

8th Grade Theatre Arts Syllabus

Spring 2021

Mint Hill Middle School

Instructor: Melanie Setzer

Course Overview: This semester-long course will explore basic aspects of acting, theatrical design, technical skills, and theatre history. Students will explore creative play, vocal training, movement, stage basics, improvisation, script analysis and performance, and playwriting.

Grading Breakdown:

35% **Informal:** Class Exercises and Participation, Daily Doubles, Written Classwork, Workshops

65% **Formal:** Performances, Projects, Written Tests/Quizzes/Midterm

Class Participation: Participation in this setting means actively contributing in synchronous live classes. Participation includes asking relevant questions, contributing to class discussion and answering teacher questions, working in small breakout room groups, volunteering for scenes and class demonstrations, and practicing good digital audience etiquette by giving and receiving constructive criticism.

Digital Drama Notebook: Each class, students will be required to contribute to their digital notebook: at the beginning of class to answer a warm-up question and again at the end to answer a reflection question. They will also collect notes and record other feedback in this document. The Digital Drama Notebook will be graded at least once per quarter.

Workshops: Workshopping allows students to give a “rough draft” of their performance piece. Students will perform their work and receive constructive feedback from the class and the instructor. Workshopping is graded based on two elements, each worth 50 points, performance and giving peer feedback, for a total 100 point informal grade.

Performances: Each performance will be graded based on a rubric provided. Performance rubrics will serve to assess students on skills learned in class such as vocal projection, memorization, characterization, etc.

Written Quizzes and Midterm: These formal assessments will be used to test students’ knowledge of basic stagecraft and theatre history. Multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank, short answer, and constructed response questions may be used. Formal assessment of this type will be given on Canvas. Students will be monitored via DyKnow as they take assessments.

Course Outline (subject to change):

Module 1 2 days	Why we do theater, expectations and procedures	Reflections, Introductions, "10 Lessons in Theatre..."
Module 2	Voice Acting - Speeches and Spoken Word	Class exercises, Breath Control Challenge, Tongue Twister Performance, Voice Acting Workshop + Performance
Module 3	Movement and Staging Basics	Stage directions, stage types, blocking basics, Stage Composition Assignment
Module 4	Script Analysis and Characterization	Scene Analyses, Open Scene Workshop, Peer Feedback, and Performance
Module 5	Playwriting and Monologue Performance	Choral Poem, Monologue Analyses, Planning Document/Rough Draft, Final Draft, Performance

Commitment Statements and Classroom Procedures

I will be prepared.

1. **Participation:** Students are asked to come to class ready to participate in all class exercises. EVERYONE participates. This is probably the most important agreement. You don't get to log in, turn your camera off, and check out.
2. **Work Ethic and Memorization:** Students are asked to be prepare work on monologues and scenes to the best of their ability. Memorization is expected and is a part of the performance grade. Good performances cannot happen if a student does not put in the effort to know his/her lines.

I will be respectful.

3. **Practice good audience etiquette** for all formal and informal performances. When people are workshopping or performing (from preparation to the conclusion of their scene or monologue) do not talk, rustle papers, get up, or leave and/or re-enter the room. During formal instruction and performances, students should not leave their seat for ANY reason without permission from the teacher. Good audience etiquette is always part of the performance and participation grade.

I will be responsible.

4. **Assignments and Late Work Policy** - While students may need to spend time memorizing or practicing their performances outside of class, students are given ample time in class to complete written classwork assignments. All written assignments have announced due dates.