

Fine Arts - Theatre Course Description

Theatre - 1320 - Second Grade [1997]

SIS NUMBER: 1320

SIS CODE: AR

CREDIT: 0.25

COURSE PREFACE:

Core Curriculum for Theatre Arts

Introduction

The Core Curriculum for Elementary Fine Arts is written to communicate what students are expected to know and be able to do in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. The intended result is to effect in students:

1. the development of affective, cognitive, and psychomotor skills in the arts,
2. the joy of self-expression and aesthetic awareness,
3. a personal connection with community heritage and varied cultures, and
4. the achievement of Life Skills.

The Core espouses no specific methodologies but supports the experiential development of primary arts skills as the natural vehicle for discovering the attendant history, culture, aesthetics, critiquing, and other relevant connections to the student's world in and out of school.

The Core centers on discovering the joy, richness, and depth of the arts through active involvement with the art form. It is designed to strengthen and advance the kinetic, pragmatic, playful, curious, creative, sensitive, and imaginative nature of elementary students through self-expression, heightened perception, and development of skills indigenous to dance, music, theatre, and visual arts. To deepen understanding of the traditions and cultures of various peoples and communities, recommended music, art, literature, and folk arts are coordinated with the topics in the Social Studies Elementary Core Curriculum.

Implications for Implementation

The Core Curriculum for dance, music, theatre, and visual arts provides the basis of professionalism and accountability for teachers, and defines the expectations and achievement standards for students. Curriculum standards create strength, unity, and heightened concern for the achievement of essential learning objectives. Each student and teacher must view these standards as both essential and desirable. Students have the prime responsibility for their own artistic achievement. The success of these curriculum standards will only be accomplished by the broad-based acceptance of classroom teachers, students, administrators, parents, artists, and dance, drama, music, and visual arts specialists from kindergarten through college throughout the state of Utah.

Teachers are the guides who provide direction for learning by continuing their personal professional development and collegial collaborations and by offering students engaging and positive opportunities for skill development, high caliber models of artwork, authentic and accurate sources of information, relevant connections to the student's world, and guidance in formative self-assessment. The role of administrators is to provide the necessary leadership, instructional time, qualified personnel, facilities, professional development, technological support,

materials, and administrative support for achieving the Fine Arts Core Curriculum.

Parents are encouraged to supplement classroom learning through encouraging the study and appreciation of art, music, dance, and theatre as a family, listening and being informed of school activities and requirements, and personal involvement in school and community activities as appropriate. Professional artists can provide models of career opportunities, expertise, local relevancy, and opportunities for teachers and students to collaborate in the professional setting.

Organization, Sequence, Format

The curriculum for Dance, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts is organized into four standards, with accompanying objectives and assessment indicators. A statement of student work clarifies the parameters of each standard. The objectives articulate specific goals to be accomplished by the student. The assessment indicators are tools designed to measure achievement of the objective through relevant performance tasks. Examples of instructional strategies and literature have been thoughtfully included in many instances.

Correlations to other elementary core documents have been footnoted to identify possibilities for integrated instruction.

The numbering system works as follows:

The kindergarten numbers for dance begin with 1400, music with 1500, theatre with 1300, and visual arts with 1000. The last two numbers of the four digits change according to grade level; e.g., first grade dance being 1410, second grade music being 1520.

The number of the standard is the first two numbers appearing after the hyphen. The specific number of each objective appears as the last two digits in the series of four numbers which indicate the standard and the objective; e.g., 0102 means the second objective of the first standard, 0401 means the first objective of the fourth standard.

ELEMENTARY THEATRE CORE CURRICULUM

Mission Statement

The emphasis of these standards is to provide a model for the development of the essential knowledge and skill base required to demonstrate proficiency in theatre arts in grades K-6.

Philosophy

Theatre, the imagined and enacted world of human beings, is one of the primary ways children learn about actions and consequences, about customs and beliefs, and about others and themselves. They learn through their social pretend play and from hours of viewing television and film. For instance, children use pretend play as a means of making sense of the world; they create situations to play and assume roles; they interact with peers and arrange environments to bring their stories to life; they direct one another to bring order to their drama; and they respond to each other's dramas. In other words, children arrive at school with rudimentary skills as playwrights, actors, designers, directors, and audience members. Theatre education should build on this solid foundation.

