



# What's the Difference between Me & You? with Kris Alvarez

## Overview

Join theatre artist Kris Alvarez on this playful creative journey. On our quest we will explore collaboratively and independently to find true connections, true voices, while collectively creating. Get ready to move around and have a lot of fun in this class.

## Artist Bio

Kris Alvarez is a theatre artist and a Regina monologue. Over the past 12 years, Kris has had the privilege to bridge diverse communities through theatre creation & play.

You may know her as an artistic associate of Curtain Razors Theatre as a performer (Bad Blood, Carmen Angel) and with her own work (What Kind of Brown Are You?). Inspired by 'growing up brown' in 1980s Regina, its most recent incarnation, Burnt Sienna with Kris Alvarez, is a talk show/variety show "with a little more colour" returning for a 2019-20 series.

At Globe Theatre School, as lead teacher & Young Company director, she implemented their first-ever Early Years programming. Currently at Fadadance, Kris introduced a similar movement course for the very young, Wee Folk. In 2018-19 Kris completed a residency with Common Weal Community Arts' Respond to Racism, building strong connections with Regina Open Door Society and Immigrant Women of Saskatchewan. Also, Kris directs a young people's troupe, Maudeville, at Artesian Performing Arts where she offers creative community programming (school break camps, holiday celebrations, family events).

**Strand:** Drama  
**Grades:** 7 & 8  
**Content:** 45 minute broadcast + hands-on activity

### **Classroom Setup:**

- Students will need room to move around and stand in a circle.
- Smart board
- White board or black board
- Device to access YouTube (can also be the smart board)
- Speakers (good sound level is important for this lesson)

### **Materials:**

- Writing utensil
- Paper

## **Curriculum Aims & Goals**

### **Aim:**

The aim of K-12 Arts Education is to enable students to understand and value arts expressions throughout life.

### **Creative/Productive:**

Students will inquire, create, and communicate through dance, drama, music and visual art.

### **Critical/Responsive:**

Students will respond to artistic expressions of Saskatchewan, Canadian and International artists using critical thinking, research, creativity and collaborative inquiry.

### **Cultural/Historical:**

Students will investigate the content and aesthetics of the arts within cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts, and understand the connection between the arts and human experience.

## **Creative/Productive**

### **CP7.5**

Use drama elements, strategies, negotiation, and collaboration to help shape the direction of the drama and/or collective creation.

### **CP8.3**

Choreograph one section of group choreography.

### **CP8.4**

Demonstrate how dramatic characters interact in relationships within the drama and/or collective creation.

### **CP8.6**

Express student perspectives on social issues (e.g., poverty, racism, homophobia, sustainability, gangs) in drama and/or collective creation.

## **Critical/Responsive**

### **CR8.1**

Respond to professional dance, drama, music, and visual art works through the creation of own arts expressions.

### **CR8.2**

Investigate and identify ways that today's arts expressions often reflect concern for social issues.

## **Cultural/Historical**

### **CH7.3**

Investigate and identify a variety of factors that influence artists, their work, and careers.

### **CH8.1**

Research and share insights about arts expressions that incorporate social commentary.

### **CH8.4**

Examine and respond to the work of artists who incorporate more than one art form in their work (e.g., combining poetry and music).

# **Recorded Broadcast Program (45 min.)**

**0:00-4:00** *Artist Bio*

**4:00-5:00** *Performance* 'Our Opening Number'

**5:00-7:00** *Introductions* 'Soup du Jour'

**7:00-10:00** *Expectations* 'Our Agreement'

**10:00-15:00** *Challenges* "The Wind Blows" + "Alien, Tiger, Cow"

**15:00-20:00** *Challenges* "Peel Off" + "In Your Shoes"

**20:00-23:00** *Performance* - 'Invisible String' song performed by Zoe, Iris & Kris

**23:00-28:00** *Conversation* - 'What's the Difference Between Me & You?'

**28:00-36:00** *Challenge* "Photo Album" / "Family Portraits"

**36:00-40:00** *Last Minute Challenge*

**40:00-45:00** *Conclusion*

# Teacher Guided Post-Broadcast Activity (45 min.)

## “Let’s Make a Scene!”

60 minutes

“Photo Album” is the post-broadcast exercise for the “What’s the Difference Between Me & You?”. This activity allows students time & space to create a very simple scene, building upon the momentum from the workshop. The simple scene can be a building block reserved for a future larger project or can be a stand-alone exercise to show a simple version of collective creation.

