

The study of theater arts is a collaborative, integrated, lifetime endeavor. Drama is an active, living, universal teaching tool which compels students to take a participatory role in developing life skills while engaging in more effective dialogue with others. Through the dramatic arts, students become active initiators rather than passive receivers of information and theater serves as universal denominator for making connections between history and technology.

Dramatic arts provide students an immediate picture of the time and of the people in it. Performance engages the individual in recalling past experience to define the present and to build toward the future. It is important for students of theater to recognize their dual roles of being active participants in life as well as being performers who represent life. Ultimately students must not be restricted in developing their potential, but rather, recognize the theater standards as targets which assist in goal setting and in helping to reach personal fulfillment.

THEATER/DRAMATIC ARTS STANDARDS

1. Students will use theater as a means for creative self-expression and interpersonal communication.
2. Students will understand the technical and dramatic aspects used in the production and performance of theater.
3. Students will understand the relationship between theater and history, culture, and society.
4. Students will demonstrate a capacity for critical and sensitive response to various theater experiences.

* All asterisked words and phrases appear in the Glossary at the end of this section.

STANDARD ONE:

Students will use theater as a means for creative self-expression and interpersonal communication.

RATIONALE: *Theater provides the basis for actively joining the intellectual, physical, and vocal tools and talents of the individual. Through theater, students can form personal interpretations of feelings or emotions and use their own creativity to communicate ideas and opinions to others. Creative self-expression builds character, confidence, and individual esteem.*

BENCHMARKS:

K-2 Students will:

1. Explain how people convey meaning through dramatization.

2. Share ideas or emotions through dialogue in social pretend play*.
3. Explore how drama is used in other activities and events.

3-4 Students will:

1. Articulate the meaning of different dramatizations or dramatic performances.
2. Present ideas or emotions through a variety of dramatizations.
3. Explain how drama can be used in other disciplines.

5-8 Students will:

1. Interpret the meaning constructed from various formal and informal productions.
2. Express ideas and emotions through various improvised and scripted scenes*.
3. Create or use dramatic presentations to communicate an understanding of concepts from other disciplines.

9-12 Students will:

1. Analyze and interpret the artistic meaning in various formal or informal productions.
2. Express ideas, feelings, and emotions through personal interpretation, creation, and improvisation.
3. Use dramatic presentations to communicate an understanding of themes and concepts from other disciplines.

STANDARD TWO:

Students will understand the technical and dramatic aspects used in the production and performance of theater.

RATIONALE: *As students develop their abilities as directors and performers, they gain a clearer understanding of the technical* and dramatic aspects* of production and performance. This understanding provides the framework for effective interpretation and performance of ideas, roles, or scripted dialogue. The use of technical and dramatic aspects of theater join music, dance, and visual arts to create a total aesthetic experience.*

BENCHMARKS:

K-2 Students will:

1. Recognize the appropriate set design for various productions.
2. Select various people from the appropriate literature and dramatize their character.

3. Recognize the attributes of characters in drama.

3-4 Students will:

1. Design a set appropriate to the nature of a production.
2. Explore acting techniques or principles of drama.
3. Describe attributes of various characters in drama.

5-8 Students will:

1. Describe the technical aspects* of designing and directing a variety of theatrical productions.
2. Describe various classical* and contemporary* acting techniques and methods.
3. Determine the emotional and social dimensions of characters in various dramatic texts.

9-12 Students will:

1. Analyze the technical aspects of designing and directing a variety of theatrical productions.
2. Demonstrate and explain various classical and contemporary acting techniques and methods.
3. Analyze the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of characters in dramatic texts from various genres and media.

STANDARD THREE:

Students will understand the relationship between theater and history, culture, and society.

RATIONALE: *A meaningful understanding of the relationships among historic, culture, and society and how these are influenced or reflected through theater begins with a strong knowledge base. Students must be familiar with the core of dramatic literature; study the historical, social, and cultural context of various performances and productions; be knowledgeable of the recognized authors, performers, and directors who have contributed to and shaped the dramatic arts.*

BENCHMARKS:

K-2 Students will:

1. Understand that a dramatization can portray an event.
2. Recognize how drama is a part of all cultures.
3. Recognize that people create and perform dramatic arts in a variety of styles.

