The Arts: A Content Course for Teachers

Seminar 1: Theatre
Teacher’s Packet

Approved for Professional Development Training by the Kentucky Department of Education. A KET professional development workshop for educators developed in partnership with the Institute for Arts in Education and the Kentucky Center for the Arts.

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Introduction to the Seminar and Series

Targeted Audience: Arts and humanities teachers, all levels

The Arts: A Content Course for Teachers features programs on the elements and principles of three art forms assessed in Kentucky schools: theatre, dance, and music. Rather than focusing on teaching strategies, these programs are designed to enhance teachers’ knowledge in the arts. The programs all feature hands-on activities and entertaining video segments as well as instruction from practicing artists and art educators.

The first seminar in the series features J. Daniel Herring of Stage One children’s theatre in Louisville. Using excerpts from Signature, KET’s series on regional writers (specifically, the programs on playwrights George Wolfe and Marsha Norman) and excerpts from the Stage One productions of Frankenstein, The Great Gilly Hopkins, and Pinocchio, Dan demonstrates the development of scenarios using both dialogue and monologue; the way in which an actor develops a character; and simple methods for including lighting, costume, and scenic design in classroom and school productions. He also provides tips for teachers to follow when directing and staging a play.

Please note: Participants should have a grade-level appropriate piece of literature on hand to use in developing a scenario with dialogue and monologue.

About This Teacher Packet

In addition to the introduction to the seminar and series, this packet includes an agenda for the program, a brief biography of the seminar presenter, and specific materials related to seminar content. You’ll find more details in the table of contents on page 3.

Seminar Format

This 90-minute program was produced on location in Louisville. Any information needed for participation in the seminar is included in the videotape and/or this teacher packet.
Professional Development Credit

Stage of Participant Development: Practice/Application

The Kentucky Department of Education has approved all KET Star Channels Seminars for professional development credit if schools or districts choose to include them in their professional development plans. Districts or schools may choose to include preparation and/or follow-up time as part of professional development. For example, if a teacher participates in one 90-minute program and spends an additional 30 minutes in related activities, he or she could be awarded a total of two hours professional development credit.

Individual teachers who wish to use these videotapes for professional development credit should check with their school professional development chair or with their district professional development coordinator.

Professional development can also be used to satisfy requirements for the fifth year program. Contact your local university or the Division of Teacher Education and Certification at 502-564-4606 for more information.
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About the Seminar Presenter

Presenter **R. Daniel Herring** is the associate producing director of Stage One Professional Theatre for Young Audiences in Louisville. Dan has a B.A. in theatre from Virginia Tech and an M.F.A. in child drama from Arizona State University. While at Stage One, Dan has developed classes and workshops for students and teachers; written study guides for Stage One productions; led after-play discussions; served on numerous arts education committees; and directed plays. He has also published articles in *Youth Theatre Journal, Drama/Theatre Teacher, Drama/Contact, Reading Horizons*, and *The Middle School Journal*, as well as co-authored and contributed to books in the field of drama education. In addition to his work with Stage One, Dan teaches in the Institute for Arts Education each summer and serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Louisville.
Theatre Vocabulary

actor: a performer who assumes the role of a character in a play

characterization: how an actor uses body, voice, and thought to develop and portray a character different from himself

conflict: when characters’ actions and wills oppose each other, creating tension

costume: an outfit or piece of clothing worn by an actor to communicate information about the character or the environment

designer: the person responsible for planning any visual or sound aspects of a production, including costume, set, props, lights, make-up, and sound

dialogue: spoken conversation between two or more characters

director: the person who guides actors and designers to develop a plan according to his or her interpretation

expression: physical and vocal aspects used by the actor to convey mood, feeling, or personality

improvisation: the spontaneous unscripted use of speech and movement to act out a particular situation

lighting: the placement and color of light to communicate environment, mood, or feeling

make-up: use of cosmetics and wigs to transform an actor into a character

mime: the art of conveying ideas without words

monologue: a long speech or passage spoken by one character

mime: gesture and movement used by the actor to indicate the presence of imagined objects

playwright: the person who develops and writes the script for dramatic performance

plot: the events and relationships that form the basis of a play’s story

producer: person who provides the financial and/or administrative support for a production

properties (props): any moveable object that appears on stage during a performance, from a telephone to a train

scenery: the theatrical equipment, such as curtains, flats, backdrops, or platforms, used in a dramatic production to communicate environment

set: the acting area, including scenery and props

script: the written dialogues, description, and directions for a dramatic performance
Recommended Resources for Teaching Drama

Supplies ideas the author has used successfully in secondary school. Focuses on the use of movement, rhythm, dance, and music as a way of fostering imagination.

The use and value of creative dramatics in religious education.

A practical, experience-based text on the use of creative dramatics in religious education.

Focuses on playwrighting for children and adolescents, starting with pantomime and improvisation and leading to writing exercises.

Provides guidance for selecting stories and presenting them effectively.

Techniques for teaching young children both in language arts and across the curriculum, with activities that start with dramatic play and move to more formal drama.

Describes an experimental creative drama workshop in an inner-city New York church.

Describes the author’s 27-year career teaching in a single school, emphasizing ways he stimulated his students’ creativity.

Practical ideas for teachers who want to include creative drama in their curriculum.

A wide variety of stories drawn from rarely represented folktales.

A book to guide teachers of the youngest pre-primary and primary students.

Highly recommended for middle school and high school teachers.
Specific outlines of lessons the authors used with younger children, including music, literature, and children’s reactions.

An account of Haggerty’s first teaching experience, teaching creative drama to children in a London ghetto school.


Chapters are arranged to guide teachers from simple to more advanced techniques, including pantomime, improvisation, songs, and games. Includes suggestions for teaching college students.


