

Westmont High School Theatre I: Beginning Acting Course Syllabus 2017 / 2018



INSTRUCTOR: Mr. Jeff Bengford **ROOM:** Room 6
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This year-long, activity-oriented course introduces students to the art of acting while building upon the student's Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration & College and Career Readiness.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To develop our skills as communicators. – 1st step: "I got it!"
- To study basic principles of acting (objectives, obstacles, & choices) & character analysis
- To learn about theatre etiquette, the audition process and basic stage & rehearsal terms

CONTENT STANDARDS

Theatre I fulfills the California State Standards for the Visual & Performing Arts as well as the Visual & Performing Arts requirements for graduation from WHS and entrance to the UC/CSU system.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE WORK

Fall Semester

1st Six Weeks TOPIC: Mime & Media / PROJECTS: Theatre Games, Etiquette, Vocabulary, Mime
2nd Six Weeks TOPIC: Comedy / PROJECTS: Characterization, Lip Sync, Scenes, Media Report
3rd Six Weeks TOPIC: Tragedy / PROJECTS: Scenes, Monologue Project

Spring Semester

1st Six Weeks TOPIC: Collaboration / PROJECTS: Theatre Research Project (including scene work)
2nd Six Weeks TOPIC: Rehearsal Process / PROJECTS: One Act Rehearsals, Play Report
3rd Six Weeks TOPIC: Production / PROJECTS: One Act Performances, Career Report, Resume, Pitch Project

Check WestmontDrama.com for the most current dates <http://www.westmontdrama.com>

REQUIRED MATERIALS *(the following items are recommended)*

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|--|-------------------------------|
| A. Books / plays / materials checked out to you | C. Black or Blue Pen(s) |
| B. a folder or 3 ring binder with sleeves to keep your work in | D. College-ruled binder paper |

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Collaboration: Our class is a community, dependent on the participation & enthusiasm of all for success.

Dress Code: Comfortable, loose-fitting clothing should be worn. No revealing or assaulting clothing is permitted.

Scene / Monologue Selections: Students will be required to find material to work on each semester.

CLASSROOM RULES

Show Respect

Do not use profanity, name calling, or physical abuse and be sensitive to the ideas, opinions and property of others. Respect each other, respect the work, respect the process, respect the director(s).

Be Here & Ready

Be here for class and after-school rehearsals & evening performances. Roles will be recast if you are absent.

Be warmed up, be memorized, be professional.

Late work is always accepted up to final exams begin for a lower grade.

Clean Up.

Keep the stage and the classroom clean – No food, drinks, or gum. Throw trash away outside.

A Special Note: Cell phones are to be left in the Cell Phone Carrier in the front of the classroom.

The theater building and all the spaces in which we share our love of theatre are extensions of the classroom and thus, all school rules are applicable.

GRADING POLICY

Class Work 40%

This class is interactive. The more each student puts into the class, the more we will all get out of it. Students earn points for positive cooperation in class activities and a willingness to try, ask questions, and volunteer. Students lose points when they are disruptive, disrespectful or unprepared

Grading Rubric

A = Takes initiative / contributes beyond required.

B = Participates often in class.

C = Satisfactory and complete. Shows interest.

D = Minimum effort. Seldom responds in class.

F = Breathing but rarely responsive.

0 = Tries to be invisible.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and promptness is expected at all times. Your grade will suffer for each absence.

- Tardies affect the student's overall class grade.
- When absent the parent, guardian or student should contact the instructor as soon as possible.
- Students absent for school activities are expected to submit their work on time or before the work is due.
- Work loses a potential grade every day the work is late. (A work submitted 1 day late = B work)

Missed Performances

Students who miss a performance miss performance points. To make them up, students must find, rehearse, and create their own performance. They must also find their own space, audience and recording to document their performance.

Assignments 40%

Written work is graded on clarity (ex: blocking in a script); format, grammar, spelling, and mechanics.

Tests and quizzes are occasionally given to evaluate the student's understanding of Theatre Vocabulary.

Students are never graded on "talent." A performance rubric is used to grade performances.

Students will:

- participate in daily exercises, theatre games, projects and workshops.

- choose, rehearse and present a scene in the fall and a One Act play in the spring.

