

Unit 2: Radio Theater and Improv Theater, Grades 7 and 8

17 Class Meetings

January 2026

Essential Questions

- How do you act out scenes in a play?

Enduring Understandings with Unit Goals

EU 1: Theater artists use improvisation to explore and create meaningful acting choices.

- Employ improvisational theater activities to introduce acting concepts.
- Create ensemble through improvisational activities.

EU 2: Theater artists bring scripted scenes to life by asking questions of the work and using their imaginations to create choices.

- Build script fluency through scene work.
- Increase ownership of the role and imaginative risk taking through scene work.

Standards

National Core Arts Standards: Theatre

TH:Cr1.1.8 a. Imagine and explore multiple perspectives and solutions to staging problems in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.8 b. Imagine and explore solutions to design challenges of a performance space in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.8 c. Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character's inner thoughts, objectives, and motivations in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr2.1.8 a. Articulate and apply critical analysis, background knowledge, research, and historical and cultural context to the development of original ideas for a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr2.1.8 b. Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr3.1.8 a. Use repetition and analysis in order to revise devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr3.1.8 b. Refine effective physical, vocal, and physiological traits of characters in an improvised or scripted drama/ theatre work.

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- TH:Cr3.1.8 c.** Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted drama/ theatre work.
- TH:Pr4.1.8 a.** Explore different pacing to better communicate the story in a drama/theatre work.
- TH:Pr4.1.8 b.** Use various character objectives and tactics in a drama/theatre work to overcome an obstacle.
- TH:Pr5.1.8 a.** Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.
- TH:Pr6.1.8 a.** Perform a rehearsed drama/theatre work for an audience.
- TH:Re7.1.8 a.** Apply criteria to the evaluation of artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.
- TH:Re8.1.8 a.** Recognize and share artistic choices when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.
- TH:Re8.1.8 c.** Apply personal aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs to evaluate a drama/theatre work.
- TH:Re9.1.8 a.** Respond to a drama/ theatre work using supporting evidence, personal aesthetics, and artistic criteria.
- TH:Re9.1.8 b.** Apply the production elements used in a drama/theatre work to assess aesthetic choices.

ISAAC Vision of the Graduate Competencies

- Competency 1:** Write effectively for a variety of purposes.
- Competency 2:** Speak to diverse audiences in an accountable manner.
- Competency 3:** Develop the behaviors needed to interact and contribute with others on a team.
- Competency 4:** Analyze and solve problems independently and collaboratively.
- Competency 5:** Be responsible, creative, and empathetic members of the community.

Unit Content Overview

1. Improvisation

- Employ improvisational theater activities to introduce acting concepts.
- Create ensemble through improvisational activities
 - **Key Terms and Vocabulary:**
 - 4 rules of Improv
 - Who, What, When, Where, How

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- Objectives
- Setting
- Improvisation
- Tactics
- Urgency

2. Scene work

- Build script fluency through scene work in a Radio Play
- **Key Terms and Vocabulary:**
 - Dialogue
 - Monologue
 - Blocking/ Staging
 - Play
 - Stage Directions
 - Scenes
 - Projection
 - Enunciation
 - Articulation
 - Character
 - Foley Sound
 - Radio Theater

2. Perform a radio play or commercial in the Winter Theater and Dance Performance.

- Increase ownership of role and imaginative risk taking through scene work and the play.

Interdisciplinary Connection:

- Math (Geometry): Lines, shapes, angles, proximity in physicality
- ELA: character, setting, dialogue, script, writing

Daily Learning Objectives with *Do Now Activities*

Students will be able to...

