



THEATRE ETIQUETTE

By KERRY HISHON

When teaching students who are brand new to theatre, it's important to discuss and apply the expectations of the drama classroom and the theatrical world. How do you implement and instill theatre etiquette in your classroom and your rehearsals - before a show and backstage? A cohesive theatrical community starts with the rules and codes of behaviour both onstage and off.

Topics covered within the unit include: What is Etiquette, Real World vs Theatre World Etiquette, Audience Etiquette, Audition Etiquette, Pre-Show and Performance Etiquette. The unit ends with a culminating activity which included a rubric and reflection.

1 - What is Theatre Etiquette

In this lesson, students will define etiquette, refine the definition for the theatre classroom, and work on a Creativity Contract that has goals and procedures. What do students want out of the class? What are the steps they need to take to achieve those goals? What procedures are needed to make the theatre classroom a safe place where they can achieve those goals?

2 - Real World vs. Theatre World

Students will learn about creating a safe and professional space in the classroom and in the theatre, and how these principles can be applied to the real world. What are the best practices for etiquette in the classroom, which can also be used in rehearsal, and which can also be used in the real world.

3 - Audience Etiquette

Theatre does not happen without an audience. It's important for students to be aware of and apply audience etiquette. In this lesson, students will explore the different ways an audience behaves depending on the event, what is bad audience behaviour, establish the rules, practice critical thinking as an audience member, and complete an exit slip to demonstrate comprehension.

4 - Audition Etiquette

Students will explore the elements of the audition process, discuss the necessary guidelines of audition etiquette, and practice applying those guidelines.

5 - Pre-Show Performance Etiquette

Students receive the Pre-Show Etiquette Tips and Performance Etiquette Tips (handouts). They will brainstorm and develop a warm-up exercise designed to encourage pre-show etiquette, and design series of posters (either fully done or described with sketches) to encourage and highlight performance etiquette.

Standards Connections

National Core Arts Standards

Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Pr4.1.HSII.a - Discover how unique choices shape believable and sustainable drama/ theatre work.

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.

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.2 - Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

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.

Reading: Literature

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.4 - Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language evokes a sense of time and place; how it sets a formal or informal tone).

Reading: Informational Text

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4 - Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.3 - 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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.9-10.4 - Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 9-10 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Writing

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2 - Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

California VAPA Standards (2019)

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

Acc.TH:Pr4.a - Discover how unique choices shape believable and sustainable drama/ theatre work.

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.

Florida Sunshine State Standards

Critical Thinking & Reflection

TH.912.C.2.1 - Explore and describe possible solutions to production or acting challenges and select the solution most likely to produce desired results.

TH.912.C.2.7 - Accept feedback from others, analyze it for validity, and apply suggestions appropriately to future performances or designs.

TH.912.C.2.8 - Improve a performance or project using various self-assessment tools, coaching, feedback, and/or constructive criticism.

Historical & Global Connections

TH.912.H.3.1 - Apply critical-thinking and problem-solving skills used in theatre collaboration to develop creative solutions to real-life issues.

Innovation, Technology & the Future

TH.912.F.2.4 - Apply the skills necessary to be an effective director, designer, stage manager, and/or technician in the mounting of a theatrical performance.

Organizational Structure

TH.912.O.1.3 - Execute the responsibilities of director, designer, manager, technician, or performer by applying standard theatrical conventions.

Skills, Techniques & Processes

TH.912.S.1.1 - Describe the interactive effect of audience members and actors on performances.

TH.912.S.2.2 - Apply technical knowledge of safety procedures and demonstrate safe operation of theatre equipment, tools, and raw materials.

TH.912.S.3.2 - Exercise artistic discipline and collaboration to achieve ensemble in rehearsal and performance.

Georgia Performance Standards - Theatre Arts

Grade 6 - Responding

TA6.RE.1 - Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member., a. Identify the role of the audience in different environments., b. Analyze the relationship between an audience and a performer., c. Create guidelines for behaviors appropriate to a theatre experience., d. Model appropriate audience behaviors.

Grade 6 - Connecting

TA6.CN.1 - Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content., a. Identify similarities between

theatre and other art forms., b. Draw conclusions about the relationships between theatre and life., c. Define tasks associated with a theatre production (e.g. director, stage manager, designer, technician, playwright, actor).

