

MORENO VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL THEATRE ARTS CURRICULUM

Course Title: Theatre Arts Course Number: 1112

Department: Fine Arts ADS Number: 1112

Prerequisites: None

Length of Course: Two Semesters Credit/PRI Area: .5 credits per semester Grade Level(s): 9-12

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course seeks to expose students to the theatre arts by teaching them how to see, express, and connect as theatre artists themselves. They will be exposed to text analysis techniques, character development, and philosophy to help them “see” as theatre artists. They will do vocal, physical, and emotional exercises to help them learn to “express” themselves as theatre artists. Finally, they will have projects that require them to relate to each other as an ensemble, the director, other collaborative artists, and to the audience in order to “connect” themselves as artists to other human beings.

SYLLABUS

1. Units of Study:

- Basic Principles
 - A. Vocal production: breath, body alignment, projection, diction, and rate
 - B. Physical Awareness: neutral body position, 3 leads (head, heart, hips), spatial/kinesthetic awareness
 - C. Text Analysis: beat work, “W” questions, Shakespeare/Iambic pentameter and prose
- Production
 - A. Auditions: prepared auditions, cold readings, head shot and resume
 - B. Early rehearsals: ensemble work, character analysis, textual/improv work
 - C. Later rehearsals: blocking, memorization, deeper ensemble/character work
 - D. Performance: technical properties, audience relationship, live ensemble work
- Original Works
 - A. Project Proposal: proposal development, research, proposal revision
 - B. Project Rehearsal/Development: Application of research, director/peer feedback, performance revision
 - C. Performance: technical properties, audience relationship, stage presence
- Outreach
 - A. Project development: age group target, type of workshop, relationship

2. Skills:

- Seeing: Learn to analyze text, develop characters, and think like a theatre artist
- Expressing: become aware of how to use themselves physically, vocally, and emotionally
- Connecting: Learn how to relate to their character, the audience, to the director, other artists collaborators, and to other actors in an ensemble

STRATEGIES:

Didactic: Through modeling, games, repetition, memorization, and research students will be exposed to the technical knowledge and vocabulary of the theatre arts.

Intellectual Coaching: Through text analysis, improvisation, open questioning, rehearsal feedback, and acting exercises students will be asked to “discover” the answer for themselves.

Seminar: Students will be asked to look at text as a theatre artist, and will be exposed to art philosophers and practitioners.

ASSESSMENTS:

Performance: In a live performance students will be graded on their vocalization (rate, projection, and diction), memorization, physicality (awareness of space and appropriateness of character), not breaking character, and application of Director’s Notes.

Exams: Given mid-term and semester to check comprehension of the material covered.

Student Self-Assessment: After watching a recorded version of their performance, students will fill out a personal performance evaluation and will also discuss each category as a group.

Text Assignments: Students will turn in a notebook that compiles several text assignments that reflect the students’ understanding of the material

Participation: Students must show that they understand that their presence physically, emotionally, and mentally affects the entire group

Observation: The teacher will observe the individual responses and behaviors of students to help determine their performance.

SUGGESTED TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

A Practical Handbook for the Actor by Melissa Bruder, Lee Michael Coh, Madeleine Olnek, Nathaniel Pollack, Robert Previto, and Scott Zigler. New York: Random House, Inc., 1986.

The Actor and His Text by Cicely Berry. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1987.

Improvisation by John Hodgson and Ernest Richards. New York: Wheatland Corp., 1974.

Masters of the Stage: British Acting Teachers Talk About Their Craft by Eva Mekler. New York: Wheatland Corp., 1989.

The Open Door by Peter Brook. New York: Theatre Communication Group, Inc., 1995.

Respect for Acting by Uta Hagen. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1973.

The Stanislavski System, Second Revised Edition by Sonia Moore. New York: Viking Penguin Inc., 1984.

Voice and the Actor by Cicely Berry. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1991.

SUGGESTED TITLES/AUTHORS WEB SITES:

www.theatron.org

www.usitt.org

www.actorsequity.org

SEMINAR PIECES:

An Actor Prepares by Konstantine Stanislavsky

The Empty Space by Peter Brook

The Shifting Point by Peter Brook

Poetics by Aristotle

STRAND I: THEATRE**CONTENT STANDARD: LEARN AND DEVELOP THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND TECHNICAL DEMANDS UNIQUE TO DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE/DRAM, AND VISUAL ARTS.**A. BENCHMARK: *Create and analyze the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of characters and sustain these characters in an ensemble.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. As a part of a cast analyze, create and portray characters in a public performance of a full length play. 2. Participate within the range of all students' abilities.	1. Students will perform <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> for the Angle Fire Public on February 17, 18, and 19. 2. Students will audition for and be cast by ability for acting and support roles for <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> .

