

Lesson 1:

DISCOVERING YOUR STORY

Overview:

Welcome to Stand Up & Learn! Today is about having fun, finding your voice, and beginning to think like a comedic storyteller. We'll explore what makes a story funny and start identifying personal stories with the potential to become part of your performance.

Objectives:

- Understand what comedic storytelling is and what makes it work.
- Watch examples and identify key storytelling and comedic techniques.
- Brainstorm personal stories that could be developed into comedic performances.
- Get familiar with the Comedic Storytelling Rubric.

Materials Needed:



Student Notebooks
or Seed Notebooks



Sticky
Notes

Video clips [Links below]:



**INTRO FOR KEVIN
TO TEACHERS**



**STAND UP & LEARN
VIDEO #1 INTRO TO STUDENTS**



**STAND UP & LEARN:
#4 STORY TIME**



**TREVOR NOAH: "HOW
IS YOUR DOG, FUFI?"**



**CLASS
CLOWN**



**VIDEO FOR
STUDENTS**



Comedic Storytelling
Rubric (1 per student)



Finding Your Story
Handout (1 per student)

Part 1:

MINI-LESSON - COMEDIC STORYTELLING

1. Welcome & Set the Tone.

Comedic storytelling is the art of sharing a personal story that entertains through humor and wit. It employs exaggeration, surprise, physicality, and timing to transform everyday moments into something worth laughing about.

2. Watch & Discuss

- Play the Stand Up & Learn Video: #1 Intro to Students
- Discussion Questions:
 - What is comedic storytelling?
 - What are the three parts to a good story?
- Play Video: Difference Between a Comic and a Class Clown
- Discussion Questions:
 - When you think of comics, what words come to mind?
 - When you think of a class clown, what words come to mind?
 - Where do they overlap and how are they different?



3. Video Example: Trevor Noah

As a whole group, ask students:

- What made the story funny?
- What physical actions or expressions did he use?
- What storytelling techniques stood out?

Example student responses might include:

- Something unexpected happened.
- They found out they were completely wrong about the dog.
- Even though it was sad in the moment, looking back he could see the humor in the story.
- He made funny facial expressions.
- He used a funny voice.
- He paused for emphasis.
- He pretended to cry.
- He was gesturing excitedly and talking with his hands.
- He acted shocked/surprised.



4. Group Activity

Now, in your groups, discuss other examples of comedic storytellers you are familiar with.

- Reflect on when you last heard a story that genuinely made you laugh.
- Think about comedic storytellers you might have seen on TV, YouTube, or perhaps even individuals you know personally.
- What do you like about how they tell stories?
- What makes their stories funny?

As you discuss in your groups, try to capture ideas about what makes a story funny in one or two words. Write those words or phrases on sticky notes.

Give students 10 minutes to discuss and generate ideas in their groups. If groups are struggling to come up with ideas and time allows for it, consider showing additional examples of comedic storytelling (*alternative examples can be found under Additional Resources in the teacher guide*).

Once the sticky notes are posted, have the students look for themes.

- Highlight common techniques: exaggeration, timing, voice, facial expressions, physical movement, twist endings.
- Video for students - "Difference between a comic and a class clown" Interview clips with comics

Part 2:

MINI-LESSON: STORY IDEAS

1. Whole Group Brainstorm: Story Ideas

As a whole group, encourage kids to recall and share real-life moments/events.

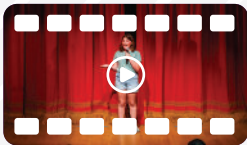
- Example ideas: First day at a new school, trip to the dentist, traveling somewhere
 - For example, remember the time your mom made you get all dressed up for “Dress Like a Rock Star” day on the WRONG DAY? At the time, you may have felt horrified and embarrassed. In that moment, it probably didn’t seem very funny. However, as you reflect on the experience, it can become a funny story to retell.

- Questions to spark ideas and discuss:
 - Have you ever gotten in trouble for doing something?
 - What are some funny things your pet has done?
 - What are some things that happened on a camping trip or at summer camp?

Part 3:

PRACTICE: FIND YOUR OWN STORY

1. Watch Video: Comics Describe How They Use Story



2. Today, we have focused on finding your story.

- Write a Quick List: Kids jot down as many story notes in their seed notebook as they can. These are just short notes or phrases to help them remember.



3. Select Your Favorite

- Kids review their lists and select a few story notes that seem the funniest or most exciting to explore.
 - Which story or stories have the most potential?
 - Which story or stories do you find funny? Which story or stories do you think others will find funny?
 - Put a check next to the story or stories you would like to continue to consider for your comedic storytelling performance.

These stories will become the focus of the upcoming lessons.

Part 4:

UNDERSTANDING THE RUBRIC

Distribute a Comedic Storytelling Rubric handout to each kid.

Introducing The Rubric

Today marks just the beginning. As you work to find the funny in a personal narrative and prepare to deliver a comedic story, we'll use a Comedic Storytelling Rubric to guide your process.

How You'll Use The Rubric

Each day, you will refer to the rubric to reflect on your progress and that of your classmates.

You'll review the rubric criteria daily to consider what you and your classmates are doing well and to identify areas for improvement to ensure a strong comedic performance.

Each group will take a closer look at a section of the rubric:

Group 1: Story Development

Group 2: Use of Physicality

Group 3: Application of Feedback

Group 4: Stage Presence

Group 5: Reflection

For your assigned section, collaborate to summarize how to progress from beginning to strong on the rubric.

What will kids need to do to ensure they transition from beginning to strong throughout the unit? Create a summary to share with the group.

You have 5 minutes. Have each group share out.

Sample kid responses include:

- **Group 1:** Story Development – well-organized story that is easy to understand, has a clear beginning, middle, and end, use descriptive language that paints a picture, funny
- **Group 2:** Use of Physicality – use physical movement to enhance the story and make it funnier
- **Group 3:** Application of Punch Up – enhance story with things like exaggeration or impressions
- **Group 4:** Stage Presence – be loud, clear, confident, make eye contact, interact with the audience
- **Group 5:** Reflection – apply feedback to improve story and give feedback to help others improve their stories

What questions do you have about the rubric?

Part 5:

REFLECTION

In their seed notebook, ask kids to respond to:

- What's one thing I learned today about how to make a story more engaging?
- What's one idea I'd like to try in my own story?

