Theatre
Grades K-2
Overview

The theatre program in Grades K-2 focuses on an improvisational, nonexhibitional, process-centered form of theatre in which the teacher provides activities that encourage students to imagine, enact, and reflect upon human experiences. Teachers use a variety of strategies and methods to address the varied instructional needs of all students.

Students in Grades K-2 are naturally creative, imaginative, and inquisitive. They learn most effectively when actively engaged in and challenged by a variety of activities. Theatre content is designed to allow the generalist teacher to be able to incorporate theatre activities in all content areas, thereby providing the participatory environment needed in the early grades.

The environment of the early childhood classroom lends itself to creative play. At this level, learning centers play a major role in the learning process. Theatre “play” comes naturally as students interact within these learning centers and utilize books to act out stories while displaying emotions and comparing real and pretend stories. The incorporation of life skills into the theatre curriculum is also important as students learn communication skills, develop the ability to cooperate, and learn about other cultures.

In Grades K-2, theatre is a tool for accommodating many learning styles. It emphasizes the tactual, kinesthetic aspects of learning and involves both auditory and visual elements. The Grades K-2 theatre program enables students to produce through imagination, creativity, and performance; to respond through aesthetics and criticism; and to understand through connections to history.
Theatre

Kindergarten

Kindergarten students are naturally creative, imaginative, and inquisitive. They learn most effectively through active learning experiences. The kindergarten theatre program, therefore, involves students in acting experiences that incorporate life skills.

Kindergarten content standards focus on learning the basic tools for classroom drama. Students learn to use space appropriately, pantomime roles in dramatic play, and become valuable audience members. At this level, the teacher uses real and pretend stories to enhance students’ dramatic expertise.

Produce

Students will:

1. Identify body, mind, and voice as the three tools of classroom drama.

2. Distinguish among personal space, partner space, and group space.
   Examples: personal space—moving through space with self-control; partner space—participating in appropriate shoulder-to-shoulder reading; group space—moving through space, respecting the personal space of others

3. Pantomime a variety of roles in real-life and make-believe through guided dramatic play.
   Example: imitating movements of animals, people, and objects

Respond

4. Identify appropriate audience behavior in a variety of settings.
   Example: comparing behavior at a ballgame with behavior at a religious ceremony

5. Identify the beginning, middle, and end of a story.
   • Identifying characters and setting in a story or theatrical performance

6. Identify a variety of dramatic productions.
   Examples: musical, movie, theatrical performance, circus, puppet show
   • Identifying technological tools used to create a dramatic production
     Examples: cameras, computers, audio and video recorders
Understand

7. Respond on cue, verbally and physically, to an oral reading.
   Examples: patting chest and slapping legs for horse trotting, quacking like a duck,
             howling like a wolf

8. Identify ways the arts enhance cultural celebrations.
   Examples: songs, dances, decorations

9. Identify theatre, music, dance, and visual arts as the four arts disciplines.

10. Identify real and pretend stories.
    Examples: real—Mike Venezia’s *Getting to know the World’s Greatest Artist: Monet*,
               pretend—*The Three Little Pigs*
Theatre  
First Grade

Students in Grade 1 are focused on themselves and their own experiences. The effective teacher of theatre draws on these student characteristics to introduce and expand the theatre experience.

In Grade 1, the theatre program is closely aligned to reading skills, incorporating stories familiar to students as well as ones they create. Content standards include demonstration of ways to use voice, space, and movement to create emotion; identification of occupations involving the arts; and demonstration of ways the arts are used in cultural celebrations. Theatre standards in Grade 1 also address spatial relationships and appropriate audience behavior.

Produce

Students will:

1. Explain how the body, mind, and voice are used in classroom drama.

2. Use personal space, partner space, and group space in an appropriate manner.
   Examples: personal space—working individually in a space, partner space—working as part of a pair in an identified space, group space—moving through a space without physically coming in contact with one another

3. Demonstrate ways that voice, space, and movement are used to create emotions, characters, or objects.
   Examples: voice—using loud voices to suggest surprise, space—standing apart from a group to suggest sadness, speed—moving quickly to represent excitement

4. Depict simple stories and situations through the use of puppetry.

5. Portray individual characters from an oral reading in literature.
   Example: Goldilocks in Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Respond

6. Portray people from the community as characters in a dramatic activity.
   Examples: fireman, police officer, teacher, mayor

7. Retell the sequence of events in a story or theatrical performance.
   • Identifying characters and setting in a story or theatrical performance
   • Identifying reasons for liking or disliking a particular aspect of a story
8. Relate a personal experience to an incident in a dramatic production.
   Example: comparing personal joy upon going home from school to Dorothy’s feelings upon going home from Oz

9. Demonstrate behavior appropriate to specific types of performances.
   Examples: cheering at a pep rally, listening attentively during a symphony performance

**Understand**

10. Identify an occupation from each arts discipline.
    Examples: dance—ballerina, music—music teacher, theatre—actor, visual arts—portrait painter

11. Demonstrate ways the arts are used in cultural celebrations.
    Examples: making masks for Mardi Gras, making rain sticks for a rain dance, making a piñata for a Cinco de Mayo celebration

12. Identify the technology used to create a theatrical production.
Theater
Second Grade

The second-grade theatre program builds on theatre knowledge gained in kindergarten and first grade. Second-grade students display a range of abilities and levels of development. They enjoy dramatic play, demonstrate much-improved manipulative abilities, and are increasingly more social. The second-grade classroom, therefore, includes simple theatrical activities that continue to develop the interests and abilities of students. As they become more proficient readers, writers, and thinkers, these students develop a growing sense of pride in their accomplishments.

