

King Midas and the Golden Touch Drama Lesson

Objectives and outcomes:

- To increase familiarity and understanding of weekly vocabulary words (wealthy, treasure, obsessed, anguished, reward, alarmed, possess, necessary) using a variety of drama integration techniques including “woosh” and teacher-in-role.
- To work on dramatic skills, especially use of voice and body to express emotions.
- To improve persuasive, argument-based writing using concrete evidence.
- To approach the students’ big question of the week, “how do you decide what is important?”

Materials: crown, floral head wreath

Special Requirement: needs a second instructor or a volunteer student to play ending role

Grade level: 2nd to 4th

Duration: 45 minutes

I. Warm-up (five minutes): Opposite Game

- A. Instruct students to move about and balance playing space at a slow walking speed. When instructor says “stop”, students continue walking. When instructor says “go”, students must freeze in place. Practice “stop” and “go” until the students are comfortable with those two instructions. Afterwards, add “jump” and “clap”. When instructor says “clap”, students must jump. When instructor says “jump”, students must clap. Make sure students are not moving when commanding “clap” and “jump” to avoid confusion. Include elimination element if time permits.

II. “Woosh” of King Midas story (fifteen minutes)

- A. Instructor has students sit in a circle, and narrates a story. Instructor will call individual students into the center of the circle to perform roles in the story. Instructor will feed lines and actions of the characters to the students, and the students will act out what has been narrated. When the instructor says “woosh”, the students in the center of the circle go back to their spots on the edge of the circle, and the instructor will continue narrating the story with new students playing the characters in the next part.
- B. Tell the story, which is at the bottom of this document. Bolded are the vocabulary words that were specific to the class this lesson was written for. Feel free to improvise, the story at the bottom is simply an example of how to tell the story.

III. Discussion (five minutes)

- A. Begin discussion by asking students what happened in the story to help with retention of the events.
- B. Ask what is most important to King Midas. Highlight the importance of his gold and his daughter.

- C. Ask students for suggestions of what they think King Midas should do to remedy his solution. Highlight the idea of King Midas asking Dionysus to take the wish back.

IV. Letter Writing (ten minutes)

- A. Instruct students to write letters to King Midas to convince him that gold is not the most important thing and to persuade him to ask Dionysus to reverse the wish.
- B. Have students use at least four of the eight vocabulary words used in the lesson.

V. Meet King Midas (ten minutes)

- A. Instructor explains to students that, when they put on the crown, they will become King Midas (teacher-in-role), and that the students are to, one at a time, read their letters to the King to persuade him.
- B. Instructor will put on the crown, embody the King's persona, express worry about his situation, and ask students for advice on the situation.
- C. Have as many of the students read their letters as possible with time permitting. King Midas should be somewhat resistant to turning all of his new gold possessions back into what they were before, by asking students rebuttal questions, but eventually allows students to persuade him.
- D. Instructor then summons Dionysus, who will be a second instructor or a student volunteer (more information in the **Modification and Differentiation** section) wearing the floral wreath. The two should have a conversation where Midas begs Dionysus to take back the wish, Dionysus is initially reluctant, saying something like "I told you to choose your wish very carefully", but will eventually reverse the wish.
- E. Midas and Dionysus remove their headwear, dropping their roles, and hold a discussion with the class about what they learned from the story.

Modification and Differentiation

The story can be told either in "woosh" format or guided narration format. The main difference between "woosh" and guided narration formats is that in a guided narration, all students will be playing each character at once, rather than one student playing one character at a time. In practice, there will be no "wooshes" and the narration will be told in one continuous piece.

If there is no second instructor available, a student volunteer can be chosen before the teacher in role section to play Dionysus, the god of celebration. Prepare the student to put up a bit of resistance in reversing King Midas's wish, but instruct them to ultimately reverse the wish. Also make sure to emphasise the student volunteer take on specific character choices as Dionysus.

Woosh Example:

Once upon a time, there was a very **wealthy** king. He said, "My name is King Midas. I am very **wealthy**, and I have lots and lots of **treasure**." He showed off his shiny rings. He showed off the gold he wore around his neck. And he had a very shiny gold crown. He was **obsessed** with gold.

Woosh

King Midas had a beautiful daughter, and one day he was in their palace talking with her. He said, "I wish that I could have all the gold and **treasure** in the world." His daughter said back to him, "Dad! You already **possess** so much! How much more do you need? I don't think more would be **necessary**." But the King was completely **obsessed**, and had to have more.

Woosh

Later that day, the King was walking through his rose garden when he noticed a half-horse, half-man named Silenus sleeping in the garden! Midas recognized Silenus, and woke him up. The King asked, "Hey, how did you end up here?" Silenus said, "Well, I was passing through with the god of celebration, but I got tired and decided to take a nap." Midas said "that's okay! You can come back to my palace and stay at my place for a few nights." So Silenus spent a few nights on Midas's couch.

Woosh

After Silenus left, the god of celebration appeared in front of King Midas. The god said, "Thank you for letting my companion stay with you for a few days!" Midas said, "No problem!" The god said, "For helping me, I will grant you a **reward**. Whatever you wish for, I will grant you." Midas thought for a second, and then said "*I wish everything that I touch turns to gold.*" Before the god granted it, he looked at the King and said, "Think very hard if that is actually what you want." King Midas quickly said, "Of course it's what I want!" The god said "okay. When you wake up, everything you touch will turn to gold." The god left, and King Midas went to sleep.

Woosh

The next day, the King wanted to see if his wish had come true. He touched the table that was next to his bed, and it immediately turned into gold. King Midas was so excited! Then he touched the chair in the corner of his room, and it turned into gold! He touched the carpet on his floor, his bathtub, and his door, and they all turned into gold. He started touching everything in his house, thrilled that it turned into gold.

Woosh

After all of the excitement, the King went to go brush his teeth. When he picked up his toothbrush, it turned into gold. He said "oops, I guess I can't use that now." He went to go eat some breakfast, and as he was about to put a grape in his mouth, it turned into gold. He was **alarmed**, as he realized he wasn't going to be able to eat! He was feeling really thirsty, and reached for a glass of water, but before he could even bring it to his mouth, it turned into gold. He said, super worried "what am I going to do?!"

Woosh

Midas's daughter walked into the room, and he asked her, "Oh daughter! I'm so worried! I thought it would be fun to turn everything into gold, but I can't eat or drink anything!" He went over to his daughter to give her a hug, but as he hugged her, she turned into a frozen, golden statue! King Midas was **anguished**, having turned the one person he loved into gold.

Woosh