Course Purpose

This full year course has been designed to provide the student with a well-rounded knowledge base of and hands-on experience in theatre production. The skills developed through the study and process of theatrical production are numerous and varied and serve as preparation for any number of careers. Students will be exposed to set design, lighting, projection, sound and the intricacies and workings of the backstage environment. The focus of this course will be on production skills and the technical operation of the theatre. Students learn research methods, organizational skills, time management and the skills needed to create everything from posters to props. Students will learn about the background of the theatre in different cultures, appropriate styles of clothing, ornamentation and decoration and learn the vocabulary of the stage to capably use the space. Students will practice the use of basic drafting skills towards set construction, color and materials in scene painting and adopt the language of the elements and principles of design. Training and instruction will be provided for using hand and power tools to construct the sets for various drama productions. As well as learning from the teacher, students will learn from their peers. Students with experience will take more responsibility, managing groups, delegating tasks, troubleshooting problems and try to ensure that events go as smoothly as possible. There will also be independent work requiring commitment and reliability. Students will work to assist in the production of various performances, cultural events and presentations. Examples include Drama Productions, Band and Choir Presentations, and mini school events such as assemblies for and guest speakers.

Course Outline

**Topic 1: Introduction**

**Objective:** Review the course requirements and expectations of the teacher and students.

**Details:**

In this unit, students will be introduced tot eh course and objectives as well as student/teacher expectations and grading/evaluation procedures.

**Topic 2: Stage Architecture**

**Objective:** Describe the different types of theater architecture.

**Details:**

In this unit, students will complete research in order to identify and describe Greek, Roman, Medieval, Renaissance, Elizabethan, Restoration and Modern Theater architecture. They will be asked to compare and contrast two types of theater architecture. Finally, they will look at our theater as well as theaters in the area and apply their knowledge of architecture to these spaces.

**Topic 3: Safety**

**Objective:** Describe and demonstrate proper general safety, personal safety and equipment safety techniques and procedures.

**Details:**

Students will have to describe and demonstrate general, personal and equipment safety procedures in the theater and scene shop area. They will have to demonstrate knowledge of tool safety and operation. They will also have to identify and describe proper accident and emergency procedures.

**Topic 4: Principles and Elements of Design**

**Objective:** Describe and demonstrate elements and principles of design such as: balance, movement, space, emphasis, color, texture and unity.

**Details:**

Students will have to describe and demonstrate principles of design such as; balance, movement, repetition, emphasis, contrast and unity. They will describe and demonstrate design elements such as; space, line, shape, form, color, and texture. They will identify examples of traditional and classic designs and then use that knowledge to develop a design portfolio.

**Topic 5: Scenic Design**

**Objective:** Develop appropriate scenic designs that are indicated by the play.

**Details:**

Students will study several short scenes and full plays over the course of the year. Some of these will be actual productions for the high school and local theater companies. They will have to create a design to capture the mood and spirit of the play, construct a design that captures the historical period of the play, describe how to reflect the locale of the play and the season of the year in the scene designs and present scenic designs through models, sketches, drawings and computer presentations.

**Topic 6: Stage Properties**

**Objective:** Devise and apply problem-solving models for handling stage properties.

**Details:**

Students will be able to identify set props, hand props and decorative props and will learn how to acquire stage property and determine if it can be simulated/created. They will organize stage property with prop lists, prop tables and cues and will use such items as furniture, curtains, foam and fiberglass to create an array of stage designs.

**Topic 7: Lighting Design**

**Objective:** Identify, define and demonstrate lighting design techniques.

**Details:**

Students will identify and describe the controllable qualities of light such as distribution, intensity, movement and color. They will also be able to identify and describe the functions of light such as visibility, selective focus and mood. They will explore the psychological effects of light on a production. Using their knowledge of the KHS Strand Lighting System, they will use a light plot, legend and instrument schedule to develop a lighting plan for all KHS productions.

This will involve applying their knowledge of the functions and controllable qualities of light as a light key to draw the light plot, to develop layering and to create a lighting plan for different stages and productions

**Topic 8: Sound Functions and Technology**

**Objective:** Incorporate sound functions and technology into a stage production.

**Details:**

Students will identify the functions of sound in a theater and compare and contrast how sound is used for affect and reinforcement. They will be able to describe how to identify basic acoustic properties, design a basic sound system configuration and apply this knowledge to the sound system at the KHS Theater. They will learn to integrate the sound system into rehearsals and performance procedures.

