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NEW FREE LESSON PLANS
IMPROV STORY AND ART JAM
MEMOIR HEART: MAPPING
EMOTIONS AND MEMORIES

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Lesson Plan: Improv Story and Art Jam

Title: Improv Story and Art Jam: Building Stories Together

TL;DR (Quick Summary) Students engage in collaborative storytelling and art using the improvisational rule of “yes, and...” to build on each other’s ideas. They take turns adding to a story and a shared illustration without erasing previous contributions, promoting creativity, active listening, and group problem-solving.

Objectives - Collaborate using improvisational strategies. - Co-create visual and written narratives. - Develop listening and speaking skills through respectful idea-sharing. - Engage in SEL practices like empathy, adaptability, and positive communication.

Standards Alignment

Common Core: - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences. - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1: Engage effectively in collaborative discussions. - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.3: Use knowledge of language when writing, speaking, or listening.

Visual Arts Standards: - Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas. - Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to art.

SEL (CASEL Framework): - Relationship Skills: Communicating clearly, listening actively. - Social Awareness: Respecting others’ contributions and perspectives.

Materials Needed - Large sheets of butcher paper or poster board - Markers, crayons, colored pencils - Lined writing paper or sentence strip templates - Optional: timer, “Yes, and” sentence stem cards, music playlist for ambiance

Step-by-Step Procedure

Warm-Up: Intro to “Yes, And” (15 min) 1. **Circle Discussion:** Explain how improvisation works. Practice saying “Yes, and...” to ideas. 2. **Game:** Play a round of oral storytelling where each student adds a sentence beginning with “Yes, and...” (e.g., “Yes, and then the robot flew to the moon!”)

Part 1: Collaborative Story Writing (20–30 min) 1. **Group Formation:** Students work in groups of 4–5. 2. **Story Setup:** One student starts the story with a sentence. Each student adds a sentence using “Yes, and...” to continue. 3. **Writing Options:** - Write on sentence strips and tape together as a “Story Train.” - Write continuously on a scroll of paper passed around.

Part 2: Collaborative Art Jam (30–40 min) 1. **Shared Art Paper:** On large paper, one student draws the beginning of an illustration for their story. 2. **Pass-and-Draw:** Each student adds to the illustration without erasing or editing others’ work. 3. **Group Reflection:** What did your group create? How did you feel building on others’ work?

Optional Sharing (15 min) - Host a class “Jam Gallery” with story-art posters. - Students present how their story evolved and what their picture represents.

Assessment Ideas - Observe group collaboration and turn-taking. - Use a reflection sheet: “What idea did you add? How did someone build on your idea?” - Rubric for participation, creativity, collaboration, and use of “yes, and...”

Adaptation for Advanced/Older Students (Grades 4–5) - Add a genre twist (mystery, sci-fi, fantasy). - Require figurative language or dialogue. - Digitally collaborate using Google Slides for writing and drawing.

Adaptation for Younger Students (Kindergarten) - Use pictures only for storytelling. - Scaffold with oral prompts and pre-drawn backgrounds. - Use sentence stems: “Then the ___ did ___.”

Cross-Curricular Extensions - **Drama:** Act out group stories with costumes or props. - **Music:** Add a soundtrack to the final story. - **Math:** Sequence story steps and create a bar graph of popular story genres. - **Social Studies:** Set stories in different historical time periods or cultures.

Home Connection - Send home a “Yes, and...” family storytelling starter page. - Encourage parents and siblings to add a sentence and drawing to a collaborative story strip.

Appendix: Sentence Stems and Story Starters

Yes, And Sentence Stems: - Yes, and then the ___ decided to . - **Yes, and suddenly** appeared! - Yes, and because of that, ___ had to act fast. - Yes, and they all worked

together to . - **Yes, and then the setting changed to** . - Yes, and a surprising twist happened when . - **Yes, and the character felt** because ____.

Story Starters: - Once upon a time, a mysterious box was found in the playground... - Deep in the forest, three unusual creatures were building something big... - One windy afternoon, a paper airplane flew through a magic door... - The sky turned green, and everyone knew something strange was coming... - In a city where animals could talk, one parrot wanted to become mayor... - A child woke up to find their room filled with floating bubbles that whispered secrets... - A robot with a broken button wandered into a library full of old books...

These prompts and sentence stems help guide students toward imaginative, respectful, and interconnected storytelling.

Lesson Plan: Memoir Heart SEL and Writing Activity

Title: Memoir Heart: Mapping Emotions and Memories

TL;DR (Quick Summary) Students create a visual “memoir heart map” filled with meaningful memories and personal moments. This activity develops self-awareness and empathy, while scaffolding narrative writing skills. Students write short personal narratives based on one of the memories inside their heart, supporting both SEL and ELA goals.

Objectives - Reflect on personal experiences to build self-awareness and empathy. - Identify and describe sensory and emotional details from memories. - Plan and write a personal narrative based on a selected moment. - Share stories to build classroom community.

Standards Alignment

Common Core (Grades 2–5): - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using descriptive details. - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.1: Engage in collaborative conversations. - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.3.5: Demonstrate understanding of figurative language and word relationships.

SEL Competencies (CASEL Framework): - Self-Awareness: Identifying emotions and personal history. - Relationship Skills: Sharing personal stories respectfully and supportively. - Responsible Decision-Making: Choosing memories that are safe and meaningful to share.

Materials Needed - Blank “Heart Map” templates (or plain paper) - Pencils, crayons, markers - Writing journals or lined paper - Optional: Music or visual art prompts for ambiance - Optional: Chart paper with sentence stems and SEL vocabulary

Step-by-Step Procedure

Day 1: Introduction & Heart Mapping

- 1. Opening Circle (10 min):** Ask students to share a memory that makes them smile.
- 2. Modeling (5 min):** Show a sample “memoir heart” with simple symbols or words.
- 3. Create the Memoir Heart (20–30 min):** - Students divide their

heart into 6–8 sections with meaningful moments. 4. **Gallery Walk (10 min):** Silent or partner sharing of hearts.

Day 2: Writing the Memory 1. Mini-Lesson: Sensory Details & Emotions (10 min):

Anchor chart on sensory prompts. 2. **Choose a Memory & Prewrite (10 min):** Students select a memory and outline it. 3. **Writing Time (20–25 min):** Draft narratives with supports. 4. **Wrap-Up Share (5 min):** Volunteers share a sentence or paragraph aloud.

Assessment Ideas - Review heart maps for emotional and memory variety. - Narrative rubric assessing sequencing, sensory details, emotional vocabulary. - Peer or teacher feedback using “2 Stars and a Wish.”

Adaptation for Advanced/Older Students (Grades 4–5) - Full 5-paragraph memoir with figurative language. - Use metaphor or symbolism in heart map. - Peer feedback and revision. - Record stories as audio memoirs or podcasts.

Adaptation for Younger Students (Kindergarten) - Use 3–4 heart sections. - Draw and label memories. - Sentence stems: “I like when I .” “***That made me feel .***” - Oral storytelling with scribed support.

Cross-Curricular Extensions - **Art:** 3D heart boxes with memory objects. - **Music:** “Memory soundtrack” playlist. - **Social Studies:** Connect memories to family traditions. - **Science:** Study how the brain stores memory.

Home Connection - Send a blank heart map home to complete with family. - Invite families to share a childhood story. - Newsletter Blurb: “Ask your child what memories they put in their heart this week—and which one became their story!”

Appendix: Heart Map Template (A simple heart outline divided into 6–8 sections, with space for words or small drawings. You can insert a hand-drawn or digital heart here or attach a separate printable page.)



