a piano without understanding the difference between the keys. However, nowadays we are blessed (and cursed) with technology that can introduce beginners to composition and the structures and dynamics of songs without the need for technical skill, coordination talent, or technical training on a particular instrument.

With computer programs like the ones we use in some of our residencies (Garageband and Acid Pro), students can produce professional quality CDs of their own original compositions without ever touching an instrument. While this could never replace the value of the joy and pain of learning how to play an instrument, it is rewarding for students to be able to hear their pieces immediately and to be able to play back what they have written and analyze their creations purely in terms of compositional structure and concept.

planning the curriculum

Because the technology is relatively simple to use, it is important that you structure your class so that the students learn the concepts, theory, and vocabulary behind their creations and not just spend the entire period on their headphones compiling their own beats. There should be plenty of time for this kind of private, individual work, but you should also modulate the class with other kinds of interactions. Your class should cover techniques, basic music theory, sound editing, and lyric writing. There should also be discussions and questions posed about the role music plays in society and culture, its history and evolution, and the conflicts and drama it contains, explores, and creates. For example, where does hip hop come from? What do you associate with classical music and why? What do diverse forms of music all have in common? What would you consider to be marginalized versus mainstream forms of music? Does this change within different communities? Who decides what goes on the radio? What do you think music in the future will sound like? What do geography, class, and race have to do with music? As always, students should analyze their work and learn to listen carefully, observe, analyze, question, and respond. Always be specific and encourage specificity from your students. Break the pieces down and discuss them at the level of phrases and transitions.

When writing lyrics, of course pay attention to the culture and rules and regulations of your site. Encourage honesty, but also encourage objectivity. Make students aware if their lyrics promote violence towards women, gays, or other groups or individuals. This does not mean that their songs should be "upbeat" or even "positive." But they should be thoughtful.

qualities
of the discipline

It would be difficult to ignore the importance of music in the social and educational development of young people. Music responds to, defines, and creates culture. Making and listening to music accesses a part of the brain that directly affects moods, emotions, intelligence, hormones, and memory. Music can soothe, heal, motivate, disturb, relax, please, excite, and inspire the body, mind, and spirit. Most young people do not need to be taught to love music. By the time they are of school age, they have already begun to develop their own set of musical tastes and preferences, and have formed both positive and negative cultural and psychological associations with particular styles of music.

As an artist-in-residence, you will not have to spend much time convincing your students that music is worthwhile and exhilarating. Many students come into after-school programs with a strong desire to compose and perform and may already have experience doing so. Your challenge will be to sustain their energy and excitement while introducing, honing, and building upon craft elements. Your objective will be to improve their skills as musicians, expand their horizons about what music is or should be or could be, and give them the tools to analyze what they hear in a way that enriches their experience of listening.

You will have succeeded in your class if your students no longer listen to the radio in a passive way, totally innocent of the structures, histories, and building blocks of particular songs, but instead are able to identify qualities that make pieces sound the way they do, and are able to imaginatively associate what they hear with their own images and feelings. Additionally, you will challenge them to experiment with their musical voices, take risks, create and combine phrases, and make some noise, while practicing the habits of mind of focus and persistence.

Course Objective

OBJECTIVE — Students will
- demonstrate an understanding of songwriting techniques, basic music theory, sound editing and lyric writing.
- create a catalog of their own songs recorded using the Acid Pro software, compatible for Windows and Mac.

WEEK 1 Introduction

OBJECTIVE — Students will
- discuss what makes a song "good" and articulate preferences and reasons.

DISCUSSION — What qualities make a good song? Is it the words? Rhythm? The structure? The instruments played? Does it make you want to dance or sit still?

EXERCISE — Many examples of different kinds of music are played. For each example, students write down personal impressions of why they are or are not attracted to a certain style, asking the questions above for each example.

SUGGESTED EXAMPLES — Hip hop, classical, country, blues, pop, jazz, rock, etc. By listening to each example, students will formulate their own opinion of what their personal preference is, and WHY.

WEEK 2 Music Theory 1, Rhythm, Tempo

OBJECTIVE — Students will
- demonstrate understanding of rhythm and tempo and will be able to identify, create, and perform different rhythms and tempos.

DISCUSSION — What is the difference between BEAT and RHYTHM? Why does a slower tempo make you feel differently than a faster one? (Define TEMPO.)

EXERCISE #1 — Students listen to a variety of examples. Students learn to differentiate between beat and rhythm. Students alternate between tapping pulse (beat) and tapping a changing rhythm.

EXERCISE #2 — Students are divided into two groups. One group provides a pulse (instruments if available or clapping) while the other group plays a repetitive rhythm at various tempos.

WEEK 3 Music Theory 2, Melody

OBJECTIVE — Students will
- demonstrate understanding of melody and will create, identify, and perform original and recognizable melodies.

DISCUSSION — What is a melody? What makes a melody "good"?

EXERCISE #1 — Students listen to musical examples and find the melody by identifying what instrument is playing it or who is singing it.

EXERCISE #2 — Using basic keyboarding techniques, students practice creating interesting melodies.
Discuss: Pitch, Steps, Leaps, Repetition.

PERFORMANCE — Teacher performs melodies written by students.

WEEK 4 Music Theory 3, Harmony

OBJECTIVE — Students will
- identify, create, and perform harmonies.
- demonstrate an understanding of basic diatonic chord progressions.
- demonstrate understanding of basic resolutions and create their own simple chord sequences using MAJOR, MINOR, DOMINANT chords.
- demonstrate how to notate music properly.
- demonstrate understanding of basic chord scales in major and minor keys.
- create a tonality (major/minor) and write a simple melody that corresponds to the chord tonality.

