**Conceptualizing & Creating a Set Design**

**Author Name:**

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**Unit Objective:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of the elements of design and the design process by creating/presenting a finished set design model.

This curriculum unit uses Michael Gillette’s “Theatrical Design and Production” textbook as a resource throughout the lessons and instruction.

**Learning Level:**

Intermediate/Advanced.

This was designed specifically for a Stage Crew class at a high school. The tech class’ main responsibilities are to run events, set ups, and support Westlake events. They build and paint the sets take care of any other tech needs for the drama productions. The bulk of their grade comes from supporting these events. Often times, these set ups, builds, and trainings happen during class hours, so it’s not uncommon for there to be a day of tech work that happens in-between normal lessons in units. This unit was designed to work in that style of classroom where students will likely have several in class work days in-between instruction.

**Prior Experience:**

Up to this point, students have studied jobs/roles in the Tech theatre world, the tech chain of command. Students have taken a tour of the auditorium, Students have learned about the different theatre spaces (arena, proscenium, black box, thrust, found space, etc…) and have had lessons on basic script analysis as it applies to theatrical design work.

**2014 National Arts Core Theatre Standards:**

TH:Re8.1.II

a. Develop detailed supporting evidence and criteria to reinforce artistic choices, when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.

The:Pr4.1.II

a. Discover how unique choices shape believable and sustainable drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr6.1.II

a. Present a drama/theatre work using creative processes that shape the production for a specific audience

TH:Re9.1.I

c. Formulate a deeper understanding and appreciation of a drama/theatre work by considering its specific purpose or intended audience.

TH:Re8.1.I

a. Analyze and compare artistic choices developed from personal experiences in multiple drama/theatre works.

c. Justify personal aesthetics, preferences and beliefs through participation in and observation of drama/theatre work.

**Big Idea:**

Set designers combine elements of color, shape, line, and texture to manipulate

the audience’s experience with a show.

**Essential Questions:**

* How can observation improve design skills?
* What is the purpose of going through each step of the design process?
* How do the elements of set design apply to other productions areas?

**Enduring Understandings:**

* Designers use their work to communicate a story to the audience and to manipulate their thoughts/feelings according to the show’s concept
* Effective set designs:
  + “Reflect the production team’s agreed-upon interpretation of the production concept
  + Exhibit a unity of style among all aspects of that production
  + Provide visual information about the world of the play including locale, period, season, time of day, culture, as well as the play’s socioeconomic, religious, and political environment” (Gillette pg. 452)

**Key Knowledge & Skills:**

* Collaboration, Commitment, Critical Thinking, Analysis, Elements of Design, Creating & Construction, Self Reflection.

**Authentic Performance Tasks:**

**Note:** A few weeks prior to Lesson 1, students were assigned to choose and start reading a play that they would use in the upcoming set design unit (must be a straight play—not a musical) and were asked to bring their script to class the next day to be checked off for points. Students have been instructed to bring their scripts to class each day during the set design unit.

**Lesson 1: *Elements of Design Part 1!***

Students will demonstrate their understanding of how shape, line, and texture and principles of composition communicate in design by analyzing their effect in several designs.

**Lesson 2: *Elements of Design Part 2!***

Students will demonstrate their understanding of how color communicates in design by doing a color response activity and brainstorming colors for their set project.

**Lesson 3: *The Viz!***

Students will be able to communicate a designer’s concept by choosing and presenting a viz for a popular fairy tale.

**Lesson 4: *Given Circumstances, Research, & Inspiration!***

Students will prepare to create and present a design/research presentation for the play they have chosen by learning how to identify and use given circumstances in a script to shape and inform their design.

**Lesson 5: *Presenting Like A Pro!***

Students will be able to verbalize and justify their design concept & choices by presenting their production viz & research PowerPoint in a mock designer presentation.

**Lesson 6: *From Research/Concept to Design***

Students will synthesize their analysis and research to create a set design model.

