

ABCDE FOCUS



FALL 2019

President's Message

In the sense that this is the time of year that feels so full of potential and excitement, I do indeed enjoy September. Welcome back everyone. I hope you are all excited for your upcoming school year, festivals, and productions. As they say in *The Greatest Showman*, "A million dreams for the world we're gonna make."

We all know that there is also a lot of work ahead of us in these coming months. Your ABCDE executive is already hitting the ground running (and in some cases have been working all summer). We are gearing up for this October's conference, BREAKING THROUGH! It certainly helps ease the load when you are connected with your fellow drama teachers and you can rely on this support network. There is no better way to connect than attending the conference. Please join us October 25-26. Our site is now live at abcde.ourconference.ca. Check out the exciting line up we have in store this year! We have lots of new and exciting stuff to offer.

In addition, we continue to work hard on other initiatives such as ABCDE Youthwright, Scholarships, Provincial Festival, Goodwill Shakespeare Festival, programming, and communicating with ministry on your behalf. Before we form a new executive at our AGM this October I would like to personally extend a heartfelt thank you to our amazing exec. It has been such a pleasure to work with you all: Christine Knight, Katie Everson, Gord Hamilton, Zelda Coertze, Lana O'Brien, Jennifer Ohlhauser, Ryan Grenier and Colin Plant. "Because I knew you, I have been changed for good!" ~ Wicked.

You probably know some other drama teachers that are working hard and making a difference! Consider nominating them for an award. There are three awards offered by the ABCDE and you can find more information on our website. It is important that we acknowledge people for their hard work.

"We start with stars in our eyes." ~ Dear Evan Hansen Hmmm... I'm feeling the musical vibe today!!

Whether your production year takes you back to medieval times, to the roaring 20s or to some other magical land, I wish you all the broken legs and ripped off faces the theatre can offer!!

Here's to a great year everyone,

Cheers,

Heather Lee

ABCDE President

Association of British Columbia Drama Educators
presents

2019 Drama Conference October 25-26

BREAKING THROUGH

SFU School for the Contemporary Arts
Vancouver, B.C.

for more information please contact
Gordon Hamilton at gghamilton@sd35.bc.ca or
Katie Everson at keverson@sd35.bc.ca

conference website: <https://abcde.ourconference.ca>



Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Center

180 West Georgia Street
Vancouver, BC

ABCDE Fall Conference 2019 Rates

Standard Queen at \$144.00 per room night
Two Doubles at \$154.00 per room night



*Cut off for the group block prior to check in date: September 24th, 2019

-Guests may call the Hotels directly or Central Reservations
-Guests must indicate reservation #1028869 and Event:
ABCDE Fall Conference upon room reservation
-Guests must quote Group Number 983566
Sandman Hotel Vancouver City Center at Tel. 604-681-2211
Central Reservations at 1-800-SANDMAN (726-3626)

ABCDE

Executive
2018/2019

PRESIDENT

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

PAST PRESIDENT

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

VICE PRESIDENT

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

TREASURER

Jenn Ohlhauser (SD #45)
johlhauser@wvschools.ca

SECRETARY

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

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

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

MEMBERS AT LARGE

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

Gord Hamilton (SD #35)
gghamilton@sd35.bc.ca

Zelda Coertze (SD #43)
zcoertze@sd43.bc.ca

SPOTLIGHT ON... FRANCES KELSEY SECONDARY, MILL BAY

Classes offered:

Drama 8-10

Acting 11-12

Stagecraft 10-12

Directing and scriptwriting

Musical Theatre

Last year, our productions included:

"car plays" as taught by Matthew Howe at the ABCDE conference- Acting 10-12

"All Shook Up" -Mainstage Musical

"12 Angry Men" - extra curricular

"Robert Munsch Stories" - Acting 10-12

Student directed 1 act and 10 minute plays

Upcoming for this school year are "Young Frankenstein" and probably an evening of 30 minute Shakespeare plays that tie into the English curriculum, among other projects. We're considering dinner theatre, too.

