

CETA Wisdom Swap

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ENSEMBLE BUILDING

Paper Bag Monologues

Kathleen Switzer - Katswitzer@gmail.com

Grade Level: High School

Step One: Fill paper lunch sacks with random objects that have a good variety of textures, sizes, shapes. One object per bag. Things like cotton balls, aluminum foil, etc

Step Two: Each student takes one bag and puts hand in it but does not look inside.

Step Three: based on what they feel, they create a character.

Step Four: all students go on stage and mingle as their characters to continue to flush out who they are

Step Five: students spend a few days writing a monologue based on their character. You can go back to the improvised mingling anytime you think they might need additional inspiration.

Step Six: students rehearse and perform monologues.

I use this as an early assignment in my advanced class. It allows them to do a little ensemble building because of the improv sessions, but also requires a good amount of buy-in and individual work. It's a great way to assess their commitment level.

Our Wonderful Year Takes Flight!

Sara Blair - sblair@tustin.k12.ca.us

Grade Level: Middle/High School

Part One:

1. Give each student a blank sheet of paper. Ask them to write down a favorite memory from the year. It can be from class, rehearsals, or shows. It could be a performance, something funny that happened, anything memorable. It should be brief and not take the entire space on the paper.

2. Have the kids make the paper into a paper airplane. You can ask someone in the class to demonstrate how to make a simple plane.
3. When everyone is finished, have them stand, count to three, and throw their planes at the same time.
4. Students should pick up someone else's plane and read the memory. They should then add another memory to the plane and refold it. Have the students get up, count to three, and throw it again. Repeat if time allows so there are a total of three memories on each plane.

Part Two:

1. Have the students get in groups of 4-5 with the airplane that they ended with (it shouldn't be their own).
2. Students will decide in their groups which one of the memories from their planes they will recreate for the class. Give them 15-20 minutes to practice, then have them perform.

Suggestions: Nobody can play themselves, no "making fun" of someone else, be creative (ex: students can play the scenery), don't use scripts-just improvise.

Teachers: Gather the planes at the end and read them! You will be surprised by what they remembered and found special. It will warm your heart! It can also help guide your instruction for future classes by learning what had the biggest impact on your students.

Fancy Feet

Jessica Volpi - jessicacarmavolpi@gmail.com

Grade Level: n/a

First, have the students find a partner. Once, everyone has a partner give them 30 seconds to make a handshake specific to their relationship.

Then have them walk around the space. Do not call the cue "Handshake" until they are all silent. This is key to setting up the game for success.

Next, have them find a new partner and tell them to create a fancy feet foot shake with this partner.

Then have them walk around the space. Do not call the cue "Handshake" until they are all silent. Then call "Fancy Feet" and "Handshake" cues alternating.

Finally, have them find another new partner and tell them to create a "total body hello." When explaining this give examples like dancing moves, high five, or mirroring each other.

Once all three cues have been learned, alternate calling them. Once you have called the cues many times, have the students get into a standing circle and ask if anyone would like to share their handshake, fancy feet, or total body hello.

Fairytale Mimes

Mackenzie Scott -

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Grade Level: High School

Mime Unit: Students will get into groups of 3-5

As a class we review the Actor's Toolbox, Voice, Body, and Mind and then ask what happens when we take away voice, and have to physically story tell (clear beginning, middle, and end)

They are given 10 minutes to talk and collaborate. I hand out random disney movies and fairytales (Finding Nemo, 3 Little Pigs, Sleeping Beauty, Princess and the Pea...)They must be involved in all areas of the scene (floor, wall, anything)

No props, no talking in performance...

The rest of the class must guess what story they have mimed...

A great lesson in mugging, tableaux, physicality, ensemble work, and storytelling.

