

Lesson 4:

PUNCH UP YOUR STORY: FIND YOUR FUNNY

Overview:

Today, we will explore how comedians use wordplay, timing, and surprise to make stories funny. Kids will learn about common comedy tools and experiment with incorporating them into their own writing. From puns to punchlines, they will begin to identify their personal comedic voice and apply it to enhance their stories.

Objectives:

- Identify and apply comedic storytelling techniques (e.g., wordplay, misdirection, exaggeration).
- Practice using multiple joke formats (e.g., The Rule of Three, Cringe, List, Absurdity).
- Experiment with writing comedic lines or moments that enhance their personal stories.
- Reflect on work and provide feedback on others' work to indicate an understanding of comedic storytelling techniques
- Use the Comedic Storytelling Rubric criteria to evaluate the use of physicality and application of comedic elements
- Practice performing in front of peers

Materials Needed:



Toolbox
Handout



Seed Notebooks



Comedic Storytelling
Rubric (1 per student)



Two-Star and A Wish
Feedback Handout

Video clips [Links below]:



VIDEO FOR KIDS:
TYPES OF JOKES
EXAGGERATION



VIDEO FOR KIDS:
TYPES OF JOKES
#5 JOKUS TYPICUS



VIDEO FOR KIDS:
TYPES OF JOKES
#3 WHAT U LAUGHING AT?



VIDEO FOR KIDS: COMEDIANS
AND THEIR TYPES OF JOKES

MINI-LESSON - FINDING YOUR FUNNY, COMEDY TOOLBOX

1. Welcome and Set the Tone

Being funny isn't just about acting goofy or being loud. Comedy writing is a craft. The words you choose, the punctuation you use, and the order in which you say things can all create a joke that sticks.

Introduce the idea of a "comedy toolbox"—a set of writing tools that help storytellers add humor through structure, language, and timing.

2. Videos & Group Discussion

Watch these videos:
Exaggeration,
#3 WHAT U LAUGHING AT?,
#5 Jokus Typicus



3. Comedy Toolbox Overview and Discussion

- Pass out or project the Comedy Toolbox handout. Discuss various joke styles with the kids. Use the examples to explain the techniques and ask for the kids' reactions.
- Key Joke Structures to Review: Wordplay (puns, homophones), The Surprise (misdirection), The Triple (Rule of Three), The List (gets funnier with detail), The Cringe (self-deprecating humor), Absurdity (random or extreme situations), Exaggeration, Juxtaposition, Inversion
- Questions to Discuss:
 - What's your favorite kind of joke or style?
 - Which of these have you heard or seen before?

4. Group Activity

- Divide kids into groups. Assign each group one comedy tool (e.g., Wordplay, Rule of Three, Exaggeration).
- Each group must:
 - Come up with one original sentence or short joke using that tool.
 - Write it on a sticky note.
 - Post all the jokes on a "Laugh Wall" or chart paper. Read some aloud and invite classmates to snap, clap, or laugh along.



Part 2:

PRACTICE & PUNCH IT UP

STAND UP
& LEARN

1. Kids choose a moment from their personal story (from earlier lessons, in your seed notebooks) and rewrite a section using one or more comedy tools. Encourage them to try punctuation techniques to enhance their delivery, such as using ellipses, bold adjectives, and dramatic periods.

2. Peer Share & Feedback

- Punch up your stories by giving and receiving feedback using a framework, "Two Stars and a Wish."
- As you watch your partners perform, write down two stars—positive aspects of the performance—and explain why you liked that aspect of their performance.
- Then note a wish—an idea you have for a way your partner can use things like elaboration, exaggeration, impressions, and/or physicality to punch up their story.

3. The teacher will meet with individuals during this time to help them punch-up their stories.

Part 3:

REFLECTION

Have kids respond in their notebooks:

- What joke type did you enjoy using most?
- How did word choice or punctuation make your writing feel more "you"?
- What's one tool you want to keep practicing?