We have a 175 seat theatre in the school, which also serves as the drama classroom.

Teachers: Anna Roberts, Jordan Heath (Musical theatre)



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Haley Allen

High School Drama Program: Smithers Secondary School

Post Secondary Training: Capilano University, Musical Theatre

This summer the beautiful, talented and hard-working Haley Allen of Smithers, BC found herself living in the world of “Newsies” with Theatre Under The Stars Stage at Malkin Bowl in Stanley Park. She and her castmates received rave reviews for their work, under the direction of Julie Tomaino.



<https://www.straight.com/arts/1265476/theatre-under-stars-newsies-showcases-epic-and-impressive-dance-numbers>

<https://vancouversun.com/entertainment/local-arts/theatre-review-politics-by-disney-and-fabulous-dancing-in-newsies>

Haley was also awarded the “Aida Broadbent Award” for “professional conduct and performance” for her work in this production. This of course comes as no surprise to her former drama teacher! “I am incredibly proud of Haley and look forward to watching her rise, as she undoubtedly will! Keep an eye out for Haley on the big stages!” ~ Heather Lee



Haley is a shining personality, particularly skilled and experienced in teaching dance and choreography. Moreover, she is a brilliant actor, gymnast and musician. If you are looking for support for your drama program you may want to contact Haley haley.elyse.allen@gmail.com 778-210-1363.

What’s next for Haley? She will be touring Pier 21 throughout Western Canada with Canadiana Musical Theatre Company



Improv Scene Exercises:

Submitted by Heather Lee

We all have our favourites... and at times we are all looking for some new ideas! These are some of our 'go to' improv exercises.

Half Time

In groups of three begin an "In a ____, with a ____ scene". Once you have agreed on your fill in the blanks (ie. In a laundry mat with a secret door) each group will have exactly one minute to improv a complete scene with a who/where/conflict/stakes/resolution. At the end of one minute they all go back to their starting positions. They discuss any aspects of the scene they may have missed (ie no stakes involved). They repeat the same scene in 30 seconds (half the amount of time) and ensure that they tighten up the scene. After that they continue to repeat the scene in half the time (15 sec., 7.5 sec., 3.75 sec., 1.9 sec) until they are having to take out information and distill the scene to a couple of words and an action.

4 Corners

The class move their chairs to approximate equal numbers in each corner (ie 5 or 6 people in each corner). Each corner is designated a portion of a scene (who & where, conflict, stakes, resolution). One or two people from the who/where corner enters the center acting space and starts a scene. They may only establish who and where – no conflict. Someone from the conflict corner will enter the scene and introduce a conflict. Next someone from the stakes corner will enter and raise the stakes. Lastly someone from the resolution corner will enter and resolve the scene. They may return to a seat if they are no longer in the scene and need to exit. After the scene is completed they find a seat in a new corner.

New Idea

In groups of three, one person steps out and becomes the 'caller'. The caller gives the remaining two players a scene starter. Once the two players get the scene going the caller can interrupt at any time and request a new idea (they simply call "new idea"). Whatever was last offered in the scene must be repeated and changed. For example, if a player said "Let's take my dad's car to the beach" and the caller interrupts with "new idea", the player must back up and change that offer. They might say "let's take my dad's boat to the Bahamas". The caller can let this suggestion go ahead or can continue to call "new idea". It could run through several ideas such as "Let's take my mom's rocket to an unknown planet". "Let's take my scooter to the ice cream store". "Let's take my bob sled to school". Scenes take fun and interesting turns.

Pregnant Pauses

Two or three players enter the acting space and using an ask for they begin a scene. The catch is that any time someone in the scene speaks, no one else may speak for a full 5 seconds. They must fill this space as naturally as they can, justifying their pregnant pauses. Students generally discover the power of silence and the tension that can be built in using this technique.

