



PLAYWRITING FOR PEACE

TRAINING MANUAL

By Matt Harmon & Emily Russell, 2019

Founders' Note

We (Emily Russell and Matt Harmon) launched *Playwriting for Peace* for its inaugural season in Pristina, Kosovo in the summer of 2019. This program was carried out with local directors Anita Uka and Dafina Krasniqi. It lasted 5 weeks. This project was funded by the Davis Projects for Peace fellowship, awarded out of the University of Michigan.

More details about the project as well as its founders and facilitators can be found online at www.playwriting4peace.wixsite.com/kosovo.

Founders can be contacted at emilyrus@umich.edu and mcharm@umich.edu.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: **Applied Theatre Interventions in Post-Conflict Countries**

pg. 3

Chapter 2: **Administrative Checklist for Staging an Applied Theatre Intervention**

pg. 7

Chapter 3: **Workshop Activities**

pg. 9

Chapter 4: **Structuring the Workshop**

pg. 64

Glossary, Appendix, and Bibliography:

pg. 68

Chapter 1: Applied Theatre Interventions in Post-Conflict Countries

INNOVATING IN POST-CONFLICT COUNTRIES

The genesis of the Playwriting for Peace framework came from both an admiration of *applied theatre* innovations and an apparent lack of theatre interventions for geopolitical peacebuilding. In recent years, applied theatre programs have worked to help populations currently facing conflict or to those experiencing institutional discrimination express themselves and heal from trauma. For example, Shakespeare in Prison programs across the U.S. have seen tremendous success in empowering the incarcerated and helping them tell the stories of others and, in turn, their own (Detroit Public Theatre. “Shakespeare in Prison | Case Study Report | January 2019.” 2019). Additionally, theatre companies like Phosphoros Theatre in London have recently been casting refugees and asylum seekers in autobiographical performances to bring their stories of escaping conflict zones front and center (Phosphoros Theatre, 2019). These innovations in applied theatre have brought often unheard stories into the modern theatre landscape.

Playwriting for Peace suggests that interventions are needed in countries even after conflict has left. It is in this liminal period when identities are formed and hierarchies are decided or eliminated. By specifically working with young people in post-conflict countries, Playwriting for Peace can serve as a tool to reduce youth military conscription and otherizing in the newly-formed political landscapes. It is our hope that, with more applied theatre interventions in post-conflict regions, the stakes of committing violence will be drastically lowered.

ACADEMIC PILLARS

Innovating Applied Theatre initiatives for post-conflict countries rests on a number of primary theories which provide insight into the situations often faced after conflict. They include youth bulges, security force enlargement, and the potential for backsliding into communal or border conflict.

Youth Bulges and Security Force Enlargement:

Youth bulges, or large portions of the population between the ages of 18-24, are most susceptible to conscription by security forces of a state (Nordås, Ragnhild, and Christian Davenport. “Fight the Youth: Youth Bulges and State Repression.” AJPS. 2013). The recruitment of young people into security forces not only increases the likelihood of state-sanctioned violence, but also arms the youth population of the country, perpetuating the possibility of increased violence. Creative interventions can give youth the chance to engage in creative work instead, opting for expression over state armament and violence.

Deterrent of Communal Violence:

The theatre is a place for humanizing and empathizing with people unlike ourselves. By providing this outlet for creative expression, young people facing a history of violence and daunted by its potential return can begin to build understanding across their differences. When people see one another as equally human, they are less likely to commit violence against them in the future. These workshop activities provide a practical way to build this sense of togetherness, devoid of otherizing, among members of the post-conflict society where institutional factors could otherwise condone hostility and competition among groups. As outlined by contemporary peace scholars, programs, institutions, and organizations are critical to providing opportunities for “individuals from respective groups... to envision themselves as part of a shared community” (Davenport, Christian. *The Peace Continuum*, Oxford University Press, 2018). By providing these opportunities for reflecting on one’s identity in a broader global context, applied theatre facilitators can provide a preventive measure against recidivism into violence.

INITIAL LAUNCH AND SOURCE OF CASE STUDIES

The initial Playwriting for Peace program took place 24 July - 23 August, 2019 in Pristina, Kosovo. It ran every Monday - Thursday for five weeks with a final showcase of student work on 23 August at a local theatre.

We chose Pristina as the inaugural program location due to its large youth population living in a post-conflict state. The Kosovo War (1999) undermined institutions and deepened rifts between ethnic groups in the region. Kosovo declared its independence only a decade ago in 2008, and its sovereign status is still not accepted by nearly half of UN member states nor by neighboring Serbia. This liminality is a risk to the nation's nascent peace.

Without opportunities for reflecting on one's identity in a broader global context, the capital and country could risk another generation disinvested in peace. We believe creative expression is instrumental to establishing a common understanding from which sustainable peace can be created and enacted in the country. The theatre has always been an avenue for individuals to express their opinions about their own beliefs, their interpersonal relationships, and the world around them.

During the five weeks, our participants engaged in a wide array of activities, all of which are found in our Section on Workshop Activities. In addition to these activities, we've provided a few case studies from the inaugural program to illustrate the types of conversations we had and how they relate to our goals of actualizing empathy through creative expression and theatre.

RELEVANT PLACES FOR PLAYWRITING FOR PEACE IN 2019

Where, in 2019, is Playwriting for Peace needed? Changing the Story, an arts-based research organization in civil society, currently follows projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, India, Kenya, Kosovo, Malaysia, Nepal, Rwanda, South Africa, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe, to name a few (Changing the Story 2019).

Still other locations need Playwriting for Peace initiatives. Any city, state, province, or country which is riddled with ethnic, racial, or other identity-based tensions should stage an applied theatre intervention. These activities rest on empathy-building initiatives which make use of the philosophical theory of cosmopolitanism to actualize peacebuilding. Cosmopolitanism is a theory which relies on our seeing one another as fundamentally like ourselves; differences in our identities are not to disrupt the fact of our shared humanness. The best platform on which to practice this cosmopolitan thinking is on the stage, where in reading and performing the written stories of others, we find ourselves sharing the emotions expressed across all languages, ethnicities, and regions. In his writing on the theory, scholar Kwame Anthony Appiah tells of the importance of storytelling: “We wouldn’t recognize a community as human if it had no stories, if its people had no narrative imagination... evaluating stories together is one of the central human ways of learning” (Appiah 2007: 29). These workshops can provide tools for storytelling so as to enrich the spread of these young people’s narratives, not only to build understanding across their differences, but to enhance their ability to recognize sharedness in their experiences and the experiences of anyone in the world.

Chapter 2: Administrative Checklist for Staging an Applied Theatre Intervention

Some of the administrative considerations of an Applied Theatre intervention are dependent on the region, purpose, and scope of the staging. Here are some things we considered when entering Kosovo, and which might be helpful in iterations of Playwriting for Peace interventions.

❑ Civil Society Partnerships

Civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can be an invaluable resource when planning an intervention. Check your region for public spaces, theatres, or creative arts organizations that support your mission. They can help you find participants, find grants for funding, and offer local support. They may also be able to publicize your events. In addition, collaborating with civil society organizations helps you integrate into local infrastructure for change-making.

❑ Local / Translator Partnerships

If you would like to stage an intervention in a country where you do not speak the language, it is critical to train local facilitators and partner with local artistic and administrative directors who can both assist in the directing of the program, as well as provide local insights into what programmatic content will work. On-the-ground facilitators who speak the language are important for many writing-based activities. We also found collaborating helpful on all aspects of adjusting to local cultures, respecting needs and norms, and for improving program ideas for context-dependent situations.

❑ Outreach Prior to Launch

When designing a Playwriting for Peace intervention, a good first step is deciding the best method of communication with the public and interested participants. Attractive Call for Participants posters[^] can be made for posting on Facebook, in other communication groups, and/or physically around the region. The posters should feature a brief summary of what the program will cover, dates, locations, and information on how to sign-up. In the weeks leading up to the program, remind people who have already signed up of their participation and to invite their friends to sign up as well. Keep their information in a roster so all of their contact information can be found in one place. Additionally, asking questions about their creative interests when they sign up can help facilitators tailor activities to their participants, resulting in greater interest. Be open to questions from participants over email to make sure they are up to date on program details.

