



# artsNOW

Integrated learning solutions

**BECOMING HISTORY**  
**Grade Band: 4-5**  
**Content Focus: Theatre & ELA**



## LEARNING DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will act out a chosen biography through a written monologue, focusing on their life, hardships, and triumphs.

## LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
How can theatre techniques help us understand historical figures better?	<p>I can write a monologue from the perspective of my historical figure.</p> <p>I can accurately depict the life events of my historical figure in my monologue using relevant details from his/her biography.</p> <p>I can use my voice and body to portray my historical figure accurately.</p>



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## GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p><b>Grade 4</b>            ELAGSE4RI3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.</p> <p>ELAGSE4W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.</p> <p>ELAGSE4W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>ELAGSE4SL4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.</p> <p><b>Grade 5</b>            ELAGSE5W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.</p> <p>ELAGSE5W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>ELAGSE5SL4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.</p>	<p><b>Grade 4:</b>            TA4.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.            TA4.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</p> <p><b>Grade 5</b>            TA5.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work.            TA5.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</p>

## SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
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## Grade 4

### READING – Informational Text

#### Meaning and Context

**Standard 5:** Determine meaning and develop logical interpretations by making predictions, inferring, drawing conclusions, analyzing, synthesizing, providing evidence, and investigating multiple interpretations.

5.1 Ask and answer inferential questions to analyze meaning beyond the text; refer to details and examples within a text to support inferences and conclusions

**Standard 6:** Summarize key details and ideas to support analysis of central ideas.

6.1 Summarize multi-paragraph texts using key details to support the central idea.

#### WRITING - Meaning, Context, and Craft

**Standard 2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

2.1 Write informative/explanatory texts that:  
a. introduce a topic clearly; c. group related information in paragraphs and sections; e. develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic; g. use paraphrasing, quotations, and original language to avoid plagiarism; h. link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases; i. use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform or explain the topic; j. develop a style and tone authentic to the purpose; and k. provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

#### COMMUNICATION - Meaning and Context

**Standard 2:** Articulate ideas, claims, and perspectives in a logical sequence using information, findings, and credible evidence from sources.

2.1 Articulate ideas, perspectives and information with details and supporting evidence in a logical sequence with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.

**Anchor Standard 1:** I can create scenes and write scripts using story elements and structure.

**Anchor Standard 3:** I can act in improvised scenes and written scripts.

**Anchor Standard 8:** I can relate theatre to other content areas, arts disciplines, and careers.



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## Grade 5

### READING – Informational Text

#### Meaning and Context

**Standard 5:** Determine meaning and develop logical interpretations by making predictions, inferring, drawing conclusions, analyzing, synthesizing, providing evidence, and investigating multiple interpretations.

**Standard 6:** Summarize key details and ideas to support analysis of central ideas.

6.1 Summarize a text with two or more central ideas; cite key supporting details.

#### WRITING - Meaning, Context, and Craft

**Standard 2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

2.1 Write informative/explanatory texts that: a. introduce a topic clearly; b. use relevant information from multiple print and multimedia sources; c. provide a general observation and focus; d. group related information logically; e. use credible sources; g. develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic; i. use paraphrasing, quotations, summarizing, and original language to avoid plagiarism; j. link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses; k. use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform or explain the topic; l. develop a style and tone authentic to the purpose; and m. provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

#### COMMUNICATION - Meaning and Context (

**Standard 2:** Articulate ideas, claims, and perspectives in a logical sequence using information, findings, and credible evidence from sources.

2.1 Analyze ideas, perspectives and information using examples and supporting evidence related to the topic.



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## KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <u>Expository Writing</u> - Writing with the purpose to inform or explain</li><li>● <u>Biography</u> - An account of someone's life written by someone else</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <u>Theater</u> - Dramatic literature or its performance; drama</li><li>● <u>Character</u> - A person, an animal or other figure assuming human qualities, in a story</li><li>● <u>Voice</u> – An actor's tool, which we shape and change to portray the way a character speaks or sounds</li><li>● <u>Body</u> – An actor's tool, which we shape and change to portray the way a character looks, walks, or moves</li><li>● <u>Monologue</u> - A speech by a single character in a play, film, or other dramatic work; often used to give the audience deeper insight into the character's motivations and feelings</li></ul>

## MATERIALS

- Biographies
- Paper
- Pencil

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

### Opening/Activating Strategy

*Classroom Tips: This strategy is great for small group or individual work and easily differentiated.*

- Start with a general physical warm-up to get the students' bodies ready. Use exercises such as:
  - Stretching: Use gentle stretches starting from the head and moving to the toes (e.g., head circles, shoulder shrugs, toe touches, etc.).
  - Shaking out limbs: Shake out arms, legs, and the whole body to release tension.
  - Energy passes: Stand in a circle and pass a clap or a simple motion around to build group focus and energy.
- Explain that students will explore different characters by changing their walk and physicality. Encourage them to think about how their character's age, status, mood, and personality influence their movement.



