

Study Guide: Students & Educators

THIS GIRL LAUGHS, THIS GIRL CRIES, THIS GIRL DOES NOTHING

**By Finegan Kruckemeyer
Directed by Alison Beatty
& Tom Costello
Original Music by
Nate Weida**

ATLANTIC FOR KIDS



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A LETTER FROM ALBIENNE (MELISSA MAHONEY)

Hello audience members!

My name is Melissa Mahoney and I play Albiene in Atlantic's production of *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing*, a story about three sisters who make three very different decisions after finding themselves alone in the woods.

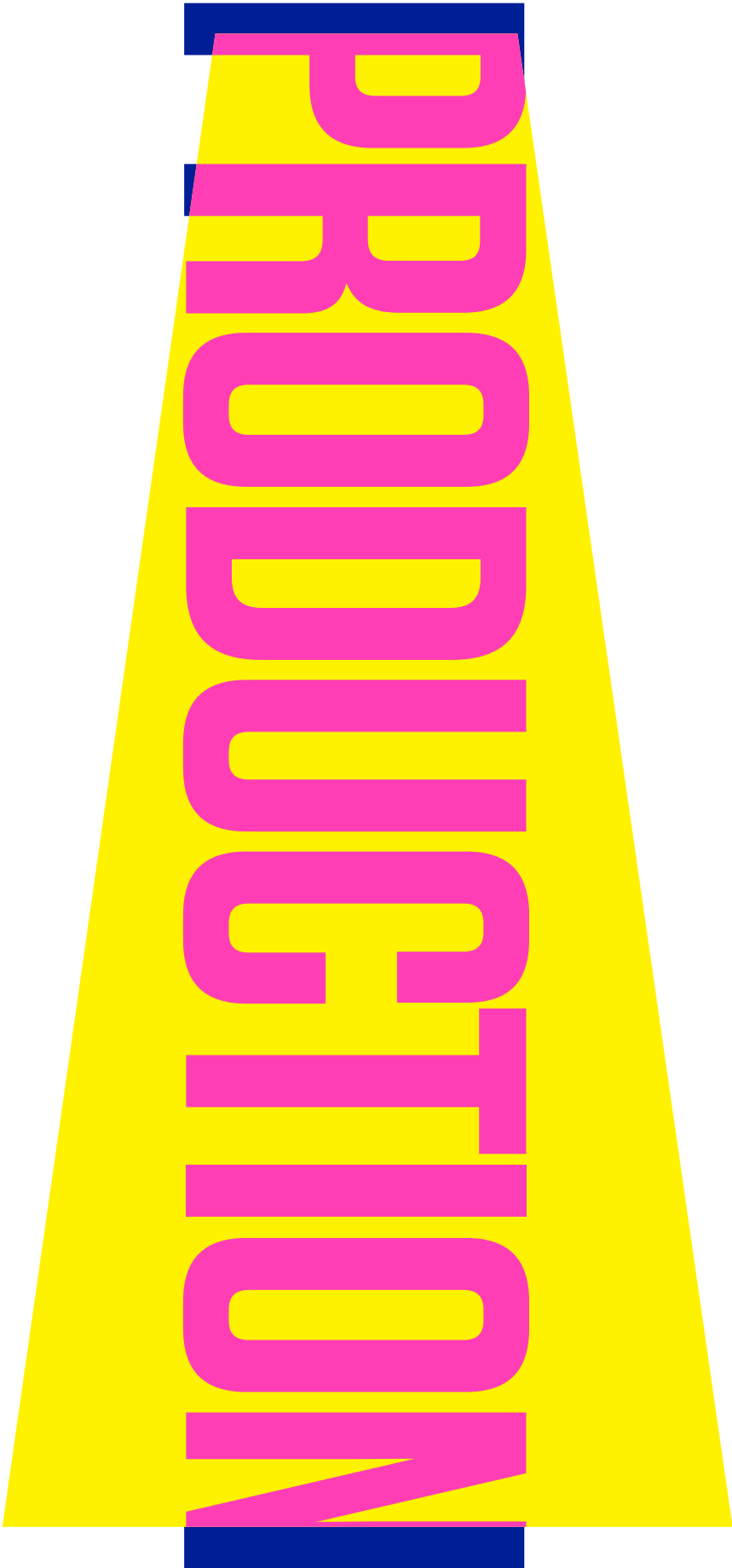
This show has an ensemble cast of eight actors, including our music director, Nate, who wrote original music for the show. An ensemble is a group of actors working together to bring the story to life. During rehearsal, we work hard to memorize our lines and our blocking (where we move on stage), as well as the music and choreography. Our directors, Alison and Tom, work hard to bring all those pieces together to create a cohesive story, very similar to a conductor of an orchestra. There's also our costume designer, Katja, who decides what we'll be wearing on stage, and a stage manager, who makes sure deadlines are met right on schedule.