❑ Space Selection and Diversity

For movement activities, venues with large, open spaces and enough room to explore will orient students to the idea of drama being able to inhabit any space, not just a theatre. In these spaces, activities that lend themselves well to the concept of a “stage” can be confined to a small part of the large room by using tape on the ground. When moving into more writing-based exercises, a smaller, intimate rental space encourages the sharing and teamwork necessary in a program such as this. For the final showcase of the students’ work, a short-term rental of a local theatre would serve as an impactful end to the program. Members of the public should be invited to the theatre for the final performance, bringing the participants’ words to an even larger audience and giving their ideas positive reinforcement.

❑ Budgeting and Expenses

Applying for funding to lead Applied Theatre interventions is important so that you can pay for spaces, partner wages, and materials. Keep a budget if running the project over the long-term, and map out all the materials you expect to need throughout the program’s entirety. That will ensure that you do not spend more than you have. Many grants are available through funds targeting projects for peace, projects for arts interventions, and more. Be creative and seek all possible funding sources, from institutions, NGOs, and partners.

❑ Day to Day

No matter the overall length of the program, the day-to-day schedule should give students time to reflect on what they’ve learned so far as well as bond with each other. This can be done with scheduled breaks to walk around, stretch, and eat in order to keep participants energized instead of wearing them down. If possible, use budget funds to provide snacks and lunch if the daily schedule is long enough. If this is not reasonable, encourage students to bring their own lunch and give participants enough time to eat and relax before diving into more activities.

Chapter 3: Workshop Activities

CONTENTS:

- 3.0..... Core Concepts
- 3.1..... Getting to Know You Activities
- 3.2..... Movement Activities
- 3.3..... Visual Arts Activities
- 3.4..... Vocal Activities
- 3.5..... Writing Activities
- 3.6..... Elements of Drama Activities

CHAPTER 3.0: CORE CONCEPTS

3.0a) Student Agency

When running a long-term applied theatre intervention, it is important that students and participants have **agency**. Taking action is an important skill, and in social movement theory, it is said that all participants must be equally capable of leading if the movement is to succeed. Giving students agency is thus imperative to successful work. Some examples of including students is 1) the showcase activity. In this workshop session, students perform their own work and show their independent art. This provides a sense of accomplishment and independence. Secondly, 2) students should become facilitators of some activities. For long-term programs, some activities will be repeated over time, and should grow in their depth as students grow in closeness. Examples include Tapeball, Space Walk, or Counting. Let students lead these activities for the best levels of engagement. Finally, 3) students should choose examples in creative warm-ups. Let students dictate what strange worlds they are in, and what characters become it. In many activities in this chapter, we specify that while facilitators can begin activities, participants should take them over and begin to lead. These are just a few examples of ways to give your students agency.

3.0b) Random Partnering

Some participants may know one another before signing up, depending on the community in which facilitators are working. Some students may also bond with some sooner than with others. In an effort to encourage dialogue between all participants, we randomly paired students for all partner-based activities. For your convenience, here are some ways we chose partners:

- Pick pairs of marker colors and have students pick markers out of a bag or hat. The other person with the same color is their partner.
- Find matching numbers in a deck of cards and have students pick from a shuffled fan of cards.
- Cut printed pictures into halves and have students draw a half out of a hat. The student with the other half of their photo is their partner.

While the way students are paired isn't crucial, the fact that it is random and encourages conversation with new people should be prioritized. Additionally, you can switch partners halfway through a partner activity to give students a chance to repeat the activity with a new partner. This is an effective way to keep people circulating and meeting all of the participants.

3.0c) Activity Progression/Reflection

Although the following activities should be enough to get facilitators started on planning a workshop, activities have the ability to make an even greater impact if they're returned to and allowed to grow across the program's duration. For example, doing an activity the first day of the workshop and returning to it at the end could result in a completely different conversation given

what the participants have learned. Building progression and reflection into a workshop has the potential to foster meaningful dialogue about the activity's purpose both in the theatre and in society.

3.0d) Evaluating Yourself and Your Leadership

Seek regular critical feedback as a facilitator. You want to ensure students are learning, growing, and enjoying themselves. Much of these rests on your facilitation and creativity. It is important to “read the room” and determine what works and what does not work for your particular students. Being open to evaluation will help you and your program improve. Plus, students may provide positive feedback that inspires you to keep working. Be self-critical, too, and take stock of how certain activities, days, and weeks make you feel. What worked for you? When was it uncomfortable to lead? How did you overcome it?

3.0e) Activity Guide Readability

Any term in our activity list that is **bolded** and *italicized* is featured in our glossary.

Any worksheet or supplementary item with a ^ after it is included in our appendix.

Any activity title with an * after the title has an associated case study from the 2019 Pristina, Kosovo Playwriting for Peace program.

CHAPTER 3.1: GETTING TO KNOW YOU ACTIVITIES

MOVEMENT NAME GAME

CATEGORY:	Getting to Know You, Movement
RUN TIME:	15 Minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students form a large circle. A random student is chosen to go first. They will tell the rest of the participants their name along with a physical action. (Example: “My name is Michael” followed by flapping your arms like wings.) The next student clockwise has to repeat the previous person’s name and their action, followed by their own name and action. The third student repeats the first and second students’ names and actions, and adds his own. This continues until the last person repeats everyone’s names and actions. Help should be given by the group when a student forgets a name or action.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

Likely on the first day, many students will not know their fellow workshop members. Learning names is an easy way to start bonding and, by associating an action with a name, muscle memory will help students remember everyone’s names.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

CRAZIEST COMMON THING

CATEGORY:	Getting to Know You
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students are split into pairs. They have ten minutes to talk to each other and ask questions to the other. Their goal is to discover the craziest thing that they have in common. (For example, one set of students found they had the same birthday; another set of students found out their parents met in the same park.) In the final five minutes, students share what they have in common. The craziest one (most unlikely) is chosen by the group.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity demonstrates that we have a lot more in common than that which separates us. It can help students feel closer to one another and start to recognize what they share.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

INTRODUCING YOU

CATEGORY:	Getting to Know You
RUN TIME:	45 minutes
MATERIALS:	Notebooks, pens
DIRECTIONS:	Students are split into pairs randomly. Ideally, every student will not yet know their partner. The pairs are encouraged to find a quiet and comfortable space, inside or outside, to talk. Each student is given 15 minutes to talk about themselves with prompting questions from their partner. The conversations can be about anything as long as both students are comfortable. While one student is talking, the other is taking notes in their notebook. After 15 minutes, the roles are reversed and the former note-taker now talks about themselves. After the 30 minutes, students are called back to a circle with partners next to each other. Then, students share what they wrote about their partner, “introducing” them to the whole group. This continues until everyone has been introduced.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This will likely be the first time in the workshop students will be engaging in dialogue about their lives, a very important step in understanding one another. By introducing a partner instead of themselves, students will get experience with speaking someone else's words and finding similarities in another person's experiences.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to let someone else talk about you?
2. What sorts of personal information did you prioritize in your conversations? Why?
3. What types of questions did you ask your partner while you were taking notes?

STORYTELLING

CATEGORY:	Getting to Know You, Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	15-30 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students take 3-5 minutes to journal about a story they have been told; perhaps by parents, grandparents, or friends. They then share these stories, emphasizing oral storytelling skills.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity shows the many ways we pass on our stories through oral storytelling. Theatre is a place for storytelling, and at the core of all drama is the story which made it possible. It also allows students to get to know one another more closely, perhaps finding stories they share.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Who told you the story?
2. Why does that story stay with you?
3. Has anyone heard a story similar to that of [Participant]?

IDENTITY WEB*

CATEGORY:	Getting to Know You
RUN TIME:	15-20 minutes
MATERIALS:	A ball of yarn, twine, or other form of string
DIRECTIONS:	Students form a circle. Holding onto the end of the yarn, the first student tells the group their name and a fact about them that they think someone else in the circle shares. An example is “I have a dog” or “I have a sister.” When their name and fact is shared, other members of the circle who identify with the fact raise their hand. If no one shares that fact, the student is encouraged to share another fact until someone raises their hand. The ball of yarn is tossed to a student with their hand raised but the first student holds onto the end of the string when they pass it. The new yarn holder grabs a bit of string, shares their name and a fact, and passes the yarn to another participant who shares their fact. This continues until everyone holds a piece of yarn and one string connects everyone in the circle, making a large web.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

Attempting to convince a group of (potential) strangers of their similarities before a workshop can be a daunting task. This activity creates a physical line, or web, that connects the whole group in one way or another. Even though the connections aren't particularly surprising, the image of everyone being connected is a powerful one. In addition to a way to learn everyone's name, this activity shows commonalities for individuals around the world.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How does it feel to know everyone in this group is connected in one way or another?
2. What do you think this web represents?
3. Do you think this activity can be done with any group? Why or why not?

