



[Click Here to Access this Unit](#)

WHAT IS THEATRE?

By KAREN LOFTUS

Students will explore the question “What is theatre?” and contrast theatre to film. They will also begin their introduction to a couple of theatre roles.

1 - What is Theatre?

Students will explore the question “What is theatre?” and start a conversation about the difference between theatre and film. Students will also participate in a warm-up ensemble-building activity that requires students to work together and an exercise that demonstrates what it means to have a “dramatic moment.”

2 - Theatre Role Definitions

In this lesson, students will learn in action about three theatre roles: the playwright, the director, and the actor. They will take a story and present it using those three roles.

Standards Connections

National Core Arts Standards

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.a - Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

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.

Organize and develop artistic ideas and work - Grade HS Proficient

TH:Cr2.1.HS1.b - Investigate the collaborative nature of the actor, director, playwright, and designers and explore their interdependent roles in a 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.

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 8

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

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.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.L.6 - Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

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

California VAPA Standards (2019)

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:Pr5 Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

7.TH:Pr5.a - Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

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.

Prof.TH:Cr2 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Prof.TH:Cr2.b - Investigate the collaborative nature of the actor, director, playwright, and designers and their interdependent roles in a 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: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.

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.

Florida Sunshine State Standards

Critical Thinking & Reflection

TH.68.C.1.3 - Determine the purpose(s), elements, meaning, and value of a theatrical work based on personal, cultural, or historical standards.

TH.68.C.1.5 - Describe how a theatrical activity can entertain or instruct an audience.

TH.68.C.2.2 - Keep a rehearsal journal to document individual performance progress.

TH.68.C.2.4 - Defend personal responses to a theatre production.

TH.68.C.3.1 - Discuss how visual and aural design elements communicate environment, mood, and theme in a theatrical presentation.

TH.68.C.3.2 - Compare a film version of a story to its original play form. Develop and apply criteria to select works for a portfolio

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.1.7 - Justify personal perceptions of a director's vision and/or playwright's intent.

TH.912.C.3.1 - Explore commonalities between works of theatre and other performance media.

Historical & Global Connections

TH.68.H.1.1 - Explore potential differences when performing works set in a variety of historical and cultural contexts.

TH.68.H.1.2 - Analyze the impact of one's emotional and social experiences when responding to, or participating in, a play.

TH.68.H.1.5 - Describe one's own personal responses to a theatrical work and show respect for the responses of others.

TH.68.H.1.6 - Discuss how a performer responds to different audiences.

TH.68.H.2.3 - Analyze theatre history and dramatic literature in the context of societal and cultural history.

TH.68.H.2.4 - Discuss the differences between presentational and representational theatre styles.

TH.68.H.2.7 - Define theatre genres from different periods in history, giving examples of each.

TH.68.H.2.8 - Identify and describe theatrical resources in the community, including professional and community theatres, experts, and sources of scripts and materials.

TH.68.H.3.1 - Identify principles and techniques that are shared between the arts and other content areas.

TH.68.H.3.6 - Discuss ways in which dance, music, and the visual arts enhance theatrical presentations.

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.68.F.1.4 - Survey an aspect of theatre to understand the ways in which technology has affected it over time.

TH.912.F.1.3 - Stimulate imagination, quick thinking, and creative risk-taking through improvisation to create written scenes or plays.

Organizational Structure

TH.68.O.1.1 - Compare different processes an actor uses to prepare for a performance.

TH.68.O.1.3 - Explain the impact of choices made by directors, designers, and actors on audience understanding.

TH.68.O.1.4 - Discuss how the whole of a theatre performance is greater than the sum of its parts.

TH.68.O.2.1 - Diagram the major parts of a play and their relationships to each other.

TH.68.O.2.2 - Explain how a performance would change if depicted in a different location, time, or culture.

TH.68.O.2.5 - Explain how the contributions of significant playwrights, performers, directors, designers, and producers from various cultures and historical periods have influenced the creative innovations of theatre.

TH.68.O.3.1 - Compare theatre and its elements and vocabulary to other art forms.

TH.68.O.3.2 - Explore how theatre and theatrical works have influenced various cultures.

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.3.1 - Analyze the methods of communication

among directors, designers, stage managers, technicians, and actors that establish the most effective support of the creative process.

Skills, Techniques & Processes

TH.68.S.1.1 - Describe the responsibilities of audience members, to the actors and each other, at live and recorded performances and demonstrate appropriate behavior.

TH.68.S.1.3 - Describe criteria for the evaluation of dramatic texts, performances, direction, and production elements.