In Grade 2, students begin to demonstrate various types of movement and create classroom dramatizations. At this level, they are introduced to the components of a dramatization and are able to identify the characters and setting in a drama, the emotions evoked by performers, and the common ideas in stories from various cultures and periods. Students also become aware of the contributions the arts make to culture and celebrations.

Produce

Students will:

1. Demonstrate ways to use the body and voice to communicate character actions, emotions, and sounds in a drama.
   - Examples: character actions—shrug, shudder;
     emotions—laughter, tears;
     sounds—fist pounding on table top, door slamming
   - Differentiating between verbal and nonverbal sounds
     Examples: verbal—“Stop!,”
     nonverbal—“Grrr”

2. Demonstrate locomotor and nonlocomotor movements that suggest specific images or ideas.
   Examples: locomotor—walking across a space,
   nonlocomotor—standing tall like a tree

3. Create classroom dramatizations based on personal experiences, imagination, literature, heritage, and history; including characters, settings, dialogues, and situations.
**Respond**

4. Describe different elements in a dramatization.
   Example: characters building suspense
   - Identifying characters, settings, problem, and solution in a drama
   - Describing character traits, including appearance, actions, and choices
   - Using appropriate theatre vocabulary
     Examples: character, plot, setting, pantomime

5. Communicate in an appropriate manner regarding aspects of a dramatization.
   Examples: appropriate—“That costume was from the wrong time period.”
   inappropriate—“That costume was ugly.”

6. Identify common topics and ideas in stories from different cultures and historical periods.
   Examples: good versus evil—*The Lion King, The Wizard of Oz*;
   finding your gift—*The Indian Paintbrush, Just the Thing for Geraldine*;
   beware of strangers—*Little Red Riding Hood, Lon Po Po*

**Understand**

7. Identify diverse world cultures through various artistic representations.
   Examples: European—British, Irish, and Scottish accents;
   Native American—blanket weaving;
   Mexican—Mexican Hat Dance, piñata

8. Describe how the arts communicate ideas in different ways.
   Example: differences in the portrayal of friendship in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* and in the visual print *The Banjo Player*

9. Use simple technology to enhance a classroom dramatization.
   Examples: tape recorders, digital cameras, computer programs
Theatre
Grades 3-5
Overview

Students in Grades 3-5 are naturally inquisitive and eager to learn. They are transitioning from a teacher-directed and dependent learning environment into a more self-guided stage of learning. These students are experiencing increased social and emotional development and are becoming more sensitive to peer pressure and acceptance. While they are primarily concrete learners, they are beginning to develop abstract-thinking skills.

The environment of the Grades 3-5 classroom is a structured one in which students use their natural imagination and creativity to focus on individual elements of communication, cooperation, and creation of writing. The classroom teacher includes dramatization and creative writing to connect learning in other school subject areas to that of theatre as well as to other expressive art forms.

Through the strands of understanding, responding, and producing, third-grade students continue to build on drama techniques learned in Grades K-2. At this level students begin analyzing and describing ways to improve a performance while under a director’s supervision. Fourth-grade students, for example, look at Alabama authors and build on previous experiences to critique and create new theatre-related experiences. Students in fifth grade continue to build on the foundation established in Grades K-4 and begin to analyze characters and to include other art forms to enhance theatrical presentations. Students in these grades are preparing to become discerning audience members as well as active participants in arts performances.
Third-grade students begin to participate in self-directed activities that reflect individual likes and dislikes. They are curious, enthusiastic, eager to learn, and sensitive to the opinions of peers and teachers. These students are more mature, competent, and confident than students in earlier grades. The classroom environment, therefore, promotes teamwork and cooperation and provides opportunities for all students to experience enjoyment and success.

In the Grade 3 theatre program students begin to understand that artistic productions are rendered according to personal interpretation. They identify various forms and uses of drama as well as the different elements of a theatrical performance. They create ideas for various components of a dramatic production and continue to work with movement as a vital part of the total theatre experience. Students are also encouraged to view performances that evoke a greater understanding of society and culture.

**Produce**

Students will:

1. Use the primary tools of mind, body, and voice in an appropriate characterization for a simple classroom production.

2. Identify the purpose of movement in a dramatic production.
   - Using high-, medium-, and low-level areas in space
     Examples: leaping for joy, running in fear, kneeling to be knighted, slithering like a snake
   - Using body sculpture or the freeze technique to create a *tableau* by freezing the action of a scene

3. Create ideas for alternate settings, characters, and endings for a dramatic production.
   - Staging classroom dramatizations in a variety of ways
     Examples: protean staging, Reader’s Theatre
   - Demonstrating movement to explore thoughts, feelings, and roles from literature, life, and history
     Examples: Native American rain and cloud dances, Russian wedding dance
   - Working cooperatively in a group setting to plan a dramatic production

4. Dramatize universal subjects and ideas in stories from different cultures.
   Examples: friendship—*Charlotte’s Web, The Secret Garden*;
   greed—*Why the Sky is Far Away, A Christmas Carol*
   - Depicting characters from diverse historical periods and cultures
     Examples: Johnny Appleseed, Pocohantas, Harriet Tubman
   - Explaining how theatre reflects life
Respond

5. Identify an emotion evoked by performers during a production.

6. Identify different elements in a theatrical performance.
   - Describing characters, their relationships, and their environments
   - Analyzing a classroom dramatization or theatre production to determine how movement, music, and visual elements are used to enhance mood
     Examples: joy in finding gold at the end of the rainbow; fear when the big, bad wolf appears
   - Distinguishing between appropriate and inappropriate audience behavior
     Examples: appropriate—applauding,
     inappropriate—booing in a noninteractive production
   - Explaining differences between audience space and performance space

7. Evaluate the effectiveness of the theatrical elements of a performance using accurate, respectful, supportive, and constructive comments.

