

Assessment

Tools, Tasks, and Rubrics

Assessment Tools and Tasks

Adapted from *Music: A Resource Guide for Standards-Based Instruction*

Theatre education encompasses a wide range of disciplines. Experiential learning opportunities include the student as actor, designer, researcher, critic, technician, and writer. Since the purposes and contexts for evaluation in schools can vary, the design of an effective approach to assessment (evaluation) cannot be limited to a single mode. Nevertheless, there is a general agreement in our profession about sound evaluation practices and procedures. Effective theatre assessment will gauge students' level of proficiency in a variety of process, performance, and production areas.

The following tools and tasks are used in theatre classrooms throughout New York State. Teachers can use this list to inventory their current assessment practices, expand the types of assessment tools and tasks available to them, and evaluate the efficiency of their assessment program. In general terms, ***tools*** are materials and ***tasks*** are actions.

Assessment tools (materials)
Using the tools below in authentic theatre tasks better links curriculum, instruction, and assessment:

- Adjudication forms
- Checklists
- Computer programs/software (CAD, PowerPoint, Vecktorworks)
- Conferences with students and/or parents
- Evaluation by self, peers and teacher
- Journals, graphic organizers, performance logs
- Learning contracts
- Multimedia devices (e.g., computers, digital cameras)
- Performance observations
- Photographs, collages
- Portfolios
- Recordings (video- and audiotapes)
- Reports, essays, reviews
- Rubrics
- Standardized theatre assessments
- Teacher-made quizzes and tests

Assessment tasks (actions)
Tasks that provide opportunities to use the tools listed are:

- Auditions
- Collages (design and construction)
- Costumes (designing and constructing)
- Critiques/reviews (e.g., classroom performance, video- and audiotapes)
- Discussion/demonstration
- Display
- Graphic organizer (constructing and updating)
- Individual and group presentations and performances
- Individual and group projects
- Interviews
- Learning contract development
- Make-up (designing and constructing)
- Model building
- Multimedia presentation
- Original monologues and scenes
- Paper-and-pencil objective tests
- Peer coaching and evaluation
- Performance/production
- Problem solving
- Props (designing and constructing)
- Research local theatre resources (companies, performers)
- Research reports, essays
- Scenery (designing and constructing)
- Script analysis
- Student-created test questions and rubrics
- Student notebooks
- Student performance competition
- Surveys
- Technology-generated products
- Theatre journals (writing entries and reflections)
- Updates of performance logs

Rubrics

This rubric and those on the following two pages are offered as models for teachers. They were developed by a committee of theatre teachers for use in assessing high school student achievement of the commencement-general education level theatre performance indicators in New York State's learning standards for the arts.

Rubric for "Open Script" Performance Event

	4	3	2	1
VOICE	Student communicates expressively, enunciating and using variety of rate, pitch, tone, and volume.	Student enunciates clearly, using rate, pitch, and volume to express character.	Student attempts to enunciate, using vocal variety and volume, but execution is weak.	Student uses limited or inappropriate enunciation, vocal variety, and volume.
MOVEMENT	Student moves expressively, using a variety of gesture, body movement, and facial expression to effectively illuminate character.	Student moves cleanly, using gesture, body movement, and facial expression to illustrate character.	Student attempts to use gesture, body movement, and facial expression, but execution is weak. Use of script inhibits performance.	Student uses limited or inappropriate movement. Use of script in hand detracts from performance.
CHARACTER	Student communicates expressively, illuminating the life and world of the character.	Student communicates clearly, expressing the life and world of the character.	Student attempts to express the life and world of the character, but execution is weak.	Student uses limited or inappropriate acting technique to create character.
ENSEMBLE	Student uses concentration and focus to collaborate seamlessly with partner during performance.	Student uses concentration and focus to collaborate appropriately with partner during performance.	Student attempts to collaborate with partner, but concentration and focus are weak during performance.	Student lacks concentration and focus resulting in limited collaboration during performance.
WORKSHEET	Student worksheet demonstrates dynamic dramatic choices.	Student worksheet demonstrates appropriate dramatic choices.	Student worksheet demonstrates weak dramatic choices.	Student worksheet demonstrates unclear or inappropriate dramatic choices.

Reflection Rubric for "Open Script" Rehearsal-Performance Event

	4	3	2	1
STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES	Student **effectively** articulated and reflected upon the strengths and weaknesses of the choices made in the rehearsal process and performance.	Student **proficiently** articulated and reflected upon the strengths and weaknesses of the choices made in the rehearsal process and performance.	Student **weakly** articulated and reflected upon the strengths and weaknesses of the choices made in the rehearsal process and performance.	Student **very weakly** articulated and reflected upon the strengths and weaknesses of the choices made in either the rehearsal process or the performance.
ACTING ELEMENTS	Student makes **very specific** references to use of voice, movement, character, and ensemble.	Student makes **general** references to use of voice, movement, character, and ensemble.	Student makes **weak** references to use of voice, movement, character, and ensemble.	Student makes **inadequate** references to voice, movement, character, OR ensemble, failing to discuss all acting elements.
REFLECTION ON WAYS TO IMPROVE	Student writes a **perceptive** reflection on how to improve both rehearsal and performance.	Student writes a **proficient** reflection clarifying how to improve both rehearsal and performance.	Student writes a **weak** reflection on how to improve both rehearsal and performance OR fails to write about either the rehearsal or the performance even though written material shows perception.	Student writes a **very weak** reflection on neither the rehearsal or performance.

