

Theatre for Youth I

THTR 350 MW 3:00-4:50pm

Instructor: Deb Currier Office: PAC 387

Office Hours: MWR 10am-noon and by appt.

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Required Texts:

Theatre for Children by David Wood with Janet Grant

New International Plays for Young Audiences ed. By Roger Ellis

Coursepack: selected articles and activities from TFY journals, websites and critical handbooks - International and non-U.S.-based websites (ASSITEJ) <http://www.assitej-international.org/en/>; Articles from International TFY ED journals /websites /broadcasts/film(s)

Course Goals

- To explore the philosophy, literature and techniques of creating theatre **for** and **with** youth K-8th grades
- To gain an understanding of the special skills and knowledge required in youth theatre
- To strengthen theatre for youth skills in communication, adaptation, directing and performing
- Making connections, finding meaning and acquiring creative pedagogy skills for future classroom/community teaching and learning in a global context
- To build understanding of the global context of TFY
- Effectively communicate intercultural concepts within the context of TFY

Departmental Learning Outcomes/Skills met in this course:

- Analyzes and interprets dramatic literature and performance from the standpoint of designer, performer, director, playwright or critic
- Knowledge of the role of theatre in shaping our past, present and future
- Functions effectively as a member of a collaborative team in the preparation and realization of a [public] performance

Course Objectives:

Students who have successfully completed This course will be able to:

- build and demonstrate skills in interactive story-telling
- create an age-appropriate reader's theatre script, performed in-class
- produce a working director's checklist
- demonstrate comprehension of the steps and format for adapting stories for theatre for youth scripts and performance
- demonstrate ability to create a devised project lesson plan
- demonstrate skill and understanding in directing peers and youth in various forms of youth drama approaches
- Effectively interact and communicate interculturally within the context of TFY
- Understand global context of TFY
- Integrate global and international theory and technique into creative arts pedagogy
- demonstrate discipline-specific knowledge and skills related to internationalized content integrated throughout course

Correlating Assignments:

- Written and performed interactive story assignment
- Midterm written and performed reader's theatre script
- Midterm written director's checklist
- Midterm and Final projects; adaptation abstract
- Final devised lesson plan assignment
- Group collaborative assignments in - -
- Reader's Theatre midterm and successful participation in 3 peer in-class teaching assignments
- Web-site research and report-out on international TFY organizations
- Midterm written and performed reader's theatre script
- Final intercultural devised lesson plan assignment

Course Requirements and Expectations

- Regular attendance – you get one “free” absence, otherwise each day is 5 points for attendance and participation.
- Participation in all class discussions and activities
- Completion of assignments, observations, midterm and final projects
- Turning in all written portions of assignments typed and on time on Canvas- **NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED. No exceptions!** Now go back and read the first part of this bullet point again.
- All reading assignments are to be completed by class time on the date assigned in the syllabus

Assessment

Please take the initiative to keep the instructor aware of your efforts and progress!

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Participation/Attendance.....	75 pts(5pts per class**)
Interactive Story.....	20 pts
<i>Working Reader's</i> Theatre Script.....	20 pts
Final Reader's Theatre Script.....	30 pts
Director's Checklist.....	40 pts
RT Performance.....	30 pts
Adapted Script Abstract.....	35 pts
<u>Final Project (Devised Activity.).....</u>	<u>50 pts</u>
TOTAL	300 pts

Letter equivalents are determined by dividing the top half of the total points for any assignment into 4 equal lettered "zones." The same is true for the final total, which is how I will ultimately arrive at a letter grade to report to the university. So...

300-263 = A range: 300-276 = A; 275-263 = A-
 262-225 = B range: 262-250 = B+; 249-237 = B; 236-225 = B-
 224-186 = C range: 224-212 = C+; 211-199 = C; 198-186 = C-
 185-150 = D range: 185-173 = D+; 172-160 = D; 159-147 = D-
 146 and below = F

** You will be participating in one or more classmates' projects, and your commitment to their projects as much as yours will count toward (or against) your participation grade.

Working Course Schedule: THTR 350

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
1/6	Introductions and definitions; Bridge-ins, warm-ups, storytales and interactive fun...	

