



# THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

By LEA MARSHALL

We included this unit in our Distance Learning Curriculum because if any group of students would understand how the world turned upside down and then apply it to theatre, it would be the students dealing with a global pandemic.

First, we take two lessons to go over the historical and philosophical background of Theatre of the Absurd. We start with a visual exercise to bring students into the emotional bleakness of the landscape and then group work to look at some of the other foundational elements that will drive the absurdist movement into the theatres. Next, we break down absurd scripts into some “recognizable” elements of language, plot structure, acting choices, and storyline. In each lesson that introduces an absurdist element, there is an opportunity for students to “play” with the element.

## 1 - Visual Absurdity

To introduce Theatre of the Absurd, students will look at photos from Europe after World War II to inform the reflection monologues they will write later. First, they will discuss an assigned photo in groups. Next, they will create group tableaux and write personal reflection monologues.

## 2 - Out of Tune

Students will explore one of the four background/historical elements for Theatre of the Absurd. Within their groups, they will create a way to share their area of exploration with the class. This works best as a multiple-class lesson.

## 3 - Cliches, Stereotypes, and Overused Phrases

Students will explore using clichés, stereotypes, and overused phrases in dialogue as used in Theatre of the Absurd.

## 4 - Cliches, Stereotypes, and Overused Phrases in Waiting for Godot

Students will be introduced to Samuel Beckett’s Waiting for Godot and examine clichés, stereotypes, and overused phrases.

## 5 - Meaningless Language and The Bald Soprano

Students will explore the absurdism theatrical convention of using meaningless language to communicate (or not communicate) a larger theme of interpersonal relationships and misunderstandings. Students will create nonsensical scenes using their own text messages.

## 6 - Acting the Absurd

Students will explore acting the absurd by taking a blank scene and adding specific absurd acting choices.

## 7 - Circular Plot Lines

Students will explore the absurdism theatrical convention of circular plot lines that appear to go nowhere and end in unresolved situations. They will create a conventional and an unconventional (absurdist) plot line using a well-known fairy tale.

## 8 - Circular Plot Lines in The Arsonists

Students continue to explore the absurdism theatrical convention of circular plot lines that appear to go nowhere and end in unresolved situations. Students are introduced to The Arsonists by Max Frisch.

## 9 - The Pause

Students will perform a blank scene, varying the placements and lengths of pauses to show the absurdist convention of using pauses to create tension and misunderstanding. They will also be introduced to the master of the pause, Harold Pinter.

## 10 - The Pause in Waiting for Godot

Students will demonstrate the absurdist dialogue convention of strange and ill-timed pauses by adding pauses to Lucky’s monologue from Waiting For Godot and either direct or perform with varying pauses in their performance.

## 11 - Impossible Things are Happening Every Day

Students will create a scene where impossible things happen and there isn’t a conventional response. This is a multiple-class lesson.

## 12 - Impossibilities and Rhinoceros

Students will act truthfully in fictitious circumstances, as they physically act as humans turning into rhinoceroses. They will be introduced to Ionesco’s play Rhinoceros.

## 13 - Unit Project

Students will apply what they have learned in a final project. Their goal is to demonstrate their understanding of the elements and the historical and philosophical background of absurdism. This will be a multi-day project.

# Standards Connections

## National Core Arts Standards

### Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - Grade 6

TH:Cr1.1.6.a - Identify possible solutions to staging challenges in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.6.b - Identify solutions to design challenges in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.6.c - Explore a scripted or improvised character by imagining the given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

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

TH:Pr4.1.6.a - Identify the essential events in a story or script that make up the dramatic structure in a drama/theatre work.

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

### Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - Grade 7

TH:Cr1.1.7.a - Investigate multiple perspectives and solutions to staging challenges in a drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.7.b - Explain and present solutions to design challenges in a drama/ theatre work.

### Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation - Grade 7

TH:Pr4.1.7.a - Consider various staging choices to enhance the story in a drama/theatre work.

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

### Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - Grade 8

TH:Cr1.1.8.a - Imagine and explore multiple perspectives and solutions to staging problems in a drama/ theatre work.