Slide Show

One player, the 'guest', asks for an exotic location and then exits the playing space. A second player is the 'host' of a travel interview talk show. They will introduce the guest and begin to interview the 'guest' asking questions about their travels to the given exotic location. The guest will offer to share photos of their trip. A small group of 5 – 10 players then begin to create tableaus demonstrating the photos of the trip. There should be a balance of give and take between the tableau players and the guest. The guest will have to explain interesting actions in the photos at the same time as the tableau players will have to create the photos the guest suggests. Remind tableau players that they can be both objects/setting as well as beings in the photos. They should move swiftly between photos, without talking or planning, and then hold the tableaus still. There is much fun to be had with having to hold awkward tableaus and having to explain poses that are randomly created. The host is responsible for creating a beginning, middle, end to the scene and wrap up the interview.

Silent Scenes

One player enters the acting space and begins an action in a public space. Once another player is confident they know what the place is that has been created they may enter the space and exist in some way. For example, the first player might enter a classroom, sit at a desk and begin taking notes. The second player may enter and become the teacher and begin writing notes on the board. The catch is that the scene remains silent. They may not talk or even pretend / mime to talk to each other. However, they may interact silently (ie a principal may point to a student to go to the office, but they may not say anything. The student would then get up and exit with the principal). The scene carries on with people entering and exiting until it comes to a natural end. People may enter as more students, parents, a principal, a guest speaker, a fireman etc. Players are encouraged to pay attention to each other and go along with the flow of the scene. It is a good idea to discuss the scene at the end. Were they all imagining the same space? Did they all imagine the board on the same wall? Did they know who everyone was and why they were there? Did the scene have an arch (beginning, middle, end).

Entrances and Exits

Three or four players enter the playing space and each will have a different category for an ask for which will give them a cue word. For instance, one player may ask for a number, another for an animal, another for a colour, etc. Once each player chooses a word they begin a scene. At the beginning of the scene some players are on stage and others are off. Each time one of their cue words is spoken in the scene that player must enter (if they are off stage) or exit (if they are on stage). Each time they enter or exit they must justify their entrance or exit. They can have some fun with using the words either frequently or not at all. (ie a player may say they have to go to the bathroom but no one will say their cue word allowing them to leave the stage and use the bathroom. This player would then have to justify why they aren't leaving.) All the while they have to create a scene with an arch that comes to a natural end. Watch for someone's word to be said twice, in which case they will have to do a quick enter and exit.

~ Hopefully one or two of these is new and fun for you and your students!! Enjoy.

Last newsletter, Heather Lee shared many variations on Charades. Here's the last one!

Variation: Charade Circles

Divide the class into two groups. Each group chooses a person to start (ie person with the most cousins, person with largest feet, person with oldest living grandparent etc.) The starting person comes to the teacher and reads the first charade off a list (see 3 sample lists attached). They run back to their group to perform the charade. The groups guessing need to keep in mind that the other group is guessing the same charade so they won't want to call too loudly and give away an answer. Once a group guesses the next person in the circle, going around clockwise, runs to the teacher and names the last charade guessed. If the answer is correct the next charade is then revealed. The groups continue around and around the circle until one group reaches the end of a list.

