

ABCDE FOCUS

Fall 2016 Newsletter



President's Report

A new school year brings with it the hope it will be an amazing year in our Drama classes. I have boundless optimism each September that is a result of rest over the summer, hoping that my classes are pleasant and that the journey will be the best one yet. I suspect most of us have similar feelings.

*This year in BC, the curriculum revision process continues. Hopefully by now you are aware of the new curriculum in the K-9 subject areas that are now adopted. This year we have new draft curriculum for grades 10-12. I cannot stress enough: **TEACHERS HAVE THE OPTION THIS YEAR TO TEACH THE OLD OR NEW CURRICULUM IN GRADES 10-12.** Next year it will become the new curriculum, but this is a trial year. You get to decide.*

*However, in the Drama subject area, not all the courses are ready for trial implementation. This is primarily a result of the province deciding, late last school year, that they would offer more than simply Drama 10, Drama 11 and Drama 12 for curriculum. That plan would have required ABCDE members to develop local courses to replace the myriad other courses we offer. Due to our lobbying they decided to include many more courses, but they have not yet been written. The list of courses for which curriculum will be developed can be found here:
<https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/curriculum/10-12#ae>*

You may notice that Musical Theatre 10, Stagecraft 10 and Drama 10: Company are missing. The ABCDE executive has written a letter to the ministry asking for these courses to be included in the curriculum-writing process. Thus far they have not committed to doing so, but we will continue to lobby on behalf of ABCDE members.

During this upcoming year the ABCDE wants to represent teachers as they provide feedback on the curriculum and ensure that the new curriculum meets the needs of our teachers and students. If you ever want to discuss this, please email me at colinplant@shaw.ca I will bring your concerns up to the executive, and any submission we make will take into account your comments. One can also write individually to the curriculum branch at curriculum@gov.bc.ca and offer feedback.

Changing topics: Our conference registration is now open and we hope you will join us in Kelowna on October 21st-22nd for "Know Your Roots", our two-day Pro-D conference. While some of you receive absolutely inadequate amounts of Pro-D funding to attend, I encourage you to see this as investment in yourself and your profession. You are worth it! Besides, it's a lot of fun and you'll meet new people and make new professional connections.

The ABCDE will recommend to the AGM that the ABCDE participate in the 100th anniversary "PSA SuperConference". This will be a multi-PSA large-scale conference held during the October Pro-D day in 2017. While it will be different than our usual October conference, the benefit of getting together with other teachers to celebrate 100 years of BCTF activities is appealing. The executive did discuss having an additional conference in February 2018, in order to have our PSA members get an opportunity to connect and focus more on Drama professional development.

This year at the Kelowna conference, during our AGM, we will have an election for our new executive. At this point all positions will be available to be filled, except the position of President which is a two-year elected position. That position will be voted for again in 2017. If you have interest in any of the executive roles, please contact me for additional information or to indicate you would like to serve on the executive. Your expenses of travelling to the meetings, and your food will be covered. We meet 4-5 times a year, usually on a Saturday.

Without trying to predict any executive changes, I would ask that you join me in thanking your entire volunteer executive for the service they provide to members.

It is an honour to serve as your President and I feel very fortunate to do so. Break a leg everybody!

Sincerely, ~ Colin Plant



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For Further Information:

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2015/2016

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Don't forget, the **ABCDE AGM** will be held at the October conference, on
Saturday, October 22nd.

Please plan on attending to vote for this year's executive, get important PSA
updates, and celebrate this year's award winning teachers.



Join us for another stellar season in 2016/17

Edward II

Christopher Marlowe
September 29-October 15, 2016
TELUS Theatre,
Chan Centre for the Performing Arts

Beckett 16

UBC Alumni
November 3-November 5, 2016
Frederic Wood Theatre

Love and Information

Caryl Churchill
January 19-February 4, 2017
Frederic Wood Theatre

Naked Cinema III

Tom Scholte
January 30, 31, 2017
Norm Theatre

Les Belles Soeurs

Michel Tremblay
March 16-April 1, 2017
Frederic Wood Theatre

NEW for next year: **special parking rates for season subscribers!** For more information about all our programs please visit our website:

UBCTHEATRE&FILM

theatrefilm.ubc.ca

UBC has set their season for next year, and as usual students are \$5 each with teachers & chaperones free. They are happy to organize an Introductory Workshop & Tour for both Acting and Design/Production students. Check out their website.