***IDENTITY WEB CASE STUDY: Pristina, Kosovo 2019**

When planning when to schedule Identity Web, we wanted to involve many people who did not yet know each other. At a well-attended public workshop in Week 2, we played this game and it was a huge success. Our yarn (or rope, in this instance) stretched all across the room, showing the various ways in which we as a group are connected. In our discussion of the activity, participants said they felt like they knew the other participants better and were then ready to dive into the pillars of writing a 10-minute play. We highly recommend this activity with a large group of new participants since, in our workshop, it fostered an open and inviting environment in which to create.



CHAPTER 3.2: MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

SPACE WALK

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	10-15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Students gather in the stage. If the activity does not take place on a stage, be sure to draw bounds in which the participants should stay. They begin to move around the space, looking at one another and taking care not to run into each other. Then, a facilitator calls out different “spaces” and students must mime with their whole body walking in these different and strange spaces.</p> <p>Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Into the ocean● The moon● On ice● With someone you love● The ground is made of eggshells● The ground is lava● On a cloud● During a thunderstorm <p>Student participants should be given a chance to choose their own locations. As they continue to walk and change “spaces,” allow them to each take turns calling out new ones.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity demonstrates that the stage can be anywhere in the world. It also brings attention to the way movement is carried out differently in various spaces. It allows students to begin to characterize a space.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to walk in different spaces?
2. What space did you feel most uncomfortable in?
3. Did you notice thinking about different parts of the space? How it would sound, or feel, or smell?
4. Did you ever run into someone?
5. How did this make you think of the stage?

BOXED IN*

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	10-15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Tape
DIRECTIONS:	Before the activity begins, tape three squares onto the floor each smaller than the first. Then students are asked to move around the largest square while making eye contact with those around them and being sure not to run into each other. After a while, students are asked to do the same movement, this time in the smaller square. Finally, students are asked to move into the smallest square. It should be very challenging to move in the smallest square without hitting one another.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity allows students to work together and move about a shared space with conscientiousness toward one another.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to walk around the large space? The medium space? The small space?
2. Did you ever run into one another?
3. How did your interactions with those around you change as you moved closer and closer?

*BOXED IN CASE STUDY: Pristina, Kosovo 2019

During Boxed In, students participated in the movements as described in the activity — moving first in the large box, next in the medium, and finally in the smallest. This activity was successful in Pristina because students drastically changed their behavior in each square. While they were goofy in the largest, and did not run into one another, by the smallest they were more focused, looking at their feet and the people around them to prevent collision.

In the *debriefing session* which followed, one student said that in the largest square, she felt like she was interacting with strangers, while in the smallest square she felt that she was interacting with friends. Students effectively named the different ways we use space and share it with the people around us, as is based on our relationship to the people in the room. They also got to know one another better through the activity.



TAPEBALL

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	10-15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Masking tape
DIRECTIONS:	Before the game, make a ball by wrapping masking tape around itself. Be sure to cover all the sticky parts for a smooth outer surface. The ball should be large enough to pass but does not hurt to hit. Students form a circle and someone starts by hitting the tapeball into the air. After each hit, the whole group counts out loud, starting at 1. If the tapeball is dropped, the group starts back over at 1. The goal is to see how many hits in a row the group can get and try to beat their previous high score. One person cannot hit the tapeball twice in a row.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity is an energetic and fun way to get students excited about the day. Additionally, it forces the group to work together to accomplish a goal and can be repeated as many times as the workshop desires since there's always a new high score to beat. The counting out loud also encourages group-wide concentration.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

MIRRORS

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students are partnered randomly. Partners are seated a few feet apart facing each other and are told they are looking into a mirror. Any movement their partner makes, the student must follow without using words. Neither student is deemed the leader; instead, their motions should blend together. After two minutes, one row moves to the right by one seat and the activity is repeated with new partners.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

Mirrors is a movement-based introductory activity to help participants focus on non-verbal communication while also making new friends. Dialogue between two characters is often a give-and-take scenario, where one character will drive the topic of discussion in one moment until the other character takes over. In Mirrors, the same relationship is established between partners, with new movements in each new pairing. In addition to its application to writing dialogue in scripts, the non-verbal component of the activity encourages communication cross-linguistically.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What sorts of stories were you telling without words?
2. Were there moments when you felt in control of the movement? What about times where you weren't driving the action? How did that feel?
3. Was it hard to maintain eye contact since you were so close together? How did you cope with the discomfort?
4. Did you ever mime objects? What objects?

BOX, FEATHER, BIRD

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	10 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Everyone stands in a circle. A facilitator says the name of an object they are “holding.” This should be something that is identifiably heavy, light, or mobile. They then mime, with their whole body and in activation of all their muscles, holding the object. Then they “pass” it to the person on their right, who inherits its weight. People continue to pass the imaginary object around the circle. Once it reaches the person who began it, the next person turns it into something else — ideally a different weight, texture, or mobility. This continues around the circle until everyone has gotten a chance to choose an object to pass.</p> <p>Some examples of objects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A steel box● A feather● A delicate bird● An angry/wet cat● A bowling ball● An expensive vase

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity allows students to practice moving, imagine the feeling of different objects, and get focused.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to hold certain objects?
2. Did you pay attention to how you passed or received the objects? What did you notice?

TRUST WALK

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	10 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students are partnered up randomly. To start, one student closes their eyes and their partner has to guide them around the room, avoiding obstacles. The leaders can choose to take them anywhere in any manner they wish, making their partner run, squat, or spin through the space. After three minutes, the roles are reversed.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

When someone is completely in charge of another person's movements, their sense of space and surroundings slowly melts away. Therefore, students must trust their guide completely in order to stay safe. This activity both helps students bond and emphasizes how much we as individuals can rely on others to guide us through hazards.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to have no sense of where you were in the room?
2. Was there ever a time you were convinced you would hit something but didn't? How did you react?
3. Did you trust your partner? Why or why not?

DETECT THE LEADER

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	10 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	One student is chosen to be the “Detective” and must leave the room and cover their ears. Once the Detective is gone, the group elects a “Leader” to control the movement. Once selected, the students form a circle on the ground and call the Detective back in. The Detective sits in the center of the circle. The Leader’s job is to decide a motion that the rest of the group repeats at the same time. For example, if the Leader starts shaking their head, everyone else shakes their head as well. The Leader can change the motion at any time and the group must follow. The Detective’s job is to discover who the Leader is so the Leader should ideally not try to be obvious with their changing motions. The Detective gets three guesses to pick the Leader. At the end of three guesses, regardless of the Detective’s success, the Leader can become the new Detective in a second round.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity is a fun way to energize students and help them concentrate on instructions. We recommend playing this game if you have a large group of students since it would be much easier to tell who the Leader is with a small group.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

BARNYARD

CATEGORY:	Movement
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Cards with different animal names on them (same # as participants)
DIRECTIONS:	Students draw a card with the name of an animal. They then close their eyes and move around a space, making the sounds of their animal. They must link arms with all the other animals which are the same -- for example, in a group of 16, there may be 4 cows, 4 pigs, 4 dogs, and 4 cats. Students will move around the space only able to identify their partners through sound. The first team to link all of their partners together “wins.” To vary the activity, one round can be played in which students must form a full barnyard — for example, one cat, one dog, one pig, and one cow. Again, the students can only move around using their voices.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity gets students working together. They are tasked with finding their fellow animals without the use of sight, which makes them rely on other forms of perception like sound. In different rounds, the students find others who are both alike and different from themselves.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What was hard about this activity?
2. Were you tempted to open your eyes? When? Were there any moments of frustration?
3. Was it easier to find “animals” when they made the same sound as you or when you had to listen for different sounds? Why might that be?

