



**CRITICAL HITS:
FROM RPGs TO HUMANITIES**
by Todd Academy, Inc.

AGENDA:

- Where we're coming from
- Why RPGs?
 - 20 MINUTE PLAY-TEST: *Play Me a Story*
 - 10 Minute Talkback
- Content hooks across the curriculum
 - 20 MINUTE PLAY-TEST: *Choose Your Own Apocalypse*
 - 10 Minute Talkback
- Thinking about authority and ownership
 - 20 MINUTE PLAY-TEST: *Improv Games*
 - 10 Minute Talkback and Wrap-up

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**LESSON PLAN #1:
PLAY ME A STORY**
by Dolly Hayde, Todd Academy, Inc.

GRADE LEVEL(S): 5-8

OBJECTIVES:

Learners will identify elements of a narrative structure.
Learners will establish a relationship between theme and game mechanics.
Learners will practice writing clear, functional instructions.

MATERIALS: paper, pencils, rulebooks for various games

TIME: 60 minutes

PROCEDURE:

Ask learners to brainstorm as many games as they can think of together. As a class, discuss how some or all of the games on their list work (i.e., how to win, how to take a turn, etc.). Next, explain to learners that they will begin to design their own games using familiar stories for inspiration. Provide learners with a copy of the instructions (see reproducible), and check in with individual learners to help them complete these steps as needed.

WRAP-UP:

Invite learners to share their game concepts and receive feedback from the rest of the class. Discuss what their games have in common with each other and with games learners have played before. If there is additional time, ask learners to begin designing the components for their games and/or make prototypes.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

MATH: MA.5.7.1 2000, MA.5.7.2 2000, MA.6.7.1 2000, MA.6.7.3 2000, MA.6.7.4 2000, MA.6.7.10 2000, MA.7.7.1 2000, MA.7.7.3 2000, MA.7.7.4 2000, MA.7.7.11 2000, MA.8.7.1 2000, MA.8.7.3 2000, MA.8.7.4 2000, MA.8.7.11 2000

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS: EL.5.5.2 2006, EL.5.5.6 2006, EL.5.7.12 2006, EL.6.3.9 2006, EL.6.5.7 2006, EL.7.3.3 2006, EL.7.4.4 2006, EL.7.5.5 2006, EL.7.5.7 2006, EL.8.3.2 2006, EL.8.5.2 2006, EL.8.5.5 2006, EL.8.5.7 2006

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS: 5.RI.3, 5.RI.4, 5.RL.5, 5.W.2, 5.W.4
6.RI.5, 6.RL.3, 6.W.2, 7.RI.3, 7.RI.5, 7.RL.3, 7.W.2, 7.L.6, 8.RI.2, 8.RL.3, 8.W.2, 8.W.4, 8.L.6

LITERACY STANDARDS FOR TECHNICAL SUBJECTS: 6-8.RT.3, 6-8.RT.4, 6-8.RT.5, 6-8.WT.2, 6-8.WT.4

Standards for Mathematical Practice 1 & 2

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PLAY ME A STORY

1) Choose a story that you know well—this could be a fairy tale, a classical myth, a favorite book, or even a favorite movie. Next, choose an important conflict or journey that happens within or throughout the story. This will be the focus of your game.

Example: In *The Wizard of Oz*, the main characters want to get to Oz, the Emerald City.

2) Write down the names of MAJOR characters who participate in this conflict or journey (try to avoid more than six or so). Consider how these characters interact in this conflict. Are they all working together, each working against everyone else, or divided between opposing teams? How would each character win this conflict or reach the end of the journey?

Example: Dorothy, The Scarecrow, The Tin Man, and The Cowardly Lion are friends who are journeying to Oz in order to get things they need. The Wicked Witch of the West is trying to stop them so she can take the prized ruby slippers Dorothy is wearing.

3) Define the structure of the game. Which characters will be players? Which, if any, will be represented by some other part of the game (e.g. cards, dice, a spinner, etc.)? How does the game end?

Example: The characters Dorothy, The Scarecrow, The Tin Man, and The Cowardly Lion will be assigned to players. Players will roll a die to move space by space along the Yellow Brick Road. If any player lands on a space with a Flying Monkey symbol, that player must turn over a card from the Wicked Witch deck and follow the instructions on the card. The first player to get to Oz wins.

4) Write a list of rules for the game. Be sure to include these sections:

- **INTRODUCTION** (describe the characters, setting, and conflict or journey)
- **MATERIALS**
- **SET-UP** (where things go at the beginning of the game)
- **OBJECT OF THE GAME** (how to win)
- **GAMEPLAY** (what each turn looks like)
- **Any exceptions or special circumstances**

Refer to rulebooks for existing games if you need help getting started!



**LESSON PLAN #2:
CHOOSE YOUR OWN APOCALYPSE**
by Abby Wolf, Todd Academy, Inc.

GRADE LEVELS: 8-12 (can be adapted for grades 4-7)

OBJECTIVES:

Students will...

- Create a plan for an artwork through a process of group work and interaction
- Develop interpersonal skill through group critique, reflection, and project development
- Practice skills in sculpture, design, form, world-building, and contextualization
- Follow a complex, multistep procedure of art creation

MATERIALS: Graph paper, markers, blank paper, pencils, modeling compound, "monsters" (various)

TIME: 30-40 minutes

PROCEDURE:

1. Divide your class into groups of three. Distribute supplies to each group.
2. Instruct learners to assign each group member one of the following roles: Mayor, City Planner, Secretary of Defense
3. Ask each Secretary of Defense to come forward and choose a monster.
4. Delegate the remaining tasks as follows:

MAYOR

- Provide basic information about your city, including its name, a brief history, and basic population stats.
- Write a short narrative describing the battle between the city and the monster, as well as the battle's aftermath.

