

Theatre 101 Workshop
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INTRODUCTION

Theatre is not just for cringy musical theatre kids from your high school. It is actually a multi-faceted, million dollar industry with immense amounts of history and complexity. Every year, an average of 13 million people see shows on Broadway, and audiences have been that large even dating back to ancient times. Theatre, like music, has a universal appeal in its ability to combine multiple artforms under one umbrella to present compelling narratives that inspire, inform and provoke. It is a discipline that involves so many moving parts, so whether in the production process, on stage, in the audience or behind the scenes, you can find a place to fit in. My Theatre 101 workshop aims to teach theatre pros and amateurs alike about the world of theatre, and all its aspects. From ancient theatre history to how to read a monologue, we will cover the basics of all things; theatre. I want students to take my workshop because theatre boosts mental health, overall intelligence and is a great way to gain confidence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Students will learn about theatre history, and how we got to where we are today. David Wiles says we would not be where we are today if it were not for the Greeks, creating the concepts of tragedies and comedies, as well as creating our first formal performance spaces; amphitheatres. They also were responsible for establishing many of the archetypes or “stock characters” we see in theatre today, such as the ingenue or comedic relief. Along with that, we will touch on Shakespeare and how he helped create stage directions on a raked stage. Students will also learn about acting techniques and methods, sometimes through readings of Michael Chekov and Mala Powers who tell us about using your body to express emotions, and the teachings of Meisner and Stanislavski, world-renowned acting philosophers with varying approaches as to how to attack a character. Lastly, I want my students to learn about every component that goes into making a show, the production, the directing, the costume design, and more! Theatre is only as good as its weakest link, and as Tal Sanders writes “Among the arts, theatre is unique in that at its very core it is collaborative”. It will only turn out well if all the parts communicate and do the best they can together, because “being part of a production often feels like having joined a new “family” (Sanders)”. I need my students to know that they must trust each other, and support each other, even if they have skills in different places or don’t enjoy the same parts of theatre.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION & SIGNIFICANCE (150-250 words)

The final project I plan to have my students exhibit at Arts Fest will be a collection of scenes and monologues written and directed by themselves. Students can choose to do an individual monologue or do a scene with a couple of other people, which should hopefully culminate to 2 scenes and 2 monologues. Hopefully by the end of our time together, I will have given them the design, directing and acting skills to put together something that truly intrigues the audience and

inspires them to do theatre too. I also hope that after learning about methods and techniques, they might be able to create their own! The student becomes the master as they say! Everything we will learn is just a viewpoint of some old dude from 500 years ago (Cole). When the foundations are provided for the students, I aim for them to take them and create something new in the future. Maybe a new acting method, a creative way to direct, or a helpful way to memorize lines. Art is meant to be changed and impacted by future generations.

AUDIENCE & IMPACT

My project is for anyone who is interested, theater lovers and novices alike. The point of the workshop is to teach new things, not build on already existing skills. Ideally, everyone at least shows some enthusiasm about theatre, or willingness to explore. It is vital to me that they take something away from this experience, and do not just forget everything as soon as they finish their final show. The participants will all be Arts Scholars freshman who enjoyed my preview, but the audience that experiences their final project will be average art enjoyers. I want to ensure they can see how much the students have grown in skill from the start of the semester. I also hope I can heighten the mental health of the audience as much as my students because “Attending live theatre improves empathy, changes attitudes, and leads to pro-social behavior (Dolan)” due to the hormones it makes you feel and relation to the people on stage. This will let them realize that literally anyone can do theatre if you put your mind to it! Arts Scholars helped me understand that anyone can do any art form, from drumming to stop-motion animation, if they just have the desire! As an education major, this experience really is to help me learn how to be an effective teacher, as much as they are learning too. I hope I can become a better educator, and use the tricks I learn with my future classes.

SKILLS

I have been doing theatre since I was in fifth grade, both on stage and off. Actually, I am currently playing a lead role in the musical *A Chorus Line* with UMD club, 32 Bars (come see it☺). I have played ensemble roles, supporting roles and lead roles, so I have the perspective of each type of part. In the backstage department, I have done sound team, putting microphones on actors and playing sound effects, and run crew, moving set pieces during the show, multiple times. Over this time, I have accumulated immense knowledge in terms of skills and techniques in all the fields though, by interacting with other teams. Though I possess all this expertise, this will be my first time teaching it all on my own, to grown adults. I will be challenged by making sure I keep them engaged, and never assume anything about their knowledge level. I need to make sure I stay on top of my lesson planning and organization of assignments. During class activities, or at the end of class, I will ask students to discuss what they learned and if I communicated the information correctly or effectively. Hopefully as the class goes on, I will be able to acquire knowledge about my unique set of students to help me teach them to the best of my ability.

