



8th Grade Theater Arts Curriculum

Board Approved: 3/20/2025

Course Information

Middle School Semester course

Course Description:

This course is crafted to elevate students' self-assurance and proficiency in presenting themselves with impact and authenticity before an audience. It fosters an environment where students can articulate their unique perspectives, and make meaningful connections with others and the broader world. The curriculum integrates live and recorded materials tailored for both individual and collaborative projects, encompassing presentations, advanced improvisation, theatrical games, strategic communication, media analysis, and technical theatre. Students will cultivate advanced critical and creative thinking skills, with techniques honed in Theatre Arts proving invaluable across a spectrum of core academic disciplines.

Transfer Goals:

- Students will be able to confidently express themselves and convey messages clearly through verbal and non-verbal means, both on and off the stage.
- Students will understand the importance of working together, respecting diverse perspectives, and contributing positively to a group project, both in theater productions and other collaborative endeavors.
- Students will develop the ability to think creatively and critically to overcome challenges, whether in creating a character, developing a plot, or addressing real-life situations.
- Students will gain the ability to understand and portray different characters and perspectives, fostering empathy and the ability to relate to others in various social contexts.
- Students will build self-confidence and courage both in performing and in everyday life, learning that mistakes are a valuable part of the learning process.

Curriculum Standards: [MLS Fine Arts Theater Standards](#)

Curriculum Resource(s): Dramanotebook.com, Theatrefolk.com Drama Teacher Academy, Broadwayhd.com, *Sixty Comedy Duet Scenes For Teens: Real-Life Situations for Laughter* by Laurie Allen, *62 Comedy Duet Scenes for Teens: More Real-Life Situations For Laughter* by Laurie Allen, *101 Monologues for Middle School Actors* by Rebecca Young

**priority standards indicated in bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 1

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhsdschools.org

Unit 1: Explore

Timeframe: 30 Days

Unit Description: This unit is crafted to deepen students' investigation into their physical and vocal capacities, script writing, and working collaboratively. It will integrate a variety of exercises and preparatory activities designed to amplify their ability to extend their creative limits.

Enduring Understandings:

- Actors' choices in how they portray characters, use their voices, move, and interact with others can change how the story is understood and felt by the audience.
- The essential building blocks for a theatrical performance (actors, directors, technical theatre elements, and audience) work together to create a compelling performance that connects with the audience.
- Teamwork and cooperation improve problem-solving skills, increase motivation and engagement, and encourage community in ensembles.
- The essential elements for creating an original script (characters, setting, stage directions, and story structure) must work together to tell a cohesive story.

Essential Questions:

- How do actor's choices influence what we see onstage?
- How are the necessary building blocks of theatre used in a performance?
- How is teamwork and cooperation relevant to a successful performance?
- How are story elements used in the creation of an original script?

Unit 1 Standards

| STANDARD CODE | STUDENTS WILL KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND BE ABLE TO: |
|---------------|---|
| TH:Cr1A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can research and evaluate technical design based on anticipated performance challenges. |
| TH:Cr2A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can research and analyze a dramatic work. |
| TH:Pr5A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can vocally, physically, and mentally prepare for a performance through acting exercises and warm-up |
| TH:Pr4A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can present a story by exploring different pacing techniques. |
| TH:Cr1A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can demonstrate knowledge of stage areas and body positions and provide solutions to staging problems to enhance performance. |
| TH:Cn11A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can compare and contrast different forms of theatre. • I can use theatre to examine different cultural issues. |

**priority standards indicated in bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 2

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhsdschools.org

TH:Cn11B.8a

- I can use a variety of research methods to compare another production of the same work.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 3

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhdschools.org

Unit 2: Express

Timeframe: 30 Days

Unit Description: This expressive unit will include exploring choices for staging a production. Topics include script analysis, writing of scripts, character development, and application of technical production elements. Through focused rehearsals, students will refine their acting skills. By engaging in peer feedback and self-evaluation, students will gain insights into their strengths and areas for improvement, setting goals to enhance their future performances and production work.