**Lesson 7: *Final Set Design***

Students will present their final set design for the class by showing/explaining their set design models.

**Lesson 1: *Elements of Design Part 1!***

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**Lesson Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of how shape, line, and texture and principles of composition communicate in design by analyzing their effect in several designs.

**Materials Needed:**

AV hook ups

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN/PRINICPLES OF COMPOSITION Handouts

ELEMENTS OF DESIGN/PRINICPLES OF COMPOSITION PPT

Analysis Activity Pictures (These can be printed or in PPT form)

Analysis Activity Slips (cut out, enough for each student to have one)

A box, hat, bag, really anything that the slips can be put into

**Prep**

* At the start of the class have the projector/speakers set up.

**Hook**

While students are taking their seats, cue up a clip from *The Lord Protector* (This movie is kind of a design train wreck-it’s the classic awesome baaaad movie-it’s meant to be an epic adventure film, but it comes across as silly). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04FObq85XSA)

* Watch the clip as a class

When the clip is over, ask students what their initial impressions were of the production based on the designs in the clip.

* Overall, would you say that the designers were successful in communicating the story in their designs? Why or why not?
* What could they have done better?

**Discussion/Transition**

Read students Michael Gillette’s “Author’s Caveat” from *Theatrical Design and Production*

* “The following is another one of those “author’s caveats” that I’ve sprinkled throughout this book. I urge, gentle reader, to pay attention to the amazingly boring material in the following two sections and learn both the elements of design and the principles of composition. A personal aside here: I *hate* learning definitions/principles just for the sake of learning them. Always have, always will. But I’ve also learned the hard way that having a though understanding of these definitions and principles will actually make it easier for you to create meaningful compositions. And creating “meaningful compositions” –scenic/costume/lighting/projection designs that shape and influence audiences understanding of he play that they’re watching—is the reason that most people want to study this stuff in the first place. So hang in there, it’ll get “funner” after a while.”

Briefly explain that this is sort of a disclaimer that unpacks the reasons why good designers need to study/learn the nitty gritty technical design definitions (such as elements of design and principles of composition) before they jump into designing.

* How many of you relate to this? (dislike learning definitions just for the sake of learning them)
* Have you had experiences like Gillette describes? (done the boring stuff first so could do the fun stuff more effectively?)
* WHY is it important to learn basics first?
* Taking the time to learn these items (elements of design) will make you a far better designer in the long run.
  + You will avoid having train wreck *Lord Protector* design work and YOU will have an easier, more enjoyable time later on when you are able to use all these tools to create)

**Instruction**

Hand out a Design/Composition Handout to each of the students in the class. Cue up the corresponding PPT presentation. Go through the slides and handout with the students (using the teacher copy as a reference), having them take notes on their copies of the handout. (Remind them that they’ll want to hold onto these notes, they’ll be very helpful throughout this unit)

Use the images in the slides to illustrate and unpack the definitions for each element of design and principle of composition. Ask what questions students have periodically throughout the presentation.

**Transition**

Ask students how do design and composition elements work individually to have an effect?

How do the elements of design play into the principles of composition?

How can analysis of these principles and elements help you as a designer?

**Analysis Activity**

Explain that students will now have the chance to practice analysis with these principles.

Cue up the Analysis Activity Pictures PPT and have students take out a blank sheet of paper. Bring out the design/composition slips. Have each student draw a slip. Explain that you will project a design image. Students’ job is to write an analyze for each image focusing specifically on an element/principle that they drew. Use the questions to guide students in their analysis

* What story does the design tell?
* How is this element/principle present in the design?
* What effect does it have on the overall mood/message of the design?

Go through 1-2 images, then have students switch pieces of papers. Do another couple images having students

Have students get into small groups 3-4 and take 5-10 mins to share their analysis of the different images.

**Wrap Up/Discussion**

Ask students to share what their experience was like.

What discoveries did you make during analysis?

How can knowing these principles help you as you start to design?

