



# INTRODUCTION TO TECHNICAL THEATRE: FLIPPED LEARNING

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When an audience watches a piece of theatre, they never see what goes on behind the scenes or know the people who work to make the production look its best. But theatre is a collaboration between what happens onstage and off.

This flipped learning unit will introduce students to the world of technical theatre. Through video, they will learn information on specific technical theatre roles and how they work together, types of stages, parts of a theatre and stage geography, and then apply this knowledge through in-class active-learning exercises.

For example, students will take on the role of a producer and decide how a budget will be divided among different departments. They will practice the calls a stage manager uses. The culminating assignment has students solve a common technical theatre issue: to design, create, and implement a solution for a unique stage direction in a play.

## 1 - Pre-Knowledge

Experience Tech Theatre: Students will explore how technical theatre affects storytelling.

## 2 - Theatre Hierarchy

This lesson introduces students to the various roles in the theatre and how they make up a hierarchy. Students take on the role of one of these three important roles in a theatre production through an activity.

## 3 - Technical Director and Tech Crews / Stage Manager and Running Crews

Students are introduced to two groups of technical theatre roles and the people in charge of those groups: the technical director and tech crews and the stage manager and running crews. Students will take on the role of a stage manager and practice the calls a stage manager would use.

## 4 - Common Types of Theatres & Stages

Students review the three most common types of theatre stages used today: proscenium, thrust, and arena stages. Students create the audience for a specific type of stage in a warm-up, and then in groups, students work to stage a fairy tale using the three different theatre configurations.

## 5 - Stage Geography & Parts of a Theatre

Students learn about stage geography and parts of a theatre. Students practice stage geography in a warm-up, and then participate in a group activity where they are given random stage geography positions and have to present a scene from those positions.

## 6 - Culminating Activity

Students design, create, and implement a solution for the famous "exit, pursued by a bear" stage direction from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.

# Standards Connections

## National Core Arts Standards

### Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation - Grade 6

TH:Pr4.1.6.b - Experiment with various physical choices to communicate character in a drama/theatre work.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade 6

TH:Cr2.1.6.b - Contribute ideas and accept and incorporate the ideas of others in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade 7

TH:Cr2.1.7.b - Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

### Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade 7

TH:Pr5.1.7.b - Choose a variety of technical elements that can be applied to a design in a drama/theatre work.

### Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade 8

TH:Pr5.1.8.b - Use a variety of technical elements to create a design for a rehearsal or drama/theatre production.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Cr2.1.HSII.b - Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Advanced

TH:Cr2.1.HSIII.b - Collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade HS Advanced

TH:Pr5.1.HSIII.b - Explain and justify the selection of technical elements used to build a design that communicates the concept of a drama/theatre production.

### Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade 6

TH:Cr3.1.6.c - Explore a planned technical design during the rehearsal process for a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work - Grade 7

TH:Re9.1.7.b - Consider the aesthetics of the production elements in a drama/theatre work.

### Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade 7

TH:Cr3.1.7.c - Consider multiple planned technical design elements during the rehearsal process for a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work - Grade 8

TH:Pr6.1.8.a - Perform a rehearsed drama/theatre work for an audience.

### Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade 8

TH:Cr3.1.8.c - Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted drama/ theatre work.

### Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work - Grade HS

### Proficient

TH:Re9.1.HSI.b - Consider the aesthetics of the production elements in a drama/theatre work.

### Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade HS Proficient

TH:Cr3.1.HSI.c - Refine technical design choices to support the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/ theatre work.

### Refine new work through play, drama processes and theatre experiences using critical analysis and experimentation - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Cr3.1.HSII.c - Re-imagine and revise technical design choices during the course of a rehearsal process to enhance the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

## Common Core

### Speaking and Listening

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 - Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

### Language

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.2 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

### Language

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.2 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

## California VAPA Standards (2019)

### 6.TH:Pr4 Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

6.TH:Pr4.b - Experiment with various physical choices to communicate character in a drama/theatre work.

