

Lesson Plan: Reader's RADIO Theater

Portions of this lesson plan were adapted from Laurie Henry's "Readers Theatre" lesson plan on the International Reading Association's website, available online at:

http://www.readwritethink.org/lessons/lesson_view.asp?id=172

Objectives

Students will practice reading with fluency and expression.

Students will perform and record a Reader's Theater piece to use for repeated readings in class.

Students will evaluate their own Reader's Theater performances.

FL Sunshine State Standards (<http://etc.usf.edu/flstandards/>)

LA.3.6.3.2 - identify and explain different production elements used in media messages (e.g., color, sound effects, animation) and use the elements appropriately in a multimedia production.

LA.3.1.5.2 - adjust reading rate based on purpose, text difficulty, form, and style.

LA.3.1.7.6 - identify themes or topics across a variety of fiction and nonfiction selections;

LA.3.2.1.3 - identify and explain how language choice helps to develop mood and meaning in poetry (e.g., sensory and concrete words as well as figurative language);

Materials

Reader's Theater scripts

Highlighters

Recording Device (Laptop with Microphone, iPod with Microphone, Digital Audio Recorder, Tape Recorder, or Video Camera)

Evaluation Forms

Procedures

Overview

Students become excited and enthusiastic about reading when they are presented with the opportunity to participate in Readers Theatre. In this lesson, students perform in groups, and practice using their voice to depict characters from texts. Through this activity, students have the opportunity to develop fluency and further enhance comprehension of what they are reading. By recording their voices, a student is able to evaluate his or her own vocal performance. Digital recordings enable publication of student work to a much broader audience and facilitate the creation of a digital classroom library.

From Theory to Practice

Kimbell-Lopez, K. (2003). Just think of the possibilities: Formats for reading instruction in the elementary classroom. [Reading Online](http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=kimbell-lopez/index.html), 6. Available: http://www.readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=kimbell-lopez/index.html

- The use of Readers Theatre can offer a different context in which students are exposed to texts focusing on poetry, science, social studies, or other content-related topics.
- Readers Theatre is another way to enhance comprehension of text, as well as to create interest in and enthusiasm for learning.
- The Readers Theatre format provides an opportunity for students to develop fluency through multiple readings of the text by using expressiveness, intonation, and inflection when rehearsing the text.

Instructional Plan

Preparation

1. Choose a variety of above-level, on-level, and below-level scripts. Here are some online sources for RT scripts:
 - <http://www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm>
 - <http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/>
 - <http://www.timelessteacherstuff.com/>

2. Review Aaron Shepard's tips for Reader's Theater online at <http://www.aaronsherp.com/rt/Tips.html> to develop a good understanding of using Readers Theatre in the classroom. You may also want to photocopy selected pages from these sites and distribute them to students as assigned reading the night before the first session.
3. Make multiple copies of the selected scripts (enough for each member of the cast and a copy for the teacher).

Instruction and Activities

1. Introduce Readers Theatre to your class. Give an overview of what it is and how it will be used in the classroom. Review Aaron Shepard's "RT Tips: A Guide to Readers Theatre," which provides tips on staging, scripting, and reading. Encourage students to apply these strategies in their preparation and performance.
2. Assign groups to work with selected scripts, keeping in mind student reading levels.
3. Introduce a Readers Theater evaluation form and make sure that students are aware of how their performance will be assessed.
4. Place students in groups to work with selected scripts, and assign students in each group the role (or roles) they will read.
5. Have students use a highlighter to highlight their roles in the script. It is a good idea for each student in the group to use a different color highlighter or for students with multiple roles to highlight each of their roles in a different color.
6. Provide time for the groups to practice reading through the scripts. Circulate around the room and give assistance as needed.
7. Have groups take turns "performing" their script in front of the class.
8. Lead a class discussion on ways that the groups could make their performance more enjoyable for the audience, reminding them of tips from "Readers on Stage." Also discuss what sound effects may help communicate the story to the audience. Brainstorm ways to create those sound effects during the recording.
9. Record the students performance of the text.
10. Play the recording for the class and have each student complete an evaluation form on himself or herself. Make anecdotal notes on students' fluency to use as an informal evaluation.

Assessment

After listening to final recording, each student will complete an evaluation form on his or her own performance. During the final recording, the teacher will take anecdotal notes on each student's fluency.