1/11	Storytales...	<i>Theatre for Children</i> pp.1-37; Bring your story book!
1/13	More Storytales; Reader's Theatre and definitions, etc.	Bring your story book!
opportunity in first week(s) to integrate international component to then infuse throughout rest of class as both research, practice, dialogic learning component.		

1/18	MLK Day: No Class	
1/20	Interactive Stories	Performance of Interactive Story Due: Typed Interactive Stories ON CANVAS by 3:00pm

1/25	Interactive Stories	Performance of Interactive Story
1/27	Adaptations	READ: <i>Theatre for Children</i> : 125 – 152

2/1	Reader's/Chamber Theatre	READ: <i>Theatre for Children</i> : 221-236
2/3	Rehearsal/Coaching	DUE: Reader's Theatre <i>Working Scripts</i> –at least first 3 pages, ON CANVAS by 3:00pm

2/8	Rehearsal/Coaching	READ: <i>Theatre for Children</i>: 38-61
2/10	Rehearsal/Coaching	DUE: COMPLETE scripts due for all your actors!

2/15-2/19 No Class- American College Theatre Festival week * can do some guest lectures and practitioners/video/film exploration during this week – Skype, etc

2/22	RT Performances: round 1**	Due: CLEAN R.T. Scripts AND Director's Checklist DUE ON CANVAS by 3:00pm!!
2/24	RT Performances: round 2**	

2/29	Devised Work	
3/2	Devised Work	

3/7	Devised Work	Due: Adapted Script abstracts
3/9	Devised Work	

Wednesday 3/16 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm Final and wrap up!
Final Devised Activity Projects Due ON CANVAS BY 3:00pm!!

NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED (in case you missed it)

Explanation of Assignments

#1: **Interactive Story:** This will be *no longer than* 3 mins when performed (about 1 page typed, double-spaced, 12 pt font...). Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

#2: **Working Reader's Theatre Scripts:** The preliminary script (meaning you will most likely make changes and/or cuts) of the piece you'll be adapting for the reader's theatre (R.T.) project. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

#3: **Final R.T. Scripts:** It should be typed and 1.5 spaced to make room for comments. This is the scripted version- what your "actors" will get to perform from- which will look more like a play script than a prose piece. Your R.T. performance cannot exceed 10 minutes total – so make sure to time your stuff! Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

#4: **Director's Checklist:** Please see accompanying sheet. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

#5: **Adapted Script Abstracts:** This is a typed version of an adapted script abstract/outline – see attached sheet. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

#8: Final Project/ Devised Activity: Please see accompanying sheet. Submit on Canvas under “assignments.”

THTR 350 Director's Checklist*
Written Assignment 40 pts possible

In complete sentences (typed, paragraph format with corresponding numbers to identify your answers), please identify and explain the following elements contained in your reader's theatre script. Remember, not all elements need be present, but try to incorporate as many as you can into your interpretation of the pieces you have chosen. Please still include the entry number even if there are none of those elements (ex: "4. Life and Death Situations: There are none in this story.") **If you need a "refresher" on specific definitions of these elements, refer to pages 38-61 in *Theatre for Children*.**

Hint: The best stories have the potential for all of these elements

1. Story
2. Theme (fantasy within reality, myth/legend, old wine in new bottles, anthropomorphic, contemporary, quest, toys/inanimate objects, worlds, etc)
3. Characters
4. Life and Death Situations
5. Language and Silence
6. "Suddenlies"
7. Humor
8. Audience Participation
9. Scale
10. Puppetry
11. Magic within the Plot
12. Colorful Look on Stage
13. Lighting (what you would do if given the opportunity)
14. Sound
15. Music
16. Climaxes and Cliffhangers
17. Justice and Fairness
18. Taboos

* *Refer to syllabus for policy on late assignments*

Adaptations Assignment: THTR 350

Finding your story: director's checklist (*Theatre for Children* p 128; 38-61)

1. Précis of the story
2. Notes on characters, locations, theatrical moments: a description of roles available; part division (doubling, male and female, etc.)
3. Problem solving: a brief description of what you have left out from the original story and why
4. Synopsis: an outline of the dramatic action- characters, settings, synopsis of story and the estimated running time of the play

Things to look for/address/add in your abstract:

Jumps in Time: can you play with the way the story is told?

