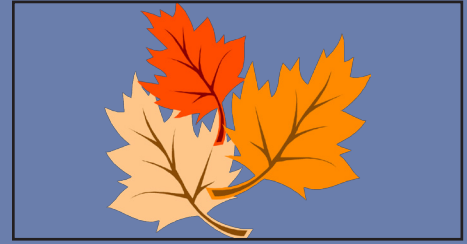


ABCDE FOCUS

Fall 2015 Newsletter



President's Message...

WOW!! It's the start of October already?!?! Where DOES the time go?

I hope everyone out there had a FABULOUS summer, doing all the things you love to do in the summer. I hope your summer included getting out to see some community, semi-pro, and professional theatre! Maybe you were even IN a show!

If you saw something great, or were in something great, drop a note to our amazing editor, Christine, and then read about yourself in the next newsletter!

Do you travel with students? Send us a report about that, too! Where do you go? What do you see? These trips we plan help to knit the fabric of our drama departments together, and if we share the things we are doing, we share the wealth with other drama teachers who might be thinking about doing a trip, but are not sure where to start or where to go!

I am taking off with fellow executive members Linda Beavan and Ryan Grenier and 48 students to the Ashland, Oregon Shakespeare Festival Oct 6-10 and we are very excited! Stay tuned for the next newsletter to read all about our adventures.

Gordon Hamilton and I have been working through the summer to bring you the most excellent adventure of going "To The Moon And Back" for this year's ABCDE Conference. If you haven't visited the website to register yet, then what are you waiting for!? We have an excellent array of workshops to choose from and we are being hosted at the beautiful Simon Fraser University School for the Contemporary Arts. We want to see you ALL there on October 23 and 24th. It's been WAY too long since we got together, don't you think?

As we approach the October AGM, please think about joining our executive team. We have a LOT of fun whilst providing great leadership and opportunities for our drama teaching colleagues. I will be stepping down as president after an eventful three years which included going on strike and following the developments of an entirely new curriculum. There are very interesting years ahead! Please consider bringing your voice and experience to the table in any of the positions we have on the executive: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Communications, and Members at Large. We have a number of portfolios including, but not limited to, Treasurer Apprenticeship, Membership Outreach, YouthWright, Festivals, Conference, and Curriculum Development. It has been a pleasure to serve as your humble leader, and I look forward to continuing my contributions as past-president for the next two years. Thank you for all the support you have shown me over the past three years. *Lana O'Brien*

ABCDE Executive

PRESIDENT

Lana O'Brien (SD #22)
lobrien@sd22.bc.ca

PAST PRESIDENT

Colin Plant (SD #63)
cplant@sd63.bc.ca

VICE PRESIDENT

Jon Polishak (SD #78)
jpolishak@sd78.bc.ca

TREASURER

Gordon Hamilton (SD #35)
ghamilton@sd35.bc.ca

SECRETARY

Katie Everson (SD #35)
keverson@sd35.bc.ca

COMMUNICATIONS

Christine Knight (SD #72)
Christine.Knight@sd72.bc.ca

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Linda Beaven (Retired)
lindanbeaven@gmail.com

Ryan Grenier (SD #23)
ryan.grenier@sd23.bc.ca

Heather Lytle (SD #54)
hlytle@sd54.bc.ca

YOUR NAME HERE?



Carihi Secondary School, Campbell River, BC
Legally Blonde

IMPROV for kids who don't like improv...

We all have students in our drama classes who are still shy about getting on stage, and that is especially true when it comes time to do improv. The unstructured nature of improv sometimes terrifies even the most outgoing theatre kid. This approach to improv has been a success in my classes.

I often start improv activities in partners, and play a bunch of games, with the kids all performing at once. Some of the activities are exercises meant to help them think fast and develop ideas, others are scene structures or improv games that allow them to work on developing a scene, making offers, advancing the story and just practicing improv.

The idea is for students to get used to improv type activities, but in a safer group setting first, and then eventually having students perform in front of the whole class, using the same activities.

Get everyone to pair up, and have them switch often. Many games will work. Here are a few suggestions:

This is My Ear:

The first player points to a body part and calls it something else...for example he might point to his ear, but says "this is my nose." Player two points to her nose and says "this is my knee." Player one points to his knee and says "this is my elbow." Etc. Go as fast as possible.

What Are You Doing?:

Player one does an action, like digging a hole. When player two asks "What are you doing?" player one will answer anything BUT digging a hole. They might say "I'm painting a picture." Player two then does the action of painting a picture, and when player one asks "What are you doing?" He/she will answer with another activity. No pausing to think in this game.

