

# Verona Public School District Curriculum Overview

## Theater Arts



**Curriculum Committee Members:**  
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**Verona Public Schools Mission Statement:**

The mission of the Verona Public Schools, the center of an engaged and supportive community, is to empower students to achieve their potential as active learners and productive citizens through rigorous curricula and meaningful, enriching experiences.

**Course Description:**

Theater Arts is a one semester course that approaches theater from a broad, practical perspective. Students will explore the performance, design, production, and composition of theater arts through creative, hands-on projects. The course will culminate in the creation of a complete theatrical production, scaled down to “toy theater” size, for which the students will design and construct the theater space, set, script, costumes, and sound of a short play.

**Prerequisite(s):**

None

## Standard 8: Technology Standards

<b>8.1: Educational Technology:</b> <i>All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.</i>	<b>8.2: Technology Education, Engineering, Design, and Computational Thinking - Programming:</b> <i>All students will develop an understanding of the nature and impact of technology, engineering, technological design, computational thinking and the designed world as they relate to the individual, global society, and the environment.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Technology Operations and Concepts</li> <li><b>X</b> B. Creativity and Innovation</li> <li><b>X</b> C. Communication and Collaboration</li> <li><b>X</b> D. Digital Citizenship</li> <li><b>X</b> E. Research and Information Fluency</li> <li><b>X</b> F. Critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. The Nature of Technology: Creativity and Innovation</li> <li><b>X</b> B. Technology and Society</li> <li>C. Design</li> <li>D. Abilities for a Technological World</li> <li>E. Computational Thinking: Programming</li> </ul>

## SEL Competencies and Career Ready Practices

<b>Social and Emotional Learning Core Competencies:</b> <i>These competencies are identified as five interrelated sets of cognitive, affective, and behavioral capabilities</i>	<b>Career Ready Practices:</b> <i>These practices outline the skills that all individuals need to have to truly be adaptable, reflective, and proactive in life and careers. These are researched practices that are essential to career readiness.</i>
<b>Self-awareness:</b> The ability to accurately recognize one's emotions and thoughts and their influence on behavior. This includes accurately assessing one's strengths and limitations and possessing a well-grounded sense of confidence and optimism.	CRP2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills. CRP9. Model integrity, ethical leadership, and effective management. CRP10. Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.
<b>Self-management:</b> The ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, controlling impulses, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward achieving personal and academic goals.	<b>X</b> CRP3. Attend to personal health and financial well-being. CRP6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation. CRP8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. CRP11. Use technology to enhance productivity.
<b>Social awareness:</b> The ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports.	CRP1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee. CRP9. Model integrity, ethical leadership, and effective management.
<b>Relationship skills:</b> The ability to establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups. This includes communicating clearly, listening actively, cooperating, resisting inappropriate social pressure, negotiating conflict constructively, and seeking and offering help when needed.	CRP4. Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason. CRP9. Model integrity, ethical leadership, and effective management. CRP12. Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.
<b>Responsible decision making:</b> The ability to make constructive and respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.	CRP5. Consider the environmental, social, and economic impact of decisions. CRP7. Employ valid and reliable research strategies. CRP8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them. CRP9. Model integrity, ethical leadership, and effective management.

## Standard 9: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life and Careers

<b>9.1: Personal Financial Literacy:</b> <i>This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers.</i>	<b>9.2: Career Awareness, Exploration &amp; Preparation:</b> <i>This standard outlines the importance of being knowledgeable about one's interests and talents, and being well informed about postsecondary and career options, career planning, and career requirements.</i>	<b>9.3: Career and Technical Education:</b> <i>This standard outlines what students should know and be able to do upon completion of a CTE Program of Study.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Income and Careers</li> <li>B. Money Management</li> <li>C. Credit and Debt Management</li> <li>D. Planning, Saving, and Investing</li> <li>E. Becoming a Critical Consumer</li> <li>F. Civic Financial Responsibility</li> <li>G. Insuring and Protecting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Career Awareness (K-4)</li> <li>B. Career Exploration (5-8)</li> <li><b>X</b> C. Career Preparation (9-12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Agriculture, Food &amp; Natural Res.</li> <li>B. Architecture &amp; Construction</li> <li><b>X</b> C. Arts, A/V Technology &amp; Comm.</li> <li>D. Business Management &amp; Admin.</li> <li>E. Education &amp; Training</li> <li>F. Finance</li> <li>G. Government &amp; Public Admin.</li> <li>H. Health Science</li> <li>I. Hospital &amp; Tourism</li> <li>J. Human Services</li> <li>K. Information Technology</li> <li>L. Law, Public, Safety, Corrections &amp; Security</li> <li>M. Manufacturing</li> <li>N. Marketing</li> <li>O. Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Math</li> <li>P. Transportation, Distribution &amp; Log.</li> </ul>