These theatre standards assume that theatre education will start with and have strong emphasis on improvisation, which is the basis of social pretend play. Theatre education embodies both

critical and creative thinking. It provides students with the life skills to actively explore and function successfully in the techno-social world of today while learning to develop skills as performing artists. The theatre curriculum will develop the students' abilities to express their understanding of their immediate world and broaden their knowledge of other cultures(past, present, and future.

Overview

The success of these standards will only be accomplished by the broad-based acceptance of classroom teachers and theatre specialists throughout the state of Utah. Each teacher must see these standards as important and essential to helping them individually meet the specific needs of their students.

The standards provide the basis of professionalism and accountability for teachers as well as define the expectations and achievement standards for students. Curriculum standards represent strength and unity for teachers. They provide a common direction and instructional approach that heighten the value of the entire field of study.

Elementary Theatre Standards

Standard One: Playmaking

The student refines the planning phase of the informal theatre process through the creation of classroom dramatizations based on personal experiences and heritage, imagination, literature, and history. Playmaking most often leads to improvised theatre with a beginning, middle, and end. Playmaking informally involves the natural dramatic play instincts cultivated in early childhood. This includes the intrinsic nonperformance elements of the theatre process:

designing, directing, researching, comparing and integrating art forms, analyzing and critiquing, and understanding context, especially historical and cultural contexts. Playmaking, in grades K-6, becomes the formal process of script writing when introduced as a content standard in the secondary grades.

Standard Two: Acting

The student refines the playing or performance phase of the informal theatre process through cooperating, imagining and assuming roles, exploring personal preferences and meanings, and interacting in classroom dramatizations. Acting in grades K-6 is a cumulative and culminating experience involving sensory and emotional awareness, rhythm and movement, pantomime, vocal expression and oral communication, improvisation, and some formal presentation usually shared within the classroom setting.

Standard Three: Understanding Art Forms

The student refines the examining phase of the informal theatre process by comparing, connecting, and incorporating art forms and by describing and analyzing methods of presentations and audience responses for theatre, film, television, and electronic media. This content standard is introduced in the third grade with the intent to enhance the student's introduction to and interaction with live theatre performance from the audience viewpoint and to reveal the role of film, television, and electronic media in one's life.

Standard Four: Analyzing and Constructing Meanings

The student refines the evaluating phase of the informal theatre process through explaining personal preferences and constructing meanings in responding to improvised and scripted scenes and in responding to theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions. This standard is introduced in the fourth grade with the intent to enhance the student's ability to analyze and construct meanings from interactions with theatre, film, television, and electronic media.

THEATRE GLOSSARY

Acting:

Playing a part in a dramatic presentation. Acting is a cumulative and culminating experience involving sensory awareness, rhythm and movement, pantomime, oral communication.

Action:

The core of a theatre piece; the sense of forward movement created by the sense of time and/or the physical and psychological motivations of characters.

Alternative Ending:

Finding a new and logically defensible way to conclude the sequence of actions presented in a story, play, or dramatic presentation.

Antagonist:

The main opponent of the protagonist. The representative of the major forces against the protagonist in reaching his or her goal.

Audience Etiquette:

The ability to understand the nature of the relationship between the live performer and the audience and to demonstrate the appropriate behavior that will nurture that relationship when attending live performing arts events.

Aural Elements:

The elements in dramatic production that are perceived by the ear; e.g., sound effects, music.

Body Awareness:

The actor's consciousness about the use of the body, including the aspects of creativity, control, and nonverbal communication.

Character:

An imaginary person or thing existing in a drama or play and brought to life by an actor.

Characterization:

The process of creating a believable "person" through exploration of the physical (e.g., sex, age, external traits), social (e.g., occupation, family, previous experiences), and psychological (e.g., attitudes, motivations, values) dimensions of a role.

