The Arts: Theatre

Comedy Tonight

High School Proficient

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
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This work references the Washington State Learning Standards in The Arts (http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/Standards/default.aspx).

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Introduction

To Washington educators who teach the arts:

Welcome to one of our OSPI-developed performance assessments and this implementation and scoring guide. This document is part of the Washington assessment system at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

The assessments have been developed by Washington State teachers and are designed to measure learning for selected components of the Washington State Learning Standards. They have been developed for students at the elementary and secondary levels. Teachers from across the state in small, medium, and large districts and in urban, suburban, and rural settings piloted these assessments in their classrooms. These assessments provide an opportunity for teachers to measure student skills; they can both help teachers determine if learning goals have been met, and influence how teachers organize their curricula. They also provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have gained.

These assessments:

- Provide immediate information to teachers regarding how well their students have acquired the expected knowledge and skills in their subject areas.
- Inform future teaching practices.
- Provide resources that enable students to participate in measuring their achievements as part of the learning experience.

Included in this document are:

- directions for administration
- assessment task
- scoring rubrics
- additional resources

Our hope is that this assessment will be used as an integral part of your instruction to advance our common goal of ensuring quality instruction for all students.

If you have questions about these assessments or suggestions for improvements, please contact:

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Comedy Tonight

An OSPI-Developed Performance Assessment

Overview

This document contains information essential to the administration of *Comedy Tonight*, an OSPI-developed arts performance assessment for theatre (High School Proficient). Prior to administration of this assessment, all students should have received instruction in the skills and concepts being assessed. Please read this information carefully before administering the performance assessment.

This assessment may be used in several ways:

- As an integral part of instruction.
- As a benchmark, interim, or summative assessment.
- As a culminating project.
- As an integral part of a unit of study.
- As a means of accumulating student learning data.
- As an individual student portfolio item.

Synopsis of *Comedy Tonight*

Students work with partners to perform 1-minute improvisations. They must portray settings clearly and establish clear conflicts and resolutions.

Each student must sustain a believable character that is exciting to watch, makes imaginative choices, and exhibits varied layers of emotions. The student must use clear and expressive movement and vocal techniques that move the character toward an objective.

Test Administration: Expectations

The skills assessed by this task should be authentically incorporated into classroom instruction.

This assessment task is to be administered in a safe, appropriately supervised classroom environment following district policy and procedures.

All industry and district safety policies and standards should be followed in the preparation and administration of OSPI-developed performance assessments in dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts.

Accommodations based upon a student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan may require additional modifications to this assessment.

Additional modifications to the administration of this assessment may be required to accommodate cultural differences, diversity, and religious mores/rules.

Description of the Performance Assessment

- Performance prompts ask each student to work with a partner to create and present a performance based on the criteria outlined in the task.
- Although partners perform together, each student's performance is assessed separately.
- The students' performance should be recorded to facilitate scoring and to document each student's performance.

Learning Standards

This assessment addresses the following learning standards. For more information, refer to Washington State Learning Standards: *The Arts Learning Standards: Theatre by Grade Level* (2017).

Anchor 3 High School Proficient	TH:Cr3.1.I	a. Practice and revise a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using theatrical staging conventions. b. Explore physical, vocal and physiological choices to develop a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant to a drama/theatre work.
Anchor 5 High School Proficient	TH:Pr5.1.I	a. Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

Depending on how individual teachers build their lesson units, additional Washington State Learning Standards can be addressed.

Supporting Materials and Resources for Teachers

Preparation for Administering the Assessment

Tools & Materials

Teachers will need the following materials and resources to administer this performance assessment:

- copies of the task, including the glossary of terms (one set for each student)
- copies of the student-response sheets (one set for each student)
- a marked performance space
- one pencil per student
- a recording device

Guidelines

Although students perform with partners for this assessment, each student is to be assessed individually.

- Copy the student's task, rubric, notes page, and glossary of terms. Make one set of copies for each student.
- Students may NOT use props and costumes in this assessment.
- Students may use chairs, tables, benches, and/or blocks.
- Assign a partner to each student (or allow students to choose their own partners).
- Assign to each set of partners another pair who will watch the partners' performance and provide feedback to the performers.
- Record the performance of each pair of students.
  - Set up the recorder in a defined space where the performers can be seen at all times. Place the camera so as to record the scene from the audience's perspective.
  - Prompt students to state their names/numbers and current grade levels into the recording device before they begin performing.
- Coach the students to face the audience when they perform. (The performers' faces must be seen so that their facial expressions can be assessed.)
- Instruct the performers to include a three-second neutral pause at the beginning and at the ending of their performance to indicate a clear start and a clear ending. The students may end off stage or off camera.

- When you are administering the assessment, students may ask questions to clarify the process. You should encourage students to ask questions at any time throughout the administration of the assessment.

Scoring Notes

The following scoring notes should be used as a guideline when scoring this item.