To arrive at an overall reflection rubric score, score each part and add up points. Use the conversion chart below to arrive at score.

12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
4	4	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1

Performance Critique Scoring Rubric

	4	3	2	1	Tally
INTRODUCTORY ELEMENTS	Includes all **five** (5) introductory elements	Includes all **five** (5) introductory elements.	Includes **four** (4) introductory elements.	Includes **three** (3) introductory elements.	_____
PRODUCTION ELEMENTS	Includes **three** (3) different production elements with specific details from the theatre piece that support the student's viewpoint. Shows a **sophisticated** understanding of the elements.	Includes **three** (3) different production elements with specific details from the theatre piece that support the student's viewpoint. Shows a **proficient** understanding of the elements.	Includes **two** (2) different production elements with some detail from the theatre piece that support the student's viewpoint. Shows a **limited** understanding of the elements.	Includes **one** (1) production element with little or no detail from the theatre piece that supports the student's viewpoint. Shows a **minimal** understanding of the elements.	(__x2) =___
PERSONAL REFLECTION	The student articulates a personal reflection in an **insightful** and **thorough** manner.	The student articulates a personal reflection in a **thoughtful** and **appropriate** manner.	The student expresses a personal reflection in a **limited** and **simple** manner.	The student expresses a personal reflection in an **unclear** manner.	_____

Total Rubric Points _____

Introductory Elements

Check all that are included:

___ 1) title and playwright
___ 2) date and place of performance
___ 3) whether it was a live or a taped live performance
___ 4) a one- or two-sentence plot summary
___ 5) identification of the main idea/theme of play/musical

Now convert the total points into a score and the score into a level. Then, record the level of achievement for the task in the space provided.

Rubric Points	16 15	14	13 12	11	10 9	8	7 6	5	4 3	2 1
Score	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Level	4		3		2			1		

Student Name_____ **Level**_____



Peer-Reviewed Learning Experience

Introduction
The New York State Academy for Teaching and Learning (NYSATL) was established in 1996 by the State Education Department to acknowledge those teachers who submitted learning experiences for validation by their peers, through the peer-review process. Over time, this process has become known as NYSATL's Statewide Peer Review. The process is an avenue for focusing professional development on standards-based classroom practice, as a means of enriching teachers' abilities to improve instruction for the purpose of higher student achievement. The process has yielded a rich collection of learning experiences that demonstrate how the New York State learning standards for the arts are addressed in classroom practice.

The following lesson, **Developing Characterizations by Creating Stereotypes**, submitted by Carolyn Black, has been accepted by the New York State Academy for Teaching and Learning. It has been included in this document as an example of how the instructional/assessment ideas included in the first section of the resource guide can be expanded into a detailed lesson plan and applied in the classroom.

You can view more lessons accepted by the Academy by visiting http://www.nysed.gov and searching for "NYSATL."

Developing Characterizations by Creating Stereotypes

by Carolyn Black
Ossining Union Free School District (retired)

Learning Context:
Students will gain knowledge about past and present cultures as expressed through theatre. They will interpret how theatre reflects the beliefs, issues, and events of societies past and present. Students will actively engage in the processes that constitute creation and performance in the art of theatre and participate in various roles. They will respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought. Students will develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

Standard 1 - Creating, Performing:
Students will:
- Create and perform theatre pieces as well as improvisational drama. They will understand and use the basic elements of theatre in their characterizations, improvisations, and play writing.
- Engage in individual and group theatrical and theatre-related tasks and will describe the various roles and means of creating, performing, and producing theatre.
- Write monologues and scenes to communicate ideas and feelings.
- Enact experiences through pantomime, improvisation.
- Use language, techniques of sound production (articulation, enunciation, diction, and phrasing), techniques of body, movement, posture, stance, gesture, and facial expression and analysis of script to personify character(s); interact with others in improvisation, rehearsal, and performance; and communicate ideas and feelings.

Standard 3 - Responding, Connecting:
Students will:
- Reflect on, interpret, and evaluate plays and theatrical performances, both live and recorded, using the language of dramatic criticism.
- Analyze the meaning and role of theatre in society.
- Explain how a theatrical production exemplifies major themes and ideas from other disciplines.

Standard 4 - Understanding diversity in shaping artistic communication:
Students will:
- Using the basic elements of theatre (speech, gesture, costume, etc.) explain how different theatrical productions represent the cultures from which they come.
- Articulate the societal beliefs, issues, and events of specific theatrical productions.
- Increase vocabulary (theatrical, societal), further develop writing skills, develop astute observations, and increase their knowledge of and sensitivity toward stereotyping.

Lesson works in English, Social Studies, Sociology, and Psychology in addition to Theatre Arts.

English Language Arts

Standard 4 - Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

Prerequisite:

- Students need some previous study of monologues and their development.
- Students need several lessons on creating characterizations, through observation, research, interview, personal reflection, etc.
- Students need to explore social perceptions and risk taking in class setting.

