

**California Department of Education
California Arts Standards for Theatre
2021**

Theatre Glossary

The theatre terms defined in this section include only those terms that are blue text in the standards. The meaning of the terms is specific to their use in the standards and the artistic discipline. The definitions included here are not meant to be an exhaustive list or used as curriculum.

The following defined terms are commonly accepted definitions, most of which are provided by the National Coalition for Core Arts at <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/content/glossary>.

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

character traits: Observable embodied actions that illustrate a character's personality, physicality, 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 processes: The application of performance, production, and technical theatre elements (see the definition) to a theatrical production.

cultural context: The characteristics of everyday existence shared by people in a place or time, including: behaviors, ideas and beliefs, race, religion, social group, geography, identity, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, and language.

devised drama: Creation of an original performance piece by an ensemble. **dramatic play:** Play where children assign and accept roles, then act them out.

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 total set of environmental and situational conditions which influence the actions that a character undertakes.

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.

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.

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.

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.

staging: The arrangement of actors and scenery on a stage for a theatrical production, sometimes known as mise-en-scène.

story elements: Characters, setting, dialogue, and plot that create a story.

style: The use of a specific set of characteristics 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 is based on the obstacle presented. In acting and directing, a tactic refers to a specific action verb.

technical theatre elements: The elements of spectacle used to create a unified and meaningful design for a theatrical production, such as sets, sound, costumes/make-up, lighting, music, props, and multimedia, as well as elements specific to the production, e.g., puppets, masks, special effects, or other story-telling devices/concepts.

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.

Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work

PROCESS COMPONENT
Envision/Conceptualize

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists rely on intuition, curiosity, culture, and critical inquiry.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
What happens when theatre artists use their culture, imaginations, and/or learned theatre skills while engaging in creative exploration and inquiry.

4.TH:Cr1	5.TH:Cr1
a. Articulate the visual details of imagined worlds and improvised stories that support the given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.	a. Identify physical qualities that might reveal a character's inner traits in the imagined world of a drama/theatre work.
b. Imagine how a character might move and speak to support the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.	b. Imagine how a character's inner thoughts impact the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.
4.TH:Cr1	5.TH:Cr1
c. Visualize and design technical theatre elements that support the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.	c. Propose design ideas that support the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Cr1	7.TH:Cr1	8.TH:Cr1
a. Identify possible solutions to staging challenges in a drama/theatre work.	a. Investigate multiple perspectives and solutions to staging challenges in a drama/theatre work.	a. Imagine and explore multiple perspectives and solutions to staging problems in a drama/theatre work.
b. Explore a scripted or improvised character by imagining the given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.	b. Envision and describe a scripted or improvised character's inner thoughts and objectives in a drama/theatre work.	b. Develop a scripted or improvised character by articulating the character's inner thoughts, objectives , and motivations in a drama/theatre work.
c. Identify solutions to design challenges in a drama/theatre work.	c. Explain and present solutions to design challenges in a drama/theatre work.	c. Imagine and explore solutions to design challenges of a performance space in a drama/theatre work.

**Creating—Anchor Standard 2:
Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work**

PROCESS COMPONENT
Develop

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists work to discover different ways of communicating meaning.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
How, when, and why do theatre artists’ choices change?

4.TH:Cr2	5.TH:Cr2	6.TH:Cr2	7.TH:Cr2	8.TH:Cr2
a. Collaborate to devise original ideas for a drama/theatre work by asking questions about characters and plots .	a. Devise original ideas for a drama/theatre work that reflect collective inquiry about characters and their given circumstances .	a. Use critical analysis to improve, refine, and evolve original ideas and artistic choices in a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.	a. Examine and justify original ideas and artistic choices in a drama/theatre work based on critical analysis, personal experience, and historical and cultural context .	a. Articulate and apply critical analysis, personal experience, research, and historical and cultural context to the development of original ideas for a drama/theatre work.
b. Make and discuss group decisions and identify responsibilities required to present a drama/theatre work to peers.	b. Participate in defined responsibilities required to present a drama/theatre work informally to an audience.	b. Contribute ideas and accept and incorporate the ideas of others in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.	b. Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.	b. Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

Creating—Anchor Standard 3: Refine and Complete Artistic Work

PROCESS COMPONENT
Rehearse

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists refine their work and practice their craft through rehearsal.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
How do theatre artists transform and edit their initial ideas?

