

# Jenny Clyde | Session 2:

## Staging Aesop's Fox Fables

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**List of Required Supplies:** Household items to use in theatre games such as chair or stool, box, kitchen utensils, sunglasses, blanket, scarves, etc.

**Space/Facility Requirements:** open floor space

**Student Time Required:** 60 minutes

### Step-by-step Instructions

Explore character through theatre games.

Review the stories. Ask students for a quick retelling. Refer to the text, if needed. Ask them about characters, plot, and setting (who, what, and where). Ask them for some words to describe Fox, Stork, Crow, and Tree with Grapes. (Yes! The tree can be a character. And no, real grapes don't grow from trees. They grow from a vine which could be held up by a tree or trellis. Or, in this case, an actor on a step ladder or holding a pole with grapes attached.) Write down describing words. They'll probably be things like mean, smart, silly, sneaky, nice, mad, sad. Perfect!

**Character Walk** – Students stand up and walk in a circle. Once they have a nice steady rhythm going, call out the name of a character. The kids then walk as that character. Call out all the characters from the Fox Fables one at a time. Each walk should be different. Now call out one of the describing words, then attach it to a character. For example, call out "mean." The students walk as a mean character. Say "mean fox" and the students walk as a mean fox. Call out a few more, such as "smart stork," and "sad crow." Praise the students' efforts. Ask students to sit for the next game.

**This Is Not A** – Choose an object nearby (a stool, for example.). Tell students this is not a (fill in the blank.). It can be anything but the actual object. The students then take turns, one-at-a-time, and use their imagination to show what else the object could be. A stool could be a ladder or a tree.

A student might sit on it and fly an airplane or lie flat on it and fly like a superhero. Turn it upside down or on its side. What could it be now? Make sure students “show” rather than tell what it is. At first, students may need some encouragement to play, but then they’ll probably be eager. Try a couple of different objects.

Use props and costumes to create characters and stories. Grab some random objects and scarves, blankets, old clothes, or dress up pieces. Let the students pull things out and create characters. In other words, play. They probably do this kind of thing all the time. Take note of what is happening. Are students creating characters that could be incorporated into Fox Fables? Sunglasses might help represent a sly fox. A fancy hat or scarf may be perfect for the stork. You get the idea.

Get their pictures from session 1. These should help students jog their memories and give them ideas to act. The students will act out each story. Choose a student to play each character. Are there some props or costume pieces from the previous activity that will help show the character or setting? Go ahead and use them. Students will act out the scenes in their own words as they go along. This is called improv. Working without a script will also help students stay in character and in the moment without having to worry about learning lines. The scenes should have a beginning, middle, and an end. Praise effort. These scenes are the basis for the performance. What worked well, what could be improved? Suggestions? We’re not looking for an exact replica of the story. Focus on imagination and character. Did someone use a fun twist on the story? Or portray a character in an unusual way? Awesome. What about props and costume pieces? What worked and what didn’t? Make a list to help you remember what went well. This is not a script, just some basic ideas. You can add to these during the next session.

Hopefully, everyone is having a good time. If students get frustrated at any point, just scale back.