**Assessment:** Students will be assessed by their participation in class activities, they should keep their notes for next time.

**Elements of Design & Principles of Composition**

**Teacher Copy**

This information from J. Michael Gillette’s *Theatrical Design and Production* pgs 78-85

**Elements of Design**

**Line:** a mark that connects two points. The characteristics of a line are determined by

* **Dimension**—the length and width of a line
* **Quality**—the line’s shape, value (how light/dark it is), and its contrast with surrounding objects. Ex-lines can be straight, curvilinear, angled, jagged, serpentine, or any combination of these characteristics
* **Character**—the lines’ emotionally evocative characteristics (ex- long lines more noticeable than short, lines that contrast strongly with surroundings/backgrounds draw more attention than those that don’t, etc…)

**Shape:** Any line that encloses a space creates a shape

* In set design, shapes create walls, platforms & defines outlines of windows, doors, furniture, etc…

**Mass:** the three-dimensional manifestation of shape. Creates an awareness of depth and spatial arrangements

**Position:** the relative location of adjacent shapes or masses. (both the distance between objects and their placement to other forms around them.

**Texture:** the visual or tactile surface characteristics or appearance of an object (ex-rough, soft, fuzzy, slick/metallic). Provides clues to the play’s psychological environment (ex-smooth surfaces could suggest a finished, orderly type of environment vs. rough textures which could suggest a less polished, harsher atmosphere)

**Principles of Composition**

**Unity:** creating a stylistic plan that all elements fit into. (Ex-Production concept) Each part of the design fits/connects with the production concept.

**Harmony**: the blending and unity that happens when all elements of a design fit together. The combination of design elements seem to naturally blend or flow together, avoids discordant/incompatible contrasts.

**Contrast:** the juxtaposition of dissimilar design elements. Effective contrast works in opposition to the major or dominant visual theme in a composition, it is balanced. Too much contrast can destroy a visual theme, but too little contrast (to much harmony) will be monotonous.

**Variation:** Variation of monotonous elements can create visual interest (ex-using a simple repeated floor pattern can be boring, but varying the shape of every second or third object can create visual interest that highlights the whole design. Line, shape, texture can all be varied.

**Balance:** achieved by arranging design elements to give a sense of restfulness or equilibrium to the design. The two types of balance are

* **Symmetrical Balance**: if the design were folded in half both sides would mirror each other perfectly
* **Asymmetrical Balance:** balance created through juxtaposition of dissimilar design elements (line, form, mass, value, color)

**Emphasis**: directing the audience’s attention to a specific place. (ex-in scenic design the focal points would be areas of the stage which specific scenes or moments are played in). Can be created in different ways (ex-converging lines or changing textures can direct audience’s attention to specific locations in a set)

**Elements of Design & Principles of Composition Handout**

**Elements of Design**

**Line:** a mark that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The characteristics of a line are determined by

* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**:the length and width of a line
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**Shape:** Any line that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Principles of Composition**

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Slips for Analysis Activity

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| LINE | LINE |
| SHAPE | SHAPE |
| MASS | MASS |
| POSITION | POSITION |
| TEXTURE | TEXTURE |
| UNITY | UNITY |
| HARMONY | HARMONY |
| CONTRAST | CONTRAST |
| VARIATION | VARIATION |
| BALANCE | BALANCE |

**Lesson 2: *Elements of Design Part 2!***

**Lesson Objective:** Students will demonstrate their understanding of how color communicates in design by doing a color response activity and brainstorming colors for their set project.

**Materials Needed:**

AV hook ups

COLOR PPT Slides

Set Design Color Brainstorm worksheets

**Prep**

* At the start of the class have the projector/speakers set up.

**Hook**

Have students pull out a piece of paper & a pen/pencil

Go to COLOR PPT slide 1

* Have students list their responses to the colors (List what emotions, images, ideas they envision, when they think of this color)
* This should be fairly detailed, take 5-10 mins on this

Go through COLOR PPT slides 3-11

Have students share their responses for each color

Go over the info for each color on the slides.

