



High School course for ½ unit of arts credit

Introduction to Theater Arts was developed in alignment with the New York City Department of Education's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Theater which builds and incorporates the New York State Learning Standards for the Arts. The Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts: Theater PreK-12 is the New York City Department of Education's curriculum framework for instruction and notes indicators for student achievement in theater at various benchmark grades (2, 5, 8 and 12).

The Introduction to Theater Arts course will allow students to meet a portion of the general high school arts requirement. This course of study provides an overview of the five strands of the Blueprint i.e., Theater Making, Developing Theater Literacy, Making Connections, Working with Community and Cultural Resources, and Exploring Careers and Lifelong Learning. Additionally, all four New York State Theater Arts Standards are addressed by this unit as well.

The course has been divided into five modules. Students begin by telling simple stories and learning to communicate meaning through the voice and through physical behavior. They move onto a study of basic acting technique, play analysis, character development and performing works of theater. Throughout the course, students will explore the origins and history of theater, learn to critique professional and student productions, reflect on and discuss theater's connection to their own lives, identify particular theater arts careers, and work with theater professionals in either long- or short-term residencies. Additionally, the course will provide baseline theater content, knowledge and skills that would allow the student to follow additional advanced course work.

DEVELOPERS:

Course Syllabus Writers: Dr. Joseph Furnari, Theatre Facilitator and Theater Arts teacher at Repertory Company High School for Theatre Arts; Paul L. King, Director of Theater Programs, New York City Department of Education.

Advisor/Reviewer: Stephen DiMenna, Adjunct faculty at the New York University's/Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development- Theater Education Program



Scope and Sequence

For a course of study based upon the proposed syllabus, list the units for the course, in the approximate order that they will be offered. For each unit, indicate the major learner outcome(s), the related learning standard(s) and commencement-level performance indicator(s), and the amount of time allocated to the unit. Duplicate this page if additional space is needed.

Title of course of study Introduction to Theater Arts

Unit	Major Learner Outcome(s)	Arts Standard(s) & Performance Indicator(s)	Time Allocation
I – Introduction - What is the “Big Idea” about theater?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students develop an appreciation of the role of theater in various cultures by exploring eras and personages in theater history and, in particular, New York City theater. Students enhance and develop their performance skills while learning to work in diverse styles and forms, such as improvisation, theater games, spoken word, physical theater, clowning, puppetry, story theater, or musical theater. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: 1, 2, 4 Respond imaginatively and expressively to imaginary and scripted circumstances Contribute positively and responsibly to the ensemble through collaboration, sustained focus and concentration Identify the origins and historical uses of theater as popular entertainment and ritual within Western and non- Western cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 weeks/4 classes per week (50 minute classes)



Title of course of study Introduction to Theater Arts cont.

Unit	Major Learner Outcome(s)	Arts Standard(s) & Performance Indicator(s)	Time Allocation
II – Exploring Basic Acting Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students enhance and develop their performance skills while learning to work in diverse styles and forms, such as improvisation, theater games, spoken word, physical theater, clowning, puppetry, story theater, or musical theater. • Students continue to develop the processes and the analytical and imaginative skills associated with acting. • Students apply an understanding of dramatic text and theater history in their critical responses as they enhance their skills to critique live performance. • Students use vocabulary that is authentic and integral to theater. • Through school partnerships and/or individual research, students broaden their horizons in theater and gain an understanding of the mission and goals of theater organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: 1, 2, 3 • Use the body and voice expressively in theater exercises and improvisations • Maintain focus and concentration in order to sustain improvisations, scene work and performance • Demonstrate the ability to commit to acting processes and responding “in the moment” within imaginary circumstances • Describe and discuss a written text or live performance in terms of its social, historical, cultural and political context • Work with theater professionals in either long- or short-term residencies connected to and supporting the course of theater study • Respond to theater pieces they have seen and read using other art forms including visual design, choreography and musical composition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 weeks/4 classes per week • (50 minute classes)



Title of course of study Introduction to Theater Arts cont.

Unit	Major Learner Outcome(s)	Arts Standard(s) & Performance Indicator(s)	Time Allocation
III - Basic Play Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students increase their understanding of theater history and compare diverse productions and theater companies by using various research resources. Students integrate an understanding of dramatic text and theater history in their responses to live performance. Students examine the themes and context of theater works to recognize and connect personal experience to universal themes. Students use vocabulary that is authentic and integral to theater. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: 2, 3, 4 Demonstrate an understanding of rising action, climax, resolution and the dramatic arc of a play Recognize patterns of meaning in a dramatic text by identifying various elements of a script Demonstrate the ability to critique and review live performance or a script by identifying elements of dramatic text Use research and analysis to inform an understanding of a play and character Reflect on and discuss theater's connection to their own lives through examining the themes and lessons of a play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 weeks/4 classes per week (50 minute classes)
IV - Developing a Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students increase their ability as imaginative and analytical actors while continuing to participate as collaborative ensemble members. Students improve upon and gain new performance skills through sequential and sustained activities in various theater forms, Students use vocabulary that is authentic and integral to theater. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards: 1, 2, 3 Use physical and vocal skills to create a variety of characters in improvisations, scene work and performance Use research to inform the creation of characters and the choices characters make Use physical transformation to create a viable characterization Understand the importance of character development in relation to the creation of a story or play 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 weeks 4 classes per week (50 minute classes)



Title of course of study Introduction to Theater Arts cont.