TH:Cr1.1.8.b - Imagine and explore solutions to design challenges of a performance space in a drama/theatre work.

### Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work - High School Proficient

TH:Cr1.1.HS1.c - Use script analysis to generate ideas about a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

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

TH:Pr4.1.HS1.a - Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr4.1.HS1.b - Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

### Perceive and analyze artistic work - Grade HS Proficient

TH:Re7.1.HS1.a - Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

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

TH:Pr4.1.HS11.a - Discover how unique choices shape believable and sustainable drama/ theatre work.

### Perceive and analyze artistic work - Grade HS Accomplished

TH:Re7.1.HS11.a - Demonstrate an understanding of multiple interpretations of artistic criteria and how each might be used to influence future artistic choices of 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.

### Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation - Grade 6

TH:Pr5.1.6.a - Recognize how acting exercises and techniques can be applied to a drama/theatre work.

TH:Pr5.1.6.b - Articulate how technical elements are integrated into a 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.

### Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade 8

TH:Cr2.1.8.b - Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

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

TH:Pr5.1.8.a - Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

### Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work - Grade 8

TH:Re8.1.8.a - Recognize and share artistic choices when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.

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

TH:Cr2.1.HS11.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.HS111.b - Collaborate as a creative team to discover artistic solutions and make interpretive choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

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

TH:Cr3.1.6.a - Articulate and examine choices to refine a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

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

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

TH:Cr3.1.7.a - Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process to analyze and refine choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work - Grade 7

TH:Pr6.1.7.a - Participate in rehearsals for a drama/theatre work that will be shared with an audience.

### Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding - Grade 7

TH:Cn11.2.7.a - Research and discuss how a playwright might have intended a drama/theatre work to be produced.

### 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 HS Accomplished

TH:Cr3.1.HS111.a - Use the rehearsal process to analyze the dramatic concept and technical design elements of a devised

or scripted drama/theatre work.

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

TH:Re9.1.HSII.b - Construct meaning in a drama/theatre work, considering personal aesthetics and knowledge of production elements while respecting others' interpretations.

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

TH:Cr3.1.HSIII.a - Refine, transform, and re-imagine a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using the rehearsal process to invent or re-imagine style, genre, form, and conventions.

## **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.3 - Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

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.

### **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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.4 - Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.5 - Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

### **Reading: Literature**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.1 - Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.2 - Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.3 - Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

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).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.5 - Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it (e.g., parallel plots), and manipulate time (e.g., pacing, flashbacks) create such effects as mystery, tension, or surprise.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.9-10.6 - Analyze a particular point of view or cultural experience reflected in a work of literature from outside the United States, drawing on a wide reading of world literature.

### **Reading: Informational Text**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1 - Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

### **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.

### **Writing**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.1 - Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

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.9-10.9 - Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

## **California VAPA Standards (2019)**

### **6.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work**

6.TH:Cr1.a - Identify possible solutions to staging challenges in a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Cr1.b - Explore a scripted or improvised character by imagining the given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Cr1.c - Identify solutions to design challenges in a drama/theatre work.

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

6.TH:Pr4.a - Identify the essential events in a story or script that make up the dramatic structure in a drama/theatre work.

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

### **7.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work**

7.TH:Cr1.a - Investigate multiple perspectives and solutions to staging challenges in a drama/theatre work.

7.TH:Cr1.c - Explain and present solutions to design challenges in a drama/theatre work.

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

7.TH:Pr4.a - Consider various staging choices to enhance the story in a drama/theatre work.

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

### **8.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work**

8.TH:Cr1.a - Imagine and explore multiple perspectives and solutions to staging problems in a drama/ theatre work.

8.TH:Cr1.c - Imagine and explore solutions to design challenges of a performance space in a drama/theatre work.

### **Prof.TH:Cr1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work**

Prof.TH:Cr1.b - Use script analysis to generate ideas about a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.

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

Prof.TH:Pr4.a - Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Pr4.b - Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

### **Prof.TH:Re7 Perceive and analyze artistic work.**

Prof.TH:Re7 - Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

### **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:Re7 Perceive and analyze artistic work.**

Acc.TH:Re7 - Demonstrate an understanding of multiple interpretations of artistic criteria and how each might be used to influence future artistic choices of 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.

