

STUDY GUIDE:
Students & Educators

World Premiere Musical

**THE BIG
ONE-OH!**

Music by **Doug Besterman**

Lyrics by **Dean Pitchford**

Book by **Timothy Allen McDonald**

Based on the Novel by

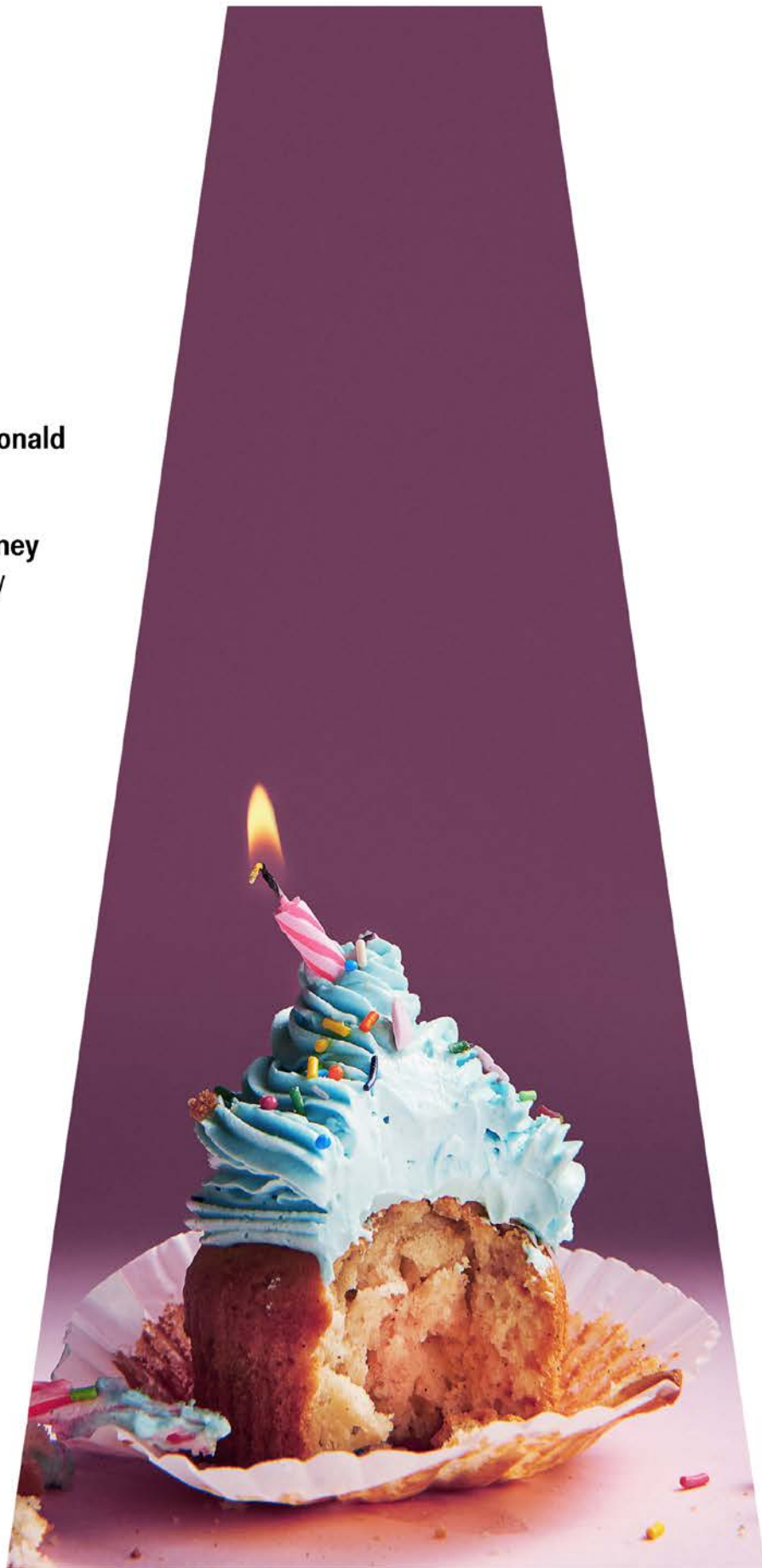
Dean Pitchford

Music Direction by **Britt Bonney**

Directed & Choreographed by

MK Lawson

ATLANTIC FOR KIDS



Heather Baird
Director of Education

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Education Manager

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I | THE PLAY

Synopsis
Setting
Themes
Characters

SECTION II | THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Creative Biographies
Cast List
Behind the Scenes Look

