

Pre and Post Reading Lesson Plans:

Reborn by Zayd Dohrn

Pre-Reading Physical Theatre Lesson Plan:

Warm-ups - 20 minutes

Zip Zap Zop

Students stand in a circle. Students will shoot a bolt of energy by doing an energetic clap that ends up with them pointing at another student while making eye contact. The first student says “zip” while sending the bolt, the next student says “zap” while sending to another student and the third says “zop” and then it keeps going zip zap zop zip zap zop. The way to get “out” is 1: not saying the words in the right order – ie: zipping when you should zop, etc) 2: breaking the rhythm – this goes fast and must keep a constant rhythm – no hesitation 3: unclear eye contact – we must be able to tell who you are sending it to. Once a student is “out” they sit in the center of the circle and try to distract by quietly zipping zapping and zopping – no gestures, just verbal – you might sit and say “zip zip zip, zippetty zap zap!” This makes the kids who are still in have to focus even more.

Rio

Students spread out around the room. Everyone starts a repetitive sound and movement. Then they start walking around the room, continuing their repetitive sound and movement. Tell students to face a partner, continuing their sound/movement...without talking about it or stopping, little by little they should both adjust until they have created a new sound and movement that is a mixture of both of theirs...when it is totally synced, they start walking around the room together, doing their new simultaneous repetitive sound and movement. After 30 seconds or so, each pair should face another pair...same process – both pairs adjusting until there is a new sound and movement that all four are doing in sync. Start moving around the room, as a group, doing the sound and movement...etc etc until whole class doing the same sound and movement!

Musical Improv

(optional – you have to provide your own music – I just went through my itunes and found fun songs from a wide array of genre’s – ie: Beethoven’s 5th and Let’s Get It On – whatever you think would work with your group! If you have the time to prep music, this is a super fun and hilarious warm-up)

Students lie down on the floor. A dramatic piece of music plays. An actor jumps up and calls out an event that fits the music – whatever comes to mind, no wrong answers. Everyone starts to enthusiastically improv the event. Play about 30 seconds of the song, then switch to the next. When song switches, everyone drops to floor and waits til someone else calls out different event. Must have new “leader” each time – and can’t call out “dancing” or “at the club” – must be action that fits the music, but that you wouldn’t actually do in reality – ie: BBQ! Fighter pilots! Frying bacon!

Ha’s

Students jog around the room. Every 7 or 8 steps, jump and land quietly in a low position, both feet planted firm and wide – stable, all momentum stopping, no wobbling – use core! As you land, open arms wide, focus eyes on a particular person or object, and “Ha” on your exhale. Try extending your arms vertical, horizontal, diagonal. Try “Ha” loud, soft, friendly, intimidating, etc. Try doing “Ha’s” to people and places close to you, and “Ha’s” to people and places all the way across the room. Vary the length and sound of the attack – short and sharp to long and drawn out. Collect your energy and radiate strength from the ground, up through the torso and legs, and out through your arms and eyes. Have students “ha” for about two minutes.

Content with Debriefs – 40 minutes

3 Changes

Everyone in pairs – 1 minute to observe each other – clothes, hair, accessories, etc. Pairs turn backs on each other for 1 minute and make 3 changes to their own personal appearance – change the part in their hair, remove an earring, cuff a pant leg, switch watch to other arm, etc. Pairs face each other again and try to identify the 3 changes.

Mirror

Students in pairs. Have one student start to move very very slowly – the other student follows their movement as if they are the mirror. So if the leader moves their left hand back, the follower would move their right hand back. They can never touch, as there is “glass” between them. This is a silent activity. Switch leaders after a couple of minutes. Then tell the students to try with NO leader! See if they can sense what they want to do and lead together! Then, start to call out themes – they can switch or handle leadership on their own at this point. Themes: exhaustion, compulsion, addiction, perfectionism, magnification – at end, ask students – how did it feel to lead? What were you focused on? How did it feel to follow? Was your focus different?

Doll Brainstorm & Mirror

Groups of 3 – 2-3 minutes to brainstorm – what were your favorite dolls or action figures when you were little? Report out on board. Back to group – what are some characteristics of dolls? 2-3 more minutes. Report out on board. Everyone up – choose a doll you are familiar with, and create a sculpture of that doll – be sure to adjust your body to fit the characteristics of dolls we have brainstormed. Pairs show each other, and critique and adjust to improve. Then, we set up the doll factory. Everyone places themselves somewhere in the room in doll sculpture. Each pair gets to check out the doll factory for a few seconds, then freezes and another pair melts and checks out the factory.

--Discuss: What physical choices made people really look like dolls? What was the effect of seeing many “dolls” at the same time? Choose some adjectives that describe the atmosphere of the “doll factory” – ie: creepy, absurd, etc. What are some of the connotations/stereotypes of dolls in American society? Where do those come from?

Final Debrief – 5 minutes

- FYI: this is an intense play – language, adult themes, drug addiction, and severe mental and emotional pain. There are definitely funny moments, but this is not a comedy. Be prepared.
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Post-Reading Questions for Discussion and Exploration:

- If you have read other plays, how does *Reborn* compare? If this is your first play, how was it different from what you expected?
- Discuss Kelly and Daizy’s relationship. What is good about it? What do they need to work on?
- At one point, Daizy describes Kelly’s job as “disgusting” – and both Emily and Daizy seem to think Kelly is working something out in her own past with this job. Do you agree with their assessment of Kelly and her work?

- Emily seems to feel Kelly is an artist, while Daizy focuses on the fact that her creations are rubber toys. Who do you agree with more? What makes someone an artist?
- Kelly frequently describes herself as crazy. Is she? What does crazy mean to you? And in our society today?
- What are some of the devices you noticed the playwright use to indicate Kelly's unraveling, coming apart, throughout the play?
- Daizy uses humor to diffuse tense situations throughout the play. What does this tell you about his character?
- We never find out how Emily lost her child. Does it matter? Could it change your view of her as a character?
- What is this play actually about – in one sentence?