4.TH:Cr3	5.TH:Cr3	6.TH:Cr3	7.TH:Cr3	8.TH:Cr3
a. Revise and refine an improvised or scripted drama /theatre work through rehearsal and collaborative review.	a. Revise and refine an improvised or scripted drama /theatre work through rehearsal, collaborative review, and reflection.	a. Receive and incorporate feedback to refine a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.	a. Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process to analyze and refine choices in a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.	a. Practice collaboration, analysis, and reflection to refine a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.
b. Develop physical and vocal exercise techniques for an improvised or scripted drama /theatre work.	b. Use physical and vocal exploration for character development in a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.	b. Identify effective physical and vocal traits of characters in a drama/theatre work.	b. Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted drama /theatre work.	b. Refine effective physical, vocal, and physiological traits of characters in an improvised or scripted drama /theatre work.
c. Collaborate on solutions to design and technical theatre element problems that arise in rehearsal for a drama/theatre work.	c. Create innovative solutions to design and technical theatre element problems that arise in rehearsal for a drama/theatre work.	c. Explore planned designs during the rehearsal process for a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.	c. Consider multiple planned technical theatre elements and designs during the rehearsal process for a devised or scripted drama /theatre work.	c. Implement and refine a planned design using technical theatre elements during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted drama /theatre work.

**Performing – Anchor Standard 4:
Select, Analyze, & Interpret Artistic Work for Presentation**

PROCESS COMPONENT
Select

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists make strong choices to effectively convey meaning.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
Why are strong choices essential to interpreting a drama or theatre piece?

4.TH:Pr4	5.TH:Pr4	6.TH:Pr4	7.TH:Pr4	8.TH:Pr4
a. Adapt the dialogue and action to change the story in a drama/theatre work.	a. Describe the underlying thoughts and emotions that create dialogue and action in a drama/theatre work.	a. Identify the essential events in a story or script that make up the dramatic structure in a drama/theatre work.	a. Consider various staging choices to enhance the story in a drama/theatre work.	a. Explore different pacing to better communicate the story in a drama/theatre work.
b. Make physical choices to develop a character in a drama/theatre work.	b. Use physical choices to create meaning in a drama/theatre work.	b. Experiment with various physical choices to communicate character in a drama/theatre work.	b. Use various character objectives in a drama/theatre work.	b. Use various character objectives and tactics in a drama/theatre work to overcome an obstacle.

**Performing – Anchor Standard 5:
Develop and Refine Artistic Techniques and Work for Presentation**

PROCESS COMPONENT
Prepare

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists develop personal processes and skills for a performance or design.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
What can I do to fully prepare a performance or technical design?

4.TH:Pr5	5.TH:Pr5	6.TH:Pr5	7.TH:Pr5	8.TH:Pr5
a. Practice selected exercises that can be used in a group setting for drama/theatre work.	a. Choose acting exercises that can be applied to a drama/theatre work.	a. Recognize how acting exercises and techniques can be applied to a drama/theatre work.	a. Participate in a variety of acting exercises and techniques that can be applied in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.	a. Use a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or drama/theatre performance.
b. Propose the use of technical theatre elements in a drama/theatre work.	b. Demonstrate the use of technical theatre elements in a drama/theatre work.	b. Articulate how technical theatre elements are integrated into a drama/theatre work.	b. Choose a variety of technical theatre elements that can be applied to a design in a drama/theatre work.	b. Use a variety of technical theatre elements to create a design for a rehearsal or drama/theatre production.

**Performing – Anchor Standard 6:
Convey Meaning Through the Presentation of Artistic Work**

PROCESS COMPONENT
Share, Present

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists share and present stories, ideas, and envisioned worlds to explore the human experience in diverse cultures.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
What happens when theatre artists and audiences share a creative experience?

