

Wilson Area School District Planned Course Guide

Title of planned course: Introduction to Theatre

Subject Area: English

Grade Level: 10, 11, 12

Course Description: Introduction to Theatre will serve as an introduction to many facets of the world of theatre, from those on paper to those on the stage. The course will open with beginning acting training, taking students from improvisation to scene work. The course will extend to play analysis, communicating the tools for reading and analyzing a play, and then move to sampling technical elements of theatre as well as the processes used by directors. Finally, the year will conclude with a performance of one-act plays, performed, produced, and possibly even written by students in the class.

Time/Credit for this Course: Half Year / 0.5 Credit

Curriculum Writing Committee: Lacy Browne

Curriculum Map

August/September: Beginning Acting & Improvisation

October: Understanding Dramatic Literature
Acting: Scene work

November: Design, Directing, and Technical Theatre

December/January: Culminating projects: rehearsal process & performance

**Wilson Area School District
Planned Course Materials**

- Course Title:** Introduction to Theatre
- Textbook:** *The Theatre Experience*, 13th edition (2015) by Edwin Wilson
- Supplemental Books:** *An Actor Prepares* by Konstantin Stanislavski
A Sense of Direction by William Ball
- Teacher Resources:** Various stage scripts as chosen for the students' performance activities; this must vary based on the abilities and interests of the group students in the course.

Curriculum Scope & Sequence

Planned Course: Introduction to Theatre

Unit 1: Beginning Acting & Improvisation

Time frame: 3 weeks

State standards: 1.3.9-10.E, 1.3.9-10.C, 1.3.9-10.H

Anchors: L.F.2.5.3, L.F.2.3.1, L.F.2.2.4

Essential content objectives: At the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- Work together in the moment to improvise characters, dialogue, and situations
- Portray and hone a character based on physical, vocal, and emotional choices
- Analyze and prepare a brief performance based on a given dramatic text

Core activities: Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Group team-building exercises
- Improvisation activities: tableau, sound collage, “games” designed to build confidence with improv, role work using a pretext (group, individual)
- Monologue selection (or creation) and rehearsal process

Extensions:

- Whole-class process drama with teacher in role
- Writing your own short monologue based on a pretext or source text

Remediation:

- Supported improvisation by teacher/ fellow students
- Choice of duo (small group scene) vs. solo work in the monologue project
- Extra rehearsal for monologue before/ after school

Instructional methods:

- Participatory group activities
- Participatory solo or group rehearsals and mini-performances with whole-class critique
- Readings and discussion

Materials and resources:

- *The Theatre Experience* Ch.1: The Audience
- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 4: Acting
- Excerpts from Stanislavski’s *An Actor Prepares* and other source acting texts
- Monologues and pretexts for use as performance material in class, as chosen by the teacher for the particular group

Assessment:

- Actor’s journal
- Readings and associated homework
- Participation observation
- Rubric for final monologue project

Curriculum Scope & Sequence

Planned Course: Introduction to Theatre

Unit 2: Understanding Dramatic Literature

Time frame: 5 weeks

State standards: 1.3.9-10.E, 1.3.9-10.C, 1.3.9-10.H, 1.3.9-10.A, C and K, 1.3.9-10.H

Anchors: L.F.2.5.3, L.F.2.3.1, L.F.2.2.4, L. F. 2.4.1, L.F.1.3.1 and 2

Essential content objectives: At the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- Read and analyze a dramatic text in terms of character, plot structure, and conflict
- Draft and revise an original dramatic scene
- Rehearse and perform a given scene from an existing dramatic text, building upon acting techniques introduced in Unit 1 as well as play analysis techniques introduced in Unit 2

Core activities: Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Reading, writing, and discussion about textbook chapters regarding dramatic structure and analysis
- Reading, writing, and discussion about a chosen play script regarding dramatic structure and elements
- Scene writing project: Drafting, sharing, and editing a short scene in dramatic form, based on above play script, or monologue or pretexts from Unit 1
- Scene acting project: Reading, notating, and rehearsal of a scene from the chosen play script above or from students' own scene writing projects
- Viewing and critiquing a play in the community (field trip)

Extensions:

- Drama "book report" project: reading, analyzing, and writing about a chosen play script independently

Remediation:

- Review handouts, study guides, and slide presentations on terms associated with dramatic literature
- Extra help with rehearsing scene acting projects, before/ after school
- Extra help with writing and/or editing scene writing projects, before/ after school

Instructional methods:

- Presentation and direct instruction of terms/ concepts (elements of dramatic lit)
- Reading, discussion, and written analysis of a given dramatic text
- Sharing, discussing, and critiquing student scene writing
- Participatory group rehearsals and mini-performances with whole-class critique

