Unit Plan Overview

Name: Tori Gitten

Curriculum Title: Immersology   **Topic:** Immersive Theatre

Grade Level: 11-12th grade   **Number of Students:** 20

Meetings Per Week and Time: Four days a week for 45 minutes.

MA Standards:

- **CREATING: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Create theatrical ideas (e.g., plot, setting, character) that reflect characteristics of different artistic movements. (F.T.Cr.01)
- **PERFORMING: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Modify a theatrical performance by anticipating audience responses to better align to student's artistic intent. (P.T.P.06)
- **RESPONDING: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Identify theatrical decisions from a work that connect it to a specific genre or style. (F.T.R.08)
- **CONNECTNG: Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural, and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Identify the connections between historical and cultural contexts and defining stylistic elements of theatrical movements (e.g., how the existential movement and absurdist theatre are connected). (F.T.Co.11)

Topic: Immersive Theatre
Facts/Knowledge that students will gain by the end of the unit.
- Immersive theatre is a type of performative theatre that emphasizes the focus of space and environments, while focusing on active audience experience.   - The audience participates in the action of the story and plays an important role.   - The actor's role is to engage the audience.
Skills that students will gain by the end of the unit.
- Collaborate as an ensemble.   - Break the fourth wall.   - Use theater game as metaphor to explore actor and audience relationships.   - Identifying the elements of immersive theatre.
Transferable Concepts that students will gain by the end of the unit.
- The Activity Spectrum (4th wall to the real world)   - World of the Story/World Building   - Character Development   - Collaboration   - Plot Structure   - Role of the Audience   - Stage/Set Design
Complex/Creative Processes that students engage in during the unit.
- Rehearse and present a short immersive theater scene in small groups from a pre-selected script.   - Understand the role of then actor in relation to the role of the audience in immersive theatre.   - Create the world of the story by designing a specific environment in the playing space.   - Surround the audience in the world of the story.
Key Vocabulary taught/used by students and teacher during the unit.
Narrative Structure; Audience Engagement; Plot; Site-Specific Theatre; Improvisational Theatre; Interactive/Participatory Theatre; Environmental Theatre; Performance Art; Promenade Theatre; Character; Script; Set; 4th Wall; Time; Ensemble; Spectactor
Prior Knowledge needed by students before beginning the unit.
- Students will be able to analyze a script.   - Students will be able to name the technical and performative aspects of a theatrical production.   - Students will be able to form stage pictures.   - Students have participated in a 4-week unit on directing.
Teacher Resources / Research (videos, books, etc) to support teaching of the unit.
Bouko, Catherine. (2016). *Immersive theater: A definition on three levels.* Sociétés,134, 55-65. https://doi.org/   Bradberry, Corey. (2018, June 25). *Seven Lessons Learned from Creating an Immersive Theatrical Whodunit.* HowlRound. https://howlround.com/seven-lessons-learned-creating-immersive-theatrical-whodunit.   Cooper, Haley ER. (2019, March 03). "Structures." *Immersology.* Strange Bird Immersive LLC. https://www.immersology.com/structures/.

Dixon, Tami. (2016, February 14) *The Immersive Actor*. HowlRound.
    https://howlround.com/immersive-actor.

Hamburger, Anne. (2019, May 02). *The Why and How of Site-Specific, From Then to Now*.
    HowlRound. https://howlround.com/why-and-how-site-specific.

Kiltgaard, Kamron. (2016). *Invisomercial.* Heuer Publishing LLC.

Lazarus, Joan. (2012, February 15). *Signs of Change: New Directions in Theatre Education,
    Revised and Amplified Edition*. Intellect Ltd.

Mandell, Jonathan. (2017, January 05). *Rethinking Immersive Theatre: Inside the Wild
    Heart of Clarice Lispector.* HowlRound. https://howlround.com/rethinking-immersive-
    theatre.

Peled, Shachar. (2013, October 10). *i24news Shachar Peled - Sleep No More*. YouTube.
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RziojmOarHY

Salazar, Laura Gardner. (2010). *Youth Take stage: An Introduction to Immersive Theatre.* 4-H
    Youth Development; Michigan State University Extension.
    https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/236/66884/4H1608_YouthTaketheStage.pdf

Snyder-Young, Dani. (2014, December 04). *Broken Public Schools and Community Dialogue at
    Collaboraction*. HowlRound.
    https://howlround.com/broken-public-schools-and-community-dialogue-collaboraction.