CITY PLANNER

- Use the graph paper to draw a blueprint for an urban area that includes at least one business, one residential building, and one public space. The blueprint should be no smaller than one city block, and no larger than five city blocks.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

- Explain your monster's origin and motivation (i.e. why it is attacking the city).
- Sketch or build some way to defend your city against the monster.

WRAP-UP:

- Invite learners to share their group work and explain it to the rest of their peers.
- Provide opportunities for group discourse around projects, and facilitate critique and response throughout the discussion.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

VISUAL ARTS: VA 6-8.RT.3 2010,
VA.8.6.1 2010, VA.8.6.2 2010, VA.8.6.6 2010, VA.8.7.4 2010, VA.8.7.5 2010, VA.8.8.1 2010,
VA.8.8.3 2010, VA.9-12.H.6.2 2010, VA.9-12.H.6.4 2010,VA.9-12.H.6.6 2010,VA.9-12.H.7.3
2010, VA.9-12.H.8.3 2010

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS: 8.RI.7, 8.W.3, 8.SL.1, 9-10.W.3, 9-10.SL.1, 11-12.W.3, 11-12.SL.1



**LESSON PLAN #3:
IMPROV GAMES**
by Kendall Trout, Todd Academy, Inc.

GRADE LEVEL(S): 3-12

OBJECTIVES:

Through the use of various improvisational theatre games learners will...

- Examine various cultural norms and stereotypes
- Create coherent narratives and build realistic characters
- Cultivate interpersonal communication skills
- Develop real world problem-solving strategies in cooperation with others
- Foster self-awareness and nurture sympathy for others

MATERIALS: pencils or pens, paper, chairs/stools (optional)

TIME: 3-4 minutes per game, but variable at the instructor's discretion

PROCEDURES:

Dr. Know-It-All

This game requires four players. One player is the interviewer, and the other three are an expert on a subject chosen by the audience. The expert is really one person with three heads, and the expert's answers to questions are provided word by word, one word at a time per player. Questions for Dr. Know-It-All may be posed by interviewer or audience, though it is suggested that the interviewer provide the first few questions so that the audience has examples. Instructors should act as the interviewer until such time as students become comfortable with the role.

This game can be playful and silly if players have the freedom to answer questions in any manner they choose. However, you may play variations of the game that require players to give their best educated responses to all questions posed. You may also modify the game to fit a particular lesson; this game can be great for review if you limit the subject matter and answers to what students have been learning in class.

Worst Case Scenario

This game can have any number of players, but no more than four is suggested, and three is generally ideal. Before the game begins, ask your audience for three completely different objects. Then get suggestions from the audience for a particular "crisis" that has nothing to do with any of the objects aforementioned. Players will work together to solve the "crisis." The catch is that players must use all three objects somehow as part of the solution to the "crisis." Players should

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act out a coherent storyline that establishes the "crisis" and solves it for the audience.

The League of Extraordinary Gentleman

As above, this game can have any number of players, but three-player scenes work best. Take as many suggestions from the audience as you have players. Suggestions can be anything as long as each is only one word—preferably a noun or an adjective (e.g., pencil, existentialism, organic, Ebola, blanket, etc.).

From these words, players are assigned a particular superhero or supervillain name (e.g. Pencilman! Existential Boy, Organicwoman, Ebola Girl, etc.). Next, get suggestions from the audience regarding a particular "crisis" that players will have to work together to solve that has nothing to do with any of the nouns aforementioned. Players should use powers related to their names as part of the solution to their "crisis." Players should act out a coherent storyline that establishes the "crisis" and solves it for the audience.

Note: For this exercise, there should always be at least one supervillain (also with powers related to his or her name) working against the other players.

Replay/Genres

Ask two to four players to play a short scene (between two and four minutes long). Then ask the players to replay the scene in any of the following variations and based on audience suggestions:

- a historical era
- a genre of film / TV / literature
- in gibberish
- backwards
- with a particular emotion
- with a different set of players

Countdown

Countdown is a variation of *Replay* where players should replay the scene in a shorter span of time than it was originally played e.g. in one minute, in 30 seconds. This variation forces players to identify what is most important in the scene and to streamline the scene accordingly.

WRAP UP:

Players should discuss what worked in their scenes and what didn't. Discuss any communication issues, holes in storylines, etc. Instructors should take the opportunity to discuss character development, as well as the reality of the given

scene. Take the opportunity to identify and discuss cultural norms and stereotypes that may have manifested in their scenes.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Theatre: 3.2.2 2010, 3.6.1 2010, 3.6.4 2010, 3.8.2 2010, 4.4.3 2010, 4.6.2 2010, 4.6.5 2010, 5.4.3 2010, 5.6.4. 2010, 7.4.2. 2010, 7.6.1. 2010, 7.8.2 2010, 7.11.2, 8.4.2 2010, 8.6.1 2010, H.1.1 2010, H.4.2 2010, H.8.4 2010,

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

English/Language Arts: 3.SL.1, 3.SL.3, 3.SL.6, 4.SL1, 4.SL.3, 4.SL.6, 5.SL.1, 5.SL.6, 6.SL.1, 6.SL.6, 7.SL.1, 7.SL.6, 8.SL.1, 8.SL.6, 9-10.SL.1, 9-10.SL.6, 11-12.SL.1, 11-12.SL.6