

Oral Interpretation Unit Plan

Teaching Unit: Oral Interpretation

Introduction: This three week unit will focus on the topic of Oral Interpretation. The unit is designed to improve students' ability to analyze literature which will be the main focus of the unit. It will also increase students' appreciation for the art of Oral Interpretation and help to develop their public speaking skills through performance. Due to this unit's emphasis on analysis, it is designed for 11th and 12th graders who have developed the higher order thinking skills required to analyze literature and then put their analysis to use in performance.

Rationale: This is an important unit to teach because it will enhance students' critical thinking skills, vocabulary, research skills, public speaking ability, and listening skills. This unit will offer them a tool to use to understand literature beyond reading it on a printed page because it allows literature to come to life in a way that is educational and entertaining.

Objectives:

After completion of this unit the students will be able to:

1. Describe the history of oral interpretation.
2. Identify and apply the elements of Dramatistic Analysis.
3. Identify the elements of an oral interpretation performance.
4. Prepare and deliver a performance of oral interpretation.
5. Evaluate the performances of their peers and justify their evaluation.

Show Me Standards: GOAL 1.2, GOAL 1.3, GOAL 1.5, GOAL 1.10, GOAL 2.1, GOAL 2.2, GOAL 2.3, GOAL 2.4, GOAL 2.6, GOAL 3.3, GOAL 4.1, GOAL 4.4, GOAL 4.5, GOAL 4.6, GOAL 4.8, CA 1, CA 2, CA 3, CA 5, CA 5, CA 7, FA 2

Supplemental Materials:

-TV/VCR

-Library

-Chalkboard or Whiteboard

-Saturday Night Live Tape

-Mississippi Review Journal

Brief Daily Summary of Unit:

Day 1- Introduction to Oral Interpretation-Definition, history lecture, and unit overview.

Day 2- What is good literature to use for oral interpretation-types/what is good vs. bad.

Day 3- Dramatistic Analysis lecture.

Day 4- Dramatistic Analysis small group activity and discussion.

Day 5- How to develop your oral interpretation presentation-voice activities, characters, and focal points.

Day 6- Continued From previous day- nonverbals, gestures, pausing.

Day 7- Group oral interpretation activity.

Day 8- Group oral interpretation activity continued.

Day 9- Performance day. Each group will perform their selection and be evaluated according to the rubric.

Day 10- Library Research Day- find materials for individual performances. Rubrics will be given to the students of what they will be graded on.

Day 11- Writing an effective introduction.

Day 12- Oral interpretation test- extra time used to finish introductions

Day 13- Performance preparations- practice session with partners.

Day 14- Individual presentations. Dramatistic analysis due for final performances.

Day 15- Individual presentations.

Evaluation:

There will be a total of 200 points possible for this unit.

-5 participation points per day **5 x 15= 75**

-One short test **1 x 25= 25**

-One individual performance **1 x 40= 40**

-One group performance **1 x 25= 25**

-One dramatistic analysis for final performance **1 x 35= 35**

Total Points for the Unit 200

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 1 (History Lecture/Overview)

Concept: Background of oral interpretation

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Discuss how oral interpretation got started.
- Define what events make up oral interpretation.

Introduction: Oral interpretation is not that much different than acting on stage. There are some similarities and there are some differences. What this unit is going to focus on is to expose you to a new realm of acting.

Procedure:

1. Brief History of Oral Interpretation

- a. Long ago it was assumed that literature was meant to be read out loud. Before printing was possible, it was the oral reader who "published" the literary works. During the 18th and 19th centuries this practice was called "elocution;" today we call it "interpretation."
- b. Aspects of delivery include delivery, audience, the act itself, and above all communication.
- c. Most people get caught up in the delivery aspect of interpretation, rather than focusing on bringing all aspects of the communication event together.
- d. Interpretation involves an active participation with the literature because it demands that the reader interact with the audience, emotions of the literature, and the words simultaneously.

2. Events, Time limits, Cuttings

- Drama
- Humorous
- Duo
- Prose
- Poetry
- Readers Theatre

Assessment: The students will be given a quiz over the material discussed in class the next day.

Closure: That that you have a basis of knowledge on what exactly oral interpretation is and how it got started we can begin tomorrow to discuss how we find good literature and what constitutes good literature.

Assignment: Be prepared to take a quiz over this material.

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 2 (Good Literature)

Concept: To be able to find good literature for performance.

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

-Distinguish between good and bad literature when looking for a performance piece.

-Identify culturally diverse situations and language in literature effectively

-Identify with the different character/characters fully in the literature

Introduction: Take a quiz over yesterdays material. Address the fact that pieces are performed at contest that are overdone and offer no emotional levels and how if literature never before seen at competition and literature offer different emotional levels will succeed, win, and be more enjoyable to watch. Good literature will consist of levels and tell a good story, while bad literature is cheesy and has 1 or 2 emotional levels in it.

