



Sample High School Acting I Learning Plan

Big Idea/ Topic

Character Analysis and Given Circumstances

Connecting Theme/Enduring Understanding:

Connecting literature to theatrical performance. Engaging in turning text into action, psychology, communication, and physical control.

Essential Questions:

- What are the Given Circumstances and why are they important for actor choices?
- How can you use a Character Analysis Questionnaire for preparing text for action?

Standard Alignment

CREATING

TAHSA.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.

- a. Use script analysis in the development and presentation of formal and informal theatre performances.
- b. Examine various theories of dramatic structure.
- c. Engage in and apply meaningful cultural, literary, and historical research to create acting choices or directorial concepts.

PERFORMING

TAHSA.PR.1 Act and direct by communicating and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.

- a. Examine and implement the voice, body, observation, and imagination as tools of the actor in presentations of formal and informal theatre.
- b. Research and assess the development of acting skills for character creation and performance including historical movements, personal experience, and cultural influences.
- c. Act by developing, communicating, and sustaining roles within a variety of situations and environments.

RESPONDING

TAHSA.RE.1 Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member.

- a. Examine and reflect on the relationship between actor and a live audience in historical and contemporary performances.

TAHSA.RE.2 Critique various aspects of theatre and other media using appropriate supporting evidence.

- a. Develop and utilize meaningful, structured criteria for assessing the work of an actor.

Instructional Design

***This lesson has a flexible timeline but can be accomplished in 2-3 days.**



This lesson is intended to reach students in a virtual setting, whether plugged or unplugged. See the bottom of the lesson for a list of unplugged supplies.

FOUNDATIONAL INFORMATION:

Students must have a foundational understanding about the roles and responsibilities of actors, turning text in to action, voice for the actor, movement for the actor, beats and objectives.

CONCEPTS:

Actor Ready Warm-ups
Given Circumstances
Character Analysis
Character Backstory/bio

VOCABULARY:

guideposts, relationship, conflict, humor, opposites, events, moment before, discovery, importance, communication and competition, mystery and secret, game playing/role playing, place.

LINKS:

[Character Analysis PowerPoint](#)
[Theatre & Film: High School: Videos: Head to Toe Physical Warm-up](#)
[Theatre & Film: High School: Videos: Vocal Warm-Ups](#)
[Theatre & Film: Acting I: Unit 1: Character Analysis Video](#)

Part 1:

The actor warm-up can be used at the top of each daily session. For a synchronous live digital interface, engage students in an actor warm-up engaging both the body and the voice before the start of class.

Examples of basic actor warm-ups can be found in the links below:

[Theatre & Film: High School: Videos: Head to Toe Physical Warm-up](#)
[Theatre & Film: High School: Videos: Vocal Warm-Ups](#)

After the actor warm-up, discuss as a class the reason for warm-ups and experience of the process. Ask the students to notice what they notice about themselves when engaged in the activity. Discuss with students the connection between an actor-ready body and playing characters on stage.

For an asynchronous recorded digital option have the students watch the video and do the warm-ups on their own making notes in their journal about the sequence when completed.

Unplugged Variation- Provide a written copy of a vocal and physical actor warm-up for the student to engage in. Have the student journal about the sequence when completed each time.

Part 2:

In a live or recorded session present the information from the example lesson script, and the PowerPoint, on a synchronous digital platform such as Google Meet ([How it Works: Google Meet](#)), or create an asynchronous video of your own.

Teachers Directions to Students:

Sample Video:



Theatre & Film: Acting I: Unit 1: Character Analysis Video

When students are ready, use the PowerPoint or video included, or presentation of your own making to introduce the character analysis tools for using the given circumstances in a script for creating a character. Select a character as a class from a play or commonly known story and answer the character questions together before letting the students explore the activity on their own. Discuss the exercises as a class or in journals.

Unplugged Variation: Have the student read the information about the character analysis and the given circumstances and engage in the character analysis activity. In place of the class discussion and example, the student can answer the questionnaires about themselves before applying the activity to the characters. This activity can also be used as an enrichment activity with students in the synchronous session if needed.

Part 3:

(The use of social media in this assignment should be adjusted to fit with the social media and online guidelines of your district. The assignment can be done in the style of social media if no online options are available)

Student Instructions:

The following Character-based project has four parts, Create, Perform, Respond, and Connect.

CREATE:

Choose a character from a play. Fill out the character analysis. For the questions that do not have answers easily found in the text, use context clues.

Complete a character biography and backstory for your character. Based on your character analysis, begin to create ideas for a series of TikToks, short videos, or Instagram posts as this character. What would their social media life look like? You can set this in the current day or the world of their play. Suspend your disbelief and make their world come to life!