**Topic 9: Costume Design**

**Objective:** Identify, develop and utilize costume design skills necessary for a stage production.

**Details:**

Students will identify and describe types of costume designs and explore the psychological and objective information provided by costumes. They will analyze several scripts (including those for actual KHS and local theater productions) for costume design details. Students will learn to determine costume wear-ability and identify costume duration and will learn to organize costumes using a costume chart, costume list, character dressing list and a costume calendar. Students will present costume designs via sketches, swatches, layouts and renderings.

**Topic 10: Make-up**

**Objective:** Research, identify and apply makeup techniques used for stage productions.

**Details:**

Students will learn to identify and describe different types of make-up and the basics of make-up design. They will learn to identify proper appearance and appropriate make-up for the time period being depicted, and practice application techniques. They will learn to coordinate make-up application with costume design. They will apply their knowledge in all KHS theater productions.

**Topic 11: Rehearsal and Performance**

**Objective:** Competently complete a rehearsal and performance.

**Details:**

Students will learn to identify and describe the purpose of a rehearsal and learn to manage a rehearsal using tools such as blocking notation, cues, prompting and timing. Students will be expected to complete at least one technical rehearsal and one dress rehearsal for a KHS production. They will learn to practice proper backstage etiquette and will be expected to participate as a crew member for one complete performance.

Assignments by Unit/Topic:

**Topic 1: Introduction**

**Objective:** Review the course requirements and expectations of the teacher and students.

Assignments:

All course expectation contracts must be signed by student and parent and returned

**Topic 2: Stage Architecture**

**Objective:** Describe the different types of theater architecture.

**Details:**

Assignments:

Students will be given a packet and lecture on basic information on the different types of theater architecture as an introduction. Using the Library Computer Lab: Students will be assigned one of the 7 topics (Greek, Roman, Medieval, Renaissance, Elizabethan, Restoration and Modern Theater) and will have to conduct research and then create and present a visual that describes/presents the architecture of that theatrical period.

Students will be assigned one theater in the surrounding area and will have to apply their knowledge of architecture to their assigned theater. They will have to present their findings to the class in the form of a PowerPoint and oral presentation.

Students will be shown pictures of various theaters from around the world and will be tested on their ability to identify the type of architecture and defend their responses in writing.

**Topic 3: Safety**

**Objective:** Describe and demonstrate proper general safety, personal safety and equipment safety techniques and procedures.

**Assignments:**

Students will be given a thorough tour of the theater and shop areas as well as a lecture on the proper use of materials and tools. They will be expected to take notes and will be given handouts that describe the purpose and proper use of all tools. They will be evaluated via a combination short answer/multiple choice exam as well as a hands-on demonstration test for major tools in the shop. They will each be assigned a different tool or area of the shop and will have to create an instructional poster (8.5” x 11”) that describes the proper use/safety for that tool or area. These will be displayed for the remainder of the year.

**Topic 4: Principles and Elements of Design**

**Objective:** Describe and demonstrate elements and principles of design such as: balance, movement, space, emphasis, color, texture and unity.

**Assignments:**

The major project for this unit is the creation of a design portfolio that will include visual examples of the design elements and principles that have been discussed over the course of the unit. This is a portfolio that they will add to throughout the year as they create designs for the different plays and shows that we study in class and/or perform on stage. The first part of the portfolio will consist of basic definitions and examples of principles and elements. This will consist of an ever growing collection of drawings and pictures created and gathered throughout the year that exemplify the definitions and principles. The second part of the portfolio is described in the “Scenic Design” section below. Students who continue with this course in subsequent years will be able to continue adding to this portfolio collection.

