

Young Audiences of Massachusetts

Educational Materials

Please forward to teachers

7/20/09

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

David Zucker: *Odyssey of the Mime*

Grade levels: 6-12

Enter the mysterious, silent world of mime with David Zucker. David makes each traditional mime performance unique by creating an environment that allows for improvisational interplay with his audience. **Odyssey of the Mime** is based on David's earlier **Mime Magic**, a program enjoyed by thousands of students and teachers over the past 15 years. It contains the same spontaneity and spirit, as well as a curriculum-based focus. Students also enjoy added material on mime training and history and its relationship to poetry.

LEARNING GOALS:

1. To develop an appreciation for mime as a means of expression.
2. To expose students to traditional mime and improve their observation skills.
3. To help students explore and understand the possibilities of non-verbal communication.

PRE-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Multicultural Communication*

Discuss different means of communication. Divide the class into groups. Assign the whole class one simple phrase to communicate and give each group a different means of communication. Ask students to practice and share their phrases with the class using their assigned languages. Discuss the differences.

POST-ACTIVITY SUMMARY: *Performing Pantomime*

Ask groups of students to choose scenes from books they have read recently. Have them practice and perform their scenes for the class using only pantomime. Ask the other students to guess what happened in the scene.

CURRICULUM LINKS:

English Language Arts, Health/Phys. History and Social Science, Theater

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PRE-ACTIVITY: MULTICULTURAL COMMUNICATION

LEARNING GOAL:

To explore different types of communication

TIME:

Two 45-minute sessions

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

- * Communication - a process by which information is exchanged among individuals through a common system of symbols, signs, or behavior
- * Language - a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, sounds, gestures, or marks having understood meaning

STEP 1:

Brainstorm ideas about the words "communication" and "language." Create a bubble chart. Discuss the definitions of the two words as they appear in the dictionary.

STEP 2:

Discuss various means of communication in different places (foreign languages, sign language, hieroglyphics, etc.). Discuss the concept of pantomime as a means of communication. Have students ever seen a mime perform?

STEP 3:

Divide the class into groups. Assign each group a language or form of communication, such as Spanish, sign language, pantomime, French, Morse code, etc.

STEP 4:

Assign each group the same simple phrase. Give groups time to study their language and figure out how to communicate the phrase to the rest of the class.

STEP 5:

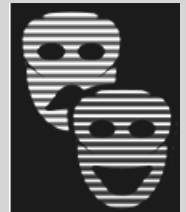
Have groups present their phrases to the class. Discuss the different means of communication used. Which were easier to understand? Which were more difficult?

EXTENSIONS:

- 1) **Discuss** different types of non-verbal communication other than mime (e.g., sign language, hand signals for directing traffic, conducting music, etc.).
- 2) **Discuss** mime as a universal language. What barriers does mime break (e.g., foreign language, hearing impairment, special needs, disabilities, etc.)?



Young Audiences of Massachusetts
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<http://www.yamass.org>



POST-ACTIVITY: PERFORMING PANTOMIME

LEARNING GOAL:

*To create a mini-skits using only mime

*To understand a scene that uses mime as language

MATERIALS/PREPARATION:

Clip from a silent film, VCR or DVD player

TIME:

1 hour

TIPS FOR THE TEACHER:

* You can either allow students to choose a scene from a book they have read or give students a choice of a few simple scenes that you have created.

STEP 1:

Show students a clip from a silent film. Discuss how the characters still come to life without sound. Explore how movement served as a means of communication in silent films.

STEP 2:

Divide the class into small groups. Ask groups to choose a scene from one of the stories/books they have read recently. (They should not tell each other which scene they have chosen.)

STEP 3:

Have students work together to create a mimed performance of their scene. (Students can speak to each other when practicing their scenes.)

STEP 4:

Have student groups perform their mime skits for the rest of the class. (The other students should take notes on what the mimed scene might be.)

STEP 5:

Discuss what each scene was about. Have students share why they felt it was difficult to understand some scenes and easy to understand others.

EXTENSIONS:

1) **Have** students examine a series of images, illustrations, or cartoon strips without speaking. Have them write or tell a short story about the series without any prior discussion.

2) **Conduct** a silent lesson.



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RESOURCES:

Alberts, David. Talking About Mime: An Illustrated Guide. Heinemann, 1995.

De Paola. Sing, Pierrot, Sing: A Picture Book in Mime. Harcourt Brace, 1987.

Kipnis, Claude. The Mime Book. Meriweather Publishing, 1988.

Straub, Cindie & Matthew. Mime: Basic for Beginners. Plays, 1984.

ABOUT THE PERFORMER:

David Zucker is an actor, director, playwright, teacher, and mime. He has performed thousands of programs for hundreds of thousands of children with Young Audiences since 1977, and is a popular guest artist with 6 other YA chapters across the U.S.. In 1996 David was chosen from over 900 ensembles across the country and honored with Young Audience's National Artist of the Year award. Mr. Zucker is the author of two original plays and of the children's book, *Uncle Carmello*. In 1987 David won the "Best Director" award from *Dramalogue* magazine for his work on *The Little Prince*, which has been performed in Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and on tour throughout the United States. David has taught T'ai Chi since 1973 and travels internationally conducting workshops. He holds a 6th degree black belt in the Zen martial art of Shim Gum Do, and has a M.F.A. degree in Acting from Brandeis University. For more information, please consult the web site www.poetry-in-motion.com.

ABOUT YOUNG AUDIENCES:

Young Audiences of Massachusetts (YAMA) is the oldest, largest and most utilized arts-in-education organization in the state and one of the largest in a national network of 33 chapters. For over 45 years, YA has been serving as a link between teaching artists and the region's school children, providing dance, storytelling, music and theater programs to children in schools, libraries and hospitals in the form of assembly performances, workshops and residencies. The organization's mission is to encourage lifelong engagement with the arts by making them an integral part of every child's education.



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MASSACHUSETTS CURRICULUM FRAMEWORKS CONNECTIONS

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| <i>Language Arts 3</i> | ...make oral presentations that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience, purpose, and the information to be conveyed. |
| <i>Language Arts 9</i> | ...identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed. |
| <i>Language Arts 10</i> | ...identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the characteristics of different genres. |
| <i>Arts-Theatre 1</i> | Acting...develop acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes. |
| <i>Arts-Theatre 5</i> | Critical Response...describe and analyze their own theatrical work and the work of others using appropriate theater vocabulary. |
| <i>Arts-Theatre 10</i> | Interdisciplinary Connections...apply knowledge of the arts to the study of English language arts, foreign languages, health, history, and social science, mathematics, and science and technology/engineering. and scripted scenes. |