This curriculum may be modified through varying techniques, strategies, and materials, as per an individual student’s Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

Approved by the Berkeley Heights Board of Education at the regular meeting held on 12/5/19.
VISION STATEMENT

The primary objective of the Communication Skills program is to help prepare our students to be the leaders of tomorrow, as we move forward into the 21st century. The Communication Skills program is a nine week elective course, for 7th grade students. In this course, students learn to shape and express their ideas with clarity and confidence. The primary component is theatre with a secondary focus on public speaking.

In the theatre component, students improvise and create various dramatic situations. Students will use theatre as a symbolic representation of their own experience. The ability to communicate their ideas is enhanced through theatre. They will create, perform, direct, and critique. Students will learn basic drama skills, explore pantomime, and focus on improvisation.

Given the proven importance of oral literacy for academic and career success, it is vital that our students are given the tools to become effective communicators and the confidence that comes from presenting their thoughts and ideas in a safe, supportive classroom environment. In addition to content-based knowledge and specific skills, this curriculum integrates the skills, knowledge, and expertise of 21st Century Learning as identified by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Twenty-first Century Learning, when used in combination with standards-based content, ensures that students are prepared for success in today’s challenging environment. In this course, students will combine elements of both public speaking and drama in an effort to communicate more effectively. Using all tools at their disposal: voice, body, mind, heart, as well as technology, students will solve challenging, authentic problems, as they become more adept in their ability to persuade, entertain, or inspire.
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Communication Skills course is to promote confidence and self-esteem in each student, as he/she grows and matures throughout the middle school years. The students will learn to form, shape, and share their ideas with confidence and clarity. This mission will be accomplished by:

- Appreciating language as a powerful tool for communication
- Developing a tolerance for the ideas and values of others
- Recognizing personal strengths and areas for growth
- Appreciating diversity
- Accepting and giving constructive criticism

Students will:

- Communicate effectively
- Work cooperatively
- Speak clearly and concisely
- Speak to a variety of purposes and audiences
- Initiate ideas and participate actively

This course is an elective offering at the middle school level. By the end of this course each student will have participated in, and completed all the areas covered in this curriculum guide. This curriculum guide addresses the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Technology, and the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for 21st Century Skills.
1. To recognize the elements required for clear and effective communication.

2. To formulate and express ideas effectively, using both verbal and non-verbal forms of communication.

3. To work cooperatively and productively with others in the creation and performance of speeches, monologues, and small group presentations.

4. To use movement, still image, and other non-verbal communication techniques to interpret a range of literary selections.

5. To use a variety of drama techniques to develop and sustain a characterization in performance.

6. To recognize the elements of stage improvisation and demonstrate acquired skills in a variety of improvisational scenes and exercises.

7. To establish criteria for peer evaluation and objective self-critique.
STUDENT PROFICIENCIES

The student will achieve proficiency in the following areas:

Knowledge
1. Understand a variety of uses for communication
2. Learn dramatic language
3. Understand the concept of negotiation
4. Discover how roles in theatre mirror roles in life
5. Learn dramatic structure
6. Understand the purpose of public speaking
7. Learn about different types of speeches

Skills
1. Define communication
2. Assume a character
3. Use body language to non-verbally communicate feeling
4. Speak clearly
5. Use dramatic and figurative language
6. Engage in constructive criticism
7. Research, construct, and deliver a speech
8. Vocalize with confidence
9. Use technology to support and convey meaning

Character
1. Appreciate language as a powerful tool for communication
2. Develop a tolerance for the ideas and values of others
3. Recognize personal strengths and weaknesses
4. Recognize importance of drama and public speaking, and sustained belief in the roles that they play
5. Appreciate diversity
6. Appreciate importance of rehearsal
7. Accept and give constructive criticism
8. Communicate effectively
9. Work cooperatively
10. Speak clearly and concisely
11. Speak to a variety of purposes and audiences
12. Participate actively in all aspects of class
13. Initiate ideas, which shape dramatic work
14. Take calculated risks with regard to improvisation
15. Express responses with care and commitment
16. Rehearse scenes and speeches.
METHODS OF EVALUATION

1. Teacher developed tests and quizzes
2. Teacher observation and evaluation of class/group participation
3. Rubrics for presentations, scene work, and speeches
4. Performance-based assessments
5. Peer and self-critique/reflection
MODIFICATIONS & ACCOMMODATIONS

Modifications and Accommodations for Special Education students, students with 504s, English Language Learners and Gifted and Talented students may include but are not limited to the following:

**Special Education**
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)
- Exemplars of varied performance levels
- Multimedia presentations
- Sheltered instruction
- Consultation with ESL teachers
- Manipulatives
- Tiered/Scaffolded Lessons
- Mnemonic devices
- Visual aids
- Modeling
- Guided note-taking
- Study Guides
- Modified homework
- Differentiated pre-typed class notes and example problems
- Use of the special education teacher to re-instruct in flexible small groups for the struggling learner
- Manipulatives
- Flipped Instruction
- Word banks
- Reduced choice on assessments
- Preferential seating
- Choice activities
- Modified time requirements
- Modified notes
- Modified lesson, assessment and study guide format
- Provide an enriched curriculum and activities
- Independent projects
- Contracts/behavior support plans
- Open-ended responses
- Project-based learning
- Group activities
- Guided Notes
- Functional learning incorporated into each lesson
- Exploration Activities
- Assessment read aloud
- Small group assessments
- Organizational Support
- Oral questioning assessments to supplement written response
- Pre-writing Structural Supports for extended writing tasks
- Ongoing teacher feedback as part of the writing process
- Interactive Study Guides
- Multi-sensory approach to instruction
- Written and spoken step-by-step directions
- Content-focused assessment (not grading for spelling/grammar)
- Graphic organizers
- Non-verbal cues to begin task/remain on task/refocus
- Individual monitoring for understanding/reinforced instruction
- Printed copies of class readings for application of Active Reading Strategies

**Gifted & Talented**
- Provide one-to-one teacher support
- Curriculum Compacting
- Advanced problems to extend the critical thinking skills of the advanced learner
- Supplemental reading material for independent study
- Elevated questioning techniques using Webb’s Depth of Knowledge matrix
- Curriculum Compacting
- Flexible grouping
- Tiered assignments
- Topic selection by interest
- Manipulatives
- Tiered Lessons
- Flipped Instruction
- Multimedia Presentations
- Open-ended responses
- Project-based learning
- Group activities
- Guided Notes
- Conclusions and analysis of exploratory activities
• Career based learning incorporated into each lesson
• Exploration Activities
• Student choice

**ELLs**
• Exemplars of varied performance levels
• Multimedia presentations
• Sheltered instruction
• Consultation with ESL teachers
• Manipulatives
• Tiered/Scaffolded Lessons
• Mnemonic devices
• Visual aids
• Modeling
• Guided note-taking
• Study Guides
• Modified homework
• Differentiated pre-typed class notes and example problems
• Individualized instruction plans
• Manipulatives
• Flipped Instruction
• Words banks
• Reduced choice on assessments
• Preferential seating
• Choice activities
• Modified time requirements
• Modified notes
• Modify lesson, assessment and study guide format
• Provide an enriched curriculum and activities
• Contracts/management plans
• Open-ended responses
• Project-based learning
• Group activities
• Guided Notes
• Exploration Activities
• Assessment read aloud
• Small group assessments
• Oral questioning assessments to supplement written response
● Pre-writing Structural Supports for extended writing tasks
● Ongoing teacher feedback as part of the writing process
● Interactive Study Guides
● Multi-sensory approach to instruction
● Written and spoken step-by-step directions
● Graphic organizers
● Non-verbal cues to begin task/remain on task/refocus
● Individual monitoring for understanding/reinforced instruction
● Printed copies of class readings for application of Active Reading Strategies

504s
● Exemplars of varied performance levels
● Multimedia presentations
● Sheltered instruction
● Tiered/Scaffolded Lessons
● Mnemonic devices
● Visual aids
● Modeling
● Guided note-taking
● Study Guides
● Differentiated pre-typed class notes and example problems
● Manipulatives
● Words banks
● Reduced choice on assessments
● Preferential seating
● Modified time requirements
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● Modify lesson, assessment and study guide format
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● Printed copies of class readings for application of Active Reading Strategies

**Students at Risk of Failure**

● Exemplars of varied performance levels
● Multimedia presentations
● Tiered/Scaffolded Lessons
● Modeling
● Guided note-taking
● Study Guides
● Differentiated pre-typed class notes and example problems
● Individualized instruction plans
● Words banks
● Reduced choice on assessments
● Preferential seating
● Choice activities
● Modified time requirements
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● Printed copies of class readings for application of Active Reading Strategies
**SCOPE AND SEQUENCE**