Procedure:

1. Students will develop a list of stereotypes indigenous to their high school and societal experiences, including typical, ethnic, and teenage descriptions. Students will use the basic elements of theatre (speech, gesture, costumes, etc.) to articulate societal beliefs, issues, and events in their original monologues, presentations, and evaluations.
   - Teacher initiates subject of stereotypes. (This can be done by showing photographs or magazine pictures to the class. Try to use black-and-white photos of ordinary—not famous—people, matted and mounted or framed for easy handling and viewing in group setting). Begin a story about one of the pictures, and have students complete the story orally. Let each student add to the story. This is important, as you want each student to participate.
   - Classroom discussion of the many stereotypes is essential. How to create a life for a particular face or expression is done orally, and collaboratively, with teacher as guide. Teacher encourages students to verbally create a life (family, environment, economic status, etc.) for one face, and then specify a dilemma this character is having in his life. For example, the character does not want to go home for the traditional Thanksgiving dinner. A possible reason for this is that the character:
     a. has had a disagreement with parent
     b. views Thanksgiving dinner as an unpleasant social gathering of unhappy relatives
     c. is now a vegetarian
     d. cannot contribute to the feast
     e. has no use for family tradition
     f. dislikes the fact the an older family member (if pictured) usually gets dumped on as meal preparer.

     Students will continue the process in the above manner.
   - Teacher has students write the thoughts of the character and try to solve the dilemma individually.
   - There will be as many different thoughts for the character as there are students.
2. Students will work individually to develop written descriptions of the stereotypes discussed in class, and will enter these into a journal/portfolio.
   - Students will create a photo file of their stereotypes, using old magazines and cutting and pasting the pictures into their files to coincide with their written descriptions.
   - Teacher should limit the number of stereotypes used in the journal and photo file to five or six. The teacher may choose to bring into the classroom magazines for the purpose of the photo file. Give each student an opportunity to display his/her work for entire class.
   - Teacher should allow for discussion of files in collaborative setting. Encourage students to include a wide range of stereotypes in their photo file.
3. Students then choose a stereotype that they do NOT consider to be their personality or type. Students must be encouraged to take a risk and choose a character they are LEAST like. They research the stereotype, using library resources, observation, personal interview, television, movies, etc.

Monologue Instructions:
When students begin the monologue, the following checklist should be included as a guideline:

Your monologue should include the following:
____ An expression of a human experience/dilemma
____ Background information that brings the subject to the dilemma
____ Emotional conflict for subject
____ Use of language/slang/nuance/essence of stereotype
____ Costume/dress/personae of the stereotype
____ Physical changes or acquired habits of the subject.
____ Strength of character's belief in his/her side of the dilemma
____ What does your character/stereotype want?

4. Students will memorize their creation and perform their monologues with appropriate costume; performance will be videotaped for assessment and analysis.
   - Teacher must keep students focused on the project. Long discussions of the descriptive terminology may have to be limited due to time constraints. Do not allow students too much time between the study of monologues and their development of the stereotype characterization.
   - Teacher should encourage students to give their character an inner and outer life—one that is as far removed from their personality as possible.
5. When the monologue is completed, a final taping of the character study is done and viewed by class and the student. Students may choose to make this a part of their performance repertoire.

Instructional/Environmental Modifications:
- Limited English speaking or physically challenged students may participate through portfolio display and/or performance.
- Students who have a problem with writing, as in organizing thoughts to put on a page, should be encouraged to use a tape recorder for listening purposes and editing.

Time Requirements:
Planning:
- Each segment of the project requires careful consideration. Initially, one week of preparation should be allowed for planning the focus of the project. Several things depend on the direction you may decide will work in your given setting. You may want to approach the project from a different perspective.
- Scapegoating is one alternative and prejudice is another. You can determine the focus after some discussion with the students.There is a short black-and-white film called *The Lunch Date*. Depending on approach, the teacher must allow time for each segment of the project.

Initial planning - one week.
Introduction - one week, minimum, including students' "people watching" time.
Implementation:
- Three to five weeks should be allowed for implementation. Depending on how quickly the students grasp the initial concepts, teachers may tailor the project to his/her needs. Students learn the concepts at different speeds. The final videotaping may take a whole week; this depends on class size, length of monologues, etc.

Assessment:
- Each segment of the project should be assessed separately. Worksheets, vocabulary development, photo files, and journals should be checked as often as the schedule will allow. The journal can be a part of the working guide to each student's progress. The second or third videotaping is one piece of

the assessment package. Students should be allowed to assess each other. A rubric follows that is student developed.

Materials and Supplies:

For student use:

1. Notebook for journal writing
2. Magazines or pictures for stereotype search
3. Separate folder for photo file (if desired)

For teacher use:

1. Video camera
2. VCR and television
3. Large, framed photos of typical stereotypes (try to use faces that are not famous). These photos should be taken from magazines and should be printed in black-and-white. Faces are more easily defined in black-and-white.
4. Recent articles about scapegoating, if available. Students usually know someone who is a victim. Or perhaps they themselves are victims of this singling-out process and will volunteer to talk about it.
5. A ten-minute black-and-white video of *The Lunch Date* (a short clip about prejudice).

Assessment Tools and Techniques:

Getting started:

1. Have students begin by listing the phrases or comments that make them angry.
2. Compile the list and show this to the students. Choose one or more comment from each student.
   - Guide students to read their particular phrases to the entire class. Only that student can say the phrase clearly so its meaning is clearly understood. All students enjoy this process. If you use scapegoating as your start-up, students will share instances of when this has happened to them or to someone they know well. *The Lunch Date* will engender a different type of discussion.
3. Have students choose the phrases that are related to stereotypes. How and why questions must be asked. How is this stereotypical? Why do you think so? Has this happened to you?
4. Lead the discussion.
5. Encourage all students to speak. Allow each of them time to speak without interruption by other students. Keep the environment friendly and encouraging so that each student will participate.

