

One Sample Lesson Plan

**An Observation from an
Administrator**

**The Role of Musical
Theatre in Education**

Adam Rosenbloom - Lesson Plan

Ensemble: Fourth Grade Chorus

Date: May 16, 2003

Unit: Stephen Sondheim, Into the Woods, Broadway Junior, #38, Curtain Music m.1-30

Daily Objectives:

1. National Achievement Content Standard 1a. Students sing independently, on pitch and in rhythm, with appropriate timbre, diction and posture, and maintain a steady tempo.
2. National Achievement Content Standard 1e Students sing in groups, blending vocal timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor.

Special Materials Needed: stereo system (including CD player and cassette recorder), pitch pipe and/or piano, music stand.

Procedure: 10:10 – 10:25

1. Physical Warm-ups – hold breath 20 sec./let air out on a hiss, stretching, head rolls, yawn, lip trills

LISTEN BEFORE IMITATING – hiss with a cutoff – watch the conductor

FQD (if necessary): “Can a parrot think complicated thoughts, like those involved when learning a new piece of difficult music?”

“Will you continue to behave like a parrot, with his small brain, or will you behave like intelligent human beings?”

“Pappeno” game – FQD: “WAIT FOR MY SIGNAL” – a) spoken
b) sung on pitches

FQD: When my finger reaches this point (the ictus point) say “Tum”

FQD: “Watch closely, I’m going to try to fool you.”

2. Vocal Warm-ups - 10:25 – 10:35

- a) Sirens

FQD: “I’m going to sing you some notes and then you repeat after me, **but only when I give you the signal.**”

Start on high F – descend diatonically

10:35 – 11:00 (25 min.)

3. Primary Rehearsal of Concert Music - S. Sondheim's Into the Woods - #38 Curtain Music

a) Refresh the childrens memories by playing the full-recording

Starting at the 12/8 – **FQD:** “What does the word ‘diction’ mean?” [clear pronunciation of the words]

FQD: “Why is having good diction important for good singing?” [so the audience can understand the words]

b) p.119 - Rehearse it SPEAKING – one phrase at a time –

- 1) I model rhythms and text
- 2) On my cue - Students repeat

FQD: “Now everybody take your imaginary needle and put your thread right in the eye of that needle. Now focus your voice on the note as though you were singing through the eye of your needle.”

c) Sing it on **pitches** on the syllable “loo” – make

- I model a short passage
- I conduct and they “audiate” (sing it in their heads) during the silence
- They sing it aloud on “loo”

d) Put the rhythms and words together – rehearse it phrase-at-a-time – first slowly, then quickly

4. If there's extra time –

Have them sing it to the playtrax

If there's more time, have them sing it to the playtrax and record them

If there's still more time, have them listen back to their tape and have them make suggestions for improvement.

Notes to ME:

Simplifications:

Additions:

There was not enough time to record the lesson and have them listen to the tape. I will do this at the next rehearsal.

Where to begin tomorrow:

Self-Evaluation:

This was a very successful lesson.

During the dress rehearsal for the show, one student thought that she could “hide in the crowd,” as if I wouldn’t notice that she was not paying attention. While I was conducting, I pointed directly at the student in order to engage her attention. When she responded I said “Your voice is important!”

The entire performance went off without a hitch. My cooperating teacher, Miss Kim, was extremely happy with the all the children’s performances. The principal at P.S. 59, Mrs. Zackman, was also thrilled.

**The Aaron Copland School of Music
Queens College, City University of New York**

**Student Teacher Evaluation Form
Performing Groups/Private Lessons**

Observation No.: 3 Date: May 16, 2003
 Name: Adam Rosenbloom
 School: P.S. 59, Manhattan
 Cooperating Teacher: Ms Jeannie Kim
 Class (e.g., 8th Grade Band): 4th gr. chorus

- Evaluation Code:
- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 1. Superior | 4. Needs Improvement |
| 2. Very good | 5. Not acceptable |
| 3. Acceptable | 6. Not able to evaluate (in this lesson) |

I. Planning

1. Learns scores/materials in advance
2. Prepares appropriate instructional objectives
3. Prepares effective & efficient teaching strategies
4. Prepares appropriate instructional evaluation procedures
5. Demonstrates knowledge of repertoire for this age level

1	2	3	4	5	6
✓					
✓					
✓					
✓					
✓					

Comments:

**Student Teacher Evaluation Form
Performing Groups/Private Lesson**

II. Teaching

1. Detects (aurally & visually) pupil performance problems
2. Analyzes and corrects pupil performance problems . . .
3. Demonstrates technical knowledge of the instruments/voice
4. Demonstrates cognitive musical skills (terms, etc.)
5. Demonstrates musical sensitivity (style, phrasing, etc.) .
6. Provides musical models for students
7. Uses singing voice effectively
8. Uses speaking voice effectively
9. Demonstrates sensitivity to individual needs
10. Develops effective working rapport with students
11. Shows ability to motivate students
12. Uses supportive assessment of students' efforts
13. Demonstrates effective classroom management skills . .
14. Meets planned objectives
15. Overall efficiency in rehearsal/teaching

	1	2	3	4	5	6
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						
✓						

Comments:

See attached report.