3-4 Students will:

1. Explain how a dramatization can portray an event in history.
2. Describe how the dramatic arts reflect the customs of various cultures.
3. Describe the contribution of selected artists to various forms and styles of drama.

5-8 Students will:

1. Describe how historical events have shaped the development of dramatic productions and performances.
2. Research how the dramatic arts reflect the customs or traditions of different cultures.
3. Research the influence of recognized writers and performers from various cultures on drama.

9-12 Students will:

1. Analyze the relationship between historical events and the development of theatre.
2. Analyze the role* and evolution of dramatic art forms in reflecting and influencing society in various cultures throughout history.
3. Evaluate the influence of individual artists from various cultures and historical periods.

STANDARD FOUR:

Students will demonstrate a capacity for critical and sensitive response to various theater experiences.

RATIONALE: *Experiencing various forms of dramatic production and performance provides students the opportunity to observe a variety of similarities, differences, and patterns found in theater. Students must think critically and make decisions about the effectiveness and quality of theatrical productions. Students must develop the capacity for critical and sensitive response to performance and become skilled at evaluating aesthetic effort according to predetermined criteria. Evaluation allows the individual to more deeply appreciate the work of others and at the same time envision ways of improving personal effort and performance.*

BENCHMARKS:

K-2 Students will:

1. Recognize the characteristics found in a quality theatre production.
2. Express personal likes and dislikes about various dramatic works.

3. Explain ways to improve personal role playing*.

3-4 Students will:

1. Describe a selected dramatic work according to specific criteria.
2. Explain personal preference for specific dramatic works.
3. Determine ways to improve personal dramatic work.

5-8 Students will:

1. Compare literary content and production of various forms of dramatic works using specific criteria.
2. Support personal preference for various dramatic arts.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of personal dramatic work using specific criteria.

9-12 Students will:

1. Analyze the literary content and production of various forms of dramatic works according to distinct and appropriate criteria.
2. Justify preferences for dramatic works using personal aesthetic criteria*.
3. Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of personal dramatic work using specific criteria.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

THEATER/DRAMATIC ARTS

Aesthetic criteria: Criteria developed about the visual, aural, and oral aspects of the witnessed event, derived from cultural and emotional values and cognitive meaning.

Aesthetic qualities: The emotional values and cognitive meanings derived from interpreting a work of art; the symbolic nature of art.

Aural qualities: Includes pitch, rhythm, dynamics, tempo, expression.

Classical Acting: Acting techniques and methods considered traditional and were significant in earlier times.

Classical Drama: Dramatic form and production techniques considered of significance in earlier times, in any culture or historical period.

Contemporary Acting: Acting techniques and methods which are presently used and are oftentimes impacted by various modern electronic technologies or media forms.

Contemporary Technical aspects: Those aspects which may be influenced by modern science, chemistry, and technologies.

Dramatic media: Includes film, television, electronic media, e.g., virtual reality.

Pretend Play: Children create situations to play and assume roles; children use pretend play as a means of making sense of the world around them, e.g., children learn from their parents, peers, viewing television, etc. and use pretend play as a way to emulate what they see and hear.

Role/Role Playing: The characteristic and expected social behavior of an individual in a given position (such as mother, employer). Role portrayal is likely to be more predictable and one-dimensional than character portrayal.

Role: The impact, influence, or reflective nature of theater in select aspects of a culture, e.g., occupations, politics, societal trends, etc.

Scripted Scenes: Scenes which have written dialogue; scenes which allow very limited alteration of the dialogue.

Technical aspects of theatre production: Those aspects of theatre pertaining to production, set design, stage use, etc.

Visual elements: Includes line, texture, color, space.

Visual principles: Includes repetition, balance, emphasis, contrast, unity.