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Intersections in theatrical and dramatic forms: An approach to holistic teaching artistry

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**Intersections in Theatrical and Dramatic Forms:
An Approach to Holistic Teaching Artistry**

An Honors College Project Presented to
the Faculty of the Undergraduate
College of Visual and Performing Arts
James Madison University

by Madeline Mojallali

Accepted by the faculty of the Department of Theatre and Dance, James Madison University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors College.

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Intersections in Theatrical and Dramatic Forms:

An Approach to Holistic Teaching Artistry

Abstract

In my research, I studied four theatrical forms: applied theatre and devising, creative drama, arts integration, and comprehensive theatre education. The purpose of studying these forms was to uncover how the forms and their corresponding pedagogies provide a Teaching Artist with skills to create an educational experience for youth. My creative project, teaching a theatre class for homeschool students, was a way to further my research by implementing what I learned while studying the forms. The goal of my creative project was to develop an environment where young people could successfully create theatre that was relevant to their life experiences. I studied these forms by reading books and articles, conducting interviews, observing classes, and engaging in participatory action research. Through my analysis of research, I found that understanding the functions of these forms helped me to uncover which contexts the forms would work best in. I also discovered that the forms all work in tandem to provide a teaching artist with the tools they need to have a holistic practice.

Introduction

In my sophomore year at James Madison University, I had the opportunity to study abroad in Russia. I worked at an arts camp for young people with disabilities. The students I worked with were all orphans, and since they had disabilities, they were not allowed to leave their orphanages once they turned 18. They would most likely be spending the rest of their lives

in these orphanages. I was astounded by the way that the arts worked in the lives of these students. What made me the most excited was that the students were at a camp that taught them real and valuable arts skills. They were not simply using the arts as a form of healing; they were also learning useful skills and becoming masters of certain art forms. This trip made me realize that in my teaching artistry, I want to provide my students with valuable skills that they can use as artists moving forward. It became a goal of mine to provide my students with the tools they would need to continue being artists even when I was not with them.

In my time as a student at James Madison University, I have been fortunate enough to be a part of a program called Independent Scholars. In this program, students create and design their own major. My major is titled Theatre for Social Change, Healing, and Education. As I speak about my positionality as a teaching artist in the following paper, it is important to note that this positionality has been shaped by the Independent Scholars program. Through this program and the creation of my own major I have been able to take classes in the fields of sociology, philosophy, women and gender studies, education, english, and theatre. This breadth of knowledge has provided me with a unique outlook on human beings. I've studied disability, universal design, intersectional feminism, girlhood identities, mental illness, and more to try and understand the experiences of people both similar and different from myself. I believe that this breadth of knowledge has made me a more empathetic person, which has shaped my positionality as a teaching artist.

To promote a comprehensive reading of this paper, it is imperative that I explain my stance on critical pedagogy, youth, and social justice. The term critical pedagogy was coined by Paulo Freire in 1968. Critical pedagogy is a unique approach to education where students are

active in their construction of knowledge. As opposed to a classroom where students are simply fed knowledge and content by an educator, a critical pedagogy classroom empowers students to question existing knowledge, mutually create dialogue, and think critically about their education (Leonard & McLaren 24). My positionality as an educator is that youth are complex, capable people with a great capacity for creativity.

I began studying critical pedagogy and different theatrical and dramatic forms because I wanted to uncover and engage in educational practices that empower youth instead of practices that suppress them. In his book *Children as Fellow Citizens: Participation and Commitment*, Micha De Winter writes about the “ladder of participation.” De Winter says that educational experiences can be seen as rungs of a ladder. Real participation exists higher up on the ladder in the situations where students truly have a voice in their projects and creative endeavors. All too often, students are left to the bottom of the ladder in the stages of “manipulation, decoration, and tokenism.” In these stages of “apparent participation,” the students are functioning to benefit the adult’s image (De Winter 105). For example, a teaching artist might put on a production where they give students no agency or decision making power because they feel pressure to meet the demands and expectations of the community. As a teaching artist, I want to make sure that the students I am working with never end up at the bottom of the ladder. Unfortunately, it can be easy for theatre educators and teaching artists to take away their students’ creative freedom and agency. There is often pressure from parents, community members, and those in charge to end a theatre class with a polished performance. In my work as a teaching artist, I am striving to combat this notion of a polished finished product being the most valuable takeaway of a theatre class. While I still work with my students towards the goal of a performance, I try to let go of the

notion of a performance that is perfectly finished and polished. All of the work I do as a teaching artist has a social justice lens because it is my goal to create an environment for youth where they have the creative agency that they deserve and seldom get. I chose to study Applied Theatre and Devising, Creative Drama, Arts Integration, and Comprehensive Theatre Education because these forms can be used to empower young people. Throughout the remainder of this essay, I will map out how the forms I studied intersect to create a positive educational experience for young people. These forms work together to create a holistic practice that honors the complexity of young people and promotes their wellbeing.

Significance

More often than not, theatre is not a part of young people's educational upbringing. Between 2008 and 2010, drama was offered in 4% of public elementary schools, and 45% of public secondary schools. Comparatively, music and visual art are offered more than drama and dance in public schools— 94% of elementary public schools and 91% of secondary public schools provided a music education between 2008 and 2010 (NCES 5-9). In a public school setting, theatre is not a required part of the curriculum, and when schools need to save money, theatre programs are often the first programs to be cut. In her book *Signs of Change*, Joan Lazarus, a scholar and theatre educator, remarks that “theatre as an academic subject is not mandated to be taught, and, in fact, is a classroom subject rarely offered in many states” (Lazarus 31). If a student in the public school system doesn't receive a theatre education at school, they may not receive one at all. One of the only alternatives is to spend a large amount of money attending private theatre programs in the community. Unfortunately, this is not an option for all young people due to socioeconomic status, location, and access to transportation.

When I began my research, I thought about the community that I was a part of—Harrisonburg, Virginia. I considered the students in Harrisonburg and what their access to theatre was like. Many of the public school systems in and around the Harrisonburg area are fortunate enough to have theatre programs because of the Any Given Child program. This program, which is sponsored by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, was implemented in June of 2015 and strives to provide all students with “...a comprehensive arts education that supports and encourages students to creatively connect and explore the value, relevance, and impact of the arts” (anygivenchildharrisonburg.org). In addition to the schools that now have theatre in the curriculum because of Any Given Child, many public schools in the Harrisonburg area already had theatre programs in place. For example, Skyline Middle School, Thomas Harrison Middle School, and Harrisonburg High School are three public schools in the area that already had theatre programs before the Any Given Child initiative. There are not, however, a good number of private theatre programs for students in the area, so if the students are not exposed to theatre in the public school setting, they may not be exposed to it at all. The theatre programs that I found for students in Harrisonburg during my research cost at least 135 dollars for around five sessions. I only found two programs in the Harrisonburg area and they were not running at the time I found them because they did not run year-round.

Since I was looking to work with a group of students in Harrisonburg who didn't have access to theatre, I decided that I would rule out the students in the public school system. I started to think about how the homeschool students in Harrisonburg received a theatre education. Unless their parents or someone in their homeschool cooperative had a knowledge of theatre, these students might not be able to access theatre. I decided that I would reach out to the

homeschool population of Harrisonburg Virginia, and offer worthwhile and inexpensive theatrical training to students who might not otherwise have access. I knew that there was previously a theatre program for homeschoolers in place at James Madison University created by Jonathan Martin, a James Madison University undergrad student, as a part of his honors capstone. I reached out to Jonathan about bringing this program back. I felt an immense responsibility to provide these students with a quality theatre education that would impact their lives not only as theatre makers but also as learners, collaborators, artists, and people. To create this educational experience, I researched the different theatrical and dramatic forms that I thought would serve myself and my students moving forward.

Research Questions

My research was guided by the following questions:

- How can I develop an environment where young people can successfully create theatre that is relevant to their life experiences?
- How do different theatrical forms (Applied Theatre and Devising, Creative Drama, Arts Integration, and Comprehensive Theatre Education) and their corresponding pedagogies provide a Teaching Artist with skills to create an educational experience for youth?

Project Overview

My facilitation of The Homeschool Theatre Class started in the Spring of 2017 and ran for three semesters (Spring 2017, Fall 2017, Spring 2018). Each semester the class ran for ten to twelve two hour sessions, with one additional session for set and prop making. The class had eight students in its first semester, and twelve students in the second and third semesters. The first and second semesters that the class was taught the students ages ranged from seven to

fourteen. The third semester that the class was taught the students were between seven and eleven years old. All of the students in the class were homeschooled and lived in and around the Harrisonburg area. It cost between thirty and forty dollars to enroll a student in the class, the first semester being thirty dollars for the ten to twelve sessions, the second and third being forty total. Seven students were enrolled in the class for one semester, four students were enrolled in the class for two semesters, and six students were enrolled in the class for three semesters. Two students were interested in coming back for a second or third semester but they were too old to be enrolled in the class again. One of these students came back in the leadership role of stage manager during his third semester working with the class. The class was capped at twelve students in the second and third semesters. There was a waitlist for the class during the second and third semesters. During the three semesters, my co-facilitator Maria Leckey (a James Madison University undergrad student and playwright majoring in Theatre and English) and I handled the administrative work.

Each semester had a similar structure. The first half of the class was spent devising scenes and engaging in drama strategies in order to create content for an original play. After enough content was generated by the students and some themes emerged, my co-facilitator Maria Leckey wrote a play using the students' ideas. After the play was written, we directed and designed the play and then performed it for friends, families, students, and other members of the community. Every play was performed only one time. Tickets were free in the first and second semesters, but the third semester there was a suggested donation for audience members to help keep the class running in the future. Each performance ran between thirty and forty-five minutes. At the culmination of the performance each semester, there was a potluck dinner for students,

families, and community members to get to know one another better and to ask questions about the performances.

The Homeschool Theatre Class was started by Jonathan Martin for his honors capstone project. When Jonathan graduated, the class did not continue for three semesters. I decided to reach out to Jonathan in hopes of getting the class back on its feet. Since taking over the Homeschool Theatre Class, I have changed the curriculum. Originally the students were provided with a script at the beginning of the semester that they worked on over the course of the class. When I took over the class I changed the curriculum so that the students were generating the content for the play that they would perform. While still focused on a final product, our class was more centered around the creative processes that we engaged in to get to the product. Jonathan provided me with the email list of parents to contact, the registration forms, which I edited, and guides for handling administrative aspects of the class such as parent parking and using a school credit card.