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

6.TH:Pr5.a - Recognize how acting exercises and techniques can be applied to a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Pr5.b - Articulate how technical theatre elements are integrated into a 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.

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

8.TH:Cr2.b - Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

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

8.TH:Pr5.a - Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

### **8.TH:Re8 Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.**

8.TH:Re8.a - Recognize and share artistic choices when participating in or observing a 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.

### **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.a - Receive and incorporate feedback to refine a devised or scripted drama/theatre 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.a - Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process to analyze and refine choices in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

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

67TH:Pr6 - Create through improvisation a drama/theatre work that will be shared with an audience.

### **7.TH:Cn11.2 Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.**

7.TH:Cn11.2.a - Research and discuss how a playwright might have intended a drama/theatre work to be produced.

### **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.

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

Acc.TH:Cr3.a - Use the rehearsal process to analyze the dramatic concept and design elements of a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

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

Acc.TH:Re9.c - Construct meaning in a drama/theatre work, considering personal aesthetics and knowledge of technical theatre elements while respecting others' interpretations.

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

Adv.TH:Cr3.a - Refine, transform, and re-imagine a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using the rehearsal process to invent or re-imagine style, genre, form, and theatrical conventions.

## **Florida Sunshine State Standards**

### **Critical Thinking & Reflection**

TH.912.C.1.2 - Create, refine, and sustain complex and believable characters for performance through the integration and application of artistic choices based on research, rehearsal, feedback, and refinement.

TH.912.C.1.5 - Make and defend conscious choices in the creation of a character that will fulfill anticipated audience response.

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.2.7 - 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.1.1 - Analyze how playwrights' work reflects the cultural and socio-political framework in which it was created.

TH.912.H.2.1 - Research the correlations between theatrical forms and the social, cultural, historical, and political climates from which they emerged, to form an understanding of the influences that have shaped theatre.

TH.912.H.2.4 - Research the intent of, and critical reaction to, artists in history who created groundbreaking, innovative, or controversial works.

TH.912.H.2.5 - Apply knowledge of dramatic genres and historical periods to shape the work of performers, directors, and designers.

TH.912.H.3.3 - Apply knowledge of non-theatre content areas to enhance presentations of characters, environments, and actions in performance.

### **Innovation, Technology & the Future**

TH.912.F.1.1 - Synthesize research, analysis, and imagination to create believable characters and settings.

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.1.1 - Research and analyze a dramatic text by breaking it down into its basic, structural elements to support development of a directorial concept, characterization, and design.

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

TH.912.O.1.4 - Write an original script or a dramatic adaptation of a literary work to demonstrate knowledge of theatrical conventions.

TH.912.O.2.6 - Deconstruct a play, using an established theory, to understand its dramatic structure.

TH.912.O.3.7 - Apply standard conventions of directing, stage management, and design to denote blocking and stage movement for production documentation.

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

TH.912.S.1.4 - Compare the artistic content as described by playwrights, actors, designers, and/or directors with the final artistic product and assess the success of the final artistic product using established criteria.

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.1.6 - Respond appropriately to directorial choices for improvised and scripted scenes.

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.

TH.912.S.2.4 - Sustain a character or follow technical cues in a production piece to show focus.

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

TH.912.S.3.1 - Articulate, based on research, the rationale for artistic choices in casting, staging, or technical design for a scene from original or scripted material.

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

TH.912.S.3.3 - Develop acting skills and techniques in the rehearsal process.

TH.912.S.3.9 - Research, analyze, and explain the processes that playwrights, directors, designers, and performers use

when developing a work that conveys artistic intent.

## **North Carolina Essential Standards**

### **Beginning High School Standards - Communication**

B.C.1.1 - Use non-verbal expression to illustrate how human emotion affects the body and is conveyed through the body.

B.C.1.2 - Apply vocal elements of volume, pitch, rate, tone, articulation, and vocal expression.

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

B.C.2.1 - Use improvisation and acting skills, such as observation, concentration, and characterization in a variety of theatre exercises.