Fortunately, Unfortunately:

Two players tell a story. Player one always starts with "Fortunately," while Player two always starts with "Unfortunately." They still need to try to advance the story. E.g. Fortunately I got my dream job working at a newspaper office. Unfortunately, I had to start in the mailroom. Fortunately, I was really good at my job and got promoted quickly. Unfortunately it was a job assisting the mean boss. Fortunately, she took a liking to me right away. Unfortunately, that made the others very jealous. etc. Remind them not to block ideas or cancel offers.

Alphabet Scene:

Do a scene starting with a sentence that starts with an "A" word. Each successive sentence starts with the next letter in the alphabet. E.g. "Amazing weather we're having!" , "Best October on record!" "Can you believe it's only rained once?" "Did you see the weather forecast for next week?" "Everyone says there's going to be a tornado..." etc.

Questions Only:

Just what it sounds like. Only speak in questions. You still have to advance the scene. E.g. "Do you like my shoes?" - "Where did you get them?" - "You know that shop on Main street?" - "The one next to the drugstore?" - "Have you shopped there before?" - "Didn't you know my Mom owns it?" etc.

continued....



Claremont Secondary, Victoria, BC
GREASE and Ashgirl



Magee Secondary, Vancouver, BC
Spamalot!

Rockridge Secondary, West Vancouver, BC
You Are Here

SPOTLIGHT ON...OKM Theatre

At Okanagan Mission Secondary School in Kelowna a small wooden sign sat in the back of OKM's band room for years which read "OKM Needs a Theatre." It found its way into every production, from Footloose to 42nd street. It was there because hundreds of OKM students staff and the community truly believed that it was true. Years of painstaking groundwork were put in by students who aren't even around to enjoy the fruits of their labour. Through hard work and determination, their dream came true for future generations. In 2014, OKM opened their own 125 seat black box theatre complete with state of the art digital sound, LED lighting and safety cable grid.

For years at Okanagan Mission Secondary school, theatre artists and their director, Ryan Grenier, have prided themselves in putting up entertaining and professional performances. Most students involved in these performances have committed to after school programs, such as Triple Threat or Theatre Company. At OKM, regardless of your hectic busy schedule, if you want to get involved, they'll find a way. The theatre programs are in no way exclusive to just acting, singing, or dancing. In 2012, (with what was formerly the OKM FAME academy, now rebranded as Triple Threat Theatre Company) a cast of approximately 60, performed "VIVA" a full-length, student written musical. "VIVA" also involved other aspects of the school, such as the music department, who provided live music, and the art department, who assisted with the creation of sets. Since then, though they haven't created another original musical, those that they did put on were expertly executed, high quality, and more than enjoyable. Triple Threat performs one show a year. It's large scale, and there are often more than 50 people in the cast. Over the last few years, they've put on "42nd Street," "Beauty and the Beast," "Bye Bye Birdie," and coming this spring "The Pyjama Game:" a 1950's musical about a union dispute in Sleep-tite Pyjama Factory, which results in a forbidden love.

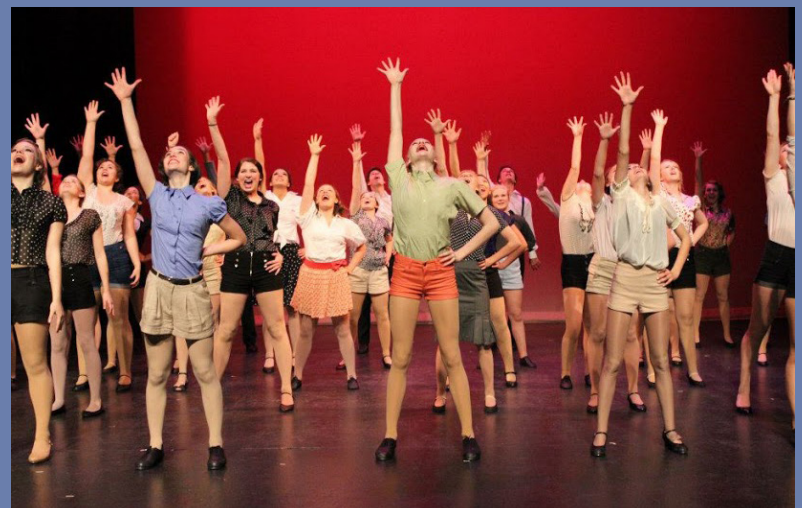
Often, students love performing, but don't feel comfortable singing and dancing. That is where the Mission Mainstage Theatre Company comes in. They perform strictly plays - a variety of comedy and drama, depending on the year. Last year, the Theatre Company opened the new theatre with a triumphant run of William Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet." Hundreds of people came out, to see the performance, as well as the new space. Over time, the company has put their heart into every genre imaginable, proving that they are a versatile group of young young professionals. Whether it be the thrilling classic, "Dracula," the twisted fairy tale "The Ash Girl," or the timeless "Around the World in 80 Days," Mission Mainstage Theatre Company has done it all. This fall the group is pairing with Seaton Secondary in Vernon for a trip to Ashland, Oregon for workshops and performances, and this coming winter they look forward to performing Oscar Wilde's quick-witted comedy "The Importance of Being Earnest."

