

Applause Musical Theatre in Revue
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Contents
Overview
Rationale
Objectives
Strategies
Classroom Activities
Bibliography/Resources
Classroom Material
Appendices
Content Standards
Web Sites
Parent Letter
Assessment

OVERVIEW

“A word devoid of thought is a dead thing, and a thought unembodied in words remains a shadow and Thought is not merely expressed in words; it comes into existence through them,” stated Lev Vygotsky a famous developmental psychologist who studied language acquisition.

This curriculum that I am writing will involve exploring both genres of musical theatre that is music and theatre. The expressive arts are very important in the early childhood classroom. This is how the student learns to communicate. I will introduce music and drama in a fun way. We will explore the main parts of each genre and bring both of them together as one functional piece under the performing arts. In doing this music will be explored looking at tempo and how to use your voice, singing different songs using instruments and recordings. Music will be used to promote skills in other areas. One of the areas will be speaking a different language to show variation in musical speed. Opera will be looked at as well through singing activities involving literature and daily classroom spoken words. A vocabulary will be used and words added as new words are introduced related to music or theatre as the curriculum progresses. The music part of this curriculum will use physical and motor skills. It will also express social skills. In theatre I will introduce theatre by using spontaneous gathering and communication of the students while they are working or playing in the classroom. I will introduce skits and let the students act them out. The use of puppetry and improvisation will further enrich the drama experience. I will also explore storybooks for dramatization as well.

It is an early childhood curriculum that can be used in pre-kindergarten to third grade. I will focus on the second grade level while writing this and give suggestions for other grades. This will be taught over a three-month period, twice a week in thirty-minute intervals. Consideration and inclusive principles for all students of abilities, ethnic groups and genders have been included. Two of the main goals are to foster literacy and social skills in the students and after the foundation has been established through these periods, the students will do a dramatization or performance. This block of time was chosen because direct instruction will be involved. This will also help the teacher to facilitate and provide a role model for acting.

Next, after these two genres are explored we will look at musical theatre, as its own genre introducing all the components such as, comedy, music, lyrics, characters, plot and dance, although you will see some overlap.

We will be adding the vocabulary, such as score and other words associated with this. This will build on the language and literacy part of the curriculum. The literature will come out of the music and the stories in the lessons.

This unit will include parent involvement through an informational letter. The letter will include an explanation of the curriculum and the skills provided. The parents will also be invited to participate in one of the lessons.

The standards that have been included are communication standard number six- all students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken, instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications and standard two all students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts. The arts and humanities standards number one and four. Number one is all students describe the meaning they find in various works from the visual and performing arts and literature on the basis of aesthetic understanding of the art form. Number four is all students produce, perform or exhibit their work in the visual arts, music, dance or theater, and describe the meanings their work has for them. The citizenship standards seven and eight are also addressed in this unit. Number seven is all students demonstrate their skills of communicating negotiating and cooperating with others. Number eight is all students demonstrate that they can work effectively with others. The students will also look at some historical activities with one of their songs and one of the movement lessons. Math standard number three is all students apply patterns, functions and relations to solve theoretical and practical problems.

These standards will be use throughout the unit and the student can use them to build on other skills throughout their education.

Evaluation of this unit will be through observation and small quizzes on vocabulary and participation and involvement. Providing an opportunity for the student to improvise and read literature will build on future skills. Allowing the students to enjoy the literature and music will permit the teacher to evaluate the student's participation. An assessment is included to evaluate the intentions of the unit and to evaluate if those intentions have been achieved.

RATIONALE

I chose this curriculum based on several reasons, the first is due to development of the early childhood student. The development in socio-dramatic play and how it began and evolved for the older student will be discussed. The student begins to build a social self through this type of communication and play. This enables the older student to perform socially and cohesively. Socio-dramatic play is basically imitating others and acting out situations to better understand the world around them.

It involves three different types of play.

These are:

Solitary Play- Student is involved but plays alone.

Parallel Play- The student plays alone but the play is similar to other students, in terms of what they are doing.

Cooperative Play- Students play together and cooperate with each other.

