

CHARACTER *itches*

R E A D I N G A N D T H E A T R E

Objectives

CONTENT

CCSS.ELA-Reading.RL.2.6 Acknowledge differences in the points of view of characters, including by speaking in a different voice for each character when reading dialogue aloud.

FINE ARTS

TH:Cr1.1.2c. Identify ways in which voice and sounds may be used to create or retell a story in guided drama experiences (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama).

Materials:

- Song with clear pitch sections like “Levelance” from *Music for Creative Dance: Contrast and Continuum (I)* by Eric Chappelle
- Document camera, computer projection, paper copies, to display story dialogue.
- Aesop’s fable “The Lion and the Mouse”
- Scene from “Jack and the Beanstalk” with dialogue between Jack and the Giant, if desired for assessment
- Video recording device

Pre-assessment:

Warm the students physically by having them move from a low level to a high level creating a small, contracted shape at the low level (raisin) and a large, expansive shape at a high level (watermelon). Warm their voices by having them move their voices from a low level to a high level on “ooo” like a roller coaster. Play the song “Levelance” or another song with clear low and high pitches having them create gestures to show when the pitches are high, low or medium level.

Engagement:

Explain to the students that they are actors and actors have 3 tools available to them - body, voice and imagination. Actors use their bodies, voices and imaginations to show their characters. The students just warmed up and utilized their bodies and voices. Listening to the selection again and using their imaginations, ask the students to imagine what kind of characters might use those high, low and medium pitches.

Activity:

1. Read the story “The Lion and the Mouse”. Do not alter your voice to indicate different characters as you read. Direct the students to engage their actor’s tool of imagination as you read to imagine what each character’s voice would sound like including the pitch.

2. In pairs have the students talk to one another as lions and then as mice. Have them discuss their vocal choices explaining why they chose that pitch for that character to their partners. As a class discuss reasons for the most likely choice of low pitch for lion and high pitch for mouse. You may wish to include body shape and size to reflect character as well and explain why a larger animal might have a lower pitched voice than that of a smaller animal.

Closing:

Keep students in these pairs. Have one student in each pair play the lion and the other play the mouse. Try dramatizing this story as a class with the teacher narrating and prompting lines and students repeating lines with appropriate voice and movements/ body shape/size.

Assessment:

Formative Choices

Have the students continue working on their lion and mouse scenes as you observe. Have the students take turns playing the two different roles. Observe students looking for appropriate character choices. You may even wish to team up pairs and have them present to one another as you circulate and observe aurally and visually.