Submit this assignment in the school's digital platform under **CREATE** with a brief outline of which project you will be choosing and creating.

PERFORM:

After you have planned out your TikToks, videos, or Instagrams...**CREATE!** You can submit your posts via the school's digital platform (**assignment PERFORM**) or by tagging the teacher on TikTok/Instagram, or other approved form of social media @teachername or emailing to teacheremail@schoolname.k12.ga.us

If you are not on social media- it is **NOT** required for this project. Choose the video/photo or we can create another alternative for you to complete the assignment.

RESPOND:

In a discussion board- The teacher will send links and info to find your peers' projects.

Using the critique guidelines, create a critique of their performance in the style of a newspaper critique or a video response.

Submit this assignment in the school's digital platform (**assignment RESPOND**) or by tagging the instructor on TikTok/Instagram or other approved form of social media @teachername or emailing

CONNECT:

Theatre is about more than just the performers, directors, and designers. It is about the impact on the world and how we influence and affect an audience.

Imagine you are someone who attended a production of your chosen play. How did the performance change their perspective in the world? Write a blog post or record a vlog as if you are an audience member who just left this production.

Submit this assignment in the school's digital platform (**assignment CONNECT**)

Unplugged Variation: Complete the CREATE portion of the assignment on paper to mail to the teacher.

Complete the PERFORM portion of the assignment, the part that would be recorded or posted digitally, live for



the teacher over the phone. Complete the RESPOND portion of the assignment by using the critiquing guidelines to critique two actors you have seen play characters recently in tv or film. Complete the CONNECT portion of the assignment on paper and mail the assignment to the teacher.

Evidence of Student Success

Diagnostic: Teacher observation of actor warm-up and a discussion about the connection between actor-ready actors and playing characters on stage.

Formative: Teacher observation group character analysis activity

Summative: Character CREATE, PERFORM, RESPOND, and CONNECT project.

Distance Learning Supports

Ideas for Differentiation:

Our goal is for all students to be actively engaged using the body, the voice, speaking, reflecting, and writing. Below are changes to the lesson to help achieve that goal for students who need additional support. or increased rigor. Note: Be careful using these lessons for all students.

- Consider allowing students to record their thoughts in a variety of ways: using the talk to text/dictate feature, making an audio recording of their responses, drawing pictures, circling and/or labeling on their diagram or PowerPoint printouts, etc.
- Students needing additional support can use the smaller character analysis questionnaire. The assignment can be further abbreviated by reducing the number of tasks or by turning the create, perform, respond, and connect into a choice board where the student only selects two of the tasks.
- For low-tech and unplugged adaptation students can work one-on-one with teachers on the phone with modified character analysis and abbreviated assignment.
- Students working at an accelerated pace can complete the character analysis bio and backstory for multiple characters from a variety of plays and complete the tasks for each.

Unplugged Supplies: Lesson checklist, Journal, printed PowerPoint slides, and/or copy of lecture notes, assignment handout, copy of assignment rubric.

Engaging Families

Materials included to support unplugged learners: Lesson checklist, Journal, printed PowerPoint slides, copy of lecture notes, assignment handout, copy of assignment rubric

Optional materials to support learning:

[Theatre & Film: High School: Videos: Extended Physical Warm-ups](#)

[School Theatre: Acting Resources](#)



Character Analysis and Given Circumstances Checklist

Part 1:

- 1. Participate in the Actor Warm-ups.
- 2. Record reflections about the activity in your journal.

Part 2:




- 3. Read, watch, or listen to the information about using the given circumstances of a play
- 4. Engage in a group character analysis questionnaire or one based on yourself
- 5. Create a bio or backstory for the group/self character

Part 3:

- 6. Select a new character from a play.
- 7. Complete the character analysis questionnaire using the given circumstances in the text.
- 8. Write the bio or backstory for your new character.
- 9. Complete the CREATE assignment.
- 10. Complete the PERFORM assignment.
- 11. Complete the RESPOND assignment.
- 12. Complete the CONNECT assignment.
- 13. Submit your original character analysis and bio/backstory to the teacher.



