

Theatre Arts Lesson Plan

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Art Form: Theater Arts
Grade Level(s) Middle School; High School

Class Objective: Students will gain an understanding of dialogue, subtext and objective.

LEVEL ONE

The Set-up

Working in pairs, students improvise conversational scene. Have 2 students read and play following sample scene to clarify exercise:

A:	How's Everything?	B:	Nothing.
B:	OK.	A:	Nothing?
A:	OK or OK?	B:	Nothing. Zero.
B:	OK.	A:	Sorry I asked.
A:	What did you do last night?	B:	Don't be.

Encourage students to speak clearly and to hear the other actor's voice and to sense what may lay behind the words. Call it the subtext.

Follow up the conversational scene with reflection, such as:

- What was the relationship between Actor One and Actor Two?
- Was there a subtext?
- Was tension present during the dialogue? If so, where? How was it expressed?
- What is the body language saying?
- Does the tone or volume of the voices change during dialogue?

LEVEL TWO

The Subtext and Points of Tension

Pair up students, giving them 5 minutes to create an "improvise" dialogue. At end of time limit, place students in audience, and call up pairs to play out dialogue (have them sit or stand facing each other; vary distance of players). Draw reflection questions from what took place during dialogue. Ask questions that draw attention to detail and possible points of tension. Ask questions about credibility of scene.

LEVEL THREE

The Objective

At some point during the playing out of dialogues, give a pair of students the following directorial revision: Play your scene out again, only this time I want you (indicate

student) *to get the person to like you*; and, I want you (indicate other students) *to pull out of the conversation as politely as you can*. Follow the revised scene with reflection concerning playing (or not) of objectives, and draw comparisons between scene one and revised scene; what changes did you see as they tried to pursue their objectives?