- For the creating and performing (*a. improvisation*) rubric:
  - To earn credit, the dialogue must indicate conflict/resolution, and it must do so fully. The watcher should not be confused about events.
  - If the performance lacks a clear central conflict and resolution, the student can earn no points for this rubric.
- For the creating and performing (*b. setting*) rubric:
  - To earn credit for the first bullet, the actor(s) must literally state where they are, whether that is a cave, a car, or a closet. If there is more than one setting in a scene, only one of them has to be verbally identified to earn the point.
  - To earn credit for the second bullet, the movement must be specific to a location (for example, if the character is in a cave, the character should be stumbling in the dark, hunching over, squinting to see, and so on).
  - If the setting is truly not established for the audience (i.e., the audience cannot deduce the characters' location—at the beach? a backyard? the gym?), the student's performance earns no score (NS) for this rubric.
- For the creating and performing (*c. character*) rubric:
  - The first two bullets must relate directly to a character to earn credit. If there is not a specific character, these two points cannot be earned.
  - To receive credit for demonstrating layered emotions, the character should be experiencing more than one emotion at the same time, not just experiencing two emotions over the course of the scene.

Using the Glossary

Terms listed in the glossary of this assessment were selected from the glossary of the Washington State Learning Standards for this subject area. When terms that come from other sources may be useful to the student, they are listed at the end of the glossary under the subheading *Additional Vocabulary*. The student's use of this additional vocabulary should not be considered in the scoring of the assessment.

Recommendations for Time Management

Students may have as much time as they need to complete the task. The timeframes suggested here are meant only as a guide, and you may shorten or lengthen them to suit the individual circumstances of the class and students.

The following is a **two-day** suggested timeframe:

Day 1

15 minutes: The teacher provides the class with the task and reads it aloud. The students may ask questions. The teacher answers questions.

10 minutes: The students select or are assigned partners; the students create and develop their improvisations.

35 minutes: Each pair of students performs their improvisation for another pair of students, who provide feedback.

Day 2

10 minutes: The student pairs review and refine their performances, incorporating the feedback that they received.

45 minutes: Each pair of students performs their improvisation; the teacher records each pair's performance.

All students who remain productively engaged in the task should be allowed to finish their work. If a few students require considerably more time to complete the task than most students, you may wish to move these few to a new location to finish. In other cases, the teacher's knowledge of some students' work habits or special needs may suggest that students who work very slowly should be tested separately or grouped with similar students for the test.

Assessment Task

Teacher's Instructions to Students

1. Say: "Today you will take the high school proficient, Washington OSPI-developed arts performance assessment for theatre. This assessment is called *Comedy Tonight*."

2. Provide the class with copies of the student's section of the assessment (which may include the student's task, response sheets, rubrics, templates, and glossary), along with any other required materials.

3. Tell the students that they may highlight and write on these materials during the assessment.

4. Have the students read the directions to themselves as you read them aloud. We also encourage you to review the glossary and scoring rubrics with the students.

5. Answer any clarifying questions the students may have before you instruct them to begin.

6. If this assessment is used for reporting purposes, circle the scoring points on the first page of each student's response sheets.

Accommodations

The following accommodations can be made for students with special needs or whose English language skills are limited:

- To complete the response sheets, students may dictate their answers to an instructional aide, who will write them down.

- Students may give the written and/or recorded responses in their first language. We request a written and/or oral English translation for consistency (validity/reliability) in scoring the rubric.

Refer also to the student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 Plan.

Student's Task

The following section contains these materials for students:

- ☑ The student's task: *Comedy Tonight* (High School Proficient)
- ☑ Assessment rubric
- ☑ Response sheets (optional)

■ Comedy Tonight

You are auditioning for the local improvisational club *Spot On!* The manager has asked you to bring a partner and work cooperatively to perform a 1-minute improvisation. The manager needs you to be clear about the setting and to establish a situation with a clear conflict and resolution. She also wants you to sustain a believable character that is exciting to watch, makes imaginative choices, and exhibits varied layers of emotions. She has told you that the best way to do this is to use clear and expressive movement and vocal techniques that move your character toward an objective.

The manager will be recording your performance. If you are successful in your audition, you will be a regular at *Spot On!* Your dream will come true!

Your Task

Create your improvisation—

The manager expects you to meet the following requirements when you create your improvisation:

☐ Create and perform a clear dramatic structure in your improvisation, using conflict and resolution (for example, cleaning a room, driving a car, going shopping, fixing a leak, or opening a package). This should include:

- o Effective use of dialogue to create and clarify dramatic structure.
- o Effective use of actions to create and clarify dramatic structure.
- o Appropriate use of ensemble work to create and clarify dramatic structure.
- o Effective use of movement and vocal qualities to create and clarify dramatic structure.

