

Musical Theater

WebQuest Description: Investigate the important "behind the stage" jobs that support a musical theater production. Discover how YOU might be a part of a musical theater production in Middle School.

Grade Level: 3-5

Curriculum: Art / Music

Keywords: Musical Theater, Music, Theater, Broadway

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Introduction

Picture yourself in a cushioned chair, in an ornate auditorium as the stage curtain opens. Click on the link below to see what happens on stage...Seussical MontageWhat did you see? Of course, you saw singers, dancers, and actors performing. Now, watch again and look a little more closely. Are the performers alone on the stage, or surrounded by scenery? Are they holding things or interacting with objects on the stage? What are they wearing? You are about to discover the complex workings that go on behind the scenes of a musical theatre production. These are the jobs that make all the magic possible on stage! Just click on "Task" to find out more...

Tasks

YOU have just been hired as the Stage Manager for Acme High School's musical theater production. As Stage Manager you must choose students to serve in the following "behind the scenes" roles: Prop Master, Lighting Designer, Set Designer, Stage Crew, Costume Designer, Sound Technician. You must understand what is required by each of these roles so that you can choose the best student for each job. Today, please choose just ONE role to research. You will use online resources to discover the responsibilities of this role. You will also put careful thought into the personal qualities necessary for success in this role. When you have finished your research, you will show what you know by making a wordle and presenting it to the class. Your wordle will include terms related to the responsibilities and personal qualities required by the job you chose to research.

Process

Use the links below to research your chosen role. As you read about the role, focus on the responsibilities it requires. Also, put thought into the personal qualities that would help someone to succeed in this role. AACT, Theater Folk Film & T.V. Careers, Musicals 101, Set Designer, Stage Crew, Lighting Designer, Sound Technician, Costume Designer. Now, show what you know by creating a wordle and accompanying presentation about the job you have researched. The link to wordle, along with detailed expectations for your work, is found on the next page.

Evaluation

Think carefully about the job you have investigated. What responsibilities (painting, sewing, organizing, etc...) are involved in this job? What personal qualities (strength, responsibility, creativity, knowledge in a specific area, etc...) would make a student well-suited to this job? Create a WORDLE including at least 25 terms. These terms must describe both: Responsibilities associated with the job you researched, Personal qualities that will be necessary for success in this role. IMPORTANT: Your wordle must emphasize one responsibility and one personal quality in a larger font. The words you emphasize should be the MOST IMPORTANT terms in each category. To be sure your chosen terms appear in larger font, enter them three or more times in your words list. Be prepared to present your wordle to the class and to explain why you included many of your terms. You will also need to explain why you believe your highlighted terms are the most important in their categories. Your wordle and your presentation will be evaluated using this RUBRIC. Good luck!

Category and Score	1 - Below Basic	2 - Developing	3 - Meets Expectations	4 - Exceeds Expectations	Score
Completion of Wordle	Wordle contains 15 or fewer terms.	Wordle contains 16 -24 terms.	World contains 25 terms.	World contains more than 25 terms.	

Category and Score	1 - Below Basic	2 - Developing	3 - Meets Expectations	4 - Exceeds Expectations	Score
Relevance of Wordle.	Fewer than 25 terms are relevant to the researched job and terms do NOT reflect BOTH qualities and responsibilities required by the role.	Fewer than 25 terms are relevant to the researched job. Terms reflect BOTH qualities and responsibilities required by the role.	25 terms are relevant to the researched job. Terms reflect BOTH qualities and responsibilities required by the role.	More than 25 terms are relevant to the researched job. Terms reflect BOTH qualities and responsibilities required by the role.	
Evaluation of Terms in Wordle	Fewer than two terms use larger font.	One responsibility AND one quality use larger font. Student does NOT defend the selection of terms as the most important in each category.	One responsibility AND one quality use larger font. Student defends the selection of terms as the most important each it's category.	One responsibility AND one quality use larger font. Student defends, using clear logic, the selection of terms as the most important in each category.	
Presentation Skills					
				Total Score	

Conclusion

Now you understand what is required by the job you chose to research. You can apply this knowledge in your role as the stage manager of Acme High School's musical theater production, as you select a student who is well-suited to serve in this role. Learning from the presentations of other students in class will give you a broader view of the "behind the scenes" jobs that make musical theater's onstage magic possible. BRAVO!!

