

Middle School Theatre: _____ Period, Room 19

Teacher: Josh Heard
 Prep Period: 6th

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 Google Classroom: **001ytgu**

Classroom Materials

- **1 Spiral Bound Notebook (250+ pages)** for coursework exploration/reflection
- **1 Pocketed Folder or Three Ring Binder** to keep track of assignments and projects
- **1 Reusable Water Bottle with a Lid**
- **Pencils and Pens** (pencil required for all script work; pen optional for all other assignments)

Course Description

This course is an acting and performance class. Middle School Acting students will build a foundation of skills and work ethic that introduce them to the craft of theatre. All students taking this course will participate as actors and crew members in class as they explore improvisation, monologues, scenes, and plays. Students can expect to participate in movement, voice, and acting technique activities every class.

Goals and Objectives

The ambition of this class is to introduce students to the collaborative and independent work that is required of theatre artists through explorations of monologues, scenes, and plays. Students will gain knowledge of, and experience in, the multiple positions and jobs that make up a functioning and successful theatre company. Students will learn the power of employing the tool of bravery in order to push past fears, while seeking out greater challenges in the creation of artistic works. Students will cultivate the tool of curiosity as a gateway to understanding new ideas and materials, and a pathway to deeper knowledge in areas they may already be familiar with in the realm of theatre.

Teaching Style

Students will learn by doing. While some classes will involve lecture and discussions, most of the time students will be on their feet doing the work. This class isn't about "getting it right." While students will be required to meet certain technical demands (such as actors knowing their lines), we will invest much more in "employing bravery" and "risking failure." It is in the attempt to reach beyond what we believe to be possible that we begin to experience the potential and purpose of theatre. In fact, we will redefine "failure" as a necessary step toward success. This does not mean students need not apply effort—quite the opposite. All students will work toward challenging themselves beyond what is expected of them, developing life long tools that extend well beyond the theatre and into their lives.

Google Classroom:**code to join - 001ytgu**

A Google Classroom page has been created to help students and parents keep track of classroom assignments and activities throughout the year. Students will also use Google Classroom to access tests and quizzes, online assignments, PowerPoint presentations, and other coursework documents. It is my first year attempting to utilize Google Classroom, and I will endeavor to keep it up to date to the best of my ability, but ultimately, any information the student requires can be gathered directly from the teacher in the classroom or through email.

Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge (Graphic Attached)

Theatre skills do not exist in a vacuum. True theatre artists must behave as scientists and detectives of their craft if they expect to unleash the full extent of their creativity.

To this end, students in Middle School Acting will be expected to apply every aspect of Bloom's Taxonomy as they approach a script. For instance, students will practice **Analyzing** scripts in order to develop a deeper **Understanding** of their characters; then, **Applying** this knowledge to rehearsals and scene work, students will begin **Evaluating** their own work, the work of others, and the needs of the scene, with the ultimate goal of serving the audience; **Remembering** all that they have discovered, students will begin **Creating** valuable works of art. No single piece of Bloom's pyramid can exist without the other when approaching this art form.

Similarly, theatre is a physical manifestation of critical thinking, reflection, informed application and experimentation; critical thinking, reflection, informed application and experimentation; critical thinking, reflection, informed application and... you see where this is going? Therefore, students can expect to become experts in all four areas of Webb's Depth of Knowledge chart.

Course Outline

The first semester will focus almost entirely on improvisation, along with a large unit on character physicality and motivation based in the acting style of Commedia dell'Arte. At the end of the first semester, students will present a night of improv for the PAPA community.

The second semester will explore script work, the basics of technical theatre, and some of the most essential jobs in the theatre. Students will also explore the origins of theatre and its impact on society.

Performances

Students *are required* to perform in PAPA theatre events. However, the ability to perform is both a privilege and a responsibility. Regular class attendance is required and crucial to the success of a performance. A passing grade in the class is also required. Students who are absent in the two weeks prior to a PAPA theatre event may not be able to perform and may be given an alternate make-up assignment. Please see the PAPA student handbook for specific details on the PAPA attendance policy.

Please mark you calendar's with these MANDATORY dates: December 4 - 6, 2018

Students will produce three nights of improv for the PAPA community. Each of the three Middle School Acting classes will perform on one of these nights. Classes not in performance may be expected to attend as support staff; this determination will be made in November and communicated to parents.

Call times will be announced closer to the performance dates.

Be aware that a reminder requiring parent/guardian signature will be sent home with updated dates and times the week after Thanksgiving.

Grading

Daily Participation and Attendance - 30% of Total Grade

Assignments - 25% of Total Grade

Projects and Quizzes - 25% of Total Grade

Semester Final Evaluations - 20% of Total Grade

Students will earn class points for participation, journal work, homework and assignments, in-class activities and in-class performances, quizzes, independent and group projects, dress rehearsals, tech rehearsals, public and competitive performances, and by following the rules and procedures of theatre.

Finals: Students will earn Final Evaluation points once a semester. These evaluations may include a performance, a written reflection, multiple choice questions, and/or a short answer component based on theatre vocabulary, technique and etiquette.

