

“The Drama King”  
*Los Angeles Times*

## School Residency Programs for Drama/Theatre

### References Packet

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**Mr. Jonas Basom**

Instructor/Presenter

Drama Education Network

[jbasom@DramaEd.net](mailto:jbasom@DramaEd.net)

P.O. Box 484

Hawthorne, CA 90250

(310) 289-4410 phone

(310) 289-4485 fax

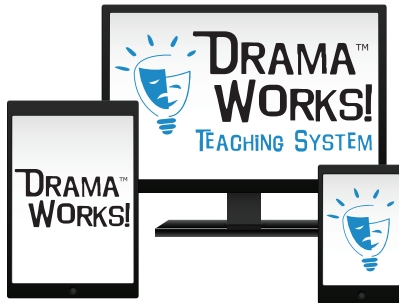


Approved provider for drama residencies and teacher PD  
Grants available to pay for programs, PD, or curriculum



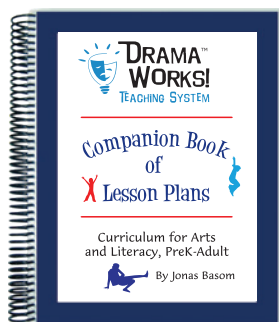
# Curriculum For K-12

- Theatre - ELA - Arts Integration



## Drama Works! Online (1yr)

- The entire curriculum in digital format
- Access DW from computer, tablet, or phone
- Read, project, or print digital content
- Standards alignments/correlations (current)
- Annual updates to content and features



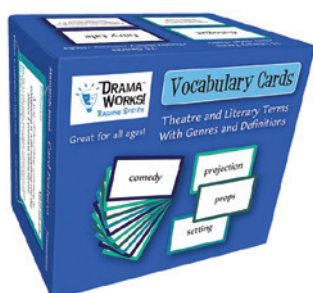
## Companion Book of Lesson Plans

- 150 lesson plans, 65 indexes, and glossary
- Work offline to quickly find and lead lessons
- Save time and cost of printing from DW
- Custom plastic binding/covers/tabs/pocket



## Creativity Cards

- 500 cards from DW in 10 color-coded sets
- Instant ideas and story starters for acting, arts integration, and vocabulary development
- 3x5" size, wild cards, tabs, booklet, and box



## Vocabulary Cards

- 300 cards from DW in 4 color-coded sets
- Standards-based theatre and literary terms with definitions, examples, and bonus content
- 3x5" size, durable tabs, booklet, and box



# Staff Development

-Theatre - Arts - ELA - STEAM - SEL



## Presenter: Mr. Jonas Basom

- Author of Drama Works! Teaching System
- Bravo Award: Outstanding Arts Educator of CA
- Professor of arts education courses for teachers
- Approved PD provider for Arts Ed Collective
- Has trained thousands of teachers since 1990



## Teacher Training Workshops

- Teachers playing, creating, laughing, & learning
- Classroom management system, arts integration
- Using Drama Works! digital and print materials



## Model Demonstration Lessons Day

- Mr. Basom leads 3 1-hr lessons with students
- Teachers observe; guided reflection after
- See DW materials and strategies in action!



## Teacher Coaching Day

- Design arts integration lessons with teachers
- Teachers lead lesson; Mr. Basom observes/helps
- Guided reflection and feedback (ind. and group)



## Video Conferencing Sessions

- Affordable ongoing PD support for teachers
- Follow-up PD: review, new activities/topics, Q&A
- Individuals, small groups, or whole staff

For rates and availability contact us at 310-289-4410 or [jbasom@DramaEd.net](mailto:jbasom@DramaEd.net)



P.O. Box 484, Hawthorne, CA 90250  
Phone 310-289-4410  
Toll Free 866-88-DRAMA  
Fax 310-289-4485  
orders@DramaEd.net

### School Residency Programs for Students: References for Mr. Jonas Basom

#### Contact Person

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Principal  
Woodland Hills Elementary (LAUSD)  
(818) 347-9220  
c.desiderio@lausd.net