Classroom Dramatization:

The act of creating character, dialogue, action, and environment for the purpose of exploration, experimentation, and study in a setting where there is no formal audience observation except for that of fellow students and teachers.

Climax:

The point from which the major conflict can go no further without bringing about a resolution; the highest point of dramatic tension; the point at which the major forces in a conflict ultimately meet; a turning point.

Comedy:

Plays generally light in tone, at times farcical, satiric, or nonrealistic, which usually have a happy ending and provoke laughter.

Complication:

A twist in the plot whereby some new development is added contributing to the rising action or growth; comes after the major conflict has been established.

Conflict:

Tension between two or more characters or between action and ideas; the collision of opposing forces within the drama; the fundamental struggle that leads to crisis and climax of a scene or play.

Constructed Meaning:

The personal understanding of dramatic/artistic intentions and actions and their social and personal significance, selected and organized from the aural, oral, and visual symbols of a dramatic production.

Critique:

A critical review or commentary, especially one dealing with works of art or literature. A critical discussion of a specified topic.

Dialogue:

Words spoken by the characters in a play to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Diction:

Degree of clarity and distinctness of pronunciation in speech or singing; enunciation.

Dramatic Presentation:

Any role-playing that includes the use of plot, character, and tension.

Dramatize:

To make role-playing dramatic, including the use of plot, character, and tension.

Emotional Recall:

The detection and apprehension of one's own and others' emotional states and emotional reactions, which can be recalled for use in understanding, portraying, and reflecting on the human condition and human behavior.

Empathy:

Emotional identification of one person with another; to vicariously experience the sensual and emotional state of another person. To empathize is to "walk in the shoes" of another. Empathy feels with a character; sympathy feels for a character.

Energy:

The capacity for vigorous activity; vigor; power. Exertion of vigor or power; vitality.

Ensemble:

The dynamic interaction and harmonious blending of the efforts of the many artists involved in the activity of theatrical production.

Exposition:

Information provided by dialogue rather than through dramatic action which concerns the past or events occurring outside the play; necessary for an understanding of time, place, plot, character, and theme.

Expression:

What the audience or other participants in the drama see and hear coming from those in-role. The actor uses the voice and the body as the basic tools of expression.

Face Puppets:

Puppets made out of plain paper plates with character faces drawn, colored, or painted on them. Actors wear them on their hands.

Fantasy:

The use of imagination to create strange, unusual, or nonrealistic characters or settings.

Formal Theatre:

Dramatic activity designed for presentation with the focus on final production and audience reception.

Gibberish:

Meaningless sounds substituted for recognizable words.

Given Circumstances:

What the playwright shares about the play within the script itself. In improvisations, given circumstances refers to what departure ideas or parameters have been established.

Human Shadow Play:

The use of the human body to create shadow images on a transparent material by being lit from behind. Shadow plays can be performed using the entire human body or parts of it to represent characters; e.g., children often create animals by using their hands to create animal-like images on a bed sheet when being lit from behind with a flashlight.

Imaginary:

A mental picture of what is not physically present or of what has never been actually experienced.

Imaginary Objects:

Objects that do not exist physically in the drama but are created through the use of pantomime by

the actor.

Imagination:

The process of forming a mental picture of what is not physically present or of what has never been actually experienced; the process of combining and altering images from previous experiences.

Imitate:

To follow, as a pattern, model, or example; to copy.

Improvisation:

The spontaneous use of movement and speech to create a character or object in a particular situation. An intuitive and immediate response rather than behavior that is rehearsed.

Improvise:

To act without previous study or preparation. To act out without a script.

Inanimate Objects:

Objects devoid of life such as pencils, silverware, lawn mower, toothbrush, etc.

Informal Theatre:

Theatre activities, often called classroom dramatization or improvisation, in which participants use their minds, bodies, and voices to plan, play, examine, and evaluate characters participating in an action. The term includes a wide range of theatre activities and situations developed by and for the participants rather than for an outside audience.

Inner Dialogue:

The conversation the actor carries on in the head that represents the ongoing thoughts of the character.

In-role:

The act of role-playing. Accepting and participating in the given circumstances of a drama or a play. A teacher is said to be teaching in-role when one joins the role-playing within a drama or play for the purpose of enhancing the dramatic experience through interaction with students already in-role.