TH.68.S.1.4 - Discuss the ways in which theatre experiences involve empathy and aesthetic distance.

TH.912.S.1.6 - Respond appropriately to directorial choices for improvised and scripted scenes.

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

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.3.8 - Direct a scene or one-act play.

Georgia Performance Standards - Theatre Arts

Grade 6 - Creating

TA6.CR.1 - Organize, design, and refine theatrical work., a. Identify artistic choices, utilize theatre vocabulary, and demonstrate non-verbal communication skills in the rehearsal process., b. Interpret a character's motivation by understanding the relationship between their background and their behavior., c. Identify the variety of relationships between characters., d. Identify, define, and classify character traits., e. Recognize and demonstrate the roles, responsibilities, and skills associated with collaborative performance., f. Use resources to identify and create technical elements of theatre.

TA6.CR.2 - Develop scripts through theatrical techniques., a. Identify the elements of a story., b. Identify the theme and structure of a play., c. Articulate creative ideas in oral and written forms., d. Use the dramatic writing process to generate a script., e. Demonstrate the conventions of dialogue and stage directions.

Grade 6 - Performing

TA6.PR.1 - Act by communicating and sustaining roles in formal and informal environments., a. Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills (e.g. rate, pitch, volume, inflection, posture, facial expression, physical movement), b. Execute character creation in a performance., c. Demonstrate a variety of types of theatre performances.

Grade 7 - Creating

TA7.CR.2 - Develop scripts through theatrical techniques., a. Create ideas for stories., b. Analyze the theme and structure of a play., c. Use the dramatic writing process to generate a script., d. Utilize dramatic conventions in the scriptwriting process (e.g. stage directions, dialogue, scenes).

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

- 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 - Communication

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

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.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 - Culture

I.CU.2.1 - Understand theatre etiquette that is appropriate for a variety of theatrical spaces, styles, and genres.

Proficient High School Standards - Communication

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

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

Advanced High School Standards - Culture

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 - 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.

MS 117.212 LII - Creative Expression: production

B.3.C - define the role of the director.

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.

HS 117.315 LI - Creative Expression: production

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 117.316 LII - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.E - identify examples of theatrical conventions in theatre, film, television, and electronic media.

HS 117.316 LII - Creative Expression: production

C.3.D - perform a role such as actor, director, designer, technician, or editor in production decision making and collaborate with others to tell a story through live theatre or media performance.

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.E - distinguish between the theatrical conventions of theatre, film, television, and other media.

HS 117.317 LIII - Creative Expression: production

C.3.D - perform a role such as actor, director, designer, technician, or editor in production decision making and collaborate with others to tell a story through live theatre or media performance.

HS 117.318 LIV - Foundations: Inquiry and Understanding

C.1.D - compare the structure of theatre to that of film, television, and other media.

HS 117.318 LIV - Creative Expression: performance

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

Alberta, Canada

Improvisation Drama 10

3 - maintain concentration during exercises

32 - sustain a character throughout a scene or exercise

Directing - Drama 30

1 - demonstrate understanding of the function of the director

Junior Goal II Objectives

explore specific techniques demanded by various dramatic forms

Junior Goal III Objectives

develop awareness of various conventions of theatre

Junior Orientation

focus concentration on one task at a time

investigate a variety of roles and situations

listen effectively
recognize the purposes of and participate in warmup activities
share ideas confidently with others
show awareness of story sequence
speak, move, and generate ideas spontaneously
support positivity the work of others
work cooperatively and productively with all members of the class in pairs, small groups and large groups

Movement Level I - Beginning

2 - demonstrate awareness of personal and shared space

Improvisation/Acting Level I - Beginning

1 - use warm-up techniques for preparation of body, voice and mind

12 - make logical choices within the boundaries of situation and character

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

8 - demonstrate appropriate rehearsal behaviours and routines

Improvisation/Acting Level II - Intermediate

17 - select and use language appropriate to a given character and situation

20 - enter and exit in character

21 - sustain a character throughout an exercise or scene

Junior Goal I Objectives

develop a sense of responsibility and commitment

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 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

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.