As you can see, there are a TON of people involved in making a piece of theatre, but the most important element is YOU, the audience! The audience is the element that makes theatre different than any other medium, like film or television. Also, it makes it the most fun for the actors! We are so excited to perform this show for you guys! Hope you enjoy!

Melissa

Section I:
The Play

- Characters
- Setting
- Themes
- Historical Background



CHARACTERS, SETTINGS & THEMES ... OH MY!

TEACHER OBJECTIVE:

To introduce students to the characters, settings, and story of *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing*

STUDENT GOAL:

To understand that the actors will simply and truthfully create the story of the play.

SYNOPSIS:

Three young sisters are left in a forest by their woodcutter father and forced to find their own way in the world. From this fairytale beginning, three resolutions are made — one sister walks one way to find purpose, one the other to find adventure, and the third stays right where she is to create a home. Years later, having circumnavigated the globe and fought vikings, crossed oceans, tamed wilds, and achieved greatness, the three sisters meet again, as women.

SETTING:

A fairytale village, a lighthouse, a mansion, and a lot of walking.

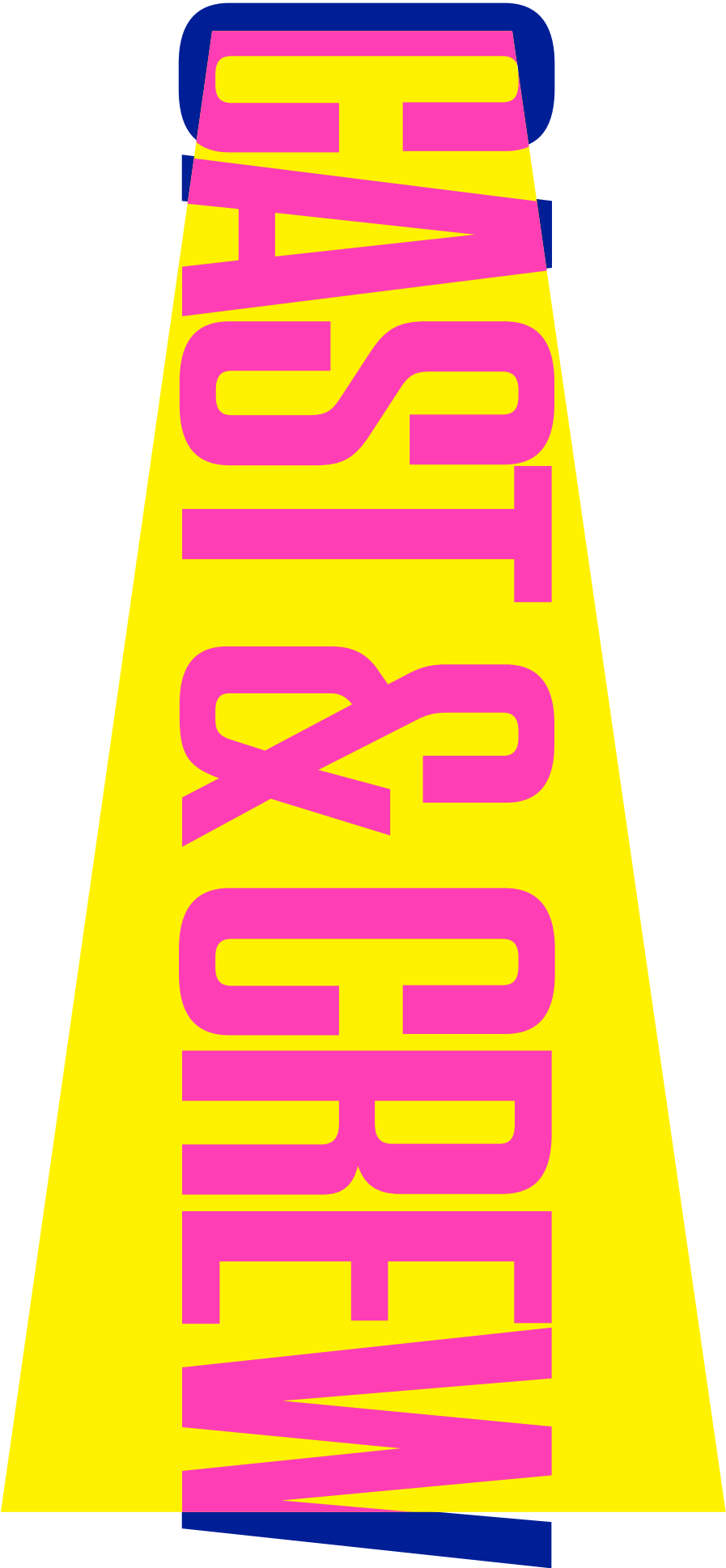
CHARACTERS:

Albienne
Beatrix
Carmen
Narrator

THEMES:

Sisterhood
Self-expression
Journeying
What it means to be by yourself

Section II:
Creative Team
Cast & Creative
Biographies



CAST (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)



**LAUREN
ANNUNZIATA**
(Narrator/Ensemble)



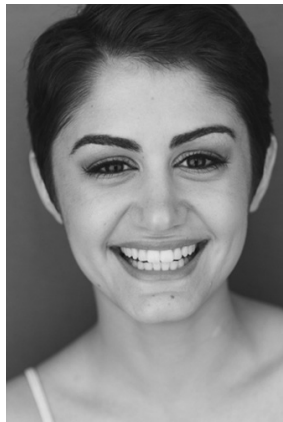
**BRENDAN
DALTON**
(Narrator/Ensemble)