8. Describe effects that sounds, movements, and visual images have on an audience.

Understand

9. Identify various forms of dramatic media and ways in which they have evolved over time.
   Examples: theatre, film, television, electronic media

10. Identify ways in which the arts are used for personal pleasure and enrichment.
    Examples: plays, art exhibits, concerts

11. Illustrate concepts from other content areas through the use of dramatization.
    Examples: acting out simple machines studied in science, depicting the migration of animals or people studied in science or social studies, illustrating Reader’s Theatre from reading and English language arts classes
Theatre
Fourth Grade

Students in fourth grade enjoy learning and display an abundance of energy and enthusiasm. They are more verbal, see themselves as more mature, and place more importance on friends, clubs, and teams. The theatre class is a place for students to express and release their energy and enthusiasm through well-defined activities that strengthen their theatrical knowledge and talent.

The theatre program in Grade 4 focuses on the roles and responsibilities of those involved in staging a theatrical production. Standards require that students identify thoughts and feelings evoked by a performance, evaluate theatrical performances, and identify dramatic works written by and about Alabama and Alabamians.

Produce

Students will:

1. Demonstrate ways in which an actor communicates character and emotions.
   Examples: body posture, movement, voice, facial expression
   - Explaining how music and sound are used to communicate emotion
     Examples: pitch, tone, volume
   - Exhibiting concentration, recall, and memorization of sequencing to create a characterization
   - Combining physical shapes, levels, and facial expressions to depict emotions and moods of characters

2. Improvise short scenes while working cooperatively in groups, including the use of role play.

3. Describe the function in musical theatre of each arts discipline.
   Examples: dance—movement, dance sequences;
              music—score, lyrics;
              theatre—acting, production;
              visual arts—scenic design

Respond

4. Identify the elements of a scripted drama, including dialogue, character, plot, and setting.
   - Identifying conflict in a dramatic situation as it unfolds through dialogue
   - Analyzing the choice of setting and characters to determine authenticity
     Example: Africa as the necessary setting for *The Lion King*
   - Demonstrating ways movement communicates characters and emotions
5. Identify thoughts and feelings evoked by a performance.
   Examples: *Alice in Wonderland*—imagining what it would be like to live in a wonderland,
   *Annie*—feeling triumph for Annie as she becomes part of a family
   • Connecting performances to personal feelings or experiences
   • Evaluating the effectiveness of artistic choices made in a production
   • Explaining the concepts of aesthetics and empathy

6. Evaluate audience behavior of self and others to determine appropriateness.

7. Evaluate the use of lighting, costumes, sound effects, makeup, props, and sets for effectiveness in a performance.

**Understand**

8. Identify ways in which theatre reflects the social values and accomplishments of a culture.
   • Describing ways in which the arts play a role in everyday life
     Examples: landscape design, advertising jingles, dances, movies

9. Identify dramatic works written by and about Alabama and Alabamians.
   Examples: Kathryn T. Windham’s *Julia Tutwiler*, William Gibson’s *The Miracle Worker*

10. Recognize the various roles and responsibilities of those involved in staging a theatrical production.
    Examples: playwright—writes the script,
             actor—interprets the part,
             director—instructs the actor

11. Identify possible connections between theatre concepts and concepts from other content areas.
    Example: explaining how student-created work in visual arts, music, and dance may be translated to theatre

12. Use the computer to research and identify works in literature that have been translated into theatrical productions.
    Examples: *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe; Charlotte’s Web; Peter Pan; The Polar Express*; books from the “Harry Potter” series
Fifth-grade students exhibit the capacity for enjoying and participating in all areas of the arts. They demonstrate skills for effective artistic expression and show a heightened appreciation for the arts and their role in shaping and reflecting the history of all cultures.

Theatre content standards for Grade 5 are designed to broaden and deepen the knowledge and processes begun in Grade 4. These standards require students to analyze and describe ways to improve a performance while under a director’s supervision, to identify universal themes and basic conflicts evident in theatrical productions, and to use age-appropriate theatre vocabulary. At this grade level, emphasis is also placed on positive criticism, including self-critiquing.

**Produce**

Students will:

1. Identify various roles and responsibilities necessary to effectively stage scenes or dramatic productions.
   
   Examples: writers editing the script, researchers ensuring that costume choices reflect the time period portrayed, directors guiding practices, actors memorizing script parts, critics viewing and critiquing theatre performances, set designers selecting materials reflecting desired setting, audiences responding to production

2. Select essential design elements to support a dramatic production.
   
   Examples: lighting, costumes, makeup, props
   
   • Combining physical shapes, levels, and facial expressions to depict emotion and mood of characters
   
   • Combining physical qualities with vocal qualities, including projection and vocal variety

3. Produce an original or published scene using an organized rehearsal plan.
   
   • Describing the importance of collaboration in a theatrical production, including scheduling, blocking, and set design
4. Compare theatrical characteristics of pantomime, improvisation, and scripted drama.