Research Approach

Throughout my time teaching the Homeschool Theatre Class, I applied the research that I was doing by altering my practices based on what I learned and reflecting on the impact of the changes I made. The bulk of my research took place between the second and third semesters that I taught the class (Fall to Spring 2018). In order to wrestle with the work I was doing in the Homeschool Theatre Class, I conducted interviews, observed theatre classes, and engaged in participatory action research to expand my learning more about the fields that tied into my work. The research I did informed the way I worked with my class. I worked to synthesize the research

I had done into concrete practices in my theatre class, and then to reflect on if these practices worked and how they functioned.

Background and Methodologies

When people hear the term “theatre” they often have a very specific picture in their head. In my experience, students, even those who have never taken a theatre or drama class before, have the expectation of putting up a play on a stage with costumes and lights. Theatre programs are flourishing and beginning all around the world that challenge the preconceived notion of what a theatre class “looks like.” Student centered productions and playmaking programs are becoming more popular. Theaters such as Synchronicity, Passage Theatre, 52nd Street Project, The Roundabout Theatre Company, Opening Act, and more are home to programs where students are the theatre makers. A theatre class is an opportunity for students to speak their opinions and have their voices heard. Giving students agency and creative license during a theatre class has just as much value, if not more, than putting on a performance or a production. The goal of my creative project was to develop an environment where young people could successfully create theatre that was relevant to their life experiences. To be effective in this endeavor, I researched different theatrical forms and how they intertwine to provide students with a holistic and educational theatrical experience.

In my experience as an Independent Scholar at James Madison University, I have found that diversity of research methodologies lends to a more comprehensive, integrated understanding of a topic. Beginning with academic research methods gave me enough insight into these forms of theatre to have an understanding of how to approach my more nontraditional research. In the following chart, I lay out the forms I studied, the definition of each form, and the

nontraditional methodologies I used to research each form. The research I did on each form provided me with insight into how to apply these forms practically while teaching the Homeschool Theatre Class. The application of these forms in my class setting is research in and of itself because it was a method of testing out the research I had done and how it functions in a theatre class.

Theatrical and Dramatic Forms

Form	Definition	Supporting Research Methodology
Applied Theatre and Devising	“Applied Theatre is what happens when a group of people working in community use the techniques of drama and theatre to address an issue of social concern” (<i>Theatre Dictionary</i>).	Interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Erika Atkins: Opening Act - Mitch Mattson: Roundabout Theatre Company
Creative Drama	“Creative dramatics is informal drama. No scripts are used. It is not created for an audience. It is an immediate experience for the child who supplies the thoughts, words and actions. Creative dramatics is an art form. It is always led by a trained teacher” (Ehrlich 75).	Participatory Action Research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guided facilitation of the Valley Scholars workshop - Guided Creation of Creative Drama Unit Plan
Arts Integration	“Arts integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both” (kennedy-center.org)	Observation of Arts Integration Classrooms
Comprehensive Theatre Education	“Instruction is holistic, authentic and allowed students to learn and practice collaboratively in roles of actor, director, playwright, designer, technician, critic, researcher, and audience. Curricular and co-curricular work intertwines production, history, criticism, and aesthetics. Integration of theatre study and practice takes place across arts disciplines, in other subjects, and in the school and community” (Lazarus 35).	Observations of Theatre Pedagogy in Schools

In the following paper, I lay out the ways in which a teaching artist can use these forms in tandem to create a holistic and educational theatrical experience for youth. Additionally, I touch

on how an understanding of these forms allows a teaching artist to prioritize certain forms over others based on the work they are doing with youth and the intended results. Each of the forms I studied have unique qualities that aid in serving specific purposes. I focus on what I found most significant about each form and how that can contribute to a holistic approach to teaching theatre.

Theoretical Framework

In this essay, I take on the framework of reflective teaching artistry. Through the reflection I have done before, during, and after teaching the Homeschool Theatre Class, I have created my own theory about intersectional teaching artistry. In reflexive practice, researchers must be self-aware to engage in an analysis of their own studies. They need to take note of and think rigorously about how the way in which they engage in their study influences those that they are working with and the outcomes of their work. In her book, *The Reflexive Teaching Artist: Collected Wisdom from the Drama/Theatre Field*, Kathryn Dawson lays out an approach teaching artistry that “provide[s] a foundational approach to reflexivity” (Dawson 41). I have loosely adapted Dawson’s method to create my own reflexive teaching practice. Throughout my work with the Homeschool Theatre Class, I have reflected in order to gain a better understanding of my work and its function in the lives of young people.

Organization of Essay

This essay will be divided into two parts. First, I will discuss what I learned while exploring my research question in regards to the theatrical and dramatic forms I studied. Second, I will speak to the takeaways from applying this research to my teaching and what implications

this has for my future as a teaching artist. I will also touch on the limitations and tensions I found throughout the study.

Exploring the Research Question

To explore my research question, I conducted interviews, observed classes, and engaged in participatory action research. What I found was that in almost all of the research I conducted, people were using multiple theatrical forms and their corresponding pedagogies in tandem to create an educational experience for young people. In the following section, I will touch on each of the forms I studied and what I learned about their function in a theatre classroom.

Applied Theatre and Devising

I decided to link applied theatre and devising because in my experience as a teaching artist, they have always been hand in hand. According to the theatre dictionary, applied theatre is “what happens when a group of people working in community use the techniques of drama and theatre to address an issue of social concern” (*Theatre Dictionary*). Devising refers to “the creation of original work... often in collaboration with other forms of performance” (Perry 65). Throughout my work as a teaching artist, I have found many ways to generate content with a group of students for an applied theatre piece, but the first and most obvious way was always devising. At the start of the Homeschool Theatre Class, it seemed to me like devising was really the only way to generate content with my students. After working on the class for three semesters, devising has become one of the many ways that we create content.

While devising definitions vary, for me the core definition is a group of people coming together to create original theatre. Depending on who you work with or speak to, devising is defined and conceived differently. What draws me to devising as a pedagogical practice is that it

requires rigorous thinking about storytelling, one of the most important aspects of being a theatre artist. In her article *Theatre and Knowing: Considering the Pedagogical Spaces in Devised Theatre*, Mia Perry links Freire's critical pedagogy to devising, remarking that both of these practices can be seen as "a development of and a reaction to more conventional practices" (Perry 65). Devising provides students with a different way of thinking that is active, student centered, and collaborative because it gets students to use their bodies, create their own content, and collaborate with one another. While the process of devising is a response to more conventional approaches of theatre, just like critical pedagogy is a response to conventional approaches to education, it is important to note that devising is not simply a contrast to traditional theatre methods. In her article *Devising Utopia, or Asking for the Moon*, Virginie Magnat says that instead of thinking of devising as a contrast to conventional approaches, "it might be more productive to envision devised theatre as offering a 'third way' beyond the constraints of such binary oppositions" (Magnat 75). Devising challenges the typical structure that students are used to, forcing them to think critically and engage with storytelling in a more active way than they are likely used to.

To further explore the topics of applied theatre and devising, I interviewed Erika Atkins and Mitch Mattson. Erika is the director of operations and communications at a theatre called Opening Act. Opening Act is a theatre company in New York City that partners with public schools that have "lower than average graduation rates (as few as 33% of students graduating in four years) and an evident lack of theater programming" (openingact.org). Opening Act uses the techniques of applied theatre and devising to promote leadership, commitment, and community building skills in their students. Erika spoke specifically about a program at Opening Act called

YESfest. With the students at Opening Act, teaching artists work to create plays that will be presented at a larger conference. All of the students who have been working with applied theatre get to come together and share their work.

Erika Atkins remarked that it is very telling to see the common themes throughout the plays; it helps the teaching artists to unpack what the students are going through as individuals and as a whole. The students also respond positively to being able to share their own stories and focus on what they are interested in. They have testified that creating theatre in this way has changed their lives for the better; one student named Franky says, “I went from being quiet and reclusive to becoming a leading public speaker at my school” (openingact.org). Speaking to Erika about the themes that come up throughout the students’ pieces made me realize that it is hugely important as a teaching artist to reflect on how the pieces connect to the students’ everyday lives. In his book *The Power of the Adolescent Brain*, Thomas Armstrong notes the importance of connecting to students’ personal lives. He remarks that, “failure to connect learning to students’ personal lives (e.g., ethnic backgrounds and cultures, families and communities, personal interests and hobbies, or daily experiences) obstructs students’ initial engagement with the material” (Armstrong 59). Applied theatre allows students to connect their learning of theatre making to their personal experiences. When speaking to Erika, I realized how important it is to understand students on a personal level so that I can understand what they are saying in their work. For example, the most recent play developed by the Homeschool Theatre Class is about a town called Imagination Valley where bacon grows on trees and the rain is maple syrup. On the surface, this may seem like a silly, light hearted, simple play. With a critical eye

however, it is possible to see that the students were perhaps inspired by the current condition of the environment and the negative effects that people's greed can have on our world.

Since speaking to Erika, I have tried to be more aware and critical of why my students are gravitating towards certain content. In our last play, I decided it would be helpful both for the students and myself to create a "community map." For our community map, each student used a picture that they had previously drawn of their character as an exercise. We rolled out a big piece of paper and decided where to situate each of these characters. We asked students to create a key and draw lines between their character and other characters to indicate relationships. They could show familial relationships, friendships, feuds, and other relationships. While I certainly do not claim that this map allowed me to understand everything my students were thinking, it did help me to make some realizations. The majority of students had drawn many relationship lines to other characters, but a handful of students only one relationship to another character. I felt that these relationship lines were indicative of who the students felt they knew on a personal level in our ensemble. After creating our community map, I decided to support the students who had potentially created less personal relationships. I did this through the use of ensemble building strategies where students have to use each others' names and learn things about one another. Erika's bit of advice reminded me the importance of stepping back and assessing what I could see in my students through their daily work.