**Topic 5: Scenic Design**

**Objective:** Develop appropriate scenic designs that are indicated by the play.

**Assignments:**

The major project for this topic of study is the creation of the second section of their portfolio (see “Principles and Elements of Design” above). Students will study several short scenes and full plays over the course of the year. Some of these will be actual productions for the high school and local theater companies. Selections will include *“It’s A Wonderful Life”, “The Man Who Came to Dinner”, “Room Service”, “You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown”, “You Can’t Take it With You”, “Fools”, “All My Sons”*, as well as whatever productions have been chosen for the current season of shows at Kingsburg High School and the local performing arts centers. They will have to create a design to capture the mood and spirit of the play, construct a design that captures the historical period of the play, describe how to reflect the locale of the play and the season of the year in the scene designs and present scenic designs through models, sketches, drawings and computer presentations. All of these will be represented in the second half of their portfolio. Students who continue with this course in subsequent years will be able to continue adding to this portfolio collection.

The Production Project involves the application of what we have learned to the actual KHS fall and spring theater productions. As a class, we will study the plays that will be produced, develop a scenic design analysis and plan and construct the set together. Students will be required to put in a certain number of hours outside of class time during set construction.

**Topic 6: Stage Properties**

**Objective:** Devise and apply problem-solving models for handling stage properties.

**Assignments:**

Two major projects center around the actual Fall and Spring productions at Kingsburg High School. Students will be tasked with organizing and cataloguing all stage property for those productions using the forms, techniques and procedures that we have discussed in class.

The E&e Internship Project involves students in the local performing arts center in Kingsburg. Students will spend time working in their properties department and gain hands-on experience with prop cataloguing and prop creation.

The final project of this unit involves the creation of a prop. Students will be given a prop and a time period. They will have to research the prop and then re-create the prop using other materials. For example, students will have to create an 18th century leather bound book using a math textbook, or a 1920’s movie camera using PVC Pipe, plastic cups and plywood. Students will chronicle their process through pictures and add this to their ever expanding design portfolio (see “Principles and Elements of Design” & “Principles of Design” sections above). Students who continue with this course in subsequent years will be able to continue adding to this portfolio collection.

**Topic 7: Lighting Design**

**Objective:** Identify, define and demonstrate lighting design techniques.

**Assignments:**

Students will re-create the lighting system grid for the KHS Theater, complete with plot, legend and instrument schedule. This can be done by hand or via computer.

Students will receive handouts and take notes on the different lighting instruments, their function and purpose.

Students will take notes on the KHS Strand Lighting System and will practice setting simple cues to master the concepts.

Students will choose one of the plays that we have studied as a class (see “Scenic Design” above) and create a written lighting design analysis. Written analysis must include discussion of mood in each scene, listing of lighting needs by scene and reasoning for lighting choices. They will create a lighting plan for their chosen show.

Students will have to attend one production outside of KHS (Community Theater or other school production) and write up a 2 page analysis and critique of their show lighting.

The Major Production Project involves the application of what we have learned to the actual KHS fall and spring theater productions. As a class, we will study the plays that will be produced, develop a lighting analysis and plan and then set the lights together using the lighting system grid that they created at the start of this unit of study.

**Topic 8: Sound Functions and Technology**

**Objective:** Incorporate sound functions and technology into a stage production.

**Assignments:**

Handouts, lecture and graded notes on basic acoustic properties and sound system configuration and specific configuration of the KHS sound system.

Students will each create a visual “cheat sheet” for the KHS theater sound system.

Students will demonstrate mastery at “hands on” sound board stations in the theater.

Students will be responsible for setting up the sound system for all major productions at KHS including the spring musical, all band and choir concerts and all guest speakers and presenters who use the theater facility.

Students will write/create their own radio play complete with sound effects and will perform it for an audience.

**Topic 9: Costume Design**

**Objective:** Identify, develop and utilize costume design skills necessary for a stage production.

**Assignments:**

Students will each be assigned a historical time period and will use the Library Computer Lab to research the dress of that time period. They will create a poster or other visual aide to represent their research.

Students will analyze the scripts listed in the “Scenic Design” section for costume design details and create a costume needs assessment for ONE of these productions. This will include sketches or pictures, fabric swatches, and character break-downs.

The E&e Internship Project involves students in the local performing arts center in Kingsburg. Students will spend time working in their costume loft and gain hands-on experience with costume organization, cataloging and repair. They will write a summary reflection on their experience.

The Thrifting Project teaches students how to “re-purpose” clothing in order to make costumes for a production. Students will be given a specific costume need for a particular show. They will have to go to the local thrift store and find a way to create that costume by re-purposing something they find at the thrift store.

