

Summit High School
Theatre I: Introduction to Theatre



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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory class into the various aspects of theatre arts, including: basic theatre history and terminology, theatre appreciation and etiquette, basic stage movement, voice for the performer, character creation, improvisational theatre, play structure and analysis and theatre production. The course helps to develop foundational knowledge and skills and is meant for both novice theatre students as well as the experienced theatre practitioner. New students will work on overcoming stage fright, develop public speaking and non-verbal communication skills, practice self-critique and reflection as well as cultivate group collaborative skills that will have many benefits outside the theatre arena. Experienced students will hone previously gained skills while developing foundational knowledge and a common language for further theatre studies and application.

Essential Questions:

- 1) What are the necessary components that make up theatre production and how do theatre practitioners work together to create theatre?
- 2) What skills are necessary to create good theatre?
- 3) What criteria is used to evaluate good theatre?

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

I expect students to arrive promptly and be prepared for class. This means putting book bags, etc. away on the metal racks or against the back wall and be standing in a circle at the beginning of class. Be prepared with your iPad charged and ready for use, although we may not always use them.

This is a performance-based class. However, I do NOT expect everyone that takes the class to *be a performer*. However, I do expect students to participate in all class activities and performances and give their best effort.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are largely performance based; however, there will be various written tasks including: worksheets, written reflections, critiques, quizzes, play analysis, design concepts and original scripts. Focus will be on the following national theatre proficiency standards available to look at on the course website.

Absences

Students with an excused absence will need to contact the teacher *prior to or the day of* the absence to find out what they are missing, turn in any due assignments upon return and schedule any makeup performances to be completed within a week's time. ***If student does not take these steps, the student may receive a "0" for assignments due and given on the day of the absence, even if excused.***

Live Theatre Performances & Extra Credit

Students will be required to attend or participate in one of the school performances during the semester. To earn credit for this assignment, students must simply attend the performance as an audience member and write a 2-page critique of the performance. (Students can also usher for the performance to see it for free.) If a student is unable to see any of the available performances because of unavoidable conflicts, they can choose to see an alternate high school, community or professional theatre performance in order to write their critique. This must be approved through Mrs. Okamoto and be a high school level or above production – your little sister's 2nd grade play, albeit adorable, does not teach you much about theatre production!

Extra Credit can be earned by going to an additional live theatrical performance and writing an additional critique of the performance. Local opportunities will be posted on the information board in the classroom and Theatre Club also organizes many group outings to various shows throughout the semester. Other extra credit opportunities might include workshops or tech days working on shows outside of class.

Extra Credit may also be earned through reading full length plays from the approved reading list and writing a analysis of the play.

Critiques

Critique and reflection are vital components of any art form and all students need to develop writing skills in various subjects and fields. Students will be responsible for writing a critique of each in-class performance, identifying their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as to set goals for improvement. Students will additionally identify a performance from within the class that was especially strong, detailing the elements of the performance that made it stand out. Students will need to learn how to write with strong opinions, using appropriate terminology and justifying artistic opinions using examples to support their statements.

Late/Missing Work Policy

For students with excused absences, assignments given before a student's absence must be turned in upon their return to classes, and performances must be performed or scheduled at a later date with the teacher immediately upon return. For assignments and performances assigned during the absence, the student has two days for every one day of absence to makeup the work. If a student has an unexcused absence, zeros will be given for participation points, assignments and performances due on that date. Try to make up late work and performances in a timely manner: however, Mrs. Okamoto wants nothing more than for you to succeed! Mrs. Okamoto will accept late work and students can make up performances up until Finals Week of the semester.

UNITS OF STUDY

UNIT 1: THEATRE APPRECIATION

- Theatre Etiquette
- Stage Basics and Terminology
- Theatre Hierarchy & Roles
- Theatre Production

UNIT 2: MOVEMENT

- Pantomime
- Tableaux
- Qualities of Movement

UNIT 3: VOICE & DICTION

- Qualities of Voice
- Projection and Clarity
- Vocal Characterization
- Readers' Theatre

UNIT 4: CHARACTER CREATION

- Stock Characters
- Outside-In Character Creation
- Inside-Out Character Creation

UNIT 5: IMPROVISATIONAL THEATRE

- Improvisational Theatre Skills:
 - Quick Thinking
 - Accepting Offers
 - Energy and Dedication
 - CROW
 - Story
 - Creativity
 - Ensemble

UNIT 6: DRAMATIC LITERATURE – Page to Stage

- Play Analysis: Theme, Audience and Given Circumstances
- Page to Stage – Theatre Analysis and Production
- Final Project: Design and Performance of a Scene