DRAFT SYLLABUS & LESSON PLAN

WORKSHOP TITLE: Theatre 101

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

By the conclusion of this workshop arts scholars will experience the following:

- *Analyzing the impact of Greek and Shakespearian theatre on modern theatre*
- *Developing skills for approaching memorization of lines in a script, as well as how to portray emotion through lines on paper*
- *Learn about the different parts of putting on a show (production, design, blocking, etc.) and who does what*
- *Establish a community with a daily improv game, that will also improve acting confidence*
- *Collaborating on blocking and performing their very own scene, or individually working on presenting a monologue*

WORKSHOP PROCESS & EXPECTATIONS (aka Methods, 100-200 words)

The research question participants will explore are how does theatre improve mental health. Eric Dolan tells us how it impacts audiences but what does it do for the performers and technical crew? The structure of my workshop will be some sort of improv/theatre game to warm up, then a lecture about the topic for the day, then a related activity, culminating in a brief learning assessment or reflection. I want to start everyday with a warm up game to build a sense of community and have the students slowly become more comfortable with one another. These games also allow them to become more familiar with different acting skills in fun ways, that can be used come performance time. The lectures will be to provide them with the knowledge they need, and the activity will allow them to solidify the learning they did. The final assessment or reflection gives them time to consider how what we learned will impact their future work and further internalize the concepts.

WEEK-BY-WEEK WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

Week	Weekly Class Objectives, Activities, and Assignments
Week 1	SWBAT (Students Will Be Able To) understand basics of theatre history including Shakespeare and Greek Theatre, along with how to identify stage positions and where the terms came from, also introduce the Arts Fest final project Party Quirks Warmup Lecture on Ancient Theatre History Stage Positions Activity Quiz: Where on the stage am I standing?
Week 2	SWBAT learn the difference between musicals and plays, the audition process, and Broadway, and also perform a short dance combination Dance Warmup Lecture on Broadway, genres of theatre and auditioning

	Dance Combination and Slate Activity Send a recording of your own choreographed short dance
Week 3	SWBAT identify different technical theatre disciplines and how they work Freeze Warmup Lecture on technical theatre (set, costume, props, lighting, etc) Costume Design Activity Students submit a set design they made for a play/musical of their choosing
Week 4	SWBAT identify roles in the theatre process including director choreographer, music director, stage manager, and dramaturg Park Bench Warmup Lecture on the creative team and process Mini Musical Activity Reflection: What would I do want do in the theatre world and why?
Week 5	SWBAT practice basic acting principles and techniques “I love you” Tone/Emotion Warmup Lecture on acting philosophies and methods (Meisner, Method Acting, Stanislavsky, etc) Try out every method Activity Reflection: Which method helped you the most?
Week 6	SWBAT analyze and mark up a script “What are you doing?” Warmup Lecture on parts of a script, how we give scenes context within the given text, and how we can memorize lines effectively Line Memorization Activity Recite your memorized lines and submit a video
Week 7	SWBAT block a scene Mill and Seethe Warmup Workshop on how to direct/block, what it means Blocking a scene activity
Week 8	SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS
Week 9	SWBAT begin thinking about what they want to prepare for the final performance Bippity Bippity Bop Warmup Lecture about what the final performance will be Time to brainstorm, begin writing, find groups if you plan on doing a scene Submit a plan (what type you want to do, who is in your group if applicable, what the scene/monologue will be about, comedy or tragedy?)
Week 10	SWBAT start writing their scenes or monologues Tongue Twisters Warmup Time to work on writing the scene/monologue with help from me

	Submit a first draft
Week 11	SWBAT perform their scenes or monologues for the class Up My Butt Warmup Perform and receive class feedback Reflect on feedback and explain how you will incorporate it
Week 12	SWBAT finalize their pieces Zip Zap Zop Warmup Perform again, get a second round of feedback, and make final revisions Submit a final draft script
Week 13	Dress Rehearsals
Friday	Arts Fest exhibition and display set up (4pm-6pm) and Opening Night (7:30pm-9pm). All students expected to attend Opening
Saturday	Arts Festival @ Adele H. Stamp Student Union. All students expected to participate throughout the day.