SECTION III | YOUR STUDENTS AS AUDIENCE

Theater Vocabulary
Vocabulary from *The Big One-Oh!*
A Letter from Charley (Actor Aaron Banes)

SECTION IV | YOUR STUDENTS AS ACTORS

Reading a Scene for Understanding
Scene/Character Analysis

SECTION V | YOUR STUDENTS AS ARTISTS

Warm-up: "I Am a Tree"
Explode the Moment!
Drawing to Write Activity
Thumbs Up Or Thumbs Down?
Common Core & DOE Theater Blueprint

SECTION VI | THE ATLANTIC LEGACY

SECTION I: THE PLAY

Synopsis

Setting

Themes

Characters



SYNOPSIS

Charley Maplewood has never been one for parties—that would require friends, which he doesn't have. Well, unless you count his monster friends, but they're only imaginary. But now that he's turning ten—the big one-oh—he decides to throw a birthday party for himself, complete with a “House of Horrors” theme. Of course things don't work out as he plans. Will Charley be able to pull it together before the big one-oh . . . becomes the big OH-NO!?

TIME

Present Day

SETTING

Fresno, California.

THEMES

- Making new friends
- Change and transition
- Being yourself
- Being the “new kid” at school

CHARACTERS

Charley: An almost ten-year-old who has just moved to town.

Boing-Boing: Charley's dog, a puppet.

Mom: Charley's mom.

Dad: Charley's dad, lives in Scotland.

Lorena: Charley's sixteen-year-old sister.

So Lame #1: Lorena's back-up singer.

So Lame #2: Lorena's back-up singer.

Donna Pointer: Charley's classmate.

Darryl Egbert: Charley's classmate.

Cougar: Charley's classmate.

Scottie: Charley's classmate.

Jennifer Mobley: Charley's classmate.

Monster #1: Charley's imaginary friend, from the comic book "Monsters and Maniacs."

Monster #2: Charley's imaginary friend, from the comic book "Monsters and Maniacs."

Monster #3: Charley's imaginary friend, from the comic book "Monsters and Maniacs."

Vince: Mom's new "friend."

Garry: Charley's weird neighbor.

Mrs. Cleveland: Fresno's biggest snoop.

The Lion King Cast

SECTION II: THE CAST & CREATIVE TEAM

Creative Biographies

Characters/Cast List

Behind the Scenes Look



CREATIVE BIOGRAPHIES



DOUG BESTERMAN (*Music*). As a composer, Doug penned the score for the musical *Little Did I Know*. His music has been recorded by singer Christian Bautista, heard in the films *The Punisher*, *Out of Step*, and *Exit Speed*; TV's "Summerland" and "One Life To Live;" and in concert with the United States Military Academy Concert Band. Select orchestration credits include—Broadway: *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Anastasia*, *A Bronx Tale*, *It Shoulda Been You*, *Bullets Over Broadway* (Tony nomination), *Rocky*, *How To Succeed...* (Tony nomination), *Elf*, *Young Frankenstein* (Drama Desk nomination), *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (2002 Tony/Drama Desk Awards), *The Producers* (2001 Tony/Drama Desk Awards), *Seussical*, *The Music Man* (Drama Desk/Tony nominations), *Fosse* (1999 Tony), *Big* (Drama Desk nomination), *Damn Yankees* (Drama Desk nomination). Regional: *Marie: Dancing Still*, *Ever After*. Film/television: *Mary Poppins Returns*, *Aladdin* (2019), *Beauty and the Beast* (2017), *Frozen*, the Oscars, Tonys, Emmys, and Kennedy Center Honors.



