

Montague Township School

Curriculum Guide

Drama- Performing Arts Elective

(Middle School: Mixed Grade Levels)

Course Description: In Middle School Drama class, students will learn the basics of acting, improvisation, and collaboration while playing fun games that reinforce these skills. This class is for all personality types- whether super shy or super outgoing. Students will be challenged to move outside of their current comfort zones (in a safe and supportive environment), and use their imaginations. This class will help build confidence, improve communication skills, and allow students to explore their creativity!

Format/Mapping/Sequence: The format in which the curriculum is written follows the parameters of Understanding by Design. Each course curriculum document is written as a series of units containing established goals, enduring understandings, essential questions, and the necessary skills and knowledge a student must attain in a school year. In addition, each document stipulates mentor/anchor texts, required tasks, and assessments. Teachers are expected to design lessons that will meet the requirements stipulated in this document; however, they are provided flexibility in how they choose to meet these demands. As well, the order of the units is a suggestion and a teacher may introduce the units as he/she feels best meets the needs of the class, keeping in mind the scaffolding of skill development suggested.

Pacing: Middle School Drama is an elective course that meets every other day over the course of a trimester, 40-minutes per session, and is currently open to students in grades 5-8. There are 2 student-centered units, each designated to reflect the steps that artists undergo in the process of creating, performing, responding and connecting to works of art (i.e., the artistic processes). Each of the units provides a suggested time frame, taking into consideration the time needed to differentiate for a variety of learners. It is the goal of Montague Township School that all students will have equitable access to a quality, arts education that leads to artistic literacy and fluency in artistic practices as a mechanism for:

- Performing, presenting or producing, as artistically literate individuals, by expressing and realizing creative ideas and implementing essential technical skills and cognitive abilities significant to many aspects of life and work in the 21st century;
- Responding to artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and cognizance of the ability of the arts to address universal themes, including climate change;
- Creating new artistic work reflective of a variety of ethnic, racial, and cultural perspectives; and
- Connecting and evaluating how the arts convey meaning through all arts and non-arts disciplines and contexts of our global society.

Resources: In each unit, both electronic and print resources are provided. It is the intention that teachers will be able to access the curriculum document on the district website as well as be able to add to the resources lists periodically throughout the school year. A valuable site that should be referenced in planning <https://www.nj.gov/education/standards/>

Adopted Resources:

Drama Projects for the Middle School Classroom: A Collection of Theatre Activities for Young Actors.
Rebecca Young, Meriweather Publishing Ltd., 2013.

Additional Resources:

Google Suite

<p>Unit 1</p> <p>Characters- Dramatic Essentials: The opening unit focuses on the fundamental roles of the theatrical process. Students will gain experience as actors, writers, designers, and directors as they pursue the development of a short theatrical production. Beginning with characters, students embody circumstances and wants through vocal and physical choices. Students move into the writing process as they imagine how those circumstances and wants can create conflict in storytelling. Collaborative playmaking also includes time devoted to the study of theatrical design as students make choices about costumes, props, and sets for their plays. The unit culminates with a play festival in which students celebrate the class' work and reflect on the process of dramatic development.</p>	
Timeframe	7 weeks
Subject/Topic	Drama
<p>Desired Results</p>	
Content Area NJSLS:	<p>TH1.4.8.Cr1: Generating and conceptualizing ideas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify, explore, and imagine multiple solutions and strategies in staging problems in a theatrical work. b. Identify, imagine and practice solving multiple design/technical challenges of a performance space in a theatrical work. c. Explore, describe and develop given circumstances of a scripted or improvised character in a theatrical work. <p>TH1.4.8.Cr2: Organizing and developing ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Articulate and apply critical analysis, extensive background knowledge, sociohistorical research, and cultural context related to existing or developing original theatrical work b. Actively contribute ideas and creatively incorporate the ideas of others in existing or original theatrical work demonstrating mutual respect for self and others and their roles sharing leadership and responsibilities in preparing or devising theatre. <p>TH1.4.8.Cr3: Refining and completing products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process by analyzing and refining choices in a devised or scripted theatre performance. b. Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted theatre work. c. Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted theatrical work. <p>TH1.4.8.Pr4: Selecting, analyzing, and interpreting work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Rehearse a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or theatrical performance that assist in the development of stronger character choices. b. Use a variety of technical elements to create a design for a rehearsal or theatre production. <p>TH1.4.8.Pr5: Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.</p>

a. Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of devised or scripted theatre work.
 b. Use various character objectives and tactics in a theatre work to identify the conflict and overcome the obstacle.