Interrelated Characters:

Characters that connect in a drama or play because of the given circumstances.

Isolated Body Parts:

Having the ability to operate one body at a time or independently of other body parts in use; e.g., the hand doing one thing, the head doing something else.

Kinetic Elements:

Of, relating to, or produced by motion; movement.

Mantle of the Expert:

In classroom dramatizations or improvisations, teachers may assign individuals or groups of students to be "experts" in those things they are exceptionally knowledgeable about or willing to research. This is called operating in-role from the "mantle of the expert;" e.g., a third grader, or group of third graders, who collects butterflies being a resource in-role and out as we prepare a butterfly drama.

Metaphor:

A symbolic comparison where one thing stands for another thing; an image which synthesizes two meanings.

Mood:

A state of mind or emotion. A pervading impression of an observer: the somber mood of a play. Inclination; disposition.

Motivation:

The actor's reason for doing or saying something. Actors are motivated by characters' objectives which come from reasons or occurrences in a scene, story, or play.

Motives:

An emotion, desire, physiological need, or similar impulse that acts as an incitement to action.

Narrative Pantomime:

An activity in which the group pantomimes a story as it is narrated by the drama/theatre leader.

Nonsense Dialogue:

Dialogue that exists outside of a given social or dramatic context; an exercise in creating context and given circumstances.

Objective:

The desire and goal of a character which motivates action.

Oral Elements:

Those things the audience perceives that are spoken or created with the human voice.

Pantomime:

Action without words; using the body and face to express an idea, an emotion, or a character.

Pathos:

A quality, as of an experience or a work of art, that arouses feelings of pity, sympathy, tenderness, or sorrow. The feeling, as of sympathy or pity, so aroused.

Personal Preferences:

The identification of one's choices of liking and the exploration of why one likes what one likes.

Physical Attributes:

Things the body of a specific character is capable of or recognizable for doing based on the given circumstances.

Pitch:

Referring to the range of sound in music (high or low); sounds that can be repeated.

Planning:

In drama, planning refers to the process guided by the leader or done by the participants in small groups which precedes the improvised exercises, scene, situation, or portion of a story.

Playmaking/Playwriting:

Playmaking is a term used to describe dramatic activities that lead to improvised drama with a beginning, middle, and end, employing the general form and some of the elements of theatre. The product may or may not be shared with others. Playwriting is the act of creating the plot, theme, characters, dialogue, spectacle, and structure of a play and organizing it into a playscript form. It involves the ability to imagine the entire production scene and to put it into written form so that others may interpret it for the stage.

Plot:

The "what happens" in a story as revealed through the action and dialogue of the characters. A plot has a beginning, which involves the setting, characters, and the problem they are facing; a middle, which tells how the characters work to solve the problem; and an ending, in which the problem is resolved.

Point of Attack:

The moment in the story when the play actually begins.

Protagonist:

The principal character who carries the main thought, or theme, of the play.

Record:

Means to preserve; outline, write down, script, storyboard with dialogue, video or audio record, etc.

Rhythm:

A regular pattern of sound, as in music and poetry, or of action, as in dancing, measured by units of time. These pulses or beats can be organized in sets (meter) which move in twos or threes or multiples and combinations thereof.

Sensory Awareness:

Heightened perception of the physical sensations of touch, sight, hearing, taste, and smell, and of emotional states.

Sensory Recall:

The ability to remember various sensory experiences associated with persons, places, or things; the ability to remember, and almost feel again, the stimuli that accompanied a particular experience.

Sign-puppet:

The use of one's hands to create puppet characters; e.g., a giraffe is easily created by the arm becoming the neck, while the hand attached to that arm becomes the head of the giraffe.

Slow Motion:

Reducing the rate of movement to a level where every detail may be observed easily.

Spatial Perception:

How the actor's body relates to the real and imagined space in a drama or a play.

Stay in the Scene:

The actor's ability to maintain belief and function logically within the imaginary world the character based on given circumstances. For example, if the actor on an imaginary boat in a storm is suddenly standing up and walking to the other side of the room to get something, it would mean the actor is breaking character and not staying in the scene.

