



artsNOW

Integrated learning solutions

IDIOM IMAGININGS
Grade Band: 3-5
Content Focus: Theatre & ELA



LEARNING DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will use theatre to explore idioms. They will bring idioms to life for their classmates through body language, gestures, and facial expressions. Finally, students will demonstrate their learning by using their idioms in writing.

LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
How can we use acting to demonstrate the meaning of idioms? How can finding the true meaning of an idiom help us understand language throughout our everyday lives?	I can demonstrate that I understand what an idiom means through acting and writing.

GEORGIA STANDARDS



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Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 3: ELAGSE3RL4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases both literal and non- literal language as they are used in the text. ELAGSE3L5: With guidance and support from adults, demonstrate understanding of word relationships and nuances in word meanings. Distinguish the literal and non-literal meanings of words and phrases in context (e.g., take steps).</p> <p>Grade 4: ELAGSE4L4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a. Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>Grade 5: ELAGSE5L5 Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. b. Recognize and explain the meaning of common idioms, adages, and proverbs.</p>	<p>Grade 3: TA3.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work. TA3.CR.2 Develop scripts through theatrical techniques. TA3.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</p> <p>Grade 4: TA4.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work. TA4.CR.2 Develop scripts through theatrical techniques. TA4.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</p> <p>Grade 5: TA5.CR.1 Organize, design, and refine theatrical work. TA5.CR.2 Develop scripts through theatrical techniques. TA5.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments.</p>

SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 3: READING – Literary Text Language, Craft, and Structure (LCS) Standard 9: Interpret and analyze the author’s use of words, phrases, and conventions, and how their relationships shape meaning and tone in print and multimedia texts. 9.1 Identify and explain how the author uses idioms, metaphor, or personification to shape meaning and style.</p> <p>Grade 5: READING – Literary Text Language, Craft, and Structure (LCS) Standard 9: Interpret and analyze the author’s use of words, phrases, and conventions, and</p>	<p>Anchor Standard 3: I can act in improvised scenes and written scripts.</p> <p>Anchor Standard 8: I can relate theatre to other content areas, arts disciplines, and careers.</p>



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how their relationships shape meaning and tone in print and multimedia texts.
 9.1 Cite examples of the author’s use of figurative language, dialogue, imagery, idioms, adages, and proverbs to shape meaning and tone.

KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Idiom</u> – A group of words that means something different than the individual words it contains ● <u>Figurative language</u> - A word or phrase that does not have its normal every day, literal meaning. It is used by the writer for the sake of comparison or dramatic effect. Authors use similes, metaphors, hyperbole, and personification to make their stories more interesting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Storytelling</u> – Bringing a story to life so that someone believes your story. Actor’s use their body, voice, face, mind and hearts to tell strong stories. ● <u>Pantomime</u> - An acting technique that conveys emotion through non-verbal communication. Occasionally referred to as 'the art of silence,' pantomime relies on facial expressions, body language and gestures. ● <u>Facial expression</u> – How an actor uses his or her face (eyes, cheeks, mouth, chin, nose) to convey meaning. ● <u>Body gestures</u> – Any movement of the actor’s head, shoulder, arm, hand, leg, or foot to convey meaning. ● <u>Physical warm-up</u> – Exercises that an actor uses to warm up and loosen up their body so that they can use body gestures to help convey meaning. ● <u>Vocal warm-up</u> – exercises that an actor uses with their voice to warm up their voices so that they can project and articulate words. ● <u>Vocal expression</u> – How an actor uses his or her voice to convey character. ● <u>Improvisation</u> – Making it up as you go along. Not planned. Impromptu acting based on the following circumstances: who - the characters; what - the action;



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where - the place; and when - the time the action takes place.

- Dialogue - The words spoken by the actors during a play.
- Scene - A division of a play or of an act of a play, usually representing what passes between certain actors in one place.
- Project - Using your breath to get a small voice across the room as a big voice so that your story can be heard.

MATERIALS

**All materials listed below can be found under "Additional Resources".*

- Idiom List
- Southern Expressions List
- Acting Like an Idiom List
- Idiom/Literal Scene List

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Opening/Activating Strategy

Classroom Tips: This lesson can be done with desks as they are already arranged in the classroom, but it's always fun to push desks back and get students on their feet in a circle. You can also create a little performance "stage" at the front of the classroom.

- Start with a general physical warm-up to get the students' bodies ready. Use exercises such as:
 - **Stretching:** Stretch all major muscle groups.
 - **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.
- Vocal warm-up: "Cat got your tongue?" (Southern Expressions Idiom list located under "Additional Resources")
 - Have students stand in a line, shoulder to shoulder, across the room from a wall. Tell students that they will be doing a vocal warm up to help them to project their voices. (Actors warm up their voices and breathe in order for the audience to be able to hear their stories).
 - Have students yell "hello" across the room all at the same time.
 - Then, ask students to put breath behind their voice and push their voice out, not yell, across the room. Have students place their hands over their middle where



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their diaphragm is located and breathe in deeply so that they feel their stomachs expanding. Then, they should say “hello” imagining that all that air in their lungs is pushing “hello” across the room. Tell students that they should feel their stomachs “deflating” as they say “hello”. Have students practice projecting their voices.