STRAND I: THEATRE**CONTENT STANDARD: LEARN AND DEVELOP THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND TECHNICAL DEMANDS UNIQUE TO DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE/DRAM, AND VISUAL ARTS.**B. BENCHMARK: *Apply the basic physical and chemical properties of the technical aspects of theatre: (e.g. light, color, electricity, paint, make up).*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Apply learned technical knowledge and skills to collaboratively and safely create functional scenery, properties, lighting and sound.	Students will help create props and make-up for the production of <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> . Students will also help set up the set and run the lights for the production.

STRAND I: THEATRE**CONTENT STANDARD: LEARN AND DEVELOP THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND TECHNICAL DEMANDS UNIQUE TO DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE/DRAM, AND VISUAL ARTS.**

BENCHMARK:

- C. *Create and implement production schedules, management plans, and promotional ideas.*
D. *Conduct auditions, cast actors, direct scenes, and manage production meetings.*
E. *Demonstrate artistic discipline to achieve an ensemble.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	E. 1. Demonstrate the ability to listen to, react to, and play off of other actors in rehearsal and in performance.	<p>C. The assigned student stage manager will help record blocking, arrange schedules, disperse information, prepare a production book, and run the show for <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i>. Students will also help create and post flyers and programs.</p> <p>D. Students will participate and observe: auditions, casting of actors, scene direction, and production meetings.</p> <p>E. Seminar topic. Students read pages 3-5 from Sonia Moore's <i>The Stanislavsky System</i>, and seminar the statement, "even very talented actors should be sacrificed if they could not contribute to the harmonious atmosphere of the group."</p> <p>1. Acting is not so much acting, as re-acting. Students are coached during the rehearsal process to listen to the other characters' lines and not simply wait for their turn.</p> <p>2. Students demonstrate helping each other out on stage, and not letting an actor "die" on stage. Students are shown and then demonstrate state "awareness" of other characters.</p>

STRAND II: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: USE DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE/DREAM, AND VISUAL ARTS TO EXPRESS IDEAS.

A. BENCHMARK: *Construct and refine dramatic scripts that express specific themes and emotions.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Write short theatre, film, television, or electronic media scripts in a variety of new or traditional forms making decisions about selling the plot, characters, character motivation, and dramatic action.	<p>1. Students will develop their own performance piece, solo or with others, that will be performed at the MVHS Arts' Night.</p> <p>2. Students will help refine and cut the script of <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i>.</p>

STRAND II: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: USE DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE/DREAM, AND VISUAL ARTS TO EXPRESS IDEAS.

B. BENCHMARK: *Develop technical designs that use visual and aural elements to enhance dramatic scripts.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
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GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	No performance standards provided.	The art department will collaborate with the drama production by creating a backdrop. Students will discuss the difference between scenic properties required for a play and those required for a “straight” painting. Drama students will be able to list the needs of the play relative to the backdrop.

STRAND III: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: INTEGRATE UNDERSTANDING OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS BY SEEKING CONNECTIONS AND PARALLELS AMONG ARTS DISCIPLINES AS WELL AS ALL OTHER CONTENT AREAS.

A. BENCHMARK: *Determine how the non-dramatic art forms are modified to enhance theatrical production.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Develop a performance piece incorporating several arts media (music, painting, and dance).	1. Students will perform an original piece of their creation incorporating a musical selection to be performed live by the MVHS band, pre-recorded, or live by a musician of their choice.

STRAND III: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: INTEGRATE UNDERSTANDING OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS BY SEEKING CONNECTIONS AND PARALLELS AMONG ARTS DISCIPLINES AS WELL AS ALL OTHER CONTENT AREAS.

B. BENCHMARK: *Describe the basic nature, materials, elements, and means of communicating in the various art forms.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	No performance standards provided.	Students must research their musical selection for their original performance creation. They must present and describe to their classmates their findings about the artist, genre, medium, and how this will be incorporated into their performance.

STRAND III: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: INTEGRATE UNDERSTANDING OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS BY SEEKING CONNECTIONS AND PARALLELS AMONG ARTS DISCIPLINES AS WELL AS ALL OTHER CONTENT AREAS.

C. BENCHMARK: *Illustrate the integration of several arts media.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. In a theatrical performance show how a non-dramatic art form (i.e., music) could be used to enhance the expression of a particular emotion inherent in the script or performance.	1. There will be a live violinist play between each act and during Act III of <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> in order to link the Acts together, enhance, the romantic/tragic quality of the play, and to engage the audience's senses.

STRAND IV: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMICS OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

A. BENCHMARK: *Justify selection of texts, interpretation of texts, and artistic choices for production;*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Develop set, costume, properties, lighting, sound or make-up designs that are suitable to a production concept.	1. The lighting design for <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> will use the spotlight to point to the audience moments of importance in the play through timing, actor poses, and color choices.

STRAND IV: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMICS OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

B. BENCHMARK: *Explain the roles and interrelated responsibilities of the various personnel involved in theatrical production; and*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Discuss the relationships and responsibilities of all personnel in the production staff hierarchy.	1. As part of didactic instruction, students will be given a flow chart of theatrical production hierarchy and definitions that explain each position. Students will be tested on this information on a final exam.