	Everyday Activities:	Crimes(real and imaginary)	Places
1	Feeding the cat	Prank phone calls	Fire escape
2	Making a bed	Drunk driving	Rain forest
3	Listening to classical music	Blowing nose in public	Restaurant
4	Mailing a letter	Kidnapping	Racetrack
5	Unloading the dishwasher	Ugly tattoos	Computer lab
6	Buying a dress	Credit card fraud	Basement
7	Hanging a picture	Animal abuse	Laundry mat
8	Driving kids to school	Squeaky voice	Airplane cockpit
9	Making a P&J sandwich	Robbing a jewelry store	Barnyard
10	Stacking firewood	Bomb threats	Hospital ER
11	Installing blinds	Eating too much	Piano Recital
12	Teaching math	Enjoying math	Dressing Room
13	Roasting wieners	Name calling	Kitchen
14	Driving a bus	Burping	Pirate Ship
15	Playing with lego	Terrorism	Playground
16	Putting on clown makeup	Downloading movies	Parking Lot
17	Riding in a taxi	Plagiarism	Deserted Island
18	Playing badminton	Carrying a concealed gun	College Dorm Room
19	Making lasagna	Graffiti	Landfill
20	Applying for a job	Wearing socks in sandals	Graveyard
21	Buying milk	Shoplifting	Football Locker Room
22	Taking a driver's test	Drive by shooting	Movie Theatre
23	Mowing the lawn	Grand theft auto	Side of the Highway
24	Baking an apple pie	Loitering	Police Station
25	Teaching swimming lessons	Escaping prison	Fallout Bomb Shelter
26	Attending a funeral	Slouching	Bank Vault
27	Babysitting	Bad fashion sense	Greenhouse
28	Watching a scary movie	Talking too much	Furniture Store
29	Robbing a bank	Drug trafficking	Museum
30	Teaching kindergarten	Chewing too loud	Trunk of a Car



MTI Broadway Teachers Conference

~ submitted by Gord Hamilton

I had the amazing opportunity to participate in this conference this past summer. It was my first time and I had heard lots of other teachers talk about it but never had the opportunity to do this. It was the best professional development that I have experienced in a long time, (which may have something to do with usually organizing the annual fall conference and not participating.) I was able to attend this conference using my in-school pro-d funds, my remedy funds, and my district summer pro-d funds. I flew in a few days early and stayed a couple days after. The conference itself is a 3-day intensive workshop on Broadway that includes tickets to 4 shows with post-show cast discussions. It also includes 15 workshops and master classes to choose from to fill your 8 slots, with Broadway performers, creative teams, and production staff, and peer sessions throughout.

The Broadway Teachers Workshop is designed to inspire teachers and directors of middle school, high school and college theatre with new teaching methods, enhanced production skills and an exchange of ideas with peers and professional Broadway artists. In addition, there are four optional one-day intensive events (Tech, Music Direction, Choreography and Directing) that you can couple with your experience at the Broadway Teachers Workshop or take independently.

I was able to see Beetlejuice, Reborn, Aint Too Proud, Tootsie, The Prom, Harry Potter: The Cursed Child Part 1 & 2, and Moulin Rouge. There were drama teachers from all over the world as far as Europe, Japan, and New Zealand. Over the three days it was great to network and make connections and share what we all do in our programs.

Registration for 2020 opens in November with four different sessions to choose from:

Session A: July 6 - 8, 2020

Session B: July 9 - 11, 2020

Session C: July 13 - 15, 2020

Session D: July 16 - 18, 2020

Session E: July 20 - 22, 2020



For more information:

<https://www.broadwayteachinggroup.com/about-btw>

REUSING RECYCLING SHARING REPURPOSING - by Lori Mazey

These days it is becoming more and more common for professional theatre companies to pay attention to environmental responsibility during their theatre seasons. While materials from many shows do still end up in the trash bins, it is not a given. A few specific pieces are stored for future use, while some legendary shows are popular enough that they can auction off set pieces or costumes. Other companies are choosing to repurpose or recycle; literally hundreds of tons of steel, wood, fabric, carpet, and other materials are being re-used instead of ending up in landfills. Broadway's Peter and The Starcatcher is one example where the set was created from 100% recycled material.

For most school drama teachers, embracing the environmental movement in our own theatre departments is a completely natural fit. Having to stretch our budgets for as long as we can remember has led to great resourcefulness, putting us way ahead of the curve in the theatre world.

We have been repurposing costumes and set pieces, borrowing and loaning costumes, and combing through thrift stores and garage sales and re-stores since long before environmental responsibility became a trend on Broadway. One of the side effects is we often end up with particular costume pieces, props, or set pieces that make multiple appearances on the stage in a range of shows.

