

# High School Beginning Drama, Grades 9-12

Ms. Gretchen Nilsen

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## Course Content and Objectives:

Students in Beginning Drama will be introduced to basic theatre terminology, including stage directions, script components, and technical terms. The class will engage in numerous improvisational activities (both as a group and individually) designed to create an awareness of the actor's voice and body. Stage presence and audience awareness will be stressed as students learn the vital relationship between the actor and the audience. The class will experiment with character, relationships, timing, and storytelling through various improvisational scenes and exercises.

Beginning Drama students will learn the importance of following direction as well as working with fellow actors, and will be expected to be able to apply these necessary abilities. When a good understanding and application of basic theatre skills has been formed, students will focus on analyzing, rehearsing, memorizing, and finally, performing scenes for fellow classmates.

## Grading:

In Class Work: 40%

Assignments: 30% (Late Homework – for each school day homework is late, one point will be deducted)

Quizzes: 15%

Final Project: 15%

## Homework and Classroom Format:

The nature of Beginning Drama is one of participation; therefore, the majority of work required will take place in class. However, students will be required to complete homework assignments associated with our group improvisational activities, as well as several short essays throughout the year. In addition, students will be required to memorize scenes; time will differ for each student depending on memorization technique/ability. A final project will be required, with ample time to complete project. Quizzes will be announced, given periodically throughout the year, and will focus mainly on basic theatre terminology. Students will also be required to see one live theatrical performance of their choosing per semester.

## Class and Student Conduct:

Beginning Drama is a class in which the members are experimenting and taking risks in front of their peers. Therefore, I expect the utmost respect and support from each class member.

The following guidelines exist so that the class as a whole may operate in a smooth manner. My wish is that each student will have a rewarding experience, have fun, learn how to be comfortable on stage, build confidence, and hopefully walk away from "Beginning Drama" with a love of performing and many newly formed friendships.

- All performers must come to class ready to focus
- All performers must participate in group warm-up exercises, designed to focus actors.
- Initially, students are not required to participate in individual improvisational games, but are encouraged to do so. However, if they are not comfortable speaking or performing alone, they may simply say, "pass".
- In keeping with WJA guidelines, there will be absolutely **NO PUT-DOWNS**. Class members will be viewed as a family, and will therefore support and encourage each other.
- It is very important that performers listen attentively to the instructor in order to insure a productive and harmonious environment.

## Classroom Policies:

All students are expected to abide by the 4 Tribes Agreements:

Attentive Listening – Mutual Respect – No Put Downs

Right to Pass/Right to Participate

Failure to abide by the classroom policies will negatively affect the "In Class Work" portion of your grade.

## Bathroom Policy

- Students may take a three-minute bathroom break whenever necessary, within reason, with permission
- Students should limit bathroom breaks to appropriate times during class (rehearsal time, group work, etc...), not during teacher instruction, class warm-ups and activities, or performances
- No student may leave the classroom without the green hall pass
- The student must sign the hall pass log, with their name, time in, & time out

## Tardy Policy

- Students are considered tardy when they are not in the classroom when the bell rings

## Classroom Disruptions

- It is your privilege, not your right, to be in class.
- If you continually disrupt the teacher's ability to teach or your classmate's ability to learn, you will lose your privilege to be in class
- Continuous disruptions will be dealt with by either VP Mr. Funasaki or Principal Ms. McNeill

## Gum/Eating in Class

- Students may eat lunch in class **ONLY** if they are taking electives during both lunch periods
- No gum chewing is allowed in class

## Cell Phones

- Cell phones are permitted before school, after school, and during lunch
- The first cell phone disruption will result in a verbal warning
- The second cell phone disruption will result in the loss of the cell phone for the day. The phone must be picked up from Ms. McNeill or Mr. Funasaki the next day

## Computer Use

- The first inappropriate computer use will result in a verbal warning
- The second inappropriate computer use will result in a loss of the computer for that class period
- The third inappropriate computer use will result in a write up to Ms. McNeill

I have read the course descriptive and classroom policies for Beginning Drama. I understand what is expected of me and agree to follow the aforementioned rules. If I do not follow the guidelines, I fully understand the consequences of violating LJA/Beginning Drama classroom management policies.

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Student's Signature

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Date

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Parent's Signature

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Date

Please sign agreement and turn in no later than Friday, August 25, 2006.