CHAPTER 3.3: VISUAL ARTS ACTIVITIES

PLACEMAKING THROUGH POSTCARDS*

CATEGORY:	Visual Arts, Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	15-30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Postcard-sized thick paper, markers, pens
DIRECTIONS:	Give all students a blank postcard. On the front side, instruct them to draw a place that is meaningful to them. On the back of the card, they will write the description of this place in the traditional dramatic form of “ setting. ” They will highlight a place that has significance to them. Students should share.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity helps students reflect on places which are important to them. It also allows them to practice writing a setting description, which is an element of playwriting. It brings attention to the importance of place in telling stories.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Why did you choose this place? What is significant about it?
2. Do you have any memories associated with this place?
3. Why did you include [certain elements]?
4. Is there someone in your life who hasn't seen this place that you would want to send the postcard to? If they knew about this place, what would they know about you?
5. Did you choose a fictional place? If so, what do you imagine happens in it?

EXQUISITE CORPSE

CATEGORY:	Visual Arts
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Paper, pens
DIRECTIONS:	The first student draws a line or small sketch on a piece of paper. Then, they fold over what they have drawn, leaving only a small design showing. They pass the paper to the next student, who draws an addition onto whatever design was previously revealed. This student again folds the paper over most of their drawing, leaving only a line or corner. The paper is passed around until everyone has contributed in this fashion — drawing a component and covering it. At the end, the paper is unraveled, and a mismatched body, design, place, or scene is pictured. Students are then to write their own unique description of what the drawing represents to them.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In this activity, students collaborate on an image, character, or scene. They each anonymously contribute a portion to a drawing without knowing the direction of the piece.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to not get to see what was drawn before you?
2. Did you feel that you could control the story or was it out of your hands?
3. Why did you choose to draw what you did?
4. Did you have guesses as to what was folded over? How did the final image match or go against what you expected?

WISH TREE

CATEGORY:	Visual Arts
RUN TIME:	10 minutes
MATERIALS:	A tree, thick paper tied to string, pens
DIRECTIONS:	Students take a tag — thick paper tied to strings. They use the pens to write their wishes — these might be personal, or they might be hopes for the world broadly. They tie these wishes to the tree using the string. The tree then has “ornaments” containing all of the students’ wishes. If it is done early in a program, students can take turns throughout the program watering the tree and caring for it.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity allows students to anonymously put their wishes for a better world onto a tree. They help the tree grow, and actively think about making their wishes come true as they do. It is a good conclusion activity or could be scheduled when students have “free time” to do various visual arts activities.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR WORLD?

CATEGORY:	Visual Arts
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Paper, drawing utensils, coloring utensils
DIRECTIONS:	Students are given 15 minutes to draw their “inner” and “outer” worlds. On one side of a piece of paper, students are told to draw their outer world — their city, their bedroom, where they live. On the reverse, they can draw their inner world — their thoughts, hopes, fears. Students should share.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity allows students to visualize their own complexities and recognize the complexities of one another. What we see is not the full picture — this helps students begin to understand how a character acts in their “outer world” is shaped by deep, hidden “inner worlds.”

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How does your inner world differ from your outer world?
2. What surprises you about your fellow students’ inner worlds?
3. What does it feel like to have a complex world inside of you that people cannot see just by looking at you?

IDENTITY COLLAGE

CATEGORY:	Visual Arts
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Newspapers, magazines, colorful paper, images, scissors, glue, paper, stickers
DIRECTIONS:	Students use newspapers, magazines, images, and words to create a collage that represents them. Students should share.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity allows students to express themselves in a way which utilizes multi-media.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

CHAPTER 3.4: VOCAL ACTIVITIES

COUNTING*

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	10 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students and facilitators form a circle. Everyone should be sitting in chairs or on the floor. The facilitator leads a series of deep breaths to center everyone's attention, then instructs everyone to close their eyes. The goal of the game is to count upwards from 1 to 10 out loud as a group. There is no order or pattern and students should feel the energy of the group to see if they should say the next number. If anyone speaks over another person's number, the group starts over. This is done until the group reaches 10.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This is a very successful centering activity which concentrates on working together to accomplish a task. While the act of counting to 10 sounds very simple, listening to each other can be difficult when deprived of sight. When the group is forced to breathe and listen to the energy of the collective, reaching 10 feels like a large accomplishment and shows the benefits of working together.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What sort of cues were you taking to see if it was a good time to say the next number?
2. How did it feel to sit in silence, not sure who will speak next?
3. Were there moments when the group was so close to reaching 10 but spoke too quickly and had to start over? How did those moments feel? What helped you center your focus again?

*COUNTING CASE STUDY: Pristina, Kosovo 2019

We came back to Counting plenty of times during our workshop. We found it to be most effective at the end of the day, using it as a breathing and relaxation exercise to end our day of creativity on a positive, reflective note. The first couple of times we played Counting, participants tried to count to 10 quickly, speaking before anyone else could get a chance. While this backfired a few times, they eventually got to 10 but it didn't feel like a calming exercise. In our later versions, we created the rule that everyone must wait two seconds after a number has been said so everyone has to listen to one another and feel the energy of the circle. This, we noticed, had a much more collaborative reaction than the previous hectic version. We discussed how it felt to listen to each other, even when no words were being spoken and our eyes were closed. If ran correctly, Counting can serve as a reflection of the day's work and the collaboration that took place.



SH-F-K-CH

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	5 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students and facilitators stand in a circle. A facilitator asks the group to repeat after him or her in making the sounds Sh as in <u>S</u> heep, F as in <u>F</u> ire, K as in <u>K</u> ite, and Ch as in <u>Ch</u> air as quickly as possible, stressing the hard consonant sounds. The group repeats and eventually everyone makes the sounds together.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This vocal warmup teaches students how to **enunciate** hard consonant sounds. Sometimes, when spoken softly, words with hard consonants can be lost onstage. This activity is a fun way to practice enunciation and **diction** while reading lines.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

BODY SOUNDS

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	5-10 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students work as a group, making sounds that come from the body together — laughs, cries, wails. Then they merge the tone of these sounds. What does a happy cry sound like, or a sad laugh?

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity is practice of the non-linguistic forms of communicating. Students think about diverse and nuanced ways of using laughs, cries, and other body sounds to show emotion.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What does it feel like to use sounds of the body to show emotion?
2. How can one sound indicate many types of emotion?
3. Can you remember the last time you laughed? The last time you cried? What was it about?

PROJECTION TESTS

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	10-15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students line up at the edge of a stage or at the far end of the room. Facilitators stand at the opposite side of the room or theatre. One by one, students read a line from the show they are performing or the script they're given. (If no script is being performed, facilitators should give students sentences.) The goal is to project the line so the facilitator can hear it clearly from the far side of the room. Students should not yell the line, but rather speak from their diaphragm and enunciate so each word can be heard clearly. After the facilitator hears the line, the next student speaks. This is done until every student has a chance to project.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

Students should feel comfortable speaking the words of the piece they will be performing or reading in front of an audience. This activity gives students a chance to practice projecting their lines before an audience is in the seats. It also shows the difference between yelling and projecting, an important distinction in acting.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

TONGUE TWISTERS

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	10 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Facilitators lead students in a series of <i>tongue twisters</i> in English. Some suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Irish wristwatch● Unique New York● A proper pot of coffee in a proper-pot-of-coffee-pot <p>Any tongue twister will do. Then, facilitators ask students to lead their own tongue twisters in their native language, if it is not English. The activity lasts until the group feels their tongues are sufficiently twisted.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

The act of repeating tongue twisters helps practice diction and speaking.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

2 BY 3

CATEGORY:	Vocal, Movement
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students are partnered up randomly and told to find their own space in the room. For the first round, the partners must count to 3, alternating each number. This should be relatively easy. In the second round, partners decide on a noise to replace the number “1” in the counting. They count to 3 again, making the new noise instead of saying 1. For the third round, partners decided on a physical action to replace “2”. They could high five, point, dance, or anything they can think of. They count again, using their noise and motion. For the final round, the partners decide on a random real word in any language to replace “3”. The partners count again, incorporating all of these new pieces.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In the theatre, usage of movement and non-verbal sounds can speak just as loud as words. This activity sparks not only laughs but also conversations around how to understand one another. It also encourages teamwork in order to accomplish a task.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How hard were you concentrating on counting to 3 as the rounds went on?
2. Did you and your partner maintain eye contact? Why or why not?

