



SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CHATHAMS CURRICULUM PROFILE

CONTENT AREA(S): Theater Arts

COURSE/GRADE LEVEL(S): Stagecraft 7-8

I. Course Overview

The middle school child exhibits independent, critical thought and is a curious learner who prefers active over passive learning experiences. Opportunities to combine learning with social experiences can be productive, as social issues tend to dominate their thoughts and activities. They strive to use skills to solve real-life problems.

Physically, middle school is a time of marked increase in height, weight, heart size, lung capacity, and muscular strength. Uneven muscle/bone development can result in a lack of coordination and awkwardness. Boys will experience the changing voice.

***Intellectually**, middle school students have short-term memories as well as short attention spans. Consequently, students should be presented with limited amounts of new information, allowing them time to retain material. Teachers should also provide opportunities that will help to reinforce prior lessons and concepts. Middle school learners look for relationships between lessons and life and they desire active involvement in learning. They will also begin to clarify their ideas and discuss thoughts with others. Although students can be argumentative and inquisitive, they do not have the ability to fully comprehend abstract ideas. Therefore, middle school teachers should assign activities that will help students develop their problem solving and critical thinking skills.*

***Socially**, middle school learners generally desire more autonomy. However, students also crave social acceptance and interaction. Students will begin to interact with the opposite sex, but their same-sex relationships will supersede those with the opposite sex. During this time, middle school learners will challenge significant adults and educators by testing their limits. However, it's important for all adult family members and educators to continue expressing their love along with rules and expectations. Despite their behavior, middle school learners yearn for adult role models and guidance.*

***Emotionally**, middle school learners are usually self-conscious, persistently judging themselves by their physical appearance and development. Due to fluctuating moods, middle school students are easy to offend yet can be inconsiderate to others. In addition to this, middle school students often believe that their problems and experiences are unique to who they are. Despite adult interaction, students feel that adults can't possibly understand what teens are experiencing. Overall, middle school students seek to find out who they are as individuals.*

The study of Theater can significantly contribute to the intellectual, physical, creative, and emotional development of a student. Valuable qualities such as commitment to a long-term goal, self-discipline, responsibility, cooperation and teamwork, as well as self-expression and aesthetic perception (appreciation of theater as an art form) are among the lifetime benefits derived by the student. The focus of middle school stagecraft is to provide students with the fundamentals of backstage technology through actual practice. Learners construct scenery, paint sets, learn about lighting and sound control and do other backstage work. Stagecraft will provide students with the creative fundamental experience that incorporates all aspects of the technical theater. Students will be offered an opportunity to engage in various stagecraft techniques while learning the importance of team building.

II. Standards

Stagecraft meets all creative and performance standards for NJCCC Visual and Performing Arts and Standards for the 21st Century.

- **The Creative Process:** All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles that govern the creation of theatrical works.
- **1.2 History of the Arts and Culture:** All students will understand the role, development, and influence of Choral Music throughout history and across cultures.
- **1.3 Performance:** All students will synthesize those skills, media, methods, and technologies appropriate to creating, performing, and/or presenting works of theater.
- **1.4. Aesthetic Responses and Critique Methodologies (A, B):** All students will demonstrate and apply an understanding of arts philosophies, judgment, and analysis to works of Theater.
- **9.1 21st Century Life Skills; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving (A):** All students will demonstrate creative, critical thinking, collaboration and problem solving skills to function successfully as global citizens and workers in diverse ethnic and organizational cultures.

III. Learning Objectives

- Learners will demonstrate correct work habits, attitudes, ethics, and appreciation of health and safety.
- Learners will demonstrate the skills involved in scenery construction by building the sets, using non-traditional materials, for the class plays.
- Learners will demonstrate skill in crew techniques by working backstage, in medium of their choice, during the performances of the All-School Production.
- Learners will work in small groups and demonstrate ability to share the responsibility for the production of a quality product.
- Learners will show interest in the theater as a leisure time activity by attending performances of plays.
- Learners will demonstrate understanding of established standards in the technical areas of play production.

IV. Essential Questions

- What elements are necessary to produce a dramatic or musical production?
- To what extent do costumes, props, and makeup influence the credibility of a production?
- To what extent do technical elements influence the credibility of a production?

V. Key Performance and Benchmark Tasks

- Tour the CMS theatre, using appropriate vocabulary to describe technical elements.
- Introduce students to elements of technical theater; concentrate on separate elements and “train” students in the use and maintenance of the theater.
- Introduce students to the various roles of a production team.
- Create a chart that describes the employment opportunities in Technical Theater
- Create stage directions using proper theater vocabulary.
- Apply the principles of script analysis to the design elements.
- Discern between a set piece and a prop.
- Identify types of paints used on a backdrop.
- Demonstrate the various application processes of backdrop painting.
- Learn and reiterate electrical definitions as they apply to stagecraft.
- Identify instruments and equipment used in stage lighting.
- Understand analog lighting control buttons and switches.
- Design a sound plot for the class plays.
- Identify basic sound board components and conduct basic sound board exercises.
- Lecture, discussion, and safety rules relating to the following:

- Hand Tools
- Rigging
- Hanging backdrops
- Raising and lowering backdrops
- Properly weighting the fly system
- Identifying and labeling the fly line
- Lighting and Sound Equipment
- Usage of safety devices in the shop
- Emergency Procedures
- Safely moving set pieces
- Analyze a set of building plans.
- Identify set design views: plan (above), sectional (sides), and elevation (front).
- Map a scale drawing using a scale ruler.

VI. Units of Study

- Unit 1- Safety in the Theater
- Unit 2- Stage Terminology, Layout, and Management
- Unit 3- Set Design
- Unit 4- Shifting and Moving Scenery
- Unit 5- The Property Crew
- Unit 6- Scene Painting
- Unit 7- Electricity and Electrical Safety
- Unit 9- Lighting Design and Equipment
- Unit 10- Lighting Control
- Unit 11- Acoustical Theory, Sound Design, and Equipment

VII. Instructional Materials

Teacher-designed resources to explore the following topics:

- Direction
- Set design
- Lighting design
- Sound
- Costuming
- Makeup
- Marketing
- Stage Management
- Publicity
- Props
- Scenic Artistry

Age appropriate websites, books, and audio/visual recordings:

- Stagecraft Fundamentals Second Edition: A Guide and Reference for Theatrical Production 2nd Edition by [Rita Kogler Carver](#)
- The Backstage Handbook: An Illustrated Almanac of Technical Information 3rd Edition by [Paul Carter](#)
- Theatrical Design and Production: An Introduction to Scene Design and Construction, Lighting, Sound, Costume, and Makeup 7th Edition by [J. Michael Gillette](#)

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