Subordinate:

Belonging to a lower or inferior class or rank; secondary. Subject to the authority or control of another; e.g., dance and music used in the service of theatre.

Synchronize:

Operating in unison with all movement and/or speech occurring at the same time.

Tableau:

An interlude during a scene when all the performers on stage freeze in position and then resume action.

Tempo:

The rate of speed of a composition or section of music.

Tension:

The atmosphere created by unresolved, disquieting, or inharmonious situations that human beings feel compelled to address.

Theatre:

The imitation/representation of life, the discipline and art form that culminates in a dramatic presentation by actors, designers, and technicians on a stage or in a planned environment for an audience of onlookers. The term can also refer to the area (inside or outside) designed for formal theatre presentations.

Theme:

The central thought, idea, or significance of action with which a play or story deals.

Tone:

A sound of distinct duration; a note. The quality or character of sound.

Transformation of Objects:

The actor's ability to change an object into another object based on the needs of the drama through imagination; e.g., old crumpled newspapers become cocoons for a bunch of moths.

Visual Elements:

Elements in a theatrical production, beyond the actors, that can be seen with the eye and are used to support the overall goals of the production.

Course Description

The curriculum is written to aid the teacher and student to facilitate the learning of theatre as an art form. Four standards are included: playmaking, acting, understanding art forms (not introduced until fourth grade), analyzing and constructing meanings (not introduced until fourth grade). One, two, three, or all four standards may be addressed in every theatre lesson plan. In theatre, the emphasis is always on engaging the child in-role through the four essential processes of planning, playing, examining, and evaluating. Theatre classes may last from 15 to 90 minutes based on grade level, amount of curriculum integration, and complexity of lesson planning ranging from simple drama exercises to fully developed classroom dramatizations (which may take days or weeks to complete). Although sharing theatre work within a class or occasionally with other classes is an acceptable part of the process at all grade levels, staging plays for public audiences is NOT a priority, especially prior to the fourth grade.

Core Standards of the Course

TOPIC: Playmaking

STANDARD: 1320 - 01

The student will plan and improvise plays based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history for informal and formal theatre.

OBJECTIVES:

1320-0101

Plan, with the teacher, appropriate actions for all characters in a story and other justifiable actions motivated by the story.

- Plan and pantomime the actions of the characters mentioned in a story.
Strategy Example:
Tell or read the students a story about caterpillars becoming butterflies; e.g., Hope for the Flowers. As caterpillars shed their last skin, they transform into a chrysalis. Use old crumpled newspapers and masking tape to make the chrysalis for each caterpillar. Then with the help of "becoming" music, each new butterfly struggles to get out of their chrysalis one body part at a time. Finally, all emerge as beautiful butterflies. How will they pantomime drying their wings? Finally, with the help of uplifting music, they all risk flying! Identify specific "actions" chosen by students for their character that can be clearly observed in the pantomime.
- Pantomime justifiable actions motivated by a story but not mentioned in the story.
Strategy Example:
Select a story with lots of interesting and imaginative action; e.g., Where the Wild Things Are.

1320-0102

Plan, with the teacher, dialogue and physical attributes for characters made up of two or more actors.

- Using human shadow play, pantomime characters made up of two or more actors interacting with other characters in a poem or a story as the teacher reads it.
Strategy Example:
Have students create a huge snake or dragon made up of several actors, or a snake or dragon with many heads as in classical mythology. (See Language Arts Core.)
- Improvise brief dialogue scenes between two characters in a story. At least one character must be made up of two or more actors.
Strategy Example:
Have students consider improvising comic scenes between strange creatures meeting for the first time in a public place. Consider creating many headed and strangely arranged aliens.

1320-0103

Plan, with the teacher, a new complication that fits the given circumstances of a familiar story and adds tension. (See Language Arts Core.)