Stage Direction Battleship

Meghan Curr-Natale -

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Grade Level: Middle School

Google Drive Link: https://drive.google.com/open?id=17oZb_bubEuzcQ0prmxL1jd26EFAXj_4l

Collaboration Evaluation

Amy Caston - acaston@egusd.net

Grade Level: n/a

At the end of any group project, I have all students complete a "collaboration evaluation." This is a quick form designed to prompt reflection on their group's collaborative process, and their individual contribution to it. I also use the information they share (along with my own observations) to determine each student's rehearsal/collaboration score for the assignment.

Students are asked score themselves and each group member 1-5 for each of the following qualities:

- * Contributing ideas to the group
- * Staying on task and in the group's work area
- * Learning their part, and performing it well onstage
- * Demonstrating a positive attitude

I used to have this as a short form for them to complete on paper. I have since switched to a Google Form, which you can see here: [LINK](#).

Mini Musical

Renee Fegan - reneefegan@gmail.com

Grade Level: High School

Musical Theatre Students create a mini musical based on a theme (eg. For October the theme was "Spooky"). They select three songs as a group. My students are in a group of nine. They then write a script that incorporates the three songs and meets the requirements of the theme. Script must be in script format. They divvy up roles and singing parts (solos, duets, group number), block, choreograph, rehearse and then perform when ready/at deadline.

Daily Physical Warm Up/Pass the Clap

David Yick Koppel -

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Grade Level: High School

Students gather on stage in a circle. Teacher or student begins physical warm-up using steps listed below. Following warm-up, students pass the clap in different directions or zip zap zop.

1. Yawn & stretch
2. Stretch to left, right and center.
3. Bend & stretch right elbow & right tricep & then left elbow & left tricep.
4. Place right hand on left ear & gently stretch head & neck to right shoulder. Then reverse with the right ear.
5. Interlock fingers and place hands behind the base of skull & gently stretch the back of neck.
6. Lunge with right leg. Step back. Lunge with left leg.
7. Loosen hips sponge bob style -"Bring it around town" clock & counterclockwise directions. Or, floss both directions with hips.
8. Reach above head with both arms parallel toward the sky. Pull stars from the sky and bring them down to you.
9. Freeze with hands above head & bend at waist & bend knees. Slowly bend over vertebrae by vertebrae.
10. Bob head up & down & sway arms like rag doll from lower back to loosen torso.
11. Slowly return to standing let head & neck be the last to come up.
12. Shake out right hand & arm in circle.vShake out left hand & arm in circle.
13. Shake out left leg & foot into a circle. Have your left foot go in a circle clockwise & counter to loosen ankle & try writing name in cursive with foot. Reverse with right foot & leg.
14. On count of 3 blow through lips & shake out entire body.
15. Do hokey pokey & turn self around.
16. That's what it's all about. Clap together.
17. Pass the clap or play zip zap zop.

Stretch and Meditate

Veronica Pulido -

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Grade Level: n/a

When teaching actors skills and new activities in the classroom/theater space. Have them stretch first and then meditate/focused breathing to help be in touch with their mind and bodies.

To Stretch- any 5-6 min practice that goes through most parts of the body.

To Meditate- FIRST, I recommend you do this yourself at home. Sit upright in a chair, flat feet spine upright, hands open to ceiling on lap. Do boxed breathing and focus on breath. I recommend the app Headspace for starters. You can even do this with your class!

Build a routine with your students to help them cope and manage the ongoing present state of mind they need for theater!

Create a Company

Lisa Ferreira - Dramateacher67@gmail.com

Grade Level: n/a

Have the students choose the name of a production company, create the logo, create the tagline, and then serve in all of the different roles within the organization. With guidance from you, let them produce a play from beginning to end. Everyone has to have a role in the play, but also a role outside of the play whether it be creating the lobby display, what will be served at concessions, how the tickets will be sold, what the posters will look like and where they will go, to all of the design elements of the play. Those students that are not excited about being in the play can get excited about doing something else to support it. If you teach a class that is not an elective, this is a good way to get everyone involved in the production in addition to introducing something that students might explore further as a potential career.

Paper Folding

Jason Contreras -

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Grade Level: n/a

With a partner, turn so you are back to back.