I will want the students to be cooperative with each other during this curriculum. This at the point where more mature socio-dramatic play takes place and the performance can come together as something positive. Students in the early childhood grade levels learn through play and play helps with developing other skills. Also language acquisition is prevalent because building upon the basic development of language is important, and using new vocabulary daily as the unit progresses this will build on the literacy component of this unit. This can be done through the storybooks, myths, fables or fairytales. Literacy will be explored in this curriculum due to the theatrical component. Speaking clearly and reading information is important. Showing comprehension and enjoyment for literature starts at a young age and exposing the students to positive experiences with literature and language is important. Making books available in the classroom and puppets and other forms of language building material have proven to be enriching for students. Particularly looking at the age of seven and eight

year olds, comprehension, past, present and future can be understood. Relational terms and ability to transpose or see another's opinion can be seen at this time too. They also have the ability to resolve contradictions in a story. A student at this age can use 1,400 words. So imagine covering the whole spectrum of early childhood and building on literacy. When looking at language acquisition, there are four skills that are important in developing literacy in a student. The word morphology is the system that governs the structure of words and the construction of words and this is where language begins. Phonology is the sound system of language and the rules that govern sound combinations. This is seen in phonics and building of words and the Syntax is the system governing the order and combination of words to form sentences. To put this all together we begin to use the system of Pragmatics and this is the system that combines all of the language components into communications. This unit will build its communication out of this theory. This explains the foundation of language and how it is formed. I will also look at the student that learns kinesthetically. This type of student likes to be physical and this can take place through the movement and dance part of the unit. This can build self-esteem in this type of student because they learn better through movement and sometimes have difficulty with verbal linguistics. Musical theatre began as a way to discuss social issues and how it related to people at that time. In this curriculum the student will enjoy acting out everyday situations. This will be to get an understanding of how it had its start. This technique will also help with problem solving, using classroom disagreements or family situations or even a math lesson to solve a problem.

The role of the teacher is to provide modeling, coaching and reinforcement of what the student is learning. The coaching part will require me to provide the students with ideas for difficult situations. These difficult situations may be, for example, how not to be afraid to perform. The modeling should show the students the appropriate acting skills. The reinforcement will be through verbal guidance. This is where positive reinforcement will be used. All of the lessons should use this approach from the teacher. This will help with maintaining a consistent form of teaching.

OBJECTIVES

My objectives are based on a many goals due to the fact there are two major components and underlying them are literature and movement. The student will be able to respond to literature through dramatic play, puppetry and other expressive arts. The lessons will give the student the opportunity to explore this. The student will also follow directions through playing a pattern when doing the lesson on musical notes with instruments. He or she will be able to distinguish

between fantasy and reality when the film of Peter Pan or James and the Giant Peach will be seen and discussed. A discussion of the plot and characters will be done at this time. The student will be able to depict a theme or experience one through a dramatization or a variety of media this will be seen through some of the improvisation and doing the stick puppet lesson. When using the prop boxes the student will get an opportunity to explore this objective. The student will also express an idea, thought or feeling to others through the performance lessons and the use of the prop boxes. The student will begin to do little performances as the unit progresses. The student will be able to respond to varying tempos while doing the singing lesson. They will also be able to respond to ideas that can be expressed with their feelings through music and movement. This can be seen through the music lessons and the dancing lessons. The student will also respond through dramatizing and music, and also be able to use directional and positioning terminology to find patterns when doing the choreography lessons.

Stories will be re-enacted through the use of myths, fables and fairy tales. The social skills that will be developed are respect for the work of others while performing or being an audience to other students and to participate in a group activity such as choral readings and singing, which promotes interaction with others. Conflict resolution can be done by dramatizing problem solving oriented skits and pairing students for comprehension purposes concerning a story. In doing puppetry the students can improve eye and hand coordination. Memorization of lines for performances and reciting them will also happen. Listening skills will be refined through the music lesson associated with pitch and sound. When the student uses the instruments this will happen. Expressing emotion through movement and music and cause and effect can be explored as well. Creative imagination can be expanded through impromptu instruments and exploring different brainstorming activities.