III. Conducting

1. Uses appropriate gestures and patterns
2. Shows skillful handling of conducting problems
3. Shows effective/efficient use of the left hand
4. Uses correct preparatory and release gestures

✓					
✓					
✓					
✓					

**Student Teacher Evaluation Form
Performing Groups/Private Lesson**

- 5. Uses appropriate facial expressions & eye contact
- 6. Maintains appropriate tempi/style/etc.

✓					
✓					

Comments:

IV. Personal/Professional Characteristics

- 1. Appropriate personal appearance
- 2. Is punctual
- 3. Shows maturity/poise/emotional stability
- 4. Is receptive to constructive criticism
- 5. Is capable of self-criticism & works at self-improvement .
- 6. Accepts responsibility/goes beyond the "minimum" effort
- 7. Shows enthusiasm for teaching as a profession

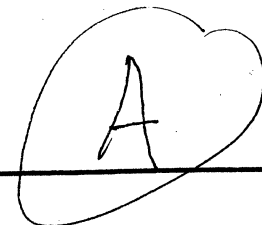
Yes	Usually	No	N/A
✓			
✓			
✓			
✓			
✓			
✓			
✓			

Comments:

Fine potential. Excellent, esp. with lower grades.

Signed 

Date 3/17/03

Grade: 

The Aaron Copland School of Music
Queens College, City University of New York

OBSERVATION REPORT

Student Teacher: Adam Rosenbloom
School: P.S.59, Manhattan

May 16, 2003
Class: 4th Grade Chorus

Dear Adam,

I greatly enjoyed your lesson today. Your warm-up exercises--hissing for 20 seconds, head rolls, and following the conductor were humorously done and very effective. The Papageno game in which the class mimics you, was especially funny. You insisted on good pitch, telling the students to "thread the needle." You complemented the class often when they deserved it. You asked, "why is it important to have good posture when you sing?" A brief discussion with the class elicited answers like, "It's easier to get the air out." Teaching the "Curtain Music" from *Into the Woods* was next. You were well-prepared with a CD of the cast recording, and lyrics on large, hanging sheets of paper. You discussed the importance of good diction. You demonstrated how to produce a nice sound and asked the class to do the same. "Notice how wide I open my mouth?" you asked. You had the class run through the selection with the recording, and then with just the piano, with Ms Kim accompanying. The kids were obviously enjoying themselves, moving to the music. Everyone was happy at the end. Very professional job.

Suggestions:

1. Ask for individual and small group demonstrations. With everyone singing all the time, it's difficult to hear problems.
2. Even though the class may not be able to read music well, they should all have copies of the music and lyrics. This is better than all rote teaching, and will eventually lead to better music reading.

It was a pleasure meeting and working with you. You have the makings of a really fine teacher I wish you the best of luck in your search for a position.

Sincerely,


Herman S. Gersten,
Supervising Teacher



The Role of Musical Theatre in Education

Parents attending P.S. 59's concerts and musical productions in the past have been delighted by the accomplishments of their children. What they do not always understand is the mechanism by which these activities benefit a child's development.

Numerous research studies have shown that the ability to match vocal pitches and reproduce rhythmic patterns enhance abstract reasoning abilities. As a "kinesthetic art," musical theatre involves the activation of multiple neuro-biological systems which integrate motor, listening, feeling, thinking, sight, and memory skills. It is a whole-body experience which requires aesthetic awareness and instantaneous decision-making. Children are natural mimics. Through the use of the show's melodies, rhythms, texts, and movements, the mimicry has been transformed into conscious, meaningful actions.

In creating the show, Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine combined four different fairy tales and added some additional characters. At first, the children learned the characters and the situations of the original fairy tales. When the stories were all mixed up, the students had to parse out and reorganize the information as well as account for the additional material. As their critical thinking skills were nourished, the children exercised their cognitive flexibility and they came to realize that disparate elements combined in novel ways can achieve fresh goals.

When music rehearsals began, the children cultivated the ability to "audiate," hearing the music in their heads before actually singing. Then they were introduced to the fundamentals of singing: posture, breath management, tonal focus, registration, and diction. Responding to a conductor's gestures aided their visual attention. Once the musical, lyrical, and physical action sequences were memorized, the addition of props and costumes added another layer to the challenge of multitasking. Many of the rehearsals were tape-recorded. After listening to their own singing, the students arrived at thoughtful suggestions as to how the performance quality might be improved. As the rehearsals progressed, the children's brains started to reorganize and consolidate a vast amount of information.

The rehearsal process also included a respect for the personal spaces of others (proxemics) and thus led to the furtherance of social skills. In addition, the students learned to take risks in both individual and group settings, acquiring an understanding that having permission to fail leads to success. Becoming aware that hard work and having fun can naturally go together, the students' participation in the spring musical has provided opportunities for fulfilling "crystallizing experiences."

Adam F. Rosenbloom, Student Teacher, Queens College