DEAN PITCHFORD (*Lyrics, Original Novel*). Born and raised in Hawaii and graduated from Yale University, Dean Pitchford performed off- and on-Broadway (*Godspell*; *Pippin*) before turning to songwriting, screenwriting and directing. Dean was nominated for four Academy Awards (winning the 1981 Best Song Oscar for "Fame," co-written w/ Michael Gore), three Golden Globes (winning for "Fame"), eight Grammys and two Tonys; his songs - recorded by such artists as Barbra Streisand, Whitney Houston, Cher, Peter Allen, LL Cool J, Kenny Loggins, Hugh Jackman, Dolly Parton, Bette Midler and Martina McBride - have sold over 70 million records. The musical stage adaptation (w/ Walter Bobbie) of his original screenplay for *Footloose* ran for more than seven hundred performances on Broadway and is now seen all over the world. Dean also provided the lyrics for *Carrie: The Musical*, which was first produced in 1988 by the Royal Shakespeare Company - first in England and then on Broadway - and was then revived in 2012 by MCC Theater. Major productions have recently been seen in London (Southwark Playhouse) and Los Angeles (The Los Angeles Theatre). Dean's middle-grade novels, *The Big One-Oh* and *Captain Nobody*, are published by Putnam/Penguin; his performances of their audiobook recordings (Listening Library/Random House) were both nominated for Grammys. His third novel, *Nickel Bay Nick*, was published to acclaim in 2013, and Dean voiced that audiobook for Audible.com



TIMOTHY ALLEN MCDONALD (*Book*) is an award-winning playwright (Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka*, *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley*, Jim Henson's *Emmet Otter's Jug-Band Christmas*, Roald Dahl's *James and the Giant Peach*) and adaptor of over 125 musicals (highlights include *Guys and Dolls JR.*, *Getting to Know...The Sound of Music*, *The Wizard of Oz YPE*, and *Les Miserables School Edition*). McDonald is also

an accomplished director (*Dear Edwina* produced by multi-Tony award winner Daryl Roth, and *The Phantom Tollbooth* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts) and a leading authority on musical theater education. Tim has had the unique honor of seeing Roald Dahl's *Willy Wonka* performed at the White House for President and Mrs. Bush, and directing Sarah Jessica Parker at the first-ever White House Talent Show for President and Mrs. Obama.



MK LAWSON (*Director*) is so happy to be back working for one of her favorite companies, after choreographing 5 amazing projects for Atlantic for Kids and directing last season's *James and the Giant Peach*. As a choreographer: award-winning and record-setting productions for Atlantic for Kids, Florida Rep, White Plains Performing Arts Center, Ocean State Theatre Company, and Sharon Playhouse. As

director/choreographer: new musicals for the International Fringe Festival and NY Children's Theatre Festival; *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Brigadoon* and *The Secret Garden* (NYU). As an Associate Director: *Romy and Michele's High School Reunion* (world premiere at the 5th Avenue), *Atlantis: a new musical* (world premiere at Virginia Rep), *Rock of Ages* 10th Anniversary production (New World Stages). You can find more of her at mklawson.com.

BRITT BONNEY (*Music Director*) is an award-winning music director and composer whose eclectic vocal arrangements have been featured on The Weather Channel, the Fox network, WPIX11, at Lincoln Center, and in Broadway houses. Music directing credits include the DC premiere of Todd Almond's *Girlfriend* at Signature Theatre (Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Musical Direction), the recent national tour of *American Girl Live*, and Orfeh & Andy Karl's *Legally Bound* concert in San Francisco. Britt's vocals can be heard on 2017's *Beauty and the Beast* film as well as Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* cast album, which she also mixed and mastered together with Stephen Schwartz. Britt recently received an honorable mention from the Billie Burke Ziegfeld Award for female composers, and in response to a reading of her new musical *Montgomery* at the Kennedy Center, *DC Metro Theater Arts* declared, "Britt Bonney... has already made a mark on American musical theater." BMI Workshop; M.A., Vocal Pedagogy: Columbia University.

