



Lesson #1

Five-day Residency on exploring your abilities

Handicap able-A theater troupe composed of physically and developmentally handicapped artists. The troupe would begin as a five-day workshop with a sharing of the work at the end of the five days. The hope would be that this five-day program could turn into a touring group that could perform throughout the school year

Each session is two hours a day for five days.

Goals of the troupe

To develop or strengthen self-confidence in the performers

To create an ensemble piece of theater

To develop a young person's ability and help that child discover their abilities

(Each day or session should last no more than two hours to allow the students/artists time to reflect on the things that have happened during each session. A recorder/observer should be present at every session to observe the progress of the group and to ask specific questions to the participants. Example: "How did this experience affect you as a person?" This will help better evaluate and plan for the future).

Day #1

The young people will brainstorm ideas and specific events in their lives that have affected them as a result of their disabilities. Together the students, with the artist, will brainstorm ideas and then begin to work together to role-play/act out/ recreate these events as they happen (according to the person that is telling the story). The students will reenact these scenarios using basic improvisation and creative dramatic exercises.

Day #2

During the second day, the students/artists will take the stories that they shared with the group during the last session and begin to put these ideas on their feet. Using the stories that they shared, the students will act each of them out again. But this time, the students will begin to look at these stories more critically. "What was it in these events that made the person uncomfortable or upset?" The point of this exercise is not to make the student/artist upset or distressed, instead the exercise is used to help the students/artist find similarities in each of their stories. More than likely, there are similarities in the stories. When the similarities are found, we as an ensemble can begin to create the beginnings of a story with a beginning, middle and end.

Day #3

The students will take the beginning of the story that they created in day #2 and continue to tweak and make the story cohesive and truthful.

*****If the students are able and willing an audience participation element can be added to the piece where a problem or conflict concerning a person's disability. The audience can come up with a way to solve a problem or at least a direct response to the problem that is raised. Example: Not being admitted to participate in a school activity because of a disability. If the audience participation aspect is not an option, the piece can still be affective with the students/artist individual stories.**

Day #4

The students will continue to rehearse their piece, as well as construct a simple background that is made up of simple cloth and perhaps some paint on the cloth. The background will simply have the name that the students/artists have chosen to call themselves.

Day #5

The students will rehearse their piece for a performance at the end of the session.