5. Analyze a dramatic performance to identify its intended personal emotional response.
   Example: *The Miracle Worker* encouraging audience to persevere in spite of adversity
   - Using age-appropriate theatre vocabulary to accurately describe theatrical concepts
     Examples: dialogue, pitch, tone, volume, set designer, theme, improvisation, script, tableau

6. Compare ways in which ideas and emotions are expressed in theatre, dramatic media, dance, music, and visual arts.
   Example: comparison of African-American displacement as seen through Jacob Lawrence’s *The Migration Series* paintings, Jewish displacement as portrayed in the movie *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and displacement of Okies as depicted in selected scenes in the movie *The Grapes of Wrath*

7. Describe how audience behavior affects a performance.

**Understand**

8. Identify conflict in a drama, including man versus man, man versus self, man versus nature, man versus the supernatural, and man versus society.
   - Identifying the message, theme, and purpose in a drama

9. Describe ways various cultures reflect their beliefs and traditions through theatre and storytelling.
   Examples: Indonesian—Javanese puppet theatre, Native American—powwow

10. Identify universal themes in literature.
    Examples: love, hate, friendship, loyalty, family
    - Enacting a drama in such a way that its major scenes depict literary accuracy
    - Developing a one-act play around an event in United States history
      Examples: Trail of Tears, Civil Rights Movement
Theatre
Grades 6-12
Overview

Four theatre courses, presented sequentially, are provided for students in Grades 6-12. Increased academic rigor at each level leads to mastery of content at Level IV. Students may earn the one-half arts education credit required for graduation upon successful completion of any one of these levels in Grades 9-12.

In Levels I and II, students begin to learn the legal and ethical implications of performing another’s work. They also examine more completely dramatic structure, incorporate creativity and imagination into the production of a classroom script, begin to realize the role of self-evaluation, and expand performance and scripts through their knowledge of settings, materials, and production staff. Students at these levels begin to explore the world’s cultures, identifying how the arts influence various cultures as well as how those cultures impact the arts.

The Level III theatre classroom provides students with opportunities for rigorous academic study and response to performances as well as participation in a full theatrical production. Students at this level transition from adolescence into early adulthood with varying abilities, learning styles, interests, and social skills. These students are challenged to begin justifying critical choices through the different aspects of theatre. Emphasis is placed on theatre’s role in society and the ever-expanding opportunities for technology in the arts. At this level, students have an in-depth understanding of theatre’s history and critically study the works of renowned playwrights.

Level IV classes are designed for students who have mastered basic theatre skills and concepts. Students are provided a more in-depth study of the history of theatre as well as a study of aesthetic and critical issues. They master the rigor of a professional production and are involved in an independent learning environment as they design, lead rehearsals, and take more responsibility for their own learning and products. Appropriate audience as well as performer etiquette is also stressed.

As students master standards in Level III and Level IV, other local advanced courses may need to be designed to expand and increase the depth of understanding and the quality of responding and producing. Examples of elective courses are Dramatic Media, Musical Theatre, Survey of Production, Playwriting, Directing, Technical Theatre, Design, Makeup, Costumes, Acting Performance, Vocal Performance, and Theatre Management.
Theatre

Grades 6-12

Level I

The Level I Theatre course is recommended as a transitional course for early adolescent students, separating childhood drama from the more sophisticated world of theatre. Students in this age group are moving from childhood into the teenage years. They require teacher direction, but at the same time need to be provided with opportunities for self-expression.

Content standards for Level I Theatre address the intellectual needs, learning styles, talents, interests, and maturation levels of early adolescents, placing continued emphasis on the development of the three strands of production, response, and understanding while building on the academic aspects of theatre. In this initial level, students study the vocal, kinesthetic, emotional, analytical, and intellectual elements of theatrical training. They begin to examine more completely dramatic structure and the overall acting process, including the collaborative nature of a theatrical production and the role of the production staff. As in all levels of theatre, students continue to examine theatre history, broaden theatre vocabulary, and respond to productions by communicating thoughts and feelings, explaining concepts of aesthetics, and evaluating artistic choices.

Produce

Students will:

1. Identify basic elements of theatrical training, including vocalization, kinesthetics, and emotional and intellectual processing.
   - Demonstrating ways an actor controls voice through pitch, rate, volume, pronunciation, and enunciation
   - Developing characters through various postures, gestures, and facial expressions
   - Identifying basic stage directions
     Examples: upstage, downstage, stage left, stage right, wing

   - Using high, medium, and low spatial levels to enhance the effectiveness of a scene
     Examples: high—standing; medium—sitting; low—kneeling, crouching
   - Demonstrating a variety of actor positions or profiles
     Examples: one fourth, one half, full, back
2. Describe the acting process, including memorizing, determining, and enacting character objectives and motives; listening; and maintaining concentration.
   - Using the acting process to perform a monologue or dialogue
   - Using improvisation to discover character and motivation
   - Demonstrating understanding of text, subtext, and context through improvisation
   - Identifying the structural elements of plot in a script or production
     Examples: exposition, complication, crisis, climax or resolution

3. Identify basic components of staging a production, including set design, blocking, costumes, lighting, and sound.
   - Selecting sets, props, costumes, lighting, and sounds to support a drama
   - Producing a rehearsal notebook that includes a record of acting choices, directions, and blocking
   - Analyzing the technical parts of a theatre facility and their functions, including flats, platforms, backdrops, cyclorama, and drapery, to determine their roles in effectively staging a production

**Respond**

4. Explain emotional responses to the whole as well as to the parts of a dramatic performance.
   - Discussing different goals and feelings of characters
   - Comparing character wants and needs to personal wants and needs

5. Use appropriate theatre vocabulary, including blocking, character, scene, empathy, aesthetics, and enunciation, to describe theatrical experiences.

