



**Lower  
Manhattan  
Cultural  
Council**

EMPOWERING ARTISTS,  
INVESTED IN COMMUNITY

## TRAINING, NETWORKING, TALKS: ARTS ADVANCEMENT SERIES

*MAKING THE TRANSITION TO BEING A TEACHING ARTIST  
A HANDS-ON WORKSHOP*

### SAMPLE LESSON PLAN 2

Below is a sample lesson plan for reference use only. A Lesson Plan is a plan for a relatively short-term process of teaching and learning. Usually it describes one workshop session. A lesson plan is firmly grounded in reality when its goals are specific, measurable, accountable, repeatable, and bound by time. Although it can take many forms, a simple and effective lesson plan usually has an opening activity, a main activity, a sharing, and a closing reflection. During the main activity students gain knowledge of specific concepts and practice specific skills. During the sharing students demonstrate their understanding and ability. During the closing reflection students make connections and consider the implications of what they have explored, learned and practiced.

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**# of students:** Approx. 25  
**Age/grade:** 15-16 years old/10<sup>th</sup> grade  
**Session:** Preshow #1  
**Duration:** 45 minutes  
**Teacher:** Jane Doe

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**Unit of Study:** *Billy Elliot* by Lee Hall, music by Elton John, choreography by Peter Darling.

#### **Overall Objectives:**

By participating in this preshow lesson the student will:

1. Be prepared to see, experience, and reflect upon the musical *Billy Elliot*.
2. Reflect upon their own lives in order to connect to the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of the characters they will be seeing in the play.

*Content updated 2013*

3. Learn part of the song “Electricity” from the musical, *Billy Elliot*.
4. Learn three ballet dance moves.
5. Choreograph their own dance/music piece including three moves they have created themselves, the three ballet moves they have learned, and include “Electricity” in the performance.
6. Through the process of creating and sharing their work with one another they will have an understanding of what it means to create an original piece of theatre.

### **Assessment Tools:**

- Observation. I will know that the students have connected to the workshop if:
  1. They are listening and engage in the activities.
  2. They participate and ask questions.
  3. They take risks.
  4. They share their work.
  5. They are willing to reflect with each other on the experience of the workshop.

**Materials Needed:** CD player.

### **Preshow Workshop:**

1 Intro (5 minutes)

- As students enter the room, pass out the following prompt : “What is your dream?”
- Instruct students to answer the question in one or two sentences, and then put it in their back pocket to be considered later.
- After students have completed task, instruct them to sit on the floor in a circle.
- Go over agreements for the workshop.
  1. Everyone must participate.
  2. Everyone must be careful with their bodies and keep each other safe. There will be extensive movement in the workshop.
  3. If the TA calls Freeze, everyone must stop what they are doing and stop talking.
  4. Everyone must listen and be respectful of one another, and support each other’s work.
- Talk briefly about the musical *Billy Elliot*.
  1. It takes place in England in the 1970’s when there was major upheaval in the mining industry. The action of the play centers around one family and how the stress of an uncertain future affects them. Billy is part of this family.
  2. The main character, Billy, is an 11-year-old boy whose father has signed him up for boxing lessons. The community center where he takes his boxing lesson also has a ballet class that Billy is curious

about.

3. Billy discovers ballet, and finds that he loves to dance.

## 2 Teach and Learn – song (10 minutes)

- Play section of the song “Electricity” for the class that they will be learning.
- While song is playing write lyrics on the board.
- “And suddenly I’m flying, flying like a bird, like electricity. Electricity, sparks inside of me, and I’m free, I’m free.”
- Call and response learning – teacher sings a phrase then students sing phrase.
- Repeat song in its entirety and practice 2 or 3 times until students get it.

## 3 Teach and Learn – dance (5 minutes)

- Billy loved Ballet. Ballet is a kind of dance that takes years and years to learn. However, Billy started at the beginning and we so will we.
- Teach three basic dance moves.
- Write name of the dance move and simple definition on the board.
- Plie – Smooth and continuous bending of the knees.
- Jete – Leap from one foot to another.
- Releve – Lifted balance on toes.
- Model dance moves, and explain correct technique.
- Have students try each move a few times until they are comfortable.

## 4 Create (10 minutes)

- Have students think about something that they are good at. It may or may not be connected to their dream that they wrote about at the beginning of class.
- Model a pedestrian movement that represents this idea. For example, “throwing a football” move would represent the idea that the TA is good at football.
- Have students break down TA’s pedestrian movement into three distinct moves. Encourage all dance terminology that was used when learning ballet moves. Elongate, lengthen, extend, etc. This will transform pedestrian moves into dance. For example, the TA (with the student’s assistance) would change their general “throwing football” mime into three clear moves. 1. Bringing football back. 2. Pushing arm forward through the air. 3. Bringing both arms in the air in a triumphant pose.
- Break students into four groups.
- Have students create their own moves based on the modeling TA just did with them.
- Have students teach and learn each other’s dance moves.

## 5 Rehearse and Perform (10 minutes)

- Challenge students to create a performance piece. They must include their

original dance moves, the three ballet moves they learned, and as a class they will finish the dance performance with the singing of “Electricity” that they learned earlier in the workshop. The students have the option of also including the song within their dance piece if they feel comfortable singing in the smaller group.

- “Electricity” should be playing during rehearsal and dance performance.
- Have student groups perform their pieces for one another in a pre-determined order.

#### 6 Reflect (5 minutes)

- How did it feel to create original dance/performance pieces?
- What skills did they need to use to make the performance more successful?
- Did you have any challenges?
- What kind of challenges do you think Billy might have?
- What do you think you are going to see in the show based on the work we did today?
- Have students look at the first question they were given when they started the workshop.
- “What’s your dream?” Think about this when you see show. Ask yourself, “Do Billy’s dreams come true?”
- Leave them with the following question: How will you make your dreams come true?