Teaching As Performance

Monika Antonelli
University of North Texas
July 9, 2000
How Is Teaching Related to Performance?

All the world is a stage!
On the Stage of Life We All Have Roles. What’s Your Role Today?

- Audience member?
- Committee member?
- Library Instructor?
Whether You Like It or Not You Are Being Judged on Your Performance
Reduced to Their Most Basic Elements
Both Consist of Three Parts

- Theatre
  - Actor
  - Audience
  - Script

- Teaching
  - Instructor
  - Students
  - Lesson
How Do Theatrical Techniques Assist the Library Instructor?

- Increases:
  - Energy
  - Confidence
  - Spontaneity
How Do Theatrical Techniques Assist the Library Instructor?

- Teaches us to make full use of our body, voice, and environment
- Makes teaching more enjoyable
How Do Theatrical Techniques Assist the Student?

- Helps maintain attention
- Assists with retention and recall
- Makes learning more enjoyable
The Two Areas of Control

- Instructor
- Classroom
Four Performance Elements to Focus On

- Instructor/Performer
- The Script/Lesson Plan
- Setting the Stage in the Classroom
- Rehearsals
Both Actors and Instructors Use Their Mind, Body, and Voice to Communicate
Instructor/Performer

- Controlled energy
- Controlled movement
- Eye contact
- Vocal variety
Instructor/Performer Controlled Energy

- Good teaching is energetic teaching
  - Too low = boring
Instructor/Performers Controlled Energy

- Warm ups
  - Before class give yourself 5 minutes to be silent and alone
  - Neck and shoulder rolls
  - Stretches
Instructor/Performer Controlled Movement

Control of your student's attention is exercised through control of oneself
Instructor/Performer Controlled Movement

- Uncontrolled movements to avoid
  - Pacing
  - Crossing arms on chest
  - Fidgeting
  - Slumping
Instructor/Performer Controlled Movement

- It’s okay to be nervous
- Use movement to draw focus
- Try not to “walk” on your lines
Instructor/Performer Eye Contact

“The face is capable of over 20,000 expressions, but it is the eyes that are most often the distinguishing feature.”

– Arthur F. Olaisen Jr.

The charisma process
Instructor/Performer Eye Contact

- It is nearly impossible to engage a class of students by ignoring their presence.
- When eyes meet there is a sensation of physical contact. Use this!
Instructor/Performer Eye Contact

- Look your students in the eye
  - Don’t stare at one person
  - Scan the room right to left
  - Let your enjoyment of teaching show in your eyes
Instructor/Performer
Vocal Variety

To keep the attention of your students it is necessary to use the full range of your voice.
Instructor/Performer
Vocal Variety

- Everyone in the room should be able to hear you
- Enunciate
- Avoid physical tension in the throat