One of the practices associated with Erika's use of applied theatre and devising is creating a specific lens for her students to work in. Armstrong remarks in *The Power of the Adolescent Brain* that "as students move into a stage where they need to develop the ability to make good decisions in preparation for adulthood, the school system provides fewer and fewer

opportunities for them to make choices” (Armstrong 39). In order to allow students the agency they deserve while also giving them the structure they need, Erika often creates a lens based on the students’ interests. She uses what she calls “context texts” such as an article from an important moment in history to ground the students in some sort of mutual understanding that they can begin their devising from. In this way, the applied theatre work done at Opening Act can also take on some of the features seen as arts integration, students are learning about historical moments through creation of a theatre piece.

In the facilitation of the Homeschool Theatre Class, we have always used a piece of literature as a lens for inspiration. After talking with Erika and contemplating the importance of choice and agency in student lives, I decided that for our third semester we would use a collection of poetry instead of one book. Each day before we created content we read three poems to our students. The students were allowed to use any of the poems for inspiration in the pieces they created. While the poems still provided a structure that our students needed, they allowed the students more freedom to generate content about what they wanted because there was more variety than when we used one book.

In addition to interviewing Erika Atkins, I interviewed Mitch Mattson, who is the associate director of education at the Roundabout Theatre Company in New York City. Before working at the Roundabout Theatre Company, Mitch worked at Arena Stage in Washington DC and was involved in their program called Voices of Now. Voices of Now is a program for youth in the DC area to share their stories and promote change in their communities (arenastage.org). When Mitch was working with Voices of Now, he said that they always posed the same question to their students at the start of the process: “If all the adults in your life were in the room and

their job was just to listen what to you, would you say to them?” This question guided the students’ creation of their autobiographical pieces moving forward. In this way, similarly to Erika, Mitch was giving his students agency and opportunities to choose within a structure where they could be successful.

In my research on applied theatre and devising, I found a few common threads that I think are significant. Because of the nature of devising, it is imperative to provide students with a strong structure that they can succeed in. In *Through the Body: A Practical Guide to Physical Theatre*, Dymphna Callery states that “chaos is a necessary process of devising” (Callery 164). Because of the loose structure of applied theatre and devising work, it is important to create a structure for new theatre makers so that they can be successful. Moving forward, the students can be given more artistic freedom, but only once they are flourishing within the guidelines that have been set out for them. Both Erika and Mitch found this structure in creating a lens or having a guiding principle for their work. For Erika it was using a source text, and for Mitch it was asking a guiding question.

Another common thread that I found in devising and applied theatre work was that it provided students with an opportunity to learn about theatre while connecting to their personal lives. In my conversations with both Erika and Mitch, it seemed that this connection to students’ personal lives encouraged the students to invest in their work at a deep and rigorous level. In her chapter on socially responsible practice in *Signs of Change*, Joan Lazarus remarks that it is the responsibility of a teaching artist to connect the work to “students’ lived experiences” and to “acknowledge [students’] realities in the work” (Lazarus 123). This practice of connecting to students’ lives also relates to my framework of reflexive teaching artistry. I learned throughout

these interviews that it is imperative not only to be reflecting on my practice for myself, but to reflect on my students' practices to understand how they are doing and what they are wrestling with in their work.

Creative Drama

Creative Drama work is different from applied theatre in that it does not end with a formal script or performance, but a lot of the processes can be similar. In *Creative Dramatics as a Classroom Teaching Technique*, Creative Drama is defined as “informal drama” where “no scripts are used” (Ehrlich 75). Creative drama does not exist for an audience, but for the students involved. The reasons I am drawn to the pedagogy of creative drama are very similar to the reasons I am drawn to applied theatre, but the difference is that there is no pressure of a performance. While a performance as an end goal certainly has merit, there are different benefits to simply using drama for the sake of creative exploration.

Working with creative drama is a great way to turn a group of students into an ensemble. In an ensemble, a group of theatre artists come together to work for a period of time on a piece. Michael Boyd, former artistic director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, says that ensemble requires trust and “empathetic curiosity” (Boyd 150). Creative drama also provides a teaching artist with the opportunity to promote skills in individual students such as “artistic sensitivity, awareness of self, others and the world... and dramatic imagination” (Pinciotti 1). To explore creative drama I engaged in participatory action research. Participatory action research is “a form of applied research [that] is intended to have some real world effect” (Walter 2). Specifically, I co-facilitated a workshop for the Harrisonburg Valley Scholars and I created a creative drama

unit plan, both with the guidance of Joshua Rashon Streeter, an assistant professor of theatre education at James Madison University.

Valley Scholars is a program in Harrisonburg through James Madison University that strives to help “local, talented children become the first in their families to earn their college degree” (jmu.edu/valleyscholars). In the Valley Scholars workshop I co-facilitated, our goal was to use creative drama to leave the students wrestling with the following question: “What is something that you can contribute or offer that can positively impact your environment?” One of the challenges of the Valley Scholars workshop was that the students did not all know one another, so we needed to make sure that they were comfortable with each other before engaging in certain drama strategies. One of my biggest takeaways from the Valley Scholars workshop was that although creative drama can be used to build an ensemble, we as teaching artists need to work carefully to scaffold up to creative drama where students are being vulnerable and sharing their personal opinions about the world.

In the Homeschool Theatre Class, we are very careful about scaffolding creative drama work because we have learned from experience that you cannot simply jump in to this work. Now, we begin our creative drama work on the second day of class. When we start our creative drama work it begins as individual work and it builds up to group work. For instance, we use creative drama to help our students create characters that they may choose to embody in their play. We want our students to understand these characters on a deep level, so we engage in creative drama strategies to let them get to know their characters. To do this we lead students through a guided improvisation with no words where they discover how their character walks, what their character looks like, what their character’s opinions are, and where their character

holds tension in their body. In this exercise the students walk around the room as their characters while contemplating certain questions such as “How old is your character?” or “What part of your character’s body is the most heavy?” On the third or fourth day of class we then move into a group improvisation. The group improvisation we do is called Town Hall Meeting. All of the characters the students have created get together at town hall to discuss an important issue. The issue usually comes from something that the students have been focusing on in their devising and applied theatre work. This more complex guided improvisation is successful because the students have been lead up to it. They engage in drama games where they get to know one another, they create characters with a clear point of view, and finally they express their characters point of view in a group setting.

The creative drama unit plan that I made was a great way to practice this scaffolding on a larger scale. The plan that I created also tied into arts integration. I used the story of the Great Barrier Reef being declared dead to explore how to take action in regard to the environment. Writing this plan also taught me that creative drama and arts integration can be practiced in tandem. I could teach my Great Barrier Reef lesson to students in a theatre class or students in a school because in the lesson, students learn valuable theatre skills and they gain knowledge on the topic of coral reefs and the environment. Just like in Valley Scholars, the creative drama work I was engaging students in served a purpose of teaching a lesson or getting students to understand certain content.

Arts Integration

Arts integration is defined by the John F Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as “an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art

form” (kennedy-center.org). In Harrisonburg, arts integration is practiced at Stone Spring Elementary School as part of the Any Given Child initiative. The reason that I am drawn to arts integration as a teaching artist is that I am constantly linking theatre to learning about the world. I believe that the students I teach can learn valuable theatre skills while also learning useful information about the world around them. When reflecting on my practice after my first semester teaching the Homeschool Theatre Class, I realized that I took for granted that all of the students I worked with were able to read and write. I began to think about how I would have accommodated those students who were not able to read and write, and how theatre could be used as a tool for teaching. I also thought about how arts integration strategies could help us get to our goal of a performance.

To study arts integration, I observed two classes at Stone Spring Elementary School. In the classes that I observed, the students were using the visual art form of clay to study different habitats. One of my takeaways from the arts integration classroom was the way its physical layout promoted students to construct learning together. The students were working in clumps of four and the teachers and student teachers could rotate around the classroom to help the students. When a teacher was not at one of the desk clumps and a student had a question, they often asked one of their peers across from them for help. In his book *Teach Like a Champion*, Doug Lemov examines the ways that the physical layout of a classroom influences classroom culture. Lemov speaks about six different ways to promote a positive learning environment for students in a classroom (Lemov 184-186). As a teaching artist, I will often teach in classrooms or theaters that are not my own. I realized when observing this arts integration lesson that I will not usually have the luxury of designing each room I work in with students. Because of this, I will need to create

accommodations in my lesson plans that allow me to alter the plans to different spaces. While space has a huge influence on the culture of a room, I will not always be able to work in a space that is ideal.

Another takeaway from observing the arts integration classroom was that students were using the art form as a way into the topic, but they were also using different, more traditional methods to study habitats. In addition to creating their models, the students had to write about their habitats and present posters to the class. In a theatre class, arts integration can be used to reach the goal of a performance. For example, in the second semester of the Homeschool Theatre Class, our play was about the election for the mayor of Harrisonburg. If we had the time, I think it would have benefited us to use arts integration strategies to study the way that politics work in the Harrisonburg community and the function of the mayor. While we could use drama strategies as a way into this work, a teaching artist could also promote rigorous thinking and encourage literacy in students by having them write letters to the mayor or write a letter as the mayor of Harrisonburg. Although creating a play was the end goal in the Homeschool Theatre Class, arts integration strategies could be used to teach students about the world around them while promoting a deeper understanding of the script.

In the future if I taught this class again, I would like to make more time to bring arts integration into the curriculum. Because of time constraints, arts integration often did not get incorporated as much as it could have. Each of the plays we created with the Homeschool Theatre Class had very important themes. In their work the students explored issues of politics, the environment, and coming of age. Because applied theatre often gets at themes that are

controversial or political in nature, I think taking the time to learn specifics about the themes that students were exploring would enrich their experiences.

Comprehensive Theatre Education

Comprehensive theatre education refers to an environment where students have the opportunity to take on the roles of “actor, director, playwright, designer, technician, critic, researcher, and audience” (Lazarus 35). As an artist, it is one of my core beliefs that we should strive to be well rounded theatre makers who can take on multiple roles. As a teaching artist, I want to allow my students to have the opportunity to explore these different roles before a collegiate setting. To explore comprehensive theatre education, I observed a theatre class at Thomas Harrison Middle School.

The class that I observed provided me with two main takeaways: students need to be exposed to all roles of a theatre artist to learn where they thrive, and allowing students to thrive in certain roles will help the entire ensemble. In the class that I watched, The students were studying Ancient Greek works— *Antigone* and *the Odyssey* by staging and performing in them according to what they had learned that week. While the teacher worked with one group, another group worked independently. The students had to create two physical traits and one vocal trait that helped to express their character based on what they knew about them. The students were also using this day to incorporate props and their masks that they had created for the performance. In this classroom, students were taking on multiple roles all at once, they directed themselves, acted, created masks, and incorporated props themselves. What I noticed while observing the group working on their own was that although the students were not given particular roles to follow, the students were gravitating towards the specific roles. Maybe they

were choosing to take on the role they were most excited about, or they knew they were best at. I realized that because the students all had the opportunity to take on all of these roles, they each found their niche within the ensemble.

