Students will explore the structural elements of a play: character, objective, obstacles, tactics, resolution, and raising the stakes. They will also learn how to write character-driven dialogue and stage directions.

The unit culminates in a group written original play which is performed in front of the class. Please refer to the Pacing Guide for more details and ways to supplement with other DTA materials.

1 - Structure
Students are introduced to the structural elements of a script.

2 - Dialogue
Students are introduced to the concept of stakes as an additional element of a script, and participate in a group playwriting activity that allows performers to test out lines of dialogue in performance.

3 - Stage Directions
Students learn the three types of stage directions, and apply what they’ve learned to their own scenes as well as open scenes (sample included).

4 - Character Dialogue and Development
Students learn the importance of dialogue and creating it for their characters.

5 - The Unities
Students are introduced to Aristotle’s 3 Unities and participate in an improv exercise to apply these guidelines for playwriting.

6 - Writing: Part 1
Students apply what they have learned so far in the unit and participate in a group playwriting activity - the writing pass technique.

7 - Writing: Part 2
Students continue to work on their group playwriting activity and finalize their script with stage directions, as well as complete staged readings.

8 - Unit Project
Students complete their script, format it properly, then hand it in. Next, they will perform their scene and complete a final reflection. A rubric is included.
Standards Connections

Alberta, Canada

Junior Goal I Objectives
- develop a positive self-image
- develop self-discipline
- develop self-confidence
- strengthen powers of concentration
- extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively
- develop the willingness to make a decision, act upon it and accept the results
- develop a sense of responsibility and commitment
- develop the ability to offer and accept constructive criticism

Junior Goal II Objectives
- become familiar with dramatic terminology and script format
- become familiar with disciplines that enhance dramatic process

Junior Goal III Objectives
- develop awareness of various conventions of theatre

Junior Orientation
- demonstrate a willingness to take calculated and reasonable risks
- share ideas confidently with others
- focus concentration on one task at a time
- listen effectively
- generate imaginative and creative solutions to problems
- work cooperatively and productively with all members of the class in pairs, small groups and large groups
- support positivity the work of others
- offer and accept constructive criticism, given specific guidelines, with a desire to improve
- recognize the purposes of and participate in warmup activities
- show awareness of story sequence

Improvisation/Acting Level I - Beginning
- understand and apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax and plot
- use stage vocabulary: stage areas, body positions and crosses
- demonstrate appropriate rehearsal behaviours and routines
- communicate a clear beginning, middle and end in spontaneous and planned scenes

Improvisation/Acting Level III - Advanced
- pick up cues effectively

Theatre Studies Level III - Advanced (The script)
- read a script aloud
- demonstrate understanding of plot structure

Senior Goal I Objectives
- develop a positive and realistic self-image
- increase self-discipline
- increase self-confidence
- extend the ability to concentrate

Orientation Drama 10
- share ideas confidently
- demonstrate behaviour appropriate to given circumstances
- concentrate on the task at hand
- demonstrate effective use and management of time
- listen to self and others
- positively support the work of others
- demonstrate self-discipline, self-direction and a sense of responsibility
- work cooperatively and productively
- offer and accept constructive criticism with a desire to progress

Improvisation Drama 10
- tell a story spontaneously
- apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax and plot in planned and unplanned scenes

Theatre Studies Drama 30 (Early or Middle or Late drama)
- recognize dramatic structure of a play

Playwriting - Drama 20
- demonstrate understanding of the basic structure of a play
- define and identify plot, character, thought and diction
- demonstrate understanding of script format
- generate and collect ideas that have dramatic possibilities
- write a scenario
- identify character types and their functions and attributes
- demonstrate understanding if and write exposition
- use effective diction
- define character objectives
- define conflict
- construct a conflict between two characters (protagonist and antagonist)
- construct a scene with two contrasting characters
- give and accept constructive criticism

British Columbia, Canada

Drama 8
- demonstrate an appreciation for the diversity of others and their various perspectives
- demonstrate the unique ability of drama to unify a diverse group
- demonstrate trust through collaborative drama
- make and act on reasoned and thoughtful decisions
- suggest and try a variety of appropriate solutions to a given problem
- create a unified drama with a distinct beginning, middle, and end
- use appropriate vocabulary to describe drama and theatre elements
- apply theatrical conventions to dramatic forms
- demonstrate respect for the nature of their audience

