

# Arts Assessment For Learning

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THEATER— 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADE

## REFLECTION: SCENE STUDY – THE ODYSSEY

### What went well?

The initial work with the directors was largely successful. We kept the groups very small at first, two to three people. These scenes were easy for the students to manage. Almost every student showed growth on successive assessments.

### What was so-so?

As the demands of the scene work became more difficult (more students in each group, longer scenes) the success of the small group work diminished. It might be that the demands of the scene, either in the numbers of students involved, or the complexity of the scene became too much for the directors to handle.

### What was the most challenging part of trying this?

I had never tried this approach to small group work before, so much of it was learning as I went along. I could not predict in advance what the next lesson would be. Everything depended on what had happened in the lesson before. There were two areas of concern. First, it was necessary for me to understand the dynamics of small group work as it applied to this particular class. Second, what did the students need to know as actors and directors to make good art?

### What was the impact of this strategy on student learning? (specific examples)

What strikes me the most was the ability of certain students to function effectively as directors, managing a small group and giving useful feedback. The directors were the students who really grew in this process. It required a higher order of thinking for them. First they needed to understand the requirements of the scene, and how each actor fit into the scene. Then they had to be able to communicate the need for basic acting skills to the actors, who may or may not have had the ability to follow their directions because they were students themselves.

### How do the results of your action plan inform your inquiry question?

My original question was: *How can I use formative assessment strategies to improve independent small group rehearsals in theater?*

As we began to work, it became clear that the role of the director was indispensable, but we all, me included, had to discover what the criteria were for a good director.

### Documentation to bring (student work, photos, writing, teacher journal, etc.):

The use of video was critical to the process. It was important for the students to be able to see their own work to be able to reflect on it and set goals. It was also crucial for rubric development. When viewing the videos the students had a chance to think critically and describe the work they were viewing. It's difficult to do this in the moment of a rehearsal.

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This reflection and description became the basis for rubric development. The students needed to see samples of good and poor rehearsal work in order to improve.