4.TH:Pr6	5.TH:Pr6	6.TH:Pr6	7.TH:Pr6	8.TH:Pr6
Present a drama/ theatre work to peers as audience and reflect on performance.	Present drama/ theatre work to an audience.	Adapt a piece of literature and present it for an audience.	Create through improvisation a drama/ theatre work that will be shared with an audience.	Perform a rehearsed, scripted scene from a drama/theatre work for an audience.

**Responding—Anchor Standard 7:
Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work**

PROCESS COMPONENT

Reflect

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

Theatre artists reflect to understand the impact of drama processes and theatre experiences.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do theatre artists comprehend the essence of drama processes and theatre experiences?

4.TH:Re7	5.TH:Re7	6.TH:Re7	7.TH:Re7	8.TH:Re7
Identify artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation.	Explain personal reactions to artistic choices made in a drama/theatre work through participation and observation.	Describe and record personal reactions to artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.	Compare recorded personal and peer reactions to artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.	Apply appropriate criteria to the evaluation of artistic choices in a drama/theatre work.

Responding—Anchor Standard 8: Interpret Intent and Meaning in Artistic Work

PROCESS COMPONENT
Interpret

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

Theatre artists' interpretations of drama/theatre work are influenced by personal experiences, culture, and aesthetics.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can the same work of art communicate different messages to different people?

4.TH:Re8	5.TH:Re8
a. Compare and contrast multiple personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.	a. Justify responses based on personal experiences when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.
b. Compare and contrast the qualities of characters in a drama/theatre work through physical characteristics and prop or costume design choices that reflect cultural contexts.	b. Explain responses to characters based on cultural contexts when participating in or observing drama/theatre work.

4.TH:Re8	5.TH:Re8
c. Identify and discuss physiological changes connected to emotions in drama/theatre work.	c. Investigate the effects of emotions on posture, gesture, breathing, and vocal intonation in a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Re8	7.TH:Re8	8.TH:Re8
a. Explain how artists make choices based on personal experience in a drama/theatre work.	a. Identify the artistic choices made based on personal experience in a drama/theatre work.	a. Recognize and share artistic choices when participating in or observing a drama/theatre work.
b. Identify cultural contexts that may influence the evaluation of a drama/theatre work.	b. Describe how cultural contexts can influence the evaluation of drama/theatre work.	b. Analyze how cultural contexts influence the evaluation of a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Re8	7.TH:Re8	8.TH:Re8
c. Identify personal aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs through participation in or observation of drama/theatre work.	c. Interpret how the use of personal aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs can be used to discuss drama/theatre work.	c. Apply personal aesthetics, preferences, and beliefs to evaluate a drama/theatre work.

**Responding—Anchor Standard 9:
Apply Criteria to Evaluate Artistic Work**

PROCESS COMPONENT
Evaluate

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING
Theatre artists apply criteria to understand, explore, and assess drama and theatre work.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION
How do analysis and synthesis impact the theatre artist’s process and audience’s perspectives?

4.TH:Re9	5.TH:Re9
a. Develop and implement a plan to evaluate drama/theatre work.	a. Develop multiple criteria to evaluate drama/theatre work.
b. Analyze and evaluate a character’s choice in a drama/theatre work from an audience perspective.	b. Analyze and evaluate a character’s circumstances in a drama/theatre work from an audience perspective.
c. Explore how technical theatre elements may support a theme or idea in a drama/theatre work.	c. Assess how technical theatre elements represent the theme of a drama/theatre work.

6.TH:Re9	7.TH:Re9	8.TH:Re9
a. Use supporting evidence and criteria to evaluate drama/theatre work.	a. Explain preferences, using supporting evidence and criteria, to develop a personal aesthetic to evaluate drama/theatre work.	a. Respond to a drama/theatre work using supporting evidence, personal aesthetics, and artistic criteria.
b. Identify a specific audience or purpose for a drama/theatre work.	b. Identify how the intended purpose of a drama/theatre work appeals to a specific audience.	b. Assess the impact of a drama/theatre work on a specific audience.
c. Identify the technical theatre elements used in a drama/theatre work to justify aesthetic choices.	c. Analyze and evaluate the aesthetics of the technical theatre elements in a drama/theatre work.	c. Differentiate the effect of technical theatre elements used in a drama/theatre work to assess aesthetic choices.