Theories/Theorists and/or Artists/Theatre Companies discussed, explored, or used during the unit.

- *Punchdrunk* (British Immersive Theatre Company)
- *Trusty Sidekick Theatre Company* (Immersive Theatre Company)
- *Sleep No More* (Immersive Theatre Show)
- *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*
- *Fire Season https://howlround.com/fire-season*
- *Invisomercial -* by Kamron Klitgaard

-Synopsis: https://www.hitplays.com/default.aspx?pg=sd&st=INVISOMERCIAL&p=211
-Script Preview: https://www.hitplays.com/hp/Scripts/Samples/Invisomercial=071709.pdf

How do you envision this unit utilizing comprehensive theatre education? (Address all these components in the Venn diagram (page 224 in *Signs of Change).*

- **Holistic Learning:** Students will understand multiple aspects of theatre by participating in different theatrical roles throughout the unit as follows: Students will research immersive theatre types/styles and direct a scene to fit one of the styles of immersive theatre; Students will collaborate as scenic designers and directors to present and stage their scene; Students perform as actors and participate as active audience members while performing and viewing each other's scenes; Finally, students will constructively critique their own performance and the performances of their peers.

- **Interdisciplinary Arts Education**: In English class students are studying modern Shakespeare adaptations, to make seemingly dated texts more relevant. In class, students watched *Sleep No More's* 1930's film noir adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, where they were introduced to immersive theatre.
- **Arts Integration:** In science class students are studying climate change, where the final project includes devising a site-specific, immersive PSA to educate people on the effects of climate change. (Inspired by Alice Stanley Jr.'s *Fire Season* https://howlround.com/fire-season)

Scope and Sequence

Lesson #	Day #	Enduring Understanding	Essential Question	Objectives	Assessment
Pre-Assessment: Snowball (Topic is "Immersive Theatre.")					
1	1-2	Immersive theatre is a type of performative theatre that emphasizes the focus of space and environments.	What is immersive theatre?	(a) Students will define and visually map the key frameworks of theatre under the lens of Joan Lazarus' 8 Theatrical Roles [researcher, playwright, director, designer, technician, actor, audience, and critic]. (knowledge, analyze) (b) Students will identify The Activity Spectrum [4th wall to the real world]. (understand) (c) Students will analyze the functions of the 4th wall. (analyze, apply) (d) Students will define immersive theatre and relate the foundations of immersive theatre to key vocabulary [audience engagement, narrative structure, immersive, performance space, world of the story]. (remembering, understand)	(a) Visual Mapping Photograph (b) Activity Spectrum Note Sheet (c) Complete The Image, Followed by Post-Strategy DAR and Teacher Observational Notes (d) Poster Dialogue
2	3-4	Immersive theatre relies on the world of the story in order to	How does immersive theatre focus and utilize space and environment?	(a) Students will interpret and analyze how movement correlates to environment. (analyze) (b) Students will prepare and present a two-minute handout on assigned immersive theatre types/styles. (understand, create) (c) Students will identify the components of immersive theater types/styles. (knowledge) (d) Students will formulate and create different soundscape environments. (analyze, create)	(a) Cover The Space, Followed by Post-Strategy DAR and Teacher Observational Notes (b) Handout Presentation (c) Alphabet Relay (d) Soundscapes, Followed by Post-Strategy Individual Journal Reflection