Drama 9
- choose appropriate ways to express thoughts, feelings, and beliefs
- demonstrate the unique ability of drama to unify a diverse group
- demonstrate trust in others through class activities and individual and ensemble performances
- accept responsibility for decisions and solutions
- show facility in using a variety of forms to develop a drama
- collaborate in the direction of a dramatic activity
- demonstrate familiarity with stage vocabulary and apply theatrical conventions to dramatic forms
- demonstrate respect for the nature of their audience
demonstrate responsibility to the group and self in rehearsal and performance

**Drama 10**
- demonstrate the unique ability of drama to unify a diverse group
- demonstrate trust in self and others through class activities and individual and ensemble performances
- defend choices made in problem solving
- define and use criteria to assess and evaluate the work of self and others
- negotiate and compromise to solve group problems
- suspend disbelief to create drama
- analyse the motivations, objectives, obstacles, and actions of a character
- apply the principle of the three unities
- demonstrate an appreciation for the necessity of structure in dramatic work
- apply stage vocabulary and theatrical conventions to dramatic forms
- demonstrate a commitment to the team approach in rehearsal and performance

**Drama 11**
- critique their own work and that of others
- demonstrate appropriate performance etiquette

**Drama 12**
- use appropriate terminology to describe theatre performance
- manipulate script conventions and structures to achieve specific purposes
- use appropriate stage terminology
- demonstrate appropriate performance etiquette
- demonstrate commitment to the rehearsal and performance process

**California VAPA Standards (2001)**

**GRADE 9-12 PROFICIENT - 2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION**
2.2 - Creation/Invention in Theatre - Write dialogues and scenes, applying basic dramatic structure: exposition, complication, conflict, crises, climax, and resolution.

**GRADE 9-12 PROFICIENT - 5.0 CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, APPLICATIONS**
5.3 - Careers and Career-Related Skills - Demonstrate an understanding of the professional standards of the actor, director, scriptwriter, and technical artist, such as the requirements for union membership.

**GRADES 9-12 ADVANCED - 2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION**
2.2 - Creation/Invention in Theatre - Improvise or write dialogues and scenes, applying basic dramatic structure (exposition, complication, crises, climax, and resolution) and including complex characters with unique dialogue that motivates the action.

**GRADE SIX - 2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION**
2.3 - Creation/Invention in Theatre - Write and perform scenes or one-act plays that include monologue, dialogue, action, and setting together with a range of character types.

**GRADE SEVEN - 1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION**
1.1 - Development of the Vocabulary of Theatre - Use the vocabulary of theatre, such as playwright, rehearsal, dress rehearsal, run-through, and cold reading, to describe theatrical experiences.
1.2 - Comprehension and Analysis of the Elements of Theatre - Identify dramatic elements within a script, such as foreshadowing, crisis, rising action, catharsis, and denouement, using the vocabulary of theatre.

**California VAPA Standards (2019)**

8.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
- 8.TH:Cr1.b - Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character’s inner thoughts, objectives, and motivations in a drama/theatre work.

Acc.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Acc.TH:Cr1.b - Use personal experiences and knowledge to develop a character that is believable and authentic 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.

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

7.TH:Pr4 Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.
- 7.TH:Pr4.b - Use various character objectives in a 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.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4 - Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.6 - Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

**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.

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.3 - Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
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.

**Writing**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.5 - Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

**Florida Sunshine State Standards**

**Critical Thinking & Reflection**

TH.912.C.2.2 - Construct imaginative, complex scripts and revise them in collaboration with actors to convey story and meaning to an audience.

TH.912.C.2.6 - Assess a peer’s artistic choices in a production as a foundation for one’s own artistic growth.

**Skills, Techniques & Processes**

TH.912.S.1.5 - Write monologues, scenes, and/or short plays using principles and elements of writing found in dramatic literature.

TH.912.S.2.8 - Strengthen acting skills by engaging in theatre games and improvisations.

