

THEATRE ARTS APPRECIATION
Herndon Middle School – 2017-2018
Yearlong course - 5th period – 7th & 8th grade
Mr. Pafumi - Theatre Director

Drama Room

<http://www.hmsdrama.org/>

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This elective performing arts course is designed to give the beginning theatre student a deeper understanding and appreciation for the fine and practical art of Theatre. Study will concentrate on the history, vocabulary, and creative processes within this artistic discipline. As a class ensemble students will explore the tools of the voice and body, as well as seek for a dynamic energy that will bring action to the performance space of the theater classroom. These objectives will be met by sharpening creative skills through: storytelling, character development, improvisation, creative movement, and original scripted presentations. Daily work will involve the journey of process to product, wherein the class ensemble will serve as both audience and as performers. Every week, new theatre vocabulary words and artistic quotes will be presented to be used for discussion and in the application of critical writing responses. This course may serve as a springboard for interested students to become involved in the extracurricular HMS Theatre.

UNITS OF STUDY

Semester 1

1st Quarter: *August 28 to November 3*

- *Building the Ensemble*, which includes games, exercises and warm up that teach creative movement and vocal techniques for performing on a variety of stages.
- *History of Theatre*, by way of an overview of the different periods in history, including *Theatrical Vocabulary* and published *Quotes* by creative artists.
- *Storytelling*, which will include the structures of: character building, plot foundations, and learning how to connect with an audience in a presentational style.
- *Improvisation*, through Theatre Sports games and team challenges. Emphasis will be on comical scene work from audience suggestions. Class will be divided into teams.

2nd Quarter: *November 8 to January 25*

- *Duet Performances*, to include challenges in concentration and trust. Emphasis will be two person acting scenes, both scripted and improvisational.
- *Solo Performance* will be the final unit in this course, using all previous theatrical knowledge and skills to be applied on the stage as a solo performer. An original scripted monologue will be completed using a true-life story from the performer's experiences.
- *Peer Evaluation and Critique* will be taught and applied to all work that is presented.

Semester 2

Third Quarter: *January 30 to April 13*

Scripted Scene work. The class ensemble will work in groups of two to three actors, choosing dramatic scenes from classic American plays. Emphasis will be on scene study, character development, memorization techniques, blocking choices, and performance critiques. Each group will give 2 different presentations over the grading quarter.

Fourth Quarter: *April 17 to June 15*

- *Fairy Tales.* This classical genre will be explored through the research and development of several versions of the same story. Students will work in groups of 4-6 players throughout the grading quarter. Each group will rehearse and present 3 different variations of their fairy tale story – in both the classical and modern fractured tale.

RULES AND CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

- **No gum chewing, candy, food or drinks during class time.** These things are both a distraction and they restrict the ability to focus on vocal technique while performing.
- **No cell phones or personal music listening devices** are allowed during class time, and may be confiscated. *Exceptions to this rule are at the teacher's discretion.*
- **Flip-flops are highly discouraged!** There will be a lot of movement work in this class, and this type of shoe just is not appropriate for presentational stage work.
- **Arrive to class on time.** A second tardy to class results in detention. With each consecutive tardy comes longer detention time to be served after school.
- **Do not speak when others are talking** or “have the stage”. This includes listening to and paying attention to your peers and teacher while they perform and/or are sharing.
- **You will treat others with respect and courtesy** while always exercising positive manners. The art of theatre is a discipline that is to be understood by choosing respectful actions towards others. Negative language or behaviors will not be tolerated.
- **You must actively participate** every day in this class to receive an above average grade. Grading in this course is largely based on the demonstration of content and measureable skills. Students who miss ten or more (excused) class sessions within a quarter will be offered an alternative research written assignment for a final grade.
- **You will maintain an organized notebook** that will be continuously added into. This will serve as your class textbook. It will contain this syllabus at the front, all daily objectives, vocabulary words and definitions, quotes and authors, general notes, and all handouts and tests that are given throughout the semester. The information documented in this notebook can be used while taking the tests at the end of each quarter.
- **All other rules and guidelines that are documented in the HMS student handbook** as well as the expectations within the FCPS *Students Rights and Responsibilities* are to be strictly adhered to and obeyed at all times!

EVALUATION

- Students of this course will be graded for their project presentation work based on: **Demonstration of Content, Measurable Skill Sets** and **Audience Expectations.**
- Students who **earn below a 70%** on any project or test **may retake** outside of class time, but can only up to an 80% for the retake, no matter how high the score.
- All **late work and incompletes** must be turned in within **two weeks** after deadline. If not, the score for that project or test will be entered as a 50%.
- There will be **(4) Tests administered**, one at the **end of each quarter** – open notebook.
- **(2) Theatrical play reviews** to be written and completed by the end of each semester. Student must type a one-page (*minimum*) critical essay response on a theatrical production that is of a middle school, high school, college, community theatre or professional caliber (*no elementary or dance shows please*). A Herndon High/Herndon Middle School mainstage production is ideal for this assignment – show your support!

(8) Performance projects graded each quarter. Each worth 10% per quarter = 80% total

(4) Tests (open notes) given at the end of each quarter - worth 20% of the quarter grade.

(2) Play Reviews - due at the end of each semester - worth 10% of that semester's grade.

*Hand written work will not be accepted for final papers!
Outside of script memorization & play critiques, there will be no homework!*