You will only need one piece of paper. One person dictates how to fold the paper as they fold it. The other one tries to copy the instructions without looking. Then after five or six folds, they compare. Then they debrief on what went wrong (or right), and switch the person giving the directions.

This builds speaking and listening skills as well as analyzing the language we use.

Stage Positions and Areas

Jason Contreras -

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Grade Level: Elementary/Middle/High School

Have students meet center stage. Then give out a stage area (Down left, up right center, etc.). Then the students will need to move quickly over to that location. Then give out a stage position (full front, 3/4 right, profile left, etc.)

Then after they self correct, shout out another! Careful, don't trip!

Drive Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1-wqWrW8nlhBC5FWbGducL14yXm4JVbSE>

30 Plays in 60 Minutes

Lissa Slay - LSlay@nmusd.us

Grade Level: Middle/High School

My guidelines for creating 30 Plays in 60 Minutes:

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/12MWeeBxXTWa0GpXrR-zfdNXb7LMvIKfcM5LDBR9Jh2g/sharing>

Remember that it is about writing the performance, NOT performing the writing! (Email me if you have questions)

Paper on the Back

Jason Contreras -

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Grade Level: n/a

Class activity that promotes everyone being a hero. First, a sheet of paper and have someone tape it to your back. Then return the favor. Then the entire class mingles and writes positive comments (not related to expensive clothes or superficial aspects) on the paper. Disclaimer: mechanical pencils hurt and Sharpies bleed.

Everyone needs at least ten positive comments written for them. Is there someone who only has two? Go be a hero. We need to learn to look out for each other. Not focus just on attention to ourselves.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Call and Response

Cassidy Jessup -

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Grade Level: n/a

How can you get your students back on task in a timely manner and still utilize theatre vocab? "Company!" After discussing with the students what it means to be a company (we work together to achieve a common goal!), introduce "Company!"

Teacher says, "Company!"

Students say, "Yes!"

Positive Cell Phone Block

Robin Edwards -

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Grade Level: n/a

Put up a numbered place for Cell phones in the classroom (such as a wall shoe caddy with numbers on it), if you can provide chargers in this area - EVEN BETTER! Take attendance daily by having the student either say "Here" or give the number of the pocket they place their cell phone in.

DO THIS ON DAY #1 explain if they put their cell phones there daily, they will get 1 (or however many you choose to do) extra credit point per day. By the end of the semester, they may get up to 80-90 Extra Credit points. I give them double points the day after I get back from an absence (CETA Conference, EdTA Conference, Being Sick). Over the last 8 years of doing this, I have collected enough data to prove to them that the students who volunteered to place their cell phones away ended up with higher grades. Keep a column in your grade book SOLELY dedicated to this purpose (and if the parents can see it, even better). Do this during attendance taking time so you can figure out who is present, absent, and who gets daily extra credit.

DO NOT MAKE PUTTING THE CELL PHONE AWAY DURING A CLASS A NEGATIVE! You will not win the battle for their attention, Remember your Legally Blonde DN Song - KEEP IT POSITIVE!!!

Improv-mpts!

Martin Rodriguez -

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Grade Level: Middle/High School

At the start of class, I have a word on the board. That is the student's improvisation prompt. They have 5-7 minutes to get with a partner, group, or solo it- to create an improvised scene.

DURING this time, I take ATTENDANCE. The students know every day that they have this so it gives me time to take attendance while they are quickly working.

After my attendance is done (or mostly done), depending on what the plan for the day is, I will have groups perform for one another or take volunteer groups to perform for the class.

This is also a PARTICIPATION check for the day too!

If You Hear My Voice Take a Deep Breath

Veronica Pulido -

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Grade Level: n/a

Whenever the class is rowdy and I'm trying to get everyone's attention. I say "If you hear my voice take a deep breath!" and then I listen. If I keep hearing chatter I repeat the same thing until I have their attention. This strategy helps students give their attention to me, be centered and present with me. It helps in a chaotic theater classroom/space!