B.C.2.2 - Interpret various selections of dramatic literature through formal and informal presentations.

### **Beginning High School Standards - Analysis**

B.A.1.1 - Interpret the plot structure and the thematic, technical, and dramaturgical elements within scenes from plays.

### **Beginning High School Standards - Aesthetics**

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.

### **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.

B.CU.2.2 - Use acting conventions, such as stage presence, subtext, style, and ensemble work, to perform formal or informal works.

### **Intermediate High School Standards - Communication**

I.C.1.1 - Use non-verbal expression to illustrate how human motivations are prompted by physical and emotional needs.

I.C.1.2 - Apply vocal elements of volume, pitch, rate, tone, articulation, and vocal expression appropriately to theatrical texts, such as monologues and scenes.

I.C.2.1 - Use improvisation and acting skills, such as observation, concentration, and characterization, to demonstrate given situations.

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

### **Intermediate High School Standards - Analysis**

I.A.1.1 - Analyze the plot structure and the thematic, technical, and dramaturgical elements within plays.

I.A.1.2 - Evaluate the works of theatre artists for strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions for improvement.

### **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.

### **Intermediate High School Standards - Culture**

I.CU.2.2 - Use production conventions, such as blocking or style, as given by directors or as indicated by playwrights.

### **Proficient High School Standards - Communication**

P.C.1.1 - Use non-verbal expression and physical self-awareness to communicate movement elements and characterization, including size, weight, and rate of movement.

P.C.1.2 - Apply vocal elements of volume, pitch, rate, tone, articulation, and vocal expression to develop characters.

P.C.2.1 - Use improvisation and acting skills, such as observation, concentration, and characterization, to create extended scenes.

### **Proficient High School Standards - Analysis**

P.A.1.1 - Analyze full-length plays in terms of plot structure, pacing, given circumstances, and character development.

P.A.1.2 - Distinguish the evolution of written texts to theatrical performances.

### **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.1.1 - Use non-verbal expression and physical self-awareness to communicate movement elements and characterization, including differentiation between multiple characters.

A.C.1.3 - Use constructive criticism to improve original works both written and read orally.

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

### **Advanced High School Standards - Analysis**

A.A.1.2 - Critique performances of written texts based on a set of given criteria.

### **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.

### **Advanced High School Standards - Culture**

A.CU.1.2 - Exemplify a variety of theatrical forms, such as puppetry, musical theatre, and pantomime, from Non-Western cultures and a variety of historical periods through the creation of theatrical works.

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

## **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.

C.1.F - identify the structure and form in examples of dramatic literature.

### **MS 117.211 LI - Creative Expression: performance**

C.2.A - demonstrate safe use of the voice and body.

C.2.B - imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships, and their surroundings.

### **MS 117.211 LI - Creative Expression: production**

C.3.C - collaborate to plan brief dramatizations.

### **MS 117.211 LI - Critical evaluation and response**

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

C.5.C - identify production elements of theatre, film, television, and other media.

C.5.D - examine selected occupations in theatre such as director, stage manager, actor, designer, running crew, front of house, and educator.

### **MS 117.212 LII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

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

### **MS 117.212 LII - Creative Expression: performance**

B.2.A - demonstrate safe use of the voice and body.

B.2.C - select movements and dialogue to portray a character appropriately.

B.2.D - create stories collaboratively and individually that have dramatic structure.

### **MS 117.212 LII - Creative Expression: production**

B.3.A - determine specific technical elements to provide a safe setting and to support character and action in improvised and scripted scenes.

### **MS 117.212 LII - Critical evaluation and response**

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

B.5.C - demonstrate knowledge of production elements in theatre, film, television, and other media.

### **MS 117.213 LIII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

B.1.B - explore preparation and warm-up techniques.

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

### **MS 117.213 LIII - Creative Expression: production**

B.3.A - recognize and select specific technical elements to suggest environment, establish mood, and support character and actions for performance.

### **MS 117.213 LIII - Critical evaluation and response**

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

B.5.C - demonstrate knowledge of production elements in theatre, film, television, and other media.