Fantasy: Can you add in a dream or fantasy sequence if there is none already in the story?

Transformations: Characters that transform from one thing to another (Witch in Snow White; Pinocchio; Magic Fish in Fisherman and His Wife, etc.)

Music: Where can music be included? Can characters sing a song? Used in background? What types of music will be used and where?

Cross-Referencing of other story characters: Where can other well-known story characters be referenced? Can they even make guest appearances?

Audience Interaction: How and where does this occur? Which characters have this capability? (usually not all characters can see and interact w/audience – narrators and maybe leads or bit players)

Narrators: At least two for interaction, if you choose to have them

Stair Step Age Casting: Parts for expanding group numbers, for a variety of appropriate levels of involvement. For example...

- group “pee-wee,” or K-2
- 2nd step: grades 3-5
- 3rd step: grades 6 and up

Final Assignment: THTR 350
Devised Project

Goal of Assignment: To design a complete devised piece workshop for a specific age group *between grades K-8*.

Scope of Assignment: Each project will include (but not be limited to)...

1. A clear and concise **bridge-in activity**
2. A **physical and/or vocal warm-up** activity designed to engage the body and mind in preparation for the main event.
3. A **main event:** this is the “meat” of the devised workshop. What we have been doing in class as activities leading to performance of *original* material scripted by the participants are good examples. There are also many ideas included in your supplemental text *Theatre Games for Young Performers* as well as other library “finds and treasures.” The end result is a piece that can be shaped for actual performance in a showcase by the participants.
4. A **cool down or bridge-out activity:** you may combine a cool-down and a bridge-in if the one activity successfully provides closure to the main event activity as well as “returning” your participants to the here-and-now.
5. A **final summary** of expected outcome and goals of your specific project. This should include a projected length of actual workshop (since we will not have time to do them all in class, I’d like to know what time-frame you would work in if you could), the age-range you are working with, the maximum/ideal number of participants and expected leader involvement (participatory? side-coaching? autocratic? democratic? etc.)

Details

1. **The project will be typed and complete when turned in on Canvas by 3:00 pm, March 16, 2016.***
2. Please prepare a *2-3 minute oral presentation* of your project to present to the class during the final meeting. This goes by QUICKLY! You will be graded on the thoroughness of the typed and turned-in project (the in-class demonstration is for everyone’s benefit and will aid me in understanding your typed version, but will not be graded). The project as a whole is worth 50 points and should be the pinnacle, the culmination, the zenith of your efforts as a TFY practitioner.
3. ****You must turn in the final project on time in order to pass the course.***

Reader's Theatre Rubric: THTR 350

Director:

Story:

Category	Excellent 4	Very Good 3	Average 2	Below Average 1
Creativity:				
Choice of material <i>Evocative; Connected; Complete</i>				
Use of enriched language <i>adaptations; creativity; line division</i>				
Technique:				
Use of space <i>Cross-focus, action/reader movement</i>				
Use of Props				
Direction:				
clear and concise; actors know what they are doing; story is clear; well-organized				
Group Collaboration/ Performance total (20 points from above categories)				
Final Script: 30 pts possible				
Director's Checklist: 40 pts possible				

Adapted Script Abstract: THTR 350

Categories of evaluation	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Below Average
Précis/Synopsis :outline of dramatic action, etc 10pts				
Notes on characters, locations, theatrical moments (under “things to look for” in assignment sheet) 10pts				
Description of roles and part division 5pts				
Overall creativity/problem-solving/suitability of story choice 5pts				
Proofreading and general level of effort in formatting/spelling/grammar, etc. 5pts				
Total: /35				

Final Devised Project Rubric: THTR 350
50 points possible

Categories of evaluation	Excellent: 9-10/15 points possible	Very Good: 5-8 points possible	Average: 3-4 points possible	Below Average: 0-2 points possible
bridge-in activity (10)				
physical and/or vocal warm-up (5)				
main event (15)				
cool down or bridge-out activity (5)				
final summary (15)				
Total /50				