

# 8th Grade Acting and Improv.

## Course Syllabus- Fall 2019

Ms. Callie Llewellyn  
llewellync@weston.org  
Room: 135

### Course Description

8th Grade Acting and Improv is an improv tools and technique overview designed to practically educate students on the rules and tools of successful improvisation. Building upon the foundational skills they have learned in previous drama courses, students will explore elements of character, given circumstances, and more through the lens of improv. Topics to be explored in the world of improv include but are not limited to: concentration, continuation, endowment, ensemble, long form improv, listening, storytelling, status, and pantomime. Furthermore, students will analyze the dramatic structure of a story through developing their own short play with a peer and through acting in a peer written play.

### Course Objectives

- ★ Students will be able to discover and use different ways of communicating meaning and perspective both to their peers and to an audience.
- ★ Students will be able to synthesize all they have learned about acting techniques into a long form improv performance.
- ★ Students will be able to practice improvisation and compose an improvised moment with their peers.
- ★ Students will be able to define improvisation.
- ★ Students will be able to understand, define, identify, and execute the golden rules of improv in performance.
- ★ Students will be able to understand, define, identify, and execute the tools of improv in performance.
- ★ Students will be able to critically analyze the improv performances of their peers for elements of improv that made it successful and give critical feedback.
- ★ Students will be able to compare and contrast different techniques of acting and begin to develop their own actor's toolbox.
- ★ Students will be able to reflect and analyze their experiences in class.
- ★ Students will be able to describe the dramatic structure of a story.

- ★ Students will be able to compose and direct a play with a peer or peers.
- ★ Students will be able to analyze and interpret a script written by their peers and perform the written character in a play that they are assigned.
- ★ Students will be able to describe and define new vocabulary related to improvisation.

### **Texts to Be Used**

*Improv Encyclopedia* from [improvencyclopedia.org](http://improvencyclopedia.org)

### **Required Materials to be Brought EVERY Day to Class**

- 1 regular or composition notebook for journaling
- 1 pencil

### **Attendance Policy**

Please see student handbook for Weston Middle School guidelines and policies on absences.

### **Daily Routine**

Every day when students enter the classroom they will put all of their belongings and their shoes in the cubbies at the back of the room. Belongings should remain in the cubbies for the full duration of the class period unless otherwise instructed.

After placing belongings in the cubbies, students will stand in their assigned circle spot and wait for the warm up to begin.

At the end of every class, students will do a written reflection on their experiences in class that day.

### **Dress Code Policy**

Almost every day, we will be moving around and on the floor. Students must wear clothing they feel comfortable moving in and appropriate to move around in. No shoes are allowed in the classroom. Shoes should be left in the storage cubbies. Furthermore, students must adhere to school policies when dressing for class. Should students break dress code policy or wear clothing that prohibits or is inappropriate for movement, they will receive a 0 for participation points that day.

### **Technology Policy**

*Phones are only allowed with specific and explicit permission from the teacher.* Without this permission, phones will be confiscated and given to the main office. Anyone found using their

phones for purposes not relevant to the class will also be subject to having their phones confiscated.

Computers may be used for sound and research purposes during appropriate times otherwise they should be placed in the cubbies and not used.

## **Food Policy**

No food in the classroom unless given explicit permission from the teacher. The only beverage allowed is water unless otherwise explicitly told.

## **Grading Policy**

### **Grading Breakdown**

Performances and Plays- **30%**

Participation and in Class Work- **50%**

Reflections and Journals- **20%**

### **Late Work**

All assignments should be turned in on time. However, life happens and assignments sometimes end up being turned in late. Should one of these situations arise, the student should inform me that their assignment is going to be late *at least 24 hours in advance* of the deadline in order for the assignment to adhere to the following grading policy:

1 day (24 hours) late- grade decreases half a letter grade

- For each additional day, the student will be deducted half a letter grade.
- After seven days, the assignment will no longer be accepted and the student will receive a zero.

Should the student not inform me that their assignment will be late 24 hours in advance of the deadline, the assignment will adhere to the following grading policy:

1 day (24 hours) late- grade decreases a full letter grade

- For each additional day, the student will be deducted a full letter grade.
- After three days, the assignment will no longer be accepted and the student will receive a zero.

The purpose of this policy is to help students strengthen their accountability. Deadlines are important, but I realize students have other classes and other life obligations that may get in the

way. With this policy, I hope to help students learn to plan ahead, know what assignments they have going on, and plan their time accordingly, only turning in assignments late when they know they will not have time to finish it on time, rather than simple procrastination.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

Any form of cheating or plagiarism is strictly prohibited and will result in the student receiving an automatic 0 on the assignment. Please see the student handbook for more information on what constitutes as cheating and/or plagiarism.