ACTIVITIES/LESSONS

Learn About Sets

Danni Davidson -

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Grade Level: Elementary (3rd-6th grad)

Google Drive Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=10QITqfDMAYCqDzN3hyNCDQFhwW4y70w2>

Cause and Consequences of a Character's Action

Danni Davidson -

Mrs.davidson101@gmail.com

Grade: Elementary

Google Drive Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1QuWEegfMGC6xI35kFs522-1RU-zp26ha>

Why I Love My White Shoes

Danni Davidson -

Mrs.davidson101@gmail.com

Grade: Elementary (Kinder)

Google Drive Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1oP0ECZFwY2sMSE2ZSezAwEqifsbTkfs5>

Chicka, Chicka, Boom, Boom

Danni Davidson -

Mrs.davidson101@gmail.com

Grade: Elementary (Kinder)

Google Drive Link: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1zNaf7qSpPBCQ9kQMz_5Jv5lhBBFbydL4

PRG Theatre

Martin Rodriguez -

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Grade Level: Middle/High School

Take an RPG, such as "Alice is Missing", "Fiasco", "10 Candles", "The Heist", or any RPG you may own and use it as an improvisation activity. After practice, use these as a storytelling unit and have students who type up what

happens during the RPGs as scripts. Now take those scripts and rehearse and perform them. We take one form of storytelling and turn it into a differentiated theatre performance.

Hunter House Fundraiser

Bryan, Ringsted - bringsted@ndsj.org

Grade Level: High School

- 1) Start with tech. Have each designer create their own "room" in a haunted house around a theme.
- 2) Once 3D models are created, have the designers summarize 3 "scares" in their rooms. These are the tools your playwrights can use to create the story
- 3) Have student playwrights create 1-3 guided walkthroughs (you often can have 2 groups in at once, and I always did 3 scripts to maximize value for patrons if they wanted to see all 3...and buy more tickets \$\$\$)
- 4) Get a student director and AD, have auditions, cast, and run the week of Halloween.
- 5) Profit.

I have dozens of pages on this I'm happy to share, but it's WAY more than 300 words.

Building Our Stage Knowledge

Rebecca Long - Rebecca-Long@scusd.edu

Grade Level: Middle School

At the beginning of each year it is important to introduce a common language when referring to the parts of the stage and stage directions. To assist my students in cementing this knowledge, I have them build stage models and label the parts. (Takes 6 class periods in total)

Step 1: Split students into groups of 3-4 (any bigger and there's not enough work to do.)

Step 2: Take them into the theatre and provide a graphic depiction of a stage and its parts: (proscenium, main curtain, legs, borders, valance, scrim, etc.) Point out these elements that exist in our theatre. (1 class period)

Step 3: Mask out a grid of 9 on the floor and have kids practice in small groups running to the correct square when the Director calls out location. Example: Downstage Right! 3,2,1..Upstage Left. Note: I always remind kids to never walk backwards when going to a location as that should always be rehearsed. Turn and go. (1 class period)

Step 4: Students then get a medium sized cardboard box, construction paper, scissors and glue. Then I give them a print out of the labels and they work together to build a replica of the stage. Students may also bring extra materials from home-fabric, popsicle sticks etc. (Approx. 3 class periods)

Step 5: Students present their models to the class. Each person in the group describes a different part and a success or complication they experienced. (1 Class period)

Silent Movies (Building Mime Technique)

David Yick-Koppel -

dyickkoppel@fusdk12.net

Grade Level: High School

Google Drive Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1JWMqt71ACjVRF-4g1j7vPizDWf4MYfdI>

Bring the Drama BackJason Contreras - jeramsey1@hotmail.com

Grade Level: High School

When it's hard to get students to engage you have to become very creative. Have them write down different items like people, animals, feelings then have them take turns. The person whose turn is given an object from the prop room and then given one of the things to act out. They use the prop in as many ways to act it out.