In the Homeschool Theatre Class, our students take on the roles of actor, deviser, playwright, audience member, set designer, props master, costume designer, music director, stage manager, and more. For the most part, we don't allow students to only take on one role. After I observed class at Thomas Harrison, I thought about how I could honor students who thrived in particular roles. In order to do this, Maria and I offered a stage manager position to a student who was a leader in our class previously. He was too old to be in the class for a third semester, but we decided that since he thrived in a leadership role we wanted to help cultivate his leadership skills. What we didn't realize was how helpful it would be to have a student take on the role of stage manager. In the future, I would certainly be willing to take on more "alumni" of the Homeschool Theatre Class to grow in roles such as costume designer, set designer, props master, etc.

Outcomes and Conclusions

My research on applied theatre and devising, creative drama, arts integration, and comprehensive theatre education was useful to me in multiple ways. Learning the specifics of each form helped me to understand which contexts the forms would work best in. For example, applied theatre and devising are useful tools for empowering students, arts integration can be used to teach new topics in and out of a traditional classroom setting, and creative drama is a great way to encourage ensemble building among students. I also learned that these forms can all exist together in a teaching artist's toolbox to create a holistic pedagogy. In practice, I have used each of these forms in the Homeschool Theatre Class to create new content with my students.

Limitations of the Study

While working with our students, I found that our study was limited for a few reasons. Because of these limitations, I do not think that my findings would apply to all students, and I attempt here to come up with some alternative options for different students in different communities. While I will not touch on all of the limitations of the study, I will touch on three that are very significant.

One of the reasons that we were able to successfully create new work with our students in this amount of time was because of their family lives. The students all lived in homes where their parents were willing and able to help them rehearse their lines and blocking. The parents that we worked with all communicated with us effectively through email or text. Additionally, because of our students' flexible schedules, they had time to practice their lines each day and even get together to rehearse with other students from the class. In most other communities, this would not be the case, and we would need more time to work with our students both in a group and one on one. If we did want to keep the same time frame, we would most likely need to simplify the script we were working with. This is not a reflection on the students' capability, but rather the way that their environments influence the way they learn and their needs in class.

Another limitation in our study that I found was that we worked with some of the same students for multiple semesters. This was a huge benefit for Maria and I because when we were beginning our devising work, we intentionally paired new students with students who were more comfortable with devising. By the third semester, it seemed like we were much better at teaching our students how to devise scenes, and while I think we certainly made great strides, I also think we benefitted from our more experienced students helping the new students. This limitation

reminded me that often times I will be working with a group of students that I have never met before, who know nothing about theatre. In this case, the way that I teach devising will be very different from the way I teach it when I know some students are already aware of how to devise. I realized that this was a limitation when I was facilitating the College for Kids program with Maria. We had never worked with these students before and not all of them had been exposed to theatre. Our directions on devising scenes had to be much more scaffolded, scripted, and specific so that our students could be successful.

The final limitation of our study that I want to touch on was that all of our students, for all three semesters, were able-bodied. The majority of the work that we do in class has students up on their feet and moving. The students dress in sneakers and comfortable clothes for each class session because they will be moving around so much. With that being said, I know that it would be a huge challenge for me to do this work with students who were not able-bodied. When I create a lesson plan, I always add in accommodations for students with different levels of ability. I try to create accommodations in my plans even when I know that the group of students I am working with will not need them. I have been doing this for about a year now so that I remind myself to always think about ways to accommodate all students. My hope is that when I need to think on my feet in order to accommodate someone, I have already had practice and know what to do.

Tensions

The two tensions that I found most significant in my work highlighted my core values as a teaching artist. When I reflected on these tensions, it helped me to clarify some priorities in my work. The first tension that I found was that when blocking our plays, I often wished I had more

time to give my students acting notes or to coach them one on one. I realized that because of our time restraints, the creative work in devising and drama was prioritized over giving the students acting notes when we worked through the script. With that being said, I was shocked at how intuitive and committed my students were when working with the script. I realized that when we devised scenes in class, we always gave the students time to reflect on what they understood in each others' work. If students devised a scene that was unclear or they were not specific in their acting choices, their peers were not able to identify exactly what was going on in the scene. When this happened, Maria and I took the time to figure out with the students what we could have done to make the scene more clear. I believe that the reason my students had so much success with the script was because they were training as actors throughout our entire devising process, so when we got to the script they understood how to tell a story. While I still would have liked to spend more one on one time with each student to help them make acting choices based on the script, I believe that our coaching throughout the devising process provided the students with useful tools as they approached their scripts.

The second tension I discovered in my work occurred right at the start of the third semester that I taught the class. Maria and I made the decision to change the term "sex" to "gender/preferred pronouns" on the registration form because we believed that it would be more inclusive of all students. What we were not prepared for was the amount of pushback that we would get from the community we were working with. After we changed this term, we received a number of emails and phone calls from concerned and upset parents. I was shocked to see how much such a small change influenced people's view of the class. After reflection however, I realized that this change, although small to me, was not small to many individuals in the

community I was working with. This conflict became a powerful learning opportunity for me because I had to navigate making sure the community I was working with felt comfortable and safe without compromising my beliefs of inclusivity for all students. I am so grateful that I experienced this conflict in an educational setting where I had the opportunity to get advice from my mentors and teachers. Since then, I believe that I have been more cognizant of the values of each community I am working with.

Moving Forward

Throughout the facilitation of the Homeschool Theatre Class, I learned both through research and experience. Although I frame the homeschool theatre class as applied theatre on my resume and in my teaching artist portfolio, I have come to learn that it is much more than that. Understanding these different theatrical and dramatic forms has benefitted me and my students because it has given me insight into what my students need and how I can help them reach their goals. While I inherently used some of these methods before I researched them, I now have a more concrete understanding of how the forms function in a theatre classroom. Moving forward, I plan to continue learning about different approaches to teaching artistry so that I can continue to build my toolbox as a teaching artist.

Appendix A: Valley Scholars Workshop Lesson Plan

Valley Scholars Workshop November 11, 2017 Forbes Center for the Performing Arts

Group A 9:00-9:45

Group B 9:55-10:40

Facilitator(s): Josh Streeter, Madeline Mojallali

Strategies: Circle Dash, Exploding Atom, Character Traits, Devising with a Menu

Time Needed: 40 minutes

Materials Needed: Chart Paper, Markers, Character Trait Sheets, Water Bottle, Name Tags (if needed)

Space Needs: A Large Open Space

Grades: 8th-11th Grade

Essential Question (AKA Focus Question):

What is something that you can contribute or offer that can positively impact your environment?

Enduring Understanding:

You have something to offer your community!

FACILITATION PLAN

Introductions (Josh & Maddy):

5 minutes

Please make a large standing circle.

Josh and Maddy introduce themselves.

We are excited to explore theatre with you today, focused on what you contribute to your community. Before we get started, let's go around the room and say your name. However, when you say your name, please add a character trait before it.

[Pass out sheet.]

Consider how this character trait is something you both offer and self-identify as. For example, "energetic Josh" or "optimistic Maddy".

[Share]

Transition: Let's begin by engaging in a strategy called Circle Dash. This will get us moving, help us focus, and consider how we can work together as a group.

Circle Dash (Josh):

5 minutes

We will begin by silently “switching places” with one other person in the circle. When two people agree to swap places, it is important that they both commit to completing the switch.

After a few switches have been made, take away one space in the circle and stand in the middle.

Now, while the group is making their switches, the person in the middle will try to find an open spot before the two people who are trying to swap get to their places. The person left without a spot will come here to the middle of the circle, and the game continues. If I call out the words “all dash” that means that everyone, including the person in the middle, has to find a new spot.

Side-coaching:

- *Be sure to make eye contact with someone before you try to switch places.*
- *Please be aware of each other’s bodies when switching places and moving through the circle.*
- *More than one pair can switch at a time – so make eye contact and go!*

Stay in the circle.

Transition: *Now that we have warmed up a bit, we are going to engage in a strategy called “Exploding Atom” that will help us explore our topic for exploration.*

Exploding Atom (Maddy):**10 minutes**

This strategy allows us to think about and share with the class our own personal opinions. Know that this is a safe space and no one is judging your answers! Embrace your own opinion; it is our own personal opinions that make us unique and help us to express individuality.

We are going to place this water bottle in the middle of the circle. Imagine that each one of you are standing on your own line between you and the water bottle, like spokes on a wagon wheel.

I will read a statement aloud and you will think about your opinion on it. We will read the statement again, and you will decide if you strongly agree, strongly disagree, or feel as if you fit anywhere in between these two extremes. Moving right next to the water bottle means that you strongly agree (model), and staying where you are means that you strongly disagree (model). We will move silently, and discuss our opinions after we have expressed by moving our bodies. Does anyone have questions?

Let’s practice. Here is the statement. “I love chocolate.” I will read it a second time and then we will move silently. “I love chocolate.” We would then discuss by getting people to share about why they moved where they moved, what word(s) they zoomed in on, and how they thought about the statement. Everyone please reset. Any questions?

Statement #1: It is important that what you do is fulfilling to yourself and others

Side-coaching:

- *This is all about what you think so don’t worry about where others are moving. Have a clear point of view and commit to it.*

- *It is okay if you think differently than your classmates.*
- *After the activity is over we will discuss, please stay quiet for now to respect your classmates.*
- *This is a safe space where everyone's opinions are valid. No one is right or wrong.*

Reflection:

- *Look around the room. Find someone who is standing in a position that is not similar to yours. Get together with them and think-pair-share.*

Statement #2: It is more important to do what you are good at than to do what you love.

Side-coaching:

- *This is all about what you think so don't worry about where others are moving. Have a clear point of view and commit to it.*
- *It is okay if you think differently than your classmates.*
- *After the activity is over we will discuss, please stay quiet for now to respect your classmates.*
- *This is a safe space where everyone's opinions are valid. No one is right or wrong.*

Reflection:

- *Look around the room. Find someone who is standing in a position that is similar to yours. Get together with them and think-pair-share.*

Statement #3: It is important for youth like yourselves to give back to the community.