## Course Materials

<b>Core Instructional Materials:</b> <i>These are the board adopted and approved materials to support the curriculum, instruction, and assessment of this course.</i>	<b>Differentiated Resources:</b> <i>These are teacher and department found materials, and also approved support materials that facilitate differentiation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment of this course.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>Proof</i> by David Auburn</li> <li>● <i>Contemporary Stage Monologues</i> (Anthology)</li> <li>● <i>Secret Life of the American Musical</i> by Jack Viertel</li> <li>● <i>Shrek: The Musical</i></li> <li>● <i>Guys and Dolls</i></li> <li>● <i>Theater: Art in Action</i> (Textbook)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Graphic organizers</li> <li>● Set design templates</li> <li>● Costume plot templates</li> <li>● Costume sketch templates</li> <li>● Selected myths from ancient societies</li> </ul>

**Unit Title / Topic:** Building an Ensemble

**Unit Duration:** 3 Weeks

## Stage 1: Desired Results

### Established Goals:

#### National Core Arts Standards for Theater:

##### TH:Cr3.1.I: Refine and complete artistic work

b. Explore physical, vocal and physiological choices to develop a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant to a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Pr4.1.I: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

- a. Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.  
b. Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Pr5.1.I: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

a. Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.

##### TH: Re7.1.I: Perceive and analyze artistic work

a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

## Transfer

### Transfer Goal:

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Engage in and use theatrical warm-ups to prepare themselves for class activities
- Perform complete improvisational scenes with other members of the class
- Trust and support each other in a performance setting

## Meaning

### Students will understand:

- Theatrical performances require trust and attention to a scene partner or ensemble group
- Improvisational scene work requires building a scene with other members of the ensemble
- Warm-up games are not a formality or a waste of time, but essential in creating an open space and a theatrical mindset

### Essential Questions:

- How can a performer build a complete scene from a single word?
- What are the necessary components to a good improv scene?
- How do performers build enough trust to engage with one another on stage?
- Why do performers warm up?

## Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills

**Students will know:**

- The golden rule of improv: “Yes, and”
- The five tenets of an improv scene: Location, Action, Relationship, Character, History
- Basic warm-up games and exercises that will continue throughout the semester
- The history of the theatrical ensemble

**Students will be able to:**

- Participate in an improvisational scene with confidence
- Speak openly and engage with the rest of the class (ensemble)
- Analyze and criticize improvisational scenes

**Stage 2: Acceptable Evidence****Transfer Task**

- At the end of the three-week period, each student will be responsible for leading a class warm-up
- Participation in a summative improvisational scene, in which each major component must be demonstrated
- Students will complete a written improv quiz

**Stage 3: Activities**

- LARCH Notes
- “Yes, and” Game
- Ensemble development
  - Random Sound Stories
  - Sun and Moon Game
  - Count to Twenty
  - Ball Game
  - One Word Stories
  - What are you doing?
- Improv Games (in order of skill building)
  - “Yes, and”
    - Three-Line Scene
    - “Yes, and yes, and yes, and yes, and...”
  - “Location”
    - 30 Seconds of Silence
  - “Action”
    - Act First, Talk Later
    - Don’t Talk About Your Action
  - “Relationship”
    - Scene from a Relationship
  - “Character”
    - Waiting for Charlie
    - Bus Stop
  - “History”
    - Time Warp
  - Complete Games
    - Continuation
    - Half-Life
    - Scene from a word (summative game)

**Unit Title / Topic:** Monologues

**Unit Duration:** 2 Weeks

## Stage 1: Desired Results

### Established Goals:

#### National Core Arts Standards for Theater:

##### TH:Cr3.1.1: Refine and complete artistic work

- a. Practice and revise a devised or scripted drama/theatre work using theatrical staging conventions
- b. Explore physical, vocal and physiological choices to develop a performance that is believable, authentic, and relevant to a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Pr4.1.1: Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.