☐ Create and perform a clear setting for your improvisation by:

- o Referring to your setting by its common name.
- o Using movement to create a clear understanding of where the improvisation is taking place (for example, a home, a car, a store [food or retail], a cave, or a post office).
- o Creating dialogue that enhances the audience's understanding of the setting.
- o Working cooperatively with your partner to create a mutual understanding of the setting and of the conflict and resolution in your scene.

☐ Create and perform a fully developed character by:

  o Using a series of movements that clearly show the character's objectives.

  o Choosing a series of vocal qualities that clearly achieve the character's objectives.

  o Using layered emotions (more than one emotion exhibited at the same time) that achieve the character's objectives.

  o Sustaining your character throughout the entire performance.

You will have time to create your improvisation with your partner, review your performance with another pair of partners, revise your performance based on their feedback, and perform a one-minute improvisation for the teacher. Your performance will be recorded.

Comedy Tonight

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Creating & Performing (a)	The student meets all four of the following requirements, demonstrating a thorough understanding of how to establish dramatic structure using conflict and resolution in an improvisation: ◆ Creates dialogue effectively. ◆ Creates action(s) effectively. ◆ Uses ensemble work appropriately. ◆ Uses movement and vocal skills effectively.	The student meets three of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating an adequate understanding of how to establish dramatic structure using conflict and resolution in an improvisation.	The student meets two of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating a partial understanding of how to establish dramatic structure using conflict and resolution in an improvisation.	The student meets one of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating a minimal understanding of how to establish dramatic structure using conflict and resolution in an improvisation.
Creating & Performing (b)	The student meets all four of the following requirements, demonstrating a thorough understanding of setting in the improvisation: ◆ Refers to the setting specifically by its common name. ◆ Uses movement effectively to indicate the setting. ◆ Uses dialogue clearly to enhance understanding of the setting. ◆ Uses ensemble work appropriately to create a mutual understanding of the setting.	The student meets three of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating an adequate understanding of setting in the improvisation.	The student meets two of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating a partial understanding of setting in the improvisation.	The student meets one of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating a minimal understanding of setting in the improvisation.
Creating & Performing (c)	The student meets all four of the following requirements, demonstrating a thorough understanding of how to establish character in the improvisation: ◆ Uses a series of movements that demonstrate believable objectives for the character. ◆ Chooses a series of vocal qualities that demonstrate believable objectives for the character ◆ Creates a performance with clearly layered emotions (exhibits more than one emotion at a time). ◆ Sustains character throughout the entire performance.	The student meets three of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating an adequate understanding of how to establish character in the improvisation.	The student meets two of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating a partial understanding of how to establish character in the improvisation.	The student meets one of the requirements listed at left, demonstrating a minimal understanding of how to establish character in the improvisation.

No Score: If the student demonstrates no understanding of the concepts indicated, meets none of the requirements listed, or is unable or unwilling to complete the task, the student will earn no score.

Student's Name/ID#_____ Grade Level_____

Circle number:

Creating & Performing Score *(a. improv.)*	4	3	2	1
Creating & Performing Score *(b. setting)*	4	3	2	1
Creating & Performing Score *(c. character)*	4	3	2	1

Your Notes

Use the space below to write down notes as you create your performance and receive feedback for improving it. (Your notes will not be scored.)

Glossary

action: the events within the play that move the plot along

character traits: observable embodied actions that illustrate a character's personality, values, beliefs, and history

conflict: the problem, confrontation, or struggle in a scene or play; conflict may include a character against him or herself, a character in opposition to another character, a character against nature, a character against society, or a character against the supernatural

dialogue: a conversation between two or more characters

dramatic structure: the composition of a theatrical work, including a play, scene, or improvisation, that includes:

exposition: the background information included in the beginning of the play that introduces characters, actions, setting, and so on.

inciting incident: an action that occurs that sets the conflict of the play in motion.

rising action: the intensification and the complication of the inciting event.

conflict: the central struggle of the play, either within a character or plot.

climax: the moment in the play when all conflict comes to a central and high point.

falling action: the actions that occur after the climax, heading towards resolution.

resolution/dénouement: the ending action that resolves or concludes the conflicts within the play.

improvise: the spontaneous, intuitive, and immediate response of movement and speech; a distinction can be made between spontaneous improvisation, which is immediate and unrehearsed, and prepared improvisation, which is shaped and rehearsed

improvisation: a spontaneous performance during which the actors establish a story (including objectives, setting, characters, and relationships) with little or no preparation

movement: a physical action used to establish meaning and emotion in order to create a character

objective: a goal or particular need or want that a character has within a scene or play

setting: the time, place, and atmosphere in which the scene or play occurs

voice: vocal qualities that are used to convey meaning and emotion in order to create character

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Terms in italics are reproduced from the glossary of the National Core Arts: Theatre Standards by the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards.

The full glossary for this subject area can be found in the Washington State Learning Standards: *The Arts Learning Standards: Theatre by Grade Level* (2017).