Sharon Carter  
Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator  
Whittier City School District  
(806) 797-7400  
scarter@whittiercity.net

Robyn Johnson  
Lead Kindergarten Teacher  
Farragut Elementary (Culver City USD)  
(310) 842-4323  
robynjohnson@ccusd.org

Sara Brown  
Arts and Community Outreach Coordinator  
iLEAD and SCVi Charter Schools  
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sara.brown@ileadschools.org

Kate Peattie  
Assistant Superintendent  
Newhall Unified School District  
(661) 291-4000  
kpeattie@newhallsd.com

Fabio Kayama  
Visual and Performing Arts Coordinator  
Norwalk La Mirada USD  
(949) 235-1485  
fkayama@nlmusd.org

#### School Residency Programs Provided for Students

2014-2024 (3 schools, multiple repeated programs)  
Drama Works! for Science (gr 5, 4 groups)  
12 lessons each with culminating performance  
Drama and Literacy (gr 2, 5 groups, 6 lessons)  
Model lessons, teachers observe, discuss after  
12 groups (gr TK-5), 6-10 lessons per group

2022-2024  
Drama Works! for Literacy  
6 groups of middle school ELD students (gr 6-8)  
12 lessons each with culminating performance  
Modeled arts strategies for SEL, ELD/ELL

2015-2024  
Drama Works! for Literacy  
4 groups of Kindergarten, 2 groups of TK  
12 lessons each with culminating performance  
Expanded from 6 to 12 to 24 lessons per group

2019-2020  
Drama Works! Across the Curriculum  
6 groups (gr 1-8), 3 lessons per group  
K-8 teachers observed lessons, discussed after  
Modeled arts integration methods for teachers

2018-2019  
Drama Works! for Science  
All 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes (31 groups at 10 schools)  
12 lessons each with culminating performance  
Modeled arts integration methods for teachers

2018-2019  
Drama Works! Across the Curriculum  
3 groups (gr 1, 3, 4), 6 lessons per group  
K-5 teachers observed lessons, discussed after  
Modeled arts integration methods for teachers

Reference letters attached from schools where Mr. Basom has worked as a drama teacher

Contact Mr. Jonas Basom with any questions at [jbasom@DramaEd.net](mailto:jbasom@DramaEd.net)



LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Woodland Hills Elementary  
Charter for Enriched Studies*

22201 SAN MIGUEL STREET, WOODLAND HILLS, CALIFORNIA 91364  
(818) 347-9220 SCHOOL ♦ (818) 347-2365 FAX

**Alberto M. Carvalho**  
Superintendent

**Joseph Nacorda**  
Local District Northwest Superintendent

**Christina Desiderio**  
Principal

June 28, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I have been working with Jonas Basom and Drama Education Network since 2014 when I first saw his program at a statewide conference for gifted education. His curriculum materials and teacher training PD services are so outstanding that I have brought him to 3 different elementary schools where I have been the principal.

In 2014 I purchased his curriculum program, *The Drama Game File* (CD-ROM, companion book, and character cards box set) for all 35 teachers (grades K-8) at Yerba Buena Elementary in Las Virgines USD, and, with Jonas' guidance, developed a PD plan that included 3 full-day trainings, 3 afternoon workshops, and 10 virtual 1-on-1 coaching sessions for teachers. Jonas also led 10 model demonstration lessons for 3 groups of students (grades 1, 3, and 5) with teachers observing. His excellent work led to the district funding a group of 11 teachers from other schools to receive the curriculum and 3 full days of PD.