**Instruction/Discussion**

Go through COLOR PPT slides 12-15

Have students take notes on the main points of color terminology

Use COLOR PPT slides 17-18 to discuss how designers use color to manipulate audience responses.

**Application**

Have students analyze the color palettes for each production On COLOR PPT slides 19-22

* What stands out in each image?
* How do the designers use color to emphasize portions of the environment? How about the characters?
* What affect do these choices have?

**Script Work**

Have students take out their scripts (the ones they’re doing their design project on). Give each student a copy of the set design color brainstorm worksheet.

Give students 10-15 minutes to write down/answer the following questions on the worksheet

* What is the environment of your play?
  + Is in one location the whole time? Several?
* Do you want your characters to stand out more or their environment?
* What color choices could you make with your set to support the things you want to emphasize?
* What moods do you want to establish? What colors capture that mood? Why?

Have a couple of students share some of their answers/ideas.

* If any are struggling, walk through the questions with students-giving examples of what answers to these might look like.

At the end of the class period, have students hold on to their worksheets. They’ll need them for upcoming projects and will turn them in at the end of the unit with their final project.

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**SET DESIGN COLOR BRAINSTORM**

What is the environment of your play? Is in one location the whole time or in several? (list them below)

**Now choose 1 scene from your play. This is what you will be designing for through the rest of the unit. When you have decided which scene you will use, answer the following questions about it.**

Do you want your characters to stand out more or their environment?

What color choices could you make with your set to support the things you want to emphasize?

What moods do you want to establish? What colors capture that mood? Why?

**Lesson 3: *The Viz!***

**Lesson Objective:** Students will be able to communicate a designer’s concept by choosing and presenting a viz for a popular fairy tale.

**Materials Needed:**

AV hook ups

Viz Images PPT

Several Sound Clips

* I used Jacques Offenbach’s Orpheus in the Underworld (7:50-8:50)
* A heavy metal version of Greensleeves
* A spy sounding song (some Cowboy Bebop)

**Hook:**

Once students are all settled in, lead them in this hypothetical situation:

Imagine that I’m directing (Insert any well known show title here—I used Romeo & Juliet). I met with my design team, told them what show we’re doing, that I was very excited about it, and then asked everyone to come back with their finished designs next time. And that was all the info I gave the design team.

* What do you imagine we’ll discover about the designs when everyone meets again to present them next time?
* Explain that without giving the team a concept and a solid image to anchor ideas to, it’s very possible that the designs (lights, set, costume, sound, etc..) will reflect different interpretations of the show that won’t mesh well with each other. There’s a lack of unity.
* If we did a show like that (—chances are pretty good that the audience would be all sorts of confused.)

**Transition:**

That’s why we need what is called a viz—the director brings an image, piece of music, something that all the designers can use to connect their ideas to.

Viz should capture the emotions, mood, images that you want the audience to experience. The things that you want to be represented in your designs

Viz can be an image, an object, or even music (in this class, we use music w/o lyrics)

**Image Viz Practice: Little Red Riding Hood**

Go over the basic plot of “Little Red Riding Hood” so that people can remember it.

* Have student volunteers recount main plot points

Show 1st Viz image—imagine we’re doing production of Little Red Riding Hood, director showed you this image for the viz

* What kinds of feelings to you get? (what emotions? What mood? What attitudes?)
* How might this be interpreted in elements of design? What colors, textures, shapes, might be in this world, etc…?

Show 2nd Viz image, how does this image change our understanding of the play?

* What kind of set could we create based off of this?
* How did these images help you understand what style/mood the director is going for with this show?

**Music as Viz: The three little pigs**

Quickly review the basic plot of this story

Play several different clips of music for students—again having them analyze the following for each:

* Feelings (what emotions, moods, attitudes does this music give off?)
* Concept (what do you visualize? Color, texture, images, shapes etc might be in this world?)
* How might we translate what we feel from the Viz to a set design (what could we do to translate that into something solid?)