HEARTBEAT

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	5-10 minutes
MATERIALS:	Drumsticks, pencils, or none
DIRECTIONS:	Students sit together in a circle on the floor or around a table. Each student holds one hand to their pulse, and with the other, beats their heartbeat physically onto the surface. The activity continues until all heartbeats are in unison.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity physically draws students together, getting them to focus on their own heartbeat and those of others. It centers them and unifies them, by physically tying together their heartbeats and identifying their unique and shared place in the world.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

HAH

CATEGORY:	Vocal
RUN TIME:	5 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students and facilitators form a circle. With hands on their diaphragms, students try to say “HAH” following the facilitator. The goal is not to guess when the facilitator will say it but rather listen and feel when they will say it. The facilitator should try and trick the group by faking them out but should eventually say “HAH” regularly so it can be predicted and said together as a group.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity serves two purposes: one to practice breath control and the other to practice listening and cues. In a play, a lot of time between lines in a conversation feels awkward to the audience. Actors are encouraged to pick up cues from their fellow actors and get their lines out quickly and effectively. They also have to watch their breath support so they don't run out of air during a longer line. By practicing both skills, students will feel more confident in their ability to keep the audience engaged.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

CHAPTER 3.5: WRITING ACTIVITIES

CIRCLE STORY CHAIN

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	45 minutes
MATERIALS:	Big paper, different colored markers
DIRECTIONS:	Everyone is gathered around a big piece of paper. Everyone should have their own colored marker. Either starting with “Once upon a time” or from scratch, the first person chooses the first word of the story. Moving clockwise, each person adds one word to build the story. If they feel like the sentence is done, they can add punctuation and start the next sentence. This process continues until the group decides the story is complete. The group can make as many stories as they want with discussion after each of them.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

As creatives and inhabitants of the same world, we all have stories to tell. In fact, stories are what commonly unite people all over this planet. This activity gives the students the agency to build their own story by working together. It may not make sense and it may not have a beginning, middle, and end, but it was a product of teamwork and collaboration which makes it a useful tool in this program. Additionally, by having separate colors, the students can track their own contributions through the story. They will also improve at telling a *narrative arc* with repeated rounds. They may also create *motifs*.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What does this story say to you? What is it really about?
2. How did it feel to write a story word by word? How about with other people?
3. Were there moments when you thought the story was going one way but ended up going a completely different direction? Where did you think it would go?

MAKING A MONOLOGUE

CATEGORY:	Writing, Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Notebooks, small pieces of paper, pens
DIRECTIONS:	Students are given two small pieces of paper and told to write a character on one and a setting on another. For example, a character could be a Chef or a Grandmother and a setting could be a park or Mount Everest. The options are endless. Putting the pieces of paper into two containers, the students draw a character and setting at random. They are then tasked with writing a monologue from the perspective of their character in their setting. After given time to write, the monologues are read out loud to the group and everyone gives feedback.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

As an introduction to monologue writing, this activity operates on the idea that all you need to write a monologue is a character and a place. The conflict should arise given the character's background and their reaction to their setting. In addition to being a good starting point for monologue writing, the randomization of characters and settings gets the students used to writing from the perspective of people they do not instinctively think to write about. This creates a sense of understanding and empathy from the writer encountering new stories.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did you first react when you read your character and setting? What surprised you? What did you think would be difficult?
2. How did you develop your character just from their short description?
3. Did the conflict of the monologue arise from the character's backstory or the setting? Or was it a bit of both? Elaborate.

TALKING TO TREES

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	Nature, notebook, pen
DIRECTIONS:	Students are instructed to go to a place in nature; a park, a forest, or yard. They should find and select a tree or a plant. Then, they sit by the tree and try to imagine its life. What are its surroundings? How have they changed over time? What are its hopes? Fears? Students write a monologue from the perspective of the plant. What does it say, and what is its story?

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity brings students meditatively close to nature, allowing for a moment of reflection in a calm, quiet place. It also allows students to practice listening to EVERY living thing's story. If even plants can talk, how does our understanding their stories help us think about the stories of those around us that we cannot hear? This activity helps students practice this type of perspective-seeking writing that is essential to building empathy. The activity also highlights how many things around us are voiceless — whether it be subjugated persons, the planet, animals. How can we give voice to the voiceless?

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What did it feel like trying to listen to something silent?
2. What type of story did you imagine from the plant?
3. Was it hard to “hear” the plant?
4. How far back in its history did you go?

CALLING STRANGERS

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	20-30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Notecards, markers
DIRECTIONS:	Students are given notecards on which to write types of people — maybe celebrities, occupations, relations. Then, students each draw an “identity” card, written by someone in the group. The students then break into pairs and must write a <i>dialogue</i> between their two strangers. What would the two talk about? How does who they are affect the conflict and type of dialogue they engage in? Students should read the dialogue after.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity helps students begin writing dialogue between, potentially, two unlikely conversants. It illustrates how we can talk to anyone, across boundaries of any sort. It also may illuminate the struggles each faces individually, and how they are resolved or exacerbated when they come together.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Was it hard to imagine a story or conversation between these two people?
2. What did you find that they could talk about?

TIME-TRAVEL LETTERS

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	15-30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Paper and pens
DIRECTIONS:	The students write letters to themselves. In the first, the students write to their past selves. They should reflect on their regrets and mistakes, but only to advise themselves how to act differently. The letter might be cathartic — they can forgive themselves or show how they change. They can reassure their younger selves that they will make it through whatever they are facing. Next, students should write a letter to their future selves. What are their hopes, fears? What advice would they give themselves now for years in the future? Students can pick what “past” and “future” selves they write to — maybe 10 years, 20 years, or simply 2 minutes into their past or future! Students should NOT share these letters — they should be private and reflective.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity helps students get in touch with themselves and understand themselves more deeply. It also helps them make peace with time passing — they can forgive, advise, and hope for themselves. This helps them both reflect and move forward. It exemplifies how much they have grown and how much they will grow — a critical part of self-reflection.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

Not applicable.

VILLAIN MONOLOGUE

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Notebooks, pens
DIRECTIONS:	Students are given examples of famous villains in stories. For a common example, a conversation should take place about why this character is considered a villain and if there are any details in the original story that explain their actions. An example could be Cinderella’s Evil Stepmother. Students are then tasked with writing a monologue from the perspective of a villain with the purpose of garnering sympathy. After writing, students come back to the group and share their monologue without revealing the villain. Students can guess after the monologue has been read.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

We are often told if someone is “evil,” they have no redeeming qualities or are evil for the sake of being evil. We rarely question what makes someone evil and why they act that way. This activity encourages students to ask questions and consider the hidden stories of famous villains so that, in life, they will work to understand others instead of letting surface-level labels of evil define another person.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Why did you choose this villain? What about their story stands out to you?
2. Was it hard to write as this character? Was finding redeeming qualities about them difficult?
3. How did you find their actual motivations and write the monologue? What tools did you use?

FISH IN THE SKY

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	15-30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Paper
DIRECTIONS:	Students draw a setting. Then, they pass their drawing and the next student draws a protagonist that does not belong, like a fish in the sky. They then pass this scene, and each student must write a scene in which the protagonist they receive is out of place. They give special attention to how that character navigates the space in which it does not seem to belong.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In this activity, students learn how to write based on feeling out of place. It helps them identify how it might feel to navigate a place as an outsider.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What did it feel like to write from the perspective of a character that didn't belong?
2. What part of the landscape was hard to navigate?
3. Did your character interact with someone who did seem to belong? How did they overcome isolation?

DINNER PARTY*

CATEGORY:	Writing, Visual Arts
RUN TIME:	1 hour
MATERIALS:	Large paper, markers, and notebooks
DIRECTIONS:	<p>To begin this activity, all students journal in their notebooks about the most memorable meal of their life. Who was there? What did they eat? What made it memorable?</p> <p>Then, students should sit in a circle and each should be given a paper with an oval drawn on top — like a tabletop. They should draw a series of food on the table and label it. Then, students pass the table to the right. The next student should write two people who are guests at the meal. Then they pass the table again to the right where the next student writes two new guests at the table. Then they pass it to the right, and the next student writes a conflict to be solved. These can be simple conflicts, like who pays for the meal. Then they pass it to the right one final time. Each student now has a table with a set of food, four guests, and a simple conflict. They must write dialogue which 1) mentions the food, 2) every guest speaks, and 3) solves the conflict.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In this activity, students learn to work together on the task of storytelling and each have a stake in the stories of one another. They get firsthand experience solving a conflict through dialogue.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did the characters interact at the table?
2. Do you wish you could have added or removed a particular character to make it easier?
3. Did the food play a role in how your characters interacted?
4. What did it feel like to have all the characters in one room?
5. Did you use any experience from a dinner table to shape your scene?