Several of the standards have been addressed in the overview. Now let's discuss how it will relate to the unit. The communication standard will be used when skits and musical songs are done. Showing comprehension and describing the literature will assist in accomplishing that standard. The arts and humanities standards will be seen through the singing and choral music. They will also be used in all of the lessons dealing with improvisation. The mathematic standard will be seen at the end when a pattern of singing is done.

They will also be seen through the performances. The acting and skits will become better after having the opportunity to practice them. They will be able to describe their work through a rubric and group discussions. The citizenship standards will be seen when the students show respect for each other's work.

They will be cooperating to get a task done and do a dance in unison.

All of the standards will be utilized throughout the unit. You can also incorporate others of your own. This unit is flexible and can accommodate the needs of any classroom. The objectives should be used in each of the lessons so that the student can get the maximum benefit from it.

STRATEGIES

The strategies in this unit were spoken of in the objectives to continually coach, reinforce and model all of the behaviors desired to accomplish the skills. We know that imitation and practice is important as part of the modeling component of this curriculum, making one self-available as much as possible for encouragement to model a scene or skit. This unit is student centered and most of the corrections will come out of the students need to perform better. When using the literature aspect of this unit some questions should be posed after reading the myths, fables or fairytales.

1. Who are the characters?
2. Are the phrases or words a complete sentence?
3. Does the story have a plot?
4. What do or don't you like about the story?
5. How do you feel about the characters
6. What did the story make you think would happen?
7. Can you make a different ending?
8. Where did the story take place?

Before you begin this be sure that the students know the background and some basic information about the story. Using the natural approach and some of the latest models for intervention will assist with every student learning how to perform.

When using music you may want to have the students listen for different sounds and for the kinesthetic learner you may want him to feel the vibrations of sound, as involving pitch use different objects. It is suggested to revisit a lesson that teaches some of the basic skills such as timbre, tempo or pitch. Using a simple melodic pattern, let the students control pitch and sound. Use several different ways to teach the same skill. Make the student the composer or use music story pictures to prompt the students to sing about it. A great deal of repetition is greatly needed to reinforce the concepts.

When using inclusion for students of different abilities this unit can be adapted with sign language or a lesson made basic to more complicated. Any student should be able to enjoy this unit. If you focus on the development of singing and musical skills such as listening, aural memory and physical skills, the skills will mature. This is a flexible unit to which you can add your own adaptations, and can be used throughout the year. It can be a supplement to your reading curriculum or used as an enrichment unit to other curriculums.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Lesson One

This is the introduction to music and its basic skills. First play different types of music while the students are arriving to class. While you are teaching other subjects such as math play something soft such as jazz or classical. This will elicit the student's interest. Then play music with lyrics (words). Discuss what it is and how it makes you feel. Take a song such as "I Been Working on the Railroad" and look at the words and how it relates to the song. Spend the entire lesson exploring literature and how it relates to music. Discuss the mood of the music as well. At this time begin to introduce your key vocabulary. The words for this lesson are score, lyrics, sound and music.

Lesson Two

The musical symbols can be introduced at this time. The staff, musical note and staff paper should be introduced. Keep it simple for the student. They also will be familiar with these symbols from their music class. Explain what each symbol means. After an explanation has been given, give each student some score paper. Emphasize that a score is written on this paper and we learned what a score is in the last lesson. As an activity let the students stick musical notes and staves on to the score paper. After the students complete this activity display their work on a classroom bulletin board. Decorate the boarder with notes and staff and the background with score paper. Your key vocabulary is musical note, staff and score paper.

Lesson Three

This lesson will began to look at language and literature more deeply. Introduce two fables or myths at this time. Using the song "Yankee Doodle" read the song and discusses the heritage. Tell the students what heritage means and that this

song is very old, the lyrics were written in 1755 by an English army doctor. He was making fun of the untrained American troops during the French and Indian war. Americans liked the words and began to whistle it through the American Revolution. Have the students draw a picture about the song with two or more sentences under the picture. The key vocabulary for this lesson is myth, fable, rhyme and heritage. At this time review your vocabulary. This should trigger a conversation about the previous lessons.