Character Analysis and Given Circumstances Printout

 <h2>Character Development</h2> <p>Character Analysis and Given Circumstances</p>	 <h2>Character</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of Aristotle's six components of theatre • character refers to the human beings represented in the play. • Aristotle stresses that the central aim of theatre is not to depict human personalities, but rather to represent human action. 	<h2>Character Enhances the Plot</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character is second in importance to Plot in Aristotle's hierarchical organization of these elements; representation of character should always enhance the written word. 												
<h3>How to Make Sure Acting Choices Reflect the Character in the Text</h3>	<p>It is crucial that the actions and the words spoken by the actor are reflective of the character's lives and context of the world of the written script.</p> <p>The actor must make concrete decisions about who the character is and what the character wants.</p>	<h3>GIVEN CIRCUMSTANCES</h3> <p>(The information in the script about the character) These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct description of the character by the playwright Statements made by the character Statements about the character made by others in the script 	<h3>Mining the Given Circumstances</h3> <p>Character Analysis</p> <p>In order to have clarity for who your character is and what your character wants you need to make some decisions.</p> <p>One place to start is with a quick character analysis questionnaire.</p> <p>Actors use these frequently to flesh out the unwritten aspects of who their character is.</p>											
<h3>Character Analysis Questionnaire</h3> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>What is your character's name?</td> <td>What is your character's age?</td> <td>What's your character's social position?</td> <td>Describe your character's physical appearance.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>What does your character like to do?</td> <td>What does your character like to wear?</td> <td>Describe a typical day for your character.</td> <td>Describe a dream your character has had.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Describe a secret your character has.</td> <td>What is your character's goal?</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	What is your character's name?	What is your character's age?	What's your character's social position?	Describe your character's physical appearance.	What does your character like to do?	What does your character like to wear?	Describe a typical day for your character.	Describe a dream your character has had.	Describe a secret your character has.	What is your character's goal?			<h3>Specificity is KEY</h3>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The influential Broadway actor and teacher Uta Hagen includes Specificity as one of the key elements of her acting technique. • The first step to achieving this is making detailed choices about the character. 	<h3>More Character Analysis</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some questions are aimed at getting answers that are not expressly mentioned in the text. • For these types of questions, the actor must use context clues from the script to make a choice about the character.
What is your character's name?	What is your character's age?	What's your character's social position?	Describe your character's physical appearance.											
What does your character like to do?	What does your character like to wear?	Describe a typical day for your character.	Describe a dream your character has had.											
Describe a secret your character has.	What is your character's goal?													
<h3>More Detailed Questions</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were your parents like? • Do you have any brothers or sisters? How many older? How many younger? • What is your favorite childhood memory? • What is your worst childhood memory? • What is/was your relationship with your family like? • Are you now a member of any clubs, organizations, or religious congregations? • What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? • What kind of music do you enjoy listening to? • What do you do for exercise? • What is your best feature? • What is your greatest fear? • What type of clothing do you most like to wear? • What are your favorite TV programs? • Are you happy with your social position? • What do you feel the future holds? • Describe your personality. • Pet Peeves: What are some things that annoy or bother you? • If you were an animal, what would you be and why? 	<h3>More Detailed Questions</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were your parents like? • Do you have any brothers or sisters? How many older? How many younger? • What is your favorite childhood memory? • What is your worst childhood memory? • What is/was your relationship with your family like? • Are you now a member of any clubs, organizations, or religious congregations? • What do you enjoy doing most in your free time? • What kind of music do you enjoy listening to? • What do you do for exercise? • What is your best feature? • What is your greatest fear? • What type of clothing do you most like to wear? • What are your favorite TV programs? • Are you happy with your social position? • What do you feel the future holds? • Describe your personality. • Pet Peeves: What are some things that annoy or bother you? • If you were an animal, what would you be and why? 	<h3>Unique & Personal</h3> <p>It is recommended that you don't write the biography from the perspective of an omniscient third-person narrator. Consider developing the character's backstory and biography from the perspective of the character. Make the character's history autobiographical. Write the backstory in first person as the character.</p>												

Abbreviated Character Analysis Questions: Character Analysis Questionnaire

- What is your character's name?
- What is your character's age?
- What is your character's social position?
- Describe your character's physical appearance.
- Where does your character live?
- What does your character like to do?
- Name one thing that would make your character angry.
- Describe a typical day for your character.
- Describe a dream your character has had.
- Pretend your character has a secret. What is it? Why is it a secret?
- What is your character's goal?

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Extended Character Analysis Questions

The question set below for character analysis is just one of many. Start by asking these questions and making some basic decisions about who the characters are:

- What is your full name?
- What were your parents like?
- Do you have any brothers or sisters? How many older? How many younger?
- What is your favorite childhood memory?
- What is your worst childhood memory?
- What is/was your relationship with your family like?
- Are you now a member of many clubs, organizations, or religious congregations?
- What do you enjoy doing most in your free time?
- What kind of music do you enjoy listening to?
- What do you do for exercise?
- What is your best feature?
- What is your greatest fear?
- What type of clothing do you most like to wear?
- What are your favorite TV programs?
- Are you happy with your social position?
- What do you feel the future holds?
- Describe your personality.
- Pet Peeves: What are some things that annoy or bother you?
- If you were an animal, what would you be and why?