Side-coaching:

- *This is all about what you think so don't worry about where others are moving. Have a clear point of view and commit to it.*
- *It is okay if you think differently than your classmates.*
- *After the activity is over we will discuss, please stay quiet for now to respect your classmates.*
- *This is a safe space where everyone's opinions are valid. No one is right or wrong.*

Reflection:

- *From where you are standing individually, would anyone like to share why they decided to stand in this particular spot?*

Transition: *With these statements in mind, we will consider how you can support your community.*

Brainstorming, Sharing, & Devising Methods (Maddy)

10 minutes

Think about something you can do in your local community, whether this is in your apartment building, in your school, at your church, or in another setting. Consider the statements that we went over in the exploding atom and the character trait you shared at the beginning of the workshop. Think about how we are asking you to move beyond something you already do to a project you could do.

[Allow silent think time.]

Create groups of three, in your group share your ideas. Each person has 30 seconds to share.

In your group, I would like you to choose one of the three ideas to work on. You will create a scene based on the idea you selected. The scene will include:

- 30 Seconds Long
- All are involved.
- A clear beginning, middle, and end.
- Use of dialogue (voice) and actions (body).
- Develop clear environment and character.
- Use a _____ in a conventional or unconventional way.
- Select a focus:
 - o Overcoming a Challenge & How
 - o Impacting Others & How
 - o Showing What This Looks Like in Action

Once you have an idea, try out different ways to act out the scene. Consider rehearsal and revision to clearly communicate the focus of your scene to the audience and tell a clear story. You will have 3 minutes to create and rehearse your scene.

[Maddy and Josh side-coach and support participants as needed.]

Side-coaching:

- *How might this look in your bodies?*
- *What other ideas can you add to deepen the characters or conflict?*
- *How can you collaborate to involve all group members?*
- *Try the work out on its feet, rehearse what you would like to share with the group.*

[Do a simultaneous dress rehearsal.]

Transition: *As we share our work, consider how this is about being right or wrong, or guessing correctly. The goal of the process is to share the ideas you have create by using the tools of the theatre – your voice, your body, and your ideas.*

Sharing/Reflection (Josh):
10 minutes

Let's give the group a 3-2-1 Action.

D: What was the focus on the scene? [Refer to poster.] What was the environment? What was going on?

A: If you were to come up with a creative title for this scene, what would it be?

[After all have shared.]

R: What were some common themes that we saw across all the scenes? How does this connect back to your character traits? How does this connect to the ideas we heard in the exploding atom? How is circle dash a metaphor for work in the community?

Ending Statement:

Thanks for sharing your ideas and work with us today. We believe that theatre can be a tool to express ideas and consider what those ideas look like in action. The notion that theatre is recreating and

regurgitating plays on the stage is not all theatre is and can be. Often some of the most exciting theatre is created by youth like yourselves or is theatre for social change. We hope that you consider the work today as a way to begin to start dialogue in order to create change in your own communities.

Appendix B: Creative Drama Unit Plan

Creative Drama/Educational Drama Unit Drama for Social Change • Process Drama • Devised Theatre Extended Drama Overview

Name: Madeline Mojallali

Day Number	Drama Strategy	Objective	Materials Needed
1	Community Contract	The students will create class guidelines by devising rules that they can all follow in order to show respect towards each other, themselves, and their property.	Chart Paper and Marker
1	People Shelter Storm	The students will engage in this ensemble building activity in order to become comfortable with one another and to start thinking about how to support a community in need.	None
1	Crumbling	The students will use the metaphor of crumbling to discuss a time that they needed help and someone "picked them up."	None
1	Exploding Atom	The students will answer questions about how informed and concerned they are about the environment to help them begin thinking about the topic of climate change and its influences.	Water Bottle
2	Artifact	The students will analyze piece of coral from the coral reef by engaging in a D.A.R. process (Describe, Analyze, Relate).	Piece of Dead Coral
2	Soundscapes	The students will apply their knowledge of the Great Barrier Reef to create this environment with their voices and bodies.	None
2	This Setting Needs	The students will apply their knowledge of the Great Barrier Reef to create the setting with their bodies.	None

3	Real and Ideal	The students will work together to embody the different elements of the coral reef by creating real and ideal images.	None
3	Person In A Mess	The students will give advice to someone who needs help to understand the factors of climate change for a school report.	Glasses, Clipboard
3	Paired Improvisation	The students will express the issues surrounding the issue of the coral reef by discussing different ways to take action.	None
4	Role On The Wall	The students will analyze the feelings of a person who is dedicated to preserving the environment in a world where people do not always want to help.	Chart Paper and Markers
4	Headlines	The students will create headlines about the issue of climate change and ways that individuals can help preserve the earth.	Paper and Markers
4	Town Hall Meeting	The students will participate in a Town Hall Meeting where they push for legislation that helps to preserve natural habitats.	Chart Paper, Marker

Creative Drama/Educational Drama Unit

Drama for Social Change • Process Drama • Devised Theatre

Extended Drama

Facilitator(s): Madeline Mojallali

Question/Topic for Exploration: The story of the Great Barrier Reef being declared dead to explore how to take action in regard to the environment.

Strategies: Community Contract, People Shelter Storm, Crumbling, Artifact, Exploding Atom, Soundscapes, This Setting Needs, Real And Ideal, Person In A Mess, Paired Improvisation, Role On The Wall, Headlines, Town Hall Meeting

Introduction/Justification: While a lot of students understand that the environment is being negatively impacted by human waste and a variety of other factors, many students don't believe they can make a difference or take action. If the students understand what factors are contributing to the environment's decline, they can learn how to reduce their carbon footprint. Additionally, they can learn about how to push for legislation that will help the world they are living in.

Time Needed: Four days, 45 minutes each day.

Materials Needed: Chart Paper, Paper, Markers, Water Bottle, Piece of Dead Coral, Glasses, Clipboard, Digital Media Device to watch Videos

Space Needs: Open space to move and chairs

Grade(s): 5th and 6th grade

National Standards:

- Creating – Envision/Conceptualize (c): Imagine how a character’s inner thoughts impact the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.
- Creating – Develop (a): Devise original ideas for a drama/theatre work that reflect collective inquiry about characters and their given circumstances.
- Creating – Develop (b): Participate in defined responsibilities required to present a drama/theatre work informally to an audience.
- Performing – Select (a): Describe the underlying thoughts and emotions that create dialogue and action in a drama/theatre work.
- Performing – Select (b): Use physical choices to create meaning in a drama/theatre work.
- Performing – Share/Present (a): Present drama/theatre work informally to an audience.
- Responding – Interpret (b): Explain responses to characters based on cultural perspectives when participating in or observing drama/theatre work.
- Connecting – Empathize (a): Explain how drama/theatre connects oneself to a community or culture.
- Connecting – Interrelate (a): Investigate historical, global and social issues expressed in drama/theatre work.

Essential Question(s):

What is the Great Barrier Reef?

What factors contributed to the death of the Great Barrier Reef?

What can you do to help improve the earth’s health?

Enduring Understanding:

I have the ability to change the world in a positive way.

Learning Objectives:

- The students will create class guidelines by devising rules that they can all follow in order to show respect towards each other, themselves, and their property.
- The students will engage in this ensemble building activity in order to become comfortable with one another and to start thinking about how to support a community in need.
- The students will use the metaphor of crumbling to discuss a time that they needed help and someone “picked them up.”
- The students will answer questions about how informed and concerned they are about the environment to help them begin thinking about the topic of climate change and its influences.

- The students will analyze piece of coral from the coral reef by engaging in a D.A.R. process (Describe, Analyze, Relate).
- The students will apply their knowledge of the Great Barrier Reef to create the setting with their bodies.
- The students will apply their knowledge of the Great Barrier Reef to create this environment with their voices and bodies.
- The students will work together to embody the different elements of the coral reef by creating real and ideal images.
- The students will give advice to someone who needs help to understand the factors of climate change for a school report.
- The students will express the issues surrounding the issue of the coral reef by discussing different ways to take action.
- The students will analyze the feelings of a person who is dedicated to preserving the environment in a world where people do not always want to help.
- The students will create headlines about the issue of climate change and ways that individuals can help preserve the earth.
- The students will participate in a Town Hall Meeting where they push for legislation that helps to preserve natural habitats.

Facilitation Plan

Day #1

Drama Contract (5 Minutes)

Hi everyone! Before we get started today, we are going to work together to develop a drama contract.

As we work with each other, let's think about ways that we can make this environment comfortable for everyone. What is a rule that the whole class can follow that would help us to create a safe environment? Write down the student's responses. Get specific about what these rules look like in action.

Transition: *As we engage in our work this week, let's try to remember the guidelines we have just created for ourselves. To start our work, we are going to play a game called People, Shelter, Storm.*

Ensemble Building Strategy: [People, Shelter, Storm] (15 Minutes)

Count off the students into groups of three.

In each of these groups, two people will be a shelter, and the other person will be someone living in that shelter. A shelter is created by two people facing one another and putting their arms out to create a roof. Model one side of the shelter for the students. The person living in the shelter will duck underneath.

I am going to call out three words, “people, shelter, and storm.”

When I call out people, the people have to leave their shelters and find a new one. Let’s practice that a few times. Before we get to practicing, does anyone have any ideas about how we might play this game safely and without injury? Get a few answers and engage them.

Practice with the group calling out the word people a few times.

Great! Now let’s add on a layer. When I call out shelter, the shelters have to break apart and find a new person to build a shelter over. Now let’s combine those two things. I can now call out people, or shelter. Remember what we discussed about playing safely!

Practice people and shelter with the group a few times.

Okay, I think we are ready to add the last command! The last thing I will call out is storm. When I call out storm, we will all move around the space, swiftly but safely, for five seconds. At the end of the five seconds, you should form new groups with people and shelters. The people can now switch to become shelters and the shelters can switch to become people. Just make sure that each group has two shelter people and one person being sheltered.

Continue playing the game for a few rounds. If the students seem ready for it, allow one student to be the caller. When the storm is called, the caller tries to join a group and the person left out then becomes the new caller.

Side-coaching:

- *Remember our rules about playing safely!*
- *Find a group as quickly as possible.*
- *Remember, only the shelters (or people) can move.*

Reflection:

D: How did it feel to participate in this activity? Why?