TH1.4.8.Pr6: Conveying meaning through art
 a. Perform a rehearsed theatrical work for an audience

Interdisciplinary Connections, Career Readiness/ Life Literacies, and Key Skills Practices/ Computer Science and Design Thinking

✓	Science	✓	Social Science
	Earth and Space	✓	History, Culture, and Perspectives
✓	Life Sciences	✓	Geography, People, and the Environment
	Physical Sciences		Economics, Innovation, and Technology
		✓	Civics, Government, and Human Rights
✓	Technology	✓	Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills
	Computer Science (8.1)		9.1 Personal Financial Literacy
✓	Design Thinking (8.2)	✓	9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation, and Training
		✓	9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills

- Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills Practices**
- Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee.
 - Attend to financial well-being
 - Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.
 - Demonstrate creativity and innovation.
 - Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
 - Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.
 - Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.
 - Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration, and communicate effectively.
 - Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence.
- Computer Science and Design Thinking**
- 8.1.8.DA.3: Identify the appropriate tool to access data based on its file format.
 - 8.2.8.ED.1: Evaluate the function, value, and aesthetics of a technological product or system, from the perspective of the user and the producer. 8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time. ● 8.2.8.EC.1: Explain ethical issues that may arise from the use of new technologies.
Enduring Understandings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Theatre is a product of many skilled artists coming together. Their collaboration is essential to create unity and harmony on stage. ● Character creation includes a writer's dialogue/action and an actor's physical, vocal, and emotional choices. ● Rehearsal and reflection are necessary for actors and other skilled artists to improve their craft.
Essential Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does a play become a play? What are the steps to making a play happen? Who contributes to that process? ● What are the fundamental tools that actors and writers have to create characters? ● Why do performers rehearse? What is the value of reflection in the rehearsal process?
Critical Vocabulary	Creativity, improvisation, monologues, duologues, triologues, scripts
All Students Will Know and Be Able To . . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build trust and establish group norms. ● Make choices to embody truthful choices in performance. ● Analyze the fundamental elements of story structure. ● Use empathy to understand characters' emotional circumstances. ● Develop and resolve conflicts in storytelling. ● Reflect on the individual's role in the process of developing a play. ● Analyze how design elements enhance truth in performance.
Evidence of Student Learning	
Formative Performance Task:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improvisation: participate in group games, and individual improvisation scenario practice in preparation for performance. ● Scene writing: write and perform original scenes created collaboratively in small group ● Monologues: read aloud informal monologues and other public speaking in response to an informal topic in preparation for writing.
Summative Performance Task:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monologue performances: read aloud a monologue to follow specific elements as outlined in the established monologue rubric. ● Theatrical performance: play festival in which students celebrate the class' work and reflect on the process of dramatic development.
Formal Evidence of Learning & Progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rubrics ● Written Responses ● Oral performances ● Presentations
Informal Evidence of Learning & Progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reading Assessments (Oral, etc.) ● Peer Review ● Informal Observations/Dialogues ● Think Alouds ● Quick Writes ● Self-Assessment /Reflection

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Examination of Student Work- peer reviews ● “Would You Rather” responses
Learning Plan	
Required Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Games-intro to classmates and skill-building basic training (Example: charades) ● Blocking Techniques: (Principal of Threes, Power Positions, Cross, Counter Cross, Cheat, Take, Steal and Upstaging) ● Discussion of a script’s basic structure and purpose ● Elements of a Score: (Beats, Vocal Inflection, Emotional Mapping & Blocking) ● The study of a character includes: background, intent, conflict, context, and motivation ● Pre-Production: (Concept, Production Meeting, and Organizational Set-Up) ● Rehearsal Process: (Read-Through, Table Work, Staging, Run-Throughs, Setting, On Set, Dry Tech, Tech and Dress Rehearsals) ● Post-Production: (Performances, Touch-Up rehearsal and Strike)
Required Resources:	<p><i>Drama Projects for the Middle School Classroom: A Collection of Theatre Activities for Young Actors</i> Elements of Drama Sliddeck</p>
Suggested Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Socratic Seminar ● Theater games ● Informal speech/ monologue performances
Suggested Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Story Spine http://improvcyclopedia.org/games/Story_Spine.html
Strategies for Differentiation:	<p>Accommodations for Students in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special Education ● ELL ● RTI ● Gifted and Talented ● 504 <p>Accommodations/Modifications Specific to this unit as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student choice ● Small-group instruction (reading comprehension and writing) ● Tiered assessments (public speaking) ● Tiered assignments (Leveled students) ● Multiple-entry points (Leveled students) ● Demonstration by interest and modes of expression (artistic, technological, written, oral)