Late Work: Homework, Assignments, and Projects will have 5 points deducted from the final grade for each day past the due date. **A Reminder to Students: ANY GRADE IS BETTER THAN A ZERO**

How Performance Grades are Determined: Largely participation based, students will also have to meet specific guidelines clearly defined by the teacher when the assignment is given.

Sample Daily Participation Point Breakdown

1 pt. The student is **Present**

1 pt. The student was **On Time**

1 pt. The student is **Prepared** (ex. has course materials, assignments, etc.)

2 pt. The student **Seeks Out Opportunities to Participate** (doesn't have to be prompted)

5 Points TOTAL Possible

**Students with Excused Absences that meet the Student Handbook Guidelines for Attendance will not be penalized.*

Extra Credit is available to every student who attends a PAPA performance and writes a review. After attending a PAPA performance (such as, band, choir, dance, guitar, piano, orchestra, film screenings, or musical theatre), or any other theatrical performance outside of PAPA. Reviews must follow the Theatre Critic rubric which a student may request from the teacher at any time.

Classroom Expectations

Dress appropriately.

In addition to following the Dress Code found in the Student Handbook, students must wear clothing that allows them to move freely and comfortably. For example, do not wear clothing that inhibits the student's ability to participate in activities like yoga. Do not wear clothing that constantly requires the student's attention (examples: pants or shirts that must always be pulled up or down after physical activity). This does not mean students need to wear exercise clothes; jeans and a t-shirt are just as appropriate so long as the student has full range of motion. **Skirts and dresses are not appropriate unless the student wears shorts underneath.**

Attendance is absolutely necessary.

Students may be penalized in more ways than one for absences. Here's why:

1. This course relies on cumulative knowledge—meaning, what a student learns during the previous class is essential to successfully participating in the current day's curriculum. Missing classes will significantly increase the difficulty of the course for the student.
2. Students frequently work within groups, and absences will be a detriment to the entire group and project, not just the absent individual.
3. As a performing arts school, production rehearsals happen during class time. An absent student will significantly harm the rehearsal process for all involved in the production, and may result in terminating the absent student's privilege to participate.

Participation is more than showing up.

Students are expected to come to class prepared, with all necessary tools and assignments, and a willingness to complete all assigned tasks in the day's curriculum. Further, students will be expected to seek out challenges and confront related personal fears in order to unleash their full creative potential.

Support everyone. Period.

The work we do requires the entire class to participate in the creation and maintenance of a safe space to explore our creativity. Artistic exploration requires a level of vulnerability that demands unconditional support from our peers. Any behavior that is of detriment to fellow students will not be tolerated. Students are expected to behave as listeners, mentors, and compassionate allies.

No food. No gum. No drinks (except water).

Mints are welcome during roll call.

No electronic distractions.

Student cellphones and electronics must be on silent and stowed in the student's bag before class begins. **Electronic devices out without permission will be confiscated, turned in to the office, and returned to the student with parent/guardian involvement.**

Leave the space in better condition than how you found it.

Clean up after yourself and then go the extra mile to leave the space in even better condition for the people you share it with.

Consequences.

Students who repeatedly disregard the Classroom Expectations may experience loss of participation points, loss of privileges, contact/conference with parent/guardian, referral, removal from performances, behavior contract and/or academic consequences.

What we do in class will be challenging. If you are struggling or need assistance, please tell me. I am your ally.

Student Contract

Please Fill Out and Return Page 5 with a Parent/Guardian for an Assignment Grade

Name of Student: _____

Name of Parent(s)/Guardian(s): _____

Person to Contact and Phone Number: _____

Guardian Email address (Optional): _____

Please Read the following statements and initial below as instructed. By initialing I am confirming my knowledge of and commitment to fulfilling the following statements:

Student Initial | Parent Initial

____ | ____ I confirm that I have read through the Syllabus and attached documents.

____ | ____ I will attain Classroom Materials for an assignment grade, due by 8/21/17

____ | ____ I understand that performances are both a privilege and a responsibility, and that my attendance and participation are essential to participating.

____ | ____ I acknowledge and have recorded the provided dates and times for performances and competitions. (dates/times may change)
Improv Night: December 4 - 6, 2018

____ | ____ I have read and agree to follow the rules set out in our Classroom Expectations to the very best of my ability.

____ | ____ I understand that it is my responsibility to communicate any need for assistance to my instructor, and commit to doing so if I am struggling.

I have read and agree to the terms of the syllabus:

Student Name Printed

Parent/Guardian Name Printed

Student Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Help make PAPA Theatre even better! The theatre department may be in need of parent/guardian volunteers who can help us with our productions. If you can help in a certain area of need, please put a check next to category below and list who to contact.

____ Costuming: mending, alterations, sewing, etc.

____ Set construction: building set pieces, painting, etc.

____ Supervision: backstage supervision, ushering, taking tickets, box office, etc.

Name of Guardian(s) interested: _____