In 2016 I purchased his new curriculum program, *Drama Works! Teaching System* (online subscription, Companion Book of Lesson Plans, Creativity Cards, and Vocabulary Cards) for all 28 teachers at Stevenson Elementary in Burbank USD, and worked with Jonas to craft a PD plan that included a full-day training in August, 2 afternoon workshops, then 6 model lessons for 3 groups (grades K, 3, and 5) with teachers observing and Jonas leading guided reflection afterwards. In the spring, Jonas led 5 coaching days in which he worked 1-on-1 with teachers to design and teach a lesson integrating *Drama Works!* with a specific curriculum topic. The teacher led the lesson and Jonas provided guided reflection and feedback. Despite some initial reluctance, teachers felt this process was very beneficial. In years 2 and 3, we renewed our *Drama Works!* subscriptions, and Jonas focused his PD workshops, demo lessons, and coaching days on integrating drama with our new science curriculum.

In 2021 I purchased the complete *Drama Works! Teaching System* for all 32 teachers (grades TK-5) at Woodland Hills Elementary. During remote teaching, Jonas led 4 virtual PD trainings and 1 model lesson for every class TK-5. In year 2, returning to campus, Jonas led 3 afternoon workshops with teachers, 6 model demonstration lessons for 7 groups (TK-5) with teachers observing and reflecting afterwards, plus virtual 1-on-1 coaching sessions for teachers.

*Drama Works!* is a wonderful curriculum for elementary teachers. The lesson plans are comprehensive. The cross referencing helps the teacher find activities that integrate with ELA, the arts, and all school subjects. The Creativity Cards provide creative ideas to try during the activities while also building English vocabulary. This is not an add-on program; it trains teachers how to integrate drama with their existing curriculum. It meets Common Core ELA and CA Arts standards, reaches different learning styles, addresses social emotional learning, and develops 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills such as creativity and collaboration.

Jonas' work with my teachers and students has been exemplary. During workshops, he keeps teachers engaged and actively participating throughout the day while providing useful integration ideas across the curriculum. He makes them feel comfortable and confident to lead drama on their own with his detailed system of classroom management that balances creativity and control. He is professional and responsive to teachers' needs, challenges, and questions. Jonas is a master teacher of students. His in-person lessons are dynamic and engage students of all ages and abilities while demonstrating creative and effective ways to teach specific curriculum topics (my teachers have seen character, setting, plot, grammar, idioms, weather, biomes, states of matter, the Industrial Revolution, and the water cycle). His model lessons are powerful. Teachers have felt inspired by the positive impact on the students in only 6 lessons. When incorporating *Drama Works!* activities and strategies in their own classrooms, teachers have reported great success, noting high levels of engagement and effectiveness.

The customer service provided by Jonas and Drama Education Network has been superb. He is flexible, responsive, and clear in handling paperwork, contracts, pricing, communications, and scheduling. He provides free usage reports, PD evaluations, and teacher handouts. He continues to collaborate to discover new ways to inspire and empower my teachers. We plan to renew our annual subscription to *Drama Works!* and bring Jonas back to continue working with our students and teachers.

Sincerely,

Christina Desiderio, Principal





**Culver City Unified School District**  
Administration Building 4034 Irving Place • Culver City, CA 90232-2848  
Telephone (310) 842-4220

**Farragut Elementary School**  
2012 California Distinguished School  
10820 Farragut Drive • Culver City, CA 90230 • Telephone (310) 842-4323

July 1, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

This is an open letter of recommendation for Mr. Jonas Basom and his *Drama and Literacy* residency program offered through Drama Education Network. My kindergarten class at Farragut Elementary has participated in his wonderful program every year since 2016. Our parent booster group, Farragut Fan Club, has paid for the program for all four kindergarten classrooms, and we have continued to bring him back every year. For the first three years, we had the short version of the program with six lessons (once a week, 45mins each). Because it was such a positive experience, we expanded in 2019 to the full program including 12 lessons and a culminating showcase performance for parents. I have seen all of his lessons up close since they take place in my classroom, and, as the lead kindergarten teacher, have worked with Mr. Basom on contracts, scheduling, and program elements.