5 - demonstrate understanding of the various conventions of the components being studied

Senior Goal I Objectives

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 contribute effectively and constructively to the group process

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

develop a sense of inquiry and commitment to learning

extend understanding of, acceptance of and empathy for others

increase self-confidence

increase self-discipline

Orientation Drama 10

concentrate on the task at hand

demonstrate effective use and management of time

demonstrate trust by becoming comfortable with others, physically and emotionally

display consideration and respect for self and others

listen to self and others

make effective decisions or choices

share ideas confidently

British Columbia (2018)

GRADE 6 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting

Examine relationships between the arts and the wider world

Reflect on works of art and creative processes to understand artists' intentions

GRADE 6 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Experience, document and present creative works in a variety of ways

Express, feelings, ideas, and experiences through the arts

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Exploring and creating

Create artistic works collaboratively and as an individual using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful play

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting

Research, describe, interpret and evaluate how artists (dancers, actors, musicians, and visual artists) use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments in the arts

GRADE 7 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Experience, document, choreograph, perform, and share creative works in a variety of ways

Take creative risks to express feelings, ideas, and experiences

GRADE 8 - ARTS - Reasoning and reflecting

Describe, interpret and evaluate how artists (dancers, actors, musicians, and visual artists) use processes, materials, movements, technologies, tools, techniques, and environments to create and communicate ideas

GRADE 8 - ARTS - Communicating and documenting

Experience, document, choreograph, perform, and share creative works in a variety of ways

GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Exploring and creating

Create dramatic works both collaboratively and as an individual, using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, and purposeful play

Take creative risks to experience and express thoughts, emotions, and meaning

GRADE 9 - DRAMA - Reasoning and reflecting

Receive, offer, and apply constructive feedback

GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Explore and Create

Improvise and take creative risks to express meaning

GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect

Apply feedback to develop and refine ideas

GRADE 10 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and the audience

GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Explore and Create

Improvise and take creative risks using imagination, exploration, and inquiry

GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect

Receive and apply constructive feedback to develop and refine ideas

GRADE 11 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate awareness of self, others, and audience

GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Reason and reflect

Use self-reflection and awareness of audience to refine ideas

GRADE 12 - DRAMA - Connect and expand

Demonstrate respect for self, others, and audience

Ontario, Canada

Grades 9 & 10 - 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)

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.3.2 - 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)

Virginia Standards Of Learning (2020)

Grade Six

6.3 - The student will analyze, interpret, and evaluate theatrical works

6.4 - The student will identify connections between personal experience and dramatizations

6.5 - The student will identify communication and collaboration skills for theatre experiences.

Grade Six

6.6 - The student will explain influences of history, culture, and current events on the development of theatrical works.

6.7 - The student will identify theatrical resources in the community.

6.8 - The student will define intellectual property and describe issues of intellectual property related to theatre.

Grade Six

6.15 - The student will identify functions of a theatre director.

Grade Six

6.9 - The student will describe various careers in theatre arts.

6.10 - The student will identify the use of contemporary technology in theatre production.

6.11 - The student will analyze how theatre incorporates other art forms.

Grade Seven

7.3 - The student will analyze, interpret, and evaluate theatre.

7.4 - The student will justify personal responses to theatrical productions.

7.5 - The student will identify and apply communication and collaboration skills for theatre experiences.

Grade Seven

7.6 - The student will explore historical and cultural aspects of theatrical works

7.7 - The student will describe ways that theatre arts contribute to the community and society.

7.8 - The student will identify appropriate resources for scripts and materials, with a focus on ethical and legal considerations.

Grade Seven

7.9 - The student will identify various careers in theatre arts, with a focus on career preparation.

7.10 - The student will investigate the uses and impact of digital media in theatre production.

7.11 - The student will explain how other fine arts and fields of knowledge are applied in theatre

Grade Seven

7.15 - The student will identify functions, skills, and responsibilities of the creative team and production staff.

Grade Eight

8.3 - The student will analyze, interpret, and evaluate theatre.

8.4 - The student will explain responses to theatrical productions based on personal background and experience.

8.5 - The student will apply communication and collaboration skills for theatre experiences.

Grade Eight

8.6 - The student will explore historical and cultural aspects of theatrical works.

8.7 - The student will identify theatre resources in the community and the Commonwealth including but not limited to professional, community, and educational theatres.

8.8 - The student will identify and discuss digital citizenship as it relates to the research and presentation of theatrical works.

Grade Eight

8.9 - The student will examine a selected career in theatre, television, film, or contemporary media.

8.10 - The student will explore the use of digital media in the creative process and in the production of a theatre performance.

8.11 - The student will synthesize knowledge from other content areas to support theatre arts processes.

Theatre Arts I: Introduction to Theatre

TI.3 - The student will analyze, interpret, and evaluate theatre.

Theatre Arts I: Introduction to Theatre

TI.2 - The student will apply a creative process for theatre.

Theatre Arts I: Introduction to Theatre

TI.6 - The student will explore historical and cultural aspects of theatrical works.

Theatre Arts I: Introduction to Theatre

TI.15 - The student will understand roles and relationships for theatre production.