



# artsNOW

Integrated learning solutions

## DISCOVER THE ART OF PLAYWRITING

Grade Band: Grade 2

Content Focus: Theatre & ELA



### LEARNING DESCRIPTION

Students will be introduced to the art and technique of playwriting by brainstorming possible emotions, relationships, and storyline extensions based on a familiar fairy tale.

### LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	“I Can” Statements
How can we write a short play together based on a familiar nursery rhyme?	I can contribute ideas to write a short play based on a familiar nursery rhyme.  I can take a role in acting out an original script.



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## GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p><b>Grade 2:</b>            ELACC2W3 Write narratives in which they recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events, include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings, use temporal words to signal event order, and provide a sense of closure.</p> <p>ELACC2W5 With guidance and support from adults and peers, focus on a topic and strengthen writing as needed by revising and editing.</p> <p>ELACC2SL4 Tell a story or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking audibly in coherent sentences.</p>	<p><b>Grade 2:</b>            TA2.CR.2 Develop scripts through theatrical techniques. a. Explore the dramatic writing process. b. Collaborate to generate story ideas. c. Develop dialogue based on stories (e.g. personal, imaginary, real). d. Develop character and setting through action and dialogue. e. Sequence plot events for dramatizations.</p> <p>TA2.PR.1 Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments. a. Use imagination and vocal elements (e.g. inflection, pitch, volume, articulation) to communicate a character's thoughts, emotions, and actions. b. Use imagination and physical choices to communicate a character's thoughts and emotions. c. Collaborate and perform with an ensemble to share theatre with an audience. d. Explore character choices and relationships in a variety of dramatic forms (e.g. narrated story, pantomime, puppetry, dramatic play).</p>

## SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p><b>Grade 2:</b>            2.W.MCC.3.1 Explore multiple texts to write narratives that recount a well-elaborated event or short sequence of events; include details to describe actions, thoughts, and feelings; use temporal words to signal event order; and provide a sense of closure.</p>	<p><b>Anchor Standard 1:</b> I can create scenes and write scripts using story elements and structure.</p> <p><b>Anchor Standard 3:</b> I can act in improvised scenes and written scripts.</p>

## KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<p><u>Character</u> – a person, or an animal or object that has human qualities, in a story.</p> <p><u>Setting</u> - The time and place of a story (when and where).</p>	<p><u>Theater</u> - Dramatic literature or its performance; drama.</p> <p><u>Playwriting</u> – the process of writing or composing a script to be performed by actors</p>



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Plot - the series of related events that together form a story.

Script – a story written in a format to be acted out, indicating what the characters say and do.

Dialogue – the part of the text that the characters speak aloud to one another.

Line – words or sentences spoken by an actor.

Stage Directions – actions or emotions for the actor, usually included in parentheses before or after a line of text.

## MATERIALS

- Copies (on paper, or on one or more screens) of a familiar nursery rhyme, such as “Jack and Jill”
- Flip chart, white board, or digital blank page for developing class script
- Pencils
- Clip boards and lined paper

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

### Opening/Activating Strategy

#### CLAP-AROUND

This warm-up exercise helps students connect to one another through collaboration and eye contact.

- Arrange students in a circular formation.
- Have students place their hands on their hips and bend their knees to make sure they are in a neutral position.
- Begin the process by making eye contact with the first student and then clapping at the same time. Instruct that student to turn to their other neighbor, make eye contact, and clap simultaneously. That student continues the process. Each student, in turn, passes the clap to the next student until the circle is completed.
- Continue striving to keep the clap moving smoothly around the circle multiple times, with participants establishing eye contact and synchronizing the clap as it passes.
- Option: Once the students have gained mastery of the Clap-Around activity, for an extra challenge try it with two starting points and two claps going around simultaneously.

### Work Session

#### NURSERY RHYME

- Show students the selected nursery rhyme. Read/recite it together.
- Ask students about the story elements: “Who are the characters? What is the setting? What happens in the plot of the story?” (e.g., Jack and Jill; a hill, during the day; going to get water, then falling down).



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## PLAYWRITING

- Tell students that together the class will use a playwriting process to adapt this simple story into a script that the class can act out.
- Ask students what happened first in the story. Ask them to imagine what the characters might have said – this can be imagined, as it likely is not included in the nursery rhyme (e.g., perhaps their mother said, “Children, we need water!”; Jill said, “Come on, Jack. Let’s go! I have the pail,” and Jack said, “But I’m playing with my toys!” etc.).
- Select and write their ideas in script format. Put the character name on the left margin followed by a colon. Then write what the character says. Skip a line on the page between different characters’ spoken lines. Elicit enough ideas to fill out a simple scene. Explain that the class is generating dialogue, composed of lines for the individual characters. Option: Define, solicit, and include stage directions, including feelings or actions to help the actors know how to play the roles. Place those in parentheses within the script.
- Hand out clipboards with paper and pencils. Have students copy the developing script, being sure to follow the playwriting format.
- Repeat the process with other segments of the story (e.g., climbing the hill, then tumbling down). Write out the students’ ideas in a way that all can see, follow, and copy. Remind them to use their neat handwriting as they copy the script.
- As appropriate to the story, ask students to imagine what might have happened afterward, and then develop further dialogue for their idea (e.g., Jack and Jill are taken to the hospital).
- Invite volunteers to come to the front to read and act out the script that the class generated. Coach them in using voice and inflection to convey the meaning and emotions of the lines. Prompt with lines as needed for emerging readers. Allow several groups to do readings/performances (after several rounds, the students will be familiar with the script).

## Closing/Reflection

Ask: “What is playwriting? What is a script? What is dialogue? How did we add ideas to expand and fill out the story? How did we act out our script for the story? How is our script different from the original nursery rhyme?”

## ASSESSMENTS

### Formative

- Students are able to identify key elements of the story.
- Students suggest additional ideas that are suitable to the story.

### Summative

- The class-generated script contains dramatic elements of character, setting, and plot.
- The students’ copies of the script follow the prescribed playwriting format.
- Students read and enact the script with enthusiasm and expression.



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## DIFFERENTIATION

**Acceleration:**

Have students work in groups to replicate the process with other familiar nursery rhymes.

**Remediation:**

In developing the script with students' ideas, keep the lines short with simple vocabulary and clear emotions.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.teachingheart.net/readerstheater.htm> - a site with numerous readers theater scripts available.

*\*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 and updated by: Susie Spear Purcell and Barry Stewart Mann*

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