A: What were some strategies you used to find a new group of people?

R: How were you helped by others and/or how did you help others as we engaged in this strategy? Thinking metaphorically, how does this game relate to the way that people give help to those in need during environmental disasters?

Transition: *Now we are going to engage in one more strategy to help us work as an ensemble and think metaphorically.*

Ensemble Building Strategy: [Crumbling] (10 Minutes)

Define the space that we will be using for the students and assign them numbers.

This next strategy is called crumbling. We will walk around the space silently and I will call out a number. The person or people with that number will call out “Crumbling!” then crumble their

body very slowly and safely towards the ground. At the same, the rest of the group tries to support the crumbling student to stand upright again.

Before we engage in this strategy, know that the goal is to support each other and keep one another from crumbling to the ground. So if you are crumbling, go slowly and safely, and if you are helping the person who is crumbling, get to them quickly but without running!

Side-coaching

- *I shouldn't hear anything unless it is the word "crumbling!"*
- *There are never too many catchers, so anyone can help out the person who is crumbling.*

Reflection:

D: How did it feel to crumble? How did it feel to be caught? How did it feel to catch others?

A: What are some skills that we used to successfully keep people from crumbling to the ground?

R: How can we relate the strategy of Crumbling to the strategy of People Shelter Storm?

R: What is a time in your life that someone has helped you or you have helped someone else when you were falling, either metaphorically or literally?

Transition: *We are going to use our time together to explore a topic through process drama. This means that we will engage in dialogue together, and then use our bodies and voices to express ideas through the use of theatre games! As we continue with our work, please keep in mind the drama contract we have created and the metaphor of people shelter storm as well as crumbling.*

Introduction to Question or Topic through Active Engagement: [Exploding Atom] (15 Minutes)

We are going to engage in a strategy called "Exploding Atom." This strategy allows us to think about and share with the class our own personal opinions. It is important to act respectfully toward one another, as it is our own personal opinions that make us unique and help us to express individuality.

Keep in mind our drama contract.

With that being said, please form a circle.

We are going to place this water bottle in the middle of the circle. Imagine that each one of you are standing on your own line between you and the water bottle, like spokes on a wagon wheel.

I will read a statement aloud and you will think about your opinion on it. Then I will read the statement again, and you will decide if you strongly agree, strongly disagree, or feel as if you fit anywhere in between these two extremes. Moving right next to the water bottle means that you strongly agree (model), and staying where you are means that you strongly disagree (model). We will move silently, and discuss our opinions after we have expressed by moving our bodies. Does anyone have questions?

Let's practice. Here is the statement. "I love to read." I will read it a second time and then we will move silently. "I love to read." We would then discuss by getting people to share about why they moved where they moved, what word(s) they zoomed in on, and how they thought about the statement. Everyone please reset. Any questions?

Statement #1: I am concerned about the negative impact of humans on the environment.

Side-coaching:

- *This is all about what you think so don't worry about where others are moving. Have a clear point of view and commit to it.*
- *It is okay if you think differently than your classmates.*
- *After the activity is over we will discuss, please stay quiet for now to respect your classmates.*
- *This is a safe space where everyone's opinions are valid. No one is right or wrong.*

Reflection:

Look around the room. Find someone who is standing in a position that is not similar to yours. Get together with them and think-pair-share about why you stood where you did.

Get a few responses based on what the students discussed in think-pair-share.

Statement #2: I am well aware of and understand the effects of people on the environment.

Side-coaching:

- *This is all about what you think so don't worry about where others are moving. Have a clear point of view and commit to it.*
- *It is okay if you think differently than your classmates.*
- *After the activity is over we will discuss, please stay quiet for now to respect your classmates.*
- *This is a safe space where everyone's opinions are valid. No one is right or wrong.*

Reflection:

Look around the room. Find someone who is standing in a position that is similar to yours. Get together with them and think-pair-share.

Get a few responses based on what the students discussed in think-pair-share.

Statement #3: I feel like I am able to make a positive impact on the state of the environment and the overall health of the planet earth.

Side-coaching:

- *This is all about what you think so don't worry about where others are moving. Have a clear point of view and commit to it.*
- *It is okay if you think differently than your classmates.*
- *After the activity is over we will discuss, please stay quiet for now to respect your classmates.*
- *This is a safe space where everyone's opinions are valid. No one is right or wrong.*

Reflection:

From where you are standing individually, would anyone like to share why they decided to stand in this particular spot?

Get a few responses from the students.

Ending Statement

The Great Barrier Reef was declared dead in 2016 by an environmental writer, Rowan Jacobsen. It was 25 million years old. When the ocean warms up because of climate change, the coral cannot live. There is no way for the coral to contain the algae which it feeds on in such warm conditions, and it starves. Let's watch this clip on the coral reef together to finish up our session today. While we watch, please consider the work we have done together thus far and how it relates to what you are seeing in the clip.

<http://www.express.co.uk/news/nature/721115/Great-Barrier-Reef-dead-2016-after-25million-years-Queensland-Australia-Unesco-obituary>

Day #2

Drama Strategy: [Artifact] (15 Minutes)

In our last class we looked at the damage that has been done to the Great Barrier Reef. Today, we are going to learn about what the Great Barrier Reef used to look like in comparison to what it looks like now so that we can understand the drama that the reef has undergone.

For this activity, we can sit in our seats.

Pass the dead piece of coral around.

As we pass this object around, take note of how it looks and feels. What are the colors, textures, shapes? What is its size? And please be careful with it because it is fragile!

Does anyone know what this object is? Get some answers. This is a piece of coral, from the ocean, but it is not living anymore. Coral is a living organism, just like the plants we see outside!

We are going to do a think pair share and answer some questions. Turn to the person next to you.

Reflection:

D: What do you see? What do you notice about the coral?

A: Why might this coral look and feel the way it does?

R: What do you think the coral would feel and look like if it were still alive?

Direct Instruction on the habitat of coral reefs. (15 Minutes)

Transition *Now that we have learned a bit about what lives in coral reefs, we are going to work together to create a soundscape of the Great Barrier Reef.*

Drama Strategy: [Soundscapes] (5 Minutes)

We can remain in our seats for this activity.

Take a moment to think about some of the sounds you might have heard in the Great Barrier Reef when it was perfectly healthy. You could be the sound of the ocean, the fish, a scuba diver, or anything else we learned about that lives in this environment. If you don't know the sound that your object makes, you can ask me or you can interpret this object metaphorically. You can use your body and/or your voice to create this soundscape.

Check in with thumbs to make sure everyone has had time to think of a sound.

Now, when I point to you, you are going to start your sound. Go around the circle until everyone is participating. Lead the class in crescendos and decrescendos.

Side-coaching:

- *Listen to the group; add new sounds or shift your sound to explore all possible aspects of place.*
- *Use your imagination or think back to the video clip to create some sounds that could be in this place.*

Reflection:

D: *What kinds of sounds did we use to establish a location?*

A: *Why did you choose your sounds? How did the sounds you chose help to evoke a sense of place?*

R: *Do you think the Great Barrier Reef would sound different now than it did 20 years ago? Why?*

Transition *Now that we have created a soundscape for the Great Barrier Reef, let's create a physical picture of this habitat with our bodies.*

Drama Strategy: [This Setting Needs] (10 Minutes)

Please remain in your seats for right now.

First let's start by practicing with an environment that isn't the Great Barrier Reef. Let's begin with the environment of a playground. Everyone take a moment to think of some of the things you find in the setting of a playground. When you an idea, please raise your hand. Call on a few students and invite them to create a frozen stage picture of their item. Great! So, if you have that idea for an item, you would say "this setting needs," and then say that object. Get the student to repeat that back. How can you represent that object with your body? Would you come up and show us? Get a few students to add on.

Okay, I think we have got the idea. Let's give our classmates a round of applause. Now let's play this same game with the environment of the Great Barrier Reef. Get a few students to say what

the setting needs. Ask them why they chose the object they chose. Once a few students are in stage pictures, ask questions.

From the audience, what do we see in this setting? What clues do the actors give you to help you understand who they are/what they are doing/how they feel about it? If you had to give this setting a title, what would you title it? Let's take out our cameras (model) and take zoom in on the part of this picture that stands out the most to you. Now take a picture of it! Great. Let's give our friends a round of applause.

Side-coaching:

- *Show me the character/object with your body. Be as specific as possible*
- *What else is missing from our setting?*

Reflection:

D: *How did we use our bodies today to create this setting?*

A: *What were some actions or relationships we saw in these images? Did it seem like anyone had a strong point of view of their object or character?*

R: *Based on what we saw our classmates doing, do you think they were a healthy Great Barrier Reef, an unhealthy Great Barrier Reef, or both? Why? What did you see that indicated that?*

Transition *Now that we have studied and worked on understanding the physical elements of the healthy and unhealthy Great Barrier Reef, we are going to start focusing on what it is that we can do as individuals to help our own environments.*

Ending Statement *While we may not be able to fix the issue of climate change all on our own, that doesn't mean we cannot make a positive difference in our environment. As you leave today, think of one action you could take to help improve the earth's health!*

Day #3

Today we will begin by creating real and ideal images of the Great Barrier Reef with our bodies.

Drama Strategy: [Real and Ideal] (10 Minutes)

Think back to yesterday when we played This Setting Needs. In that game, we used our bodies to create the environment of the Great Barrier Reef. Today, we will be using our bodies in a similar way.

Put the class in small groups.

Take a moment to think about what the Great Barrier Reef looks like now, and what it would look like in an ideal world. For the purposes of this activity, the organisms in the Great Barrier Reef can have a point of view about their situation.

Get thumbs to make sure everyone has had enough time to think.

Now, in your groups you are going to create two frozen stage pictures. One picture will be the real Great Barrier Reef as it is today, and another picture will be the way the Great Barrier Reef would look in an ideal situation.

Give the groups a few minutes to create their images. Check in with them as they create and side-coach if needed.

Now that we all have our real and ideal images, we are going to see what each group has come up with. Who would like to start?

We are going to use the strategy of “black out” to look at these images. When I say black out, everyone will close their eyes except the group who is getting into their image. When I say, “lights up” everyone can open their eyes. We will do this again when the group switches their image from real to ideal.

Do this with each group. Based on how much time there is, reflect between groups or after all of the groups have gone.