6. Explain artistic choices made collaboratively by a group.
   - Choosing special effects to enhance a story
     Examples: lighting, sound, technology

**Understand**

7. Explain legal and ethical ramifications of using another’s work in a production, including copyright and intellectual property rights issues.

8. Compare various theatre styles from different time periods and cultures.
   Examples: theatre in ancient Greece, Kabuki in Japan, *commedia dell’arte* in Italy
   - Designing masks, puppets, props, and sets in a variety of styles
     Examples: Japanese shadow puppets, Noh masks
   - Describing the use of literary historical archetypes as dramatic characters
     Examples: Greek hero, chivalrous knight in Arthurian legend, Shakespeare’s tragic hero
9. Identify ways the arts influence and are influenced by culture and politics.
   Examples: music growing from protests of Vietnam war helping to change public opinion against the war, plays bringing attention to the plight of women who have been ignored and ruled by a male-dominated world

10. Use theatre skills to communicate ideas from other curriculum areas.
    Examples: establishing a Reader’s Theatre for poetry readings, writing scripts of historical events, utilizing acting techniques to represent simple machines

11. Identify job requirements for a variety of theatre and theatre-related careers.
    Example: costume designer—responsible for reading script and planning costume design appropriate to period, character, and production concepts

12. Identify various uses of technology, including the Internet, in theatrical design.
    Examples: graphic design software, intelligent lighting
The Level II Theatre course builds sequentially upon theatre knowledge and skills developed in Level I. Designed for the early adolescent, this level addresses students’ intellectual needs, learning styles, talents, interests, and maturation levels. Level II enables students to become more proficient in the three strands of production, response, and understanding.

Students in Level II are more involved in character development, script analysis, collaboration, and the role of the technical theatre in a production. They are learning to realistically weigh their strengths and weaknesses through self-evaluation. In addition, they begin to learn about the legal and ethical implications of performing another’s work, explore the history of theatre both in America and in the world, and examine more thoroughly the concepts of theatre, including elements of theatre and styles of performance. Students look at how society values the arts and begin to make critical judgments about these values and the arts that reflect them. The impact on language is stressed both in script evaluation and in students’ choice and use of language in the theatre class and in other academic subjects.

**Produce**

Students will:

1. Demonstrate use of the body and voice as creative instruments.
   - Example: depicting old man with hunched shoulders, shaky hands, and trembling voice
   - Demonstrating staging techniques
     - Examples: stage positions, movement
   - Participating in a variety of subtext vocal exercises accompanied by physical reactions
     - Examples: “I didn’t do that.” (Subtext: How dare you ask!)
     - “I didn’t do that.” (Subtext: I promise, not me.)
     - “I didn’t do that.” (Subtext: I’m too sweet to do something like that.)
   - Demonstrating resonance, projection, and articulation through vocal exercises and personal vocal warm-ups
     - Example: vocal exercise or warm-up—“Articulate the consonants, clearly speak the words, round out the vowel sounds, and then you will be heard.”
   - Performing scenarios for pantomime using characters involved in an initial incident, conflict, rising action, climax, or conclusion
     - Examples: initial incident—raking leaves, conflict—gust of wind blowing across leaves
   - Performing stage combat exercises
     - Example: techniques involving sword play, falling, and fighting
   - Demonstrating spontaneity through improvisation exercises
     - Example: creating a dialogue in which each actor’s line begins with the next consecutive letter of the alphabet to tell a story
2. Analyze scripts, including dialogue, action, and expository information, to explain and justify character motivation.
   - Depicting behaviors based on interactions, ethical choices, and decisions made by characters
   - Justifying artistic choices made when rewriting an original work
   - Creating an original work in a selected theatrical style
     Examples: musical theatre, vaudeville, Greek chorus

3. Utilize the components of playwriting to create short scenes.
   Examples: plot structure, character types, themes, settings, dialogue
   - Illustrating language and action used to define characters
   - Interpreting metaphors, themes, and moods in scripts
   - Adapting student-written scenes for dramatic media

4. Create scripts that reflect specific periods, events, or cultures.
   - Demonstrating how improvised dialog and scenes can be used to tell stories and develop characters based on a variety of sources
   - Identifying ways plays can represent the time periods in which they are set
     Examples: costumes, lighting, set, speech patterns, dialogue

**Respond**

5. Explain the functions of technical theatre.
   Example: roles that scenery, props, lighting, sound, costumes, and makeup play in creating the environment for a play
   - Identifying roles of different members of the production staff
     Examples: sound engineer—determining all sound reinforcement, sound effects, and music;
     light designer—designing all lighting requirements;
     stage manager—accepting responsibility for general operations;
     costume designer—designing all costuming needs;
     makeup artist—designing all makeup for characters
   - Developing sound effects to support a production
   - Designing a set for a given piece, including floor plan, set materials, props, lighting, costumes, and sound requirements

6. Determine criteria necessary to review a theatrical production.
   Examples: relationship of theme, plot, and conflict; dramatic elements; appropriate use of theatrical language; quality of acting

