

Theatre

Theatre professionals throughout the state have contributed to the development of Delaware's Statewide Recommended Curriculum in Theatre. They modified the standards represented here from the 1997 Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards in order to provide more cohesive and focused guidance for what students should know, understand, and be able to do in theatre.

Key Goals at the Heart of the Standards

Delaware's theatre curriculum is designed to:

- Provide teachers with a user-friendly, standards-based framework for theatre instruction
- Provide a scope-and-sequence model for assuring students receive a comprehensive theatre experience
- Provide a framework for assessment of theatre knowledge and skills
- Provide mechanisms for using theatre standards to teach across the curricula
- Provide opportunities for creative problem-solving and learning life skills through role-play

An education that includes theatre contributes to the social, emotional, and cognitive development of young people.

Educational Theatre Association <http://www.edta.org/>

American Alliance for Theatre and Education <http://www.aate.com/>

Rationale for the Standards

Members of the Visual & Performing Arts Design Team believe that theatre education is basic to learning in school, in work, in life and encourage the study of theatre by all. Throughout this recommended curriculum, theatre education is recognized and supported as one of four art disciplines that singly, or in combination, contribute to a student's comprehensive education.

The Theatre Framework assumes that:

- ◆ Delaware public schools and charter schools align their instructional resources with the Delaware Regulation-503 Instructional Program requirements which state:
 - 7.1 – Local school districts and each charter school shall provide instructional programs in the Visual and Performing Arts for each grade K-12 with the exception of the James H. Groves High School program.
 - 7.2 – All public school students in each grade 1-6 shall be enrolled in a Visual and Performing Arts program.
- ◆ This document will serve as a framework to guide theatre educators and instruction in and through and about the discipline of theatre.

Standard 1: Improvising and writing scenes, scenarios, and/or plays

Standard 1 recognizes the importance of envisioning various real-life and imaginary scenarios to develop character, setting, and plot through the integration of language arts and theatre concepts and skills.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Identify the foundation of playmaking in real life and fantasy
- Identify the basic elements of a play (e.g., characters, setting, plot)
- Develop an improvisation utilizing characters and setting that create tension and suspense, with a subsequent resolution

- Record the improvised movement and/or dialogue of a play through writing, taping, or other means
- Adapt a piece of literature into a theatrical piece
- Explore human issues and various outcomes in order to devise a performance piece that is linear in presentation form
- Write an original one-act play with clearly developed characters, setting, conflict, and resolution

To help students meet Standard 1, teachers will provide opportunities for improvisation and creative writing in the critique and development of stage action and written scripts, emanating from real-life situations, make-believe, and pre-existing texts. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 2: Acting in improvised and structured presentations

Standard 2 recognizes the importance of developing verbal and physical communication skills to convey meaning, emphasizing the use of these skills in both theatre and real-life experiences.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Employ variations in movement, gesture, and vocal expression (pitch, tempo, tone) to create characters
- Recall and recite assigned lines for a theatre piece
- Identify character motivations through research and analysis and be able to articulate how they affect the character's actions
- Portray a believable character with effective performance techniques (use of voice, facial expressions, and body movement) in both improvised and structured presentations
- Apply various acting and performance methodologies to appropriate theatrical styles (DeiSarte, Kabuki, Noh, Viewpoints, Theatre of the Oppressed, Theatre-in-Education, Restoration, etc.)

To help students meet Standard 2, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) engage in theatre activities that require a variety of voices, moods, and physical movement; 2) recite and act from scripted scenes; and 3) improvise unscripted scenes that have a predefined framework. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 3: Designing and building environments for informal or formal presentations

Standard 3 integrates design elements and principles in the visual arts with the creation of environments for the theatre, reinforcing the importance of environment (the visual elements of theatre) in communicating meaning.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Develop and implement costume and makeup designs for a structured theatrical production
- Apply design concepts (line, color, space, shape, texture) to design a set that communicates locale and mood for a theatrical production
- Construct scenery and props appropriate to the setting of a theatrical production
- Develop and implement lighting and sound designs appropriate to the setting, mood, and action of a theatrical production
- Utilize software components (vector, autocad, wysiwig, audio realtime) in order to develop set designs (elevations, ground plans, cross-sections), lighting designs (plot, sectional, paperwork), and sound designs (burning, downloading, streaming, pod casting) appropriate for theatrical production

To help students meet Standard 3, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) study and develop costume/makeup design, particularly as they relate to the historical context of a theatre piece; 2) learn and employ basic construction skills in the building of a set; and 3) study lighting design and technology and assist in setting lights and sound equipment for a theatre production. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 4: Directing by envisioning and realizing improvised or scripted scenes