CHARACTERS/CAST LIST



Laura Axelrod
Jennifer/Alien



Aaron Banes
Charley



Sarah Kowalski
Donna/Swamp
Thing



Thomas Prast
Cougar/Dad



Austin Sanders
Garry/Vince



Heather Sawyer
Scottie/Mrs.
Cleveland



**Samantha
Joy Singh**
Mom



Daniel Soto
Darryl/Zombie
King



Sarah Sutliff
Lorena/Boing Boing

BEHIND THE SCENES LOOK AT REHEARSAL



SECTION III: YOUR STUDENTS AS AUDIENCE

Theater Vocabulary

Vocabulary from *The Big One-Oh!*

A Letter from Charley (Actor Aaron Banes)



THEATER VOCABULARY

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To be able to discuss theater through a common, shared vocabulary.

STUDENT GOAL

To understand that the most effective way to discuss theater and new ideas is through a shared vocabulary.

OVERTURE: An orchestral piece at the beginning of an opera, suite, play, oratorio, or other extended composition.

GHOST LIGHT: An electric light that is left energized on the stage of a theater when the theater is unoccupied and would otherwise be completely dark.

PROLOGUE: A separate introductory section of a literary or musical work.

VOICE OVER: A piece of narration in a movie or live performance, not accompanied by an image of the speaker.

REPRISE: A repeated passage in music.

NARRATOR: A person who delivers a commentary accompanying a movie, broadcast, piece of music, etc.

CURTAIN CALL: The appearance of one or more performers on stage after a performance to acknowledge the audience's applause.

FICTION: Literature in the form of prose, especially short stories and novels, that describes imaginary events and people.

GENDER NEUTRAL CASTING: Casting which allows actors to portray any character, irrespective of gender.

CHARACTERS: Individuals the audience learns about from their actions and reactions.

ENSEMBLE: A group of performers working together to create a complete production.

DIALOGUE: The exchange of speech between two characters that reveals the feelings of the character as well as the story of the play.

MONOLOGUE: A speech by one actor on stage that is intended to reveal the inner thoughts of the character the actor plays.

CHARACTER ARC: The change produced in a character by the events and other characters in the play.

MOOD: The overall feeling the play evokes.

COSTUME: The clothes, boots, etc., worn by the actors based on their character.

PROP: Objects used by an actor to enhance their character.

SET: The constructed environment of a play within which the action takes place.

SOUND: Noises and music used in the play.

VOCABULARY FROM THE BIG ONE-OH!

TABLEAU: A group of people in a frozen image representing a scene from a story or history.

SPECIAL EFFECTS: An illusion created in theater or film using props, makeup, or computer graphics.

A LETTER FROM CHARLEY

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To introduce students to professional New York City actors, their process and motivation.

STUDENT OBJECTIVE

To understand that actors need an enthusiastic, informed audience to view their work.

Hi!

Welcome to *The Big One Oh!* We've got a mind-blowing, eye-popping party planned for you and we're so glad you could make it!

My name is Aaron Banes and I play Charley Maplewood. It's Charley's tenth birthday and he's throwing a party to celebrate! He's moved to a new town with new neighbors and a new school. Throwing a birthday party to make some friends just seems like something he should do, right? But nothing quite seems to be going according to plan.

Putting on a musical like this can be a lot like throwing a party, especially because this will be the first time this show's being performed on a stage like this! As much as we rehearse and prepare, when we walk out on stage, things might not go exactly as we thought. But that's what makes theater so exciting! The story may be the same, but with the energy from each new audience, every performance is conjured up differently each time. You're a part of this show just as much as I am, so thanks for coming! We couldn't do it without you.

Will Charley's birthday party turn out alright? You'll find out...And who knows what other jaw-dropping antics might happen this time!

