

# ARTS IMPACT SUMMER SCHOOL

WRITING/THEATER LESSON – THIRD GRADE

## Character Maps

Artist/Mentor: Dave Quicksall; Teachers: Jill Barrett and Rachal Marcus

**Problem to Solve:** How can a character be created through the analysis of literature?

**Understanding:** Identifying the physical, vocal and emotional attributes of a character can build a deeper comprehension of a story.

### Brief Description of Task/Project

Students analyze a character within a story from a theatrical perspective. They create a written Character Map of the character and portray that character for the class.

### Target Learning and Assessment Strategies

Knowledge and skills: *The student:*

**Target:** Identifies a character's attributes from a selected story.

**Criteria:** Uses and records clues (key words: adjectives-adverbs) from the text.

**Target:** Moves as the character from the story using the character map as a guide.

**Criteria:** Demonstrates physical choices (posture and movement) in the portrayal of the character supported by the Character Map.

**Target:** Speaks as the character from the story using the character map as a guide.

**Criteria:** Demonstrates vocal choices (voice quality, pitch, volume) in the portrayal of the character supported by the Character Map.

**Target:** Combines voice and body to communicate the character to an audience.

**Criteria:** Uses dialogue with vocal choices and physical choices informed from the story.

**Evidence of Student Learning**  
character map

### Instructional Strategies for the Teacher and Student

1. **Teacher:** **Hands out a blank Character Map. Assigns a character** or allows the student to pick one. Guides students in mining the story for clues and descriptions that point out the character's attributes. These attributes are then written onto the Character Map. Character attributes are: any descriptions (adjectives, adverbs) of the character: likes, dislikes, attitudes, what other characters say about the character, anything the character says about him/herself. *Prompts: Look for any adjectives that describe the character. Are there any adverbs that tell you how the character moves? If you can't find actual words that tell you about the character's attitudes what do you think they are? Use your imagination to fill in the blanks.*

**Student:** Mines the text and fills out the Character Map

2. **Teacher:** **Instructs students to walk around the class as themselves.** *Prompts: In theater we call movement without character added to it neutral. When you are acting as yourself, you are neutral.*

**Student:** Walks around the class in a *neutral* manner.

3. **Teacher:** **Guides the students in transforming their walks from neutral to that of the character.** Asks students to walk around the room. Introduces a character (human or animal) not from the specific story but one that the students would be familiar with (i.e.: pirate, teacher, lion, snake, spacemen, etc.). *Prompts: How does a bear walk? How does a fireman walk? How is the character's walk different from yours?*

**Student:** Uses Character Map and changes posture and movement to represent the given character.

4. **Teacher:** Repeats the above exercise but now **asks the students to walk as their character from the story would walk.** *Prompts: Using your Character Map as a guide, move the way in which your character moves. What adjectives or adverbs on your map describe how you would move? How does your character feel? Is he/she mad, happy sad, scared, etc.? How do those feelings change how you move?*

**Student:** Uses the Character Map as a guide in order to change posture and movement to represent the character. *Embedded Assessment:* Criteria-based self-assessment

5. **Teacher:** **Instructs students to say the following phrase as themselves** (neutral): "Excuse me, but can you tell me what time it is?" *Prompts: Do you remember what neutral means in the theater? A neutral voice is without any character added to it. When you are speaking as yourself your voice is neutral.*

**Student:** Walks up to fellow students and asks the question using his/her own neutral voice.

*Embedded Assessment:* Criteria-based peer assessment

6. **Teacher:** **Guides the students in transforming their voices from *neutral* to that of the character.** Introduces a character (human or animal) not from the specific story but one that the students would be familiar with (i.e. pirate, teacher, lion, snake, spaceman, etc.). *Prompts: If a wolf could talk what would it sound like? How does a pirate talk? How is the character's voice quality different from yours? Is it higher, lower (pitch change), more gruff, softer (change in vocal quality), louder/softer (change in normal volume)?* **Embedded Assessment:** Criteria-based teacher checklist