3	5-7	effectively engage the audience.	How do we build the world of the story?	(a) Students will build an environment with their bodies based on selected prompts to explore the many characteristics and aspects of a location, setting, environment, or event. (apply) (b) Students will construct a 'one-word story.' (understand, apply) (c) Students will evaluate how to participate as an active audience member and 'spectactor.' (analyze, evaluate) (d) Students will visually map the plot and narrative structure of the play "Invisomercial." (knowledge, analyze)	(a) This Setting Needs, Followed by Post-Strategy DAR and Teacher Observational Notes (b) One Word/Phrase Story Telling, Followed by Post-Strategy DAR and Teacher Observational Notes (c) Complete The Story, Followed by Post-Strategy Individual Journal Reflection (d) Visual Mapping Photograph
		Immersive theatre blurs the boundaries between audience/act or relationships.			
4	8-11		What is it like to experience live immersive theatre?	(a) Students will respond to a short video on the experience of the immersive theatre play 'Sleep No More'. (knowledge) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RziojmOarHY (b) Students will compare and contrast what makes an immersive theatre experience more or less effective. (analyze, evaluate) (c) Students will craft 'Real/Ideal Images' to demonstrate and compare what effective immersive theatre should look like. (apply, evaluate, create) (d) Students will interpret and express the text and story of their assigned scene. (apply) (e) Students will devise the world of the play (story) by rehearsing with their scene partners in preparation for the final in-class presentation. (apply, create)	(a) Video Note Handout (b) Individual Journal Reflection (c) Presentation of Real/Ideal Images and Teacher Observational Notes (d) Visual Dramaturgy/Collective Drawing (e) Rehearsal Journal Entry Part 1

5	12-13	Immersive theatre focuses on an active audience experience.	During an immersive theatre experience, what is the role of the actor? What is the role of the audience?	(a) Students will demonstrate actor audience relationships by doing trustwork. (understand) (b) Students will apply constructive peer feedback by rehearsing with their scene partners in preparation for the final in-class presentation. (apply) (c) Students will present their final scene to the class and act as active audience members. (create, evaluate)	(a) Trust Walk, Followed by Post-Strategy DAR and Teacher Observational Notes (b) Rehearsal Journal Entry Part 2 (c) Performance and Active Participation – Student Q & A/Reflection Post Performances
Post-Assessment: Snowball (Topic is "Immersive Theatre.")					

Diagnostic Assessment: Snowball

Pre-Assessment:
Welcome to 'Immersology'! Please take one sheet of paper and a marker, then find a seat in a circle.

[Wait time]

To begin our unit on immersive theatre, we will share our opinions and previous knowledge on immersive theatre through the strategy Snowball.

In a moment, I will read a statement aloud. After I read the statement, silently write a word or brief response to the statement on the piece of paper. Your response will be anonymous. Does anyone have any questions?

[Wait time]

Great! The statement is: Immersive theatre is… You will have 3 minutes to write your response.
[Read the statement twice and write the statement on the board for students to reference]

Okay, friends, please look up at me once you are finished writing.

[Wait time]

Excellent! Please crumple your piece of paper into a 'snowball' and toss the 'snowball' into the bucket in the center of the circle.

[Wait time]

Once you have thrown your 'snowball,' pick up a different 'snowball' from the center of the room/bucket and find your way back to a standing circle.

[Wait time]

We will read each anonymous response one at a time, starting to my left.

[Each student reads a response aloud]

Such thoughtful responses, great work! Let's take a moment to reflect.

Side Coaching:
- *This is anonymous so use this opportunity to express a respectful opinion, concern, or question.*
- *This is about your opinion. I'm not looking for a single "right" answer.*
- *If you pick up your own 'snowball' statement, please toss it back in and pick a different one.*

Reflect:
- **D:** *What did we do in this activity?*
  A: *What were some of our common responses–meaning where did we offer similar answers to the prompt? Why do you think this might be? Where were our areas of difference? Why might this be?*
- **A:** *How many of you found you agreed with someone else's opinion in the group when the statements were being read aloud? Can anyone share an example?*
- **R:** *How might these responses inform us about the traits, aspects, and purpose of immersive theatre?*

Post-Assessment:

Great work with your final immersive scenes! We've explored the many aspects of immersive theatre throughout this unit; let's take a moment to reflect on what we have learned by revisiting the strategy, Snowball.

Please take one sheet of paper and a marker, then find a seat in a circle.

[Wait time]

In a moment, I will read a statement aloud. After I read the statement, silently write a word or brief response to the statement on the piece of paper. Your response will be anonymous. Does anyone have any questions?

[Wait time]

Great! We will revisit the statement: Immersive theatre is… You will have 3 minutes to write your response.
[Read the statement twice and write the statement on the board for students to reference]

Okay, friends, please look up at me once you are finished writing.