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 - Responding

TA7.RE.1 - Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member., a. Assess the role and responsibility of the audience as an integral part of theatre performances., b. Summarize the relationship between the audience and performers., c. Predict how audience relationships will differ with venue and performance type., d. Demonstrate appropriate audience behaviors.

Grade 7 - Connecting

TA7.CN.1 - Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content., a. Compare and contrast theatre with other art forms., b. Articulate relationships between theatre and life., c. Utilize a multi-disciplinary approach to create original theatre., d. Describe the careers and professional responsibilities associated with theatre production (e.g. director, stage manager, designer, technician, playwright, actor).

Grade 8 - Performing

TA8.PR.1 - Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments., a. Demonstrate the physical, emotional, vocal, and social dimensions of a character in different types of theatre performances (e.g. rate, pitch, volume, inflection, posture, facial expression, motivation, physical movement)., b. Demonstrate appropriate ensemble skills throughout a performance., c. Use appropriate listening and response skills during performances.

Grade 8 - Responding

TA8.RE.1 - Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member., a. Evaluate the role and responsibility of the audience as an integral part of media productions., b. Articulate why the relationships between the audience and performers is critical to the success of theatre productions., c. Examine the differing audience relationships (e.g. various venues, performance styles)., d. Demonstrate appropriate audience behaviors.

Grade 8 - Connecting

TA8.CN.1 - Explore how theatre connects to life experience, careers, and other content., a. Investigate and prove common themes and structure among theatre and other disciplines., b. Defend how theatre reflects life., c. Incorporate multi-disciplinary aspects into theatre performance., d. Identify and analyze professions associated with different forms of production (e.g. director, stage manager, designer, technician, playwright, actor).

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 - FUNDAMENTALS OF THEATRE LEVELS I-IV - Responding

TAHSFT.RE.1 - Engage actively and appropriately as an audience member., a. Articulate why the relationship between the audience and performers is critical to the success of the production and demonstrate appropriate audience behavior., b. State and support aesthetic judgments through experience in diverse styles and genres of theatre.

Grades 9-12 - FUNDAMENTALS OF THEATRE LEVELS I-IV - Connecting

TAHSFT.CN.1 - Explore how theatre connects to life experiences, careers, and other content., a. Examine how theatre reflects real life., b. Analyze how theatre employs aspects of other art forms and disciplines to effectively communicate with a live audience., c. Demonstrate awareness of the discipline, knowledge, skills, and education required for careers in theatre., d. Explore various careers in the theatre arts (e.g. performance, design, production, administrative, education, promotion).

North Carolina Essential Standards

Beginning High School Standards - Culture

B.CU.2.1 - Illustrate appropriate theatre etiquette as a member of an audience, as a performer, and as a technician.

Proficient High School Standards - Culture

P.CU.2.1 - Understand how the rules of audience etiquette originated, how they have evolved, and for what purpose.

P.CU.2.2 - Analyze the interrelationships of theatre roles.

Advanced High School Standards - Aesthetics

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.

Advanced High School Standards - Culture

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

Tennessee Theatre Curriculum Standards

GRADES 6-8

8.0 Context - Students will understand context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the community and in other cultures

GRADES 9-12

8.0 Context - Students will understand context by analyzing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in the past and the present.

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for Theatre Arts

MS 117.211 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.E - identify theatrical vocabulary and terminology,

including basic anatomy of theatre spaces.

MS 117.211 LI - Critical evaluation and response

C.5.A - identify and apply audience etiquette at all performances.

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 - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

B.1.E - apply knowledge of theatrical vocabulary and terminology.

MS 117.213 LIII - Critical evaluation and response

B.5.A - understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of live performances.

HS 117.315 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.F - demonstrate a working knowledge of the language of theatre such as stage terminology, elements of theatre, or theatrical conventions.

C.1.H - define the roles of and appreciate the collaborative relationships between all artistic partners such as playwrights, composers, directors, actors, designers, technicians, and audience.

C.1.K - identify and recognize the importance of safe theatre practices.

HS 117.315 LI - Creative Expression: production

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.

C.3.D - demonstrate responsibility, artistic discipline, and creative problem solving by concentrating in one or more areas of theatre production such as acting, technical theatre, or theatre management.

HS 117.316 LII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.F - relate the interdependence of all theatrical elements.

HS 117.316 LII - Critical evaluation and response

C.5.A - evaluate and apply appropriate audience etiquette at various types of performances.

HS 117.317 LIII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.F - evaluate the interdependence of all theatrical elements.

