Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow

Course Description

In this course, students will be introduced to basic performance techniques. Improvisation, pantomime, public speaking, acting, theatre terminology, theatrical convention, blocking, and character interpretation are all topics that will be explored by students. The word drama comes from an ancient Greek word meaning "to do" or "to act." Students selecting this course should be prepared *to do* by acting, speaking, creating, and moving. *Doing* is what drama and theatre is all about. All students will perform in an evening showcase at the end of the semester.

Standards for Artistic Practice

These practices describe the processes and skills students learn as practitioners throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years in order to achieve artistic literacy.

⇒ *Creating art with artistic intent.*

⇒ *Presenting, performing, or producing artistic works to evoke, express, or communicate.*

⇒ *Responding to art through intellect and emotion.*

⇒ *Connecting the arts to the self, society, history, culture, and other disciplines and bodies of knowledge.*

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 20

Content Standards for a Foundations Theatre Course

Creating:

1. Create theatrical ideas (e.g. plot, setting, character) that reflect characteristics of different artistic movements.

2. Create an outline for an original scene or short play, including details such as costumes or scenery.

3. Refine and revise character dialogue, stage directions, and sensory details of imagined worlds.

Presenting:

4. Identify historical sources that explain drama/theatre terminology and conventions.

5. Identify theatrical staging conventions in a scripted theatrical work.

6. Describe how decisions about a performance are connected to what the student wants to express, evoke, or communicate.

Responding:

7. Analyze the style of a playwright and how it manifests in a given theatrical work.

8. Identify theatrical decisions from a work that connect it to a specific genre or style.

9. Compare and contrast different rubrics or criteria for evaluating theatrical presentations.

Connecting:

10. Describe what influenced changes in one's own dramatic style and preferences in theatre.

11. Identify the connections between historical and cultural contexts and defining stylistic elements of theatrical movements (e.g. how the existential movement and absurdist theatre are connected).

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 55

Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide		Course: Acting I
Units	**Essential Questions**	**Key Activities May Include...**
Introduction (Actor Warm-Ups)	• How can we feel comfortable when asked to step out of our comfort zone? • How can we create trust amongst our classroom community? • What behaviors and expectations will be necessary to reach out goals in this class?	• Introductory games and activities • Actor warm-ups for voice, body, and mind • Building classroom community • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment
1. Pantomime (Uses of Voice, Body, and Movement)	• How can we tell a story without relying on words and texts?	• Introduction to levels, gesture, and facial expression • Acting games, including Statues, Moving Machines, Walking Through a Substances, Freeze, Box/Bag/Magic Hat, Tableau and Postcards, Competitive Action, and Charades • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment
2. Improvisation (Creating Believable Character)	• Why are there "rules" for improv comedy? • How do improv skills help the acting process? • What makes an actor in a role believable to an audience?	• Introduction to improv comedy • Practice of improv rules (yes and, turn off your editor, listen, etc.) • Viola Spolin-style improv games and activities, including Yes Let's, What Are You Doing?, Dr. Know-It-All, Yes and Stories, Invention Convention, Late to Work, Clue, Party Quirks, Hitchhiker, Freeze, Pillars, Gibberish Ding, Gibberish Translator, and Super Hero • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment
3. Acting in the Real World (Public Speaking)	• Where, off the stage, can we use acting skills? • How do we differentiate between effective and ineffective public speaking?	• Introduction to public speaking • Job interview improv and scenes, infomercial scenes (melodrama), person/place/thing news broadcasts, informative speech writing, marking scripts, body language analysis, and informative speech performance • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment

Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide		Course: Acting I
Units	**Essential Questions**	**Key Activities May Include...**
4. Theatrical Terms and Scene Work (Playwriting)	• What is the language of theatre, and how does it help actors and directors communicate? • How does subtext change a performance? • What is the relationship between an actor and a director? • What role does blocking play in telling a story?	• Introduction to theatre terms (stage directions, exits, entrances, crossing, etc.) • Acting games, including Hit the Deck, Trust Walk/Theatre Term Obstacle Course • The Neutral Scene • Creation of props, costumes, and sets • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment
5. Monologues (Goals, Obstacles, and Tactics)	• How are monologues classified? • How does an actor's overall goal effect the actions or tactics they use on stage? • What are the best ways to memorize text? • What skills have I learned that can help me in my monologue performance?	• Introduction to monologues • Memorization workshop • Goal obstacle tactic scenes • Monologue writing: stock photo character development • Monologue performance for class • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment
6. Elements of Drama (Storytelling)	• What makes storytelling "good" or "bad"?	• Introduction to elements of drama • Fractured fairytale scenes • Fractured fairytale performance for class • Classroom feedback • Self-assessment • Final evening showcase

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Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide Overview

Curriculum Guide

Curriculum guides are public documents aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks. They outline and highlight the set of standards that students will learn within certain disciplines at each grade level. Curriculum guides are intended for teachers, parents, and the wide school community to provide an overview of the course of study for

Curriculum Map

Curriculum maps are internal documents utilized as planning tools for teachers and administrators. Curriculum maps keep a focus on the end-of-year standards and chart a course for teaching and learning over the year. They are typically organized by month and/or marking period and may include: genres/topics or units of study, methods of assessment, and major content resources. Maps are fluid documents that are revised and revisited regularly to ensure stu-

Content Standards

The standards used as the foundation of our curriculum come directly from the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework. State standards may be viewed here: http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/

Standards for Artistic Practice

The standards for artistic practice describe the processes and skills students learn as practitioners throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years in order to achieve artistic literacy. Based on the processes presented in the 2014 *National Core Arts Standards*, these practices are grouped into four clusters that focus on creating, presenting/performing, responding, and connecting across the five arts disciplines (dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts)."
- *MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019*, p.20

Essential Questions

Essential questions are questions that are not answerable with an easy answer or a simple instruction. The purpose of essential questions is to provide opportunities for inquiry into learning and act as an umbrella to anchor the unit/lesson.

Key Activities

Key activities are examples of the instructional contexts and structures for learning that students and teachers *might* be engaged in during arts instruction. Those listed represent a sampling and the list is in no way exhaustive. The list is not intended to mandate or require certain types of instruction at any given time, merely to suggest best practices.