**Designer Application Assignment**

We’ve just worked to interpret a viz. As designer, your job is to come up with a viz to support your concept.

As a class, read a popular fairy tale (we used Goldilocks & The Three Bears)

**Assignment:**

You are going to create a design viz for G&TTB. Can be an image, object, or music. Just make sure you can explain what story you want to tell, what your concept is, and how your viz supports the ideas/mood/concept that you want to communicate.

Bring Viz next time, you will present them for eachother.

**Lesson 3 Continued…**

The next class period, students will present their Viz to the class. This will likely take the entire period.

**Procedure for presentations:**

One student will present at a time. During presentations, class members should list 1-2 questions or observations that they have about each viz/presentation.

After each presentation, students will have 3-4 minutes to ask questions/discuss the viz. Point out good things students are doing in their presentations. Ask questions as well to help presenters expand their ideas if needed.

**Assessment:** Students will be given points for their participation (if they have written, asked questions). Question/response papers will be turned in. Students will be given points for their presentations. Since this is a practice for the final, I gave students full points if they presented a viz.

**Lesson 4: *Given Circumstances, Research, & Inspiration!***

**Lesson Objective:** Students will prepare to create and present a design/research presentation for the play they have chosen by learning how to identify and use given circumstances in a script to shape and inform their design.

**Materials Needed:**

AV hook ups

*Monty Python & The Holy Grail* Witch Scene (transcript)

RESEARCH PPT Slides

Research Presentation Rubric Sheet

**Hook:**

Have projector set up & *Monty Python* text displayed

Call for 3 student volunteers—assign each a role from the scene. They will read it for the class. While this happens, the class’ job is to look for and note as many clues about the characters and the setting as they can.

* What could you tell about the world the characters live in (and the characters themselves) from what was read? How?

**Instruction:**

Open the RESEARCH PPT Slides

Go through slides 1-9

* These introduce the 6 main “Given Circumstances” and explain why GC and research are necessary in the design process
* Student should take notes on the GC info
* Check for understanding along the way, ask for questions, for students’ observations, etc…

**Application:**

Have students pull out their scripts/notebooks where they have been doing their set design application work.

Have them review their scripts and identify the Given Circumstances for their play.

* Location(s)-Where does the story take place?
* Time-When does it take place?)
* Economic Climate
* Social Environment
* Political Environment
* Religious Environment

Which of these circumstances are most important or highly emphasized in your particular play? How does this affect your set design ideas?

**Assignment:**

Wrap up class by going through slides 12-16. These quickly outline students’ next assignment for their set design project—A viz & research presentation. Presentations will begin the next class period. Make sure students copy down the requirements & q’s are answered. They should also prepare to give a quick (few sentences) summary of their play before presenting.

**NOTE:** When I taught this unit, the stage crew class had to use the next couple class periods following this lesson to complete set ups for school events. Therefore, students created their presentations at home. The presentations were due about a week after the assignment was given. I emailed them the slides and other requirements to help them as they worked. If your students have access to a computer lab or other equipment you can give them time the next day to work on presentations during class, etc…The power is yours!

Monty Python & The Holy Grail: A Witch!

[A wild crowd gathers in a medieval town square. They are dragging along a woman who looks completely normal aside from the false nose attached to her face and the funnel hat she is wearing. The crowd approaches the wise SIR BEDEVERE who is standing in the town square]

CROWD: A witch! A witch! A witch! We've got a witch! A witch!

VILLAGER #1: We have found a witch, might we burn her?

CROWD: Burn her! Burn!

BEDEVERE: How do you know she is a witch?

VILLAGER #2: She looks like one.

BEDEVERE: Bring her forward.

WITCH: I'm not a witch. I'm not a witch.

BEDEVERE: But you are dressed as one.

WITCH: They dressed me up like this.

CROWD: No, we didn't... no.