Photo file/creating a character:

Aim: How can we create a character using a picture?

- Students will develop a monologue for a character on the basis of a photograph. They will do so using specific questions that will help them develop a character.

Procedure: Hold up a large photograph of a stereotype (e.g., an old woman or man, a biker, a flower child, a glamour girl, a nerd). The photo should show some facial expression indicating that stereotype.

Ask students the following questions:

1. Who is he/she? (Define age, occupation, personal history from the picture.)
2. What is his/her name? (Encourage specific answers.)
3. What is special about him/her? (How does this person talk? walk? dress? Elicit specific character traits.)
4. Where is he/she? (Ask students to be specific. Is this person at home? at a restaurant?)
5. How does the person feel about being there? (Look at the face, particularly the eyes and mouth. Is the person happy? sad?)
6. Why do you think so?

7. What does this person want? need? dream about? (A boyfriend, job, a new walkman, bike?) What's stopping him/her from getting what they want? need? dream about? (They have no money, they have a police record, no one will hire them because of their appearance, etc.)
8. Instruct the class that the central desire they create for this character will be the center of the monologue. The question becomes, "Will the character get what he/she wants, needs, or dreams about?"
9. Monologues come about because a character has a need to tell something. What does the character want to tell you? How would the character tell you?
10. Have students develop several characterizations orally this way. Allow students to choose from a group of photos chosen by the teacher. Have students complete one characterization by writing what he/she thinks the character should say in a monologue.
11. Have students read their monologues to the class. Note in each what the individual had to say and what the dramatic question was. WHAT DID THE CHARACTER NEED or WANT THAT WE ARE WAITING TO SEE THEM GET OR NOT GET?
12. Students should begin their stereotype photo file with their descriptions.

Your monologue should include the following:

_____ An expression of a human experience/dilemma
_____ Background information that brings the subject to the dilemma
_____ Emotional conflict for subject
_____ Use of language/slang/nuance of stereotype
_____ Costume/dress/personae of the stereotype
_____ Physical changes or acquired habits of the subject (slouch, smoke, drink)
_____ Strength of character's belief in his/her side of the dilemma
_____ Wants of your character/stereotype?
_____ Changes the character undergoes in order to achieve his/her desire.

A taping and viewing of the first presentation of the monologue is very helpful to the student and teacher in assessing the progress of the monologue and its development. The above checklist should be employed here. Viewing allows student to make changes and helps in final production. Students can also assess each other in this first taping/viewing. As students are given feedback on the above checklist, students should make necessary changes and incorporate the following list for the rewriting process if a whole or partial rewrite is mandated.

Rewriting Work Sheet:

1. What do you like about this work?
2. What is the major conflict? How strong is it?
3. Does your monologue ask a question, present a dilemma, or present a need?
4. Is the monologue confusing?
5. Does this character sound familiar or is he/she different from your personality?
6. Will the audience have a clear picture of your character's problem?
7. How can you make the character stronger?
8. Did you complete the monologue? Is there anything introduced that seems to drift away?

The questions and checklists are guides. Teachers may modify any of the above for his/her specific circumstance or teaching situation.

After final taping and viewing by the class, and ask this final question:

- Did your monologue portray the stereotypical characterization using the gestures, facial expressions, need, choice, or dilemma set forth in the opening statement?

The following rubric was student developed with some input from the teacher.

Rubric

STEREOTYPE MONOLOGUES

DISTINGUISHED	PROFICIENT	LIMITED	UNSATISFACTORY
Stereotype with emotional conflict clearly defined	Character not clearly defined	Stereotype unclear	Improvement needed
Progression of events with background information	a clear plan, sufficient	Uninteresting, unclear recitation	Not understood
Clear enunciation distinctive, varied, effectively delivered	Adequate language use, clear and functional	Unclear, monotone vague, repetitious	Fragments and run-ons, inappropriate
Believable character memorized thoroughly	Not true, memorization sufficient but lacks passion	Memorization, distracting	Not memorized
Costume authentic	Costume sufficient	Costume careless	Costume inappropriate to task

Scoring Key:

Distinguished: 90–100 Proficient: 80–89 Limited: 70–79 Unsatisfactory: 65–69

The following rubric followed the guidelines of the students, but added an additional category for the development of the photo file and journal keeping. These are important to the student and teacher as the development process enables students to communicate all the important elements necessary to complete the characterization.

Rubric

STEREOTYPE MONOLOGUES

DISTINGUISHED	PROFICIENT	LIMITED	UNSATISFACTORY
Monologue is distinctly original, shows insight, shows understanding of character	Monologue is valid, thoughtful, and organized, and communicates understandable character	Monologue is not complete or detailed; organization or focus is unclear; character is difficult to understand	Monologue has no clear character development
Problem/dilemma and solution are clearly evident	Problem/dilemma and solution are identified	Statement of problem and solution are incomplete	No definable dilemma stated or inferred
Enunciation clear, presentation creative, gestures authentic	Clear presentation, some creativity evident, needs some authenticity	Is not understood, some garbled words	Enunciation with incomplete presentation
Fully memorized	Fairly well memorized	Partially memorized	Not memorized
Photo file and journal completely support the process of character development and monologue writing	Photo file and journal adequately support process, but missing some parts of development	Photo file and journal show inadequate, hastily assembled work	Journal and/or photo file are missing; work incomplete

REFLECTION:
The development of ideas for the monologues depicting stereotypes evolved after a student angrily entered the room saying, “You have so much hair, it makes you look like a ‘Jungle Barbie.’” She was joined by several other students announcing the taunts that upset them. The conversation that followed revealed that students often find themselves stereotyping each other. The thought of how often it’s done and how it causes such unhappiness became a topic to be explored.

