

PROGRAM

Off the Bench

ARTIST NAME

Melissa Kate



AVAILABLE FORMATS

- Performance
- Single Workshop
- Multi-Session Residency Workshop

GRADE LEVELS

- Pre-K
- K – 2nd
- 3rd – 5th
- 6th – 8th
- 9th – 12th

MAX NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

In-Person: 18
Virtual: N/A

PROGRAM LENGTH

45 minutes

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Young people face being “benched” every day. In a learning environment with peers, the struggle for uncovering one’s strengths while comparing and competing with others can be daunting. Deeply embedded social emotional skills are utilized in “Off the Bench’s” theater and improvisational techniques to challenge thinking, unleash creativity, and build self-confidence and empathy for others.

Research shows that use of play can build social-emotional skills, but when coupled with theater can enhance emotional intelligence, body awareness, classroom camaraderie, and a sense of social responsibility to the self, to peers, and to the larger community. Theatre improvisation challenges students in unique ways to face their fears, take positive risks, and strengthen confidence in their choices and in giving and receiving support from others. It’s time for us to be “off the bench” and fully immersed in life.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS

This program supports these NYS or Next Generation Learning Standards:

- TH:Cr1.1
- TH.Pr5.1
- Th.Cn10.1

**Contact Arts for Learning WNY for more information.
(716) 881-0917 | info@artsforlearningwny.org**

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EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will be challenged in their perceptions, their emotions, and their creativity. They will build self-confidence and respect for others as they develop critical thinking skills that will aid them in their educational careers.

LOGISTICS/EQUIPMENT

Theatre or large room that can be uninterrupted by passersby.

Good: Library, Large rooms, Theatres, Music Rooms. Bad: Gyms, Cafeterias, Hallways

VOCABULARY

Improvisation: The act of making things up "on the spot"

Space Object: An object created using empty space

Yes, And: A way of moving the scene forward and affirming scene partner's choices; a philosophy for life

POST-PROGRAM ACTIVITIES & RESOURCES

All games can be played to the enjoyment and further edification of young people

Online yoga activities to build body awareness and sense of calm: <https://613tube.com/watch/?v=CITc2AxYnPY> (for younger students)

<https://youtu.be/Td6zFtZPkJ4> (for middle school/beginners)

Viola Spolin: <https://spolingamesonline.org/>

ARTIST BIO



Melissa Kate is an experienced teaching artist. She has taught for nearly two decades with programs in creative writing, poetry, theater, improvisation, and music. A studied and working theatre artist, a professional singer, and published songwriter, Melissa offers high quality programs tailored to a broad range of young learners. At the center of her work as a performing artist, Melissa's goal has been to engage young people and adults in the arts and humanities, to foster new experiences for her audiences, and to inspire growth as empathic human beings for personal, social, and civil empowerment.

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