### 6.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

6.TH:Cr2.b - Contribute ideas and accept and incorporate the ideas of others in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

### 7.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

7.TH:Cr2.b - Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

### 7.TH:Pr5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

7.TH:Pr5.b - Choose a variety of technical theatre elements that can be applied to a design in a drama/theatre work.

### 8.TH:Pr5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

8.TH:Pr5.b - Use a variety of technical theatre elements to create a design for a rehearsal or drama/theatre production.

### Acc.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Acc.TH:Cr2.b - Cooperate as a creative team to make interpretive choices for a drama/theatre work.

### **Adv.TH:Pr5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.**

Adv.TH:Pr5.b - Explain and justify the selection of technical theatre elements used to build a design that communicates the concept of a drama/theatre production.

### **Adv.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.**

Adv.TH:Cr2.b - Collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### **6.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.**

6.TH:Cr3.c - Explore planned designs during the rehearsal process for a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### **7.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.**

7.TH:Cr3.c - Consider multiple planned technical theatre elements and designs during the rehearsal process for a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### **7.TH:Re9 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.**

7.TH:Re9.c - Analyze and evaluate the aesthetics of the technical theatre elements in a drama/theatre work.

### **8.TH:Pr6 Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.**

8.TH:Pr6 - Perform a rehearsed, scripted scene from a drama/theatre work for an audience.

### **8.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.**

8.TH:Cr3.c - Implement and refine a planned design using technical theatre elements during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### **Prof.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.**

Prof.TH:Cr3.c - Refine design choices using technical theatre elements to support the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### **Prof.TH:Re9 Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.**

Prof.TH:Re9.c - Analyze and evaluate the aesthetics and effect of the technical theatre elements in a drama/theatre work.

### **Acc.TH:Cr3 Refine and complete artistic work.**

Acc.TH:Cr3.c - Re-imagine and revise design choices using technical theatre elements during the course of a rehearsal process to enhance the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

## **Florida Sunshine State Standards**

### **Critical Thinking & Reflection**

TH.912.C.2.3 - Analyze different types of stage configurations to determine the effects of each as potential production solutions.

### **Skills, Techniques & Processes**

TH.912.S.1.7 - Interpret dramatic texts, organize and conduct rehearsals, and justify directorial choices for formal and informal productions.

TH.912.S.1.8 - Use research to extract clues in dramatic texts to create performances or technical elements, choosing those that are most interesting and that best convey dramatic intent.

## **Georgia Performance Standards 2017 - Theatre Arts**

### **Grade 7 - Creating**

TA7.CR.1 - Organize, design, and refine theatrical work., a.

Identify and rehearse effective communication skills., b. Compare and contrast character types and relationships by analyzing character motivations, objectives, and goals., c. Compare the physical, emotional, vocal, and social dimensions of a character., d. Investigate the role and responsibility of the cast and crew., e. Identify and model ensemble skills in the rehearsal process., f. Utilize staging and blocking choices to enhance the performance., g. Compare, contrast, and design elements of technical theatre., h. Utilize theatre vocabulary throughout the rehearsal process.

### **Grade 7 - Performing**

TA7.PR.2 - Execute artistic and technical elements of theatre., a. Select a variety of technical elements that can be applied to a theatrical work., b. Incorporate artistic and technical elements into a theatre performance.

### **Grade 8 - Creating**

TA8.CR.1 - Organize, design, and refine theatrical work., a. Differentiate the physical, emotional, vocal, and social dimensions of a variety of characters., b. Compare the relationships and interactions between characters by analyzing character motivation (objectives, obstacles, strategy, action, stakes, outcome)., c. Incorporate dramatic elements through improvisation., d. Connect theatre vocabulary to the application of theatre performance., e. Identify and demonstrate both ensemble and leadership skills in the rehearsal process., f. Evaluate the effectiveness of artistic and technical elements used in a theatre production., g. Design and create scenery, props, costumes, lighting, and sound., h. Assume different roles and responsibilities in the rehearsal process.