### **HS 117.315 LI - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

C.1.B - develop and practice theatre preparation and warm-up techniques.

C.1.E - analyze characters by describing attributes such as physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions through reading scripts of published plays.

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

### **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 - 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.C - perform a role such as actor, director, designer, technician, or editor in production decision making and collaborate with others in a production role to tell a story through live theatre or media performance.

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

C.5.C - offer and receive constructive criticism of peer performances.

### **HS 117.316 LII - 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 - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

C.1.B - experiment with stage movement.

#### **HS 117.317 LIII - Creative Expression: performance**

C.2.E - write dialogue that reveals character motivation, advances plot, provides exposition, and reveals theme.

#### **HS 117.318 LIV - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding**

C.1.C - model proper techniques such as diction, inflection, and projection in the use of effective voice.

#### **HS 117.318 LIV - Creative Expression: performance**

C.2.B - demonstrate creativity as it relates to self and ensemble and its effect on audience.

C.2.C - analyze and interpret characters from various genres and styles, describing physical, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions.

C.2.E - create individually or devise collaboratively imaginative scripts and scenarios.

## **Alberta, Canada**

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

1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of costume

### **Speech Drama 30**

23 - use vocal variety in character development

24 - select appropriate visual elements such as props and costumes to enhance spoken interpretation

### **Improvisation Drama 10**

10 - demonstrate appropriate rehearsal methods

11 - apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax and plot in planned and unplanned scenes

24 - select and use vocal techniques appropriate to a character

25 - select and use language appropriate to character and situation

32 - sustain a character throughout a scene or exercise

9 - use appropriate stage directions

### **Improvisation Drama 30**

37 - demonstrate various ways of expressing emotions that are consistent with a character

### **Acting Drama 20**

1 - analyze a script for explicit character clues

9 - demonstrate the ability to pick up cues effectively

### **Acting Drama 30**

18 - use various vocal skills to enhance characterization

21 - create appropriate stage business

22 - display appropriate character relationships with all other characters in a scene

### **Theatre Studies Drama 10 (Greek, Medieval or Elizabethan, and Canadian)**

1 - recognize theatre has evolved as a traditional art form

2 - recognize innovations in the theatre

### **Theatre Studies Drama 30 (Early or Middle or Late drama)**

4 - recognize dramatic structure of a play

6 - recognize realism and selected other significant theatre styles

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

1 - demonstrate understanding of the purpose of stage lighting

### **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

### **Playwriting - Drama 20**

1 - demonstrate understanding of the basic structure of a play

10 - define conflict

13 - give and accept constructive criticism

3 - demonstrate understanding of script format

4 - generate and collect ideas that have dramatic possibilities

7 - demonstrate understanding if and write exposition

8 - use effective diction

### **Directing - Drama 30**

1 - demonstrate understanding of the function of the director

### **Improvisation/Acting Level III - Advanced**

26 - pick up cues effectively

30 - analyze text for meaning and character development

32 - rehearse, polish and present text

33 - critique the work of self and others through observation of specific details

### **Junior Goal II Objectives**

become familiar with dramatic terminology and script format

develop belief in, identification with, and commitment to a role

develop the body and voice as tools of 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

develop the ability to analyze and assess the process and the art

### **Junior Orientation**

communicate through use of voice and body

demonstrate a willingness to take calculated and reasonable risks

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

offer and accept constructive criticism, given specific guidelines, with a desire to improve  
recognize the purposes of and participate in warmup activities  
share ideas confidently with others  
show awareness of story sequence  
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

### **Movement Level II - Intermediate**

21 - display clarity of movement and gesture

### **Movement Level III - Advanced**

28 - coordinate movement and movement patterns with other students

### **Speech Level I - Beginning**

5 - recognize the need to control and protect the voice  
6 - use volume appropriate to situation  
8 - understand volume, articulation, projection, rate, pause, phrasing, pitch and intonation

### **Speech Level II - Intermediate**

10 - demonstrate effects of intonation, rate, pause and phrasing on the meaning of words  
9 - use volume, articulation and projection to achieve clarity

