

Mood Orchestra

How to do it:

Language Arts Content

Understanding character

Common Core Standards

RL.6.3 Describe how a plot unfolds as well as how the characters respond or change

W.6.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique

SL.6.4 Present claims and findings, using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation

Materials Needed

None

Vocabulary

Mood, emotion

- 1** Introduce the activity: “We’ve been paying attention to how characters’ moods drive or are driven by the plot of a story. Today’s activity will be a warmup for thinking more about characters’ moods. We’ll form an orchestra section but instead of making the sounds of instruments, we’ll make the sound of an emotion.”
- 2** Create sections of three or four students and have them stand, kneel, and sit in an orchestra-like arrangement. Assign each section an emotion, using rich vocabulary words such as melancholic, ecstatic, terrified, jubilant, timid, bewildered, and irate.
- 3** Give each section a moment to think of one sound to convey the emotion assigned.
- 4** Now conduct your orchestra:
 - When you point to a section, that section makes the sound of their assigned emotion.
 - When you raise your hand higher, that section gets louder; when you lower your hand, they get softer.
 - When you point to a different section, the previous section falls silent. When you point to more than one section at a time, all those sections chime in with their sounds.

EXTENSIONS FOR A LATER LANGUAGE ARTS LESSON

- Ask students to name the mood that the author is creating in a story, drama, or poem they’re reading, citing evidence from the text. Then have them focus on how the characters’ moods change as they encounter different situations in the story.
- Challenge students in their own narrative writing to show, not tell, how their characters are feeling.