Side-coaching:

- *Is this an authentic representation of the real problem? If not how can we make it more real?*
- *How does the character get from the real problem to the ideal solution? What has to change? What actions might the character have to take? What other people might be a part of the solution?*

Reflection:

D: *What was the real issue explored in our work today?*

A: *What are some outside forces that shape this issue?*

R: *How could you work to help change these issues?*

Transition *Today our focus is on what factors influence the climate change that negatively impacts habitats such as the Great Barrier Reef and what we can do to change those issues.*

Direct Instruction on the Factors of Climate Change (15 minutes)

Transition *Now that we have learned about the factors contributing to climate change, we are going to help someone else to understand these factors too!*

Drama Strategy: [Person In A Mess] (10 Minutes)

In just a moment, I am going to go into role as someone who needs to write a report on the factors that contributed to the death of the Great Barrier Reef for school. You all are now scientists who are experts on the factors of climate change in relation to the Great Barrier Reef. You are going to help me write my paper by teaching me about the factors of climate change, the habitat of the Great Barrier Reef, and how they are related. Can we all agree that when I put on these glasses, I will be a student and you will all be scientists?

Go into role. Ask the students for help and write down their ideas for the paper. Once they have finished, go out of role. There is no DAR for this strategy because they are doing that throughout the strategy.

Transition *For our final game today, we are going to do a paired improvisation.*

Drama Strategy: [Paired Improvisation] (10 Minutes)

Everyone find a partner. In this strategy, we will be looking at a moment where one individual doesn't believe they can make positive change in their environment, and another one does. We will do this improvisationally, meaning we will make it up as we go, and we will all engage in the strategy at the same time so don't worry about having an audience.

Everyone pick an A person and a B person. A people, you are someone who thinks that you cannot do anything to improve the environment. Person B, you are someone who believes individuals can make a change in their environment. You are at the beach and you were discussing the Great Barrier Reef. Person A feels that they cannot take action to help the state of the Great Barrier Reef or the ocean. Person B decides to convince them that they can make a difference!

Give the students some time.

Side-coaching:

- *Incorporate your character's objectives into the scene. If they don't get what they want how can you try a different tactic?*
- *"Yes, and" an offer from your scene partner to continue the dialogue.*
- *How will your scene end? What decision or choice has been made?*

Reflection:

D: *How did that go for everyone? Why?*

A: *What did you discover about the conflict between these characters?*

R: *What were some ways that you told or were told that you could help the environment? Do you think you could really practice some of those things?*

Transition *Tomorrow, we will learn more about the actions that you can each take to help preserve and heal the environment you live in.*

Ending Statement *Right now, it may seem like you are just one person and can't make a change on this planet. After our work together tomorrow, I hope that you feel like there are some concrete steps you can take in order to preserve beautiful habitats such as the Great Barrier Reef.*

Day #4

In our work so far, we have looked at the habitat of the Great Barrier Reef, the factors of climate change, and how they relate. Today, we are going to finish up by discussing and putting into practice some concrete strategies for helping to improve the environment. First, we are going to think about how someone might feel who lives and works in Australia by the Great Barrier Reef.

The Great Barrier Reef is important to preserve for many reasons. As we have learned, without the coral reef, there will be no more fish. In Australia, the Great Barrier Reef is a huge tourist attraction and fishing is also very important. Without the reef, a lot of the people in this area will have trouble making money like they once did.

Drama Strategy: [Role On The Wall] (10 Minutes)

Think about how it might feel to have been a fisher when the Great Barrier Reef was dying.

What are some words or short phrases that could tell us how the fisher might feel when the reef was dying? Get a good amount of responses and ask the students why they chose their words.

What are some of the outside forces contributing to the fisher feeling this way? They could be people or ideas. Get a good amount of answers and relate them back to the lesson on factors of climate change.

Let's make some connections between these factors and the ways that the fisher is feeling. Get answers and ask why those connections were made.

Transition *Now that we have an idea about the impact climate change can have on people, let's learn about ways we can preserve our beautiful earth and help people like the fisher that we just described.*

Direct Instruction on ways to help preserve the environment on an individual and larger scale (15 Minutes)

Transition *Now that we have some knowledge of ways we can help improve the environment, let's put these ways into practice.*

Drama Strategy: [Headlines] (10 Minutes)

Pass out paper and markers.

Considering what we have learned about the Great Barrier Reef, create a newspaper headline that may have come out when the reef was dying and in its critical stages.

Allow students time to write their headlines.

We are going to share out our headlines by saying "Extra, Extra, Read All About It" and hearing three headlines, and then repeating "Extra, Extra, Read All About It" until we are complete.

Transition *In our last strategy, we are going to focus on what we could have done after seeing these headlines to combat the death of the Great Barrier Reef.*

Drama Strategy: [Town Hall Meeting] (10 Minutes)

In a moment, we are all going to go into role. I will be the mediator at a town hall meeting. We are in a coastal town in Australia that is being directly influenced by the death of the Great Barrier Reef. You will all choose a name and an occupation. I will give you a minute to think about who you are.

Give the students a moment to think. Check in with thumbs to see that they have all had enough time.

Ready? We are all going to go into role in 3 – 2 – 1 – Go!

Hello everyone! Welcome to our town hall meeting. It has come to our attention that our Great Barrier Reef is very sick and we are all gathered here to discuss the issue and possible reform we can put in place to help save our reef. Does anyone have any ideas? We are going to write them down on this paper and create some new town legislation.

Engage in a discussion with the students. Try to hear from each one of them. Work together to set some ground rules for the town that will help reduce its carbon footprint.

Ending Statement *As we end our work together, I want you to consider all we have talked about in these past four days. Remember that you have the power to make change in this world every single day.*

Appendix C: Revised Homeschool Theatre Registration Form

The JMU Homeschool Theatre Class

Starting February 14

Wednesdays 3:30-5:30 Forbes Center for the Performing Arts Room 1220

Ages 7-11

This Program costs a \$40 registration fee!

Student's Name: _____ Preferred Name: _____

Gender/Preferred Pronouns: _____ Age: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name(s): _____

Address: _____

E-mail : _____

Parent/Guardian Phone Number: Cell: _____

Home/Other: _____

Emergency Contact: _____ relationship to student: _____
 contact #: _____

List anyone approved to pick up student:

Student allergies:

Is there anything else we should know about your child?

- I hereby give permission for _____ to attend the Theatre class.
- I grant permission for my child to receive emergency medical treatment.
- I grant permission for my child to be recorded and photographed throughout the course. This information is for Madeline Mojallali and Maria Leckey to use in their professional portfolios and will not be shared or used for anything else.
- In consideration of you accepting this registration, I, (parent/guardian on behalf of student), intending to be legally bound and hereby waive or release any and all right and claims for damages or injuries that I may have against James Madison University and all of their agents assisting with the program and their representatives and employees for any and all injuries to my child & his/her personal property. This release includes all injuries and/or damages suffered by my child before, during, or after the event. I recognize, intend and understand that this release is binding on my heirs, executors, administrators, or assignees.

Signature of parent/guardian: _____

Date: _____

Appendix D: Drama Constitution Created By the Homeschool Theatre Class (Spring 2018)



Appendix E: Informal Homeschool Theatre Class Lesson Plan

This plan was written by Madeline Mojallali and Maria Leckey

HOMESCHOOL THEATRE CLASS ONE (Spring 2018)

1. Hey everyone!

2. Let's be friends...

1. Sticky waffle & Magic string - 7 minutes

2. Ensemble Building Games

1. Start Stop Game - 5 minutes

1. Arms, Knees

2. Name, Jump

2. Crumbling - 10 minutes

1. *In a moment, we will engage in a strategy called "crumbling." This will be our playing space for today. Indicate a large open area. To play this game everyone will be given a number between 1 and 12 (assign numbers). We will begin by taking a silent walk around the space. As you all are walking I will call out a number, and whoever I call will yell "crumbling!" After they yell "crumbling" they will crumble their body very slowly and safely towards the ground. At the same time, the rest of the group tries to support the crumbling student to stand upright again. Any questions?*

2. *Let's discuss a few ways that we can ensure we play this game safely.*

3. Truth About Me - 8 minutes

1. *Today we will engage in a strategy called the Truth About Me. Let's form a standing circle! In this strategy, we will learn about each other. One person will stand in the middle of the circle and they will say "The truth about me is blank." For example, I might say, the truth about me is I love chocolate.*
2. *Once you hear the statement, you will think about whether or not that statement is true for you. If it is true, you will try to find a new spot in the circle. The last person who does not have a spot will stand in the middle of the circle and become the new caller.*
3. *Try to call things that might be true about a bunch of people! Can anyone think of some things we could say?*

4. Knots - 10 minutes

1. Two groups of 6
2. First silently, then with communication
3. DAR: What strategies did we use to untangle the knot? Were there some strategies that worked better than others? What were some ways that we could have worked together better in this strategy?
How did we work as an ensemble in this game?

3. Other Games:

1. **Who Started the Motion - 7 minutes**
2. **Columbian Hypnosis - 8 minutes - ? depending on time**

3. Keeper of the Keys - 7 minutes

1. *In this exercise, I will choose one person to be the “Keeper of the Keys.” This person will wear a blindfold and sit in the center of the circle. It is their job to keep all of you from stealing their keys. Anyone in the surrounding circle can try and steal the keys, but if the Keeper hears you, they can raise their hand and point at where they heard the noise. If they point at the person who made the sound, that person has to go back to the edge of the circle and start over again. If anyone manages to successfully steal the keys without being heard by the Keeper of the Keys, we will pause the game, and everyone in the surrounding circles - including the person who stole the keys - will hold their hands behind their back so the Keeper doesn’t know who has the keys. The Keeper of the Keys will then have three guesses to find out who stole the keys. If they guess correctly, the key thief will then take the place of the Keeper of the Keys. Any questions? [Answer questions or model as necessary]*
2. DAR: What strategies did we use to keep the Keeper of the Keys from discovering who took the keys? Were there some strategies that worked better than others? How did we work as an ensemble to win the game?