Since the addition of a theatre, more opportunities have been created for behind the scenes work. In the past, shows were often performed in the Mary Irwin Theatre, which limited the work that could be done, as there was 1 day to set up and prepare. Now with the school's first Stagecraft classes, students are designing and building sets, sewing costumes, hanging and designing lighting, creating soundscapes, running audio, and more. The new theatre has lengthened the reach of OKM's theatre program, touching those with big and fantastic ideas who thought they could never be involved because they didn't dream of performing. It's created a greater sense of community, and a theatre program, facilitated by Mr. Grenier, that essentially is self-sufficient.

The OKM theatre community fearlessly bounds into another year of great characters, fascinating stories, and creativity. Above all, however, OKM has provided community where everyone is welcome, new friends are found, and family is created.

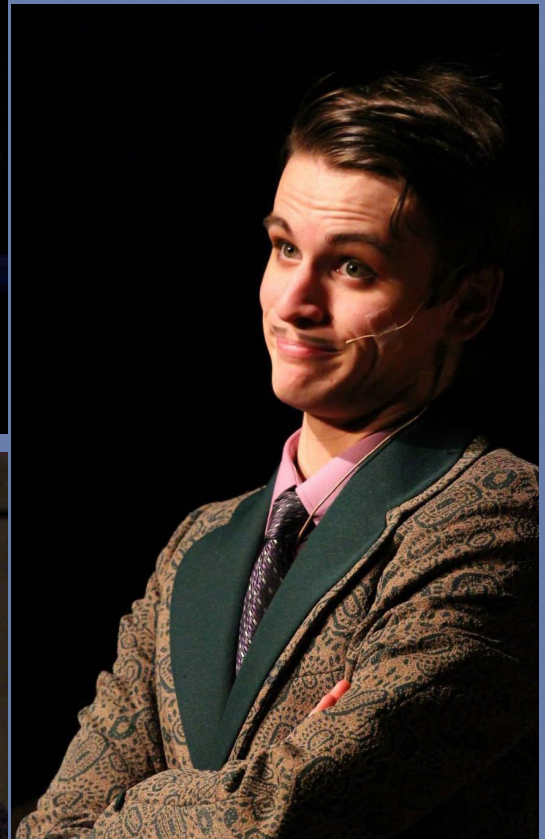
Emily Friesen, Grade 12 student, OKM

SPOTLIGHT ON...OKM Theatre



Highlights from several
OKM productions

Highland Secondary - Comox, B.C.
The Addams Family



Correliou Secondary School -
Quesnel, BC - Cinderella

Improv for kids who don't like improv...continued...

Scene Without_____:

Partners do a scene, but with different rules. For example a "scene without the letter E!" No words can have the letter E in them. Change it to whatever you want. "Scene without the letter S," "Scene without proper names," "Scene without the word THE." Super funny!

Hey, I Got You a Present!:

Great for practice advancing the scene. Partner one starts by saying "Hey, I got you a present!" and handing over a gift. The student should show the size and weight of the gift as they pass it to Partner two. Partner two opens the present and says what it is..."Thanks! I've always wanted a potsto masher" Partner one advances the scene further "I know. I thought it would be easier than using that old fork you make mashed potatoes with." From there they can continue the scene, adding more offers as they go.

There are many other improv games you can play in partners. Everyone in the class is engaged at the same time, and they have fun. The students learn the games, get to practice, and also build their confidence before doing scenes in front of the rest of the class.

Have fun!

Christine Knight ~ Carihi Secondary School



Become a member of the ABCDE... a PSA of the BCTF

#1 Do you want to join/subscribe to the ABCDE? Need to renew your membership? On-line registration can be found at <https://www.bctf.ca/psa/join.aspx>

#2 Do you prefer to print off the application and mail it in? Find a link to the form at www.bcdramateachers.com

#3 Join our moderated email list-serv and connect with other Drama practitioners! Share ideas, ask for help, post info about your shows. Almost anything Drama-related goes. Anyone can read our list-serv, but only members/subscribers can post (membership has its privileges). (*sometimes we will post FREE offers for teachers on behalf of non-members)

To join our list-serv:

Use the drop-down list to select "psa-abcde" (fortunately we are the first one in the list!). To post a message to our list-serv, please send an email to Colin Plant at colinplant@shaw.ca Our list-serv is moderated to avoid getting spammed.

Not sure of your membership status? Please contact the BCTF at 1-800-663-9163 and ask