HS 117.317 LIII - Critical evaluation and response

C.5.A - compare behavior at various types of performances and practice appropriate audience etiquette.

HS 117.318 LIV - Creative Expression: production

C.3.F - apply expertise in one or more areas of theatre production, demonstrating responsibility, artistic discipline, and creative problem solving.

HS 117.318 LIV - Critical evaluation and response

C.5.A - evaluate and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances.

Alberta, Canada

Technical Theatre/Design 10-20-30 - Management - House

2 - demonstrate knowledge of appropriate safety procedures

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

2 - recognize and use basic technical theatre/design terminology

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

5 - demonstrate knowledge of appropriate safety procedures

Junior Goal II Objectives

gain awareness of how the integration of disciplines enriches dramatic communication

Junior Goal III Objectives

develop awareness of drama and theatre presentations as possible

develop awareness of various conventions of theatre

develop recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre

Junior Orientation

demonstrate a willingness to take calculated and reasonable risks

demonstrate trust by becoming comfortable, physically and emotionally, with others

focus concentration on one task at a time

generate imaginative and creative solutions to problems

investigate a variety of roles and situations

listen effectively

meet deadlines and follow through on individual and group commitments

share ideas confidently with others

support positivity the work of others

understand that technical elements enhance verbal/physical communication

work cooperatively and productively with all members of the class in pairs, small groups and large groups

Improvisation/Acting Level I - Beginning

7 - use stage vocabulary: stage areas, body positions and crosses

8 - demonstrate appropriate rehearsal behaviours and routines

Junior Goal I Objectives

develop a sense of responsibility and commitment

develop self-confidence

develop self-discipline

develop the ability to initiate, organize and present a project within a given set of guidelines

develop the ability to interact effectively and constructively in a group process

develop the ability to offer and accept constructive criticism

develop the willingness to make a decision, act upon it and accept the results

extend the ability to understand, accept and respect others-their rights, ideas, abilities and differences

strengthen powers of concentration

Technical Theatre - Levels I, II, III - Awareness

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

2 - demonstrate understanding of the basic functions of the component being studied.

Technical Theatre - Levels I, II, III - Readiness

11 - arrange and sequence time, ideas, information, materials and/or personnel for achievement of the project

6 - demonstrate understanding of the importance of

planning and organization

Technical Theatre - Application

12 - demonstrate understanding of and apply appropriate regulations, procedures and precautions to ensure safe working conditions

Senior Goal I Objectives

apply imaginative and creative thought to problem-solving situations

demonstrate a sense of inquiry and commitment, individually and to the group

demonstrate a sense of responsibility and commitment, individually and to the group

demonstrate the ability to considered decisions, act upon them and accept the results

demonstrate the ability to contribute effectively and constructively to the group process

demonstrate the ability to initiate, organize and present a project within a given set of guidelines

extend the ability to concentrate

extend understanding of, acceptance of and empathy for others

increase self-discipline

Senior Goal III Objectives

demonstrate recognition of and respect for excellence in drama and theatre

explore various conventions and traditions of theatre

Orientation Drama 10

concentrate on the task at hand

demonstrate effective use and management of time

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

solve problems imaginatively and creatively

work cooperatively and productively

British Columbia (2018)

GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Reasoning and reflecting

Receive, offer, and apply constructive feedback

GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Connecting and expanding

Demonstrate respect for themselves, others, and the audience

GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate personal and social responsibility associated with creating, performing, and responding to dramatic performance

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and the audience

GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate awareness of self, others, and audience

Demonstrate personal and social responsibility associated with creating, performing, and responding to dramatic works

GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate personal and social responsibility associated with creating, performing, and responding to dramatic works

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and audience

Ontario, Canada

Grades 9 & 10 - Foundations - Responsible Practices

C.3.1 - identify and follow safe and ethical practices in drama activities (e.g., exhibit safe use of sound and lighting boards; follow procedures for the environmentally responsible use of materials and energy; prepare an individual or group seminar report on the nature and purpose of one or more of the following: copyright protection, royalties, public domain, intellectual property rights)

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)

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 - 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)

Grades 9 & 10 - Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing - The Critical Analysis Process

B.1.1 - use the critical analysis process before and during drama projects to identify and assess individual and peer roles and responsibilities in producing drama works (e.g., identify and assess the contribution of leadership and supporting roles, group dynamics, and cooperative problem solving to their process of creating drama works)

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