Student Assignment Handout:

	Create	Perform	Respond	Connect
Acting	<p>Choose a character from a play. Fill out the character analysis. For the questions that do not have answers easily found in the text, use context clues.</p> <p>Based on your character analysis and guidepost journaling, begin to create ideas for a series of TikToks, short video,s or Instagram posts as this character. What would their social media life look like? You can set this in the current day or the world of their play. Suspend your disbelief and make their world come to life!</p>	<p>After you have planned out your TikToks, videos or, Instagrams....CREATE! You can submit your posts via Schoology (assignment PERFORM) or by tagging the teacher on TikTok/Instagram, or other approved form of social media @teachername or emailing to teacheremail@schoolna.me.k12.ga.us</p> <p>If you are not on social media- it is NOT required for this project. Choose</p>	<p>In the school's discussion board- The teacher will send links and info to find your peers' projects. Using the critique guidelines, create a critique of their performance in the style of a newspaper critique or a video response.</p> <p>Submit this assignment in the school's digital platform (assignment RESPOND) or by tagging me on</p>	<p>Theatre is about more than just the performers, directors, and designers. It is about the impact on the world and how we influence and affect an audience. Imagine you are someone who attended a production of your chosen play. How did the performance change their perspective in the world? Write a blog post or record a</p>

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	Submit this assignment in the school's digital platform under CREATE with a brief outline of which project you will be choosing and creating.	the video/photo or we can create another alternative for you to complete the assignment.	TikTok/Instagram or other approved form of social media @teachernameor emailing	vlog as if you are an audience member who just left this production. Submit this assignment in the school's digital platform (assignment CONNECT)
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Peer Critique Guide

Acting I	Unit: 1	Peer Critique
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Peer Critique for use in RESPOND

Answer the following based on peer observations:

1. What was attempted by the performer? Be specific. Cite examples and explain your response.
2. How well did the performer achieve the goal?
3. Did the performer have beats and objectives? Cite examples and explain your response.
4. How well were they used to achieve the character goal? Cite examples and explain your response.
5. Was the character evident? Cite examples and explain your response.
6. Was the vocal quality in alignment with the character and character goals? Cite examples and explain your response.
7. Was the physical quality in alignment with the character and character goals Cite examples and explain your response?



8. What can the performer export improve performance in the future?

Rubric Copy

Character Analysis	Exceeds 20 pts	Masters 15 pts	Progressing 10 pts	Needs Improvement 5 pts	No Evidence 0 pts
Questionnaire and Bio	All character answers are clear, and the bio is complete. All character information is textually based.	Most character answers are clear, and the bio is complete. All character information is textually based.	Some character answers are clear, and the bio is complete. Most character information is textually based.	Some character answers are clear, and/or the bio is incomplete. Most character information is textually based.	None of the character answers are clear, and/or the bio is incomplete. The character information is not textually based.
Create	The social media plan is well laid out and reflects the character's given circumstances.	The social media plan reflects the character's given circumstances.	The social media plan is unclear, but the plan reflects the character	The social media plan is unclear and rarely reflects the given circumstances of the character.	No plan is provided.
Perform	Character-based vocal and physical choices are consistently believable; committed distinct character choices are appropriate to the text.	Character-based vocal and physical choices are frequently believable; committed character choices are evident.	Character-based physical and vocal choices are rarely believable.	Character-based physical and vocal choices are not evident or are rarely believable.	No Character Choices are evident.



Respond	The critical peer responses posted are all observant, informed, sensitive, demanding, and articulate.	The critical peer responses posted are mostly observant, informed, sensitive, demanding, and articulate with a very few exceptions.	The critical peer responses posted are often observant, informed, sensitive, demanding, and articulate, but certain categories are lacking throughout.	The critical peer responses posted are rarely observant, informed, sensitive, demanding, and articulate.	The critical peer responses posted are never observant, informed, sensitive, demanding, and articulate.
Connect	Audience Response is relevant and uses quality critiquing methods. No errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Formatting is correct.	Audience Response is relevant to the character. Few errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. An attempt was made in style. Few errors in formatting.	Audience Response is relevant to the character. Several errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. An attempt made in style. Few errors in formatting.	Audience Response is rarely relevant to the character. Careless errors, no proofing evident, some formatting errors/missing elements.	Riddled with errors or cannot read because of a lack of formatting interferes with comprehension.