7. Analyze selected texts to determine how they incorporate figurative language and imagery.
   Examples: Thornton Wilder’s *Our Town*, August Wilson’s *Fences*, Tennessee Williams’ *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Nilo Cruz’s *Anna in the Tropics*

8. Use various self-evaluation processes, including journaling, rubrics, and aesthetic responses, to evaluate personal choices and performances.
9. Explain the impact of social and cultural events on theatre.
   • Describing ways American history has been reflected in the theatre
     Examples: August Wilson’s two plays in a ten-part series chronicling the African-American experience, Ma Rainey’s *Black Bottom* and *Fences*

10. Identify the major periods of theatre history.
    Examples: Greek, medieval, Elizabethan, modern, contemporary

    • Identifying major writers of various historical periods
      Examples: Sophocles—Early Greek,
                 William Shakespeare—Elizabethan,
                 Edward Albee—twentieth century

11. Apply theatre skills to reflect concepts presented in other curriculum areas.
    Examples: social studies—improvisations of historical events,
             English language arts—Reader’s Theatre,
             science—movement exercises reflecting movement in simple machines

12. Identify ways technology has impacted theatre, including American theatre.
    Examples: projection screens, computer programs, lighting sequences, computer designs or graphics, surround sound

    • Describing the effect of modern media on live theatre
    • Describing the impact of computers and the Internet on the arts
Theatre

Grades 6-12

Level III

The Level III Theatre course is designed to build upon previous knowledge and skills through a rigorous study of theatre encompassing the three strands of producing, responding, and understanding. Students in Level III approach theatre, as a substantive academic discipline. The focus at this level is a comprehensive look at theatre, including how it has developed, how it functions in society, and the different aspects of theatre that must be assumed and mastered. Level III students continue writing scripts, directing, working collaboratively, and performing in scenes and short plays. At the same time, they explore theatre history both in America and in the world and investigate the issues of aesthetics and criticism. Students are provided with opportunities for academic study and response and are challenged to begin justifying critical choices through the various roles of theatre. Emphasis is placed on a higher level of characterization, analysis, interpretation, script creation, and technical work. Students begin to look at the effective use of modern technology, study the process of directing, and become aware of the various schools of thought for acting, coaching, and directing.

Produce

Students will:

1. Create characters, situations, and events based on personal experience, literature, historic events, or research to introduce tension and suspense in a theatrical production.
   - Demonstrating exercises for physical and vocal conditioning
   - Performing pantomimes or improvisations using voice, blocking, and gesturing to depict characters and tell a story

2. Demonstrate an understanding of characterization and scene work through a group performance.
   - Analyzing a scene from a play read in class to adequately portray a character or action
   - Demonstrating understanding of subtext and emotion through vocal and physical work
   - Demonstrating a relationship to other characters in a scene through interaction with and reaction to other characters in the scene
   - Memorizing a scene
   - Performing a scene accurately, including actions designed during the rehearsal process

3. Create a video that tells a story or depicts an overall theme, including the effective use of modern technology.
   - Using various artistic camera shots, framing techniques, and digital photography to enhance a video
   - Using a storyboard to plan a scene and develop plot, character, and theme
Respond

4. Interpret directional goals in scenes and plays from a variety of playwrights.
   • Analyzing the form and structure of scripts and scenes to identify theme, plot, character functions, subtext, setting, and dialogue
   • Choosing the appropriate acting style for a scene or play
     Examples: classical, high comedy, low comedy

5. Describe the impact various components of technical theatre have on a dramatic production, including lighting, sound, scenery, props, costumes, makeup, and hairstyling.
   • Identifying how technical theatre elements can be effectively used to communicate mood, character, and location in a formal and informal scripted or improvised production
   • Using computer graphics or models for theatrical design
     Examples: designing sets, preparing lighting plots
   • Comparing different performance spaces, including arena, proscenium, thrust, and informal venues such as sidewalks and classrooms
   • Comparing stage acting to acting before a camera

6. Describe theatrical experiences using theatre vocabulary, including genre, style, acting values, themes, and designs.

7. Critique theatre productions to determine the effectiveness of verbal and nonverbal interpretation, director’s intent, audience response, and technical elements.
   • Identifying strengths and weaknesses of one’s personal acting voice as well as the voices of other actors
     Examples: articulation, volume, dialect, vocal quality, tone, resonance
   • Differentiating between positive and negative responses to criticism
     Examples: positive—agreeing with the critic, probing for clarification, compromising;
     negative—being antagonistic, ignoring criticism

8. Describe the impact of audience behavior on cast performances and the impact of cast performances on audience behavior.
   • Clarifying how production space impacts both the audience and cast members

Understand

9. Describe the impact history and theatre have upon each other.
   Example: medieval period impacting morality plays
   • Comparing dramatic texts to historic texts for accurate portrayal of cultural, social, and political ideas and events
   • Depicting cultural environments and historical periods through settings, props, costumes, and makeup
   • Recognizing the influence of a historic event on the work of a playwright
     Example: impact of the French Revolution on Victor Hugo’s Les Misérables
10. Identify major writers of theatre.
   • Comparing scripts of various major writers
     Examples: Sophocles’ *Antigone*, Anton Chekhov’s *The Cherry Orchard*, David Auburn’s *Proof*

11. Identify ways in which theatre originating in different times and cultures can reflect the same theme.
   Example: parent-child relationship as depicted in William Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and in the movie *Steel Magnolias*

12. Compare the fundamental elements used to communicate in dance, music, theatre, dramatic media, and visual arts.
   • Defending theatre as a synthesis of all arts disciplines
     Example: identifying the use of scenery, music, and dance in a production
The Level IV Theatre course is designed for students who have mastered basic theatre skills and concepts. Students enrolled in this course depend upon peers for social interaction and acceptance, and to a degree, success. The classroom environment promotes social interaction through the theatrical production process. Students are required to work cooperatively in a group setting, yet are able to maintain their independence and identity throughout the process. Possession of a solid theatre background, maturity, dependability, analytical skills, self-discipline, self-motivation, and focus are characteristics of successful Level IV theatre students.