theatrefilm.ubc.ca

Mini Travel Diary - London - Like all Drama teachers' kids my girls have seen many shows! In fact my eight year old, Ruby, was "in" a show with me before I even knew I was pregnant. Nella, my baby five year old helped me direct, between naps, my first high-school musical at just seven days old! This summer, however, I had the chance to really show them something special. While visiting family in Europe we went to see Wicked in London. It was so awesome that I swear I spent the entire show watching them. The scope and power of the spectacle completely blew their minds. I got to see, in my own children's eyes,



the the light and sparkle that is the true magic of theatre. And it wasn't just the performance. It was the whole experience : the cool night air, the lights and sounds of the city, the fancy outfits, the preshow dinner, the buzz of the audience at the Apollo Theatre, the overpriced treats, and the glossy souvenir program. I will always remember that sleepy, giddy, late night double decker bus ride home- and I hope they will too.

Lisa Williams - Highland Secondary School, Comox, BC

Drama teacher life saver (or what to give to your TOC at the last minute!)

Buy the game Guesstures. It is like a user friendly version of charades that you can play, team versus team, in the first week of your drama classes and then have as a back up in case of TOC emergency.

It is available at places like Toys R Us. Instead of those playing the game coming up with movies, etc. the game provides you with cards and a timer that drops each card after a certain amount of time.

One person stands up in front and acts out the word on the card and their group has to guess each card. For every card the team guesses right they get points - 1 for the easier cards and 2 for the more difficult.

Here's a more detailed explanation:

1/ I get the class to line up in order of how comfortable they are playing charades - (or if they don't know what that is or how comfortable they are with the idea of miming or guessing what someone is miming.)

2/ I divide them into teams of about 5-6 , depending on the number of them who are uncomfortable and the amount of time we have. I count 1-2-3-4, 4-3-2-1 for teams to even them out. I often ask those at the "comfortable" end of the line to be team captains.

3/Each group has to come up with a team name. To encourage them to be creative with their team names I let them know I will rate them on creativity as a tie breaker if necessary.

4/ Each group has to come up with a set number of actors who will act the cards out to their group while the others guess. Depending on the amount of time I will do multiple rounds, often starting with 4 easy cards, then 3 easy, 1 difficult, then 2 easy 2 difficult, then 3 and 1. (If they are really good you could do all hard) I let them know ahead of time if they should save their more confident actors for the end when it gets harder. I have also said they could have 3 play and then decide who would like to go up a 2nd time.

I often offer some kind of prize , edible or otherwise, for the winning team. It helps allow those who are "too cool" to buy in with enthusiasm.

Sometimes the more shy students are REALLY good guessers too!

And best of all - if I end up with a sudden need for a TOC, it is a decently worthwhile way for the class to have a bit of fun and me not to stress.

Lori Mazey - Vanier Secondary School, Courtenay, BC



Lesson ideas - All kinds of quick start up activities



What DON'T I know? - Have students pair up, and take turns telling their partner what they DON'T know about them. E.g. "I don't know if you have any pets, I don't know where you live, I don't know your Mom's name, I don't know your favourite subject" etc. After the first person has told their partner a few things they don't know about them, the partner answers as many as they can remember. "I have a guinea pig named Henry, I live on Main street, My Mom's name is Debbie, my favourite subject is Drama...of course." Then they switch. After that, all partners switch.

Alien, Cow, Chicken - In a circle you must all look down and either come up as the Alien, Cow or Chicken until everyone in the group comes up all the same. (Alien is two antennae, chicken is hand as the wattle under your chin and cow is hand as udder on stomach)

Say Your Name - Everyone finds a spot to sit and close your eyes. One at a time everyone says their own name. If two people say their name at the same time you have to start again.

Name it - Name objects you see around the room as you walk around. Then say anything except what they actually are. Then name them one object behind what you have seen.

What Are You Doing? - In partners, one partner starts an action (maybe they are digging a hole.) Other partner asks "what are you doing?" First partner then says something other than what they are actually doing, like "I am brushing my teeth!" Second partner then starts the action of brushing their teeth, and so on.

Catch My Name - Whole class stands in a circle. One person starts and says to the person to their right, "Hi Christine, I am Jana." That person turns to the next person and says "Hi George, I'm Jana." "Hi Fred, I'm George." You go all the way around the circle until everyone has introduced themselves to the person to their right. Then mix up the circle, and introduce yourself to the SAME person as you did in the circle. Once you can do that, do two or three introductions at the same time.

Perfect Teeth - Stand in a circle. One person steps forward and assumes a physical character, then says a line. Everyone in the circle then copies that character and line, then everyone steps back and the next person takes a turn. Continue around the circle.



British Columbia
Teachers' Federation

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 colin-plant@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