



LIVE Arts with Greg Ochitwa

Overview

This session will give students the opportunity to participate in a live broadcast by professional theatre artist Greg Ochitwa.

Students will learn how professional playwrights 'workshop' a play and how actors work from a script to interpret characters.

This workshop will show teachers and students one approach to writing a scene and the stages of interpreting a script.

Drama

Grade 7-8

Nov. 28, 2013 1:30-2:30pm

Broadcast

Ask the ARTIST: You can connect with the artist during the broadcast through a virtual classroom, go to: <http://connect.edonline.sk.ca/liveartsed/>

Artist Bio

Greg Owchitwa is an actor/writer/rapper, born and raised in Saskatchewan. He was a member of the 2010 Globe Theatre Actor Conservatory, and holds a BFA in Theatre Acting from the U of R. Favourite theatre credits include *Metamorphoses* (Globe Theatre), *Over the River and Through the Woods* and *The Drawer Boy* (Mae Wilson Theatre), *Zastrozzi* (Hectik Theatre), and Charming in Kelley Jo Burke's *Charming and Rose* (Shu-Box). Film and television credits include *Corner Gas*, *The Lost Angel*, renegadepress.com, and three seasons on *Incredible Story Studio*.

Greg is a founding member of the hip-hop group TopWise. Originating in 2001, they've played countless shows, including main stage sets at the Flatlands Music Festival and the 2005 Canada Summer Games, and they've independently released two full length albums, with a third set for release by 2012.

Greg has spent a large portion of the past three years developing a hip-hop musical, *Cope*. A portion of it was showcased at the Recovery LabCab at Factory Theatre in Toronto, it was presented by the Globe Theatre in Regina as part of the 2010-2011 Sandbox Reading Series, and it is one of five shows that were selected to be part of the 2011-2012 Sandbox Series Season.

He also absolutely loves to work with 6-17 year olds as an acting teacher at The Globe Theatre School. Recent Productions: *Robin Hood* (Globe Theatre); *Cope* (Sandbox Series, Globe Theatre).

Curriculum Aims & Goals

Creative/Productive:

Students will create their own short scene and then interpret another classmate's work.

Critical/Responsive:

Students will have the opportunity to ask theatre artist Greg Ochitwa questions about his life as a professional actor and playwright.

Cultural/Historical:

Students will learn about the work of Canadian playwrights and the nature of Canadian theatre.

Broadcast Program (1 hour)

Please have your students participate in the activities that Greg will be demonstrating during the broadcast.

Students will need paper and pencils/pens for a writing exercise during the broadcast. Students will also be working with a partner during this writing activity, you may wish to assign partners prior to broadcast.

During the broadcast you may be asked to lead your students through an activity. Instructions will be posted on the broadcast.

- **Video Bio/Personal Intro**

- **Warm Up**

Stretches Focus Exercises Balance Exercises Focus Games

- **Where Does Inspiration Come From? Brain-storming session**

1. Our community Our province Our world
(Grade 7 Focus on Place; Grade 8 Focus on Social Issues)
2. Something you like about the province/something you'd like to change about the province?
3. What's the best our province could be? What's the worst?
4. What makes our province unique?- Do you have a crazy Saskatchewan story?

- **Artist Interprets Story**

Taking one or more of the students ideas, and figuring out how these ideas could be presented dramatically

Talking about the 5 Points of story development

1. Establish Character
2. Establish Location
3. Problem Arises
4. Problem Gets Worse
5. Solution

- **Building a Story Classroom Activity**

Students get in groups of two or three, and start to build their craziest Saskatchewan story into a short dramatic scene

- **Sharing Our Stories**

Students can share the scenes they've developed, and the artist will guide the class in how to look at the scene dramatically, discussing ways in which it really worked, or ways that maybe it could have been more clear.

This is a chance for the student to play with the character for the first time, the artist will guide them in ways that they can explore it further.

Dramaturg the Scene

Students return to their groups to develop the script a bit further. Flesh out the characters

Share a Saskatchewan Story "What a Crazy Story"

Creative/Productive CP7.5 Use drama elements, strategies, negotiation, and collaboration to help shape the direction of the drama and/or collective creation.

CP7.6 Express ideas about the importance of place (e.g., relationships to the land, local geology, region, urban/rural environments) in drama and/or collective creation.

Critical/Responsive CR7.1 Respond to professional dance, drama, music, and visual art works using analysis, personal interpretation, and research.

Creative/Productive CP8.4 Demonstrate how dramatic characters interact in relationships within the drama and/or collective creation.

