

Reader's Theatre Syllabus ***Comm 3320-001***

The University of Texas at Dallas

Instructor: Kathy Lingo, Office 3.514, 972-883-4152

Semester: Fall 2015

Course Start/End Date: Aug 24-Dec.8

Course Place and Times: Jo 3.536 T/R 10:00-11:15

| [Course Information](#) | [Technical Requirements](#) | [Course Access](#) | [Communications](#) |
| [Assessments](#) | [Scholastic Dishonesty](#) | [Course Evaluation](#) | [Course Schedule](#) | [Addendum](#) |

Course Information

"Readers Theatre introduces the element of drama into literacy learning and magically transforms the classroom into a stage. During Readers Theatre time, the reader is at center stage, totally absorbed in reading. The reader is a star." *Internet Resources for Conducting Reader's Theatre*

Reader's theatre in this class is based upon:

- The presentation is based upon narration and group performances.
- The presentations may use a variety of costumes, props and minimum set pieces.
- The student will be so familiar with the text it is almost memorized and even page turning will be timed.
- Students must attend rehearsals inside and outside of class.
- Movement and direction will be given for each performance. It is NOT simply people sitting on chairs or stools reading casually. Proper readings require the use of the entire body, whether it is walking onto the stage or sitting and reading. Active reading requires the reader to encapsulate the character in mind and body.
- Literature from all genres will be employed. The literature must be examined and analyzed for understanding, character development, presentation design and vocal work.
- Performances may be designed using poetry, prose, plays, original and translated works.

If you are considering teaching:

"Popular first in colleges and universities, reader's theater has now moved to earlier education, where it is seen as a key tool for creating interest and skill in reading. Young

people love to do it, and they give it their all—more so because it's a team effort.... Repeated readings bring fluency, and if a script is based on an available book, kids want to read that too. What's more, reader's theater is a relatively simple activity for the teacher, with no required setup other than making copies of scripts. Reader's theater has been found effective not only for language arts but for social studies as well. Performing stories based on another culture is one of the best ways for students to become interested in and familiar with that culture.”
<http://www.aaronshep.com/rt/whatis.html>

Benefits of Using Readers Theater in the Classroom or Library?

Readers Theater helps to....

- develop fluency through repeated exposure to text.
- increase comprehension.
- integrate reading, writing, speaking, listening in an authentic context.
- engage students.
- increase reading motivation.
- create confidence and improve the self-image of students.
- provide a real purpose for reading.
- provide opportunities for cooperative learning.

<http://www.scholastic.com/librarians/programs/whatisrt.htm>

Prerequisites:

College level reading and writing skills are a must, but this is only the beginning. A good actor must possess self discipline, self-respect and respect for others, gracious manners and a respect for protocol and process.

Learning objectives:

Ability to strategically analyze information, script, or pieces of literature, verbally and nonverbally

*Students will be asked to breakdown several long and short scripts to be analyzed.
Students will be asked to design their own performance pieces for Reader's Theatre.*

Ability to strengthen literacy skills.

Reader's Theatre requires the student to verbally and physically bring the work to life. Through multiple rehearsals and readings students begin to visualize the written and spoken word. Reader's Theatre has been proven to enhance literacy skills and promotes the appreciation and excitement of reading. Reader's Theatre is being used all across the country, in all levels of teaching, to motivate students of all ages to read and enhance their literary skills.

Ability to adapt literature to the needs of the Reader's Theatre.

Not all scripts are written for Reader's Theatre. Students must adapt scripts through editing and design to fit their performance needs. Students must choose scripts carefully to design their own program piece. All genres of literature will be explored.

Ability to interpret information/messages from different perspectives

Students will be asked to perform their character's roles in a variety of ways to explore different perspectives when developing a character. Different genres and types of

literature will be performed, which allows the students to explore all types of human conditions and perspectives of life.

Ability to work with others in groups

Students will work and rehearse in groups. Very few projects assigned for this course will have casts less than 4 people.