- Now, explain that you will call out phrases that are called idioms. Students will then repeat and project that idiom to the opposite wall.
- *Teacher tip: You will need to go slowly when giving them these idioms. You can also break them up into parts.*

Work Session

- Tell students that an idiom is a group of words that means something different than the individual words it contains. It is a type of figurative language.
- Idioms create images to help us understand the meanings beyond the literal meanings of the words. We can use theatre to help explore the world of idioms.
- Physical warm-up: Idiom wandering (Explain the meaning of each of the following idioms before you begin).
 - Tell students that during this game they will be walking around the room silently and will only add sound when they act out an idiom.
 - Explain that when you call “freeze”, the students should stop where they are and freeze their bodies.
 - Next, call out one of the idioms. Students will act out the meaning of the idiom using their bodies, faces and voices. Then, call “freeze” again and say another idiom.
 - Idiom examples:
 - You are “sick as a dog” (to be violently ill)
 - You’re a “stiff-necked” person (stubborn)
 - You’ve lost your “get-up-and-go” (low physical energy; extremely tired)
 - You’ve got the “world at your feet” (everything is going your way)
 - Someone has really gotten “under your skin” (they have really annoyed you)
- Improv warm-up: Acting Like an Idiom (See “Acting Like an Idiom List” located under “Additional Resources”).
 - Ask students to get into one large circle.
 - Discuss the list of idioms with them. Ask them what they think each of the idioms means.
 - Make sure to clearly state the meaning of each idiom before proceeding to the next one.
 - Stand in the middle of the circle to demonstrate acting out an idiom.
 - Start by reading the idiom and discussing the meaning; then act it out making sure to add dialogue.
 - Ask students if they believed you. Ask them what you did to make them believe you. Remind them that actors use their bodies, voices, faces, minds and hearts to tell a story and that we need to exaggerate all of these to get our story across.
 - Now explain that you will call out an idiom and its meaning and then students can raise their hands to come into the middle to act it out. Once the student gets into the middle of the circle, you will call “action” and the student will act it out.
 - When they are done, you will call “freeze”.



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- The actor can then take a bow and get back into the circle. Encourage the other students to support their classmates by clapping, or establish another agreed upon way to show support.
- Improv in Action: Idiom/Literal on Your Feet (“Idiom/Literal Scene List” located under “Additional Resources”)
 - Ask students to pair up. Assign each pair one of the idioms listed located under “Additional Resources”.
 - Explain that they will be acting out the idiom meaning and then the literal meaning of their idiom.
 - Remind students of their acting toolbox: Bodies, gestures, facial expressions and voices.
 - Provide time for students to practice acting out the idioms. Circulate to work with students and check for understanding.
- Allow time for each group to perform. Discuss appropriate audience participation and etiquette prior to performances.
 - Ask the group to read their idiom and explain the meaning to the class before they begin. Then, call “Idiom Action” to prompt students to start their first scene. Then, call “Literal Action” and to prompt their second scene.

Closing/Reflection

- Close the lesson by having students engage in a short writing prompt in which they will use their idiom correctly.
- Allow time for students to share their writing with a partner who has used a different idiom.

ASSESSMENTS

Formative

Teachers will assess students’ understanding of the content throughout the lesson by observing students’ participation in the activator, participation in the physical and improv warm-ups, discussion of effective acting techniques, and collaboration with their partners to act out their idioms.

Summative

CHECKLIST

- Students can demonstrate that they understand what an idiom means through acting.
- Students can demonstrate that they understand what an idiom means through writing.

DIFFERENTIATION

Acceleration:

- Have students engage in a narrative writing piece that uses several examples of idioms from the lesson.
- **Technology Extension:** Students can type their Idiom Scenes into a play template. Students can videotape their scene and add music and setting elements with backgrounds in iMovie



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Remediation:

- Provide illustrations to support understanding of idioms.
- Provide sentences that show the meaning of idioms in context.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Southern Expressions List:

The porch light is on, but nobody's home. (not very smart)	I'm more nervous than a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs	She's as purty as a speckled pup. (very pretty)
Well, butter my buns and call me a biscuit. (surprised)	He's got a burr in his saddle. (very angry)	Happy as a dead pig in the sunshine. (very happy)
If his brains were dynamite, he couldn't blow his nose. (not very smart)	Don't pee on my leg and tell me it's rainin'! (don't lie to me)	If that boy had an idea, it would die of loneliness. (not very smart)
I'm just tickled pink that you'll be able to join us. (happy and excited)	If you lay down with dogs, you get up with fleas. (avoid bad company)	She's as lost as last year's Easter egg. (confused)

Acting Like an Idiom List:

"A blessing in disguise"	Something that seems bad, but is actually good	Tripping and falling on the floor, you find the diamond earring you lost.
"Driving me bananas"	Making me feel irritated, agitated, maddened	Your screaming baby brother is making it impossible to study.
"Beating around the bush"	Not saying what is important; procrastinating	You have to get your parents to sign your failed math test but you keep nervously talking about the weather.
"Taking candy from a baby"	Easy and effortless	You ask grandma for money to go to the movies and she gives you \$50.
"Actions speak louder than words"	The things you do say more about you than what you say	You tell your girlfriend you love her but you flirt with everyone.
"Butterflies in your stomach"	The anxious feeling you have before something important is known as butterflies in your stomach.	You are next in line to jump off the high dive at the swimming pool.

Idiom/Literal Scene List:

"Eat like a horse"	Someone who eats a great deal of food.
"In the same boat"	People in the same bad situation
"Pull the wool over someone's eyes"	To deceive or fool someone
"Talk turkey"	To talk seriously, usually about a business deal
"Beating a dead horse"	Trying to convince people to do or feel something without any chance of succeeding.

**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.*

Ideas contributed by: Susie Spear Purcell. Updated by Katy Betts.



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