Students will apply skills gained in the study of costumes in all KHS theater productions.

**Topic 10: Make-up**

**Objective:** Research, identify and apply makeup techniques used for stage productions.

**Assignments:**

Handouts, lecture and graded notes based on the different types of make-up and the basics of make-up design.

The Face project involves pairing students and giving them an age or condition (or both). For example, a student pair may be given a character description involving an elderly man with gray hair, mustache and scar over his right cheek. Students will have to apply what has been learned to create this look on the face of the partner.

The Halloween Project involves students in the creation of different looks that are appropriate for the season.  Students will be paired together and given a specific make-up kit.  Each make-up kit contains everything needed for a specific look (zombie, head wound, scar face, witch, vampire, etc).  Students will create that look on their partner and will be assessed based on the success of their overall look.

They will apply their knowledge in all KHS theater productions, conducting a script analysis to determine the make-up needs for each production.

**Topic 11: Rehearsal and Performance**

**Objective:** Competently complete a rehearsal and performance.

**Details:**

Students will create a poster or pamphlet that will teach proper backstage etiquette.

Students will be given a scene from one of the plays that we have studied as a class (see “Scenic Design” above) and will create blocking notations for their assigned scene. They will give an oral presentation/demonstration of the blocking and the reasoning for their decisions.

Students will attend at least one technical rehearsal and one dress rehearsal for a KHS production. They will be expected to not only participate, but then write a reflection of their learning.

Students must serve as a backstage crew member for at least one KHS production. They may also serve as a crew member for a production at the local performing arts center or at any of our elementary schools.

**Instructional Methods and/or Strategies**

A variety of methods and strategies are used to accommodate the diverse learning styles of our students as well as the different skills that are being taught in the course. These strategies include direct instruction/lecture, projects, speakers, reading assignments, research, class discussions and group work. Direct instruction and lecture is primarily used to deliver basic information at the start of a unit to explain and demonstrate the concepts that will be explored throughout the unit. These are usually accompanied by handouts and Cornell Notes. The bulk of each unit involves projects that give students the opportunity to learn and demonstrate mastery through hands-on application of concepts. Speakers are used to expose students to people who are actually working in the world of theater. Our speakers list currently includes a technical director, a costumer, a stage manager, a sound technician, a make-up artist, a director and a lighting designer. These speakers are drawn from our local community theaters and give students the opportunity to see the concepts in class actually being applied in the real world. Reading assignments are used when we study the specific plays that are being used for our projects as well as the plays that are being produced by our KHS theater company. Students will also be given technical manuals to read when we study sound boards and lighting systems. Students will frequently conduct research in this class, especially during the Stage Architecture unit and the Costuming unit. Discussion and group work is an integral part of every unit of study in Stagecraft. Students work in groups for major projects like the Halloween Make-Up project and the Radio Play project. Because stagecraft involves a lot of creative problem solving, the sharing of ideas that takes place in groups and in discussions is incredibly important.

**Assessment Methods and/or Tools**

It is important to use a variety of methods and tools to accommodate diverse earning style san different skill levels. This course offers utilizes many different methods for evaluation at the beginning, middle and end of each unit. There is no one formal or informal assessment for a unit, but many opportunities are given to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Examples include tests, projects, labs, homework assignments, written reflections, performance tasks/demonstrations, and oral presentations. Tests are important in evaluating the mastery of basic foundational concepts. For example, a test would be appropriate to demonstrate a student’s basic knowledge of the sound board or lighting system. Mastery of these basics is essential to future project based assignments that will require a student to move beyond the basics into creative application. This testing takes place after the initial direct instruction/lecture in each unit. After testing basic mastery, it is possible to move on to other forms of assessment such as projects, labs and performance tasks/demonstrations. These allow students to show a deeper master of a subject and also allow for them to develop creativity and problem solving/critical thinking skills. Book knowledge will only take you so far in the world of stagecraft and design…application of those skills is essential. Oral presentations are important in that they take the focus off of the direct instruction/teacher centered model and give students the opportunity to demonstrate/share their knowledge and ideas with the class. Written reflection (after viewing performance or working in another theater) is a very important assessment tool in this course because so much of what we do is very experience based and written reflections provide an opportunity to make connections between what they have experienced in the real world and what we have been learning in the classroom. It is a great way to assess whether these connections are really taking place.