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- Begin with simple prompts to get students thinking about different ways to walk. Call out various types of characters and ask students to walk around the room embodying those characters. Examples include:
  - An elderly person with a cane
  - A proud soldier
  - A sneaky thief
  - A graceful dancer
- Have students return to their seats.

## Work Session

*Student pre-work: Students will be assigned or choose a grade level appropriate biography to read.*

- Tell students that now that they have researched the person from their biography, they will write a monologue that reflects on that person's life in first person.
  - Tell students that a monologue is a speech by a single character in a play, film, or other dramatic work; it is often used to give the audience deeper insight into the character's motivations and feelings.
  - Show students a clip of a monologue or have students read a monologue from a play or other work.
    - Example: The Lion King (1994) - Simba's Monologue
      - Context: Simba has grown up away from his kingdom but is reminded of his responsibility and legacy by Rafiki and Mufasa's spirit.
      - Monologue: "I know what I have to do. But going back means I'll have to face my past. I've been running from it for so long. It's just, my father's death is so hard to talk about. I thought I couldn't live up to his expectations. But now I understand. The past can hurt. But the way I see it, you can either run from it or learn from it. I'm ready to take my place in the circle of life."
  - Ask students how they think a monologue is different from other types of writing.
  - In their monologues, students should retell the major life events of the biography and be sure to mention the biographical focus (Example: Abraham Lincoln's role in the Civil War).
- After writing, tell students that they will practice presenting their monologues with a partner.
  - Group students in pairs.
  - Have students experiment with their figure's voice. Consider the following elements:
    - Pitch: Is the figure's voice high or low?
    - Pace: Does the figure speak quickly or slowly?
    - Volume: Does the figure speak loudly or softly?
    - Tone: What is the emotional quality of the figure's voice (e.g., cheerful, gruff, nervous)?
    - Ask students to practice saying a few lines or phrases from their monologue in their figure's voice.
  - Have students explore their figure's physicality using their bodies. Consider the following elements:



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- Posture: Does the figure stand upright, slouch, or have a distinctive stance?
  - Movement: How does the figure walk? Are their movements fluid, jerky, slow, or quick?
  - Gestures: What kind of gestures does the figure use when speaking? Are they expressive, restrained, repetitive?
  - Facial Expressions: What are the figure's common facial expressions?
  - Ask students to practice saying a few lines or phrases from their monologue in their figure's voice again, but this time, they should add physicality.
- Allow time for students to practice their monologues with their partners using their voice and body.
  - Time permitting, ask for a few student volunteers to present to the class. *Discuss appropriate audience participation and etiquette prior to performances.*
    - Classmates can then interview the historical figure.

### Closing/Reflection

- Bring the class together and discuss the experience.
- Ask students to share something interesting they learned about their figure or their partner's figure.
- Discuss how incorporating voice and body helped them understand and portray their figures more deeply.
- Have students write a short reflection on how they felt embodying their figure with voice and body language and what new insights they gained.

## ASSESSMENTS

### Formative

Teachers will assess students' understanding of the content throughout the lesson by observing students' participation in the activator, conferencing with students during the writing process, and observing students use voice and body to portray their historical figures.

### Summative

#### CHECKLIST

- Students can accurately depict the life events of their historical figure in their monologue using relevant details from their biographies.
- Students can use their voices and bodies to act in a manner in which they portray their historical figure accurately.

## DIFFERENTIATION

### Acceleration:

- Students can write a scene between their figures. They should include dialogue.
- With a partner, students can act as journalists interviewing each other's figure. Encourage journalists to ask open-ended questions to draw out more detailed responses. Have the



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pairs switch roles so that each student has a chance to be both the journalist and the figure.

- Have students research portraits of historical figures and create their own for their historical figure.

**Remediation:**

- Provide graphic organizers to help students structure their writing.
- Provide sentence starters for monologues.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

NA

*\*This integrated lesson provides differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. Standards referenced at the time of publishing may differ based on each state's adoption of new standards.*

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