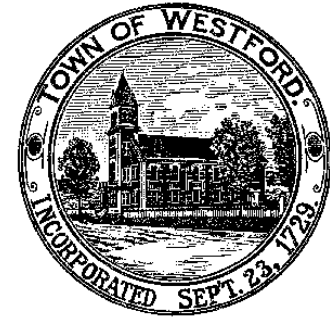


# WESTFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## CURRICULUM BENCHMARKS

**GRADES 9-12**

**THEATRE ARTS**

Westford Academy

Compiled by The Arts Curriculum Task Committee  
under the direction of  
Director of Curriculum and Instruction  
Lorraine Tacconi-Moore

*"Shaping the future one child at a time"*  
<http://westford.mec.edu/schools>

*"If our children are unable to voice what they mean, no one will know how they feel. If they can't imagine a different world, they are stumbling through a darkness made all the more sinister by its lack of reference points."*

Rita Dove, United States Poet Laureate

*"In dance, music, theater and the Visual Arts, people express ideas and emotions that they cannot express in language alone. In order to understand the range and depth of the human imagination, one must have knowledge of the arts."*

Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework

*"In the creation of a theatrical event, people make art out of themselves for others to watch, think, feel, and understand."*

*Theater: A Way of Seeing*  
Milly S. Barranger

Westford Academy Theater Arts (WATA) offers students the opportunity to explore the living art of theater. In accordance with the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework, WATA challenges students in the areas of: acting; reading and script writing; directing; technical theater; and critical response in its three course offerings: **Introduction to the Stage; Advanced Acting; and Script and Design.**

WATA also offers driven students an opportunity to continue their growth and research through independent study. Individual course goals and a course contract are formulated through discussion between the student and the teacher. Independent study subjects may include playwriting, directing, or publishing.

## Introduction to the Stage

*Students will be introduced to the major genres of drama including comedy, tragedy, farce and melodrama through in-class reading, discussion and script analysis. Projects include scene production where students exercise learned acting technique and basic theatrical devices. In understanding that the audience is central to the theatrical event, students will also appreciate the value of critique.*

- Read plays from a variety of genres and styles
- Create complex and believable characters through the integration of physical, vocal and emotional choices
- Perform in a variety of scenes for invited audiences
- Demonstrate objectivity in assessing their personal abilities and creative endeavors
- Direct informal presentations for a variety of audiences
- Use group generated criteria to assess their own work and the work of others
- Demonstrate the ability to receive and act upon coaching, feedback, and constructive criticism
- Devise specific methods for documenting and assessing one's own artistic development

## Advanced Acting

*Students will be introduced to the rigorous demands of Method Acting as invented by Russian actor/director, Constantin Stanislavsky. Students will be expected to complete a large amount of independent reading and research. Advanced Acting will involve an intense exploration of character and self.*

- Using the correct form and structure, collaboratively write an original script
- Demonstrate an understanding of a dramatic work by developing a character analysis
- Demonstrate an increased ability to work effectively alone and collaboratively with a partner or in an ensemble
- Apply appropriate acting techniques and styles in performances of plays from a variety of dramatic genres and historical periods

Select a scene from original or scripted material, conduct research on the historical period, genre, playwright, and other relevant information, determine casting, staging, and technical requirements, and articulate the rationale for all artistic choices

- Using the correct form and structure, collaboratively write an original script or a dramatic adaptation of a literary work

\* Prerequisite: Introduction to the Stage

## Script and Design (H)

*Students work cooperatively to create, write, edit, design and produce an original stage play. This collaborative product becomes WATA's submission to the annual MHSDG State Festival. Students are also required to complete an independent practicum in playwriting and theater production wherein students assume full responsibility for all areas of stage management.*

- Demonstrate an understanding of the playwright as a collaborating artist who works with the directors, actors, designers and technicians
- Demonstrate a high level of consistency and believability in portraying characters on stage in formal dramatic productions
- Demonstrate sensitivity to audience response
- Using the correct form and structure, independently write a one-act play that includes fully developed characters, believable dialogue, and logical plot development
- Participate as a member of a technical crew or management team for a mainstage production
- Demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationship between the technical aspects of production and on-stage performers
- Create and implement a major design element for a mainstage production ( set, lighting, sound, costume, and/or makeup)

\*Prerequisite: Grades 11 & 12 only  
& departmental recommendation