Cheers!
Aaron

SECTION IV: YOUR STUDENTS AS ACTORS

Reading a Scene for Understanding
Scene/Character Analysis



READING A SCENE FOR UNDERSTANDING

GRADES 5+

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To introduce the Practical Aesthetics “tools” for breaking down a scene. To understand the character and the story of the scene by relating the character’s actions to the student’s own life.

STUDENT GOAL

To understand that an important part of creating a simple, honest character involves knowing what that character wants.

THE ATLANTIC TECHNIQUE EXERCISE

STEP ONE

Divide the students in pairs. Ask the students to select which character they want to portray.

STEP TWO

Allow the students time to read the scene silently to themselves.

STEP THREE

Ask the students to read the Introduction to the Practical Aesthetic Introduction sheet and have the students answer the four questions on the Scene Analysis Worksheet.

NOTE: The four questions and the students’ answers to them form the basis for the Practical Aesthetics scene analysis; and enables the actor to create a simple, honest character. They’re simply being honest to their own experiences!

STEP FOUR

After the students have completed the question worksheet, ask each pair of actors to read the scene in the front of the classroom for an audience. The students should incorporate the ideas from the worksheet as they read the scene.

THE BIG ONE-OH! SCENE:

VINCE

Wait! Is that a hairnet?! (to MOM) Why is he wearing a hairnet?

MOM

He takes his cooking seriously.

VINCE

The kid cooks? That's not normal.

MOM

Are you saying my son isn't normal?

VINCE

A nine-year-old kid in a hairnet, crying and cooking is... strange.

MOM

So now he's strange?

VINCE

People might think he's some kind of a-

MOM

Some kind of a what?

VINCE

Some kind of a *freak!*

THE ATLANTIC TECHNIQUE INTRODUCTION

ANALYSIS

Script analysis is the process of breaking down a beat within a scene. We ask four questions in order to do this:

1. What is the character literally doing?
2. What does the character want?
3. What is the essential ACTION?
4. What is that action like to me? It is AS-IF...

LITERAL: In this step, the actor determines what the character he or she is playing is literally doing according to the text.

PURPOSE: An actor has to travel far—think of this preparation as the road map.

WANT: In this step, the actor identifies the goal of the character in the scene, specifically what the character wants from the other character/s in the scene. The given circumstances of the story inform the WANT.

PURPOSE: To focus the actor on the characters' interaction.

ACTION: Playing an ACTION is the physical pursuit of a goal. Defining the ACTION of the scene allows the actor to determine what result or CAP he or she is looking for from the other actor/s in the scene.

EXAMPLES:

- Put someone in their place | • Beg someone for forgiveness. | • Get a favor.
- Get someone to let me off the hook. | • Force someone to face the facts.
- Inspire someone to greatness. | • Get someone to see the light.

PURPOSE: Using an action gives the actor a task and a specific point of view. The Atlantic Acting School teaches that the Action creates character.

AS-IF: In this step, the actor personalizes the action by finding a real-life situation in which they would behave according to the action they have chosen for the scene.

EXAMPLE: Get a favor. It's AS-IF I forgot to do my science homework and I'm asking my teacher for an extra day to hand it in.

PURPOSE: To gain personal insight and urgency to the scene or beat.

TACTICS & TOOLS: Different ways an actor goes about getting his action.

EXAMPLE: Plead, joke, demand, inspire, challenge, reason, encourage.

LIVING IN THE MOMENT: Reacting impulsively to what the other actor in the scene is doing, from the point of view of the chosen action.

SCENE ANALYSIS WORKSHEET

Here are your “tools” for understanding your character:

	IF YOU'RE PLAYING VINCE...	IF YOU'RE PLAYING MOM...
WHAT IS MY CHARACTER LITERALLY DOING?	Vince is talking to Mom about how it is strange for a nine year old to wear a hairnet, cry and cook.	Mom is questioning Vince about his opinions on her son's behavior.
WHAT DOES MY CHARACTER WANT?	Vince wants to warn Mom that her son's behavior could get him labeled as a freak.	Mom wants Vince to realize her son's behavior is not strange or deserving of his judgement.
WHAT IS THE ACTION I'M GOING TO PLAY?	To get someone to face the facts	To put someone in their place
THE AS-IF...	It's as if your friend is not working hard at school and you are telling them they need to do their homework, otherwise they won't get good grades.	It's as if someone at school is bullying your friend about the clothes they are wearing and you are standing up to the bully.

