

Livermore Valley Joint Unified School District

Course Title:	Theatre Arts 1
Grade Level(s):	9 - 12
Length of Course:	One semester or equivalent term
Credit:	5 units
Prerequisite:	None
Co-requisite:	None

Course Overview:

Students will learn the basics of dramatic performance and literature, and will be provided exposure to technical theatre. Students will learn the foundations of performance, including pantomime, improvisation, voice, diction, movement, and technical theatre. Students will complete a variety of performance pieces and written assignments that will demonstrate practical and critical thinking skills, and meet performance criteria.

Schools Offering:	Del Valle High School Granada High School Livermore High School Vineyard High School
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Meets University of California Entrance Requirements:	Update Approval May 4, 2020 “F”- Visual and Performing Arts
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Board Approval:	April 21, 2020 Formerly Board Approved as Drama 1 on February 13, 2001
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Course Materials:	<i>Basic Drama Projects</i> Fran Averett Tanner, Ph.D.; Perfection Learning Corporation, 2004 ISBN-13: 978-0756916404  Selected Performance Pieces (Royalties and Rights Acquired)  Licensing Agencies: Concord Theatricals, Disney Theatrical, Dramatic Publishing Company, Dramatists Play Service, Music Theatre International—MTI, Pioneer Drama Service, Stage
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Rights, Theatrical Rights Worldwide & TRW Plays.

Music used before or after a performance, or during intermission, is handled by ASCAP, BMI, or SESAC. Harry Fox is a licensing agent for acquiring music rights.

Supplemental Materials:

Film clips from relevant sources Theater facility and equipment

## THEATRE ARTS 1

### COURSE CONTENT:

#### **Unit 1: Getting and Giving Permission**

Students will learn the proper channels for requesting permission to utilize work created by another individual. This will include researching licensing agencies (i.e., Samuel French, Dramatists Publishing, etc.). Students will review and synthesize information about copyright protections, to make sure their intellectual property cannot be used illegally. Students will learn the requirements related to working in theatre as a creator, such as paying for royalties and securing the rights to any or all pieces they choose to use in their projects.

#### *Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will research the source, and to whom royalties must be paid, for the rights to use published theatre works (e.g., scripts for plays, musicals, operas), and for copyrighted images (e.g., graphics, multimedia projection, scenic elements, and backdrop projections) and any music selections (e.g., scene transition music, sound effects, underscoring, or pre- and post-show) used in performance. Permission for the rights must be secured, and the royalties paid, in advance of the production.

Students will compile a list of all copyrighted theatre works, images, and/or music selections, properly credited to their creator(s), along with the licensing agencies holding the rights. Application will be made to the licensing agencies, and the rights secured for use in the formal production.

#### **Unit 2: Self-Awareness**

Students will participate in a variety of theatre games and reflection activities to help them gain a deeper understanding of self. These games will provide a foundation for more complex work in acting, directing, producing, and technical theatre. The exercises are designed to collectively address the following six key developmental elements:

- Ensemble-building
- Trust
- Observation
- Self-confidence
- Concentration
- Imagination and Creativity

#### *Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

After spending time reflecting on behaviors and characteristics of themselves, students will create a project about their life's journey to demonstrate their understanding of self. Without speaking, each student will walk their lifeline in front of their classmates. Each part of the journey will be demonstrated emotionally through changing pace, facial expressions, gestures, etc. Students will reflect and respond in writing to the performances of other students.

**Unit 3: Pantomime**

Students will work individually and in groups to perform pantomimes and tableaux. Each performance will include a Who, What, Where, When, Why, as well as a beginning, middle, and end. By focusing on physically depicting action without sound, students will be able to make precise movements to demonstrate their ability to focus on physicality.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will work together to imagine they are selecting different treasured items from a trunk found in an attic. Each student will take a turn at pantomiming, taking out one item from the box, using the item, and then placing the item back inside the box. Students will demonstrate physical representations of using the item, as well as engage in the world of imagined circumstances.

**Unit 4: Character Development**

Students will work to create realistic characters using observation and script analysis. Students will first look at characters from famous works that are known to have strong personality traits. Utilizing these observations, students will start to create their own characters with fully fleshed out backgrounds, goals, and personalities. These skills will help students create believable characters when they find themselves performing in larger stage productions.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will study individual characters that are part of a script. Using the given circumstances of the text, they will write a background they have created for the character. Further analysis of the script will allow them to pinpoint a character's objective, motivation, action, stakes, and subtext. Students will discuss their characters with classmates and demonstrate their understanding of character by acting as their character in activities outside of the text.

**Unit 5: Improvisation**

Improvisational acting is a skill that many actors can utilize throughout their career. The ability to create performances spontaneously is a useful skill, even in a scripted environment. Sometimes things do not go according to plan. Students will study basic techniques of improvisational acting and then practice putting them into use in a variety of situations, ranging from pure improvisation to 'covering' when mistakes occur.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will hone their improvisation skills through a variety of games. Through performance-based games such as Park Bench, students will create characters with specific quirks. Students will create these characters on the fly and then jump in the scene. The rest of the students on stage will mimic the quirk of that student. Applying the principles of "Yes, and..." students will add to the scene without preparation.

**Unit 6: Technical Theatre**

Theatre is a collaborative art form; it depends upon people working together. For every actor on stage, a dozen or more may be working backstage to create the environment and effects that support and enhance the performance. Students will demonstrate a working knowledge of theatre safety rules and understand the elements of technical theatre, including basic set construction, props, lighting, sound, costumes, hair and makeup, and the crews that perform tech during a

production performance.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will work on a design project where they can demonstrate their understanding of how design choices affect the audience's experience of a production. Students will pick a play or fairy tale to focus on, and use a variety of aesthetics to fit the atmosphere of the production.