Ability to take criticism in a positive progressive manner

Critiques will be given in a workshop type environment. Students will be given instruction and evaluation of their work verbally in class. Students and instructor will discuss the needs of the piece and the performers. Students are to carefully make notes of all criticisms.

Ability to understand a variety of human conditions

Reader's Theatre covers all types of literature, which requires the student to develop an understanding of many different human conditions. We will be working on translated pieces, comedies, dramas, plays, short stories, historical, contemporary and all types of works with many different themes, topics and story lines.

Ability to follow direction in detail

Instructor Information

1. Contact information: 972.883.4152, Office JO 3.514
2. Web site: klingo@utdallas.edu

Course Materials

1. Required and recommended texts and materials

Student must have two sizes of black three ring binders for performance and gloss page protector for their material in their notebooks. Specific sizes and set up of pages will be given in class. Students must follow these strict instructions.

Students must keep a personal notebook, which contains all their course work and scripts used and researched. Students must also keep a collection of their criticism notes when working on their pieces and have each script marked carefully. All scripts and criticisms should be in your notebooks.

**Please keep a notebook of your learning experiences with critiques.
You may be given a questionnaire at the end of the semester.**

**Listen: To accent recordings (YouTube and Internet)
Vocal cadence and pattern**

2. Other resources or tools

Students must sign a talent release form.

Please dress comfortably, but appropriately for class. Make sure the clothes you were are moveable and comfortable.

Textbooks and some other bookstore materials can be ordered online through [MBS Direct Virtual Bookstore](#) or [Off-Campus Books](#) online ordering site. They are also available in stock at [UTD Bookstore](#) and Off-Campus Books.

Course Policy

1. Make-up exams: ***Exams will be in the form of performed assignments and will only be allowed if official emergency documentation can be proved.***
2. Extra Credit: ***Students will be given due dates and assignments in advance. Extra Credit work will not be given.***
3. Late Work: ***refer to make-up exams to whom the curtain is held for***
4. Participation: ***We will be doing in class activities and participation is a must, as well as a part of the student's grade.***

Technical Requirements

Must be able to use email and other social media.

Student Assessments

Grading Information

List point values and weights for all assessment tasks

| | |
|--|------------|
| Assignments/Collected Works/Research: | 25% |
| Character Skill Growth: | 20% |
| Participation/ Rehearsals: | 25% |
| Performance Grades: | 20% |
| Notebook: | 10% |

List grade criteria for course:

| Scaled Score | Letter Equivalent |
|--------------|-------------------|
| 90 -100 | A |
| 80-89 | B |
| 70-79 | C |
| 60-69 | D |

Your instructor keeps an electronic and an old-fashioned grade book. Due to past technological misfortunes, some operator errors and some systems errors with WebCT and other systems used, your instructor chooses to use elements of both, maintaining the whole organization of the class in written format. You may always set an appointment with me to discuss your grades; the instructor will let you know in class if there are postings.

Participation

Reader's Theatre is a collaborative art. Participation in this course is a physical and mental activity. Students must be able to handle criticism with a positive attitude and work to incorporate those critiques/suggestions into future performances.

Your attendance can seriously affect your final grade. Please read below under attendance policy.

Absences *are taken seriously and only two "free get out of jail" cards are given per semester if your class meets twice a week, ten points will be taken off your participation and performance grade for each absence that follows. If your class meets once a week, students receive one "free get out of jail" card and 20 points will be taken off their participation and potentially their performance grade with each absence that follows. Only absences where emergency/medical documentation is provided or University sponsored field trips/events will be excused. Improvisation and Acting requires discipline. Use your absences wisely!*

Please do not come to class ill. Remember, it's a collaborative event and we don't want to create a tragedy or comedy of errors with others health. Please bring me a copy of your medical documentation to avoid penalty.

Participation includes contributions and reactions to classroom and studio work, verbal expression of ideas to others, enthusiasm for topic in those expressions and overall involvement/behavior in class activities. Students must speak up, but do so appropriately. It is also the ability to accept criticism in a positive light and work to improve on those observations.