WITCH: And this isn't my nose, it's a false one.

BEDEVERE: Well?

VILLAGER #1: Well, we did do the nose.

BEDEVERE: The nose?

VILLAGER #1: And the hat -- but she is a witch!

CROWD: Burn her! Witch! Witch! Burn her!

BEDEVERE: Did you dress her up like this?

CROWD: No, no... no ... yes. Yes, yes, a bit, a bit.

VILLAGER #1: She has got a wart.

BEDEVERE: What makes you think she is a witch?

VILLAGER #3: Well, she turned me into a newt.

BEDEVERE: A newt?

VILLAGER #3: I got better.

VILLAGER #2: Burn her anyway!

CROWD: Burn! Burn her!

BEDEVERE: Quiet, quiet. Quiet! There are ways of telling whether she is a witch.

CROWD: Are there? What are they? Do they hurt?

BEDEVERE: Tell me, what do you do with witches?

VILLAGER #2: Burn!

CROWD: Burn, burn them up!

BEDEVERE: And what do you burn apart from witches?

VILLAGER #1: More witches!

VILLAGER #2: Wood!

BEDEVERE: So, why do witches burn?

[pause, villagers are confused, wracking their brains to figure out the answer]

VILLAGER #3: B--... 'cause they're made of wood...?

BEDEVERE: Good!

CROWD: Oh yeah, yeah...

BEDEVERE: So, how do we tell whether she is made of wood?

VILLAGER #1: Build a bridge out of her.

BEDEVERE: Aah, but can you not also build bridges out of stone?

VILLAGER #2: Oh, yeah.

BEDEVERE: Does wood sink in water?

VILLAGER #1: No, no.

VILLAGER #2: It floats! It floats!

VILLAGER #1: Throw her into the pond!

CROWD: The pond!

BEDEVERE: What also floats in water?

VARIOUS CROWD MEMBEERS: Bread! Apples! Very small rocks! Cider! Great gravy! Cherries! Mud! Churches! Lead!

ARTHUR: A duck.

CROWD: Oooh.

BEDEVERE: Exactly! So, logically...,

VILLAGER #1: If... she.. weighs the same as a duck, she's made of wood.

BEDEVERE: And therefore--?

VILLAGER #1: A witch!

CROWD: A witch!

BEDEVERE: We shall use my larger scales!

[yelling of approval, excitement, and yelling for yelling’s sake from the mob]

BEDEVERE: Right, remove the supports!

CROWD: A witch! A witch!

WITCH: It's a fair cop.

CROWD: Burn her! Burn! [yelling]

BEDEVERE: Who are you who are so wise in the ways of science?

ARTHUR: I am Arthur, King of the Britons.

BEDEVERE: My liege!

ARTHUR: Good Sir knight, will you come with me to Camelot, and join us at the Round Table?

BEDEVERE: My liege! I would be honored.

ARTHUR: What is your name?

BEDEVERE: Bedevere, my leige.

ARTHUR: Then I dub you Sir Bedevere, Knight of the Round Table

**Set Design Research Presentation Assignment**

**Part 1:** Find a visual item (a photo, object, etc..) or a piece of music (or both) that communicates your design ideas for the play you have chosen. Item must be brought and briefly explained. Make sure you use this to verbalize what your design concept is and that the choices you make in your presentation support this.

**Part 2:** Create and be prepared to present a PowerPoint (or Prezi) presentation that includes the following:

**6 Slides**-each slide should outline one of the given circumstances for your play

* Location, Time, and Economic, Social, Political, & Religious Environment

**2 Slides**--how you plan to use the elements of design based on your concept

* Line, color palette, shape, textures, etc…

**3-4 Slides**—What you are thinking of using in your set design based on your research (need images!!!)

* Ex—types of furniture, decoration, projections, or other set pieces

**Research Presentation Rubric**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Rating** |
| Viz Presentation | 1 2 3 4 |
|  |  |
| Location Slide | 1 2 3 4 |
| Time Slide | 1 2 3 4 |
| Economic Environment Slide | 1 2 3 4 |
| Social Environment Slide | 1 2 3 4 |
| Political Environment Slide | 1 2 3 4 |
| Religious Environment Slide | 1 2 3 4 |
|  |  |
| 2 Design Element Slides | 1 2 3 4 |
|  |  |
| 3-4 Set Design Idea Slides | 1 2 3 4 |
|  |  |
|  |  |