The *Drama and Literacy* program teaches the basics of theatre arts and how to use drama to teach ELA. Lesson topics include Actor's Tools, Pantomime, Speaking on Stage, Tableau, Character, Setting, and Plot. Every lesson includes theatre vocabulary and dramatizes ELA concepts (I've seen alphabet, rhyme families, antonyms, diction, emotion, sequencing, and story elements). There are also literacy benefits from the visual aids Mr. Basom uses from his published curriculum, *Drama Works! Teaching System*. The posters have fun graphics that clarify key terms for story elements. He uses the *Creativity Cards* to provide a variety of acting choices for character, setting, and plot while also building English vocabulary as students see the flash cards, say the words, and act them out. Mr. Basom also adapts his lessons to incorporate our current classroom stories and vocabulary. We are meeting State Standards for Common Core ELA and Theatre Arts. The literacy benefits are so clear and substantial that we continue to convince our administrators to include it as part of regular day instruction.

Mr. Basom is definitely a favorite teacher among our students and staff. He is a master of balancing creativity and control with his excellent classroom management skills. He keeps engagement and participation high for the entire group, capturing and holding the attention of our youngest learners with a mix of humor, acting demonstrations, group games, chants and rhymes, and lively pacing. He expertly builds up their confidence and skills by starting with whole group exploration, gradually mixing in solo turns, and giving lots of positive encouragement. He guided them to a very successful culminating showcase performance in which every student delivered lines with creative expression, projection, and articulation in front of a live audience. Parents were thrilled to watch their children demonstrate all they learned in the drama program.

I have seen so many positive effects on my students over the years. Many who are shy, do not typically participate in group activities, or have speech impediments have blossomed. I have used many of Mr. Basom's strategies in my daily teaching, such as reminding students to articulate and project their voices. We act out new vocabulary words, and create and act out new endings in stories we are reading. Most importantly, I reinforce the foundations of cooperation and acceptance that Mr. Basom so expertly introduces so that all students have a safe place to learn and grow.

Working with Mr. Basom is a pleasure. He is professional and reliable. He seeks our feedback and input, provides a program evaluation, and is flexible and responsive to our needs. I highly recommend his program.

Sincerely,

Robyn Johnson, M.Ed  
Kindergarten Teacher, Farragut Elementary School  
CCUSD, Teacher of the Year 2021-2022

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Alta Loma Elementary School*

1745 VINEYARD AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90019  
TELEPHONE: (323) 939-2113 FAX: (323) 965-9233

DAVID L. BREWER III  
*Superintendent of Schools*

MICHELLE KING  
*Superintendent of Local District 3*

LISA MANZANERA  
*Principal*

June 30, 2008

To whom it may concern:

Please accept my letter of commendation for Mr. Jonas Basom, Theatre Arts teacher. He taught at Alta Loma for 15 weeks from November 13, 2007 to March 7, 2008, instructing 15 fortunate classrooms in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Mr. Basom is one of the best teachers I have ever observed. Everything was so well-planned that his lessons flowed seamlessly from the first minute to the last. The quality of his written lesson plans is first-rate and he provided the full packet of his original 12 model lessons and support materials to all teachers served in the Arts Program.

Alta Loma School is designated a Title I school and the majority of its students are English Learners. Curricular enrichment and language development are vitally needed and Mr. Basom delivered both within the depth and breadth of his lessons. When I observed lessons entitled "Speaking on Stage" and "Story Dramatization", I saw differentiated instruction, CRRE strategies, and ELD methodology all within standards-based instruction. He integrated drama across the curriculum, engaging the students extremely well, connecting to literacy development. He modeled his topic and then enabled the students' teachers to teach portions of the lessons, helping them to gain confidence and knowledge in theatre arts instruction. I also watched him work patiently and effectively with reticent, shy, and/or awkward children who eventually performed well!

Our teachers are unanimously awed and thrilled with his teaching! They have attested to the high quality of his handout materials which are so well connected to literacy and language development. He led a staff development training entitled "Basic Literacy Skills Come Alive With Drama!" followed with relevant, usable handouts for all of our teachers.