Unit	Major Learner Outcome(s)	Arts Standard(s) & Performance Indicator(s)	Time Allocation
V –Performing Works of Theater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students enhance and develop their performance skills while learning to work in diverse styles and forms, such as improvisation, theater games, spoken word, physical theater, clowning, puppetry, story theater, or musical theater. • Students increase their capacity in Theater Making through collaborations with theater professionals. • Students investigate how arts are incorporated in the theater production through design, movement and musical scoring and articulate the distinct choices that are made within the art forms to interpret and develop the theater work, i.e., costume design, choreography and sound design • Students use vocabulary that is authentic and integral to theater. • Students assess and evaluate their own personal and professional skills through the identification and examination of theater careers. • Students cultivate a personal response to and affinity for theater as a part of their lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards: 1, 2, 3, 4 • Receive, respond to and incorporate directions • Perform for peers and the wider community including parents and guardians, other schools and community groups and senior centers • Recognize that behaviors and themes particular to the world of the play also connect to our understanding of the larger world • Identify particular theater arts careers that are of interest - production, performance, technical theater and supporting occupations • Develop and articulate a personal connection to theater 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 weeks/4 classes per week (50 minute classes)



Course Sampler

For a major learner outcome in one of the units Section II, list three specific objectives for students. For each objective, identify instructional strategies, materials/equipment/facilities, and evaluation techniques that will be used to achieve it. This section should assist a person not familiar with the course to see how the syllabus will be translated into the classroom.

Title of Unit Developing a Character

Major Learner Outcome Through sequential and sustained activities in various theater forms, students improve upon and gain new performance skills.

Subject Objectives	Instructional Strategies	Materials/Facilities/Equipment	Evaluation (of Student Achievement)
Student Objective #1 - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will extend ability to create a physicalization for his/her character 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will have previously chosen a character from a popular play and extracted the given circumstances from the script. After instruction by the teacher, students will score scenes in their plays for action, intention, and motivation Students will further develop their character through observation and create a character biography. Observation exercise – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> students will use script analysis and observation to begin to create a physicalization for their characters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A classroom with an open space for working and presentation Basic furniture and properties for scene work 	Students will be evaluated based upon: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> details of script analysis specificity of character biography focus and commitment to exercise choice and execution of specific movements that define the character



Subject Objectives	Instructional Strategies	Materials/Facilities/Equipment	Evaluation (of Student Achievement)
<p>Student Objective #2 -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will extend the development of his/her character's background and physicalization 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> After instruction by the teacher, students will write an original story about an important event in their character's life. Teacher will model telling of story and Hot Seat Exercise. Students, as the character, will tell their story to the class using physicalization developed in the observation exercise. Hot Seat Exercise - the student, in character, is asked questions by the teacher and/or other students relating to the character. The student responds as the character would respond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A classroom with an open space for working and presentation Basic furniture and properties for scene work 	<p>Students will be evaluated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> specificity and imaginative quality of written story vocal and physical presentation of story as character specificity of responses during Hot Seat Exercise ability to maintain character throughout telling of story and exercise
<p>Student Objective #3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will expand their ability to sustain a characterization through improvisation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher will review basic improvisation technique and lead the class in a simple improv exercise Teacher will set up improvisational situations defining setting and relationship in which the students' characters can interact with each other Students participate in improvisations trying to sustain a scene for five minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A classroom with an open space for working and presentation Basic furniture and properties for scene work 	<p>Students will be evaluated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ability to maintain character throughout the improvisation vocal and physical clarity and specificity of characterization specificity and imaginative quality of choices made during the improvisation



Evaluation

Evaluation of Student Achievement

List the various techniques that will be used to evaluate student achievement throughout the course. (Periodic exams, projects, psychomotor testing, etc.)

Teacher Assessment -

- Daily observation of student work during exercises and rehearsal
- Review of written student work and notebooks
- Periodic oral and written quizzes/tests
- Use of a rubric for describing and assessing rehearsal and presentation
- Review of performance of theater pieces created during class
- Videotape of work to be evaluated after performance, using rubric

Student Self Assessment -

- Through reflective writings
- Use of a rubric for describing and evaluating work process during scene work

Peer to Peer Assessment -

- Through observation and discussion
- Through use of a rubric for describing and assessing presentation

Provide an outline or copy of the proposed final examination/student assessment on the course.

Final Examination:

Part I – 20 to 25 multiple choice questions covering the theory and content of the five units

Part II – 5 to 10 short answer questions covering the theory and content of the five units

Part III – a critical response essay on a specific topic covered in the course

Part IV – a performance assessment of an on-demand presentation of a short scene or monologue

Course Revision

Identify the procedure(s) to be used for improving this course.

The functionality and quality of this course will be assessed and revised through observation of sample classes and student performances, responses to Central Arts Office questionnaires from teachers teaching this course, and through direct discussion with teachers.