Lesson Four

This lesson is the field trip lesson. The field trip will involve a trip to the school library or a visit from the neighborhood children's librarian that will bring books. The books that the students will get they can use to do The Author's Chair in this lesson. Each student gets to sit in front of the class and discuss what the story is about that they have. You should have questions for each student to answer. The students should be able to answer questions concerning the plot, characters and the setting. They should also be able to tell you what the story is about and what was their favorite part of the story and why. At this time have the students project their voices to the audiences. This will prepare them for future performances. The key vocabulary words are plot, character, voice, author and setting. Make sure you are displaying the words on a chart or permanent board in the room. The questions that are listed in the strategies can be used at this time or you may want to make up some of your own. These questions will help in building comprehension skills.

Lesson Five

This lesson, when doing your communication in your classroom you will need to sing it. Prior to singing everything introduce the word opera. Give a definition for it and some lengthy explanation on its history. Play an opera clip so students can see it and know how the characters used their voice. You may want to sing early in the morning or for a certain period of time. Explain that an opera is singing a story and the costumes are very bright and bold. Also, that there are several different types of opera serious, comic, and romantic. Make the discussion simple and based on the film clip you choose. You may want to use a singer such as Marion Anderson. Opera is drama in which the text is set to music and staged. This definition is being given so that you have it without looking it up. The key vocabulary is opera, stage, costume comedy, romantic and tempo. The singing for a day will help improve the student's speech and tempo.

Lesson Six

This is the lesson to introduce some of the Italian words related to speed and volume. This is a simple lesson where the students get the opportunity to play different instruments as well. Before introducing the words explain what a conductor does. Model for the students as you teach and give an example for each word. While playing these instruments the student will use the following words,

1. Pianissimo- very soft
2. mezzo piano- moderately soft
3. mezzo forte- moderately loud
4. Fortissimo - very loud
5. Crescendo- getting louder
6. Decrescendo- getting softer

Teach each of the words using the instruments After each of the students have gotten familiar with volume now you can look at the speed (tempo).

1. Lento-slow
2. adagio- quite slow
3. moderato- at a moderate pace
4. Allegro- fast
5. Vivace- very fast and lively
6. Presto- very fast

Add this also while the students are playing. To make it more interesting for the students, let them take turns being the conductors. They can use the words as they conduct. You should have a ditto or have the words on the board, so they can be easily seen. There isn't any vocabulary for this lesson due to all of the new words introduced. You can also look at patterns at this time using repetition. You may want to limit your words to three or four words. This may make it easier for the students and you can repeat this lesson several times to insure understanding.

Lesson Seven

Exploring with puppets in this lesson. This lesson will involve conflict resolution. This is the opportunity to use problem- solving techniques. Have a worksheet made up of several situations involving conflict with in the story. If this is a younger group of students explain the conflict. Now make a web, put the conflict in the center and ways to resolve it branching out from it. Use this as an example to resolve something. Then introduce one of the conflicts with stick puppets you have already made, so the students can observe how to use them. This is the time to introduce musical theatre. Tell the students what it is and how it began. It began with a story with situations and how to solve it and how to solve it in an entertaining way. Have the students draw a face of each

of the characters limit the conflict to two people, so that the student has two characters to work with. Then give them Popsicle sticks to glue the characters heads to and they can act out the situations. Also make available in your room puppets so the students can freely explore them. The key vocabulary word is puppet.

Lesson Eight

This lesson will involve improvisation. I will use prop boxes to achieve this. A prop boxes is a box filled with different material such as hats, purses, and sport equipment, cooking utensils, dress clothes and other objects for the students to act with. The student will pick something out of the box and act out something that they can creatively imagine will go with the object. The teacher should do several examples and be very dramatic about it. Talk about acting and how people put on plays. Tell the students to show feelings and body movement. Let them know all this will help in communicating what they are improvising from the prop box. The key vocabulary words are prop, acting and drama.

Lesson Nine

This lesson will begin the choreography, which is the movement part of the lesson. This lesson will develop language skills and improve movement. The students should stand in a large circle with the teacher on the outside. Let one of the students go into the center with a stack of words. This game should be played like charades. Give each student the opportunity to do it. Have each student who gets a turn go into the circle. When the student gets a word such as comb. They will have to use their imagination and show body movement with out verbalizing what they are talking about to show what the word means. This lesson can help in teaching verbs and adjectives or if the students have spelling words to learn mix them up and let them show movement for them. The key vocabulary word is choreography.