Procedure: Take a prose and discuss and evaluate it's worth as a performance piece.

1. A good piece of literature is universal, individual, and suggestive.
2. While reading find the levels present in the literature. Is there more than just one or two emotions present? Are there different cultures present in piece i.e.: southern, African American, Jewish, etc. What is the character feeling?
3. If you want to perform this piece can you portray the character that is required.
4. We will go through the literature together and discuss it's merits.

Assessment: Students share with the class what they discovered about the literature. Fore example the emotion, characters, and different cultural aspects of the literature. Finally they reveal whether it's good literature or bad literature. The instructor will observe the discussion, and help lead it.

Closure: Review of what has happened in class for the hour. Tell the student to remember that a good piece of literature can go a long way in helping you stand out in the round. The stronger the literature, the stronger your performance can be.

Assignment: None

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 3 (Dramatistic Analysis Lecture)

Concept: Introduce Dramatistic Analysis to the students.

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Define what Dramatistic Analysis is.
- Understand what the Dramatistic Analysis is.
- Apply the Dramatistic Analysis to their literature.

Introduction: You cannot perform a piece of literature to your fullest capabilities until you fully understand the literature itself. Professional actors spent countless hours researching their characters before they even begin to work on their lines. They do this so that they can bring the true character out. While we might not spend as much time as these professional actors on our scripts, we will look at a technique used so that you can fully understand what it is your characters motivation truly is. So today we are going to look at the Dramatistic Analysis.

Procedure:

1. Definition

-the process an interpreter uses to discover what is in a literary selection, and begin to make decisions about how to become the speaker(s) in the text.

2. Seven Question to ask yourself about the literature:

Who is speaking?

To whom is the speaker speaking?

About what is the speaker speaking?

Where is the speaker speaking?

When is the speaker speaking.

How is the speaker speaking?

Why is the speaker speaking?

3. Elements of the questions you need to know:

A. Who is talking?

Narrator
Persona
Character

B. To Whom?

- Himself or herself
- An inanimate object, a deceased or absent person, a muse, God, or some other mute listener
- A character or characters created in the work
- The general public

C. Where?

Anywhere
Specific locale

D. When?

Anytime
Specified time

E. What is the subject? The attitude?

Does the title provide a clue to subject and/or attitude?
Are there key lines which point to subject and attitude?
What key lines or words play upon your senses?

F. Generally, how is language used?

What does this tell you about the speaker(s)?

G. What is the total comment?

Assessment: Will occur the next class period.

Closure: If you answer these question that we have discussed in class today you will find that the characters for your pieces will come easier because you now understand them more.

Assignment: For tomorrow be ready to implement the Dramatistic Analysis in class. Study and know the questions by heart.

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 4 (Dramatistic Analysis Activity)

Concept: Applying the dramatistic analysis

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

-list the elements of dramatistic analysis.

-apply the process of dramatistic analysis to a piece of literature provided

by the instructor.

-justify their analysis to their classmates orally.

Introduction: The class will be asked what the seven elements of dramatistic analysis are(who, to whom, about what, where, when, how, and why). The instructor will list the terms on the board as they are stated by the students.

Procedure: The students will form groups of 4-5 members.

1. The groups will receive a copy of either *The Parakeet Lounge*, *The Awful Billboards of Sharks*, or *Meat*.
2. The groups will read their story and apply the process of dramatistic analysis to analyze their story.
3. The groups will record their findings to share with the rest of the class when they are done.

Assessment: The instructor will listen and observe the groups reports and the class discussion to determine their level of understanding of dramatistic analysis.

Closure: The groups will share their analysis of their story. We will do one story at a time so the class can compare the similarities and differences in the group's findings. We will then review what we did for the day, and answer any questions the students may have before the hour is up.

Assignment: Bring your English book to class tomorrow.

Daily Lesson Plan- 5 & 6 (Creating Characters)

Concept: Create believable characters.

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Create believable and distinct characters during performance.
- Recognize and stay away from negative stereotypes of other cultures.

Materials: Saturday Night Live video.

Introduction: It is very important to have distinct characters in your performance. Without them your performance will drag and it will be easy for your audience to get lost. Show the video of Saturday Night Live.

Procedure:

1. While sometimes they can be funny you don't want to fall into stereotypical characters.
2. While performing your character you
3. Have different physical stances for each character.
4. The best way to connect to your audience is to maintain eye contact throughout the performance.
5. The class will break up into pairs and select a piece of literature from their English book and create a character for one of the characters in the script.
6. Each group will have about 10 minutes to create a character that they have chosen, and then perform a couple of lines for the class.

Assessment: The instructor will observe their group work and then observe their presentation to the class.