***DINNER PARTY CASE STUDY: Pristina, Kosovo 2019**

In the journaling portion at the beginning of Dinner Party, students very successfully thought on their own mealtime experiences in their lives, and a variety of stories emerged. This helped us realize how many different stories can be told from a dinner. As students draw on the tables, they become invested in all of the other stories, because they've contributed some component to each. Students creatively tied issues of "mental and physical nourishment" by having one father talk to his son about reading more books to help his mind grow, just like his body would grow with the food at the table. Another had a fitness trainer enter a meal of fast food — very humorous. The activity also allows students to share about their culture through food, and compare and contrast their specific experiences. At the end, students shared their work and "cast" their peers to read each part. This was one of the first experiences reading one another's dialogue, which was an effective way to promote collaboration.



FOREHEAD CHARADES*

CATEGORY:	Writing
RUN TIME:	45 minutes - 1 hour
MATERIALS:	Small pieces of paper, notebooks, pens
DIRECTIONS:	Students and facilitators form a circle and write an occupation on a piece of paper. Without showing anyone else, everyone passes their paper face down clockwise. Everyone takes their new piece of paper and holds it to their forehead, words facing out. Then, each person has to guess the occupation on their forehead with the rest of the group giving them hints and answering their questions. Once everyone guesses, the students will take their occupation cards from their forehead and write a backstory for their character.^ After answering these prompting questions, everyone must write a paragraph about their character's backstory. After writing, everyone will share.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

On first look, we typically judge people by their outward appearances or the little things we know about them. In this activity, everyone knows only their character's occupation. By asking more questions about what is unseen, students gain valuable experience in building compelling, complex characters beyond surface-level traits. Additionally, the activity encourages learning more about other people in real life beyond their basic physical attributes.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What sorts of things did you know about your character from their occupation?
2. How did you build the rest of the character? What did you want to highlight about this person?
3. Could you see this character being a part of a larger play? What would their role in said play be?

***FOREHEAD CHARADES CASE STUDY: Pristina, Kosovo 2019**

During our first publicized workshop in the second week, we designed a “Pillars of Writing a 10-Minute Play” schedule of activities that dove into Setting, Character, and Plot. This activity was incredibly successful in teaching the students how in-depth they can be when it comes to writing characters for the stage. After the energizing and humorous game, students wrote backstories for their characters, prompted by questions about their families, hobbies, fears, and more. After, we took turns giving feedback about the characters and practiced the way in which many perspectives alter the growth and depth of a character. As an example, a male participant created a story about a female astronaut. Women in the room contributed to what type of pressure that woman might face in her field, and what her emotional landscape may be. When people holding various identities enter a discussion together of a character and their motives, they began to learn from the experiences and identities of others, enriching their empathy for both their fictional characters and one another.



CHAPTER 3.6: ELEMENTS OF DRAMA ACTIVITIES

WHAT IS DRAMA?*

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	20 minutes
MATERIALS:	Poster paper, markers
DIRECTIONS:	Everyone gathers around a big piece of paper that says “DRAMA” in the center. Students are all given markers and told to write down anything that comes to mind when they think of the word Drama. Facilitators emphasize there are no wrong answers. Students can switch markers throughout the activity. After everyone is done, everyone examines the word cloud and draws connections between words and concepts.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

A great opening activity for the program no matter the duration, this activity is meant to show how large of an art form theatre is and can be. Connections should be made between theatre and other types of art on the word cloud, as well as anything having to do with life outside of the theatre. Drama is everywhere and this is an activity that can put this concept into words. It grounds students to a shared and robust idea of the art form.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Which of these words and ideas stand out to you? How come?
2. How can other art forms find a home in Drama? Music, visual art, etc.?
3. What does Drama mean to you after doing this activity?

WHAT IS DRAMA? CASE STUDY: Pristina, Kosovo 2019

This was one of the first activities we did as a group during our 5-week program and it really set the tone for the rest of the workshop. Our role wasn't to tell the students exactly what theatre *must* be and, from this activity, we knew the participants were excited to experiment with what theatre *could* be. In our word cloud below, we have words that are associated with the classic definition of drama like "Shakespeare," "stage," and "Broadway." But as we thought more and more about drama, words like "profoundness," "humanity," and "=life" struck our group as incredibly important to what theatre has the potential to tap into and how it can make an impact in our global dialogue. By starting the workshop with this activity, we could move forward knowing all ideas and talents were welcome and encouraged in the theatre.



SHOWCASE

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama, Vocal, Movement
RUN TIME:	Undefined
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	Students are given the opportunity to display any pieces of art they've created before the workshop. They should be given enough notice of the showcase in advance so students can prepare their pieces. Changes to the space should be made to accommodate as many types of art as possible. Facilitators should also share a piece if possible.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

The beauty of theatre comes from the collaboration between artists. In theatre, all creatives have a place. The showcase is time for students and facilitators to share their various artistic interests with the group, which brings everyone closer together as creators and collaborators. It also demonstrates the variety of media which can be used in dramatic and performance arts.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How long have you been practicing this style of art? What made you interested in it to begin with?
2. How can this talent find its place in theatre?
3. What inspired you to share this piece or talent?

NEWSPAPER SETTINGS

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	15-30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Newspaper headlines (collected digitally from around the world, printed); large paper, markers
DIRECTIONS:	Cut out newspaper headlines from all over the world. Then give these headlines to students. Students should identify the “macro” and the “micro” settings of the story in the news. On a large sheet of paper, make two columns: MACRO, and MICRO. Then have students record the small and large settings of their news. Micro settings include things like a balcony, a park, a pool, a home. Macro settings include things like Seoul, South Korea or Brooklyn, New York City.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In this activity, students can discover the large and small settings which comprise a story. They also explore the relationships between these settings and how large social contexts can have an impact on the individual locations and vice versa.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Try mixing up some of the micro and macro settings. What types of stories could you tell? How could you stories change? What would stay the same?
2. What did you notice about your headline?
3. What was interesting about the story you read?
4. If you could write a new story in the same setting, what could you write about?

FREEZE

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama, Movement
RUN TIME:	30 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Two students are chosen at random and brought to an area deemed the stage. They are then presented with a scenario and told to act it out with the most exaggerated movements they can. Examples of starting scenarios include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Two friends in the park chasing pigeons● A dentist performing a root canal● Two people dancing and trying to have a conversation but the music is too loud <p>The two students improvise this first scenario. At any moment, any student can call “FREEZE!” and the two actors have to freeze in that exact position. The student who stopped the scene enters the stage, taps one of the actors out of the scene, and starts a new scene about something completely different from the frozen positions. The new pair improvise this new scenario until someone else calls Freeze. This repeats until the group feels the game has reached a good ending.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In instances of global politics, individuals often feel like they don't have a role in deciding what happens next when, in reality, they have a large role based on speaking up and creating change. This activity gives students the power to stop scenes and make them completely different, a feeling of agency not often afforded to younger people by older people in power. In addition to being a fun improv game, Freeze has real-world implications in its ability to inspire social change and youth movements.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to interrupt a scene? Were you hesitant at first?
2. What about the actors' movements inspired you to call Freeze? What did you change the scene to?

STREAMLINE DIALOGUE

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	20 minutes
MATERIALS:	Worksheet^, pens
DIRECTIONS:	A facilitator will provide the Streamline Dialogue worksheet to students. The premise of the scene doesn't matter but each line should say practically the same thing three times. Students are told to choose which of the three sentences in each line they like the most and cross out the other two. Everyone will then share their new scenes and discuss which sentences they liked over others and why.

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

When writing dialogue, it is important to make sure you can get your point across without repeating yourself. Before students write their own dialogue, this activity encourages students to consider how they want to spend their draft pages of a play and how to make each line count. Streamline Dialogue also touches on the idea of choosing tones and how information is conveyed in a conversation. Although the lines say almost the same thing, choosing your words carefully results in different tones and, when meeting people with other identities, these decisions of conversation make a difference.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. Why did you pick this specific sentence over another option? What about this sentence speaks to you?
2. Is the overall tone of your dialogue different from anyone else's? How so?
3. How would you take the lesson from this activity and apply it to your own plays?