[Wait time]

Excellent! Please crumple your piece of paper into a 'snowball' and toss the 'snowball' into the bucket in the center of the circle.

[Wait time]

Once you have thrown your 'snowball,' pick up a different 'snowball' from the center of the room/bucket and find your way back to a standing circle.

[Wait time]

We will read each anonymous response one at a time, starting to my left.

[Each student reads a response aloud]

Such thoughtful responses, great work! Let's take a moment to reflect.

Side Coaching:
- *What have you learned since the first time hearing this statement?*
- *Reflect on the different activities and strategies we have done throughout this unit… what did you discover?*
- *This is anonymous so use this opportunity to express a respectful opinion, concern, or question.*
- *This is about your opinion. I'm not looking for a single "right" answer.*
- *If you pick up your own 'snowball' statement, please toss it back in and pick a different one.*

Reflect:
- **D:** *What did we do in this activity?*
  A: *What were some of our common responses–meaning where did we offer similar answers to the prompt? Why do you think this might be? Where were our areas of difference? Why might this be?*
- **A:** *How did these responses change from the first time we did this activity? Do you feel the class has learned more about the traits, aspects, and purpose of immersive theatre?*
- **R:** *What are the key takeaways you have learned about immersive theatre?*
- **R:** *How is immersive theatre an effective way to tell a story?*

Benchmark Assessment

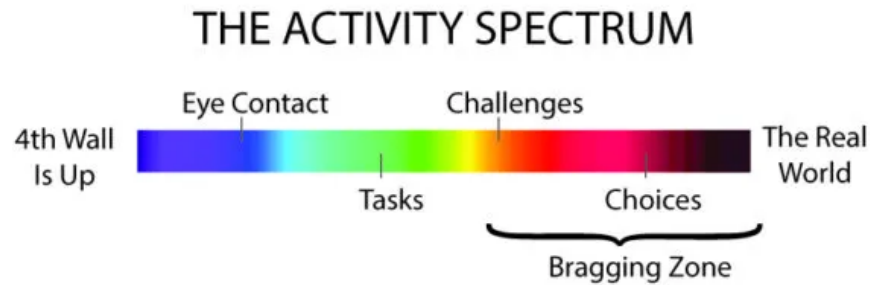| Student Name	Date	State or National	Subject	Standard Number	Standard	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Comments
		M.A. State	Theatre	F.T.Cr.01	**CREATING: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Create theatrical ideas (e.g., plot, setting, character) that reflect characteristics of different artistic movements.				
		M.A. State	Theatre	P.T.P.06	**PERFORMING: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Modify a theatrical performance by anticipating audience responses to better align to student's artistic intent.				
		M.A. State	Theatre	F.T.R.08	**RESPONDING: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Identify theatrical decisions from a work that connect it to a specific genre or style.				
		M.A. State	Theatre	F.T.Co.11	**CONNECTING: Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Identify the connections between historical and cultural contexts and defining stylistic elements of theatrical movements (e.g., how the existential movement and				

					absurdist theatre are connected).				

Lesson #1: 'Activity Spectrum' Exit Ticket

Name:
Date:

THE ACTIVITY SPECTRUM

Eye Contact   Challenges

4th Wall   The Real
Is Up   World

Tasks   Choices

Bragging Zone

- How is the audience's engagement affected as you move left to right on the activity spectrum?

- What impact will different modes of audience engagement have on the story?

- How might you structure an immersive theatre experience for multiple participants that allows each to exercise meaningful choice without ruining the show for the others?

Formative Assessment #2

Lesson #1: Rehearsal Journal Entry – Part 1

Name:
Date:

- Which immersive theatre techniques is your group integrating into your scene?

- How might your group engage the audience in relation to the Activity Spectrum?

- How is the scene progressing?

- How is the group working together? How well do you work with other people?

- Is there one leader, or does everyone participate?

- What did you accomplish during today's rehearsal?

- What are your goals for the next rehearsal?

Lesson #5: Performance/Active Participation Critical Response Method (Liz Lerman)

Name:
Date:

To be answered by the audience:

- I appreciate…
  What did you appreciate about their performance? Why?

- I wonder…
  What wonders/pieces of feedback do you have for this performance?

To be answered by the performer:

- I discovered…
  What did you discover while performing/preparing?