Students in Level IV apply prior knowledge of script writing, analyze a variety of texts to determine character development, and demonstrate directorial and rehearsal techniques. They recognize the influence of historical events on the works of great playwrights and are able to describe the impact history and theatre have had upon each other.

**Produce**

Students will:

1. Apply basic dramatic structure, including exposition, complication, crisis, climax, and resolution, in the script writing process.

2. Direct formal and informal productions by interpreting dramatic texts and organizing and conducting rehearsals.
   - Identifying various schools of thought for coaching and directing
     Examples: Konstantin Stanislavski, Lee Strasberg, Viola Spolin, Sanford Meisner, Stella Adler
   - Communicating effectively to a small ensemble the directional choices for improvised or scripted scenes
   - Directing a selection of scenes or a one-act play, assuming all responsibilities of a director
     Examples: choosing play, casting, blocking, designing sets

3. Demonstrate rehearsal techniques, including pacing, polishing, and vocal and physical encoding, with technical proficiency.

4. Create a multimedia production using advanced technologies.
   Example: using a slide show or video clip within a play
   - Developing a director’s notebook
   - Planning a rehearsal schedule
   - Staging production with blocking, casting, and technical designs
Respond

5. Analyze classical, contemporary, realistic, and nonrealistic texts to determine character development.
   - Creating characters for a dramatization through script analysis and revision
   - Explaining choices for creation of a character’s voice
     Example: using high pitch for a child’s voice
   - Explaining choices for the creation of a character’s physical appearance based on social and psychological dimensions
     Example: character skipping and whistling to portray carefree attitude
   - Improvising scenes based on dramatic texts to reveal complex characteristics of characters

6. Analyze productions that reflect life situations to determine how they broaden the range of human understanding.
   - Identifying personal and universal meaning in a production
   - Relating motifs, symbols, and metaphor to personal experiences
   - Communicating the personal impact of theatrical experiences
     Examples: empathy, catharsis, delight

7. Identify requirements and responsibilities of a dramaturge.
   - Determining appropriate dialect, set, and costume design for the historical period of a play through research

8. Compare a variety of genres of dramatic literature using complex evaluation and terminology.
   - Identifying the use of metaphor, subtext, and symbolic elements in various genres

9. Analyze a dramatic work to determine its effectiveness regarding intent, structure, and quality.

Understand

10. Describe the effect of historic events on works of great playwrights and screenwriters.
    Example: Arthur Miller’s The Crucible reflecting the Salem witch trials and paralleling the social intolerance of the Joseph McCarthy hearings
    - Identifying ways film, theatre, television, and electronic media influence values and behavior
      Examples: film—relationship of Rebel Without a Cause to street racing and rebellious teenagers; theatre—relationship of All I Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten to values and behaviors learned as a child; television—reflections of strong, caring, family values in 7th Heaven; electronic media—impact of video games and compact disk-read-only memory (CD-ROM)
    - Describing ways in which writers reflect and influence culture through their works
      Examples: Lorraine Hansberry’s A Raisin in the Sun and Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird comparing the cultures of two groups, selected scenes from the movie Grand Canyon addressing the question of whether art influences society or society influences art
11. Analyze a variety of theatrical styles to ascertain basic commonalities.
   Example: comparing traditional and nontraditional theatre such as in a Shakespearian play to a Cirque du Soleil

   - Performing pieces from a variety of playwrights representing different schools of thought and specific theatre styles
     Examples: William Shakespeare, Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin), Anton Chekov
   - Comparing directing and acting styles from a variety of periods
     Examples: Konstantin Stanislavsky from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Edward Albee from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Viola Spolin from the twentieth century

12. Identify career options in the dramatic arts.
   Examples: cinematographer, dramaturge, stage manager

   - Identifying the education, training, and work experience needed to enter an arts field
   - Developing a portfolio for audition purposes
Theatre Glossary

Action – That which happens physically in a play and involves a distinct beginning, middle, and end.

Aesthetics – Study of the nature of beauty.

Antagonist – Either of two opponents in conflict or the character who opposes the protagonist.

Articulate – Speaking distinctly.

Audition – Competitive tryout for a performer seeking a role in a theatrical production; process may include interviews, “cold” reading from the script, the presentation of a prepared audition piece, improvisations, or any combinations of these.

Backdrop – Pieces of scenery that are hung over the stage and often “fly” in and out; often painted but can also be full wall units with doors and windows.

Backstage – Stage area beyond the acting area.

Blocking – Term given to the staging of the actual movements of each cast member or actor.

Cast – To choose a person to perform a theatrical part (verb); group of people to perform a theatrical work (noun).

Catharsis – Release of emotions caused in a tragedy.

Center stage – The center area of the stage.

Character – Participant in the play whose qualities and traits arise from ethical deliberation.

Characterizations – Putting together all facets of a character to make that character a living, convincing human being.

Chorus – Group of actors in Greek drama of the fifth century B.C., who sang, chanted, spoke, and moved, usually in unison.