Job Interview

David Yick-Koppel -

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Grade Level: High School

Students practice playing actions & using a variety of tactics in the context of a job interview with an HR Director whose objective is to hire the best potential employee and the interviewee whose objective is to get hired.

Student Created RubricShaun, klaseus - Shaunklaseus@gmail.com

Grade Level: High School

Have students work with a partner to come up with 5 areas that could be assessed on an assessment. Have all pairs write the areas on the white board. Then have the class decide on 5 areas to use on a rubric. With their partner they define what a 4 would look like, a 3, a 2, and 1 in each area.

This can also be used as a formative assessment.

Partner PoemsAmy Caston - amylynncaston@hotmail.com

Grade Level: Middle/High School

A performance project I assign that always brings great results:

Students choose from a selection of poem scripts that have been divided into 2 roles. They stage, rehearse, and perform their partner poem.

Shel Silverstein's poems were the original inspiration for this project, specifically: One, Two; MeeHoow with an Exactlywatt; Mirror, Mirror; Complainin' Jack; Crocodile's Toothache; Sleeping Sardines; Us; Zebra Question; and others formatted here:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1OXF1qU4NexHSSLz0AQinZusTsiAINEyP?usp=sharing>

Also check out Joyful Noise: Poems for Two Voices by Paul Fleischman

Multiplication Songs

Robert Singer -

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Grade Level: Elementary

Threes Tables to the tune of Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Fours Tables to Itsy, Betsy Spider

Six Tables to Twinkle Little Star

Sevens Tables to If Your Happy and You Know It

Eight Tables to Sound Off

Nines Tables to Glory Hallelujah

Stage Directions Tic-Tac-Toe

Peter Parish - pparish@tamdistrict.org

Grade Level: Any

A classic to get groups of students familiar and habitual with stage directions. Show and explain the grid of stage areas (SR, C, SL, UpSL, UpC, UpSR, DownSL, DownC, DownSR) in the room or field or parking lot.

Have a round or two or three with you calling out the stage directions and having teams of 3 or individuals move to those areas as fast as they can.

Get a Pair of students to play Tic Tac Toe with other members of the group being the "Xs" and "Os" and standing in the stage area that is called out.

These rounds go pretty quickly - could be a quick segue game, or a project to turn the game into a scene (and intro to "motivation"). Instead of moving because someone called out the move, find a reason to enter the scene and go to that stage area (and why would you be holding your arms in an X or O position?)

That's actually two games...you can see how to manipulate games to turn into improv scenes!

Critiques - PAIRPo

Jason Contreras -

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Grade Level: Any

Projection, articulation, inflection, rate, and poise. Those are the central components to all performance critiques generated by the class audience for all formal performances.

It is a scale of 1-5, but added to each critique are:

1. Please list two positive comments about WHY their performance was good, funny, sad, or its overall effect. (This keeps the comments from being things like "It's funny. It was good)."

This is central to aesthetic valuing.

2. Write one way the performer could improve upon their work. (Give examples of things they could do to improve, rather than "I couldn't hear you.")

We use this throughout the year and add Duo for duet effectiveness, PLO for plot development. Gro for group work effectiveness. And Blo for blocking. These are used and added depending on the performance.

Theater Subscription Service for your School

Thomas Schultheis -

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Grade Level: Any

A theatre subscription service allows students, family, friends, alumni, and the community to purchase tickets to a variety of theatre productions. With a subscription plan for your school's theatrical season, one can build loyalty within your community and create a steady stream of funds for your program.

Benefits offered can include:

Cast Talk Backs

Complimentary or discounted concessions

Discounted tickets

No-fee ticket exchanges

Pre-show receptions

Seating preferences

Theatre tours

Additionally, there are several online platforms that help with this service.

Theatre subscriptions can encourage everyone to continue to stay connected with your program long after their direct involvement has changed. A subscription service can be a valuable asset to any school. It can help to make theatre more accessible to students & community, increase exposure to the arts, and provide educational opportunities.