SAY HI

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Students are partnered up randomly and told the only word they are allowed to use during this activity is “Hi.” As a group, students will be presented with different scenarios and must greet their partner in different hypothetical situations. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● They’re your best friend● They’re your worst enemy● You used to be best friends with this person and haven’t seen them in awhile● You might be allergic to this person● You’re at an event when you have to be completely silent but are so excited to see this person <p>Facilitators should solicit scenarios from students as well. The activity ends when the group has exhausted all of the scenarios.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

The way we greet others changes greatly based on the scenario. In playwriting, a greeting between two characters can say a lot about their relationship, even if they only say “Hi.” Outside of the theatre, the greeting is typically the first step to getting to know someone. By showing the varying ways you can greet someone in complex scenarios, students unlock the hidden meaning behind one word and can use this skill to be more open in future meetings.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What methods did you use to convey the relationships? Did you use body language, gritted teeth, the absence of sound, etc.?
2. What was the weirdest way either you or your partner said hi? Was it effective in getting the relationship across?

REACH THE ENDING

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama, Writing
RUN TIME:	30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Notebooks, pens
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Students are given the ending of a scene and must write a short scene to reach that ending. They can use whoever they want in the scene and it can take place wherever but it must reach the same ending. Ending examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Someone decides to fly to Paris● The car's engine comes back to life after being stuck on the side of the road● The couple decides to go their separate ways <p>Students are given time to write and, when they return, other student volunteers read their dialogue out loud. Everyone is given time to share and feedback is given.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

When a goal as large and intimidating like world peace is proposed, the path there is often hard to imagine. This activity gives students experience in constructing a world and choosing people they think will reach a goal. While Reach the Ending also help students write plays where the ending is apparent but the events prior are obscured, it also makes building a better world look a little easier.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What characters did you choose to reach the ending? How do your characters compare to others'?
2. What about your setting? Why did you choose this setting as the place to reach the ending?
3. How did it feel to know where you needed to get to but not be told how to get there?

WHAT'S OFFSTAGE?

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama
RUN TIME:	15 minutes
MATERIALS:	None
DIRECTIONS:	<p>Students enter the playing space or stage and the wings are established in the context of the space. When the facilitator announces what is offstage, students should improvise accordingly, acting as if that thing is actually behind the curtain. Examples of scenarios include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Your best friend waving hi● An elephant walking down the road● An alien spaceship● A rainstorm heading right towards you● A beautiful sunrise● A meteor crashing to Earth <p>Scenarios can be realistic and completely absurd to give the students more variation on which to improvise. After a few examples, students are encouraged to provide their own. The activity continues until the group decides it's done.</p>

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

In theatre, what is offstage is sometimes equally as important as what's onstage. This is the same in life, when what's going on down the street or halfway across the world has a profound impact on your life and the betterment of the world. By having students to react to imagined scenarios offstage, this activity encourages an active consideration of other people's stories and what's going on in their lives, no matter the distance.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. What scenarios were easier to react to than others? How come these felt easier or more familiar?
2. Did you notice someone else had a different reaction to a scenario than you did? How were your reactions different? Why do you think this is the case?

CALLING CLOUDS

CATEGORY:	Elements of Drama, Writing
RUN TIME:	30 minutes
MATERIALS:	Notecards, pens
DIRECTIONS:	In Calling Clouds, students will write a seemingly nonverbal object onto a notecard. Then, students draw these cards and write a dialogue between themselves and these strange partners. For example, what would a conversation look like between me and a cloud, should I be able to call it? What might we talk about?

ACTIVITY PURPOSE:

This activity shows students how they can communicate with anything in their world, and attunes them to talking to those which are typically voiceless.

SAMPLE DEBRIEF QUESTIONS:

1. How did it feel to start a conversation with something random?
2. How did you think of what to talk about?
3. Why did you write what you did on the notecard? Did the conversation go the way you had intended?

Chapter 4: Structuring the Workshop

While the inaugural program was 5 weeks long, we believe Playwriting for Peace can be adapted to fit any length of program, from one day to an indefinite period of time. Below are suggestions for structuring activities and themes that we experimented with during the Pristina program. Feel free to use and adapt them as facilitators see fit.

ONE DAY - 6 HOURS (9:00 - 15:00)

In a one-day program, students should leave with skills that will help them write for the stage in the future. Although they won't be realistically be able to write full ten-minute plays during the program, this schedule includes time for sharing their activity work and giving feedback to other participants. We also recommend facilitators be willing to read and give feedback to any students moving forward to encourage them to keep writing.

9:00 - 9:15 - Students Arrive

It's realistic that students will be late. Provide some extra time so facilitators aren't rush to finish activities at the end of the day.

9:15 - 9:30 - Identity Web

9:30 - 10:00 - What is Drama Word Cloud

10:00 - 10:15 - Introduction to the 10-Minute Play^

10:15 - 10:30 - Boxed In

This activity introduces students to the idea of space and how it relates to the first pillar of setting.

10:30 - 10:45 Snack break

10:45 - 11:00 - Read Setting Descriptions

Facilitators should find setting descriptions from published and famous plays that are culturally and historically relevant to the location. Discuss the "macro" setting (city, year, etc.) and the "micro" setting (house, park, room, etc.) with students. Ask what they noticed and what they liked about the setting descriptions.

11:00 - 11:30 Placemaking Through Postcards

Give each student a chance to share their drawing and setting descriptions. Ask for feedback from other students.

11:30 - 12:00 - Lunch

12:00 - 12:15 - Mirrors

12:15 - 13:15 - Forehead Charades

13:15 - 13:30 - Space Walk

Use the characters the students just wrote backstories for during the space walks. Get them thinking about how characters respond to new settings.

13:30 - 13:45 - Snack break

13:45 - 14:45 - Narrative Arc Mapping

Choose a common story (fairy tales work well) and map the narrative arc with the students. Ask them where the climax should go and what the conflict of the story is. Then, find or write a short script for the students to read and analyze in groups. Give them large paper to map their own narrative arcs, circling the climax and writing the setting, characters, and conflict. Tape all of their arcs to the wall and ask them to point

out the differences between their arcs, specifically what they chose as the events to highlight, their climax, and their conflicts.

14:45 - 15:00 - Wrap Up

Give out contact information and tell students they can send any writings (plays, poems, or other works) to the facilitators for feedback whenever. End on a positive, grateful note!

ONE WEEK

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
Theme: Getting to Know You / Intro to Drama	Learning Setting	Learning Characterization	Learning Monologue
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Movement Name Game ● Craziest Common Thing ● What is Drama? ● Space Walk ● Identity Web ● Storytelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Newspaper Settings ● Placemaking through Postcards ● What's Offstage? ● Fish in the Sky ● How Do You See Your World? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Exquisite Corpse ● Dinner Party ● Forehead Charades ● Introducing YOU ● Trust Walk ● Barnyard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Storytelling ● Making a Monologue ● Villain Monologue ● Boxed In ● Wish Tree ● Identity Collage ● Talking to Trees

DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
Theme: Learning Dialogue	Elements of Performance	Showcase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mirrors ● Streamline Dialogue ● Say Hi ● Trust Walk ● 2 by 3 ● Heartbeat ● Circle Story Chain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Space Walk ● Boxed In ● Box, Feather, Bird ● Body Sounds ● Projection Tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Showcase

ONE MONTH

WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
Theme: Getting to Know You / Setting and Characterization	Monologue and Dialogue / Conflict	Writing and Workshopping	Elements of Performance / Final Showcase
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identity Web ● Craziest Common Thing ● What is Drama? ● Space Walk ● Boxed In ● Newspaper Settings ● Placemaking Through Postcards ● Forehead Charades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making a Monologue ● Villain Monologue ● Talking to Trees ● Calling Strangers ● Fish in the Sky ● Dinner Party ● Streamline Dialogue ● Calling Clouds ● Freeze 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Circle Story Chain ● Letter to the Past ● Identity Collage ● Narrative Arc Mapping ● Reach the Ending ● Storytelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tapeball ● Mirrors ● Counting ● Sh-F-K-Ch ● Projection Tests ● Tongue Twisters ● 2 by 3 ● Heartbeat ● Hah ● What's Offstage?