Classical – Period of Greek drama and theatre; refers to Greek and Roman drama and theatre in general.

Climax – The point of highest tension in a dramatic presentation.

Comedy – A play that deals with treating characters and situations in a humorous way.

Commedia dell’arte – Improvised comedy with stock characters.

Conflict – Struggle between two opposing forces.

Costume – Clothing worn by an actor during a performance.

Crisis – Moment of decision for the leading character; the highest point of conflict.

Criticism – Verbalized response to the play or script that is meant to enrich the experience for others.

Cue – Audible, verbal, or physical signal indicating that an action will occur.

Cyclorama – White or blue tautly stretched canvas drop or plaster dome across the back wall of the stage which, when lit, simulates the sky.

Dialect – Regional or ethnic speech, sometimes necessary for an actor in a particular role.

Dialogue – The lines of a play spoken by characters.

Director – The person responsible for molding all aspects of a production into a unified whole.

Downstage – Stage area closest to the audience.

Drama – A literary composition performed on stage.

Dramatic play – Scenes created by children when at play.

Dramaturge – A resource person who provides in-depth knowledge to theatre personnel and audiences.

Elements of theatre – Plot, character, setting, dialogue, design, and theme.

Elizabethan – The period of English theatre during the reign of Elizabeth I until the closing of English theatre in 1640.

Ensemble – The dynamic interaction and harmonious blending of the efforts of the many artists involved in the dramatic activity of a theatrical production.

Enunciation – Articulation; to speak or pronounce words clearly.

Exposition – Opening of the play that explains the background and sets the plot in motion.

Flats – Frame constructed of 1-by-3 boards covered with canvas, painted, and used most often for interior or exterior walls of a building in a stage setting.

Floor plan – Top view of a set showing the setting arrangement.

Formal performance space – Area designed for theatrical performances, including proscenium stage, arena stage, black box theatre, thrust stage, and stadium stage.

Genre – A category of plays—comedy, tragedy, melodrama, or farce.

Gesturing – The movement of body or limbs to suggest thought or feeling.

Improvisation – The impromptu portrayal of a character or scene without any rehearsal or preparation.
Informal performance space – Acting or audience space designed for another purpose; productions in streets, bus terminals, gymnasiums, parks, and the like are said to use informal playing space.

Initial incident – The first and most important event in a play from which the rest of the plot develops.

Kabuki – Popular Japanese drama incorporating stylized costumes, acting, makeup, and music.

Lighting plot – The lighting designer’s graphic rendering of the arrangement of lights and their connections.

Locomotor movement – Moving through space and time.

Makeup – Cosmetics worn by male and female actors to create a character or reflect a historical period.

Melodrama – An 1800s drama characterized by emotion, suspense, virtue, and morals.

Method – Acting style characterized by a variety of techniques to simulate realism.

Monologue – A long speech by an individual.

Musical theatre – Genre that includes opera, operetta, musical comedy, and musical plays.

Noh – Japanese theatre style featuring masked male actors who create a drama.

Nonlocomotor movement – Action performed while staying in one place.

Pantomime – The art of acting without words.

Pitch – The relative highness or lowness of the voice.

Platform – Raised area to add level(s).

Play – A dramatic composition; bringing an action or story to life on a stage.

Playwright – A person who writes plays; a dramatist.

Plot – The series of related events that take place in a play. (See also Exposition, Conflict, and Crisis.)

Projection – Vocalization that can be heard at a distance.

Properties, props – Objects used on stage such as furniture, glasses, books.

Proscenium arch – Picture-frame acting area with all of the audience sitting and facing the stage.

Protean staging – Scenery or staging that is simple; can be arranged and rearranged to suggest a variety of settings, and whose basic properties are changed by its use.

Puppetry – Inanimate objects brought to life through manipulation to convey a story. Types of puppets may include rod, hand, and marionette.

Reader’s Theatre – A performance created by reading from a script rather than from memory.

Rehearsal – Session where actors and technicians practice for a performance.

Resolution – Part of a play in which clarification is made; also called the climax.

Resonance – The intensification of vocal tones during articulation.

Rising action – The series of events following the initial incident.

Scenery – Painted backdrops on a theatrical stage.

Scenes – A portion of a play, usually part of an act.

Screenwriter – A writer of screenplays.

Script – The text of a theatrical production.

Setting – Time and place in which a dramatic work takes place.

Special effects – Technical effect, usually spectacular, found in a play, television program, or film; can vary from the relatively simple gunshot to a vast flood or thermonuclear war.

Stage left – The left side of the stage when the actor is facing the audience.

Stage manager – The person who is in complete charge backstage during rehearsals and performances.

Stage position – The position of the actor in relation to the audience (as in full front, full back, right profile).

Stage right – The right side of the stage when the actor is facing the audience.

Storyboard – Visual blueprint of the sequence of events in a story.

Style – The way in which a play is written, acted, and produced.

Subtext – Character interpretations that are not in a script but are supplied by an actor.

Tableau – Scene created by actors who remain motionless and silent. The plural is tableaux.
**Theatre of the Absurd** – A form of theater in which language becomes the unconventional, and in which political and social problems are examined and presented to the audience in unconventional ways.

**Theme** – An idea or point of view depicted in a work of art.

**Tone** – The quality and pitch of a vocalization.

**Upstage** – Stage area farthest away from the audience.

**Volume** – The strength, force, or intensity with which sound is made.

**Wings** – Offstage areas; right and left stage.