REHEARSAL AND PRODUCTION

Shakespeare in the Quad

Michelle, Campbell -

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Grade Level: Any

Shakespeare in the Quad is a collaborative production involving three area middle school Theatre programs. Rehearsals happen at our separate sites and on a Friday in Spring, near Shakespeare's birthday, actors from the three schools come together to perform one of Shakespeare's plays as a "puzzle play".

Each school rehearses 1/3 of the play on their own. The day of the show we come together a couple hours before showtime for theatre games, a "tips and tails" run through, and a costumes/props orientation. (Students perform in all black. Colored sashes, hats, and simple props help the audience to understand who characters are through the play even though different actors are playing the parts.) When possible we add in Elizabethan dance or live music.

In the tradition of "Shakespeare in the Park," our theatrical production is staged outdoors in the quad, entertaining audiences while they enjoy a picnic dinner.

Script Read Around

Swann, Amanda - aswannie@aol.com

Grade Level: Any

An ensemble approach to reading through and meeting a script:

Cast or class sits in a circle each with their own script. One student or teacher reads all stage directions. The script read around commences with each new line read aloud by the very next student in the circle, not dependent on character.

Pace, understanding and engagement are all increased. Ensemble is being built.

This approach can work for a pre-audition read through or the first read through after a show is cast.

Getting Into Character

Jason Contreras -

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Grade Level: Any

After warm ups, each actor is to choose a master gesture as if they could only use this one gesture for the rest of their life, how would it look? Then if a statue was made of your character, what would it look like? Finally, choose a line that your character says and walk around the stage saying it to other actors, while reacting to their line as well. Actors should be in close proximity to one another, and they should not break character.

TECH THEATRE

'How To' Student Made Tech Reference Videos

Nicole parsons - Parsons.nicole@tUSD.org

Grade Level: n/a

Google Drive Link: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1MYbL8pDez0bYORwN4zbzOMI3Wa-RSXzqM1TmRbeADvs>

Script Analysis

Michelle, Campbell -

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Grade Level: n/a

Students read the script for the fall production(s). They are put in groups based on the scene they are interested in analyzing and creating a design for. We typically spend one week creating the slides, another few days making shoe box diorama sets, and then a couple days presenting. Here are the basics:

Read the script through once just to get a feel for it. Be sure to listen to any guide vocals or other music to get a full sense of the production. For your second read, start visualizing how this might look on our stage. What colors do you imagine? Write out a short summary and create a mood board with a color palette. Be sure to cite your sources of inspiration. For your third read and beyond, start annotating your script. Mark stage directions or dialogue that point out necessary technical elements (lighting, sound, hair/makeup, costumes, props, and sets). Be sure to mark any vocabulary you aren't sure about.

Do the following for your assigned scene/song. Summary, mood board, color palette, lists, cue sheets, light plots, designs (photos/drawings) should be on a Google Slides. Be sure to include a Works Cited Slide and to cite URLs for images. Keep track of who does which parts. Prepare a presentation for the class.

One Object, One Light, One Minute

Peter, Parish -

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Grade Level: n/a

Students are given 15 minutes to choose an object from the space, or perhaps an object from the scene shop or props room. They are also to choose a single lighting instrument within this time and determine where to place the lighting instrument in relation to the object - how to light that single object with the single light. The lighting instrument can be any of the available instruments in the space - a wash, a profile, a birdie, an LED.

Once all have chosen their object and light, as a group they must focus and patch the instruments into the control board - this may take some time, depending on your technical arrangement.

Students are then given time to write down a cue sheet that will be programmed into the board. Within a one-minute timespan, how do they want the lighting instrument to operate? Fade in over 10 seconds? Pulse with increasing intensity over 20 seconds? Flash brilliantly, then fade over 30 seconds? One minute is a long time on stage - what story can the students tell about that single object with a single light and a number of cues?

***Lighting instruments CANNOT MOVE. All control of the lighting instrument can only come from the control board - no human intervention other than pressing the GO button. Cues can be "follows" or can be cued manually.