Meant for classroom teachers who have no background in theatre, but who would like to use drama with their students.

Exercises for use with adults as well as children. Focuses on spontaneous response to the unexpected and using that response in controlled situations.

All the stories included in this collection have been successfully dramatized in the classroom.

Recommended to both specialists and generalists working in schools, recreation programs, and therapeutic settings.

One half of this book is set up for creative drama workshops and includes rhythm and drama, group poetry production, improvisations with large groups and “no audience” activities. The second half contains dramatic sketches.

Divided into three sections for children 5-7, 7-9, and 9-12, the exercises in this book progress from simple to complicated.
Useful for having some ready-made plays that deal with African culture. Includes *The Man Who Loved to Laugh.*

Explores how sounds and actions can be used to capture the imagination of younger children.

Geared toward more experienced teachers, this book contains 20 essays by experts in the field of teaching drama to children.


These books combine theory and lesson plans with scope and sequence of objectives; geared toward classroom teachers specifically.


Tested, successful activities for classroom teachers and recreation leaders.

Teaching creative drama successfully in nontraditional spaces and places (for teachers as well as recreation leaders).

Contains an abundance of short, lively suggestions for improvisation.

Ideas for using the neighborhood library as the site for dramatic activities with suggestions for starting points, games, group management, visual aids, and culminating activities.

Covers imagery, the Rutgers Method, drama structures, and “starters.”

Designed for classroom teachers who are required to teach drama but have little or no background in it. Includes clear guidelines and practical activities.

Lots of good ideas for games, warm-ups, mime and movement, and activities with props and costumes as well as suggestions for improvised plays.


Ideas for working with older students, including advanced improvisation and producing end-of-term plays.


Workbook-style book for elementary school teachers including dramatic activities, goals, and assessment checklists.


Stories include introductions that are particularly useful to less experienced drama teachers, but the book is useful for more experienced teachers as well.


Intended for more experienced teachers and graduate students, this book discusses the philosophy of drama, the teaching of drama, and individual experiences and uses of drama.


Sklar’s approach to creating an animal, object, natural (wind or sun), or human character is simple and direct. He has students answer certain questions in character and then write about their performances.


Detailed, informative text that presents the author’s philosophy of teaching drama to children.


Highly recommended for the beginner, this book provides a succinct introduction to Slade’s ideas concerning drama and children including minimal adult imposition.


Comprehensive handbook for teaching and directing, primarily for adults. Appropriate for more experienced teachers who can adapt the material to fit their students. Includes variety of theatre exercises and games.


Spolin’s adaptation of *Improvisation for the Theatre* for inexperienced classroom teachers.


Contains materials teachers and recreational leaders should find useful in teaching creative drama.


Geared particularly toward teachers of very young children with ideas for stimulating creativity through music, mime, movement, and language. Highly recommended.

Inspiring book for people who work with children in the arts. Illustrations depict children experimenting with color, movement, and music, as well as creative drama.


Arranged according to age level and use, including dramatics in schools, recreation, therapy, and religious settings. Valuable for both inexperienced and expert teachers.


Rich variety of stories arranged according to children’s ages (includes ideas for children from six to 14).


Stresses the development of the whole child, with special attention given to older students.


Includes challenges, projects, descriptions of the author’s classroom experiences, management tips, and more.

www.artsednet.getty.edu

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org
Theatre Resources Available from KET

**Arts Toolkit: Drama**
Visit [http://www.ket.org/artstoolkit/drama/](http://www.ket.org/artstoolkit/drama/) for information and online resources related to the KET Drama Arts Toolkit. The Toolkit includes videos, video excerpts, and accompanying teaching and informational materials to help you address Kentucky academic standards as well as to build your own knowledge of drama.

Kentucky teachers may order the Drama Toolkit from KET. Visit our ordering information page at [http://www.ket.org/artstoolkit/drama_order.htm](http://www.ket.org/artstoolkit/drama_order.htm) for complete details.

**Instructional Television**
You can learn about the programs listed below and other instructional series and programs available from KET by searching our online Instructional Videos Catalog at [www.ket.org/itvvideos/](http://www.ket.org/itvvideos/).

*Appleseed John*
Students in grades 3-7 will enjoy this 90-minute Stage One production about a young farm girl who meets John Chapman, the legendary Appleseed John.

*Liz’s Circus Story*
Kentuckian Liz Bussey Fentress’s one-woman play spans 23 years, beginning when Liz is 21 and newly graduated from the University of Wisconsin. Originally produced at Horse Cave Theatre and adapted for television by the playwright/performer, this 60-minute program is suitable for students in grades 6-12.

*Electronic Field Trip to Horse Cave Theatre*
This 30-minute program showcasing Kentucky’s Horse Cave Theatre gives students a behind-the-scenes look at theatrical production.

*Wind in the Willows*
Stage One, Louisville’s professional theater for young people, adapted Kenneth Grahame’s classic children’s novel for the stage. This 90-minute program, intended for grades P-8, includes the play itself plus a short segment on how the stage performance was transformed into a television production.

*Words Like Freedom/Sturdy Black Bridges*
Geared toward high school students, this 60-minute program features African-American writers and performers giving dramatic readings of their own works and the works of other black women.

**Editor’s Note:** KET often airs Kentucky and national productions and plays on its evening schedule (KET1 and KET2). To learn about current programming, check in *Visions*, KET’s program guide (available at the back of *Kentucky Monthly* magazine) or go to “Watch” on the KET Web site, [www.ket.org](http://www.ket.org).
Seminar Activity

1. Using a grade-level appropriate piece of literature, write a scenario using dialogue and monologue to dramatize a portion of the book.

2. As a follow-up activity, have someone else read your scene aloud. Listen carefully and then rewrite the scene based upon what you heard.
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