Enduring Understandings:

- Performance elements such as dialogue, body language, and backstory create characters that are engaging, understandable, and meaningful to the audience.
- Rehearsals help refine acting skills, including line delivery, timing, and emotional expression. Actors bring their unique perspective to a role, shaping the character's personality, emotions, and motivations.
- Aspects such as lighting, sound, set design, and special effects can significantly affect how actors deliver their performances and how they are perceived by the audience.
- Peer feedback offers different viewpoints and constructive criticism that can highlight blind spots, helping you refine your skills and make more informed improvements.
- Self-evaluation fosters understanding of strengths and areas needing improvement in order to set goals for future performance.

Essential Questions:

- How can actors use performance elements to make their characters more believable?
- How can an actor use the rehearsal process to enhance their performance?
- How can we utilize technical elements to elevate storytelling?
- How can a performance be constructively evaluated?
- In what ways can self-evaluation lead to better performance and technical design?

Unit 2 Standards

| STANDARD CODE | STUDENTS WILL KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND BE ABLE TO: |
|---------------|---|
| TH:Cr3A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can develop and portray a character using various physical and vocal traits in a drama/theatre work. |
| TH:Pr5A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can create a design suitable for a specific drama/theatre production using a variety of technical elements. |
| TH:Pr6A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use the script, adaptation, editing, dialogue, and blocking to rehearse, prepare and present a performance for an audience. |
| TH:Cr1A.8c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can develop a character by thinking about their inner thoughts and objectives. |
| TH:Cr3A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze and revise a scripted work. |

**priority standards indicated in bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 4

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhsdschools.org

| | |
|------------|---|
| TH:Cr3A.8c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can refine a technical design based on feedback from the rehearsal process. |
| TH:Pr4A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can create character objectives to overcome obstacles in a scene. |
| TH:Pr5A.8c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette. |
| TH:Re9A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can constructively critique a performance. |

priority standards indicated in **bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 5

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhdschools.org

Unit 3: Connect

Timeframe: 30 Days

Unit Description: This unit will build connections between the performer and the audience. Topics will include script analysis, musical theatre, performance critique, self-reflection, cultural connections, and historical context. Students will explore how personal experiences, including cultural heritage and individual values, influence their interpretation of characters and themes in theatre. Through analyzing and articulating the reasons behind these artistic choices, students will deepen their appreciation of how these elements impact a theatrical work and its overall effectiveness.

Enduring Understandings:

- Personal experiences, such as cultural heritage, past events, and individual values, shape our responses to theatre by affecting how we interpret characters and themes.
- Ensures historical accuracy and relevance by aligning design elements with the materials, technologies, and cultural norms of the time period, enhancing authenticity and effectiveness.
- Artistic choices, (such as costume, set design, and lighting) help tell the story and set the mood, making the dramatic work more engaging and meaningful.
- Analyzing and articulating the reasons behind artistic choices deepens one's appreciation of a production's impact.

Essential Questions:

- How do your personal experiences affect how you respond to theatre?
- How can researching a specific time period help you create a more accurate and effective technical design for a project or performance?
- How do the artistic choices in a dramatic work influence its overall impact and effectiveness?
- How can understanding and explaining the reasons behind artistic choices enhance the overall impact of a production?

Unit 3 Standards

| STANDARD CODE | STUDENTS WILL KNOW, UNDERSTAND, AND BE ABLE TO: |
|---------------|---|
| TH:Cn11B.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can research a time period to develop a technical design for a scripted work. |
| TH:Re7A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can evaluate the artistic choices made in a dramatic work. |
| TH:Re8A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify and express the reasoning behind artistic choices in a production. |
| TH:Cr2A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can work collaboratively in a group. |
| TH:Re8A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze how cultural perspectives influence how one views a dramatic work. |
| TH:Re8A.8c | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can apply personal experiences to evaluate a dramatic work. |
| TH:Re9A.8b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can evaluate the production elements of a dramatic work. |

**priority standards indicated in bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 6

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhsdschools.org

| | |
|-------------|--|
| TH:Re9A.8c | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● I can assess the cultural impact of a dramatic work on an audience. |
| TH:Cn10A.8a | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● I can compare various character perspectives of an issue in a dramatic work. |

priority standards indicated in **bold*

8th Grade Theater Arts Page 7

BOE Approved: 03/20/2025

Patrons with questions about the course should contact curriculum@fhdschools.org