Glossary

- **agency:** Self-sustaining independence in a person's actions and decisions
- **applied theatre:** the act of creating theatre for the purpose of education and social justice
- **Civil Society Organization (CSO):** An organization that works to better the community in which they reside
- **debriefing session:** A dialogue or discussion between students about an activity led by a facilitator. It involves questions that get to the deeper meaning of the activity.
- **dialogue:** The lines of a play, conveying discussions between characters.
- **diaphragm:** A muscle at the bottom of your ribcage that helps pull air into the lungs. It helps control breath support. Activating this muscle while speaking can give the voice more power and stamina.
- **diction:** The style of speaking; how each word is pronounced.
- **enunciate:** Speaking in a manner in which every consonant and vowel sound can be distinguished from one another.
- **macro and micro:** Large and small characteristics. In this context, macro settings and conflicts refer to city-, nation-, and world-wide locations and problems. An example of a macro setting and conflict could be Yorktown, Virginia, 1789 during the American Revolution. Micro settings and conflicts are typically the setting and the main conflict of a play, which involves a smaller location and more individual problems. An example could be a playground in which two children fight over a toy.
- **mixed media:** A piece of art that blends art mediums. For example, a musical is a combination of music and theatre.
- **motif:** A trait or theme found in a piece of art.
- **narrative arc:** The plot structure of a play. It typically begins with the exposition and rises with conflict until the climax of the play is reached. Then, it falls to the resolution of the conflict.
- **non-verbal:** Speaking without words.
- **project:** to push your words outward and clearly so audiences can hear you without straining your vocal chords.
- **protagonist:** The main character in a play, often the one that drives the action and the audience roots for.
- **setting:** The place in which the play occurs.
- **tongue twister:** A phrase that is so complex to say that it takes concentration to speak clearly.

- **wings:** The areas behind the curtains of the stage. When in the wings, actors can see the events onstage but audiences cannot see them.
- **word cloud:** A visual representation of an idea where the theme is written in the center and words that remind students of the theme are written around it.

Appendix

A1. Call for Participants Poster

**Playwriting for Peace
Summer Camp**

For ages 16-24

23 July through 24 August in Pristina

For 5 weeks, students will learn how to bring their own stories to life onstage through theatre games, writing workshops, and art activities. The program is run by two American playwrights and two Kosovar youth leaders. It runs Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday and will end with a final performance. The camp is FREE and will be run in English.

PLEASE CONTACT EMILYRUS@UMICH.EDU TO SIGN UP

A2. Character Backstory Sheet

OCCUPATION:

NAME:

AGE:

WHERE DO THEY LIVE:

FAMILY MEMBERS:

FAVORITE HOBBY:

BIGGEST FEAR:

A3. Streamline Dialogue Worksheet

Instructions: In a ten-minute play, every line is crucial. Saying the same thing multiple times takes away from other important dialogue. In this scene, pick one sentence you want to use in each line and cross out the others. See how your new dialogue compares to other playwrights' sheets.

It is a beautiful, sunny day in the park and JOSH and MARIA, recently married, are taking a walk.

JOSH

What a gorgeous day! Have you ever seen anything as beautiful in your life? Look Maria, the sun is brighter than ever!

MARIA

Josh, can we talk for a second? There's something I want to tell you, Josh. I don't want you to freak out, Josh, but something's been on my mind.

JOSH

Of course, Maria. What's bothering you? You can tell me anything.

MARIA

I think you need to shower more often. Your stench is ruining this perfect day in the park. Honestly, you're gross.

JOSH

I don't understand. That's so rude of you to say. I can't believe you would insult my new cologne like that!

MARIA

I can't be married to someone who smells like you! I need to plug my nose every time you get near me! Buy different cologne, Josh!

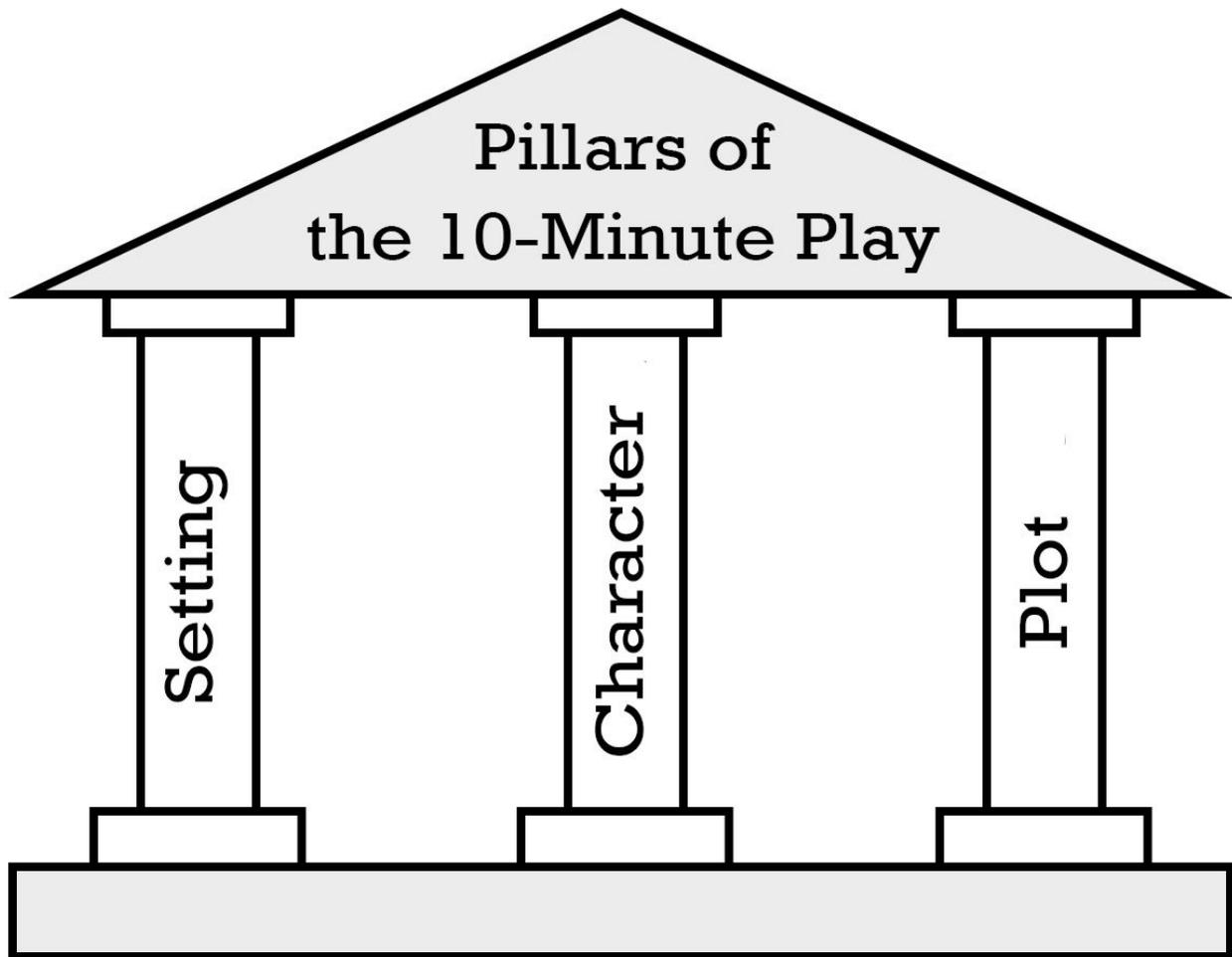
JOSH

Maria, please keep your voice down. Do you want everyone in this park to know I smell? This is so embarrassing.

MARIA

Sorry but I've had enough of this. The stench is too much for me. Go stink up someone else's park.

A4. Ten-Minute Play Pillars



Bibliography

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, New York: W.W. Norton, 2006.

Changing the Story. "Changing the Story." 2019, <https://changingthestory.leeds.ac.uk/>

Davenport, Christian., Erik Melander, and Patrick M. Regan., *The Peace Continuum: what it is and how to study it*, Oxford University Press, 2018.

Detroit Public Theatre. "Shakespeare in Prison | Case Study Report | January 2019." www.detroitpublictheatre.org/sip-case-study. 2018.

Nordås, Ragnhild, and Christian Davenport. "Fight the Youth: Youth Bulges and State Repression." *AJPS*. 2013

Phosphoros Theatre. "About Phosphoros Theatre." Phosphoros Theatre Company, 2019, www.phosphorostheatre.com/about.