SECTION V | YOUR STUDENTS AS ARTISTS

Warm-up: I Am a Tree

Explode the Moment!

Drawing to Write Activity

Thumbs Up Or Thumbs Down?

Common Core & DOE Theater Blueprint



WARM UP: “I AM A TREE”

GRADES 2-5

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To understand tableau, to practice collaborative storytelling.

STUDENT GOAL

To use our bodies in creative ways, to practice making tableaux.

MATERIALS

Just our bodies!

STEP ONE

Have students gather in a circle. Explain that the class will be making tableaux, or stage pictures, together three by three.

STEP TWO

Have one student start in the center of the circle as if they were a tree and proclaim, “I am a tree.” Prompt students to think of people, objects, animals, etc. to add to this stage picture that might make sense living near a tree. When one student has an idea, they may jump in the center of the circle, make the object with their body, and proclaim, “I am a ____” (for example, “I am a squirrel,” “I am an apple on the tree”). Have one more student do the same and jump into the stage picture.

STEP THREE

The student playing the tree will leave the stage picture and choose one of the other objects to take with them by proclaiming, “I am a tree and I am taking the (squirrel, apple, etc.)” This will leave behind one object to create a new tableau.

STEP FOUR

Repeat the pattern starting with the object that has been left behind, adding two more objects. Repeat for however many rounds you would like.

EXPLODE THE MOMENT!

GRADES 3-5

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To engage students in lively writing on the topic of “the first time I felt different.”

STUDENT GOAL

To create a piece of writing about a personal experience with “the first time I felt different.”

MATERIALS

Paper for writing, copy of Explode The Moment Planning Sheet (on the next page), pen or pencil. One tool in a writer’s toolkit is the “explode the moment” tool, in which the writer slows down the action of a particular moment to describe it in vivid detail.

STEP ONE

Ask students to think of a moment when they realized that they were different from other people.

STEP TWO

Instruct students to think on that experience for a moment and remember the details: specific things they heard, saw, said, felt, thought, and did.

STEP THREE

Have students fill out the pre-writing worksheet. Encourage students to think of at least two examples for each category.

NOTE: It is alright if one or two categories has only one detail—each should have at least one, two at most, and in general as many more as they’d like.

STEP FOUR

Once students have finished the pre-writing brainstorm, tell them to start writing. Encourage them to use all of the details they brainstormed and dive right in with a strong detail. For example, instead of “I realized I was different

one time when..." they might try starting with a quote or with something they saw, felt, or thought.

STEP FIVE

If you'd like, as additional writing practice, have students revise their work to ensure that every sentence is active and the writing is rich and descriptive.

STEP SIX

You may choose to take it to the publishing phase and put together an anthology of student stories.

STEP SEVEN

(Optional) Have students split into groups of 4-5. Have each student become the director of a tableau that tells the story of the first time they felt different. The director will play their own character, and the other group members will take on the roles of the other people, animals, objects, etc. that are included in the story. Each director will title their own piece. Share with the whole group.

EXPLODE THE MOMENT PLANNING SHEET

I SAW...

I HEARD...

I FELT...

I THOUGHT...

I DID...

DRAWING TO WRITE ACTIVITY

GRADES 2-3

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

Facilitate the students' abilities to gather details by having them write a story based on an original drawing. Encourage the students to develop their own creative insight by using these drawings as triggers for short written scenes

STUDENT GOAL

To understand that recalling vivid details of an experience is a great artistic "tool."

MATERIALS

Pencils, crayons, markers, drawing paper, writing paper.

MOTIVATION

Discuss the following concepts with your students:

Does adding small details to your drawing make it more interesting to look at? Do these small details help your drawing tell a good story? Why?

