

FALL FESTIVAL – MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION

SETS/LIGHTS

Why is it called Sets and Lights if we're only doing Sets?

- Because the Varsity entries have to include 3 light plans, and Junior Varsity has to do one light plan so they can start learning what it's about.
- Middle School does NOT have to do a Light Plan. But it's easier to have all the ballots & categories say the same thing.

Okay, what do we have to do?

- You have to build ONE set for the designated category for the Fall Festival, draw an overhead ground plan, create a notebook and write a concept paper. These are MANDATORY. Details below.
- You should draw one (1) front elevation in color. This is not required, but it is highly recommended.
- You also need a verification form signed by your teacher that says students did all the work and didn't spend more money than allowed.

****The Verification Form is on page 3 of this pdf.*

What do we build the set on?

- Your school may already have what's called a "black box stage" for building your presentation set on. If not, you will need to create one for your set. It's basically a piece of wood, metal or foam board, painted black, where you can create a 3-dimensional set.

How big a set do we build?

- Maximum size is 18' high, 36' wide, 30' deep (18 feet high, 36 feet wide, 30 feet deep).
- The set for your presentation is created to a MANDATORY scale: ½ inch = 1 foot. (Therefore 1 inch on paper equals 2 feet, 3 inches represents 4½ feet, etc.) How many inches for 18 feet? 36 feet? 30 feet? Or the number of feet in your stage or performance area?
- Measure out the size of your stage for your "black box stage" and create walls, furniture, whatever you would need on stage for a performance of one particular scene from the designated play.

How much money can we spend?

- You can spend no more than \$50 on materials for the set itself.
- The black box does NOT get counted in the \$50.
- If someone gives you something to use in your set, you have to find the fair market value of it on the internet, print a page that proves what it would cost, and include that in the \$50 total.
- If you borrow things for the set, you still need to find fair market value and include them in the \$50 you're allowed.
- Save all your receipts and print-outs from the internet and bring them in case the judges ask for them.

What's the overhead ground plan?

- Pretend you're looking down at the stage from up above it. Draw all the items in your set design to scale. You should use $\frac{1}{4}'' = 1'$ scale here (1/4 inch = 1 foot), although you can use $\frac{1}{2}''$ scale if you have enough space on a sheet of white letter-size paper (8½" x 11").
- The ground plan shows the length and width of each item on the set.
- The ground plan is required.

What about those "highly recommended" front elevations?

- Draw a scale model ($\frac{1}{2}'' = 1'$ scale here (1/2 inch = 1 foot) of your set.
- Show the set from the audience's point of view.
- Keep it to scale so you know how tall each item is.

What about the notebook and concept paper?

- You must have a notebook and concept paper, showing all the research you have done and the work that went into preparing your set design.
- ****Instructions for the Notebook and Concept Paper are on page 4 of this pdf.*
- You must identify each page with your school code and the title of the play.

What will the judges expect?

- Your presentation team will provide a brief synopsis of the selected play, if necessary, or a brief explanation of the scene selected, if the judges should know the play well.
- The team will also provide an explanation of your concept and how it fits your selected play and chosen set locations.
- Then the team will show the set design and ground plan, and explain the components (parts), and why those items were chosen.
- Your presentation team can have 1 to 6 persons.
 - The presentation can take up to 8 minutes. Watch your time! You have a lot of material to cover!
 - The judges may or may not ask questions after your presentation.

What if we don't have everything?

- You'll still do the presentation, but you won't get as high a score.
- You will probably not be eligible for a trophy.
- You'll still get share sheets with judges' comments.

What do we say in our presentation?

Talk about the following, but you can do it in any order that seems natural for you:

- Why you chose this particular scene for your set design
- Why you need the items you have on the set – practical reasons including cost and ease of use as well as the actors' needs, plus what the set items show by way of emotion or meaning or style for that scene
- Why they are arranged as they are
- If you have particular colors or patterns, explain why they're important
- Problems you had, and how you solved them

continued

- Who worked on what parts of the design and ground plan, and how you decided on responsibilities
- How many other students besides the presentation team were involved (if there were more – there might or might not have been)
- What you learned from working on this project

What are the judges likely to ask us?

- If the judges ask questions, they might ask some of the following:
 - “If you were to actually build this set on a real stage, what materials would you use to build a full sized set?”
 - “How will you get your sets on and off stage? How many people will you need? How long will the set shift take? Will this occur in front of the audience?”
 - “How does your set fit your concept?”
 - “Do you feel this is safe for actors to use?”
 - “Have you consider audience sight lines?”
 - “Is the majority of your Light Plot used for general illumination, or are you creating mood and tone, as if the lights were characters themselves?”
- If the judges don’t ask questions, don’t worry. You may have answered everything in your presentation.

What happens after our presentation?

- The judges may want more time to look at your set and your notebook. If so, leave them there and pick them up later in the day.

SETS/LIGHTS VERIFICATION FORM

One copy of this sheet must be filled in and signed for the budget/publicity design entry. The participant must include it in the mandatory notebook.

SCHOOL CODE: _____

CREATOR’S NAME(S): _____

TOTAL COST OF DESIGN: _____

I verify that the accompanying sets/lights design was conceptualized and created by student(s) enrolled in the above school indicated by code. I further verify that this design has never placed in any DTASC competition prior to this date and that expenses did not exceed one hundred dollars (\$100).

Signature of Creator/Designer

Signature of Director/Sponsor

SETS/LIGHTS:

A GUIDE TO THE

NOTEBOOK AND CONCEPT PAPER

I. TITLE PAGE

1. School Code
2. _____ Division Festival
3. Title and author of play

II. TEACHER'S SIGNATURE SHEET (see E3–26)

III. CONCEPT PAPER (1–2 pages maximum)

Please write in short, simple sentences.

A. Essential Play Information

1. Title (again)
2. Author (again)
3. Genre (tragedy/comedy, etc.)
4. Historical period/cultural context
5. Settings and time passage
6. Style (romantic, etc.)

B. Interpretation of Play

1. Very brief plot summary — key conflict/resolution
2. Significant roles played by key characters
3. Dominant theme or message
4. Playwright's intent — How play reflects author's purpose

C. Designers' intent — Values of the play/playwright that the designers are committed to expressing through their designs

1. Mood, emotional tone, meanings
2. Stylistic and/or practical design goals

IV. RESEARCH

The following are **recommendations** of things to include in this section. Include as few or as many as are appropriate for each entry.

- A. State specific design choices and explain in more detail how they help to communicate the practical needs, as well as meanings, emotions, and stylistic goals stated in the introduction.
- B. Drawings/sketches/renderings/models/plots (Explain in more detail how they support the play based on number and sequence of settings, time passage, script requirements, and authentic research)
- C. Practical choices — cost, time, materials, ease of use, ease in staging
- D. Artistic choices — color, texture, line, shape, composition, silhouette, balance, terminal accents, special effects
- E. Artistic license — unique choices based on an artistic vision (visual metaphors)
- F. Special design problems faced and how you resolved them
- G. Changes that you would make a second time and why
- H. Your greatest successes/personal rewards and why

CA Theatre Arts Standard
3.2 - Advanced
Students design theatre pieces
in specific theatrical styles
including classics by such
playwrights as Shakespeare.