As the stereotype monologue idea began to unfold, it became apparent that the students would benefit greatly from a workshop in monologue development. A former student and graduate of the State University of New York at Purchase agreed to a five-day workshop with the theatre arts students during class. Students described that experience as “awesome” and inspirational, and said it added a new dimension to their task.

This lesson really brings stereotypes into the forefront of students’ minds. It makes them focus on being less judgmental about the differences in people and more open to their similarities. “Walk a mile in my shoes” becomes a familiar phrase. Students broaden their outlook and become more tolerant. Students learn to be more open-minded and less judgmental in their own lives, especially when meeting new people, or when confronting new situations.

This series of lessons teaches students to think and solve problems in creating characters and monologue writing. Students spend time creating, writing, researching, and performing a characterization that stretches their imaginations, teaches them to focus, and helps them to “walk in another person’s shoes.”

It is suggested that students be encouraged to write everything in their journals, including unused, edited monologues. Most students keep their journals and do not part with them. Some part with only the photo files. The final draft is on videotape and written in the journal.

Students learn to evaluate their work and learn that rewriting is not rejection. They learn to embrace their differences, listen carefully, observe astutely, and believe in themselves.

Since completing these lessons on stereotyping, students have caught themselves in mid-sentence with “I’m stereotyping,” with a gesture that indicates that it is inappropriate and harmful. Some students have found themselves considerably friendlier to new students and much more open to friendships with students unlike themselves. I have found that there is an increasing diversity among the students now auditioning for the school productions and they are warmly welcomed into the fold.



Supplementary Materials

Students with Disabilities

The Theatre educator has the responsibility for teaching and supervising a diverse group of students. This group includes those students with learning disabilities, speech or language impairments, hearing and visual impairments, including blindness and deafness, physical disabilities, health-related challenges, and cognitive, behavioral, and emotional disabilities. To help all students achieve to their potential, it is recommended that multiple intellegences be addressed in all teaching strategies.

A varied instructional approach is extremely helpful for learning to occur. Of our five senses—sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell—it is recommended that theatre educators design lessons that use a minimum of three senses, the audio-visual-tactile senses, to reach every student. All students can benefit from these varied approaches.

All students must have equal opportunity and access to achieve the New York State learning standards in all areas, including the arts. To ensure access and participation in theatre classes, some students with disabilities may need services and supports to address their unique learning needs. These services and supports are determined by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) and indicated on the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). This may include program modifications, accommodations, supplementary aids and services, assistive technology devices and services and supports for school personnel on behalf of the student. To assure that the theatre teacher makes the accommodations to curriculum, instruction, and assessment that are necessary, the theatre teacher must be provided a copy of the student's IEP and be informed of his or her responsibility in implementing the IEP. For example, some students may benefit if printed materials are enlarged. Others may need tactile materials to accompany instruction. For some students, the theatre teacher may need to teach a skill by breaking it down into very small steps. Students may also use assistive technology services and devices, such as an auditory enhancement device or a voice-activated computer, during theatre classes. Consultation from special educators and related service personnel is a support that will help the theatre teacher provide successful learning activities for students with disabilities.

The theatre teacher should expect students with disabilities to successfully reach the goals established for theatre class as well as those indicated on their IEPs. The theatre teacher, as well as the student's other regular education and special education teachers are a team that supports student success. Regular reporting of student progress by all the student's teachers on a formal and informal basis helps monitor student progress effectively. As questions or concerns arise about student behavior and achievement, teachers should contact parents and school personnel according to the policies established by the school. If it is necessary for the CSE to meet and determine if revisions need to be made to the IEP, observations and assessments of the student from the student's teachers are most helpful in determining what changes, if any, need to be made to the IEP. The theatre teacher's participation in the annual reviews of students with disabilities provides valuable information in determining appropriate programs and services.

All students can benefit highly from the study of theatre in all of its modes, performing, creating, viewing, reflecting, and knowing. The quality of the theatrical experience should not be compromised. A teacher who exudes positive thinking, commitment and accomplishment, along with meeting other teacher qualifications can assist students with disabilities in their study of theatre. Teaching consistently in an audio-visual-tactile mode and concentrating on process and product will help encourage and inspire students with disabilities to fully participate in the theatre curriculum and learning activities.

For more information on State regulations, policy and guidelines for students with disabilities contact the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) via their website, www.vesid.nysed.gov or (518) 473-2878.

Benefits of Theatre Education

Aesthetic: Theatre is an art form in which students develop an awareness of beauty and a heightened perception of the world around them.

Character Development: Theatre develops trust, patience, perseverance, and strong interpersonal relationships.

Collaboration: Theatre teaches students to work cooperatively when responding to a given situation. It allows them to predict, plan, organize information, and solve problems collectively.

Communication: Theatre develops both verbal and nonverbal communication skills, as well as encouraging active listening.

Community: Theatre helps to bridge diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, providing opportunities for students to consider different values and attitudes.

Creativity: Theatre releases the student's imagination through spontaneous dramatic action which encourages and values unique, individual responses.

