



Backlight In-Schools Lesson Plan

Intended for grades: Middle School- High School (Grades 5-12)

Length of Backlight On-Tour Performance: 1 hour.

Length of Backlight In-Schools Workshop: 2 Day workshop- each day is comprised of a 1 Hour session (2 hours of instruction total)

LESSON OVERVIEW

Backlight Productions is a non-profit organization that gives individuals with special needs an opportunity to perform significant roles in a theatrical production. While Backlight strives to help these performers grow and succeed, a main focus of these productions is to encourage the actors involved through the support of audience members.

During Backlight on Tour performances and workshops, Student Volunteers from other departments of the school are pre-selected by faculty to help guide Backlight Actors through the course of their show, taking this opportunity to shift the focus from themselves and step into the backlight. Theatre itself, encourages empathy by stepping into the shoes of another person. Backlight, not only encourages empathy, it allows students to *put empathy into practice* by giving them the opportunity to assist their peers in a creative production.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide the opportunity for special ed students to perform significant roles before a live audience
- Enable students to enhance their social skills through artistic expression
- Help students grow in confidence both on and off stage
- Strengthen the inclusion of students with IEPs within the entire student population using theater as a means to build relationships and encourage kindness.
- Share a profound and powerful message which will elicit a greater degree of acceptance and appreciation by the students and present this message in a fun, engaging and thought provoking way.
- Encourage students to seek to understand and befriend those who may seem different from them, and to support and stand up for those who may not be able to stand up for themselves.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Backlight supports each school's compliance with Tennessee state laws T.C.A. § 49-6-1007(a) (Character Education), T.C.A. § 49-6-1007 through 1019 (Safety and Civility) and T.C.A. § 49-6-4503 (Bullying and Harassment).

Social Studies (reinforcing the traits of good citizens in a diverse and accepting community)

1.18 Define citizenship, and recognize traits of good citizens, such as respecting the rights of others, voting, following laws, etc.

GC.27 Identify and explain legislation and legal precedents that established rights for the underserved, including Title IX and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

CI.03 Analyze how cultural characteristics (e.g., language, religion, ethnicity, gender roles) link, divide, and/or define regions.

Fine Arts (using theater arts to send a message of kindness to counter prejudice and bullying)

6.T.R2.B Identify multiple cultural perspectives that may influence a theatrical work.

Foundation Cn2 - Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical text.

6.T.Cn1.A Explain how the actions and motivations of characters in a theatrical work may impact a community or culture's understanding.

8.T.Cn1.A Examine a community issue through a theatrical work.

HS3.T.Cn1.A Examine a community issue through multiple perspectives in a theatrical work.

HS2.T.Cn1.B Incorporate multiple perspectives and diverse community ideas in a theatrical work.

DELIVERY INSTRUCTION

For the Backlight In-Schools Workshop, a Backlight Associate will connect with both the heads of the Special Education Department and Drama Department. Backlight Productions supplies the Special Education Department with a document depicting various short Fairy Tale Stage Scripts. These stories are familiar and are ones that can easily be re-told or improvised. This document includes the title of the script, description of the story, number of roles, character description, and what would be required of each actor within that role (such as physical movement, number of lines, etc.) These scripts can be adapted to both the number of individuals and functioning levels of each unit.

Once the Special Education Department selects a script, their department will cast the production according to each student's strengths and abilities. The chosen script is also forwarded to the Drama Department.

During this workshop, the Special Education and Drama classes combine. The students from the Special Education Department will be the Actors in the play. Each student from the Drama Department will be partnered with a student from the Special Education Department. Their responsibility is to help the Actor they are partnered with, tell the story, by assisting as needed, with line prompting and movement on stage. Day 1 of the workshop, these classes rehearse with a Backlight Associate for 1 hour to learn their blocking/movement on stage and explore character development.

Day 2 of the workshop, students have a dress rehearsal where we run through the show adding any additional costume or prop items. Before the conclusion of the class period, students will have the opportunity to perform their short-play in front of a small audience as part of an open classroom sharing (possible audience members could include: family members, other students, and/or faculty members.)

MATERIALS

- Fairy Tale Short Script (provided by Backlight Associate, can be customized for each Department-copies will be sent out to both the Special Education and Drama Departments.)
- Pencils
- Treasure Chest (includes basic costume and prop pieces, provided by Backlight Associate)

ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION

Successful completion of this task would indicate:

- Participation and from both the Special Education and Drama Departments
- Creative Partnership between both classes by using collaborative skills and group problem solving techniques to perform a short story
- Greater confidence in students functioning as Actors
- Increased Empathy in student volunteers and audience members

Students will show evidence of skills and knowledge by:

- Producing a performance that will be shared before a live audience

NOTES:

The Backlight In-Schools Workshop can be performed in addition to the Backlight On-Tour Performance (1 hour) and the Ensemble Workshop (1 hour instruction total) or this Workshop can be scheduled independently.