WEEK 1 LESSON PLAN

Topic:	Theatre History and Stage Directions	
Materials:	Projector with slideshow, small pieces of paper with archetypes	
Lesson Goals:	To understand basics of theatre history including Shakespeare and Greek Theatre, along with how to identify stage positions and where the terms came from	
Timeline	Lesson Structure <i>(Your lesson should include all of the following components. You can adjust the order of each component and timeline to suit your plan for the day).</i>	
6:00PM	Reminders:	
6:05PM	Introduction:	Lecture on Ancient Theatre History - Shakespeare (comedy versus tragedy, the Globe Theatre, men playing women, etc) - Greek Theatre (Amphitheaters, stock characters, etc) - Raked stages as the reasoning for stage directions - What stage directions are (upstage, stage right, downstage left, etc)

6:10PM	Warm-up activity:	Party Quirks (with archetypes) - Each student will receive a piece of paper with their “quirk” or the character they are playing, and their one host who does not have a quirk. - The host lets in the party goers one by one and must guess what archetype they are as they interact with the host and each other. - The host gets 3 guesses for each person, and the game ends when everyone’s archetype is guessed or revealed.
6:20PM	Discussion Questions:	- Have you seen archetypes in shows or movies? What were they, and where? - Can you think of any other archetypes we didn’t discuss? - Why do we have stage directions? How are they helpful?
6:40PM	Activity:	Stage Positions (similar to Simon Says) - Call out different stage positions and have them run there. - Make them switch which directions they are facing, and then continue to run to the right places. - If you go the wrong place OR go when I do not say Simon Says, you are out!
7:15PM	Learning Assessment:	- Individual test of stage direction knowledge (speed round)
7:25PM	Final Reminders:	-For homework, take the stage directions quiz on ELMS. -Next class wear comfy cloths because we are going to be doing some dancing!

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Audition Monologues - Village Theatre.

https://villagetheatre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Audition_Monologues.pdf.

This source is just a list of different types of monologues. I want to use these to learn about how we act with varying emotions, dramatic versus comedic. This source, unlike the others, is not scholarly but rather just practical. It has helped me realize that not all research has to come from research papers and journals, it can come from anything.

Chekhov, Michael, and Mala Powers. *To the Actor*. Routledge, 2002.

This source is about acting techniques and methods. It breaks down basic acting principles and skills, which I hope to teach my students. It is similar to the next source on the list because it focuses on action rather than listening. It has a lot of information even I didn't know as a seasoned actress and will help me better the acting teaching.

Cole, Emma. "The Method behind the Madness: Katie Mitchell, Stanislavski, and the Classics." *Classical Receptions Journal*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2014, pp. 400–421., <https://doi.org/10.1093/crj/clu022>.

This source is also about acting techniques, but focuses on the ideas of specific acting philosophers including Stanislavski and Katie Mitchell. Focusing on their specific ideas will allow the students to deep dive into the minds of real actors. It has a lot of valuable insight into the bare bones of acting I feel the students will really appreciate, which is different than the classic style of learning to act.

Dolan, Eric W. "Live Theatre Can Boost Empathy and pro-Social Behavior, According to New Research." *PsyPost*, 25 July 2021, <https://www.psypost.org/2021/07/live-theatre-can-boost-empathy-and-pro-social-behavior-according-to-new-research-61582>.

This source is about how watching live theatre can impact your mental health and social behavior positively. It is very different from the others because it is all about the impact of theatre on others, not what theatre is. This is one of my main arguments for why I am doing this workshop and why people should take it. I always knew theatre impacted the people actually performing, but I never considered how it affected the audience.

Sanders, Tal. *An Introduction to Technical Theatre*. Pacific University Press, 2018.

This source covers all the basics of technical theatre, including the backstage tech: lighting, sound, costume, set and makeup design, along with the off stage, ticketing, producing, directing, choreographing and so much more. Technical theatre is something I am less versed in, because I was mainly on the stage, so this information will be helpful for me to digest and relay to the students effectively. I have grown an even greater appreciation for technical theatre after perusing this writing.

Spalding, Dan. *How to Teach Adults: Plan Your Class, Teach Your Students, Change the World*. Langara College, 2017.

This source is different from all the other sources because it is about how to teach, not what to teach. Teaching "adults" or at least people your own age is intimidating and different.

They may not listen to you, and they bring a very unusual dynamic to the teacher-student relationship. This source will help me learn how to manage that to make my workshop the most effective it can be, for both me and the participants.

Taylor, Millie, and Dominic Symonds. *Studying Musical Theatre: Theory and Practice*. Macmillan International Higher Education, 2019.

This source is about the basics of musical theater. This part of theater is my forte but it is always good to brush up on specifics. It goes over Broadway, how a musical comes together, and more. There is so much more to musical theater than meets the eye and this reading made me realize that more than ever.

Wiles, David. *Greek Theatre Performance: An Introduction*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

This source is all about Greek theatre history. I hope to teach this content so obviously I want to be knowledgeable on it, which is similar to a lot of the sources in this bibliography. I have learned a whole bunch from this reading and it has given me so much material to work with for the class.