Assignments

This is a performance-based course. Performances will be graded in written and oral forms at the discretion of the instructor. Performances will be discussed openly in class for learning purposes. Students are to take detailed notes of criticisms and comments made by the instructor and others during critique sessions.

Exercises, rituals and readings require physical involvement. There will be individual assignments, but most will involve groups of people. Theatrical work is collaborative. Actors must learn to work, listen and literally feed off other people. Therefore, theatre games, physical and vocal types of exercises will be employed throughout the semester. Students will be expected to research and lead in such exercises. Students will be asked to bring tongue twisters and other exercises to class. The body and the voice must be ready to respond with warm-ups and exercises.

Assignment submission instructions: Again, this is a performance-based class and you will be critiqued orally in class. You will be responsible for keeping up with those comments and grades. In other words, keep every critique and grade sheet you are given until you receive your final grade. Write down your critiques. You should have your books with you at all times in this class. I recommend this for any class you take. Besides you will need all of these materials for your notebook to be handed in at the end of the semester.

Online Tests/Quizzes

Exams and quizzes are in the form of performances.

Final Examination and Performances

You may have several performances throughout the semester and a final show at the end of the semester. These performances will have audiences and will be in different locations around the University and at different times. If a student is cast in a Reader's Theatre they must attend all performances in and outside of class. The dates of these performances will be announced in class. There are no excuses for missing a performance date outside of extreme emergency. Detailed requirements will be given in class based upon individual and class needs and understudies will be assigned, if available.

[Top](#)

Course Evaluation

As required by UTD academic regulations, every student must complete an evaluation for each enrolled course at the end of the semester. An online instructional assessment form will be made available for your confidential use. Please look for the course evaluation link on the course Homepage towards the end of the course.

[Top](#)

Course Outline/Schedule

This course outline and schedule is purely tentative. It is a form of organization that is intended to help the instructor reach the objectives of the course, but when dealing with human elements and development, there are always variables. The instructor has the right to change the dates, times and assignments, as she deems necessary. Instructions will be clearly discussed in class and students are required to take notes of all class discussions.

| WEEK | STARTING DATE | TOPIC/LECTURE | ACTIVITY |
|------------------------|----------------|---|--|
| 1 (First class day) | Aug 25 | Welcome Syllabus Review Begin the importance of exercises and focus | Get students to perform with small opening pieces from Professor. See what students would like to perform Wednesday night for theatre meeting at 7 p.m. |
| 2 | Sept 1 | Begin Scenes Focus on voices and physicalities Warming up the voice | In class exercises The wonderful tongue twister and why they are important |
| 3 | Sept 8 | Student Presentations | . In class exercises |
| 4 | Sept 15 | Workshop Begin to choose pieces | Students need to come to class with pieces they have found |
| 5 | Sept 22 | Read through of scripts. | |
| 6 | Sept 29 | Read through of scripts | |
| 7 | Oct 6 | Student performance | |
| 8 | Oct 13 | Student performance | |
| 9 | Oct 20 | Workshop | |
| 10 | Oct 27 | Workshop | . |

| | | | |
|----|--------|---|-------------------------------|
| 11 | Nov 3 | Choose final scenes to work on for show | |
| 12 | Nov 10 | Scene development of what was selected | |
| 13 | Nov 17 | Rehearse | |
| 14 | Nov 24 | Thanksgiving Break | |
| 15 | Dec. 1 | Final Performances | Performance and Participation |
| 16 | Dec. 8 | Final Performances | |
| | | | |

These timelines and descriptions are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

[Top](#)

Syllabus Addendum

Prof's notes on dishonesty:

Performances can be plagiarized by the cutting selected, movements copied and mimicking. Your performances must be your own. Imitating someone else's performance is cheating. Don't use someone else's work. Make your own decisions, cut your own work and incorporate your own talents.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Please go to <http://provost.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies/>