

GIBBERISH REHEARSAL

AGES: Middle School, High School, College

DESCRIPTION

Enhanced physicality, reaction, expression and connection between characters

FULL LESSON PLAN

Uses: When rehearsals have turned stale; when your actors are having a hard time reaching a desired energy level; when searching for new physicality and characterization; when searching for better expression of emotion and thought. Once rehearsals have been going on for a while, and all the actors are memorized, I like to shake things up a bit and have them do a Gibberish Rehearsal. This is a full run (no skimping and letting them off the hook half way through) in which the actors have to replace the learned dialog with gibberish statements. "To be, or not to be" turns into "Blah boo, bling snoop da doo." This forces the actors out of their comfort zones within the lines and makes them aim at really expressing the ideas and emotions behind the script. It also reinforces real learning of the lines by making the actors think about what combination of ideas and statements are being used by their peers, rather than tuning out during known sections. It really helps to get your actors moving and physicalizing their thoughts, as they can no longer hide simply behind the words, but must show what they are saying. The exercise adds a sense of motion and life to the whole cast, bringing in even small characters who must listen and react to the nonsense being spouted by the leads. I have also seen it add a real sense of humor and energy to almost every scene. It probably should not be done more than once per show, as it could lead to some serious over acting, but it is a darn fun day of rehearsal that has some immediate benefits to the actors and company as a whole.