**ANTHONY
HOLIDAY**
(Narrator/Ensemble)



**SARAH
KOWALSKI**
(Carmen)



**MELISSA
MAHONEY**
(Albienne)



**CERRIDWYN
MCCAFFREY**
(Beatrix)



**ADAM
ROEBLING**
(Father)

CREATIVE TEAM

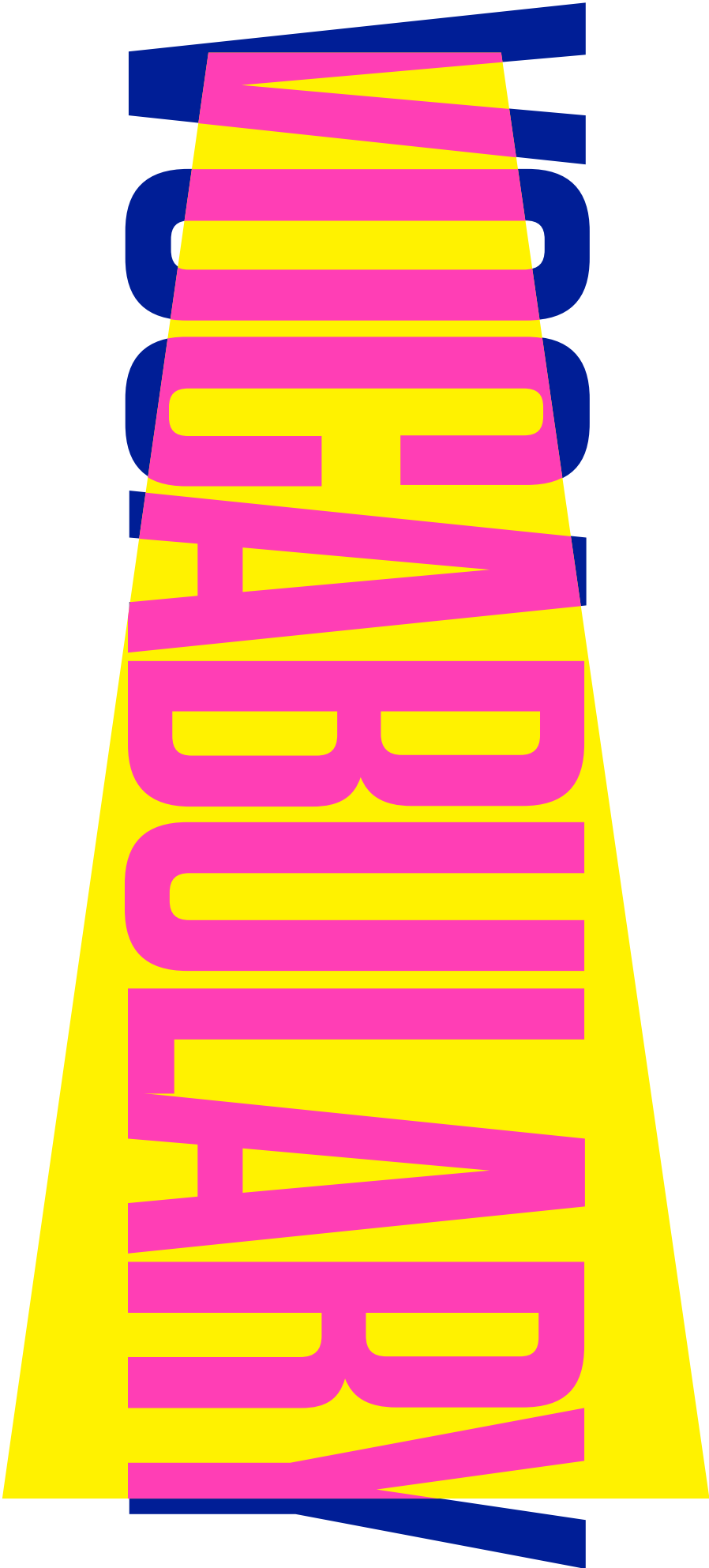
FINEGAN KRUCKEMEYER (Playwright) has had 83 commissioned plays performed on five continents and translated into six languages. His work has enjoyed seasons at the Sydney Opera House (six works), Kennedy Center (three works), Lincoln Center, Dublin's Abbey Theatre and Shanghai's Malan Flower Theatre. He and his work have received 36 national and international awards, including the 2017 Mickey Miner Lifetime Achievement Award for international Theatre for Young Audiences, 2015 David Williamson Prize for Excellence in Australian Playwriting, and five Australian Writers Guild Awards. He has spoken at conferences in nine countries, with papers published and works studied at international universities.

ALISON BEATTY During her eight year tenure as the Atlantic for Kids and Atlantic Acting School Artistic Director, Alison has directed many Atlantic for Kids productions, including *Camp Kappawanna* (2015 Off Broadway Alliance Best Family Show nominee), *Ivy and Bean the Musical* (National Tour), *The Hundred Dresses*, *Miss Nelson is Missing*, and *Really Rosie*, as well as choreographing *The Velveteen Rabbit*, *Tilly the Trickster*, *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, *No Dogs Allowed*, *Strega Nona*, *The Big Stew*, and *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown*. She earned a B.F.A from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and an M.A., M.Ed. in Psychological Counseling from Teachers College, Columbia University.