DISCUSSION What is harmony? Can you play harmony with one note? What effect does harmony have on music?

EXERCISE Ear Training. Students define MAJOR and MINOR. Teacher plays examples of both, students identify.

PERFORMANCE Teacher plays/records examples of student work.

WEEK 5 Music Theory 4, Melody/Harmony

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **demonstrate understanding of relationships between melody and harmony.**
- **demonstrate understanding of basic chord scales in major and minor keys.**
- **create a tonality (major/minor) and write a simple melody that corresponds to the chord tonality.**

DISCUSSION Why do some melodies work with some harmonies but not others?

EXERCISE Teacher plays one chord sequence but plays a dissonant melody over top of it. Students describe the sound of it and discuss what could improve the sound.

PERFORMANCE Students perform their melodies and harmonies with teacher.

WEEK 6 Composition 1, Putting Theory to Practice

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **add "rhythmic feels" to their piece.**

DISCUSSION What is the relationship between Melody, Harmony and Rhythm?

EXERCISE #1 Teacher plays musical examples. Students identify tonality quality, tempo, and describe qualities of the melody.

EXERCISE #2 Students create new composition or use composition from week five and add a rhythmic feel to their piece. Discussion of "feels": rock, jazz, funk, hip hop, etc.

DISCUSSION Why did you choose this particular feel to accompany your composition?

PERFORMANCE Teacher plays composition with feel distinction, students critique. (Review critiquing practice.)

WEEK 7 Composition 2, Song Structures

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **define: Intro, Verse, Chorus, Bridge, Solo, Outro.**
- **identify differentiating qualities of each.**

DISCUSSION How many song sections does a typical song on the radio have in it? Why is this true?

EXERCISE #1 Teacher plays song selections, and students identify as many different song sections as they can hear.

EXERCISE #2 Students now listen to selections and identify as Verse, Chorus, etc.

WEEK 8 Composition 3, Creating Song Structures

OBJECTIVE **Students will**
- **demonstrate ability to create songs using defined structures.**

DISCUSSION Should Harmonies, Melodies, Rhythms change between song sections? Where should the harmonic high point be? What sections should have harmonic repetition section to section?

artist statements

Chrissy Anderson-Zavala Creative Writing Instructor

I became a writer when I felt like my voice was becoming stuck to the roof of my mouth like peanut butter. I turned to writing to feel like I was responding to what was happening around me and to loosen the hold that silence seemed to have on me. I was a teenager at the time. I want to name what is happening around me, in our society and communities, but I also want to start the process of imagining a different world in my work.

I teach young people because the joy I feel when a student connects to their own words is immeasurable. I teach because this is all I've ever wanted to do and I truly believe in Paulo Freire's idea that "there is no true word that is not at the same time praxis." Therefore, true words are able to change our worlds. What better place to speak truths than with youth, to bring a sense of power and validation to the voices of our youth?

I would say that the biggest difference between after-school and the regular school day is that in after-school the students don't have to be there and so there are a lot of retention issues. The students have to sincerely love the work you're doing with them or you simply won't have a class. Also, teaching after school really stretches you as teacher because students come in and out, there are different ages and levels, discipline has to be subtle, and everything has to be fun at all times.

I usually ask the students questions to try and get at what they love to do, draw, play video games, go to the playground, etc., and use that as an "in." I, also, adapt what I'm teaching to fit the "shy" or "resistant" students. If the students aren't engaged, I see that as my shortcoming, not theirs.

I want my students to know that their words and dreams are powerful. I want them to feel that if they hold to their dreams, then anything is possible, and that writing can be a place to turn when their voices feel stuck.

Delmance Ras Mo Moses Theater, Writing, and Music Instructor

As a performer, popular theater teacher, and community worker, it is my mission to help restore the arts to their role in the continuing renewal of community. I strive to do this through performance pieces blending traditional with contemporary cultural forms, and also through popular theater, which fosters a process of collective reflection, creation, and action. In this way, I hope to contribute to overcoming the problems that afflict our society, and to preserving the links between art and daily life.

Jacinta Vlach Hip Hop Instructor

I have been blessed throughout my life to be mentored by many great artists and community activists.

I feel a responsibility to pass on this information. Today's youth are experiencing extreme displacement, a loss of identity and self-worth, and thus become a voice that will never be heard. Art, social interaction, and the creative process serve as powerful catalysts to evoke change. Consumerism, mass technology, persistent class racial divide, and the misplaced values of our government have affected the younger generations irrevocably. There is a dangerous lack of understanding and respect toward the power of art and performance in this culture. It's disheartening, to say the least, because creativity, imagination, and community are as necessary as the air we breathe. I teach to keep inspiration and hope alive.

Many times I see kids fidgeting about while they are waiting for the bus. Most of the time that fidgeting is actually the early stages of creative movement. I can't tell you how many times I see kids doing dance moves on the street. These kids are yearning to develop these talents.

Scott Phillips Gong-Fu Instructor

Having an opinion is part of being an artist. With gong fu, I have very specific criteria for what I consider artistic movements. Do they have roots? Do they have stability. Are they sung? Do they have presence? (Can you see the time commitment in the quality? Do the children own the movement? Do they frighten you with their precision the way a great comic does with their timing? Do they inspire you to do better yourself?) Young people only learn integrity from being around people who act with integrity. When you create a safe environment, humans will take risks.

No matter how much planning you do, teaching is always improvisational. It requires constant changes in statues from Queen of England–high, to boot-carrier-of-a-foot-soldier low. It requires a feeling of goodwill and mutual support. It requires accepting all offers without ever letting go of the curriculum.
It requires not controlling the future.







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