

Honoree: Dr. William Carson

Grade Level: 9-12

Subject: Character Analysis

Introductory Statement: Dr. William Carson is a physician from South Carolina who specializes in the area of psychiatry.

SC Standards Addressed:

TH1-2.1 Apply a knowledge of essential acting vocabulary such as blocking, objective, motivation, projection, diction, rate, and pitch in peer assessment as well as self-assessment.

TH1-2.5 Research and observe to create characters.

TH1-2.6 Synthesize research, observation, given circumstances, and acting skills to create characters for formal and informal presentations.

TH1-2.8 Create and justify characters and roles on the basis of his or her observations of people's interactions, ethical choices, and emotional responses.

Goals/Objectives: To understand the internal cognitive and emotional make-up of a dramatic character in order to prepare for performance.

Items/Materials Needed: Character Analysis Worksheet (attached)

Steps/Strategies: The students will read the biographical description of Dr. Carson, and will discuss the role of psychiatry and psychology in society.

Activity One: Based on a role that a student has been assigned for performance, the student will participate in an improvised scene in which that character participates in a session of psychoanalysis or talk therapy, with a classmate playing the doctor.

Activity Two: Based on discoveries made during the improvisation, the student actor will complete a character analysis worksheet for their assigned character.

Character Analysis Worksheet

1. When does my character live? Past, present or future?
2. Where does my character live? In the country, the city, the suburbs...?
3. What is my character's nationality?
4. What is the age of my character?
5. How does my character dress?
6. What is the socioeconomic background of my character?
7. What educational background does my character have?
8. Does my character work? If so, at what?
9. What is a typical day for my character like?
10. Who lives with my character and what are their relationships?
11. Who else heavily influences my character?
12. Is my character very religious, political, or otherwise a member or some kind?
13. What is my character's biggest life goal?
14. What is my character's biggest goal within the piece?
15. How does my character's motivation change from the beginning of the selection to the end?
16. What is the primary emotion my character has throughout this piece?
17. What other emotions are affecting my character underneath that emotion?
18. Does my character have mental or emotional difficulties, illnesses or tics?
19. What kind of self-esteem does my character have?
20. What are my character's strengths and weaknesses?
21. How does my character relate to the outside world?
22. What emotion should the audience feel toward my character? Sympathy, hate, friendly?
23. In the beginning of the story, poem, or play, what do we discover about my character?
24. In the middle of the selection, how does my character grow and change?

25. At the end of the selection, what will happen to my character?
26. What information about my character has been cut out of the piece for IE performance?
27. How can I add the elements of that information in my performance?
28. What is the most important element to my character: family, love, or career?
29. How old is my character? What major historical events have they lived through?
30. Does my character have children? How does (s)he feel about them?
31. Is my character manipulating or being manipulated by anyone?
32. Does my character have a hidden agenda or a deep secret?
33. Who are they hiding this from? Another character? The audience?
34. How strong are my character's emotions in this piece? Pure hatred? Mild lust?
35. What is my character's greatest fear?
36. What is my character's greatest accomplishment?
37. What is my character's motivation in each unit of the piece? Does it coincide with or conflict with other character's motivations in those units?
38. Does my character have their wants achieved at the end of the piece?
39. If not, will my character ever have those wants achieved?
40. What person or fictional character does my character most remind me of?
41. If I met my character, how would I react to them?
42. What is my character's voice like? Is it high? Low? Soft? Loud? Fast? Slow? Articulate? Inarticulate? With or without an accent or dialect?