**Artistic Expression**

Students are given numerous opportunities to process, analyze and respond to various plays, scenes, and situations through the language of stagecraft and design. Students are given scripts, plays, stories, scenes, situations, etc., and are asked to analyze such things as historical background, characterization, setting, costume needs, lighting needs, sound requirements, blocking, transitions, props, make-up, backstage organization, set design and construction. This can be seen in many areas of the course outline and assignments/activities including the following:

Topic 5: Scenic Design- Portfolio Project and Production Project

Topic 7: Lighting Design- Major Production Project

Topic 8: Sound Functions and Technology- Radio Play Creation and Performance

Topic 9: Costume Design- Costume History Project, Production Costume Assessment, Thrifting Project

Topic 10: Make Up- Face Project, Halloween Project

Topic 11: Rehearsal and Performance- Scene Blocking Presentation

**Creative Expression**

Students are given countless opportunities to be involved in performing and participating in the world of stagecraft. This is seen not only in the class projects in every unit but in the involvement of students in actual theatrical productions and community theater companies. See evidence in Topic 2, and Topics 5 through 11. Students gain hands on experience analyzing, designing and creating the sets, lights, sound, and costumes for all KHS stage productions and actually create and perform their own stage production for the Radio Play project. They will work behind the scenes of KHS and community theater productions as backstage crew members or front of house managers. They are required to visit other theaters and watch other stage productions in the surrounding schools and community theaters.

**Historical and Cultural Context**

Students explore the historical contributions and cultural dimensions of stagecraft in many ways. Initially, they explore Greek, Roman, Medieval, Renaissance, Elizabethan, Restoration and Modern Theater architecture and apply their understanding to local theaters in our area (see Topic 2). In our study of stage properties, students will research a prop in its historical and cultural context and then recreate that prop using modern materials (see Topic 6). Later, they will explore the costumes of different historical time periods and the influence of culture on the costumes of those time periods (see Topic 9).

**Aesthetic Valuing**

Students look critically at the aesthetics of a stage production and the influence of lighting, sound, costuming, props, make-up, blocking and scenic design on the overall quality of the production.  These topics will be approached as integral elements and contributing factors to the overall aesthetic quality of a stage production.  This focus can be seen in nearly every unit of study within this course (Topics 2, 5-10).  Topic 2 requires students to look at the influence of stage architecture on the overall look of a production and on the choices that are made in other areas of scenic design. Topics 5-7 explore the influence of scenic design, stage props and lighting design choices and analyze their effectiveness in enhancing a production. Topics 8-10 look at the influence of sound, costumes and make-up. It is essential that students understand that the choices they make in production will have a direct impact on the overall look and feel of the final product.   Students will be given several opportunities to view productions at school and community theaters in the area and critique how these elements affect the overall aesthetics of those stage productions (see Topic 7).

**Connections, Relationships and Application**

There is a natural connection between this course and the drama courses that are taught at the school. In drama, students learned the basics of theater and performance. Using this base of knowledge, Stagecraft teaches them how to enhance that performance using lights, sound, props, and scenic design. It teaches them the connection between what happens on stage and what happens behind the scenes of a production. This is very much connected to the aesthetic valuing component of the course, where students explore the influence of design elements and choices on the overall production. This can be seen most clearly in Topics 5-10 where students look specifically at the connection between what is happening on stage with the actors and what they are wearing, where they are standing, what they look like etc. Students connect and apply what they know about art in their study of the principles and elements of design (Topics (Topic 4) and scenic design (Topic 5). This is further applied in Topic 7 when students experiment with light and color to create mood and enhance setting. When students write critiques of stage performances (Topic 7), or conduct research on stage architecture, stage properties, and costume periods (Topics 2, 6 and 9), they are making connections to both English Language Arts and Social Science. Math concepts and drafting skills are reinforced in the drafting, design and construction of sets as well as the design of lighting plots for productions (Topics 5-7). Guest speakers are used to expose students to people who are actually working in the world of theater. Our speakers list currently includes a technical director, a costumer, a stage manager, a sound technician, a make-up artist, a director and a lighting designer. These speakers are drawn from our local community theaters and give students the opportunity to see the concepts in class actually being applied in the real world.