Teacher Page

This webquest will familiarize students with the "behind the scenes" roles which make the magic of musical theater possible. To complete this webquest you will, ideally, need computers for each student in the class. If you do not have access to computers for all students, consider allowing students to complete the webquest in small cooperative groups. Each member of the group should be assigned a clear role such as: group leader, time-keeper, discussion prompter, scribe, etc. Alternatively, the webquest may be used by individual students as enrichment or extra credit when a related unit is being studied in class. A wealth of critical thinking skills will be used during this webquest. Knowledge of the researched role will be necessary for students to generate the list of terms that will be used to create the wordle. Students will evaluate as they judge two terms to be more important than the others included in their wordles. Comprehension will be required (and demonstrated) as students present about the job they researched and defend the terms they designated as the most important of the lot. Finally, the teacher should find ample opportunity to encourage comparison of roles in the discussion that surrounds the classroom presentations. This webquest can be completed in one to two 40-minute class periods. Be sure to allow an extra class period for student presentations. In my music classroom, this webquest will be a part of a larger musical theater unit in which students also are introduced to the history of the artform and have the opportunity to apply their learning in seeing a show. If you find the need to adapt this learning opportunity for students with special needs, check out the built-in accessibility tools available in your computer. You can access these features through these keyboard shortcuts: (Mac -->SYSTEM PREFERENCES-->UNIVERSAL ACCESS)(WINDOWS - START-->ACCESSORIES-->EASE OF ACCESS)

Standards

This webquest addresses a variety of technology, reading, and speaking standards.

As a music teacher, I will cite here the NAfME standards addressed by this webquest and the larger lesson in which it is used:

8. Content Standard: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
 - b. Identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in school are interrelated with those of music.
9. Content Standard: Understanding music in relation to history and culture.
 - d. Identify and describe roles of musicians in various music settings.

Credits

Resources which supported the creation of this webquest included:

- <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/> - A free rubric generator for teachers.
- <http://www.wordle.net/> - A free text cloud generating tool.
- <http://www.aact.org/people/index.html> - A community theater website with accessible information about various "behind the scenes" jobs.
- <http://filmtvcareers.about.com/> - An about.com website that contains succinct information about a variety of film and T.V. careers. Students will encounter ads, and some searching is required.
- <http://www.musicals101.com/puton8.htm> - An exhaustive website which details various jobs within musical theatre as well as a wealth of information about the history of musical theatre. Will be useful for a teacher wishing to provide some historical context to the lesson.
- <http://dot-job-descriptions.careerplanner.com/SET-DESIGNER.cfm> - A website intended to aid in career planning. Students will encounter ads, accessible information for upper elementary students, but does not offer much depth of content.
- <http://careers.stateuniversity.com/pages/94/Stagehand.html> - A website intended to aid in career planning. Students will encounter ads.

http://education-portal.com/sound_technician.html - An ad supported website intended to guide students in making career and college choices.

<http://www.fashion-schools.org/costume-designer.htm> - An ad supported website detailing fashion careers and school options.

<http://www.fashion-schools.org/costume-designer.htm> - You tube features an infinite variety of user-generated video. Great for musical theater demonstrations.

Credit should also be given to Hank Wadja's course, "Using Technology for Authentic Assessment and Administering the Successful Music Program for 21th Century Learners," offered at the Villanova Summer Music Program in 2012.

Other

Any questions? Contact me at abuvia@yahoo.com.