Do details in writing a story make it more interesting? Believable? Funny?

STEP ONE

Using the art materials, ask students to draw their favorite scenes from *The Big One-Oh!* Feel free to mix the scenes and characters together.

STEP TWO

Use the students' individual drawings to trigger ideas for a written story about the images in their drawing.

AT A LATER DATE: STEP THREE

Have the students divide into small groups.

STEP FOUR

Each student should create six lines of dialogue for their character. Check the vocabulary list for inspiration.

CREATING YOUR OWN REVIEW: THUMBS UP OR THUMBS DOWN?

GRADES 3-5

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To introduce the critical thinking skills involved in expressing one's personal opinion.

STUDENT GOAL

To understand that the 4Ws can be used to critically describe an artistic experience. To enhance the literacy skills of the 4Ws and sequencing in writing.

MATERIALS

Paper, pen, copy of *The Big One-Oh!* program, attached worksheets.

STEP ONE

Review the four W's (who, what where, when). For example, who - Charley.

STEP TWO

Review the "Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down" worksheet with your students. Remember there is no right or wrong response. Each student's review will be based on individual opinion.

STEP THREE

Using the "Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down" worksheet, ask the students to write their review in three paragraphs - beginning, middle and conclusion.

STEP FOUR

Post the reviews in the classroom.

THUMBS UP OR THUMBS DOWN?

WHO:

WHAT:

WHERE:

WHEN:

THUMBS UP OR THUMBS DOWN?

LIST SOME IMAGES THAT FIRST SPRING TO MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE PLAY:

LIST SOME WORDS OR PHRASES THAT WILL REMIND YOU OF POINTS YOU WANT TO MAKE:

WHAT DID YOU THINK OF THE PLAY? WHAT WAS YOUR OPINION?

HOW DO YOU THINK THE COSTUMES, LIGHTS, AND MUSIC AFFECTED
THE PERFORMANCE?

HOW MIGHT YOU START YOUR PAPER?

COMMON CORE & DOE THEATER BLUEPRINT

STRAND BENCHMARKS

THEATER MAKING: ACTING

Benchmark: Students increase their ability as imaginative actors while continuing to participate as collaborative ensemble members. Students demonstrate the ability to reflect on and think critically about their own work.

THEATER MAKING: PLAYWRITING/PLAY MAKING

Benchmark: Students refine their ability as playwrights to express point of view and personal vision.

DEVELOPING THEATER LITERACY

Benchmark: Students develop skills as critics by analyzing the critical writings of others.

MAKING CONNECTIONS THROUGH THEATER

Benchmark: Students demonstrate a capacity for deep personal connection to theater and a realization of the meaning and messages of theater.

WORKING WITH COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Benchmark: Students invigorate and broaden their understanding of theater through collaborative partnerships with theater professionals.