Mr. Basom was a viable, contributing member of our staff for too short a time. Great teaching such as his is rare and instinctive and will have an ongoing effect here, not only in arts integration, but in better teaching overall.

Sincerely,



Lisa Manzanera, Principal

**Los Angeles Unified School District**  
**Rosemont Avenue Elementary School**  
421 North Rosemont Avenue  
Los Angeles, California 90026  
(213) 413-5310

June 11, 2002

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in commendation of Mr. Jonas Basom, a highly gifted instructor in the field of Visual and Performing Arts who has been working with our Rosemont Avenue Elementary teachers and students in the field of drama.

Mr. Basom is a highly skilled and intuitive individual who works effectively with both adults and students. He is pedagogically well informed with a profound depth of knowledge regarding methodologies and instructional strategies relating to the Visual and Performing Arts as well as the other curricular areas. Mr. Basom is equally comfortable and effective whether he is teaching in the classroom with our young students or presenting a high level and enriching workshop to a group of teachers. He uses a constructivist approach that is solidly grounded in the California and National Standards for the Visual and Performing Arts.

The Visual and Performing Arts is a curricular area of high priority at Rosemont. Mr. Basom has worked with Rosemont staff and students for two years. His model theater lessons have greatly improved the self-expression, confidence, imagination, concentration, and communication skills of the many kindergarten through fifth grade students who have had the opportunity to work with him. The teachers, who have observed and participated in Mr. Basom's lessons, have been inspired to creatively and consistently integrate many effective drama strategies and techniques across all of the curricular areas.

Close to ninety percent of our students are classified as English Language Learners. Mr. Basom's gifted instruction is designed to bridge their abilities in the domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking toward mastery of grade level standards for the English Language Arts. Using a multi-sensory approach, Mr. Basom enables students to use mind, body, voice, emotions, and social interaction to build the confidence, conceptual base, and high-level vocabulary needed to produce a successful and literate individual. Teachers have commented to me that Mr. Basom's drama lessons have been a great vehicle for improving comprehension, retention, and motivation for learning. Our English Language Learners have blossomed before our eyes working with this wonderful teacher.

We look forward to our continued association with Mr. Basom. He is responsible, hard working, flexible, and enthusiastic. We feel his instructional expertise in the Visual and Performing Arts will be an enormous asset to any school who elects to avail themselves of his services.

Sincerely,



Evaristo Barrett, Principal





August 29, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Jonas Basom. I have known Jonas for the past seven years as his Assistant Principal in the Lower School. **Jonas is an enthusiastic, creative, resourceful, and highly motivated individual.** I have had the pleasure of watching Jonas join our faculty in 1993, fresh out of Amherst College, to take on the teaching of Drama and French to our Lower School students.

**Over the years, Jonas has matured as an educator and developed such a strong curriculum in Drama that he is now one of the best teachers with whom I have had the pleasure to work.** He continually analyzes his approach to teaching, revising what works and what does not work with young children. **Jonas consistently planned with every homeroom teacher to integrate Drama into Language Arts, Social Science, Music, and Art.** As a result, the students experienced a drama program with depth and meaning, making connections across the curriculum.

**Jonas will be an asset to any school or organization he joins.** Among his colleagues, Jonas was appreciated for his ingenuity, perseverance, and humor. Among his students, Jonas was appreciated for how he got to know each one as an individual and the joy of learning he brought to their classes. Among the parents, Jonas was a professional who was dedicated to his craft and their children. He will be missed at Buckley.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (818) 783-1610, extension 481.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Parsons  
Assistant Principal/Preschool Director

Kristen Lowman  
4701 Halbrent Ave.  
Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

November 22, 1999

To Whom It May Concern:

Regarding the positive impact drama has had on my daughter, Claire, I must first acknowledge the profound impact it had on myself as child. I was a shy student; it seemed best to not raise my hand even though I knew the answer, to not sit in the front row, to be, generally, a good girl. I didn't express myself at school, and wasn't encouraged to risk exploring myself or the material being taught. I took drama in high school and in this safe environment I worked my voice, my body, my emotions. I explored the world and myself through different characters, saying and doing things on stage that I felt I could not do in the 'real' world. As well as the sheer joy of performing, there were benefits like developed concentration, confidence, responsibility, contributing to a community, and new and healthy friendships. Through character study I developed an increased curiosity about and understanding of the world, its history, cultures, and stories. I participated more in my classes and my education was no longer fragmented but part of an ever-expanding picture – I owe that to drama.