Closure: We just briefly messed with characterization today. However now that you know how to go about creating your character it will be important that you use the things we have discussed, your analysis, focal points, etc.

Assignment: Bring your English books again tomorrow.

Daily Lesson Plan- Days 7 & 8 (Group Oral Interpretation Activity)

Concept: Performing oral interpretation

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Select an appropriate selection of literature for oral interpretation.
- Develop a performance of oral interpretation as a group bases on their selection.
- Perform their oral interpretation as a group for the class.
- Evaluate the performances of other group's interpretations.

Introduction: As a class, the students will review the performance elements of oral interpretation (gestures, pausing, paralanguage, nonverbals, etc.), and the instructor will write them on the board as the students say them.

Procedure: The class will form groups of 4-5 members. Using their English books that they brought to class today they will be instructed to do the following:

1. The groups will select one work of literature to perform for the class.
2. The groups will complete a brief analysis of their literature selection using the dramatistic analysis.
3. The groups will divide up their selection so that all members participate in the performance.
4. The students will help to "coach" the other members of their group to improve their section of the performance.
5. The students will rehearse their performance for delivery to the class.
6. Handout grading rubric to the students.

Assessment: The instructor will monitor the groups' performance through observation. The performances will be done on day 9. The class members who are not performing will take notes on the performances and engage in a post performance evaluation discussion for each group that performs.

Closure: Make sure that you use your extra time to work on your section of the performance so it will be a strong performance.

Assignment: Practice, Practice, Practice.

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 9 (Performance Day)

Concept: Students perform group skits.

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Feel more comfortable performing for their peers.
- Understand what is needed for a good performance.
- Give constructive critics of other performances.

Procedure: The groups will perform their stories that they have been working on in class for the previous two days.

Assessment: They will be graded based on the rubric provided to them. The non-performing groups will take notes on the other performances so that critics can be done following the performance.

Closure: Now that you know how and what is expected of your performances you will begin to work on your individual performances tomorrow. Tomorrow we will discuss how to write an introduction for your selection.

Assignment: Tomorrow we are going to the library so that you can find literature for your individual performances.

Daily Lesson Plan- 10 (Library Research Day)

Concept: Find literature for performances

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Do research in the library in order to find literature for performance.
- Have increased researching skills

Procedure: The students have the hour to find their pieces of literature for performances. If the student does not find what he/she is looking for then they must complete their research on their own time. The grading rubric for the performances will also be passed out.

Assessment: The student must have the literature approved by the instructor prior to performance.

Assignment: Begin to cut the literature so that they do not exceed five minutes.

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 11(Writing an Introduction)

Concept: Writing an effective Introduction

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

-List the elements of an introduction.

-Compose an introduction appropriate for their selected work of literature.

Introduction: No performance piece is complete without a way to set it up for the audience. The way that you do this is through an introduction. The students will be told that they are going to compose the final element of their performances so that it will be ready for presentation in the next couple of days.

Procedure:

1. The students will brainstorm items that should be in an introduction and the instructor will write them down on the board.

2. The instructor will show an example introduction for the class:

Isaac Bachevas once stated "Doubt is part of religion. All religious thinkers were once doubters." Since the beginning of time religion as sparked some of the biggest arguments throughout history. From the Crusades to the recent troubles with Catholics and Muslims, we have found ourselves wondering where the real struggle lies. With the various religions, or within ourselves? In Jim Grimsley's "Jesus is Sending You this Message" we find a young man you struggles with this question, and the truths he finds about himself.

Jesus is Sending You This Message

By: Jim Grimsley

A. A quote is a good way to start off your introduction.

B. Give us the basic theme of your piece without summarizing your literature.

C. Give us the title and author of your piece.

3. The students will break into pairs and will compose introductions for the following poems: *I Hear America Singing*, *Annabel Lee*, *I'm Nobody!* *Who are you?*

4. The pairs will share one or two of their introductions with the class (depending on the time available).

5. The groups will hand in their introductions at the end of class.

Assessment: The students will be evaluated based on observation by the instructor and by making sure that the necessary parts to the introduction are there when they hand them in.

Closure: The students will review the elements of an introduction and will be told that they will have the following day to compose introductions for their performances after they take their test.

Assignment: Study for the test tomorrow

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 13 (Practice Sessions)

Concept: Peer coaching

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

-Engage in constructive peer coaching.

-Give each other positive and helpful comments to improve their performance.

Procedure: The students will be given the hour to help coach each other for their performances to be given the next two days. They will be instructed to use the hour to improve trouble spots and to have written critics of the performance they watch.

Assessment: Students will turn in their critics of the performances that they watched, with the comments that they made to improve their performance.

Closure: Be ready to perform tomorrow. Make the needed adjustments tonight so that your performance is as strong as you can make it.

Assignment: Practice, Practice, Practice.