- a. Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of a drama/theatre work.
- b. Shape character choices using given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Pr6.1.1: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

- a. Perform a scripted drama/theatre work for a specific audience.

### Transfer Goal:

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Perform a complete monologue using motivation, objective, action, and diction

### Meaning

#### Students will understand:

- Focus and connection to the text are vital for the actor's portrayal of the scene
- Monologues require communication with the audience in the absence of a scene partner
- Thorough and critical reading of the text leads to effective acting
- Proper staging is critical for the audience's understanding of a performance

#### Essential Questions:

- How do playwrights help actors perform their scenes?
- How is acting on stage different than or similar to participating in everyday life?
- What is "truth" in art?
- How can an actor bring truth and reality to a fictional text?

### Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills

#### Students will know:

- Methods of approaching a monologue for performance and audition
- How to construct the physicality of a character when working alone on stage
- Techniques for memorization of long passages

#### Students will be able to:

- Use direction and constructive criticism to improve their performance
- Command the attention of the audience through their performance
- Connect with the text critically and emotionally



## Stage 2: Acceptable Evidence

### Transfer Task

- Students will complete pre-performance preparation work
  - Annotation of text
  - Conferencing with the director
  - Creation of a backstory and objective
- Students will perform a monologue (chosen from a provided selection)

## Stage 3: Activities

- Acting Warm-ups
- Critiquing famous monologues from stage and film
- Monologue study
  - Reading for objective
  - Reading for “silent” story
  - Reading for action
- Choosing a monologue that “fits”
- Rehearsing
- Using direction to enhance a performance
- Performances

**Unit Title / Topic:** The American Musical

**Unit Duration:** 2-3 Weeks

## Stage 1: Desired Results

### Established Goals:

#### National Core Arts Standards for Theater:

##### TH: Re7.1.1: Perceive and analyze artistic work

a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

##### TH:Cn10.1.1: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

a. Investigate how cultural perspectives, community ideas and personal beliefs impact a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Cn11.1.1: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

a. Explore how cultural, global, and historic belief systems affect creative choices in a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Cn11.2.1: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding

a. Research how other theatre artists apply creative processes to tell stories in a devised or scripted drama/theatre work, using theatre research methods.

b. Use basic theatre research methods to better understand the social and cultural background of a drama/theatre work

### Transfer Goal:

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Perform a structural analysis of two American-style musicals from two different time periods

### Students will understand:

- The classic structure of the American musical
- Why consistent structure and form are more prevalent in the writing and production of musicals than in playwriting
- How stories are impacted by the inclusion of song

### Essential Questions:

- How does a musical use song, dance, and spectacle to tell a story that cannot be told through spoken dialogue alone?
- Why have musicals remained popular in America throughout cultural shifts?
- How do artists use an established form or structure while keeping their artistic vision?

## Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills

### Students will know:

- The origin of the modern musical
- The evolution of the musical in American culture (and the reception of the American musical abroad)
- The plot and song structure of the American musical

### Students will be able to:

- Approach musicals as literary texts
- Compare and contrast musicals through a critical lens

## Stage 2: Acceptable Evidence

### Transfer Task

- Students will write a comparative analysis of two musicals, focusing on the retention of structure between two different stories

## Stage 3: Activities

- Introduction to Musicals
  - The History of Musicals
  - The Structure of the American Musical
  - What about foreign Musicals?
- Watching *Guys and Dolls*
  - During-movie note taking (graphic organizer)
- Watching *Shrek: The Musical*
  - During-movie note taking (graphic organizer)
- Pre-writing outline
- Writer's workshop

<b>Unit Title / Topic:</b> Theatrical Design	<b>Unit Duration:</b> 7-8 Weeks
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## Stage 1: Desired Results

### Established Goals:

#### National Core Arts Standards for Theater:

##### TH.Cr1.1.I: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

- a. Apply basic research to construct ideas about the visual composition of a drama/theatre work
- b. Explore the impact of technology on design choices in a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Pr5.1.I: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

- b. Use researched technical elements to increase the impact of design for a drama/theatre production.

##### TH: Re7.1.I: Perceive and analyze artistic work

- a. Respond to what is seen, felt, and heard in a drama/theatre work to develop criteria for artistic choices.

##### TH:Re8.1.I: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

- c. Justify personal aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs through participation in and observation of a drama/theatre work.