Lesson 10

This is the review lesson. Show the movie Peter Pan Or James and the Giant Peach discuss some of the previous vocabulary words. Look at some of the components of that are in theatre or music. Discuss how this piece flows together and how the design, costumes and music are related. Generate creative thinking skills through open-ended questions concerning the plot of the movie. Introduce fantasy and reality. Have the students write the ending to

the film change it to their very own ending. You can also have them draw an ending and have them come to the front of the class to explain it. This will help with speaking skills. The key vocabulary words are fantasy and reality.

Lesson 11

Begin with a round of Lesson nine. Then review the word choreography and how it relates to a musical. Now you are ready to introduce the new lesson. This lesson will involve movement and coordination through the use of a game song. The song is “Miss Mary Mack”.

1. Have the students choose a partner.
2. Face your partner.
3. Slap your legs.
4. Clap your hands.
5. You and your partner clap right hands.
6. Clap own hands together.
7. You and your partner clap your left hands.
8. Clap own hands together.
9. Clap both hands of your partner.
10. Clap own hands

these are the steps to use while you are singing the song. The key vocabulary is movement. This will help inclusion students with attending and listening skills. This will help with auditory and motor integration. You can also discuss repetition of words and rhyming. This will also help increased ability to coordinate movement with rhythm. To do a warm-up you may want to do Simon Says or another movement activity. You should also learn the song before adding the movement. Then practice the movement. The key vocabulary is cooperation. The lyrics to the song can be found on one of the web sites in the appendices.

Lesson Twelve

This lesson will teach the students to dance with music, doing a Minuet. The Minuet was a dance of George Washington’s time. The songs lyrics will tell you the movement.

Lyrics:

Step, step and step and point your toe, (repeat two more times) and bow way down low. Step, step upon you're tiptoe, (repeat two more times) and bow away down low.

Sing the song and practice stepping, bowing and curtsying. Now make a double line. With hands held shoulder high, the girls left fingers should be on boys upturned palm. Keep plenty of room between couples. Beginning with the left foot, take three short steps forward. Repeat the three steps, but start with the right foot this time. Then repeat again starting with left foot. The couples then turn toward each other, and bow and curtsy slowly. Now facing each other, each couple joins right hands, holding them high. Putting one foot forward, the couples go upon tiptoe, and then step back. This movement is repeated. Still holding hands, the dancers in each couple turn around each other and face opposite directions, let go of hands, and bow and curtsy. The dance may be repeated with the lines moving in the opposite direction. This lesson will promote some of the gross motor skills and fine motor skills. The key vocabulary words are graceful, dignity and curtsy.

Lesson Thirteen

This lesson will involve review of what choreography is. The teacher can pick one of the previous movement lessons and have the other students do them. To make it more student centered let the student pick one of the previous lessons. You may also want to do a line dance that is popular or easy to teach. The electric slide is very easy to teach and do. At this time discuss how important movement is in a musical. Some of the things you may want to discuss is how movement can convey feelings and holds the musical together.

Lesson Fourteen

This lesson will discuss and sing a new song "Do-Re -Me". This song is from the musical the Sound of Music. In this lesson all of the skills from the previous lessons will be used. The students should be able to put more of themselves into it. Have the students make movement to go with the songs lyrics. This should take at least four lessons until the students have perfected the movement. After the students have refined the movement then they may want to invite a guest to see it. The parents can come and be the audience.

While taking this seminar I have learned that to perform is an on going learning process and that the musical evolves as the practices go on. I would also wish to speak about design. This element plays a major role in putting a musical together. The set (design) has to go with the performance and it will help convey what the lyrics or movement will not. This curriculum does not particularly discuss design as a lesson but will use it in its final performance. To get more information about design refer to the book *The Musical* in the bibliography.

BIBLIOGRAPHY/RESOURCES

1. Bentley, N. & Guthrie, D. (1996). Putting On A Play- The Young Playwrights Guide. Connecticut. The Millbrook Press.

This book shows a person how to put on children's plays.