Do you have a set piece, prop, or costume that has an impressive show resume? Send your photos and descriptions to me at lori.mazey@sd71.bc.ca so they can get the recognition they are due in a future ABCDE newsletter!

I will get us started with just a few of the grizzled veterans of the theatre in School District 71.



The tables are 2 I saved from the junk pile at different times and spray painted black. They have been used for countless class restaurant scenes as well as for Softy, Cheque Please, Urinetown and Legally Blonde!?



Garbage cans -select theatre credits include: Little Shop of Horrors, Annie, Bye Bye Birdie, The Actor's Nightmare, The Zoo Story, Superheroes, West Side Story (2x) Grease and countless class park bench scenes

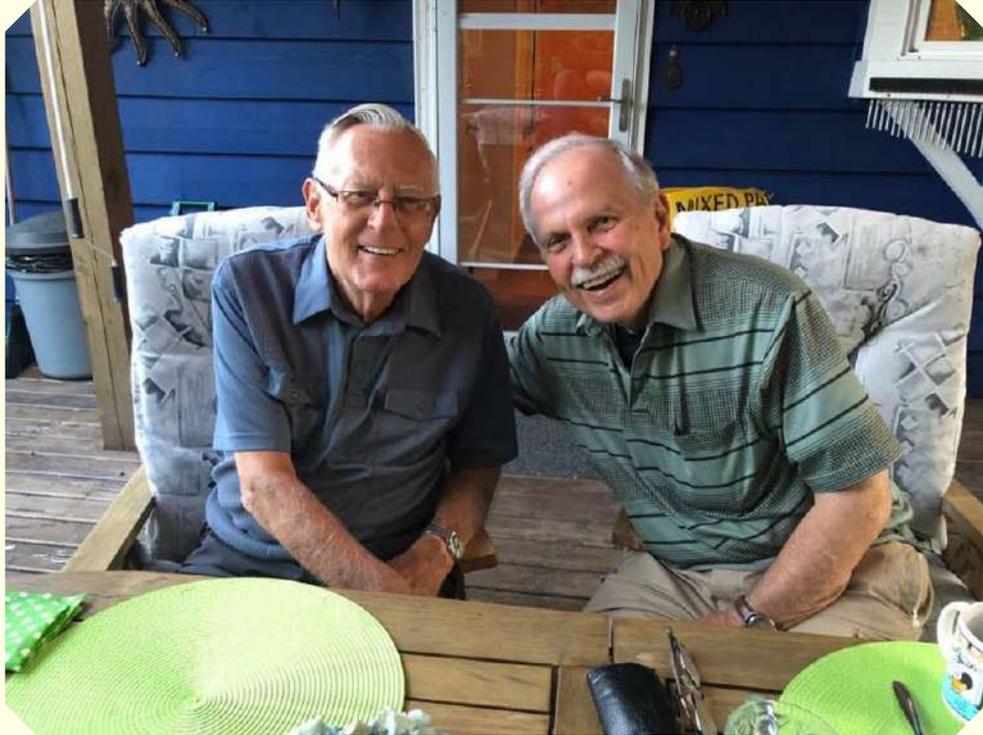


Benches - these are just 2 of a set. They come in 3 sizes - 4 of each size. They are simple but particularly well designed for sightlines and to be light enough for a smaller person to carry, but strong enough for several performers to stand on at once. In addition, they can be stacked to make more room backstage! Selected theatre credits include Footloose, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, and 3 Vancouver Island productions of Legally Blonde.



The wooden chairs!
Everyone has these!!!

CONGRATULATIONS!



THEATRE LOVE - The ABCDE would like to congratulate Robert Morgan and Larry Bauer on their 40th Anniversary. They met in 1979 at the Drama conference and have been together ever since. Another great reason to come to the conference! Who knows who you might meet?

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? Online 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 email Colin Plant at colinplant@shaw.ca