

## QUICK REFERENCE: 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE THEATRE

### A. PLAY READING AND ANALYSIS

#### Content Standard

Students in Wisconsin will attend live theatre and read plays, be able to analyze and evaluate the play, and articulate (create meaning from) the play's message for individuals and society.

#### Rationale:

The sense of immediacy and sense of community experienced at a live theatrical performance is a different kind of audience experience from attending a movie or watching television or a video. Attending live theatre helps students learn appropriate audience skills of listening and responding. Attending live theatre and reading plays also help students learn critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills. These experiences foster the use of imagination and the awareness of a variety of dramatic styles (genres) and cultures. They also develop a sense of aesthetics through exposure to and discussion of different artistic styles.

#### PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

#### By the end of grade 8 students will:

- A.8.1 Attend a live theatrical performance and be able to analyze, evaluate, and create personal meaning from the experience through small group discussion
- say what they liked and didn't like, and why
  - explain what happened in the play and discuss why they think the playwright made particular choices
  - explain how the technical aspects of the play helped to present the message of the play
  - explain the message of the play
- A.8.2 Read a play and be able to analyze, evaluate, and create personal meaning from the experience through small group discussion
- say what they liked and didn't like, and why
  - explain what happened in the play and discuss why they think the playwright made particular choices
  - explain the message of the play

## **B: PERFORMANCE**

### **Content Standard**

Students in Wisconsin will work and think as actors and develop basic acting skills to portray characters who interact in improvised and scripted scenes.

### **Rationale:**

Acting teaches students important communication skills. It teaches students to make ideas and feelings clear and to pay attention with their ears and eyes. Through acting, students learn to imagine, solve problems, and adapt to change. Improvisational acting (creating characters and scenes without a script) encourages students to use their creative powers to better understand how humans think, feel, and live. By placing themselves in others' shoes, students also learn to empathize and develop a personal understanding of other people's situations and experiences. As Shakespeare wrote, "All the world's a stage, And all the men and women merely players."

### **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

#### **By the end of grade 8 students will:**

- B.8.1 Create a character through physical movement, adapting movement and making physical choices to fit the requirements of the scene
- B.8.2 Create a character verbally, adapting language choices and dialogue to fit requirements of the scene

#### **Students in a theatre class will:**

- B.8.3 Create a believable and sustained character within a scripted or improvised context
- B.8.4 Create a character that is appropriate to the context of the scene, using facial expressions
- B.8.5 Select costume pieces or a hand prop (such as a basket) and create a character based upon that item
- B.8.6 Create a character (physically, verbally, and facially) from a scripted scene
- B.8.7 Create a character (physically, verbally, and facially) from an original idea

## **C. RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS**

### **Content Standard**

Students in Wisconsin will research and analyze methods of presentation and audience response for theatre, the interconnections of theatre, community, other cultures, and historical periods for use as general knowledge.

### **Rationale:**

Research and analysis teaches students how to study subjects in great depth. It provides them with tools to make reasoned judgments, rational decisions, and critical choices. Students learn to understand subject matter in relationship to ideas, symbols, and images in society today and interpret these forms and their effect on an audience, culture, and society.

### **PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

#### **By the end of grade 8 students will:**

- C.8.1 Identify similarities and differences between various artistic mediums such as film, video, or television
- C.8.2 Read a play and exhibit understanding of the cultural/historical connections through discussions and/or written work
- C.8.3 Discuss the cultural/historical importance of a play through group discussion or written work

#### **Students in a theatre class will:**

- C.8.4 Explain in writing what they liked and didn't like about a dramatic presentation and justify their comments
- C.8.5 Write a review of a play and demonstrate an understanding of how a presentation was the same or different than other media presentations
- C.8.6 Continue to select stories or topics and plan plays with beginnings, middles, and ends
- C.8.7 Continue to find information to help develop characters and the appropriate backgrounds for presentations

## **D. ANALYSIS OF PROCESS**

**Content Standard**

Students in Wisconsin will work and think as theatre artists and reflect upon and assess the characteristics and merits of their own work and the work of others.

**Rationale:**

Theatre's uniqueness is rooted in the essential interaction with others. Exchange of feedback between actor and audience, director and actor, and director and designer is an essential component of theatre. What works, what doesn't work, and, perhaps more importantly, why or why not is at the heart of the theatre process and any problem-solving activity. Good communication skills are vital for gaining greater understanding and working cooperatively with others.

**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS****By the end of grade 8 students will:**

- D.8.1 Accept and use criticism constructively to revise and refine their own work
- D.8.2 Share their comments constructively and supportively within the group

**Students in a theatre class will:**

- D.8.3 Continue to identify strengths (what worked) and weaknesses (what didn't work) in character work and scenes presented in class
- D.8.4 Identify what they need to do to make their character or scene more believable and/or understandable

**E. THEATRE PRODUCTION**

**Content Standard**

Students will think and work as playwrights, designers, managers, and/or directors to create and interpret improvised and scripted scenes.

**Rationale:**

Production work based on personal experiences, cultural contexts, heritage, literature, and history enable students to better understand the diversity of the world, gain insight into how people think, feel, and live, and develop skills important to work within a variety of contexts. Playwrighting teaches basic script structure and developing character and story through dialogue. Design teaches students to develop their sense of spatial and geometric relationships, and increases students' sensory ability to work with color, texture, line, and form. Management teaches students basic business skills (such as developing, maintaining, and working within a budget), technical writing skills, advertising skills, and life skills (such as goal setting and working with deadlines). Directing teaches students how to work with others in leadership roles, how to organize and carry out complicated tasks, how to analyze literature, and how to define and solve problems.

**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS****By the end of grade 8 students in a theatre class will:**

- E.8.1    Improvise a scene or play with a problem or conflict
- E.8.2    Script their scene or play using proper scripting format
- E.8.3    Develop an understanding of design by creating a floor plan or visual representation of a play or literature selection
- E.8.4    Analyze a play and determine appropriate setting, lighting, costume, and make-up requirements
- E.8.5    Read a play and describe the potential visual and emotional effect it has on an audience
- E.8.6    Exhibit understanding of theatre management through direct involvement in a public performance by making posters, selling tickets, and/or ushering
- E.8.7    Rehearse and perform a scene or play for peers or invited guests