2. Berbie, N. (2001). Music An A - Z Guide. New York. Scholastic.

This book is a dictionary of music related terms or words.

3. Flora, B. S. (2001). A to Z Early Childhood Curriculum. Grand Rapids. Instructional Fair.

This book has activities and lessons related to the alphabet.

4. Goldfish, M. (1993). Thematic Poems, Songs and Finger Plays 45 Irresistible Rhymes and Activities to Build Literacy. New York Scholastic.

The lessons in this book are related to reading and building lessons from them.

5. Kislán, R. (1995). The Musical - A Look At American Musical Theater. New York. Applause Books.

This book discusses the history of the musical and all the components. It also discusses some of the famous directors.

6. Northeast Foundation for Children. (1997). Yard Sticks Children in the Classroom 4-14 A Resource for Parents and Teachers. Massachusetts. Northeast Foundation for Children.

This book gives you tips on classroom management.

7. Raines, C. S. & Canody, J.R. (1989). Story Stretchers Activities to Expand Children's Favorite Books. Maryland. Gryphon House Inc.

This book gives you ideas and activities to go with the children's stories.

CLASSROOM MATERIAL

1 - C D player

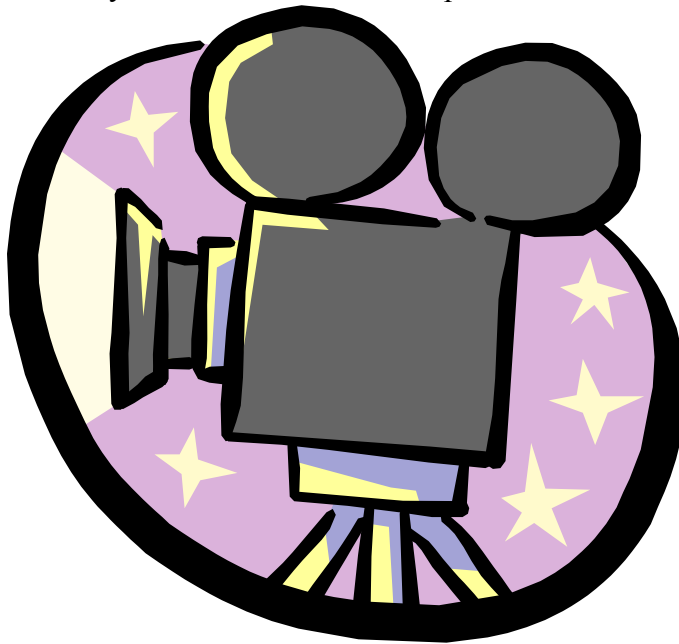
1-pack of index cards

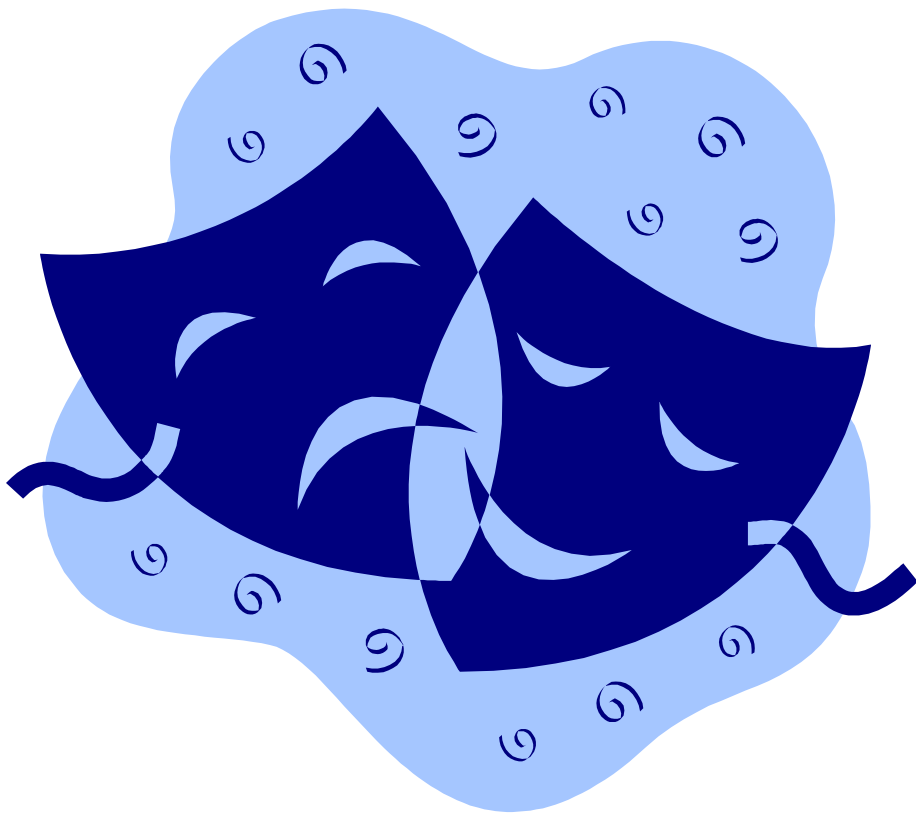
15- packs of magic markers

20 Pieces of score paper

- 4-packs of each staff and musical notes stickers
- 1- box of Popsicle sticks
- 3- large cardboard boxes
- 4- different types of hats
- 4- different types of shirts
- 4- different types of purses or bags
- 3- pieces of plastic sporting equipment
- 3- pieces of plastic cooking utensils
- 1- set of percussion instruments
- 1- of each opera, jazz and classical C D
- 1 – Peter Pan or James and the Giant Peach Video
- 1- Dance video
- 1- If I Could written by Judy Nayer book to read in Lesson 8
- 1- City Rhythm by Judy Nayer book to be read in Lesson 6
- 2- packs of construction paper (multi-color)
- 2- set of classroom puppets (approx. 24)

You may want to use some of the prints below when doing your lessons.





You can also make some of your own. Each of these pictures represents both genres. The masks are for theatre and the other for music.

1- Assessments can be made to accommodate the teaching style of the teacher. I will be using two different ones. The first one will be for the vocabulary, a simple test letting the students give the meaning of the key words. This can be done verbally or written. The second assessment is to assess the intention of the curriculum. That will be done through observations of the objectives being met.