TOM COSTELLO (Director) is a New York-based director from Ithaca, NY. He is the Director of Artistic Development for Pipeline Theatre Company, an Associate Artist at the Flea Theater, and a 2017 Drama League Directing Fellow. This summer he directed Olivia Dufault's *The Messenger* and Christopher Parks' *Aesop's Fables* at the Hangar Theatre. At the Flea he has directed the world premieres of *Smoke* by Kim Davies, *The Wundelsteipen (and other difficult roles for young people)* by Nick Jones, and co-directed *The Flying Latke* by Arthur Yorinks. With Pipeline, he has directed *Sleepless City* by Tim Chawaga, *Shakespeare the Dead* by Alex Mills, and *Bubble and Squeak* by Evan Twohy (Samuel French finalist). With Libra Theater Company, he directed *The Thirteenth Commandment* by Joshua H. Cohen. With Dramatic Adventure he has devised productions in Slovakia and Ecuador which were then performed in New York City. He is a faculty member at Atlantic Acting School where he most recently directed Sarah Ruhl's *Passion Play*. BFA from NYU/Tisch.

Section III:
Your Students
As Audience

Theater Vocabulary
Fables & Fairytales



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.

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 which reveals the feelings of the character as well as the story of the play.

MONOLOGUE: A speech by one actor on stage which 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. For example, wine glasses at a bar for drinks.

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

SOUND: Noises and music used in the play.

NARRATOR

**A person who narrates something,
especially a character who recounts
the events of the play.**

FABLE

A short story, typically with animals as characters, conveying a moral.

TRANSFORMATION

**A change in form, nature,
or appearance.**

FABLES & FAIRYTALES

by Reilly Hilbert.

The history of fables and fairytales is a really beautiful one. Even before we had words to tell stories, people used stories to help them understand the world around them. There are cave paintings all over the world, dating back thousands of years with pictures of glorious battles, instructions for future generations, and magical retellings of things using images of family, animals, and fire. The Ancient Greeks told stories of many gods, mighty and fragile, who made the world the way it was. Native Americans told stories about how the different kinds of trees came to be or why there are stars at night. Pictures turned spoken turned stories turned written, and they became accessible not only by firesides or in early printing forms, but in books. From King Arthur to variations on Little Red Riding Hood, stories love being told.

The cross-cultural phenomenon of the fairytale was popularized by two German folklorists and linguists best known for their “Kinder - und Hausmärchen” or Grimm’s Fairy Tales. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm were strongly influenced by folk songs, poetry, and philosophy. To them, folk poetry (or stories with morals and often used to explain phenomenon too big for explanation) was the only true poetry. They found it the only thing that properly expressed the eternal joys and sorrows and the hopes and fears of being a human. All 200 stories in their book investigate the human condition in a way that it accessible to children and adults alike.

In *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, and This Girl Does Nothing*, the playwright, Finegan Kruckemeyer, investigates some of the conventions of fairytale telling with a modern voice. A familiar set of fairytale conventions is established in the first scene: children abandoned in the woods by their weak father and cruel stepmother. In the exploration of the three very different sisters’ reactions to this fairytale situation, Kruckemeyer explores the difficult concept of feeling alone being the ultimate catalyst to explore the world.

These girls see loneliness, pain, war, fame, and a lighthouse, and discover over thirty-three years that perhaps “coming home” means a lot of things. What does “coming home” mean for you?

Section IV: Your Students As Actors

Warm-up Game
Reading a Scene for
Understanding Scene/
Character Analysis



YOU'RE AN AGTOR

WARM-UP GAME

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To engage students by using their minds and bodies together as communication tools.

STUDENT GOAL

To explore how to effectively communicate using both their mind and body.