### **Grade 8 - Performing**

TA8.PR.2 - Execute artistic and technical elements of theatre., a. Incorporate artistic and technical elements into a theatre production., b. Resolve conflicts in technical applications.

### **Grades 9-12 - FUNDAMENTALS OF THEATRE LEVELS I-IV - Performing**

TAHSFT.PR.2 - Execute artistic and technical elements of theatre., a. Identify and define the various collaborative roles and relationships of technical production personnel (e.g. sound, lighting, set, scenic, costume, dramaturge, makeup, marketing, business aspects) in relation to the directors and performers., b. Identify and apply the various aspects of directing, staging, performance spaces, and rehearsal management., c. Recognize and apply the basic elements and procedures involved in the construction of props, scenery, and platforms., d. Formulate effective theatrical designs in order to support the text and directorial concept.

### **Grades 9-12 - TECHNICAL THEATRE LEVELS I-IV - Creating**

TAHSTT.CR.1 - Create technical elements of theatre (e.g. sets, props, costumes, makeup, lighting, sound)., a. Explore and utilize the elements of design and principles of composition for a theatrical context., b. Create basic to advanced technical elements by choosing appropriate materials, tools, and techniques., c. Analyze and/or develop choices in technical elements (e.g. sets, lights, costumes, sound) of informal and formal productions and theatrical texts as a part of the design process, considering mood, tone, and symbolism., d. Create industry standard paperwork (e.g. budgets, cut lists, materials, cue sheets, lighting and costume plots, schedules, calendars) as it relates to completing design renderings and/or models., e. Conceptualize and/or generate design elements for a dramatic work (e.g. scene, one act, full-length, musical).

### **Grades 9-12 - TECHNICAL THEATRE LEVELS I-IV - Responding**

TAHSTT.RE.1 - Respond to technical elements of theatre using appropriate supporting evidence., a. Revise projects, plans, and/or procedures after peer criticism to improve development of technical elements., b. Identify and analyze the characteristics of different types of performance spaces and how they can influence production decisions (e.g. proscenium stage, studio/black box, thrust stage, classroom, arena, found space)., c. Evaluate design choices of professional designers., d. Evaluate design and technical elements in a post mortem following the completion of a theatre production.

### Grades 9-12 - TECHNICAL THEATRE LEVELS I-IV - Connecting

TAHSTT.CN.1 - Connect technical elements of theatre., a. Explore and understand the collaborations between designers and directors to develop design elements., b. Investigate the history of theatre architecture, stage technology, and other technical elements., c. Understand technical theatre career options and various industry unions (e.g. International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Actor's Equity, United Scenic Artists, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, League of Resident Theatres)., d. Explore connections with other disciplines associated with technical theatre (e.g. scientific principles behind technical theatrical practices, physics of electricity and sound, basic structural engineering, load ratings, working load limits)., e. Connect design themes with historical and social relevance using dramaturgical research and an understanding of historical and cultural artistic movements (e.g. expressionism, realism, Kabuki, Sanskrit Drama).

## North Carolina Essential Standards

### Beginning High School Standards - Aesthetics

B.AE.1.1 - Understand the major technical elements, such as sound, lights, set, and costumes, and their interrelationships.

B.AE.1.2 - Explain how the major technical elements, such as sound, lights, set, and costumes, are used to enhance formal or informal productions.

### Intermediate High School Standards - Communication

I.C.2.2 - Interpret scenes through formal and informal presentations.

### Intermediate High School Standards - Aesthetics

I.AE.1.1 - Use technical knowledge and design skills to formulate designs.

I.AE.1.2 - Use the major technical elements, such as sound, lights, set, and costumes, for formal or informal audiences.

### Proficient High School Standards - Aesthetics

P.AE.1.2 - Apply working knowledge to solve problems in the major technical elements, such as sound, lights, set, and costumes, for formal or informal audiences.

### Advanced High School Standards - Communication

A.C.2.2 - Interpret scripts through formal and informal presentations.

### Advanced High School Standards - Aesthetics

A.AE.1.1 - Use technical knowledge and design skills to formulate designs for a specific audience.