**Unit 7: Dialogues & Short Monologues**

Students will work individually and in groups to write and perform short scenes. Performances will include characterization conveying character intent/objectives, relationships, and emotional state, staged within a defined cultural context/environment. Students will demonstrate an understanding of text, subtext, and context. Students will also focus on the basics of projection, inflection, and enunciation, in order to enhance performance.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will work with play texts to understand background and motivation of specific characters. They will then memorize a short monologue to perform, in character, for the class. Students will be assessed on their understanding of the character as well as their depiction of the character, both emotionally and physically.

**Unit 8: Scene Work**

Utilizing concepts students have studied in previous units, students will then synthesize all they have learned and produce performances based on short, selected scenes from a variety of plays, both famous and amateur. Students will consider characterization, playwright intent, staging, among other things. Students will prepare a demonstration of acting concepts learned with a performance before the class.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will be assigned a specific scene to analyze and perform with a partner or small group. Each student will analyze the text for underlying meaning in the subtext, as well as interpret how the scene should be staged. They will create and write a background for the character they are portraying, and explain the character's motivation, objective, actions, stakes, and subtext demonstrated. The students will then incorporate this understanding of character into their performance of the scene in front of the class.

**Unit 9: Research and Historical Context**

Students will study the history of theatre through lecture, discussion, reading, research, video clips, and projects. They will be introduced to the characteristics of different time periods of theatre including, but not limited to, Greek theatre, Renaissance theatre, Modern theatre, and Theatre of the Absurd. Students will use basic research methods to better understand the social and cultural background of a drama/theatre work. Students will explore the function of history and culture in the development of a dramatic concept, through a critical analysis of original ideas in drama/theatre works from western or non-western theatre traditions.

*Summary of Key Assignments, Labs, and/or Activities*

Students will research one aspect of historical theatre to present to the class. Using databases and

physical texts, students will explore the aspect of theatre and analyze how it has influenced theatre today.

## **California Arts Standards for Public Schools - Prekindergarten Through Grade Twelve The California Arts Standards - Theatre Arts**

### *Creating*

Prof.TH:Cr1

- a. Apply basic research to construct ideas about the visual composition of a drama/theatre work.
- b. Use script analysis to generate ideas about a character that is believable and authentic in a drama/theatre work.
- c. Explore the impact of technical theatre elements on design choices in a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Cr2

- a. Explore the function of history and culture in the development of a dramatic concept through a critical analysis of original ideas in drama/theatre works from western or non-western theatre traditions.
- b. Investigate the collaborative nature of the actor, director, playwright, and designers and their interdependent roles in a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Cr3

- a. Rehearse and revise a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using theatrical conventions.
- b. Explore physical, vocal, and physiological choices to develop a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant to a drama/theatre work.
- c. Refine design choices, using technical theatre elements to support the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/theatre work.

### *Performing*

Prof.TH:Pr4

- a. Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.
- b. Shape character choices, using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Pr5

- a. Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.
- b. Use researched technical theatre elements to increase the impact of design for a drama/theatre production.

Prof.TH:Pr6

- a. Perform a rehearsed, scripted short drama/theatre work for a specific audience.

*Responding*

Prof.TH:Re7

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

Prof.TH:Re8

- a. Analyze and compare artistic choices developed from personal experiences in multiple drama/theatre works.
- b. Identify and compare cultural contexts and contexts that may influence the evaluation of a drama/theatre work.
- c. Understand how multiple aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs shape participation in and observation of a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Re9

- a. Examine a drama/ theatre work using supporting evidence and criteria, while considering art forms, history, culture, and other disciplines.
- b. Formulate a deeper understanding and appreciation of a drama/ theatre work by considering its specific purpose or intended audience.
- c. Analyze and evaluate the aesthetics and effect of the technical theatre elements in a drama/theatre work.

*Connecting*

Prof.TH:Cn10

- a. Investigate how cultural contexts, community ideas, and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work.

Prof.TH:Cn11.1

- a. Explore how cultural, global, and historic belief systems affect creative choices in a drama/theatre work.
- b. Practice ethical responsibility to oneself and others during the production process and when recording, posting, and sharing through the internet, social media, and other communication formats.

Prof.TH:Cn11.2

- a. Research how other theatre artists apply creative processes to tell stories in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work, using research methods.
- b. Use basic research methods to better understand the social and cultural background of a

drama/theatre work.

### **Instructional Methods and/or Strategies**

- Individualized instruction
- Small group discussion
- Large group discussion and debate
- Reading, writing, listening, and homework
- Direct Instruction: lecture, reading, in-class research, in-class critical analysis
- Self-directed and collaborative learning projects to include individual projects and critique. In addition, critiques of other theatre artists in the classroom, the local community, and beyond.
- Leveled instruction: scaffolding, assessing students' prior knowledge to inform instruction
- Developing and applying theatre criticism, reflecting on attendance at live theatre performances
- Writing critiques of students' own and other theatre artists' works
- An analytical presentation on culturally significant artists and their works
- Personal daily journal

### **Assessment Methods and/or Tools**

Authentic assessment is an effective method for assessing understanding, skills, and the ability to engage in the artistic processes. This type of assessment happens in real time, as the student demonstrates knowledge, skill, and is engaged in the process, such as a student improvising a scene, performing in a specific theatre genre or style, interpreting the artistic intent of a theatre performance, or comparing the similarities of two different performances of the same text. Authentic assessment provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding through the genuine application of the knowledge and skills necessary to engage in each of the artistic processes: Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting.

Assessment tools can take many forms, such as selected response, open response, portfolios, open-ended, performance, performance criteria, criterion-referenced, performance/authentic assessment, analytical and holistic scoring rubrics. Assessments will be project-based or designed as performance tasks to showcase student originality and creativity.