##### TH:Re9.1.I: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

- a. Examine a drama/ theatre work using supporting evidence and criteria, while considering art forms, history, culture, and other disciplines
- b. Consider the aesthetics of the production elements in a drama/theatre work
- c. Formulate a deeper understanding and appreciation of a drama/ theatre work by considering its specific purpose or intended audience.

### Transfer Goal:

Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Design a production of David Auburn's *Proof*

## Meaning

### Students will understand:

- Personal creative choice and preference can influence the design of a play
- The text is a starting point for theatrical design, not a strict guide
- The creative design process includes drafts and revisions

### Essential Questions:

- What artistic choices can a designer make when designing a play?
- How can the design of a play aid in the telling of the story?
- What components of design can speak for the character's motives, emotions, objectives, and subtext?

## Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills

### Students will know:

- How to design a written costume plot
- How to create costume sketches
- How to design a set to scale
- How to design properties creatively

### Students will be able to:

- Conceptualize theatrical sets
- Apply period appropriate aesthetics to theatrical design
- Approach theatrical texts from a creative design perspective

## Stage 2: Acceptable Evidence

### Transfer Task

- Students will design a set for Proof
- Students will design a costume plot for Proof
- Students will design four major props for Proof

## Stage 3: Activities

- Reading *Proof*
  - Class discussions
  - Reading quizzes
  - Creative choices graphic organizer
- Set Design Introduction
  - Excerpts from *Theater: Art in Action*
  - Drawing to scale
  - Incorporating personal creative ideas with the text
- Costume Design Introduction
  - Creating a costume plot
  - Sketching costumes
  - Characterization through costume choices
  - Time period research
- Creative Prop Design Introduction
  - Exploring prop design as a creative endeavor
  - Creating a prop aesthetic
  - Time period research
- Designing *Proof*

<b>Unit Title / Topic:</b> Theatrical Production	<b>Unit Duration:</b> 4-5 Weeks
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## Stage 1: Desired Results

**Established Goals:**

**National Core Arts Standards for Theater:**

**TH:Cr1.1.I: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.**  
 a. Apply basic research to construct ideas about the visual composition of a drama/theatre work  
 b. Explore the impact of technology on design choices in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr2-1: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.**  
 b. Investigate the collaborative nature of the actor, director, playwright, and designers and explore their interdependent roles in a drama/theatre work.

**TH:Cr3.1.I: Refine and complete artistic work**  
 c. Refine technical design choices to support the story and emotional impact of a devised or scripted drama/ theatre work.

**TH:Pr5.1.I: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.**  
 a. Practice various acting techniques to expand skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.  
 b. Use researched technical elements to increase the impact of design for a drama/theatre production.

**TH:Pr6.1.I: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.**  
 a. Perform a scripted drama/theatre work for a specific audience.

**Transfer Goal:**  
 Students will be able to independently use their learning to...

- Create a complete toy theater production

### Meaning

<p><b>Students will understand:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Each choice in a production should enhance the storytelling of the play</li> <li>● The world of theater extends beyond that of the actor</li> <li>● Live performance requires the coordination of many different parts, both seen and unseen</li> </ul>	<p><b>Essential Questions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How can a theater space reflect the story of a text?</li> <li>● How do playwrights transform pre-existing stories into stage adaptations?</li> <li>● How does working collaboratively present advantages and challenges in the theatrical world?</li> </ul>
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### Acquisition of Knowledge & Skills

**Students will know:**

- How to write a dramatic adaptation of a pre-existing story
- How to incorporate cues into dramatic scripts
- How to create production documents, including material lists, schedules, and task charts

**Students will be able to:**

- Write a script that includes technical cues
- Work collaboratively to create a unique adaptation of a story
- Construct a toy theater to house their production
- Perform an original small-scale production

## Stage 2: Acceptable Evidence

### Transfer Task

- Students will create their own toy theaters, complete with proscenium, set, stage, and costume design
- Students will write a script for their production, based on a mythological story (chosen from a provided set)
- Students will rehearse and perform their productions

## Stage 3: Activities

- Reading mythology
- How to work collaboratively in a theatrical setting
  - Designating roles
- Creating production documents
  - Working with multiple writers
- The history and application of toy theater/scale theatrical models
- Makerspace Workshops
- Creating toy theater “actors” and “costumes”
- Rehearsing
- Performing