

Using Skits in Teaching

Skits are a clever way to get students to teach one another without lecturing or reading a report. Students can role-play different situations, and those watching can respond afterward with critiques and further discussion.

You can make use of skits in the classroom to address current social issues like care for those who are underprivileged, outreach to family members and the community, and the ills of a self-centered society. Prior to assigning the skits, you could create a handout featuring suggestions on what the students should consider when they are developing their skits and what they might watch for while viewing the skits.

First decide on the topic or theme of the skits, for example, “Living a Life of Apostolic Witness.” Then follow these steps:

- Decide how many skits you wish to have, and divide the class into small groups (or allow the students to choose their own group members, though this might lead to cronyism or someone being left out).
- Have the students work on the skits together, including every member of their groups in the process, either as actors, directors, or writers.
- Explain to the students the responsibility of each role. Students can certainly have more than one role. All group members will most likely contribute to the writing of the skit, with one person taking notes as needed. A formal “director” may or may not be needed for short skits; group consensus can decide on the action and timing of the skit.
- Decide on a day and time for presenting the skits. Often the planning and the acting out can take place on the same day or in the same class period. If more elaborate or more polished skits are desired, give a few minutes for practice for two or three days before the designated day of presentation. At that time provide an area for the students to perform the skits.

Sample Instructions

- Post a sheet of newsprint with a topic of discussion, such as, “How Do You Live Your Apostolic Witness?” printed at the top. Then ask:
 - @ Do I have a volunteer to read this topic out loud?

Choose a volunteer to read the topic out loud to the class.
- Now have students act out various ways that they might live their apostolic witness. Offer the following instructions:
 - @ We are going to act out skits that demonstrate how we might live out our apostolic witness.
 - @ After each skit we will decide what we learned from each example acted out in the skit.
 - @ We’ll need a volunteer to record our comments on the newsprint.

Choose a volunteer with neat handwriting to do this.
- Hand out a printed sheet with the directions for each skit. Choose groups to act out each skit.



- Dismiss the students to develop and practice their skits. When enough time has passed, gather the students back in the large group. Say the following:
 - @ I will choose one group at a time to act out its skit. When the group has finished, we will discuss what was demonstrated.

Characteristics Involved and Developed through Classroom Skits

- **Individual Accountability** Students are each responsible for a specific part of the skit production, and to contribute to other parts as needed. If they do not perform their individual job, or contribute to other tasks, then the skit will not come together as a whole.
- **Positive Interdependence** Students work together and rely on the other members to produce a skit. Each student may have a specific job, but the students must communicate with one another, and eventually the students must pull all of their parts together: to read the play, practice parts, set up the props, and put on the production. A single student is not responsible for the entire production.
- **Social Skills** Students are required to work together, which means that they must communicate with one another and spend time together.
- **Face-to-Face Interaction** Students are working as a group to develop a skit. They must talk to one another in order to develop all of the separate parts. They must also practice the skit, so they will be required to practice their individual parts in front of one another.
- **Open Communication** Students must talk to one another and discuss their ideas for the skit, problems they may be having, and how the progress is going on each of their individual parts. Open communication, in turn, builds trust and security because students must trust their group members and feel safe in order to express ideas and opinions.
- **Shared Goals** Students work together on one project. Although each member has his or her own part, each job is a small part of the larger project. The students all have the same end goal of putting on a skit for their class.

The following sources were helpful in writing this article:

www.users.muohio.edu/shermalw/edp621_CL-lessons-sm02/overmyer_lesson_621sm02.htm

www.ehow.com/how_5861149_use-body-language-skit-13.html