**Student:** Change their neutral voice to sound like the given character.

7. **Teacher:** **Guide the students in selecting a line of dialogue from the story** (or inventing one) that the characters would say. Repeats the above exercise but now the students are the character from the story. *Prompts: What descriptions on your map tell you what the character's voice would sound like? What words or pictures in the story describe how the character might sound? How does the character feel? Is he/she mad, happy sad, scared, etc.? How do those feelings change how you use your voice?* **Embedded Assessment:** Criteria-based teacher checklist

**Student:** Uses Character Map and changes voice to sound like the given character from the story.

8. **Teacher:** **Guides students in moving and talking like the characters** from the story by having them walk around the classroom while speaking the previously chosen lines of dialogue. *Prompts: How does the character move and speak at the same time? How does the way the character moves affect the way its voice sounds?* **Embedded Assessment:** Criteria-based teacher checklist

**Student:** Uses the Character Map to move and speak simultaneously as the character.

**POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UPS:** Choose scenes from the story that include several characters and ask the students to act it out using all their character expertise.

### **Vocabulary**

- adjectives
- adverbs
- attribute
- character
- movement
- neutral
- pitch
- posture
- quality
- volume

### **Selected Resources**

*Classroom Resources:*  
selected story from literature

### **Student Applications of Learning**

Student uses voice and body to demonstrate understanding of characterization.

#### **Essential Learnings**

*AEL 1.1 concepts:* character attributes

*WEL 1.1 develop concept and design:* relevant details: character attributes

# ARTS IMPACT

WRITING/THEATER LESSON – THIRD GRADE

## Character Maps

### Target Learning and Assessment Strategies

Knowledge and skills: *The student:*

**Target:** Identifies a character's attributes from a selected story.

**Criteria:** Uses and records clues (key words: adjectives-adverbs) from the text.

**Target:** Moves as the character from the story using the character map as a guide.

**Criteria:** Demonstrates physical choices (posture and movement) in the portrayal of the character supported by the Character Map.

**Target:** Speaks as the character from the story using the character amp as a guide.

**Criteria:** Demonstrates vocal choices (voice quality, pitch, volume) in the portrayal of the character supported by the Character Map.

**Target:** Combines voice and body to communicate the character to an audience.

**Criteria:** Uses dialogue with vocal choices and physical choices informed from the story.

### ASSESSMENTS CHECKLIST

Student	Character Map	Characterization			Total Points 4
	<b>LITERACY RESPONSE</b> records clues (key words from text: adverbs, adjectives), phrases	<b>ARTISTIC RESPONSE</b> uses posture and movement choices to describe attributes of character	<b>ARTISTIC RESPONSE</b> uses vocal quality, pitch and volume to describes attributes of character	<b>ARTISTIC RESPONSE</b> combines vocal quality, pitch and volume with posture and movement choices to describe attributes of character	
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					
Total					
Percentage					
Mean					
Median					

*Teacher Comments:*

# ARTS IMPACT

## Character Maps

Dear Family:

Your child participated in a reading and writing lesson using theater. We studied **characterization** by making a **Character Map**.

1. We mined for all the key words: **adjectives** and **adverbs** in a story that told more about the character **attributes** and then recorded them on a Character Map.
2. We changed our **posture** and **movement** to represent a specific character on our Character Map: made **physical choices**.
3. We changed our voices, **voice quality**, **pitch**, and **volume**, to represent a specific character on our Character Map: made **vocal choices**.
4. We combined our physical and vocal choices to represent a specific character on our Character Map.

At home you could mine a favorite story for all the descriptive words that tell more about the character's attributes. Look for descriptions used by other characters as well as words that the character uses.

## ***UNDERSTANDING***

***Identifying the physical, vocal and emotional attributes of a character can build a deeper comprehension of a story.***

# CHARACTER MAP

Fill out the numbered boxes  
With the following information  
from the nursery rhyme/story.  
(if it's not in the actual text  
you can make it up!)

Character's name: \_\_\_\_\_

1

2

3

4

5

6

1. What does this character say?

2. What kind of sounds does this character make? (growls, laughs, screams, whispers, etc.)

3. Describe this character's voice.

4. What does this character look like?

5. How does this character move?

6. What feelings does this character have?