

Lights, Camera, Literacy!
(Part Two)
Lesson Plan #28

Topics:
Journal Writing
Context Clues
Character Traits
Learning Modalities

Outcomes:

Students will follow organizational procedures.
Students will see, hear, and use applicable vocabulary.
Students will consider how characters' traits can guide the development of a story.
Students will view and analyze the characters in group films.
Students will learn the three main modalities of learning.
Students will determine their strongest modality of learning.

Materials:

Writing journals
Video cameras
Tripods
Mini-dv tapes or memory cards
Computers with editing software
LCD projector
Chart paper
Post-its
Individual student pocket folders

DVD: *AKEELAH AND THE BEE*

Script: *AKEELAH AND THE BEE*

HANDOUTS: Learning Modality Survey
Learning Modality Descriptors and Suggestions

New Vocabulary: *excitable, self-serving, somber, fastidious, learning modality, visual, auditory, kinesthetic*

Sequence of Events:

I. Journal Writing (15)

1. Today's Prompt:

How did adding the two words "scrutinizes" and "diversion" to your film's dialogue make a difference in your production?

II. Character Traits (30)

1. Again show the following scene sequence...

DVD: *AKEELAH AND THE BEE*

Start at **7:00** (near the end of 2nd chapter "ESPN": The principal and Dr. Larabee see the girls messing with Akeelah.)

Stop at **8:35** (beginning of 3rd chapter: The principal offers Akeelah the choice of the school spelling bee or detention.)

2. Distribute the *AKEELAH AND THE BEE* scripts and turn to page 9.

3. Together read the descriptions of the two men. Explain that a short character description appears in a script only when a character is first introduced and that the character's name in all caps indicates this first appearance. Tell students that this is the only description that actors receive when they accept their roles. Actors must make inferences about other traits of their character based on how the character acts and what the character says in the script.

4. Have students guess and then look up the four words used to describe the two men:

"EXCITABLE" "SELF-SERVING" "SOMBER" "FASTIDIOUS"

5. Ask, "How can you tell as a viewer that Mr. Welch is excitable?
(observable speech pattern, behavior, mannerisms: not written into the script)

6. How can you tell as a reader of the script that Mr. Welch is self-serving? (His dialogue reveals his motivation as to *why* he wants Akeelah in the spelling bee.)
7. Read script pages 9a, 10, 11 together as a class.
8. Ask students to imagine the same scene if the character traits assigned to the two men were switched...If Mr. Welch were somber and fastidious and Dr. Larabee were excitable and self-serving...How would the story change? (Lead students to understand that the characters themselves can actually determine a story's direction as they think about what their characters might say and do in a particular situation based on the traits assigned to them. As creators of a story, they need to "get into the skin" of their characters, feel what it is like to be that character, and then create the scenes according to how that character might react to what is happening.)

III. View and Critique (45)

1. Students again view the group productions in turn, but this time, they focus solely on the characters, their traits, and how their traits force them to act in particular ways.
2. Students share what works well and what might be improved.

IV. Modalities (40)

1. Show the following scene:

DVD: *AKEELAH AND THE BEE*

Start **52:35** (near the end of the 12th chapter "I'm not in the Mood"
Dr. Larabee discovers that Akeelah might learn more easily while jumping rope.)

Stop **55:20** (very end of 12th chapter)

2. Ask students why this scene was included. (Lead them to understand that this shows the way Akeelah learns best and is **not** on their list of traits. Instead this exhibits what is called a **LEARNING MODALITY**.) Write this term on the board. Ask if anyone knows what this means.

3. Explain that people vary in the ways they learn and usually each of us has a strongest way of learning although we might not realize it.
Some of us learn easiest by:
 - looking at information (**VISUAL LEARNER**)
 - hearing information (**AUDITORY LEARNER**)
 - moving when information is presented or viewing movement as the information is presented (**KINESTHETIC LEARNER**)

Write the three "learner" terms on the board.

4. Ask students which best describes Akeelah? (kinesthetic)
Tell students that when Dr. Larabee discovered this, it was much easier for him to help Akeelah learn her words.
5. Students will now learn what their own strongest learning modality might be through a questionnaire.

HANDOUT: Learning Modality Survey

Read each item aloud as students complete the survey.

6. Record (in your grade book) the three survey totals for each student as they tell you aloud, so everyone is aware of which types of learners they have in the class. (This encourages an acceptance and respect for all and allows you to have insight into the behavior and learning patterns of your students.)
7. Review the modality descriptors and suggestions together.

HANDOUT: Learning Modality Descriptors and Suggestions

(Discussion might lead to such ideas as "If you are a strong visual learner and your parents *tell you* to empty the dishwasher and later wonder why you didn't do it, ask them to *write a reminder* for you instead.)

V. Production (55)

1. Point out that Doug Atchison added Akeelah's learning modality for increased interest in the film. Ask groups to consider adding this extra component to one of their characters. Might one of their characters be kinesthetic? Or strongly visual and hardly take in what others say to them?
2. Allow time for groups to think about and implement more changes to their productions.

VI. Reflection: (15)

1. Direct students to the hanging chart paper labeled:

How can group members' learning modalities affect filmmaking tasks?

2. Hand out Post-its on which students write their response to post on the chart.
3. Review the comments on the Post-Its with the class, so students have a sense of what was learned. Make sure to clear up any misconceptions.