1- Parent letter to get them involved and to let them know what the student is learning. This should be given out before you start the lessons for maximum parent involvement.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Content Standards – Arts and Humanities, Communication and Citizenship and Math

Arts and Humanities # 6- All student exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications.

Arts and Humanities #4- All students produce, perform or exhibit their work in the visual arts, music, dance or theatre, and describe the meanings of their work has for them.

Communications #6- All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications.

Citizenship #7- All students demonstrate their skills of communicating, negotiating and cooperating with others.

Citizenship #8- All students demonstrate that they can work effectively with others.

Math#3- All students apply the concepts of patterns, functions and relations to solve theoretical and practical problems.

Appendix B- Web Sites

1. www.stage.com - You can find all types of plays for your students or anything you may want to perform.
2. www.shadowboxtheatre.com - A company serving teachers and parents elementary and preschool.
3. www.mtishows.com - This site is an international site where you can find children's musicals.
4. www.proteacher.com - Website with finger plays and a resource room for teacher.
5. www.drama.com - This site links to different sites related to acting and plays.
6. www.abcteach.com - Lesson plan ideas, report forms and portfolio information.
7. www.teacher.com - A resource site for teacher.

The websites can be of great use when attempting to put a lesson of your own together and can give you ideas on every subject.

Appendix-C – Parent Letter

Dear Parents,

Our class will be doing a curriculum on musical theatre. We will be exploring all of the components in some detail. Your student will learn about music related topics, puppets and some elementary acting techniques. They will be looking at a musical in order to relate it to what they have learned. At the end of the curriculum the students will be learning a song that involves acting and movement. You will be invited to see the final performance.

If you have any related ideas or activities feel free to contact me at the school so it can be included in our studies.

Thank you

Appendix –D- Assessment

This can be through an observation checklist on some of the skills taught. A vocabulary test can be added as a weekly quiz. My intention for this curriculum will be assessed through the student involvement and the performance at the end of the curriculum.