



National Coalition for **CORE ARTS** Standards

## **GLOSSARY for National Core Arts: Theatre STANDARDS**

### **Acting techniques**

Specific skills, pedagogies, theories, or methods of investigation used by an actor to prepare for a theatre performance

### **Believability**

Theatrical choices thought to be “true” based upon an understanding of any given fictional moment, interpretation of text, and/or human interaction

### **Character traits**

Observable embodied actions that illustrate a character’s personality, values, beliefs, and history

### **Conflict**

The problem, confrontation, or struggle in a scene or play; conflict may include a character against him or herself, a character in opposition to another character, a character against nature, a character against society, or a character against the supernatural

### **Creative drama**

A process-centered, non-exhibitional approach to drama intended to benefit the performers themselves; story drama and process drama are two types of creative drama

**Creative processes**

The application of production and technical elements (see the definitions) to a theatrical production

**Devised drama**

Creation of an original performance piece by an ensemble

**Dialogue**

A conversation between two or more characters

**Dramatic play**

Make-believe where children naturally assign and accept roles, then act them out

**Focus**

Commitment by a participant (an actor, technician, director) to remain in the scope of the project or to stay within the world of the play

**Genre**

Relating to a specific kind or type of drama and theatre such as a tragedy, drama, melodrama, comedy, or farce

**Gesture**

An expressive and planned movement of the body or limbs

**Given circumstances**

The underlying actions and events that have happened before the play, story, or devised piece begins

**Guided drama experience**

A leader guides participants during a process drama, story drama, or creative drama experience (see the definitions) through side-coaching, narration, and prompting; the action of the drama does not stop in order for the leader to support the students; facilitator may guide participants in or out of role

**Improvise**

The spontaneous, intuitive, and immediate response of movement and speech; a distinction can be made between spontaneous improvisation, which is immediate and unrehearsed, and prepared improvisation, which is shaped and rehearsed

**Imaginary elsewhere**

An imagined location which can be historical, fictional, or realistic

**Imagined worlds**

An imaginary world created collectively by participants in a drama experience

**Inner thoughts**

The underlying and implied meaning or intentions in the character's dialogue or actions (also known as subtext)

**Motivation**

Reasons why a character behaves or reacts in a particular way in a scene or play

**Non-representational materials**

Objects which can be transformed into specific props through the imagination

**Objective**

A goal or particular need or want that a character has within a scene or play

**Plot**

A narrative as revealed through the action and/or dialogue; traditionally, a plot has the elements of exposition, inciting incident, conflict, rising action, climax, and resolution or falling action

**Process drama**

A non-linear, episodic, process-centered, improvised form of drama in which teacher and students are in-role exploring and reflecting on an issue, story, theme, problem, or idea in a non-exhibitional format that is intended to benefit the performers themselves

### **Production elements**

Technical elements selected for use in a specific production, including sets, sound, costumes, lights, music, props, and make-up, as well as elements specific to the production such as puppets, masks, special effects, or other story telling devices/concepts

### **Scripted drama**

A piece of writing for the theatre that includes a description of the setting, a list of the characters, the dialogue, and the action of the characters

### **Script analysis**

The study of a script to understand the underlying structure and themes of the play's story, and the motives and objectives of its characters

### **Staging**

Patterns of movement in a scene or play including, for example, stage crosses, entrances, and exits which help to convey meaning

### **Story drama**

Episodic, process-centered, improvised form of drama that uses existing literature as a starting point for drama exploration, the drama explores moments (before, after, or within) that may not exist in the story and is presented in a non-exhibitional format that is intended to benefit the performers themselves

### **Story elements**

Characters, setting, dialogue, and plot that create a story

### **Style**

The use of a specific set of characteristic or distinctive techniques such as realism, expressionism, epic theatre, documentary theatre, or classical drama; style may also refer to the unique artistic choices of a particular playwright, director, or actor

### **Tactic**

The means by which a character seeks to achieve their objective, the selection of tactics are based on the obstacle presented; in acting and directing a tactic refers to a specific action verb

**Technical elements** \_\_\_\_\_

The elements of spectacle such as sets, sound, costume, lights, music, props, and makeup used to create a unified and meaningful design for a theatrical production

**Theatrical conventions** \_\_\_\_\_

Practices and/or devices that the audience and actors accept in the world of the play even when it is not realistic, such as a narrator, flashback, or an aside

**Theme** \_\_\_\_\_

The aspect of the human condition under investigation in the drama; it can be drawn from unifying topics or questions across content areas

**Visual composition** \_\_\_\_\_

The arrangement of actors and scenery on a stage for a theatrical production, sometimes known as *mise en scène*