The lesson plan includes improv-based skills and story-inspired, character-driven tasks to achieve a simple scene.

## Prepare for the Activity

- Prepare the space: Make sure your room is ready for students to break into smaller groups based on the last activity of the broadcast.
- Each small group will need one student who documents ideas- a writing utensil and paper.
- As was established in the broadcast, reviewing “Our Agreement” and reminding all the students that this is important and useful for the activity to be enjoyable, easy and successful.

## Proposed Activity Schedule

- 1) (3 minutes) Invite all students to stand in a circle. Teacher re-introduces “Our Agreement”, by stating some aspects they believe help with creating together and/or by asking the students to recall the ones mentioned in the broadcast (Aspects: being willing, safety, challenge, fun). The teacher can ask if there are any other aspects/words anyone would like to add. Like in the broadcast, it is useful for the teacher to ask students to confirm their agreement to each aspect/word with a physical gesture like high fives to other students, in the air, to the room.
- 2) (3 minutes) The teacher introduces the activity “Photo Album”.
  - Step 1:** Group chooses an interesting important event that is typically captured through photos - birthday party, vacation, road trip, holiday family dinner, graduation.
  - Step 2:** Group finds 3 main moments of the event; a beginning, a middle & an end.
  - Step 3:** Group creates a “photo” for each moment. Like an actual photo, the group uses their bodies/faces in relation to each other, the situation, the space and then “take the photo” i.e., they do not speak or move.
  - Step 4:** Group decides on a “caption” for each photo – a sentence/phrase explaining the main idea or what is happening. Someone in the group says the caption aloud at the start or the end of each “photo taken”. Group practices the 3 moments to ensure they are consistent, clear and strong. The photos are performed one after the other, freezing & not speaking with each “photo taken” - with the exception of one person who will speak the caption.

- 3) (3 minutes) Break into smaller groups, approximately 6 students in each. Teacher asks each group to agree on one person to document ideas. Teacher asks each group to quickly decide on their event. A group can decide to choose an event from the list or possibly an event not mentioned.
- 4) (5 minutes) Next, the teacher asks groups to follow through with the next steps of “Photo Album” - deciding on 3 moments worthy of the photo, creating each photo and deciding on captions for each photo. Teacher should remind the group that although one person may write down some of the ideas, this is the time to be on their feet to create.
- 5) (5 minutes) “Pause!” Teacher lets the class know that each group will share what they have so far. One by one, groups share (from where they are working) their 3 photos.
- 6) (20 minutes) “Great start, everyone!” Teacher introduces the next level, “Photo Album 2.0”- It's time to turn the photos into moving pictures! Instead of being still, having one person state the caption, groups may have characters move and say lines that would be said in each photo. Teacher can make the comparison of 3 photos to a simple scene: there are characters, location and an event/series of actions. This means for each photo, the group needs to ensure all necessary characters are clear, decide which characters say something in order for the audience to understand what is happening. Each group has a student writing down each photo title and any lines that characters say in each photo.

\*TIP: Before groups begin collectively creating, the teacher reminds them to keep it simple. Each group’s photo album scene still consists of 3 main images with some movement/lines. This will create a simple scene that is approximately 2-4 minutes vs. the 1–2 minutes photo album.

\*TIP: It is helpful for the teacher to share that, during collective creation, it is best to “run with ideas” vs. sit still and discuss. For example, if a student offers an idea that does support the characters/location/event chosen, instead of the group stopping to discuss, it’s preferred to get up and simply try the idea offered. And, if anything, other students can build upon that offer. In improv and collective creation, this is often called “Yes And-ing” and makes it easier to create together in a short amount of time.

\*TIP: In a group, if there aren’t enough characters based on the event, a student could be a narrator/storyteller, a student can be a non-human character/inanimate object/part of the location (cat, lamp, table, door, fence) This could be more than one student creating a part of the location using their bodies.

\*TIP: During this small group scene-building, it is useful for the teacher to check in with each group, to ensure they are finding clear choices, to assist them with any obstacles.

- 7) (15mins) Each group shares their “Photo Album 2.0” to the rest of the class. Teacher can share at least one moment from each group that they saw/heard a successful clear image. If there is time, the teacher can ask other students to share what they saw from a group that was clear and strong.
- 8) Celebrate the successes! It is challenging to do small group creating in a short amount of time. BRAVO for trying your best!!