### **Speech Level III - Advanced**

16 - use movement and gesture to clarify and enhance speech and character

### **Improvisation/Acting Level I - Beginning**

1 - use warm-up techniques for preparation of body, voice and mind  
10 - use essential story elements in spontaneous and planned scenes  
11 - create a dramatic situation in response to varied stimuli: objects, pictures, music  
12 - make logical choices within the boundaries of situation and character  
6 - understand and apply the essential elements of a story: character, setting, conflict, climax and plot  
7 - use stage vocabulary: stage areas, body positions and crosses  
8 - demonstrate appropriate rehearsal behaviours and routines  
9 - communicate a clear beginning, middle and end in spontaneous and planned scenes

### **Improvisation/Acting Level II - Intermediate**

18 - use voice variety to enhance a character  
20 - enter and exit in character  
21 - sustain a character throughout an exercise or scene  
22 - create business appropriate to character and situation  
23 - demonstrate understanding of character motivation  
24 - recognize that relationships exist between characters in given situations

### **Junior Goal I Objectives**

develop a positive self-image  
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  
explore and develop physical and vocal capabilities  
extend the ability to explore meaning through abstract concepts  
extend the ability to explore, control and express emotions  
extend the ability to think imaginatively and creatively  
extend the ability to understand, accept and respect others-their rights, ideas, abilities and differences  
strengthen powers of concentration

### **Theatre Studies Level 1 - Beginning (performance analysis)**

1 - demonstrate understanding of the need for analysis of the work of self and others  
2 - identify specific criteria to assess a presentation

### **Theatre Studies Level II - Intermediate (Theatre History)**

6 - show awareness of selected periods and playwrights

### **Theatre Studies Level III - Advanced (The script)**

10 - demonstrate understanding of the concept of dramatic convention  
11 - demonstrate understanding of plot structure  
12 - analyze a script to identify character, setting and plot  
8 - demonstrate understanding of directions used in a script

### **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 - Application**

13 - determine and acquire necessary supplies or substitutes to construct the planned project  
14 - use appropriate tools and skills to assemble or construct the planned project  
15 - use the project

### **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  
demonstrate the ability to offer, accept, and reflect upon, constructive criticism  
develop a positive and realistic self-image  
develop a sense of inquiry and commitment to learning  
extend physical and vocal capabilities  
extend the ability to concentrate  
increase self-confidence  
increase self-discipline

### **Senior Goal III Objectives**

explore various conventions and traditions of theatre



## **Orientation Drama 10**

concentrate on the task at hand  
demonstrate behaviour appropriate to given circumstances  
demonstrate effective use and management of time  
demonstrate willingness to challenge and extend oneself:  
physically, emotionally, intellectually and artistically  
listen to self and others  
make effective decisions or choices  
offer and accept constructive criticism with a desire to progress  
positively support the work of others  
share ideas confidently  
solve problems imaginatively and creatively  
work cooperatively and productively  
work with abstract concepts

## **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.1.1 - identify the drama forms, elements, conventions, and techniques used in their own and others' drama works, and explain how the various components are used, or can be used, to achieve specific effects, with a focus on ensemble drama works (e.g., how a comic drama form can be used to convey a serious message, how setting and time period can be used to sharpen the focus on a moral dilemma, how characters can be used to vary the mood within a drama)

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)

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 - Creating and Presenting - Presentation Techniques & Technologies**

A.3.1 - identify and use a variety of techniques to influence the audience in specific ways (e.g., have actors enter the performance space from the audience to increase audience connection to the drama; use blocking to focus audience attention on key characters or relationships between characters)

A.3.2 - use a variety of voice and movement techniques to support the creation of character or atmosphere during rehearsal (e.g., use voice and movement to suggest an airport, circus, or factory environment)

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

### **Grades 9 & 10 - Creating and Presenting - Elements and Conventions**

A.2.1 - select and combine the elements of drama to achieve a variety of purposes in ensemble presentations (e.g., use the elements of character, time, and place in a drama about making a difficult choice; use the elements of time and place to clarify the focus in a drama about a historical event)