- create a scene book for each of the above

- present at least one monologue

- complete a Theater Research Project (oral report + assigned performance + individual response paper)

- participate in the annual One Act Play Festival: **after-school rehearsals: 2:30-5:00 May 18 & 22**

Performances: May 24 & 25

ONE ACTS: Each class selects their own plays and student directors.

Students must attend all performances of the One Act Festival whether they are performing or not.

One Act Play directors are responsible for the technical needs and clean up of their plays.

Critiques 10%

Students must write two Critiques per semester. One Critique SHOULD be on the school play presented during that semester and the other must be on a show produced by a professional company, community theatre, high school or college. Shows produced by a children's theatre or a church are not acceptable. (See the attached outline to help you write a Critique.)

NOTES: 1) The instructor is available to help students find cost effective ways to see shows.

2) If a student does not write at least one critique, they can not receive an A.

Service Hours 10%.

Students must work on a Westmont show in some way or another for a minimum of 10 hours. These hours are in lieu of traditional homework. Students are responsible for updating their Time Card online at: www.WestmontDrama.com

ACADEMIC CODE OF CONDUCT

All students are expected to adhere to the guidelines of the Westmont High School Academic Code of Conduct.

Do your own work. Any words in your writing that come from another source must have quotation marks around them and be followed by a parenthetical source citation. If you use words as if they are yours, that is plagiarism and it is illegal.

“Everyday is an Audition”



Theatre Critiques

A Critique is a formal, written report on a performance.
The Critique should contain **five** paragraphs.
Use MLA Format for your heading and margins.

Two Critiques are required per semester

Short Paragraph 1 - The Basics

Introduce the name of the play, author, place of performance, date of performance, and director. In a few sentences talk about the basic plot of the play.

Paragraphs 2 & 3 - The Acting

Discuss two of the performers in the show. Be sure to use their real names.
Were they believable? Why? How?

Discuss the following:

VOICE: How did the actor use their volume, tempo, vocal quality, articulation?

BODY: How did the actor use gestures, movement, and stage business?

EMOTIONS: Were the emotions true to the character?

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS: How did the actor use their face?



Short Paragraph 4 - The Design

Discuss two of the following:

SET: Did the set establish the correct mood and background for the play?

LIGHTS: Did the lighting convey the proper mood, emphasis, and illumination?

COSTUMES / MAKE UP: Were the costumes and makeup true to the period and characters?

SOUND: How did the sound effects and music contribute to the show's mood?

Short Paragraph 5 - Your Reaction

What was your opinion of the play?

Avoid generic phrases like: “two thumbs up” or “3 out of 5 stars” use your words!

TIPS:

Back up your opinions with valid reasons.

Be objective, fair and constructive. Indicate good points along with those you felt needed improvement.

Be sincere. Believe what you say.

Use MLA Format for your heading and margins.

Look on our website www.WestmontDrama.com to read examples of well written critiques from the past.

REMEMBER TO:

Attach a program for the performance you saw (*unless you saw the show with me as a field trip*)

A Format for Writing Theatre Reviews

Created by Jeff Bengford

Paragraph #1	When	<i>On Thursday, June 11</i>	
	What	I saw an original musical called <i>Tiger Stripes</i> written by Doug Soucha presented by TheatreWorks	
	Where	at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts.	
	Plot	This brilliant new work is about... (the italicized words above are appropriate for <i>Tiger Stripes</i> but you should choose your own words for the show you are evaluating)	
Paragraph #2	Who	During the show, I very much enjoyed the performance of...	
		Actor's Name	
		Character they played	
		Discuss the use of their "tools" Voice, Body, Facial Expressions	
		Give examples	
Paragraph #3	Who else	I also would like to discuss the performance of...	
		Actor's name	
		Character they played	
		Discuss the use of their "tools" Voice, Body, Facial Expressions	
		Give examples	
Paragraph #4	Wow!	In addition to the <i>fine</i> work of (actor's names) I was also <i>impressed</i> with the technical aspects of the show.	
		Discuss the sets, lights, costumes, props	
Paragraph #5	Wrap it Up	<i>I enjoyed this production and...</i>	

Make sure YOUR words are appropriate for the show YOU saw