Standard 4 focuses on the role of interpreting and directing a theatrical piece, making choices regarding the interrelationships between the director and the actors, their environment, and the audience. It promotes the refinement of critical, analytical, and leadership skills.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Analyze the meaning of improvised or scripted scenes, scenarios, and/or plays
- Create a concept that conveys meaning for a scripted scene (be it linear, episodic, abstract) through the use of metaphor, mood, or theme
- Develop an audition/casting process with criteria for casting a vignette and/or theatrical piece
- Analyze the rehearsal process (time frame, scene breakdown, blocking, tech week, script deadlines, cue assignments, stage management responsibilities) and develop a production calendar for a specific theatrical piece
- Design a scene that effectively communicates to actors and audience the director's vision of the characters, setting, and plot

To help students meet Standard 4, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) read a script, view a performance of the theatrical piece, and explain the meaning of the piece; 2) develop an audition/casting process and direct a scene with the selected students. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 5: Managing and producing informal and formal presentations

Standard 5 focuses on the business and management aspects of a theatrical production, acknowledging the importance of marketing and sales strategies, as well as careful logistical planning for theatres to operate successfully.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Analyze and understand the importance of backstage needs and communicate a plan for managing backstage traffic, props, and prop tables; dressing areas and costume changes; and the use of wing space/backstage area and set units
- Create an environment for the public and communicate a plan for front-of-house spaces and activities
- Arrange for movement patterns and communication plans for front-of-house spaces and activities (e.g., audience traffic and seating, ticket operations, usher needs, lobby/restroom needs)
- Understand the components of a prompt book and construct a prompt book for a specific theatrical production
- Formulate and implement a marketing campaign for a theatrical production

To help students meet Standard 5, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) collect and verify information, design and produce a playbill for a theatrical production; 2) develop and implement a plan to manage theatre personnel and audiences for a theatrical production; 3) develop a rehearsal/production schedule and timeline for a theatrical production; and 4) create and implement a marketing plan for a theatrical production. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 6: Comparing and integrating art forms

Standard 6 focuses on the ability to contrast, compare, and integrate art forms, reinforcing the application of theatre skills in daily communication, life experiences, and the workplace.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Observe examples of role playing in life and analyze how those roles could be used by theatre artists
- Observe different forms of communication and transfer them into usage in performance (verbal, nonverbal, ASL, written, iconic, etc.)
- Incorporate elements of dance, music, and visual arts to express ideas and emotions in improvised and structured scenes
- Compare and contrast story lines presented through different artistic media (theatre, dance, literature, music)
- Analyze the contributions of various art forms within a theatrical production (e.g., scenery, lighting, music, dance, costumes)
- Determine how learning in the arts helps develop essential skills for the workplace
- Compare and contrast the dramatic art forms of theatre, film, and television
- Create a plan for adapting a live performance to electronic media

To help students meet Standard 6, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) view and analyze live and recorded performances (dance, visual arts, music); and 2) identify/explore essential theatrical skills applicable to various social and professional settings. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 7: Responding to, describing, analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating theatre works and performances

Standard 7 emphasizes the use of critical and analytical skills to develop assessment tools for reviewing and critiquing theatrical works.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Identify and employ techniques for active listening and viewing of theatrical productions
- Relate the elements of a dramatic production and the impact they have on the viewer
- Assess how an audience's response can impact a theatrical presentation
- Explain how dramatic elements (plot, character, action, diction, music, spectacle, Aristotle's "Poetics", etc.) combine to make a whole
- Establish criteria for evaluating a presentation's effectiveness in communicating ideas and emotions
- Evaluate the artistic quality of a production based on established criteria
- Examine audience evaluation tools and their effectiveness in critiquing a performance

To help students meet Standard 7, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) view and critique a live theatre piece; 2) read and analyze a variety of theatre reviews; and 3) research existing audience survey tools and develop a tool for a specific theatrical production. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.

Standard 8: Understanding theatre works in relation to cultures, times, and places

Standard 8 employs analytical and critical thinking skills to explore and understand the interrelationship between theatre and its social and historical contexts.

In order to meet the standard, students will:

- Compare and contrast different genres of theatre (e.g., drama, comedy, musical theatre, opera)
- Analyze dramatic works in the context of the culture, time, and place in which they originated
- Analyze and explain the function of theatre across cultures, times, and places
- Assess the social, cultural, and economic impact of theatre arts on society
- Examine theatre art careers and the roles of drama professionals in society

In order to help students meet Standard 8, teachers will provide opportunities for students to: 1) view and discuss a variety of theatre genres; 2) study the historical context of theatre pieces; 3) read and discuss essays/commentaries on the role of theatre in society; and 4) interview professional (or aspiring) actors or theatre arts professionals. Following instruction by certified theatre educators, students should be able to achieve proficiency at grade-level and at proficiency levels of expectation.