MATERIALS: Large open space for movement.

THEME: Going on a life adventure to learn more about yourself and then returning to your family to share what you've learned.

I think the best way to help activate these adventures is through a shared one-word story followed by a short acting out of the story.

Step One: Start by asking the kids what their favorite stories are.

Step Two: Create our hero. We can ask for volunteers for a name, thing, job, setting etc. Let your imagination flow!

Step Three: After we have created our hero and setting, we begin!

Step Three - A: Explain the rules, we will go TWICE around the circle (possibly 3 if it's an advanced or very small class) with each student giving ONLY ONE WORD to the story.

Step Three - B: Explain that the goal of the story is for it to have a clear beginning and a clear end and that we want it to MAKE SENSE.

Step Four: Lead the circle through a guided one-word story, slightly adjusting if need be (it doesn't make ANY sense, the student needs help, etc)

Step Five: Once the story is complete, have the class stand up.

Step Six: In a leaded "Follow the leader" style circle, lead the class through a mimed version of the story we just created together!

Step Seven: If there is time, repeat for one more totally different story.

READING A SCENE FOR UNDERSTANDING

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 action 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.”

Materials: Copies of the scene from *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Laughs, This Girl Does Nothing*.

SCRIPT:

Beatrix: These are good.

Lady: I know. ‘S why I have them.
Silence

Beatrix: Do you often get visitors?

Lady: Nup... ‘S a lighthouse. Whole point of a lighthouse, you don’t want no one getting’ near it. If no one ever reaches you, then ‘s a good lighthouse.

Beatrix: Hm. [beat] I need a boat.

Lady: ‘T for?

Beatrix: Not sure – the rest of the world. And my Papa maybe.

Lady: Mm. I went looking for the rest of the world once, when I was a young woman. Ended up here. Old woman now.

SCENE/CHARACTER ANALYSIS

Here are your “tools” for understanding your character from
This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing
Practical Aesthetics Diagnostic Scene 3: Beatrix and the Ocean (14)

BEATRIX

Literal: Beatrix, the youngest, speaks with an old lady who lives in a lighthouse about traveling across the sea to find her Papa.

Want: Beatrix wants reassurance that getting a boat to cross the sea is a good idea

Essential Action: To get someone on my team

As If: It's as if I just moved to New York and don't have connections yet so I try to get my mom to buy a plane ticket to come and see me, thus adding her to my team in New York.

OLD LADY

Literal: Beatrix, the youngest, speaks with an old lady who lives in a lighthouse about traveling across the sea to find her Papa

Want: Lady wants Beatrix to realize it's best to be left alone

Essential Action: to teach a simple lesson

As If: It's as if I have a little sister and I need to teach her not to touch the stove because it could burn her.

**Section V:
Your Students
As Artists**

Explode the Moment
Dictation and Dramatization
Postcard Activity
Creating Your Own Review



YOU'RE AN ARTIST

EXPLODE THE MOMENT (GRADES 4 - 6)

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To engage students in lively writing on the topic of “You can” attitude.

STUDENT GOAL

To create a piece of writing about a personal experience with “You can” attitude.

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 saw someone else being left out or when they felt left out themselves.

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 pull 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, most two, 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 to dive right in with a strong detail. For example, instead of “One time my friend was afraid to ...” they might try starting with a quote or with something they directly 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

If you like, you may choose to take it to the publishing phase and put together an anthology of student stories.

EXPLODE THE MOMENT PLANNING SHEET

I SAW...

I HEARD...

I FELT...

I THOUGHT...

I SAID...

I DID...

DICTATION AND DRAMATIZATION (GRADES K-2)

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

To develop an understanding of the relationship between the written word and the action of a play.

STUDENT GOAL

To gain insight into how plays are constructed.

MATERIALS

Large white sheets of paper, markers and an open space for “acting-out” the dramatization.