**Grading Key:**

**1**=Presenter gives clear, concise description of the item. Provides appropriate supporting details that enhance the presentation and clearly communicate designer’s ideas.

**2**=Presenter provides mostly clear description of the item. Might be missing supporting details and/or provides a bit of tangential information. Ideas mostly communicated.

**3**=Presenter gives unclear description of the item. Missing supporting details and/or provides excessive unnecessary/tangential information. Ideas difficult to understand.

**4**=No description of the item. No slide present. No communication attempted.

**Lesson 5: *Presenting Like A Pro!***

**Lesson Objective**: Students will be able to verbalize and justify their design concept & choices by presenting their production viz & research PowerPoints in a mock designer presentation.

**Materials Needed:**

AV Hook ups

Research Presentation Rubric Sheets (one for each student)

**Presentation Protocol:**

One student will present at a time. Students should give a quick description of the play, show & explain their Viz and the rest of their presentation. Remind students about professionalism (should be present both in self/presentation & in respect for others)

During presentations, class members should list 1-2 observations (or questions) that they have about each presentation.

After each presentation, students will have 2 minutes to ask questions/discuss the viz or any of the research. Point out good things students are doing in their presentations. Ask questions as well to help presenters expand their ideas if needed.

**Assessment:**

Students will be given points for their participation (if they have written, asked questions). Question/response papers will be turned in.

Students will be graded on their presentations using the Research Presentation Rubric.

NOTE: These will likely take multiple class periods to get through.

**Lesson 6: *From Research/Concept to Design***

**Lesson Objective:** Students will synthesize their analysis and research to create a set design model.

**Materials Needed:**

AV Hook Ups

*Theatre Design & Production* – J. Michael Gillette (this is just for teacher reference)

Set Model PPT

Paper, Colored pencils

**Hook:** At the start of class, have the projector and PPT set up. Ask students what phase of design are we in now?

* **Implementation—“**where produce plans, drawings, models that allow the set design idea you have selected to be constructed” Gillette pg. 174
* This is when designers flesh out their work in several phases/forms.

Have students take out their notebooks and take notes on the following info: (Take about 15-20ish minutes to go over it, answering any questions students have as you go along) Go through the PPT using the info below to explain the items on the presentation.

**Thumbnail Sketches** (Following info from Gillette, page 173)

“Rough drawings, usually made in pencil, that show the general composition of the set but very little detail. Generally made while the designer is developing various concepts for the set as she or he is doing conceptual research.”

* Almost always unfinished drawings.
* Purpose: Provide rough visualization of various scenic concepts designer is working.

What is the benefit of doing rapid drawings like this?

* Lessens inhibitions of prod team when suggesting changes,
* Helps designer keep from being too locked into one particular design concept too soon.

**Renderings** (Following info from Gillette, page 173)

“Finished color sketches of the set.”

* Normally drawn to scale
  + WHY would this be important? (provides accurate representation of actual size, shapes, colors of set)
* Complete (represents type, style, and location of any furniture, includes trims, curtains, any decorative touches to be used on the set)

**Models** (Following from Gillette, page 175)

What is the point of a set model?

