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Arts-based learning creates a space for students to personally connect with the material. Creative class projects engender a classroom culture that is academically rigorous while being playful, imaginative, and engaging. As an instructor, arts-based learning is central to my teaching practice. Improvisational acting games, creative writing prompts, and visual art activities are employed in the classroom to engage participants and to teach key concepts. An example is having students write a short logline from a play or musical. The other students then have to guess the title of production from hearing the logline. Besides being a fun guessing game, this exercise teaches students the basic elements of story structure, the importance of given circumstances and world building in playwriting, as well as how to summarize their play's story when doing the play's marketing or in cover letters.

I have also used forum theatre, process drama, devising, puppetry, and mask-work to teach. Reviews of key terms and vocabulary are conducted using acting games, and even using mad-libs. For example, a popular improv game I use to review terms is called Dr Know-It-All. Three students become Dr. Know-It-All. Each participant is only able to say one word at a time. They must work together to answer my questions in complete sentences. Even if the answers aren't correct, their responses tend to be funny, engaging everyone present.

Creating rituals is an important part of how I structure a class. Class begins by sharing with students the daily agenda, holding the space for questions, and an opening warm-up or activity to get students present, engaged, and to pique their curiosity. After each activity, I ask students reflective questions, such as what did they find challenging or what are their takeaways. Being able to reflect on one's work instills in students a growth mindset, not one of perfectionism. Class ends with short reflective activities to assess what students learned from the session. One such example is a game called "popcorn," where each student shares a word to describe how class went that day. Their word can be an emotion, a key term, or idea. This closing ritual is a way for me to touch base with students. The reflection is low pressure, as students only have to share one word and their answers are open ended.

Ensemble building and group collaboration are central to my classroom. Mid-term and final projects are collaborative and ensemble-based. These projects are creative, such as students devising and staging a short performance or acting as a costume, set, sound, and lighting designer for the play they have been studying. Students often create small performances, have discussions, create artwork, or brainstorm on white boards or chart paper in small groups. For example, when learning about directing, students performed short open ended acting scenes,

with one student directing them, using the toolbox they learned during the previous activities, class readings, and discussions. Group activities are an opportunity for students to learn from each other and cultivate their unique voices as theatre artists. Students are assessed and given feedback on their individual contributions to the group project, to avoid group grades.

Augusto Boal, Paulo Freire, and bell hooks strongly inform my teaching pedagogy and practices, as does my research as a women and gender studies scholar. Whether choosing acting scenes or the readings for a course, I use the framework of inclusivity. I enrich the classroom with diverse voices and approaches to art-making while meeting the objectives of the core standards.

My work as an instructor has been integral to my own creative practice, as my plays are intended for university, school, community, and professional theatre spaces. I share my knowledge and passion for theatre with the aim of supporting participants in achieving their goals for taking my course, whether that is being a creative professional, scholar, a curious and informed audience member, or a life-long lover of the arts.