STEP ONE

Read the synopsis of *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing* aloud to the class. Discuss how in the characters deal with their everyday situations.

STEP TWO

Select one of the themes from THIS GIRL LAUGHS, THIS GIRL CRIES, THIS GIRL LAUGHS such as “friends help friends” or “feeling alone hurts.” Another possibility is to let the students create their own personal movie script of their lives.

STEP THREE

Ask the students to create a story based on one selected theme while the classroom teacher writes the story on a large sheet of paper for all the students to see.

NOTE: There should be one good main character who is on a journey or adventure with a clear goal at the end, and a character who keeps the main character from completing her journey. The main character’s friends help her complete the journey and achieve her goal.

STEP FOUR

When the story is complete, assign one student to each role in the story.

STEP FIVE

Read the story aloud from the paper while the student “actors” improvise the action and the dialogue of each character in front of the entire class.

NOTE: Encourage the students to contribute dialogue to the story as it is created. Pause while the student “actors” improvise the action and dialogue in the “Acting.”

DRAWING TO WRITE ACTIVITY (GRADES 3-4)

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, 11 X 14 Manila 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 *This Girl Laughs*, *This Girl Cries*, *This Girl Does Nothing* and 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 from Section 3 for the definition of dialogue as a reminder. Have each group read their sample scene to the class.

POSTCARD ACTIVITY (GRADES K-2)

TEACHER OBJECTIVE

Develop the student's critical thinking skills, drawing on a number of skills.

STUDENT GOAL

To draw the details from their favorite visual moment in the play and to write a personal response to the play.

MATERIALS: Pens, pencils, crayons and markers, copies of the postcard design provided.

MOTIVATION:

Discuss the play with your students, asking them to select their favorite "moment" in the performance.

STEP ONE

On the front of the card, draw your favorite scene from *This Girl Laughs, This Girl Cries, This Girl Does Nothing* with as much detail as possible - color, design, background. Fill the entire front of the postcard with your drawing.


STEP TWO

On the back of the card, write to a friend or family member about your feelings concerning the scene on the card's front.

STEP THREE

Address the postcard to the friend or family member.

NOTE: Small groups may arrange their postcards in the sequence in which their drawn scenes appeared in the play.

CREATING YOUR OWN REVIEW (GRADE 4-8)

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 *This Girl Laughs*, *This Girl Cries*, *This Girl Does Nothing* script, attached worksheets.

STEP ONE: Review the four W's (who, what where, when).

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.

Section 6: The Atlantic Legacy

Atlantic Theater Company &
Atlantic Acting School

Inspired by the Group Theater, Stanislavsky, and a passion for ensemble acting, David Mamet and William H. Macy formed the Atlantic Theater Company with a select group of New York University Undergraduate drama students. Since its inception in 1985, Atlantic has produced more than 100 plays and garnered numerous awards, including: 12 Tony Awards, 15 Lucille Lortel Awards, 16 OBIE Awards, six Outer Critics Circle Awards, seven Drama Desk Awards, three Drama League Awards, three New York Drama Critics Circle Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Noted productions include: Spring Awakening, Port Authority, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, The Beauty Queen of Leenane, Boy's Life, and American Buffalo. The Atlantic Theater Company's mission is to produce plays simply and truthfully, utilizing an artistic ensemble. Atlantic believes that the story of the play and the intent of its playwright are at the core of a successful theatrical production.

The Atlantic Acting School fosters new generations of actors by passing on the tools learned from Mamet and Macy and by preparing students for all aspects of a career in film, television and theater. The Atlantic offers studies through New York University, a full-time conservatory program, part-time programs and summer workshops. Atlantic for Kids offers acting classes in an after school setting as well as summer programs for children ages 4 to 18.

Linda Gross Theater
336 West 20th Street
New York, NY, 10011

Atlantic Stage 2
330 West 16th Street
New York, NY, 10011

ATLANTIC ACTING SCHOOL