Knowing how vital drama is to education, I was so pleased, felt so lucky to have drama as part of my daughter's school curriculum. Yes, lucky, because not all schools offer drama, and even the ones that do are not blessed with a Mr. Basom, who is not only a gifted performer but a gifted teacher. Because of Mr. Basom's class, my daughter, at the age of nine, is already using her voice as an instrument with a range that truly expresses, at times expressing a profundity that she is not yet able to intellectualize. She has a natural sense of story, of timing, which she uses in her school reports. Her imagination has become and remains flexible. The exercise of memorization is not resisted; she has associated this task, not just with spelling lists and facts, but with pleasure. In addition, my daughter takes great pride in the mime Mr. Basom has taught her. Mr. Basom's class has permitted Claire the freedom to be and delight in all that she is, which, in turn, leads to a delight in human beings and all that we are, which is a very necessary fuel in the educational process, which continues for the rest of our lives.

I cannot express how grateful I am for Mr. Basom's presence in my daughter's life. Aside from his gift for performing and teaching, I must say that he imparts his knowledge with a kindness, a joy, and a respect for children. I have seen 25 children respond with love and trust to Mr. Basom, then perform on stage with joy, discipline, and pride. In truth, Mr. Basom is one of the main reasons why Claire remains at her school.

Claire's words say it best. "I love Mr. Basom." "Mom, Mom, watch me do this mime. I'll do it and you'll see it." "Mom, I wish we had drama all year."

I truly wish all children of all ages could have drama instruction and, with luck, taught by someone like Mr. Basom. I don't know though; he is one of a kind.

Sincerely,



Kristen Lowman

## IN THE CLASSROOM

*'Some of the kids have blossomed in drama. They talk more. They're more expressive. They feel free to be wild and silly because [Basom] is so silly.'*

June Lew, first-grade teacher at Marquez Elementary School in Pacific Palisades

# This Educator Makes a Production of Teaching

Roving drama teacher Jonas Basom gets pupils in character to improve reading comprehension.

By JIA-RUI CHONG  
Times Staff Writer

Jonas Basom wasn't satisfied with the Marquez Elementary School second-graders' begrudging, listless "Good afternoon."

"How boring," said Basom, a rotating drama teacher for the Los Angeles Unified School District. "I'm going to fall asleep."

Squinting one eye and crooking his arm, Basom showed why the county's Music Center in downtown Los Angeles recently honored him with a \$2,000 Bravo Award for innovative arts education.

"Now say good afternoon like a pirate," the 32-year-old said, leaning toward the youngsters.

Giggling and exaggerating Basom's body language, all 16 children perked up. "Argggghhh," they growled out of the right sides of their mouths. "Good afternoon. Grrrrrrrrr."

Now that he had their attention, Basom pointed to the chalkboard where he had written "beginning/characters," "middle/conflict" and "end/conclusion." He began his real lesson: teaching them about plot and training their teacher, Susan Schwartz, to use the drama games to improve reading comprehension.

For Basom and the two other Bravo winners this year, the arts are both an end and a means to help children understand traditional subjects such as literature and math better.

In the face of cutbacks in education funding, Music Center officials said it was more important than ever to reward high-caliber arts teaching: \$2,000 apiece for Basom and Dana Howard, a fifth- and sixth-grade

teacher at Lehigh Elementary School in Montclair, and \$5,000 to the South Shores/Cal State Dominguez Hills Magnet School for the Visual and Performing Arts in San Pedro.

