



WALTON ARTS CENTER PRESENTS  
**DIGGING UP  
ARKANSAS**

AN ARKANSAS HISTORY PLAY

Written by Mike Thomas | Directed by Kassie Misiewicz  
Performed by Trike Theatre

## Communication - Post Performance

### Communication Obstacle Course

In this activity, students will:

- Imagine encountering a place in time where language is a barrier. They will reflect on communicating barriers depicted in the play, *Digging Up Arkansas*, and apply those concepts to our world today.
- Write a quick-write imagining they found themselves in a foreign country. What will they do?
- Collaborate to create a T-Chart depicting the problem/solution between the Quapaw and French in *Digging up Arkansas*.
- Reflect by using the problems/solutions T-Chart of the French and Quapaw and compare with communication in our lives today.
- Creatively assess by collaborating as a group to produce a welcome packet for a new student their language.

This lesson meets the following Common Core Standards:

3<sup>rd</sup> grade Common Core Standards:

3.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline specific tasks, purposes and audiences.

3.R.I.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

4<sup>th</sup> grade:

4.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

4.R.I.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why based on specific information in the text.

5<sup>th</sup> grade:

5.W.10 Write routinely over extended time frames and shorter time frames for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

**The learning objectives for this lesson are:**

- To identify communication barriers and brainstorm solutions.
- To create a T-Chart depicting problems/solutions of communication between the French and Quapaw.
- To create a welcome packet for new students with communications barriers.

**Materials you will need to complete this lesson:**

- Pencil / Paper
- Chart Paper and Markers
- Copy paper and Crayons
- Recycled magazines, scissors or other art supplies for welcome packet as needed

**Timeline for the lesson:**

- **Discussion Activity (10 minutes):** Students will imagine encountering a place in time where language is a barrier. They will reflect on communication barriers that were depicted in the play and apply those same concepts to our world today.
- **Quick Write (10 minutes):** Students will write a quick write imagining that it is the first day of school and they are living in a foreign country. No one speaks your language. What do you do? How will you feel?

- **Graphic Organizers (20 minutes):** Students will create a problem/solution T-chart showing communication barriers between the French and Quapaw in groups of 4.

Problems	Solutions
*could not speak to one another	* * * *

Students will share their thinking with the whole group. Then discuss if we still have these Communication problems today? How do we solve these problems today? In groups of 4, students will create another anchor chart showing problems and solutions of communication barriers that we experience in our world today.

- **Final Product (30 minutes):** Students will work in groups to create a packet for a new student who is in their class who does not speak their language. The class packet will be composed of pages created by each group. Each group will choose one part of their school day that will help the new student to survive a day at their school. Groups create a page featuring pictures, charts, diagrams that visually explain what it would take to successfully survive a day in their school. Each group will share their page of the packet and when all have shared, the pages can be combined into a book to keep as a “newcomer packet”.

**Students will show their thinking skills by:**

- Creating a T-Chart depicting the problems/solutions between the French and the Quapaw in *Digging up Arkansas*.

**Prompts for reflecting on this lesson:**

Students will reflect using the French and Quapaw T-chart and create another T-chart showing the problems/solutions of communication barriers that we experience today.

- Who used imagination to encounter a place where language was a barrier?
- Who maintained concentration while imagining it was your first day of school in a foreign country? What helped you concentrate?
- When you saw the performance of *Digging Up Arkansas*, could you tell by the actor’s faces that they were reacting to sensory images? How could you tell they were thinking about imaginary sights, sounds, smells and textures?

- What did you learn about the problems the French and Quapaw had communicating?
- What solution surprised you?
- How is the story of the French and Quapaw in *Digging Up Arkansas* similar to our imagined story of a new student coming to our school who does not speak our language?
- How does communicate help us to survive in a new and unfamiliar setting?

**The final product facilitated by this lesson should be:**

In groups, students will choose a piece of their day to communicate to a new student who doesn't speak their language how to survive a day in their school. Ex. Going to lunch, going to the restroom, visiting the nurse. \* For 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, have an example ready or model for the class. Have students create a new form of communication useful in our day and make a newcomer packet for your classroom.

**Learn More at:**

*A Dramatic Approach to Reading Comprehension* by Lenore Blank Kelner and Rosalind M. Flynn, Heinemann: Portsmouth, NH, 2006.

> Learn more about using drama in your classroom:

[www.interactstory.com](http://www.interactstory.com)

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators.aspx>

> Learn more about *Digging Up Arkansas*:

[www.waltonartscenter.org](http://www.waltonartscenter.org)

> Learn more about engaging students and exploring documents at our National Archives:

[www.archives.gov/nae](http://www.archives.gov/nae)

[www.DocsTeach.org](http://www.DocsTeach.org)

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