Unit 2
World Theatre Through Comedy: *After students have completed their original productions, they will examine the theatrical spaces and traditions of the world’s theatres. They will begin by examining the stages themselves and considering directorial questions about how the space would have shaped their plays. After students examine the spaces themselves, they’ll read about the theatrical traditions of the different stages and time periods. Through Commedia Dell’Arte, students will experiment with their own stock characters. The unit resolves with an improv performance based on the commedia characters.*

Timeframe	5 weeks						
Subject/Topic	Drama						
Desired Results							
Content Area NJSLs:	<p>TH1.4.8.Cr1: Generating and conceptualizing ideas.</p> <p>a. Identify, explore, and imagine multiple solutions and strategies in staging problems in a theatrical work.</p> <p>b. Identify, imagine and practice solving multiple design/technical challenges of a performance space in a theatrical work.</p> <p>c. Explore, describe and develop given circumstances of a scripted or improvised character in a theatrical work.</p> <p>TH1.4.8.Cr2: Organizing and developing ideas</p> <p>a. Articulate and apply critical analysis, extensive background knowledge, sociohistorical research, and cultural context related to existing or developing original theatrical work</p> <p>b. Actively contribute ideas and creatively incorporate the ideas of others in existing or original theatrical work demonstrating mutual respect for self and others and their roles sharing leadership and responsibilities in preparing or devising theatre.</p> <p>TH1.4.8.Cr3: Refining and completing products</p> <p>a. Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process by analyzing and refining choices in a devised or scripted theatre performance.</p> <p>b. Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted theatre work.</p> <p>c. Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted theatrical work.</p> <p>TH1.4.8.Pr4: Selecting, analyzing, and interpreting work.</p> <p>a. Rehearse a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or theatrical performance that assist in the development of stronger character choices.</p> <p>b. Use a variety of technical elements to create a design for a rehearsal or theatre production.</p> <p>TH1.4.8.Pr5: Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.</p> <p>a. Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of devised or scripted theatre work.</p> <p>b. Use various character objectives and tactics in a theatre work to identify the conflict and overcome the obstacle.</p> <p>TH1.4.8.Pr6: Conveying meaning through art</p> <p>a. Perform a rehearsed theatrical work for an audience (reflection, metacognition/self correction, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p>						
Interdisciplinary Connections, Career Readiness/ Life	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Science</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Social Science</td> </tr> </table>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Science	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Social Science
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Literacies, and Key Skills Practices/ Computer Science and Design Thinking	✓	Earth and Space	✓	History, Culture, and Perspectives
		Life Sciences		Geography, People, and the Environment
		Physical Sciences	✓	Economics, Innovation, and Technology
				Civics, Government, and Human Rights
	✓	Technology	✓	Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills
		Computer Science (8.1)		9.1 Personal Financial Literacy
	✓	Design Thinking (8.2)	✓	9.2 Career Awareness, Exploration, Preparation, and Training
			✓	9.4 Life Literacies and Key Skills
<p>Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as a responsible and contributing community member and employee. • Attend to financial well-being • Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions. • Demonstrate creativity and innovation. • Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. • Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management. • Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals. • Use technology to enhance productivity, increase collaboration, and communicate effectively. • Work productively in teams while using cultural/global competence. <p>Computer Science and Design Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.1.8.DA.3: Identify the appropriate tool to access data based on its file format. • 8.2.8.ED.1: Evaluate the function, value, and aesthetics of a technological product or system, from the perspective of the user and the producer. 8.2.8.ITH.1: Explain how the development and use of technology influences economic, political, social, and cultural issues. • 8.2.8.ITH.2: Compare how technologies have influenced society over time. • 8.2.8.EC.1: Explain ethical issues that may arise from the use of new technologies. 				
Enduring Understandings:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theatrical spaces can reveal the values of their audiences; both are constantly evolving over time. • Stock characters create opportunities for comedy when performers exaggerate physical and vocal choices. • Improvisational comedy is most effective when participants work together to build a truthful experience. 			

