



**Title:** Rehearsal 101: Independent Rehearsals for Theatre 1

**Grade Levels:** Grades 7-8, High School Proficient

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**Description:**

In this lesson the students will work together to determine the necessities for success during a rehearsal period, and construct a Rehearsal Contract that will guide them throughout the semester.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students will evaluate behaviors conducive to successful rehearsals

Students will reflect on their own needs for success in a rehearsal period

Students will construct a contract that will help guide their rehearsals in the future

**SEL Competencies Taught:**

*Social awareness*, which is the ability to take the perspective of others, demonstrate empathy, acknowledge and appreciate similarities and differences, and understand how one's actions influence and are influenced by others

In various steps of this assignment, students will create opportunities to work together to determine what best suits the needs of themselves and their peers to be successful in a self-guided rehearsal setting. Students will need to be mindful of not only their own needs, but the needs of others. Students will need to remain sensitive to their peers while serving the needs of the collective.

*Relationship skills*, which refers to one's ability to demonstrate prosocial skills and behaviors in order to develop meaningful relationships and resolve interpersonal conflicts

Peer discussion and negotiation can serve as a tool for creating ensemble and community in the classroom, as long as it is purposeful, guided and taught, and used as a tool for support. Through these means, relationships can be fostered between the members of the classroom and ultimately lead to the pursuit of harmony among students who may need more empathy between them.

**2014 National Core Theatre Standards:**

TH:Cr2.1.7. b. Demonstrate mutual respect for self and others and their roles in preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

TH:Cr2.1.8. b. Share leadership and responsibilities to develop collaborative goals when preparing or devising drama/theatre work.

**Time to Teach:** Two 50 min classes or one 90 min class

**Materials Required for Instruction:**

Butcher paper

Markers/pens

Access to digital copy of “Rehearsal Contract” (included below) OR a printed copy - one for each group

**Opening:**

As students come into the space, have students divide into groups of 4-6 students each. Provide butcher paper and markers to each group. Say: Today we will be defining what makes a good rehearsal, a good rehearsal. In your groups, use the paper and markers in front of you to brainstorm attributes of a good rehearsal period. There are no wrong answers! These can be personal to you, such as, “I need a quiet place to study my lines when I am not on stage” or “I need to have a place where I can cut loose once in a while before I get back to business”. Also consider attributes of a successful rehearsal from the standpoint of the director and technicians. What might the team need to also be successful in a rehearsal?” (SEL -*Social awareness*)

Explain, “While there are many types of rehearsals (read through, tech rehearsal, dress rehearsal, table work rehearsal), most rehearsals in the classroom setting or after school are ON YOUR FEET, active rehearsing. These rehearsals ask that you are “PRACTICING WHAT YOU WANT TO PERFORM”. Unlike other disciplines where saving your voice for a concert, or saving your strength in an endurance sport, theatre requires the actor to rehearse each time with the intention to grow upon the rehearsal before. Learning to practice what and how you intend to perform on show day, will help your choices to move from an aware point of view to a muscle memory performance.”

**Instructional Procedures:**

1. After the opening brainstorming session, have students pare down their lists of rehearsal attributes to their top 8-10 traits of a successful rehearsal.
2. Explain to students that each of their lists must clarify expectations in these areas:
  - a. Definition of ON YOUR FEET, active rehearsing
  - b. Punctuality - on time, in class or at rehearsal when called
  - c. Preparedness
  - d. Attitude and Respect for Others
  - e. Creating and Maintaining a Schedule
  - f. Accountability