**COURSE OUTLINE/STUDENT OBJECTIVE**

The student will be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standards</th>
<th>Course Outline/Student Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standards:</strong> 1.1.8.C.2-3; 1.3.8.C.1-2</td>
<td>I. Theatre Arts And Group Building- Improvisation (9 Lessons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology:</strong> 8.1.8.E.1</td>
<td>A. Confidence, Trust, and Focus</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>21st Century:</strong> CRP 1; CRP 2; CRP 4; CRP 6; CRP 7; CRP 8; CRP 11; CRP 12</td>
<td>1. Sustain energy</td>
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<td><strong>Cross Curricular:</strong> SL 8.1.4</td>
<td>2. Build dramatic rhythm</td>
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<td>3. Concentrate for extended periods</td>
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<td>4. Listen carefully</td>
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<td>5. Work cooperatively</td>
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<td>B. Establish Given Circumstances</td>
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<td>1. Create mood</td>
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<td>2. Communicate where and when a scene takes place</td>
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<td>3. Decide upon and communicate plot</td>
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<td>4. Establish conflict</td>
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<td>C. Create Character</td>
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<td>1. Establish motivation</td>
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<td>2. Describe character</td>
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<td>a. physically</td>
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<td>b. vocally</td>
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<td>3. Decide upon and establish relationships</td>
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<td>4. Communicate and control emotions on stage</td>
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<td>D. Preparing for Improvisation</td>
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<td>1. Use movement as a form of communication</td>
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<td>2. Use voice as a form of communication</td>
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<td>3. Make choices based on given circumstances</td>
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<td>4. React quickly/think on feet</td>
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<td>5. Recognize importance of saying “yes, and…” to further plot</td>
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<td>6. Use empathy</td>
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<td>7. Take creative risks</td>
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<td>E. Creating dramatic improvisations</td>
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<td>1. Initiate ideas which contribute to the topic, focus, and progress of scene</td>
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<td>2. Participate in various groups</td>
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<td>3. Contribute to problem-solving and decision-making inherent in drama</td>
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<td>4. Negotiate and accept ideas of others</td>
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<td>F. Reflection on group and individual scenes</td>
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<td>1. Reflect thoughtfully in private and public</td>
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<td>2. Express responses to scenes with interest and commitment</td>
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<td>3. Record reflections on dramatic experience in ongoing journal</td>
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<td>4. Apply responses and discovery to further development and growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Standards: 1.1.8.C.3; 1.3.8.A.2
Technology: 8.1.8.E.1
21st Century: CRP 1; CRP 2; CRP 4; CRP 6; CRP 7; CRP 8; CRP 11; CRP 12; 9.2.12.C.1; 9.2.12.C.2; 9.2.12.C.3
Cross Curricular: SL 8.1.4; L.8.1-3; W.8.1

II. Public Speaking-Demonstration Speech (9 Lessons)

A. Identify the Four Methods of Speech Delivery and Know When to Use Each
   1. Manuscript
   2. Memorization
   3. Impromptu
   4. Extemporaneous

B. Use Figures of Speech Where Appropriate
   1. Simile
   2. Metaphor/Extended metaphor
   3. Personification
   4. Hyperbole

C. Recognize Various Types of Socio-Ritual Speeches
   1. Introductions and welcomes
   2. Award presentations
   3. Nominations
   4. Announcements
   5. Commencements

D. Construct a Commencement Speech to Include:
   1. Welcome address
   2. Quotes
   3. Humor
   4. Memories
   5. Hopes for the future
   6. Thank you’s

E. Rehearse and Deliver Commencement Address with Confidence
   1. Volume
   2. Rate
   3. Pitch
   4. Vocal quality
   5. Clarity

F. Recognize Importance of Non-Verbal Delivery Factors
   1. Appearance
   2. Facial expression
   3. Eye contact
   4. Gestures
   5. Posture

G. Provide and Accept Constructive Criticism with Poise

Standards: 1.1.8.C.3; 1.3.8.A.2
Technology: 8.1.8.E.1
21st Century: CRP 1; CRP 2; CRP 4; CRP 6; CRP 7; CRP 8; CRP 11; CRP 12
Cross Curricular: SL 8.1.4

III. Theatre Arts/The Miracle Worker (10 Lessons)

A. Theme
   1. Study human relationships described in plays
   2. Determine how playwrights use dialogue and action to create characters
   3. Identify standards of society in the 19th century
   4. Understand that communication involves much more than speech alone

B. Dramatic Structure
   1. Examine the structure of a play
   2. Explain dramatic techniques
      a. flashback
      b. irony
c. hyperbole
3. Recognize importance of stage directions to set mood
4. Define terminology
   a. setting
   b. exposition
   c. protagonist/antagonist
   d. plot
   e. conflict
   f. rising/falling action

C. Acting
   1. Props
   2. Costumes
   3. Body language
   4. Facial expression
   5. Vocal projection

Standards: 1.1.8.C.3; 1.3.8.A.2
Technology: 8.1.8.E.1
21st Century: CRP 1; CRP 2; CRP 4; CRP 6; CRP 7; CRP 8; CRP 11; CRP 12
Cross Curricular: SL 8.1.4

IV. Mini Play - Compared To Full-Length Work (9 Lessons)
   A. Theme
      1. Study human relationships described in plays
      2. Examine how playwrights use dialogue and action to create characters
      3. Understand that communication involves much more than speech alone
   B. Dramatic Structure
      1. Examine the structure of a play
      2. Explain dramatic techniques
         a. flashback
         b. irony
         c. hyperbole
      3. Recognize importance of stage directions to set mood
      4. Define terminology
         a. setting
         b. exposition
         c. protagonist/antagonist
         d. plot
         e. conflict
         f. rising/falling action
   C. Acting
      1. Props
      2. Costumes
      3. Body language
      4. Facial expression
      5. Vocal projection
SUGGESTED MATERIALS

Resources for Students


Resources for Teacher


Videos:

Julie Taymor: Setting a Scene (WNET) Behind the Scenes, vol. 10.