Essential Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do theatres themselves reflect a culture? How has theatre changed over time and space? • Why do the stock characters of an 800 year-old art form still make people laugh today? What does this suggest about the two different audiences? • How do improvisors work together to create comedy when their characters are in conflict?
Critical Vocabulary	Identity, improvisation, stock character, Commedia Dell'Arte
All Students Will Know and Be Able To. . .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make choices to embody truthful choices in performance. • Use empathy to understand characters' emotional circumstances. • Analyze how design elements enhance truth in performance. • Explore how theatre changes across cultures and time periods. • Evaluate technology's impact on performance spaces and set design. • Identify patterns in characterization across time periods • Create improvised scenes using stock characters.
Evidence of Student Learning	
Formative Performance Task:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character profile: create and craft/write about a stock character • Character monologue: develop a monologue that logically connects to character developed in original written stock character profile • Improvisation: participate in group drama games and individual improvisation scenario practice in preparation for summative performance task. • Monologues: perform formal monologue and other public speaking tasks in response to informal topics and reading/writing responses.
Summative Performance Task:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original improvised scene using stock characters.
Formal Evidence of Learning & Progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubrics • Written Responses • Theatrical performances • Presentations
Informal Evidence of Learning & Progress:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rubrics • Exit Cards • Reading Assessments (Oral, etc.) • Pre-Assessments • Informal Observations/Dialogues • Think Alouds • Examinations of Student Work • Self-Assessment /Reflection • Examination of Student Work- peer reviews
Learning Plan	
Required Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stock character research (small group) • Original stock character monologue (writing and performance) • Character creation activity- creative writing- completing a character profile

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monologue performances- graded- practice using Screencastify as a performance analysis tool ● Improv group game- Name that Object (Symbolic transformations) ● Original Commedia dell'Arte mask creation ● Improv performance based on commedia character
Required Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improv Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://improvesbest.com/curriculum/ ○ https://foldingstory.com/ ○ http://improvenyclopedia.org/games/Word_at_a_Time_Story.html ● Commedia Dell'arte Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Characters https://sites.google.com/site/italiancommedia/the-character_s ○ Crash Course “Commedia Dell’arte” https://youtu.be/U96m8inKt24
Suggested Activities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improv games ● Socratic Seminar ● Informal speeches ● Pictionary, charades, etc.- other basic skill-building public speaking/group games as a means to inspire improv
Suggested Resources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improv Games: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://improvisationalcomedy.com/11-easy-improv-games-for-beginners/ ● Commedia Dell’arte Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://homunculustheatre.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Commedia-101.pdf ○ https://youtu.be/h_0TAXWt8hY
Strategies for Differentiation:	<p>Accommodations for Students in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special Education ● ELL ● RTI ● Gifted and Talented ● 504 <p>Accommodations/Modifications Specific to this unit as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student choice ● Small-group instruction (reading comprehension and writing) ● Tiered assessments (public speaking) ● Tiered assignments (Leveled students) ● Multiple-entry points (Leveled students) ● Demonstration by interest and modes of expression (artistic, technological, written, oral)

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Appendix

Standards in Action

The regional districts believe in offering an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning because students are able to make connections and relationships by bringing together separate content disciplines, skills and knowledge around common themes, issues, or problems. The NJ Department of Education mandates the following be identified as areas of study beneficial to integration into all grade levels and content areas.

Please click the hyperlink for further information on each area:

[Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills](#)

[Climate Change Education](#)

[Contributions of Disabled and LGBT Individuals](#)

[Holocaust Education](#)

[Amistad Commission](#)

[Social and Emotional Learning](#)

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#)

[Asian American Pacific Islander](#)

Types of Assessments

Students will be assessed across the units and year in a variety of ways. The link below indicates resources for developing assessments and general examples of assessments that teachers may utilize across all of the content areas.

[Formative, Summative, Alternative, and Benchmark Assessments](#)

Accommodations & Modifications for Special Education, ELL, G&T, 504 Plans and At Risk:

[Modifications and Accommodations](#)