SECTION VI | THE ATLANTIC LEGACY

Atlantic Theater Company & Atlantic Acting School

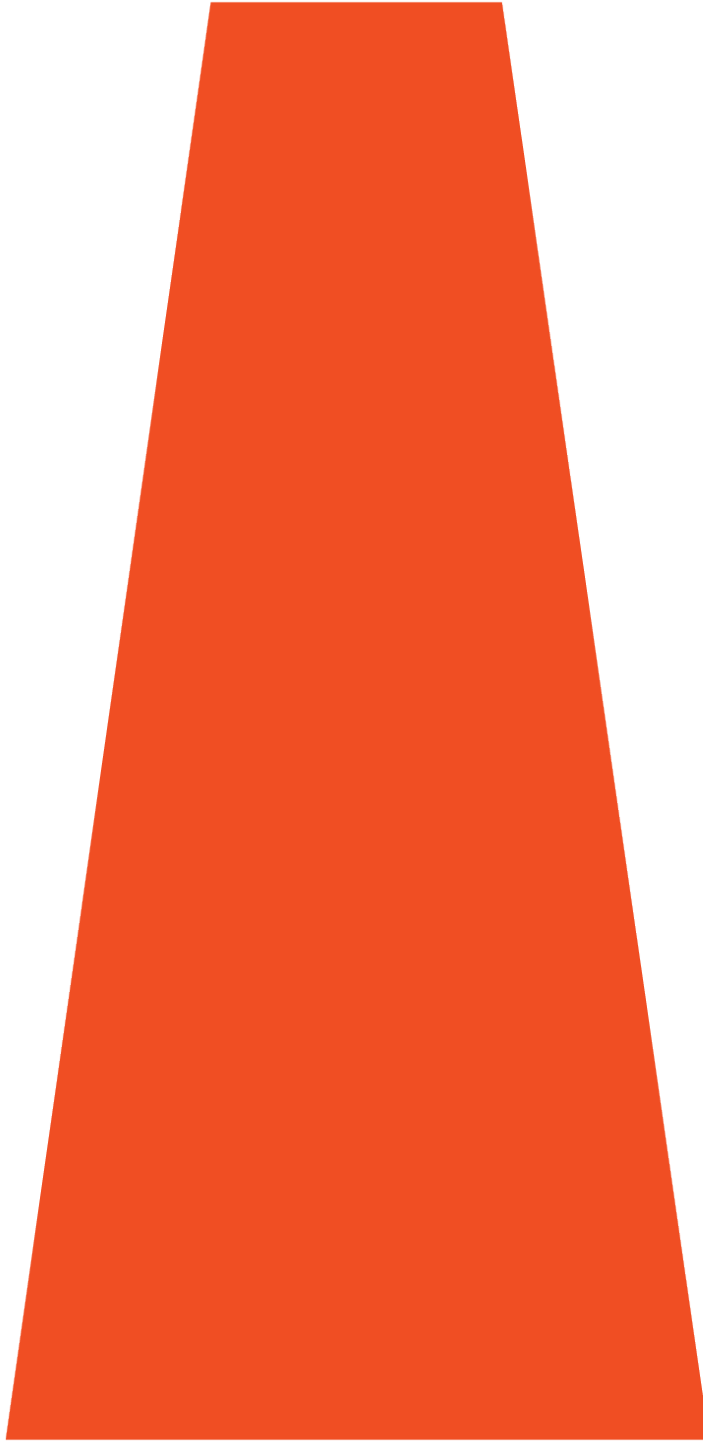


Founded as an ensemble of impassioned student artists in 1985, Atlantic Theater Company has grown into a powerhouse off-Broadway company. We challenge, inspire, and awaken audiences with truthful storytelling presented across our two venues, the Linda Gross Theater and the intimate Stage 2 black-box. As a producer of compelling new works, we are committed to championing the stories from new and established artists alike, amplifying the voices of emerging playwrights through our deeply collaborative programs and

initiatives.

At Atlantic, our aim is singular—to empower simple and honest storytelling that fosters greater understanding of our shared world. We are a family of artists dedicated to exploring essential truths onstage, be it a show at Atlantic Theater Company or a class at Atlantic Acting School. As a producer, presenter, and educator of theater, we are driven by the belief that theater can challenge and transform our ways of thinking and urge us to reflect on our role in society. From our Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning productions to our community-based education programs, we are committed to uncovering and celebrating the stories of our varied human existence.

At Atlantic Acting School, we equip our students with the physical, emotional, and tactical tools of acting to discover their truths, and prepare them for success beyond our doors. From our full-time and evening conservatories to our NYU Tisch studio, and our after-school and summer programs for kids and teens, our immersive, learn-by-doing approach is central to an Atlantic Theater Company education. We have mentored and trained outstanding artists for more than 30 years. No matter their age or background, our students learn to break through their creative comfort zones in service to bringing essential human stories to life.



LINDA GROSS THEATER: 336 W 20th St. New York, NY, 10011 | ATLANTIC STAGE 2: 330 W 16th St. New York, NY, 10011 | ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES & ATLANTIC ACTING SCHOOL: 76 Ninth Ave., Suite 313, New York, NY 10011 | ATLANTICTHEATER.ORG