Connecting—Anchor Standard 10:

Synthesize and Relate Knowledge and Personal Experiences to Make Art

PROCESS COMPONENT

Empathize

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

Theatre artists allow awareness of interrelationships between self and others to influence and inform their work.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What happens when theatre artists foster understanding between self and others through critical awareness, social responsibility, and the exploration of empathy?

4.TH:Cn10	5.TH:Cn10	6.TH:Cn10	7.TH:Cn10	8.TH:Cn10
Imagine and identify the ways drama/theatre work reflects the perspectives of a community or culture.	Explain how drama/theatre connects oneself to a community or culture.	Explain how the actions and motivations of characters in a drama/theatre work impact perspectives of a community or culture.	Incorporate multiple perspectives and diverse community ideas in a drama/theatre work.	Examine a community issue through multiple perspectives in a drama/theatre work.

Connecting—Anchor Standard 11:

Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context to Deepen Understanding

11.1 PROCESS COMPONENT
Interrelate

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

Theatre artists understand and can communicate through their creative process as they analyze the way the world may be understood.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What happens when theatre artists allow an understanding of themselves and the world to inform perceptions about theatre and the purpose of their work?

4.TH:Cn11.1	5.TH:Cn11.1	6.TH:Cn11.1	7.TH:Cn11.1	8.TH:Cn11.1
a. Respond to community and social issues and incorporate other content areas in drama/theatre work.	a. Investigate historical, global, and social issues expressed in drama/theatre work.	a. Identify universal themes or common social issues and express them through a drama/theatre work.	a. Incorporate music, dance, art, and/or media arts to strengthen the meaning and conflict in a drama/theatre work with a particular cultural, global, or historic context.	a. Use different forms, styles, and genres of drama/theatre work to examine contemporary social, cultural, or global issues.
b. Use responsible practices for creating and adapting drama/theatre works.	b. Explore the ethical responsibilities to oneself and others when observing and performing.	b. Explore the ethical responsibilities to oneself and others when recording, posting, and sharing through the internet, social media, and other communication formats.	b. Demonstrate ethical responsibility to oneself and others during the production process, and when recording, posting, and sharing through the internet, social media, and other communication formats.	b. Examine the practices, issues, and ethics of appropriation, fair use, copyright, open source, and creative commons as they apply to creating works of art and design.

**Connecting—Anchor Standard 11:
Relate Artistic Ideas and Works with Societal, Cultural, and Historical Context
to Deepen Understanding**

**11.2 PROCESS COMPONENT
Research**

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING

Theatre artists critically inquire into the ways others have thought about and created drama processes and productions to inform their own work.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

In what ways can research into theatre histories, theories, literature, and performances alter the way a drama process or production is understood?

4.TH:Cn11.2	5.TH:Cn11.2	6.TH:Cn11.2	7.TH:Cn11.2	8.TH:Cn11.2
a. Investigate cross-cultural approaches to storytelling in drama/theatre work.	a. Analyze commonalities and differences between stories set in different cultures in preparation for a drama/theatre work.	a. Research and analyze two different versions of the same drama/theatre story to determine differences and similarities in the visual and aural world of each story.	a. Research and discuss how a playwright might have intended a drama/theatre work to be produced.	a. Research the story elements of a staged drama/theatre work and compare them to another production of the same work.
b. Compare the drama/ theatre conventions of a given time period with those of the present.	b. Identify historical sources that explain drama/theatre terminology and conventions.	b. Investigate the time period and place of a drama/theatre work to better understand performance and design choices.	b. Examine artifacts from a time period and geographic location to better understand performance and design choices in a drama/theatre work.	b. Identify and use artifacts from a time period and place to develop performance and design choices in a drama/theatre work.