Established in 1983 during the lean years of arts funding after Proposition 13 capped property taxes, the Bravo Awards seek to raise the profile of arts education, said Lynda Jenner, the center's director of community partnerships. Competition has grown fiercer, she added, with 51 candidates this year.

The judges said the integration of dance, music, drama and visual arts into the regular classroom at South Shores earned the L.A. Unified arts magnet school its Bravo Award. The school's third-graders, for instance, familiarize themselves with fractions by singing about pizza slices.

Judges said Dana Howard impressed them by instilling an appreciation for arts and encouraging independent thinking. Judge Althea Woods, who saw Howard teach a lesson on ancient Egypt with about 50 ceremonial masks, said she admired the way Howard's fifth- and sixth-graders respectfully handled them and painted their own without copying each other.

"People need to realize that teachers can make an indelible impression through the arts — whether it's math, history or Matisse," Jenner said. "It's the way lessons are absorbed."

Basom landed his first professional stage role in the fifth grade as a lunch-stealing bully in a Christmas play at the Seattle Children's Theatre. As a teenager, he talked up beach shorts in radio ads and belted out songs in high school musicals. While earning a bachelor's degree in English and French at Amherst College, he performed in a musical revue. He also studied at Rainbow's Clown College in 1995 and ran his own party entertainment company.

In 1999, Basom began developing drama lesson plans as he worked toward his master's degree in education at Pepperdine University. He refined the games — which now total 101 — while teaching at the private Buckley School in Sherman Oaks.

With the Los Angeles district since 2000, Basom usually divides his week among three schools, visiting about four classrooms a day in addition to holding a resource session with teachers. The wandering minstrel wheels his supplies — which include lesson plans, "character cards," masking tape, a tambourine and a black magic hat — from room to room on a small luggage cart.

Basom believes drama can help explain even the most abstract of concepts. For example, he said, "Science and theater work together brilliantly well because both are energy-oriented."

Basom illustrated by explaining how he adapted "The Mingle Game" to re-create the water cycle for third-graders: Students move around the classroom mimicking ocean waves, jump up to the ceiling to enact evaporation, grumble loudly and gather together to form a rain cloud, make a bursting sound as they fall to the ground like droplets, and mingle like waves again.

The exercise shows how drama can engage "kinesthetic learners" — children who learn best by doing — Basom said. It also shows how such drama games can reinforce social skills for learning, such as cooperation, listening, clear speaking and self-confidence.

"Drama is tremendously successful for special-education students and English learners because it is universal in the ways people express themselves: through emotion, actions and gestures," Basom added.

The quieter children seemed to light up one recent afternoon when Basom had them reenact "The Little Red Hen" in June



AL SEIB Los Angeles Times

**DRAMATIC!** Teacher Jonas Basom makes a point with second-graders Shannon Dunn, left, and Mallory Culbertson in Julie Yoshida's class at Marquez Elementary School in Pacific Palisades.

Lew's first-grade class at the Marquez campus in Pacific Palisades.

After adding adjectives to describe the characters of the duck, pig and mouse in the story, Basom asked the children to do their own character impressions.

Though Kristopher Davis said little, nodding to show he enjoyed Basom's class and naming "The Freeze Dance" as his favorite activity, Davis quacked, wiggled his limbs and scurried with the other 19 children during

Basom's exercise.

"Some of the kids have blossomed in drama," Lew said after Basom's class. "They talk more. They're more expressive. They feel free to be wild and silly because he is so silly."

The 15-year teaching veteran said Basom's connection with the children also helps.

"What's so impressive about him is that he introduces pantomime or some concept like plot or setting and in 10 to 15 minutes the kids get it," she said. "They

go around reminding each other to 'articulate' and go around saying, 'Projection: to speak loudly on stage!'"

Second-graders at Marquez insisted that they learned a lot from Basom. Though Hailey Biscow couldn't find the words to define "plot" after class, she did remember another word not often heard in second-graders' vocabulary.

"Tableau?" she said triumphantly. "It's a frozen picture. It's a French word."