- Plan and dramatize a new complication added to a familiar story.
Strategy Example:
In The Lion and the Mouse, the Mouse pulls the thorn out of the Lion's paw, saves his own life, and gains a friend. Add the complication that the paw is

swollen, the Lion can't hunt, and hence can't eat. Now what will the Mouse do to save his own life and help his new friend? A "friend" who is looking very, very hungry.

- Plan and dramatize a new complication that leads to an alternative ending.

Strategy Example:

In James and the Giant Peach, what might be the ending if James falls off the peach in the middle of the night while all are sleeping? In the morning he finds himself on an island in the middle of the ocean. The peach and his new friends are long gone. How could this complication change the ending? Plan and improvise possible changed endings.

TOPIC: Acting

STANDARD: 1320 - 02

A student will cooperate, imagine and assume roles, explore personal preferences and meanings, and interact in classroom dramatizations.

OBJECTIVES:

1320-0201

Develop body awareness and spatial perception through movement and pantomime.

- Move isolated body parts to an established rhythm.

Strategy Example:

Use music with a strong beat. Have students move only one body part at a time. With each drum beat, add an additional body part until everything is moving as directed. (See Dance Core.)

- Use tension and relaxation to transform an object.

Strategy Example:

Have students pretend to be ice cream left out on the kitchen counter in the sun. They melt into pools of sticky ice cream. You pretend to pour them back into bowls, place them in the freezer, and refreeze them. (See Dance Core.)

- Pantomime working with imaginary objects with attention to detail.

Strategy Example:

Have students use imagination and sensory detail. Pretend to open a package and discover that someone has given them a novel tool, toy, or game. Details are important. (See Dance Core.)

- Pantomime the actions of people who build things for a living.

Strategy Example:

Students might consider being carpenters building a house, engineers building a bridge, brick layers building a wall, baker building a wedding cake, fashion designer building an outfit, etc. Details are important.

1320-0202

Develop expressive use of the voice.

- Imitate the sound and dialogue of various characters.

Strategy Example:

Have students talk like a troll, an elf, a clown, an alligator, a kitten, etc.

- Imitate the sounds and dialogue from a familiar story.

Strategy Example:

The teacher tells a story and stops when sounds and dialogue need to be filled in:

"In the distance the sounds of severe thunder could be heard _____; and as the dark clouds raced towards the sailboat, the Captain said, "_____. _____." One passenger disagreed, "_____." (See Language Arts Core.)

1320-0203

Develop sensory awareness for all five senses.

- Identify a sequence of sounds.

Strategy Example:

Give each student a long list of sounds, then take the students outside, sit absolutely still, and listen for three minutes. Have students number the sounds they heard in the order they heard them. Describe the sounds identified by the class.

- Increase awareness of different textures. (See Visual Arts Core.)

Strategy Example:

At desks, ask each student to identify the smoothest thing to touch, the roughest, the warmest, etc.

- Observe detailed behaviors in others.

Strategy Example:

Have students watch others at lunch to see how the activity of eating with a fork is a different behavior for each person when observed in detail.

- Maintain an olfactory journal.

Strategy Example:

Have students keep a journal of smells over a couple days, taking time to write down when and where they encountered each smell. Describe each smell to other students.

- Identify and describe specific tastes in isolation from the other senses.

Strategy Example:

Have students shut eyes, plug noses, and then place small pieces of food on their tongue; e.g., pieces of apple, onion, peanut butter, soda cracker. The student then tastes the piece of food and tries to identify and describe it. Abide by all district health policies concerning the handling and giving of food.

1320-0204

Develop concentration and a concern for detail when working in classroom dramatizations.

- Stay in the scene.

Strategy Example:

Have students pantomime receiving and eating a very messy sandwich. They are at a baseball game and must eat it on their laps. Concentrate on eating the entire sandwich while trying to watch the baseball game. Work for detail while staying in the scene.

- Maintain concentration despite unexpected distractions.

Strategy Example:

Have students repeat the pantomime suggested above. Other students will inject unexpected distractions. The distractions must fit the given circumstances of the scene; e.g., someone passes glasses of pop down the row, someone is in the wrong seat, someone has lost a wallet under the seats. The student is to deal

with these distractions while maintaining the objectives of finishing the sandwich and watching the baseball game.

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