A.AE.1.2 - Use the knowledge and skills associated with technical roles, such as lighting operator, prop master, or stage manager, in an appropriate and effective manner.

## Tennessee Theatre Curriculum

## Standards

### GRADES 6-8

3.0 Scene Design - Students will design by developing environments for improvised and scripted scenes.

### GRADES 9-12

3.0 Scene Design - Students will design and produce by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations for informal and formal productions.

## Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Theatre Arts

### MS 117.211 LI - Creative Expression: production

C.3.D - use technology in theatrical applications such as live theatre, video, and film.

### MS 117.212 LII - Creative Expression: production

B.3.D - use technology in theatrical applications such as live theatre, video, and film.

### HS 117.315 LI - Creative Expression: production

C.3.A - develop and practice technical theatre skills.

C.3.B - apply technical knowledge and skills safely to create or operate theatrical elements such as scenery, properties, lighting, sound, costumes, makeup, current technology, or publicity.

### HS 117.316 LII - Creative Expression: production

C.3.A - develop and practice safe and effective stagecraft skills.

### HS 117.317 LIII - Creative Expression: production

C.3.A - experiment with technical elements of theatre safely and effectively in improvisation or scripted scenes or plays.

### HS 117.318 LIV - Creative Expression: production

C.3.A - experiment with the technical elements of theatre safely and effectively in improvisation or scripted scenes or plays.

## Alberta, Canada

### Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Costume

- 1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of costume
- 2 - recognize the importance of illusion in costume design

### Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Lighting

- 1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of stage lighting
- 2 - recognize the importance of illusion in lighting design

### Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Management - Stage

- 1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose and duties of the stage manager
- 2 - recognize and use basic technical theatre/design terminology

### Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Management - Properties

- 1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of stage properties

### Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Management - Set

- 1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of stage scenery

### Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Management - Sound

- 1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of stage sound

### **Technical Theatre - Levels I, II, III - Awareness**

1 - recognize the basic terminology associated with the component being studied

### **Technical Theatre - Levels I, II, III - Readiness**

6 - demonstrate understanding of the importance of planning and organization

### **Orientation Drama 10**

cope with success and failure in positive ways  
demonstrate self-discipline, self-direction and a sense of responsibility  
display consideration and respect for self and others  
listen to self and others  
make effective decisions or choices  
positively support the work of others  
share ideas confidently  
work cooperatively and productively

## **British Columbia (2018)**

### **GRADE 6 - ARTS - Exploring and creating**

Intentionally select and apply materials, movements, technologies, environments, tools, and techniques by combining and arranging artistic elements, processes, and principles in art making

### **GRADE 7 - ARTS - Exploring and creating**

Intentionally select and apply materials, movements, technologies, environments, tools, and techniques by combining and arranging artistic elements, processes, and principles in art making

### **GRADE 7 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting**

Develop and refine ideas, processes, and technical skills in a variety of art forms to improve the quality of artistic creations

### **GRADE 8 - ARTS - Exploring and creating**

Intentionally select and apply materials, movements, technologies, environments, tools, and techniques by combining and arranging artistic elements, processes, and principles in art making

### **GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Explore and Create**

Experiment with a range of props, processes, and technologies

### **GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Explore and Create**

Experiment with a range of materials, props, processes, and technologies to create and refine performances

### **GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Explore and Create**

Experiment with a range of props, processes, and technologies to create and refine innovative dramatic works

## **Ontario, Canada**

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Foundations - Concepts and Terminology**

C.1.3 - demonstrate an understanding of production roles, practices, and terminology when planning and presenting drama works (e.g., set design, costume design, lighting plot, light cue sheet, sound cue sheet, prompt book, set sketch, set model)

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Creating and Presenting - Presentation Techniques & Technologies**

A.3.3 - use a variety of technological tools (e.g., light, sound, set design, props, models) to enhance the impact of drama works

### **Grade 11 - Creating and Presenting - Presentation Techniques & Technologies**

A.3.3 - select and use a variety of technological tools, including forms of new media, to highlight the message and enhance the impact of drama works