Summative/Authentic Assessment

Final Scene Presentation Rubric

Criteria	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point	Comments
Use of Space and Environment	The performer demonstrates an excellent understanding of stage pictures, spacing, levels, lines, and planes. The performer intentionally uses their body to help create the world of the story and scenic environment. The performer exhibits a clear understanding of performance space in relation to one of the key styles of immersive theatre. The world of the story is unified through the scenery and prop choices.	The performer demonstrates a solid understanding of stage pictures, spacing, levels, lines, and planes. The performer adequately uses their body to help create the world of the story and scenic environment. The performer exhibits an understanding of performance space in relation to one of the key styles of immersive theatre. The world of the story is assisted by the scenery and prop choices.	The performer demonstrates some understanding of stage pictures and basic blocking. The performer attempts to use their body to help create the world of the story and environment. The performer attempts to exhibit an understanding of performance space in relation to one of the key styles of immersive theatre. The scenery and prop choices relate to the scene.	The performer does not demonstrate any understanding of stage pictures and basic blocking. The performer does not use their body to help create the world of the story and environment. The performer does not exhibit an understanding of performance space in relation to one of the key styles of immersive theatre. The scenery and prop choices do not relate to the scene.	
Audience Engagement	The performer actively surrounds the audience with the world of the story. The performer actively includes and invites the audience into the scene. The performer demonstrates a clear understanding of the Activity Spectrum in relation to audience engagement.	The performer mostly surrounds the audience with the world of the story. The performer invites the audience into the scene. The performer demonstrates a good understanding of the Activity Spectrum in relation to audience engagement.	The performer partially surrounds the audience with the world of the story. The performer attempts to invite the audience into the scene. The performer demonstrates a base understanding of the Activity Spectrum in relation to audience engagement.	The performer does not engage with the audience or include and invite the audience into the world of the story or scene. The performer does not demonstrate an understanding of the Activity Spectrum in relation to audience engagement.	
Interpretation/ Preparation of Text	The performer demonstrates an excellent synthesis of choices within the scene's dramatic action. The performer exhibits exemplary interpretation of the text and a nuanced approach to the material.	The performer demonstrates a solid understanding of choices within the scene's dramatic action. The performer exhibits partial interpretation of the text and a nuanced approach to the material.	The performer demonstrates basic choices within the scene's dramatic action. The performer exhibits an attempt to interpret the text and an attempted nuanced approach to the material.	The performer does not demonstrate any choices within the scene's dramatic action. The performer does not exhibit an attempt to interpret the text or display a nuanced approach to the material.	
Focus/Connection	The performer is fully focused and concentrated throughout the scene and stays in character. The performer displays an excellent connection with their scene partner(s).	The performer is mostly focused and concentrated throughout the scene. The performer momentarily slips out of character. The performer displays a good connection with their scene partner(s).	The performer is inconsistently focused and concentrated throughout the scene. The performer is only in character for brief moments. The performer displays an artificial connection with their scene partner(s).	The performer is not focused and concentrated throughout the scene. The performer is not in character. The performer displays no visible connection with their scene partner(s).	

Voice	All of the performer's words are clearly heard and understood. The performer's vocal expression is consistently appropriate for the scene.	Most of the performer's words are clearly heard and understood, with a few exceptions. Most aspects of the performer's vocal expression are appropriate for the scene.	Some of the performer's words are clearly heard and understood, but many are not. At least one aspect of the performer's vocal expression is appropriate for the scene. The performer may be inconsistent.	Few of the performer's words are clearly heard and understood. The performer's vocal expression is consistently inappropriate for the scene.	
Performer Rehearsal Journals (Part 1 & Part 2)	The performer completes a detailed, thoughtful reflection in a timely and responsible way, adds elements beyond the assignment. The performer draws upon a wide range of drama specific vocabulary and includes many detailed examples.	The performer thoughtfully completes a reflection on the work done in class in a timely and responsible way. The performer applies course specific vocabulary with several examples.	The performer shows commitment to completing a thoughtful reflection on the work in class. The performer employs some use of course specific vocabulary with some examples.	The performer completes a minimal amount of work. Some questions remain unanswered, and responses are unfocused. The performer uses a limited range of course vocabulary without any specific examples.	