3. BREAK - 10 minutes**4. Community Contract - write on board, synthesize later - 7 minutes**

1. *As we work together this semester, I want us to think about how we can create a safe, fun, creative space for everyone as we engage in activities and help build a community. Can we all think about a rule that the whole class can follow that will allow us to do this?*
2. *Thank you! Maddy and I will look over these and create a more cohesive community contract for next class.*

5. The class! - 10 minutes

1. What are we doing in this class?
 1. We're making a play together!
 2. You all will create characters, events, come up with ideas, and Maddy and I will write a play about it.
2. We are basing our play off of poems written by Shel Silverstein
 1. **Read the poems.**
 2. DAR
 1. What words stuck out to you as we were reading the poems?
 2. What could be an alternative title to some of these poems?

6. Let's make a scene! - 25 minutes

1. 3 groups of 4
 1. Group one: Anna, Sarah, Bailey, Daniel - edge of the world
 2. Group two: Evelyn, Katie Beth, Mattias, Silas - magic carpet
 3. Group three: Josiah, Jeremiah, Krysten, Kayla - mountain
2. **Ingredients**

1. A beginning, a middle, and an end
 2. Clear environment where a character has found themselves
 1. Edge of the world
 2. A place where a magic carpet took you
 3. A mountain where no one has ever been before
 3. Use at least one line from the poem
 4. A prop used in an unconventional way
 5. A clear objective (give examples)
- 3. Reflection - 10 minutes**
1. On the board
 1. What happened?
 2. What stuck out to you? What did we like?
 3. What was unclear?
4. END YES WE DID IT!

Appendix F: Informal Homeschool Theatre Class Lesson Plan

This plan was written by Madeline Mojallali and Maria Leckey

Homeschool Theatre Class Two (Spring 2018)

Materials: Newspaper for Islands, keys (keeper of the keys), bring props

1. Hi! - 9
 1. Warm up games - 15
 1. Magic String
 2. Sticky Waffle
 3. Walk like...
 1. You're underwater
 2. You just won the lottery
 3. You're on the moon
 4. You're moving through jell-o
 5. You're late for a meeting, but you want to look cool and totes profesh in the streets of new york
 6. Your mom is making brussels sprouts for dinner
2. Community contract review - 5
 1. Review Maddy and Maria's expectations #enforcingdiscipline #wearesogoodatit
3. Review scenes from last week - 10
 1. What happened?
 2. What did we notice? What was interesting to us, and why?
4. Other games
 1. Islands - 5

1. Prior to activity place sheets of newspaper around the floor of a larger area with one fewer sheets than the number of players. To begin, establish an outside perimeter for the activity that includes all the newspaper sheets and space to move. Introduce the activity
 2. *In a moment I will ask you to cover the space, making sure you don't tread on the paper. At some point I will say, "find an island." Then, each player needs to put his or her entire body on a sheet of paper to remain in the game. Once everyone is safe, I will remove an island or two and we will begin again. The goal is for the group to keep everyone on an island for as long as possible.*
 3. Begin the game. The group is safe if no part of anyone's body is touching the surrounding floor; multiple people will end up sharing one sheet of paper. End the activity when the whole group has successfully negotiated staying "safe" on a few remaining pieces of newspaper or when the students have collapsed in an amicable pile trying.
 4. DAR
 1. Describe: *What were some strategies we used to make sure everyone got on the Island?*
 2. Analyze: *How did we work as an ensemble?*
 3. Relate: *What are some ideas from our Community Contract that we practiced in this game?*
2. Keeper of the Keys - 10

1. *In this exercise, I will choose one person to be the “Keeper of the Keys.” This person will wear a blindfold and sit in the center of the circle. It is their job to keep all of you from stealing their keys. Anyone in the surrounding circle can try and steal the keys, but if the Keeper hears you, they can raise their hand and point at where they heard the noise. If they point at the person who made the sound, that person has to go back to the edge of the circle and start over again. If anyone manages to successfully steal the keys without being heard by the Keeper of the Keys, we will pause the game, and everyone in the surrounding circles - including the person who stole the keys - will hold their hands behind their back so the Keeper doesn’t know who has the keys. The Keeper of the Keys will then have three guesses to find out who stole the keys. If they guess correctly, the key thief will then take the place of the Keeper of the Keys. Any questions? [Answer questions or model as necessary]*

2. DAR

1. Describe: *What were some strategies that we used to keep the keeper from finding out who stole their keys?*

2. Analyze: *How did we work as an ensemble in this game?*

3. Great Game of Power - 7

1. Place a set of four chairs (all the same) in a row, along with a water bottle in front of a seated group. Ask for a volunteer to silently arrange the 4 chairs and a water bottle in such a way that, in their opinion, one chair has more power than all the other chairs. Explain that any of the objects

can be moved in any direction or placed on top of each other, but none of the objects can be removed altogether from the space. Sit in the audience and wait for a volunteer to arrange the chairs. Once the chairs have been arranged ask that volunteer to return to their seat and to not reveal his/her thinking behind the arrangement. Next, ask the group to interpret or “read” the image made by the chairs and water bottle:

2. DAR:

1. Describe: *What do you see? Describe the way the chairs are positioned.*
2. Analyze: *What does that position represent or make you think of? Why do you say that? What is another interpretation of this position? Which chair has the most power? Why?*

5. BREAK - 10

1. Poems for this week
2. Googloo: pg. 114 - light
3. Batty: pg. 139 - light
4. The Planet of Mars: pg. 93 - sidewalk

6. POEMS - 5

1. Read poems
2. Full body creature creation - 7
 1. *With those creatures in mind, please find your own space in the room. Spread your body out like a starfish in the sand, and close your eyes.*
 2. Put on some cool music.

3. *Now, in your mind, you are going to create a creature - a brand new creature - a creature that no one has ever seen before... except for you. First, think about your creature's face. What does it look like? Does it have big eyes, or little eyes? Does it have one eye, or eight eyes? Does it have no eyes? Are its eyes located on its fingers? On its tummy? On the back of its head?*
4. *How does your creature see the world? In black and white? In color? Can it see at all?*
5. *Think about its ears. How big are they? Where are they located? How good is your creature's hearing? Can it hear at all? What does its mouth look like? What do its eyebrows look like? How about its hair? Does it have any hair? Does it have hair all over its body, or maybe feathers? Does it only have hair on its feet? What do its feet look like? Does it have feet? Does it have legs? Does it slither around instead of walking? Does it fly? Does it hop? Does it disco dance across the room whenever it needs to move?*
6. *Now think about the body of your creature. How does it move? How does it talk? What language does it speak? Does it speak many languages?*
7. *How does your creature feel about other creatures? Is it friendly? Is it wary, or cautious? Is it excited to meet other creatures, or does it hide away on its own?*
8. *Take a couple minutes to think about other traits of your creature. Think about things that it likes, its favorite movies, its hopes and fears.*

9. *Start thinking about your creature's past. What are your creature's favorite foods? Favorite smells? Least favorite smells? Where was your creature born? What's your creature's birth month? How old is your creature? What's your creature's favorite flavor of ice cream? Favorite color? Favorite TV show? What kind of clothes does your creature wear? Is your creature a Mac user? PC's?*
 10. *What is your creature's name? What is its species?*
3. Drawing and writing - 30 minutes
 1. On your own, draw the creatures that you created.
 2. Also, you can write from your creature's perspective:
 1. Poem
 2. Diary entry
 3. Dictionary definition/description
 3. Bring them back together and make a family tree of the creatures

Appendix G: Email Invitation to Attend Homeschool Theatre Class (Fall 2017)

From: Mojallali, Madeline Rose - mojallmr

Sent: Saturday, August 19, 2017 4:08 PM

To:

RH

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Be

[\[Click to unsubscribe\]](#)

Subject: Homeschool Theatre Class

Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to inform you that Maria Leckey and I will once again be teaching a theatre class for homeschoolers! You are on this email list because in the past you expressed interest in signing your child up for the class either when I taught the class with Maria Leckey, or when Jonathan Martin taught the class with Chrissy Johnson.

For those of you who do not know me, my name is Madeline Mojallali and I am a senior at JMU. I am double majoring in Musical Theatre and Theatre for Social Change. I have a good amount of experience working with children of this age group as does my co-teacher Maria Leckey.

I taught the theatre class for homeschool children at JMU last year with Maria. With the class, we created, wrote, and put on our very own original production! I have also worked as the education intern at Mill Mountain Theatre in the Summer of 2016 and assisted in teaching camps for kindergarteners through high school seniors. Maria and I both have a great deal of experience working with young theatre students.

Maria and I would love the opportunity to work with children on theatre skills such as ensemble building, use of the body and voice, and devising (creating original works of theatre). We plan to work with the kids in the upcoming weeks to create a piece of theatre that will be performed on November 5. Last year we got our inspiration for our play from the book *Oh the Places You'll Go*, and this year we plan on using the book *The BFG* by Roald Dahl for inspiration. I think that Maria and I can provide your children with some really fun and useful tools as theatre artists and as people.

We will only be taking 12 students into the class because we like to give individual care and attention to each student. The class will run on Wednesday afternoons from 3 to 5 pm in the Forbes Center for the Performing Arts and is open to ages 7-14. There is a fee of 40 dollars total for the class. The class will start on Wednesday September 6 and run through Wednesday November 1 (10 sessions total) with a performance on Sunday November 5 followed by a potluck meal. If you would like to sign your child up for the class or have any further questions, please send me an email back and I will send you a registration form and a parking permit form. Additionally, if you are in a co-op or have any friends with children who would be interested, feel free to forward this email along. Thank you so much for your time!

Madeline Mojallali

Appendix H: Program Designed by Students for Fall 2017 Performance



Space Jelly: A Galactic Dr. Seuss Adventure

Created by The Homeschool Theatre Class

Written By Maria Leckey

Directed and Designed By Madeline Mojallali and Maria Leckey

Special Thanks:

Ben Lambert

Jonathan Martin

Chrissy Johnson

Parents of the Homeschool Theatre Class

Jonathan Stewart

Terry Dean

Character Breakdown:

ANNA - The Narrator - Anna

JEFF - A Hakken-krak - Joshua

MOM / LOST SPACE ALIEN - Katie Beth

DAD / JELLY / FISHERMAN - Josiah

VILLAIN BOSS / GIRL - Lydia

SPACE ALIEN / NASA GUY - Lily

ROGUE SPACE ALIEN / WOMAN - Sarah

SALESPERSON / DMV WORKER - Braeden

Space Jelly: A Galactic Dr. Seuss Adventure

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ROGUE SPACE ALIEN / WOMAN - Sarah

SALESPERSON / DMV WORKER - Braeden

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