STRAND IV: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: UNDERSTAND THE DYNAMICS OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

C. BENCHMARK: *Collaborate with designers, directors, and develop a unified production concept.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	No performance standards provided.	Fight Director and New Mexico State University professor, Tim Pinnow, will come and teach the students about stage combat and will give them their fight choreography for <i>Cyrano de Bergerac</i> .

STRAND V: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: OBSERVE, DISCUSS, ANALYZE AND MAKE CRITICAL JUDGMENTS ABOUT ARTISTIC WORKS.

A. BENCHMARK: *Articulate and justify personal criteria for critiquing dramatic texts and events.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defend selection of a particular text, interpretations of said text and artistic choices for producing it. 2. Articulate personal evaluation of dramatic work comparing perceived artistic intent with production achievement. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will select a part of the play that they think the audience will have difficulty understanding. Students will then suggest changes in acting, stage positions, or wording which may clarify this for the audience. 2. Students will analyze their character by comparing their personal interpretation of the character with the need for the character in the play.

STRAND V: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: OBSERVE, DISCUSS, ANALYZE AND MAKE CRITICAL JUDGMENTS ABOUT ARTISTIC WORKS.

B. BENCHMARK: *Analyze and critique any dramatic performance comparing perceived artistic intent with final production achievement.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Analyze and evaluate others' critical comments about personal work and demonstrate an ability to decide and explain which points are most appropriate to further development of the work.	1. As a post-production assessment, students will watch their recorded performance of their MVHS Arts' Night original performance and evaluate if they communicated what they intended to the audience. Students will fill out an individual assessment and also discuss their findings as a group.

STRAND VI: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: SHOW INCREASED AWARENESS OF DIVERSE PEOPLES AND CULTURES THROUGH VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS.

A. BENCHMARK: *Analyze and compare dramatic texts and artists from various cultures and periods of history.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Choose a particular theme or idea and compare how it is developed or treated in dramas from a variety of cultures.	In their elementary outreach project, students must decide upon one particular theme they want to explore with younger students. They must bring in different works that represent this theme but will apply to the specific age group that they have been assigned.

STRAND VI: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: SHOW INCREASED AWARENESS OF DIVERSE PEOPLES AND CULTURES THROUGH VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS.

B. BENCHMARK: *Construct social meaning from productions representing a variety of cultures and historical periods, and relate to current issues.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Through writing or discussion tell how their own cultural experiences have affected a performance in a play.	1. Students will write a paper exploring similarities and differences between their character and the play's character they are represents. They should consider: socio-economic class, thinking patterns, actions and reactions to other characters, relationships, physicality.

STRAND VII: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOW TECHNOLOGY AND INVENTION HAVE HISTORICALLY INFLUENCED ARTISTS AND OFFERED NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR EXPRESSION.

A. BENCHMARK: *Explore how scientific and technological advances have impacted technical theatre development (set/scenery, costumes, lighting, properties, sound, and makeup).*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Choose playwrights from various cultures during a specific historical period and compare their lives, works, and how they influenced the society in which they lived.	1. Seminar: Students will seminar on an excerpt from Peter Brook's <i>The Open Door</i> , p. 30-37. The seminar will be based on "In the theatre, the imagination fills he space, whereas the cinema screen represents the whole, demanding that everything in the frame be linked in a logically coherent manner...If one finds oneself in a realistic set...then cinema can do it better!...Then theatre, by being theatrical, comes to life."

STRAND VII: THEATRE
CONTENT STANDARD: DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HOW TECHNOLOGY AND INVENTION HAVE HISTORICALLY INFLUENCED ARTISTS AND OFFERED NEW POSSIBILITIES FOR EXPRESSION.

BENCHMARKS:

- B. *Examine the differences in styles of performing for live audiences and performing for TV, film, or video.*
- C. *Explain how scientific and technological advances have impacted all aspects of theatre.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	B. 1. Describe how computers have impacted technical design for the live theatre. (No performance standard for C provided.)	B and C. Students will compare two stage productions: an early filmed production with a later filmed production and look at the technical design differences. Students should analyze where and when computers might have been involved in these changes.

STRAND VIII: THEATRE**CONTENT STANDARD: CONTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITIES BY SHARING EXPERTISE IN DANCE, MUSIC, THEATRE/DRAMA AND VISUAL ARTS AND BY PARTICIPATING IN THE ACTIVITIES OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS.**

- A. BENCHMARK: *Explore the art of theatre through guest speakers, field trips, and participation in school, community, and professional theatre activities.*

GRADE	PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	ILLUSTRATIONS
9-12	1. Explain the knowledge, skills, and discipline needed to pursue careers and vocational opportunities in theatre, film, television, and electronic media.	1. Students helped coordinate, publicize, read, and perform at the First Annual North Angel Fire Road Halloween Block Party. 2. Students were given the opportunity to attend the Southwest Theatre and Film Association Annual Conference in Lubbock, Texas. They attended workshops on all aspects of theatre and film, most of which were focused on college and professional development. Seniors were also eligible to audition for scholarships and admission to attending colleges/universities.