Experiential Learning: Theatre education provides active instructional opportunities suitable for all students with different levels of ability. It stimulates interdisciplinary learning in a variety of subject areas, such as social studies, language arts, mathematics, and science, as well as other art forms.

Multiple Intelligences: Theatre simultaneously addresses all aspects of learning: interpersonal, intrapersonal, cognitive, emotional, kinesthetic, ethical, and social.

Process to Product: Theatre involves both the learning process and its product, as students work individually and collaboratively when making choices about how to structure their ideas in a form appropriate for performance.

Self-awareness: Theatre helps students to understand themselves and others. This allows them to explore a variety of social roles, encouraging them to identify and empathize with others.

Sensory Perception: Theatre education develops and heightens students' awareness of the five senses.

Helpful Suggestions for Teachers

Integrating theatre techniques/concepts into other curricula or introducing theatre to the classroom

As in the design of a lesson in any curricular area, the teacher must identify the concepts, knowledge, or skills, articulate focus, and design challenges to facilitate learning. Unlike many disciplines, theatre teaching and learning are overwhelmingly collaborative and kinesthetic in nature. The guidelines below will assist teachers unfamiliar with theatre techniques and concepts to foster this integration for students.

- Provide a positive, comfortable atmosphere to facilitate creative risk taking and ensemble building.
- Use a large, quiet, open, clean space, unencumbered by furniture and suitable for movement.
- Kinesthetically and verbally involve all participants in a variety of capacities (e.g., leader/follower, actor/audience).
- Use open-ended questioning and coaching techniques to invite and encourage verbal participation by all.
- Encourage students to make their own decisions.
- Encourage group work, using collaborative problem solving.
- Include verbal and written student reflection.
- Work in a circle at the outset, expanding to flexible space usage.
- Actively participate and coach, encouraging and modeling appropriate behavior and guiding the lesson toward desired results.
- Use classroom control techniques such as “the freeze” with a percussive clap sound, the word *freeze*, or a change of lighting levels.
- Intervene or stop the action of lessons to clarify instruction, focus or refocus students, and allow for student reflection or observation.
- Repeat theatre activities to allow for developing and refining ideas.
- Allow time at the end of every session for short reflection or other culminating activities.

Selected Guiding Principles

For sequencing K-12 drama/theatre learning activities

- Always begin with large group activities in which students participate as a whole ensemble. The goals are to establish listening skills, concentration, observation and imagination in a group setting. Students should move to smaller group exercises once they have been able to show the ability to follow directions, concentrate, and observe as well as use some imagination with the tasks. Then, move to two students in a group and ultimate individual tasks or performances.

- Movement and mime activities should be utilized extensively before students are asked to do any type of dialogue or text work that requires voice.

- Be sure students know and can use the fundamentals of any task before they are asked to produce the product. For example, if students are asked to do character analysis, be sure they have explored a text and done analysis as a group, and a model of a character analysis has been provided. The example should accurately represent the implementation and finished product of the analysis process. This would apply to all new drama/theatre concepts such as script analysis, duo-acting scenes, and all aspects of technical design, creating blocking, etc. Any skills or knowledge being introduced for the first time should be well developed before asking the student to undertake the process or produce a product.

- When introducing new skills and concepts in theatre always attempt to include any historical information about the skill(s) or concept as well as some criteria for evaluating it. The depth and the complexity of the historical and the critical information depends on grade level. However, even in very early grades this can be done in a very basic manner. An efficient method for critical evaluation and analysis of theatrical elements or processes is to provide students with teacher developed scoring guides and evaluation instruments that will be used in assessing their product or the process. Always discuss the theatrical rationale for the traits or qualities included in the evaluation.

Glossary

(Selected)

Act: To represent, perform, interpret, communicate a character other than oneself; a major division of a play.

Actor: In performing a role or representing a character in a play, the actor uses vocal as well as physical techniques to bring the character to life for the audience. Posture, gestures, facial expressions, tone, pitch, rate, and diction all help to create and present the desired characterization.

Advertise: To call public attention to an event.

Antagonist: The antagonist sets the conflict in motion by offering an obstacle to the protagonist's objective.

Apron: The curved part of the stage that extends beyond the main curtain.

Arena Stage: Also called theatre-in-the-round and central staging. There is seating on all sides of the stage.

Aside: The dramatic device in which a character speaks his/her thoughts aloud unheard by other characters on stage at the same time.

Audition: An action-oriented interview between director and actors for the purpose of deciding who will be cast in what role; usually involves script reading, performing a prepared monologue, and/or improvisation.

Backdrop: A painted piece of muslin hung from the battens to depict a scene.

Backstage: This designation also applies to the wings area and, loosely, can be used to indicate anything in the physical plant that is not stage or house.

Basic Makeup: Applying base, highlights, and shadow to improve or alter facial structure for the stage.

Batten: A wood or metal pipe from which stage lights, drops, and scenery are hung.

Blackout: Stage goes to complete black; the blackout lighting cue is often used for a startling effect at the end of a scene.

Blocking: The actor's basic stage positioning given to the actor by the director or used in self-direction.

Blocking Symbols:

X=Cross **E**=Entrance **EX**=Exit **C**=Center **SR**=Stage Right **SL**=Stage Left
DC=Down Center **DSR**= Down Stage Right **DSL**=Down Stage Left **UC**=Up Center
USR=Up Stage Right **USL**=Up Stage Left **RC**=Right Center
USRC=Up Stage Right Center **USLC**=Up Stage Left Center **LC**=Left Center
DSRC=Down Stage Right Center **DSLC**=Down Stage Left Center

Bow: A movement at the waist that demonstrates acknowledgment and thanks to the audience for coming to the performance.

