

# Jenny Clyde | Session 3:

## Staging Aesop's Fox Fables

---

**List of Required Supplies:** Paper, writing or coloring supplies, household items for props or costumes

**Space/Facility Requirements:** open floor space to perform, seating if having an audience

**Student Time Required:** 60 minutes

### Step-by-step Instructions

#### Prepare to Perform

In session 2, students used their bodies and voices to create characters. They also explored character with props and costume pieces. The students probably found something to help portray their characters. Props, costumes, and set pieces help tell the story and set the stage for the play. Lights and music can also play a part. There's no need to buy anything special. If you have an interest, talent, and materials to make props, costumes, and set pieces, go ahead. Try not to go overboard. Let the students shine.

Simple costume, prop, and set ideas: Solid colored clothing or scarves can help denote characters. You can make fox ears using a head band and paper, cardboard, or fabric. If you happen to have a feather boa, that might be perfect for the stork or crow.

The actor portraying Grapes might sit on a stool or step ladder. Or maybe he or she has plastic or paper grapes tied to a pole and gleefully keeps them up and away from Fox. Think about your audience. Will students be performing in front of a live audience sitting in the living room, school gym, or Zooming with family and friends? Artists in your group may want to make posters or signs to help depict the setting or announce the title of each play. They can also design a program. Again, these things are icing on the cake. It's up to you and your crew how much or how little to do here.

Once you've decided on props, costumes, and set pieces, prepare for a dress rehearsal.

Basically, actors have three tools they need to perform: voice, body, and imagination. Students used all of these in games during session 2. Today, we'll do some warm-ups to help actors make better use of their bodies and voices. Much like athletes preparing for a race, actors do warm-ups to loosen up their bodies and prepare to perform.

**Body warm-ups:** Actors stand, grab your elbow with the opposite hand and pull gently. Now, switch. Stomp a foot onto the floor, pretend it's stuck there, now pull. Students should feel a nice stretch. Now do the same with the other foot. Roll your ankles one at a time. Reach up to the ceiling and try to touch it. Shake your hands to the side, shake them out front, now high, then low.

**Vocal warm-ups:** Using their diaphragms, students should take a deep breath. Push the air out from their stomachs and make a loud HA sound. Take another breath and push it out with a loud ha, ha, ha. The muscle in the tummy below the ribs is called the diaphragm. Using the diaphragm helps actors speak loudly on stage without hurting their voices.

**Tongue Twisters:** Students repeat tongue twisters and gradually get faster. Exercises like repeating tongue twisters help actors speak more clearly. Students may give suggestions. Here are some fun ones to try: a big black bug bit a big black bear; rubber baby buggy bumpers; four fine fresh fish for you; you need unique New York.

Go over the notes from session 2. Students may need some reminders of the basic story. Give a short synopsis, if necessary. Put props and costumes in the proper places until needed. Students should wait quietly until their turn. Unless there are major glitches, the show should be audience-ready. Reward effort and don't expect perfection. The process is the important part. Students should be excited to showcase their hard work. When the audience shows up, stand back, and let those stars shine!