* To clearly show where everything is in relation to other stuff onstage.
* Director/other designers/even actors clear visual of what the finished product will look like.
  + Can help them plan/better understand how to use the space
  + MOST useful when in accurate scale w/the stage space & type (proscenium, thrust, arena, etc…)

Two types

1. Functional Model
   1. 3-D Equivalent of thumbnail sketch
   2. Usually made out of thin cardboard, sometimes designers go through several versions of these. Can be used by the director to plan blocking, show actors, etc…
2. Production Model
   1. Complete visualization of the scenic designer’s concept. In professional world: it is built to scale, fully painted, completely decorated with all furniture, props, and set dressing to be used in the production

Designers do ground plans, front elevations, detail, full scale drawings and other paperwork.

**Set Model Requirements:**

Explain that their next project is to create a model for 1 scene of your play

Model can be in any 3-D form (paper structure, Lego, cake, sugar cube, whatever!)

Set Model should:

1. Clearly show the structure of the set
2. Include representation of all furniture, set pieces, anything you plan to have onstage as part of the set.
3. **SUPPORT YOUR CONCEPT** by reflecting ideas from your viz and research presentation. (We’re talking color pallet, all that stuff)

Assign students a due date for the model. Explain that they will need to be prepared to present it on the due date.

* NOTE: Presentation date will depend on the schedule/needs of your class. The class I taught this unit in had a pretty long gap between when the assignment was given and when they presented their final models (we had to build the set for the fall play). If this happens to you as well, make sure you remind students of the project due date and requirements along the way.

**Brainstorm Activity: Thumbnail Sketches**

Set a timer for 10-15 minutes. Students have this amount of time to create 3 different thumbnail sketches for their chosen scene.

When time is up, have students share what that experience was like. Was it difficult to move quickly? Did it help free you up?

Have students pick a sketch they like and spend the next 10-15 minutes expanding upon what they started. Have them us this as a guide as they work to construct their final model project at home.

**Lesson 7: *Final Set Design***

**Lesson Objective:** Students will present their final set design for the class by showing/explaining their set design models.

**Materials Needed:**

2 Large tables (have them set up in the front of the room)

Set Model Presentation Point Breakdown sheets

**Presentation Day:**

At the start of class, have students set up their 3-D models on the table.

Give students 2-3 minutes to walk around and look at the different types of models that were created.

Have students take a seat and begin the formal presentations. Each student will take a turn (3-5ish mins) formally presenting their model to the class.

Students’ presentations will be graded using the set model/presentation breakdown as they present.

**Self Assessment:**

After all models have been presented, put on some instrumental music. Have students take out a pen/pencil and paper and spend some time answering the following questions:

* What were some exciting design choices you saw in others’ work?
* How did you see designers applying their viz/research in their design choices?
* What were some new discoveries you made about your show through the design process?
* What do you feel you did well with throughout the unit? (Be specific)
* What do you feel you could improve on? (Be specific)

**Discussion:**

Go through the questions and have students share some of their answers that they gave to the questions they reflected on. Share some of your insights, things you’ve learned/been impressed with in their work throughout the unit.

**Wrap up:**

Have students turn in their self assessments at the end of class. They will be given points for these.**Set Model/Presentation Point Breakdown**

1. Finished 3-D set model brought to class on time. **(45 pts possible)**
   1. If model is late (brought in after the class has started without making prior arrangements, 15 points will be docked)
   2. If student doesn’t bring model at all, they can bring and present it the next period but will be docked 25 points.
2. Clear, concise design concept explanation. **(10 pts possible)**
   1. If concept explanation is overly drawn out/full of unrelated details OR
   2. If concept is quickly breezed over without providing any details, points will be docked
3. Clear, concise explanation of how your model choices support your concept for the scene, and the research you did. (**15 pts possible)**
   1. If model explanation is overly drawn out/full of unrelated details OR
   2. If model explanation is quickly breezed over without providing any supporting details, points will be docked
4. Self reflection answered completely, with supporting details. **(30 pts possible)**
   1. Points will be docked if questions are skipped, or only partially answered

Just for funs…These are some set models my students created and presented! (Legos were very popular, as was Shakespeare—as they both should be!)

Set Design for Macbeth Act 3, Scene 4



Set Design for Julius Caesar Act 3, Scene 1