**National Core Arts Standards**

**TH:**Cr1.1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - Grade 8

TH:Cr1.1.b - Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character’s inner thoughts, objectives, and motivations in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.8.c - Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.

**TH:**Cr1.1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - High School Accomplished

TH:Cr1.1.HSII.c - Use personal experiences and knowledge to develop a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:**Cr2.1: 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.

**TH:**Cr2.1: 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.

**TH:**Cr2.1: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Accomplished

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

**TH:**Cr2.1: 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.

**TH:**Pr4.1: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation - Grade 7

TH:Pr4.1.7.b - Use various character objectives in a drama/theatre work.

**North Carolina Essential Standards**

**Beginning High School Standards - Communication**

B.C.1.3 - Understand how to read and write scripts that communicate conflict, plot, and character.

**Proficient High School Standards - Communication**

P.C.1.3 - Create original works, such as monologues, scenes, or performance pieces.

**Advanced High School Standards - Communication**

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

**Advanced High School Standards - Culture**

A.CU.2.2 - Integrate conventions and structures of theatre when creating formal or informal theatre productions.

**Ontario, Canada**

**Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing - Connections Beyond the Classroom**

B.3.1 - Identify and describe skills, attitudes, and strategies they used in collaborative drama activities (e.g., brainstorming, active listening, and cooperative problem-solving skills; strategies for sharing responsibility through collaborative team roles)

B.3.3 - Identify connections between their learning in drama and possible employment opportunities in the broader educational and arts sectors (e.g., production and/or performance roles in community theatre, television/radio broadcasting, filmmaking)

**Foundations - Concepts and Terminology**

C.1.2 - Demonstrate an understanding of and use correct terminology to refer to the forms, elements, conventions, and techniques of drama, with a focus on ensemble drama works (e.g., chorus, protagonist, ingénue, supporting role, act, scene, climax, resolution, improvisation, mask, freeze-frame image)

**Foundations - Responsible Practices**

C.3.2 - Identify and apply the skills and attitudes needed to perform various tasks and responsibilities in producing drama works (e.g., use active listening and cooperative problem-solving skills; practise punctuality; use tact in suggesting changes and improvements; demonstrate willingness to accept criticism and build consensus)

C.3.3 - Demonstrate an understanding of theatre and audience etiquette, in both classroom and formal performance contexts (e.g., as a performer: show willingness to take direction and behave appropriately towards other actors; as a viewer: demonstrate respect for performers and other audience members by paying attention, not interrupting or talking, and applauding when appropriate)

**Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Theatre Arts**

**HS 117.315 LI - Creative Expression: performance**

C.2.F - Create, write, and refine original monologues, improvisations, scenes, or vignettes that reflect dramatic structure to convey meaning to the audience through live performance or media forms.

**HS 117.315 LI - Critical evaluation and response**

C.5.B - Recognize theatre as an art form and evaluate self as a creative being.

**HS 117.316 LI - Creative Expression: performance**
C.2.F - create, write, devise, and refine original monologues, improvisations, scenes, or vignettes to convey meaning to the audience through live performance or media forms.

**HS 117.316 LII - Critical evaluation and response**
C.5.C - offer and receive constructive criticism of peer performances.

**HS 117.317 LIII - Creative Expression: performance**
C.2.E - write dialogue that reveals character motivation, advances plot, provides exposition, and reveals theme.

**MS 117.211 LI - Creative Expression: performance**
C.2.F - create environments, characters, and actions.

**MS 117.211 LI - Critical evaluation and response**
C.5.A - identify and apply audience etiquette at all performances.

**MS 117.212 LII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**
B.1.B - develop and apply theatre preparation and warm-up techniques.
B.1.E - demonstrate knowledge of theatrical vocabulary and terminology.
B.1.F - analyze and evaluate the structure and form of dramatic literature.

**MS 117.212 LII - Creative Expression: performance**
B.2.B - define characters by what they do, what they say, and what others say about them.
B.2.D - create stories collaboratively and individually that have dramatic structure.

**MS 117.212 LII - Critical evaluation and response**
B.5.A - understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of performances.

**MS 117.213 LIII - Critical evaluation and response**
B.5.A - understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of live performances.