Box Office Manager: A person in charge of selling the tickets for a production.

Box-set: A feature of realistic theatre, a two- or three-walled set representing the interior of a room.

Cat-walk: A narrow bridge above the stage providing access to stage scenery or lighting units.

Cast: 1. (verb) to assign the roles of a dramatic production to actors; 2. (noun) the group of actors with specific roles in a play or narrative.

Character: A person or entity (e.g., animal) in a play, or the personality of that person or entity (e.g., animal).

Characterization: The art of developing the character (e.g., their life, emotions, choices, motivations, objectives).

Choices: The decisions of the actor or director regarding how a character will be interpreted in a given production. Most directors prefer to allow the actors some rehearsal time to explore their own choices before deciding what will best serve the show.

Choral Speaking: Reciting, in unison, a poem or piece of literature.

Chorus: In classical drama, the chorus was used to narrate offstage events.

Commedia 'del Arte: The basic plots derived from Roman comedy, and the cast of stock characters including Arlecchmo, Columbine, Pierrot, Pantaloon, Pagliaccio, Punchinello, and Scaramouche. The players appear in masks and in costumes that became the convention for the genre (e.g., the black-and-white "domino" costume of Arlecchino).

Concentration: The actor's focus on the moment of the play.

Conflict*:* Conflicts generally are described either as "human against human" (e.g., an equal struggle), "human against self" (e.g., a psychological struggle), and "human against an outside force" (e.g., an uneven struggle against some greater force such as nature, the gods, or some organization).

Costumes: Clothing worn by the actors in a performance.

Cue: The action or words that signals what happens next.

Creative Drama: An improvisational, nonexhibitional, process-centered form of theatre in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact, and reflect upon human experience.

Crew: Group of people working on technical aspects of production (e.g., set crew, costume crew, lighting crew, sound crew, running crew).

Comedy: A play that treats characters and situations in a humorous way and has a happy ending.

Culture: The arts, beliefs, customs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought at a particular time period.

Cyc: Short for *Cyclorama.* It is a huge, light blue curtain at the back of the stage that can be made to look like the sky.

Denouement: The solution to the conflict in the play, the untangling of the complications, and conflict between antagonist and protagonist.

Dialogue: Two or more characters speaking with each other.

Diction: The word choice made by the playwright; also, the enunciation of the actors as they say their lines.

Director: Person responsible for coordinating, guiding, and developing of all aspects of a production so that the performance represents a unified vision.

Dramatize*:* To present or view a story in a dramatic way.

Dramatic Criticism: An evaluation and analysis of a play according to accepted aesthetic principles.

Dramatic Play: Play in which children take on different roles (e.g., housekeeper, grocery store checker, camp counselor).

Dramaturg: An assistant to the director who researches the culture, period, and literary references in a play.

Ensemble: Acting in which a cast works together as a team to create a total effect rather than a group of individual performances.

Exposition: As part of dramatic structure, the information that is often presented at the beginning of a play. Here the playwright may set the atmosphere and tone, explain the setting, introduce the characters, and provide the audience with any other information necessary to understand the plot.

Expressionism: A highly symbolic and poetic style of drama that features distorted, oversimplified, and symbolic characters rather than realistic characters.

Falling Action: The action after the climax of the plot. (see denouement.)

Fourth Wall: The invisible wall of a set through which the audience sees the action of a play.

Front of House: 1. The part of the theatre in front of the proscenium arch. For example, the lighting equipment placed there is referred to as *front of house lights*. 2. Non-stage related production concerns, such as ticket sales, seating, concessions, and theatre house maintenance by the *front of house staff.*

Gel: A thin piece of colored plastic, available in a wide variety of colors, that can be cut and fitted to a light to color the beam directed onto the stage.

Genre: Each of the main genres may be subdivided by style or content. Comedy, for example, may be absurdist, comedy of humors, comedy of manners, or romantic. Genre studies examine a particular work in relation to others of the same kind, determining how closely it meets the characteristics in that genre.

Gesture: An intentional movement of the arms, hands, or other parts of the body that expresses or emphasizes a feeling or idea.

Graphic Organizer: A visual representation of organized data relating to a content area that integrates knowledge, fosters organization, and links higher order thinking skills.

Grid/Gridiron: A steel framework above the stage to which lines are attached to fly scenery and lights.

Ground Plan: A bird's-eye view of a stage set; also called a floor plan that often includes scenery placement.

House: The place where the audience sits.

House Manager: The person in charge of the theatre house, seating people, ushers, etc.

Improvisation: A spontaneous scene or episode created without a script by an actor or actors.

Lazzi: Plural for *Lazzo*, the Italian word meaning "trick" or "joke." Refers to comic bits or business, often repeated for humor (see Commedia 'del Arte).

Leg: A tall, narrow curtain that an actor can stand behind before an entrance without being seen.

Lighting Plot: A plan, usually drawn to scale, showing the placement of lighting instruments.

Mask: To use backing, such as flats, draperies, and drops to hide backstage areas from the view of the audience.

Melodrama: Features emotional action (more than motivation), stock characters, and a strict black-and-white view of morality (i.e., virtue rewarded and evil villains punished).

Mime: Acting without words or props.

Monologue: A work written to be spoken by just one person.