CP8.5 Investigate how theatrical elements (e.g., story, character, design, space) are combined to achieve dramatic purpose.

Critical/Responsive CR8.1 Respond to professional dance, drama, music, and visual art works through the creation of own arts expressions.

Teacher Guided Activity (1 hour)

1. Sharing Our Stories

Refer back to the 'What a crazy story'

stories shared by the students on the Live Broadcast, and ask your students to recall the steps the artist used to analyze the scene; now have your students share their stories. Each group should do their piece once, teacher and class should then provide feedback on strengths and ways to improve the scene, and then do their scene one more time.

Materials/Resources

It is recommended that the teacher guided activity take place in an open space, such as a gym or resource room.

2. Acting Warm-up: This exercise is used to get your students thinking and moving creatively.

Walking Exercise - Get the students walking around the open space. Just walking.

- Start making suggestions as to ways they can walk, or things that might affect the way they walk, or the way they think about their bodies when they walk. Phrase your suggestion as a question. "How would you walk if the room was full of quick sand? How would it be if the room was full of jello? How would you walk if *you* were made of jello? What if you were 100 years old? Two hundred? A thousand?").
- Keep the students moving. Keep firing questions at them.
- At 3 mins, start asking them to move like different animals. For example: a lion, a bear, a gopher.
- At 5 mins ask the students how they would move if they were half human, half animal. Like a cartoon animal. Then guide them with more questions, reminding them to stay as their human/animal. Hint: Teachers can ask students to move in 'Slow Motion' if students start getting to excited.

More walking exercise suggestions (this movement can be inspired by anything...so have fun with it...Teachers can participate to)

- In slow motion move: backwards; sideways; tip-toes; heels; outsides of your feet; insides of your feet

- Try walking with a: sore back; sore knee; can't bend one knee, then both knees -

- How do you walk when there's: gum on the floor; the floor's really hot; the floor's made of lava, and there are stones that you have to hop on; in knee high grass; in 5 ft tall grass?
- Now try: skating; moon walking; walking on a log over a stream; walking in a small cave, a smaller cave.
- Now students could a big rock they have to push; an even bigger rock they have to push; they are a spy/secret agent, a King or Queen, a Prince or Princess.
- Students could try: Dancing; hopping on one leg; hopping on the other leg; they have super powers

- Ask the students at some point to interact with the other human animals

Slow-Motion Mirror Exercise – Pair up your students (if you have an odd number, a group of 3 will work). Have the students stand facing each other, two arms lengths apart. Students have 3 mins to try out their human/animal with a human mirror. Moving in slow motion, students can test out their human/animals specific features (eg. How does its nose move? Eyes? Hands? Tail? Head? Neck? Mouth (including sounds)?

3. Character Interviews This exercise is intended to help students further develop their character. Have your students gather in a circle. Have each student share the answer to one or more questions such as the following: "Where does your animal live? In the Sea? On land? What is your animal's favorite food? Does your animal have brothers or sisters? How old is the animal? What's the animals biggest fear? Does the animal talk with the other animals when no humans are around? What does your animal talk about? Does your animal go to a school? What does your animal do in their spare time? Does your animal you have super powers?" Basically, you're conducting an interview with them.

4. Dramaturging The Piece

This is an opportunity for students to formalize their translation of a 'Crazy Saskatchewan Story' into a working scene. Students should create a more polished written outline for their scene (a very basic script). This written outline should include the five points of story development. The outline could describe actions of the characters and loose description of dialogue.

For example: 'Establish Character: Story starts with three kids. Establish location: sitting in a field looking up at the sky. Problem arises: suddenly all react to some sort of loud noise. Problem gets worse: One yells it's an alien spaceship, run (characters run in circles, bumping into each other. Solution: Character 1 realizes that it's just a new high tech fertilizer unit, all calm down.

- Students should once again go off to work with their group on the scene because performing a scene more than once can be very insightful.
- This is the groups last chance to refine their performance and/or add content. Students should analyze their own script and adjust it in whatever way they chose. Students may chose to add a scene about what happens right after, or right before the first scene. Inform students that sometimes it's good to expand your scene, but sometimes it's better to stick it out, using their best judgment.

5. Final Presentations- Our Story

Students once again get a chance to share their scenes.

Lead a brief discussion about what they found interesting or successful about the scenes.

Drama is a collaborative process, and the more students share their work, both performing and dialoguing about it, the richer it becomes.

Celebrate successes.