- Compare and contrast radio theater and theater
 - *Do you listen to the radio? What do you listen to?*
- Assess a radio play script or radio commercial script and know how to accurately read it.
 - *What makes a voice performance believable when the audience can't see the actor?*
- Examine Foley artistry and its role in radio theater
 - *How can you create a vivid setting using only sound?*
- Create a Radio Commercial Script.
 - *What is a commercial you remember? Why?*
- Analyze a Radio play script.
 - *What's the difference between writing a script for radio and writing one for the stage?*
- Rehearse the beginning of the play or the radio commercial script.
 - *How do voice actors use voice and tone to build trust or excitement?*
- Rehearse the middle of the play or the radio commercial script.
 - *How can sound effects become a 'character' in a radio play?*

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- Rehearse the end of the play or the radio commercial script..
 - *How do pauses, silence, or background noise affect the way a scene feels?*
- Synthesize all the scenes together to make a full play and/or radio commercial.
 - *Fill out the Performance Checklist in your theater journal.*
- Rehearse the full play onstage
 - *What are your rehearsal goals for today? (Memorize Lines, Know Blocking, Project?)*
- Rehearse the full play onstage using the performance checklist
 - *Circle your goals on the performance checklist*
- Perform a Radio Play or commercial in the Theater and Dance Winter Performance.
 - *Use the "How Do You Feel?" chart to rate how you feel about performing the scenes and monologues.*
- Reflect on the play.
 - *Write one thing that went well and one thing that could have gone better in the performance.*
- Apply the four rules of improv into theater exercises.
 - *Complete the sentence in the theater journal: Improvisation is...*
- Investigate and apply character objectives (*who and what*) through improvisational theater exercises.
 - *Write the name of a person or character (everyone should know/ know of this person) on a small piece of paper. Fold it and put it in the box.*
- Construct a setting (*where*) through improvisational theater activities.
 - *Write the name of a place that everyone understands/ knows of on a small piece of paper. Fold it and put it in the box.*
- Apply the concepts of tactics and urgency (*how and when*) through improvisational activities.
 - *In your theater journal, write what motivates you to move quickly and do your best.*

Instructional Strategies/Differentiated Instruction

- Whole group instruction
- Visuals of instructions for assignments
- Plan for the Day (Visual and Aural)
- Scaffolding (Building on theater skills)
- Repetition
- Imagery
- Silent Cues
- Visual learning, Aural Learning, Kinesthetic learning
- Sentence starters
- Student-led instruction
- Teacher modeling
- Written feedback
- Think-pair-share and small-group discussions
- Accountable talk
- Homework
- Word walls with visuals of theater vocabulary

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- Small group instruction
- Virtual tools: Online example of scenes and monologues
- Conferencing
- Theater Journals
- Rehearsal
- Performance
 - Performance Checklist Scoring Guide

EL Differentiated Instruction

- Word walls with visuals of theater vocabulary.
- TWPS (Think, write, pair, share)
- Pre-reading strategies
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Explicit modeling of dance steps by teacher
- Key Vocabulary
- Graphic organizers
- Strategic grouping
- Non-verbal Assessment

Assessments

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- TWPS
- Daily Participation Checklist
- Student discussions and responses
- Accountable Talk Discussions
- Theater Journal Entries
- Group Work Checklist
- Improv Daily Participation (EU 1)

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS:

- Theater Vocabulary Quiz (EU 1 & 2)
- Performance Task- “ISAAC Radio Theater!” (EU 1 and EU 2)

Unit Task

Unit Task Name: Performance Task- “ISAAC Radio Theater” Plays and Commercials.

Description: Students perform radio plays and commercials for an audience of parents and community members.- They incorporate the acting and collaboration skills they have developed through improvisational exercises and theater work in class. A self-reflection of their work throughout the unit will follow the performance. (EU 1 and EU 2)

Evaluation: Performance Task Scoring Guide.

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Unit Resources

- Video Resources of Online scenes
- Theater Images to post for gallery walk
- Laptops
- Visual vocabulary cards
- Smart Board
- Google Slides/ Power Point Presentations
- Music
- Radio Plays
- Foley Sound Effect Makers
- Who, What, When, Where Cards
- Speakers
- Paper
- Pencils/ Pens
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Theater Journals
- Sticky notes
- Chart Paper
- Tape
- Video of Performance