Motivation: The reason a character does something; the reason for an action.

Musical: A production consisting of a series of song and dance scenes, as well as spoken words.

Nonverbal Communication: Communication without words.

Objective: The goal a character has in a particular scene or throughout the play.

Obstacle: A person, place, or thing that gets in the way of a characters reaching their objective.

Off Book: When an actor has his lines memorized and doesn't need to look at the script.

Open Script: A written dialogue with no apparent plot, given circumstances, or specific characters.

Orchestra Pit: The place where the orchestra or band is set up: usually in the front of the theatre or under the stage.

Oral Interpretation: Interpreting and communicating a story or script primarily through voice, facial expression, posture, and minimal gestures. In formal theatre, used in specialized presentations like Readers Theatre and storytelling.

Pantomime: Creating an imaginary object through hand and body movement.

Personal Review: An announcement in print or broadcast media of a production with some description of the cast, plot, and technical elements.

Places: A stage manager's term. It means you go to your first entrance and are quiet so that he/she knows you are ready and can start the show.

Play Space: Any space where drama takes place (e.g., classroom, stage, auditorium).

Playwright: A person who writes a play.

Portfolio: An organized, systematic record of student work chosen by the student and teacher that documents growth in student learning. Portfolio types usually include process, product, and cumulative portfolios.

Producer: The person who puts together a theatrical production: obtains financial backing; leases rights to the play; rents the theatre; hires the directors, designers, crews; and supervises the budget.

Prompt Book: A notebook containing a script pasted on large pages with areas for notes. The notebook also contains production notes, blocking, and all lighting, sound, and special effects cues.

Props: Short for stage properties. Usually divided into four categories: hand props, set props, dress props, and effects not produced within the lighting and sound boards.

Proscenium Stage: A performance space in which the audience views the action as if through a picture frame.

Readers Theatre: A performance at which a play is read aloud for an audience rather than memorized.

Rendering: A sketch or illustration of a proposed product, often used to depict scenery that reflects the meaning and intent of a play.

Resolution: A period of time in which the conflict in the play is ended.

Rigging: The process of hanging scenery or lights; the handling of stage curtain or drops.

Rising Action: The events of a play leading up to the climax; the creation of conflict; the entanglement of forces.

Role-Play: Taking on a role in a play or improvisation.

Scene: A division of an act or of the play itself.

Scrim: A drop made from sharkstooth scrim or theatrical gauze and dyed or lightly painted: it becomes transparent when lit from behind.

Script: The text of a play, motion picture, or broadcast.

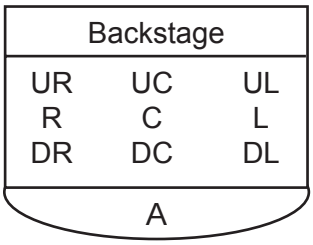
Script Analysis: The separation of the script into its parts in order to determine/understand its nature.

Setting: The surroundings in which the action of the play develops; also the units of scenery that combine to suggest a particular place.

Sight Line: Lines indicating visibility of onstage and backstage areas from various points in the house or audience.

Smart Board: An interactive device that combines the power of a projector, computer, and white board, and allows class presentations from a computer in an interactive manner.

Stage Areas/Directions:



Key:

Upstage Right - UR	Upstage Center - UC	Upstage Left - UL
Stage Right - R	Center Stage - C	Stage Left - L
Down Stage Right - DR	Down Stage Center - DC	Down Stage Left - DL

Apron - A

Stage Crew: The backstage technical crew responsible for running the show.

Stage Manager: The person in charge backstage during the performance.

Stage Property: Anything that the actor handles onstage as well as furniture and other items used to enhance the set.

Story Board: The depiction of the script in comic book form to help visualize a play.

Story Dramatization: An improvised play based on a story and used in informal drama. At the elementary level, students are usually guided by a leader who reads or tells a story while the students take on roles. At upper levels, students assume the various roles and work in ensemble to dramatize the story, often interchanging roles and experimenting with ideas.

Storytelling: The process of orally interpreting a story with a script or from memory using voice, facial expression, and gestures.

Strike: To take down the set.

Synthesis: The combination of separate elements into a single or whole unit.

Tableau: A frozen picture.

Tech Control Center: The place where the lighting and sound operation equipment is se tup and run.

Technical Elements: Lighting, sound, makeup, costumes, set design/construction, props.

Theme: What the play means as opposed to what happens.

Thrust Stage: A combination of the proscenium and arena stages, where the audience sits on two or three sides of the acting area.

Tragedy: A play in which the protagonist fails to achieve desired goals or is overcome by opposing forces and, in many tragedies, dies.

Understudy: Someone who learns a role for the purpose of performing in the absence of the primary actor cast in that role.

Unit Set: A stage setting consisting of units of scenery that are capable of being rearranged in varous combinations for different scenes.

Venues: Types of performance space.

***Verbal Communication*:** Communicating with words.

Wings: The offstage area to the right and left of the set used as entrances but concealing backstage areas.

Theatre Resources For Teachers

The list of resources that follows was compiled by the New York State Theatre Education Association (NYSTEA) Curriculum Committee and other contributors to this guide listed on the Acknowledgments page. These titles represent a sample of resources available in the field of theatre education. The list is not exhaustive nor is it intended as a recommended list; rather, it is a list of resources that may be helpful to teachers implementing the instructional ideas, suggested assessments, and other curricular materials found earlier in this document.

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