Daily Lesson Plan- Day 14 & 15 (Performances)

Concept: Perform their selections

Objectives: After completion of this lesson the student will be able to:

- Feel confident in performing their selections for an audience
- Have a better understanding of what goes into preparing for performance.

Procedure: The students will perform their five minutes selections for the class. Those not performing will write critics of each performance in class.

Assessment: The students will be graded according to the rubric provided to them. The students will also need to hand in their critics of the performances observed.

Closure: Now that you know what exactly goes into these performances you can have a better appreciation for the art of interpretation. Tomorrow we will begin to discuss the public speaking aspect of forensics.

Assignment: None

Oral Interpretation (Groups)

Title: _____ Name: _____

Lowest Highest

I. Selection 1 2 3 4 5

II. Presentation 1 2 3 4 5

III. Ensemble Effect 1 2 3 4 5

IV. Characterization 1 2 3 4 5

V. Total Effectiveness 1 2 3 4 5

Additional Comments:

Total Points _____

Oral Interpretation (Individual)

Title: _____ Name: _____

Lowest Highest

I. Selection 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

II. Presentation 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

III. Characterization 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

IV. Total Effectiveness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Additional Comments:

Total Points: _____

Quiz For Lesson #1

Name: Oral Interpretation Date:

Directions: Put the appropriate word in the space provided, with the correct spelling.

Fill in the Blank:

1. The practice that we know today of interpretation was known as _____ in the 18th and 19th centuries.

2. Aspects of delivery include delivery, _____, the act itself, and above all _____.

Short Essay: List and explain four of the six events that make up oral interpretation. Include time limits of each.

Test Over Oral Interpretation

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. A good piece of literature for oral interpretation is:
 - a. Universal
 - b. Individual
 - c. Suggestive
 - d. All of the above
2. Focal points are:
 - a. When the performer looks and points in the same direction at the same time.
 - b. A good way to differentiate between different characters.
 - c. Areas of the performance that are not well rehearsed and therefore focused upon by the audience.
 - d. When the performer pauses during the performance to regain her/his focus or composure.
3. The best way to form a connection with your audience while performing is:
 - a. To write a really good introduction
 - b. To memorize your piece of literature
 - c. To maintain eye contact throughout the whole performance
 - d. To be so loud and dramatic they can't ignore you

4. One aspect of Dramatistic analysis to consider when looking at a piece of literature is:

- a. Who
- b. What
- c. Where
- d. All of the above

5. When developing a performance of oral interpretation it is alright to:

- a. practice without your gestures and then add them in during your performance
- b. choose a work of literature you don't understand
- c. not complete a dramatistic analysis of your work if you have read the story/poem before
- d. ask others to give you ideas for pieces of literature to use

True/False Questions:

- 1. The author of a piece of literature is the same as the fictional speaker for that piece of literature.
- 2. Oral interpretation means reading a piece of literature to an audience.
- 3. The first step in preparing a performance of oral interpretation is to write your introduction.
- 4. Poetry is the most efficient use of language.

Essay/Short Answer Questions:

- 1. Discuss the differences between Oral Interpretation and Basic Public Speaking.**
- 2. Use the process of Dramatistic Analysis to briefly analyze the following poem:**

Mother to Son by Langston Hughes

Well, son, I'll tell you,

Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

It's had tacks in it.

And splinters,

And boards torn up,

And places with no carpet on the floor---

Bare.

But all the time

I've been a-climbin' on,

And reachin' landin's,

And turnin' corners,

And sometimes goin' in the dark

Where there ain't been no light.

So, boy, don't you turn back.

Don't you set down on the steps

'Cause you finds it kinder hard.

Don't you fall now---

For I've still goin', honey,

I've still climbin',

And life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

Answer Key:

MC

1. D 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. D

True/False

1. False 2. False 3. False 4. True

Short Answer

1. Oral Interpretation involves two gates before the message reaches the audience whereas public speaking only involves one. In Oral Interpretation the message comes first from the voice of the work and then it is translated by the oral interpreter who takes into consideration the speaker and the meaning of the piece before performing it for the audience in the way s/he thought the speaker would perform it. In public speaking the message is delivered to the audience directly from the author/speaker of the speech. No one interprets the words of the speech for the audience but the speaker himself or herself.

2. Who is speaking? A wise mother who is probably older (50 or 60), minimally educated and African American.

To whom is she speaking? To her son who is probably about 25 and may be discouraged or upset over a setback or discrimination.

About what? About the trials she has had to endure and overcome during her lifetime.

Where? In their home or another quite and private place.

When? During the 1960s - Civil Right Movement

How? A reassuring tone, short sentences using slang or regional dialect.

Why? To encourage her son to not give up or to keep fighting for what he believes in so that his life improves.

She has been fighting and climbing all her life and she wants him to do the same. If she is old and still striving for improvement there is no reason for him to give up when he is so much younger than she is.