

# Theatre Foundations 1

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Mr. Cragun

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## Course Description:

This class is a brief survey of theater including: basic performance skills, theatre history, pantomime, script work, and basic theatre terminology. Through these studies, students will have a chance to develop their creativity, self-confidence, communication skills, and artistic voice. This is an opportunity for students to experience performance in a safe and welcoming environment, and to develop their talents, regardless of previous experience.

## Expectations:

1. **Be in Class:** Theatre is a participatory art form, if you aren't in class, you can't engage with the material. Attendance is crucial.
2. **Participate in Class:** Showing up is only half the battle. Students must be willing to participate in all classroom activities, including warm-up activities and performances.
3. **Be Ready:** Our ability to progress in the classroom will be determined by the students' preparation. If a student neglects to bring the proper materials, or fails to prepare the needed material, it will impede our ability to continue working.
4. **Be Respectful:** This class allows for students to branch out and grow personally. In order for growth to occur, the environment must be one of encouragement and support. Students will be expected to work with their peers to create a safe environment for our learning.

## Assessment and Grading:

- **Attendance:** Every class at SHS is required to include attendance as a part of a student's grade. This is calculated directly by SIS. Because this class focuses so heavily on participation and hands-on experience, attendance will account for 20% of a student's grade.
- **Performances:** Students will be expected to perform a number of times throughout the class. Because every student will come to the class with a different level of experience and talent, students will be graded based upon their efforts as well as objective standards, not against the skills of their peers. These performances will vary in the size, length, number of partners, etc.
- **Daily Assignments:** There will be a number of smaller assignments throughout the class that will be based on the daily lessons. These assignments will generally be worth a relatively small number of points, but will add up in the end. Oftentimes these assignments are used to check a student's preparedness for class or to have them respond to a lesson or a performance.
- **Play Reports:** In order to gain a full understanding of what theater holds as an art form, students will be asked to seek out theatrical opportunities throughout each term as follows:
  - **Play Viewing Report:** Once per **semester** students will be required to go see a play and respond to it. Students are responsible to find a play that works, though I always make an effort to keep them informed on what is showing in the area. Plays can range from elementary school level to full Broadway productions. It must be a full-length play (Greater than 60 minutes) and it must be live (no video recordings). Ballets and operas do not count for this assignment.

If purchasing a play ticket is an issue for your family, please contact me early. There are

a few free productions that happen throughout the year, and I always set aside a few tickets to the school play for families in need.

- **Play Reading Reports:** Once per **term** students are expected to read and respond to a script. This must be a full-length script (no one-acts) and should be a script that the student has not read before. If a student reads a script as part of an assignment for another class, they may use it for this assignment, but only if it was read during the current term. Students are welcome to check out scripts from the drama department’s script library as long as they are well cared for and returned promptly. There are also a number of scripts in the public domain that can be accessed online.
- **Extra Credit:** Students may turn in an extra play report for extra credit. While I encourage students to take this opportunity, the extra credit will not be substantial enough to make up for major assignments not being completed. It is not a means of getting out of class work entirely.
- **Grading Scale:**

F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
<60%	60-63%	63-68%	68-70%	70-73%	73-78%	78-80%	80-83%	83-88%	88-90%	90-93%	>93%

**Late Work and Absences:**

As stated earlier, it is essential for students to come to class prepared with their work completed. Work that is handed in after the due date will be accepted at a discounted grade. Work will be docked **10% per school day** that it is late. All late work must be handed in at least one week before the end of term to be considered for credit.

If a student misses class for whatever reason, they are responsible to find out what they missed. If an assignment was due the day they were absent, it must be handed in upon their return to class, or it will be considered late. If an assignment was given during their absence, they will be given additional time to make up the work equal to the number of days absent.

**Final Thoughts:**

Theatre is a unique experience and the class will be different from many others that students take during their high school careers. Many students will comment on how they enjoy having a break from what they see as the “typical” class. I love watching as students gain confidence and self-esteem. I love watching as their talent grows. This class can be something that students will remember for years to come. If there is anything that you feel that I should know in order to help you get the most out of this class, please feel free to contact me.

Thanks! And let’s have a great year.