

**Communicate! Cooperate! Mime!**  
**A Theatre Arts and English Language Arts Residency**  
**for**  
**Third & Fourth Grade Students**

by  
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**Sheila Kerrigan**

***Mime, Teaching Artist, Author, Director***

**Ms. Kerrigan is a director, performer, teacher and author of *The Performers' Guide to the Collaborative Process*.** She conducts residencies in schools, after-schools, colleges, and community settings and professional development sessions for teachers and teaching artists. She served on Alternate ROOTS' Resources for Social Change Training Team and has taught *Community-Based Performance* at Duke University. She facilitates the creation of original performances with community groups. As co-director of TOUCH Mime Theater for 17 years, she collaboratively created twenty original performances and toured the eastern U.S.



**Sheila has conducted residencies** for arts councils and universities, performed and taught in prisons, juvenile detention centers, hospitals, in corporate settings, street festivals, and on television, and has directed for Jelly Educational Theater. She has been a North Carolina A+ Fellow since 2001, and is listed in the North Carolina Arts Council Touring Artist directory.

**Outcomes of *Communicate! Cooperate! Mime!* Residency**

Participants will:

- Know the definition of mime and pantomime;
- Be able to clearly communicate imaginary objects, characters, places;
- Improve their ability to focus on, listen to, lead, follow, and work with others;
- Experience strategies for working collaboratively such as: agreeing on guidelines, assigning roles, taking turns, brainstorming, and using positive speech when critiquing work;
- Use mime experiences as prompts for writing.
- Work in groups to create original performance pieces and show them.

## NC Standard Course of Study Goals and Objectives Taught

### **English Language Arts**

- **Grade 3 Reading: 3.01** Respond to fiction, nonfiction, poetry, & drama using interpretive, critical & evaluative processes by... considering main character's POV, participating in creative interpretations...

### **Theatre Arts**

- **Grade 3 2.04** Create characters and events to utilize in the dramatic process ; **2.06** Demonstrate ideas and emotions using gestures, blocking and movement.,
- **Grade 4 3.01** Participate in making artistic choices in a small group. **4.04** Apply...movement to display character traits of objects, animals and people.

### **Grades 3 & 4**

- **4.02** Demonstrate responsible behavior such as sharing, flexibility, negotiating and teamwork. **4.03** Make decisions and accept simple responsibilities in the dramatic process. **4.05** Compromise with peers in small group decision making about artistic choices.

### **Grade 3**

- **2.04** Create characters and events to utilize in the dramatic process. **2.06** Demonstrate ideas and emotions using gestures, blocking and movement.

## Skills and Concepts Involved in *Communicate! Cooperate! Mime!*

**Cooperation & Working in Groups:** Focusing on a partner; listening; leading and following and switching from leading to following; developing kinesthetic awareness of self and others; assigning roles; taking turns.

**Communication:** Non-verbal communication of ideas, characters, feelings, places and imaginary objects; spontaneous response to impulses of others; verbal description of ideas to others; using positive speech when giving peer critiques.

**Self-expression:** using mime, movement, and body language to communicate thoughts, feelings, characters, and stories.

## Materials Needed

- ❖ The artist needs space on the wall to put up and keep up chart paper with notes that we will create and add on to each day.
- ❖ Students will need paper and pencil, and space to move in.

## Outline of *Communicate! Cooperate! Mime!* Residency

### Before Residency

- Teacher and Artist meet to plan residency, look at goals and objectives, and agree on objectives.
- Teacher prepares class for residency by showing a short video of mime or a silent movie and discussing with students what is communicated and how.
- Teacher chooses small groups of students to work together during residency.

## During the Residency

**Honorable Teacher: stay in the classroom at all times!** Teachers, not visiting artists, are responsible and liable for their students. This is **not** a time for bathroom breaks, phone calls, lunch, doctor's appointments or meetings. By contracting for this residency, you are committing to being present in the classroom during the entire residency and participating fully in the activities. Please be prepared to model life-long learning for your students, and to work together with me as a colleague and team-mate in the classroom.

I hope to be working with you as a partner in the residency; and I hope you will be contributing expertise, working with groups, monitoring behavior, assisting students who need help, teaching and learning alongside me, and assessing learning and skill-building as they happen. I also hope we can consult together daily about what is working and not working, and how to improve the residency as it happens.

(Times are approximate.)

### Session 1:

- Teacher introduces artist. Artist introduces and demonstrates mime. (5 minutes)
- Artist and teacher lead a guideline-setting process. Agreed-upon guidelines are posted on wall. (10 minutes)
- Artist leads warm-up exercises with class; teacher participates. (5 minutes)
- Artist teaches one basic mime technique (creating invisible objects and communicating them clearly using movement). Teacher participates. (10 minutes)
- Students in pairs play a movement game to focus their attention on a partner. Teacher coaches or participates; artist coaches. Class reflects on what they learn about focusing. (5 minutes)
- Students in small groups practice their mime and focusing skills while playing a creative thinking game. Teacher and artist coach. (5 minutes)
- Artist, teacher, and class review the day's work; reflect on learnings; acknowledge what others have done, and write affirmations and post them. (5 minutes)

### Sessions 2 & 3:

- Artist reviews yesterday's mime technique and demonstrates new shapes and a new concept (communicating a place; showing qualities & details). (5 minutes)
- Artist leads class in warming up together. Teacher participates. (5 minutes)
- In small groups, class plays game about awareness of and responding cooperatively to others. Teacher coaches or participates. Class reflects on what they learn. (5 minutes)
- Artist teaches new mime technique. Teacher participates. (5 minutes)
- Students practice mime in small-group game. Teacher participates or coaches. Artist coaches. (5 minutes)

- Groups assign roles and work together to create small mime piece using new technique. Artist and teacher coach. (5 minutes)
- Groups show pieces. Class and teacher practice giving positive critical responses. (10 minutes)
- Review. Reflect. Acknowledge. Affirm. (5 minutes)

**Session 4:**

- Artist reviews yesterday's content and introduces and demonstrates new aspects of mime technique—physical characterization and body language. (5 minutes)
- Artist leads class in warming up. Teacher participates. (5 minutes)
- In small groups, students play a leading and following game. Teacher participates or coaches. Artist coaches. Class reflects on what they learn. (10 minutes)
- Small groups assign roles and create mime pieces using body-language and characterization. Teacher and artist coach. (5 minutes)
- Groups show their pieces. Class practices positive responses. (15 minutes)
- Review. Reflect. Acknowledge. Affirm. (5 minutes)

**Session 5:**

- Artist leads class in warming up. Teacher participates. (5 minutes)
- Artist and class review mime techniques and concepts. (5 minutes)
- Artist, teacher, and class play whole-group game about leading and following. Class reflects on strategies that work and lessons learned. (10 minutes)
- Groups continue working on yesterday's mime pieces, adding conflict or concept, beginning, middle, and end. Teacher and artist coach. (10 minutes)
- Groups show mime pieces to class. Student audience members give positive critiques. (10 minutes)
- Reflect, review, assess learning, evaluate the residency. Affirm. (10 minutes)

**After Residency**

**Enriched Assessment Activities:**

- Students write and illustrate a story based on the mime pieces they created, including information about character, place, action, conflict, and resolution. They read their stories to the class. Class members give positive critiques.
- Students in groups create and perform for the class a mime piece that summarizes a story they have been reading.