

Arts Assessment For Learning

THEATER — 3RD GRADE

REFLECTION: PLAYWRITING-TRAGEDY

What went well?

- *Empathy and Engagement*
Students proved to be more engaged than I had thought. Half way through the project, when I considered dropping it, the students showed an interest I had previously failed to observe. Most students were very enthusiastic about playwriting, and in finding out more about the characters. Formative assessment helped them listen to each other's ideas and scenes. They began to write and apply the acquired knowledge.
- *Building and Scaffolding*
Students that participated in this playwriting project last year demonstrated a better understanding of the playwriting techniques, and reached the learning goals with less difficulty than other students.
- *Understand and Analysis*
Students were able to understand how to write a tragic ending scene, and the difference between a happy and tragic ending. They were also able to decide when and how to use the playwriting techniques.
- *Revision/Teacher and Self-Assessment*
Students identified their areas of improvement, using the Student's Self-Assessment Tool. They expressed that using the Teacher's Assessment Tool prior to theirs helped them learn how to assess their own work.

What was so-so?

- *Appropriateness of Learning Goals*
The anticipated outcome was too ambitious. The lessons and the action plan had to be constantly modified.
- *Difficulty Level*
Concepts such as change of fortune and moral issue were simply not appropriate for third graders. Role reversal, tragic ending and the aside were less difficult concepts to grasp but still challenging to teach.
- *Pulling Out Issues*
I have some students that were pulled out by other teachers for different reasons. These students fell behind.

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What was the most challenging part of trying this?

The most challenging part was not realizing that the learning goals were too difficult for third graders before it was too late to go back. Once I realized it, and talked to the students about it, we (students and teacher) pulled through. However, I needed to simplify the action plan and eliminate a few learning goals. Out of all the playwriting techniques, the students expressed that the most difficult was the change of fortune. I also found challenging working with such a diverse population of children (CTT), and the need for differentiated instruction.

What questions were raised for you as you implemented the assessment practice?

I was worried that some students wouldn't be honest when completing their self-assessment tool but I didn't encounter that problem. They kept themselves on track. Appropriateness of the learning goals was also an issue when creating the assessment tools.

What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience?

FOR THE STUDENTS:

1. That a play can end tragically
2. That stage directions (informational text) are important in playwriting
3. That organizing events in a play builds (dramatic) tension
4. That playwrights can change the life and course of their characters by using specific techniques
5. That playwriting is a fun activity

FOR THE TEACHER:

1. That developing the student's assessment tool from the teacher's assessment tool helps the students understand better how to assess themselves
2. That asking the most proficient playwrights for help when other students seem not to understand the lesson is effective.

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

I am not pleased with my inquiry question due to its inappropriateness for the grade level. Also the outcome I originally expected was too ambitious. Taking this into consideration, the results informed me that more than half of my students did achieve the learning goals.

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Documentation to bring:

1. Students' Scenes
2. Student's Assessment Tool
3. Teacher's Assessment Tool
4. Student's Final Reflection
5. Video Footage/Interview about their playwriting process
6. Students' Oral Interview (transcript)