Materials and resources:

- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 6: Creating the World of the Play
- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 7: Dramatic Structure and Dramatic Characters
- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 8: (If time permits) Theatrical Genres
- *The Theatre Goers' Guide* (online resource from McGraw Hill)
- Play script for use as analysis & performance material in class, as chosen by the teacher for the particular group

Assessment:

- Readings and associated homework
- Test: Elements of drama terminology
- Rubric for scene writing project
- Rubric for scene acting project
- Rubric for play critique (field trip)

Curriculum Scope & Sequence

Planned Course: Introduction to Theatre

Unit 3: Design and directing

Time frame: 5 weeks

State standards: 1.3.9-10.E, 1.3.9-10.C, 1.3.9-10.H, 1.3.9-10.A

Anchors: L.F.2.5.3, L.F.2.3.1, L.F.2.2.4, L.F.2.1.1

Essential content objectives: At the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- Describe and explain the roles of the various designers and technical professionals in the theatre
- Sample the tasks of one of these designers via a design project
- Describe and explain the role of the director and will assume the mantle of the director by directing a partner in a short monologue task, molding and prompting his/her choices in terms of voice, physicality, and emotion

Core activities: Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Reading, writing, and discussion about textbook chapters regarding design and directing
- Experiencing lessons from guest instructors about their areas of technical theatre via hands-on tours of the theatre, question and answer, etc
- Design project: Students will design one element of a chosen dramatic text from thus far in the year and will submit and present visual evidence (model, samples, etc) of their design choices
- Directing monologues: Each student will choose a monologue for a partner, notate the monologue, and then direct a partner in a series of mock rehearsals

Extensions:

- Interested students could continue with the role of director or designer in the upcoming culminating project
- View and critique a local production on your own, writing about directing or design elements

Remediation:

- Review handouts, study guides, and slide presentations on the tasks and perspectives of the designers and director
- Extra help with design projects, before/ after school
- Extra help with directing projects, before/ after school

Instructional methods:

- Presentation and direct instruction of terms/ concepts (roles and tasks of designers, techniques of directors)
- Hands-on design work by making design choices for one's chosen text and technical role (design project)
- Participatory group rehearsals (directing project) and mini-performances with whole-class critique

Materials and resources:

- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 3: Theatre Spaces
- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 9, 10, 11: Scenery, Stage Costumes, Lighting & Sound
- *The Theatre Experience* Ch. 5: The Director and the Producer
- Excerpts from Ball's *A Sense of Direction* and other source directing texts
- Monologues for use as performance material in class, as chosen by the teacher for the particular group
- Art materials used to create design projects (scene, costume, etc), as needed

Assessment:

- Readings and associated homework
- Rubric for design project
- Rubric for directing project

Curriculum Scope & Sequence

Planned Course: Introduction to Theatre

Unit 4: Culminating Project

Time frame: 4 weeks

State standards: 1.3.9-10.E, 1.3.9-10.C, 1.3.9-10.H

Anchors: L.F.2.5.3, L.F.2.3.1, L.F.2.2.4

Essential content objectives: At the end of the unit, students will be able to:

- Rehearse and present a brief performance based on a given dramatic text
- Make directing and design choices that correspond with a chosen dramatic text
- Portray and hone a character based on physical, vocal, and emotional choices
- Present their scenes for a live audience and then evaluate the effectiveness of their performance

Core activities: Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Select desired tasks for final presentation (actor, director, designer) and work as a class to select performance text(s)
- Create and undertake a rehearsal plan, rehearsing and refining the given scene(s) and responding to constructive critique from classmates/ instructor.
- Self-evaluation as well as whole-class evaluation (discussion) of the rehearsal process and the final product

Extensions:

- A student volunteer might serve as the playwright for one or more final presentation scenes.
- A student volunteer might serve, in addition to his/her assigned responsibilities, in a technical capacity should any lighting or sound adjustments be needed.

Remediation:

- Extra help/ rehearsal time with any aspects of scene presentations, before/ after school

Instructional methods:

- Participatory group rehearsals with whole-class critique
- Hands-on design work by making design choices for one's chosen text
- Hands-on directing work by reading and marking the script and aiding student actors in making choices during rehearsals

Materials and resources:

- Any chapters/ handouts/ supplements from previous units, based on a student's chosen task for the final project (actor, director, designer, etc)
- The script of the scene(s) as well as any accompanying notes created by the student
- Art materials used to create design projects (scene, costume, etc), as needed

Assessment:

- Actor's journal
- Participation observation
- Rubric for final scene presentation (different rubrics for actors, directors, designers)
- Self-evaluation paper about final scene presentation