3. Ask: "Each of these areas require defined expectations so that you and your team are prepared and accountable for your rehearsal time together. What does your team believe is important in terms of attendance? What do you need to prepare for your rehearsal? What types of attitudes do you need to be successful? Who is responsible for creating a working schedule for your rehearsal process? What needs to be included in your schedule? What happens if these expectations are not met? Talk through these areas and dot down your notes on the Rehearsal Expectations Brain Dump (see below). (SEL -*Social awareness, Relationship Skills*)
4. Now, students will use the information they have gathered to create a Do's and Don'ts performance of their rehearsal expectations. Say, "Now that you have begun to flush out the expectations you have for your group's rehearsals, create a 2-5 min planned improvisation scene where you teach the class half of your 10 traits of a successful rehearsal. You may choose to create these scenes in any format, but all group members must participate in the acting of these scenes."(SEL -*Social awareness, Relationship Skills*)
5. Say, "Begin to implement these rehearsal strategies as you rehearse these Do's and Don'ts scenes. Are your expectations realistic and can they work in the context of this classroom and in a production setting?"
6. As students rehearse, visit each group to review their lists, guiding groups who have not used specific expectations that can help shape the rehearsal process as you also need them to be conducted for your personal goals of success.
7. As students begin to wrap up their rehearsals, ask "On a scale of 1 to 5, one being not ready at all and five being ready to go now, tell me where you believe your group is in terms of performing these scenes." Gather the feedback from the students and determine if more time is needed for rehearsal. If so, be sure to continue to work the room and provide feedback on their use of the traits they have determined are essential for a successful rehearsal.
8. When ready, have students perform their scenes for the class. Review the characteristics of a good audience member:
  - a. Listening, not talking
  - b. Phones off
  - c. Welcoming and attentive body language
  - d. Clap when appropriate
  - e. Laugh when appropriate
9. After each group has gone, have each group bring their butcher paper and Rehearsal Expectations Dump Form and circle up together as a whole. Have students discuss the similarities and differences in their lists. (SEL -*Social awareness, Relationship Skills*)
10. Have a student volunteer to write the common traits on the board.
11. Compile one list from all of the suggestions within each group to formulate one Rehearsal Contract. Have a student fill out the Rehearsal Expectations Contract (see below) either digitally or print and have the student complete. (SEL -*Social awareness, Relationship Skills*)
12. Once the class has completed the contract, print copies for each student and have them sign the document. This copy can go to you for safekeeping and referencing if needed throughout the year. Students can also have their own copies in their production or class binders to help guide them through a rehearsal period, if needed.

# Rehearsal Expectations Brain Dump

As you determine the traits of a successful rehearsal, use the areas below to list expectations in each of these areas. Use the questions to guide you.

**ATTENDANCE**

**ATTITUDE**

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

**PREPAREDNESS**

**SCHEDULING**

What does ON YOUR FEET rehearsal mean to you?

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# Rehearsal Expectations Contract

My name:

Date:

Class:

Period:

Together we have built a list of traits that help to determine how we might be able to perform successfully in a rehearsal. While there are other ways to measure the outcome of a rehearsal, the list below describes how we, as a class/production team, will work together to create an environment and culture of expectations to be as successful as we can in a rehearsal period.

We believe that by following the guidelines below, we are providing ourselves with the best opportunity for success in rehearsal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

We believe some of the most common problems faced in rehearsal are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

We will counter these problems by holding each other accountable in these manners:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

My own personal goals I want to accomplish in a rehearsal period are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Obstacles I personally face during the course of a rehearsal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Ways I plan to keep myself on task and in tune with the list of traits above:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Ways my teacher/director can help me stay on track:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I will do my best, try my hardest, and HAVE FUN!

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Signature of Student

**Assessment:** The following questions may be used as a journal entry or an exit ticket:

- Why is it important that we have guidelines for a successful rehearsal?
- What do you need in order to have a successful rehearsal period?
- How can we make decisions in the rehearsal room to help lift up our fellow artists and support others?

**Closing:**

Have students sit in their groups once again. Ask, "I am going to ask you all a series of questions and I want you to express your answer with a thumbs up if you believe your answer is a clear yes, a thumbs down for a clear no, or in the middle if you think you can answer 50/50 for that question. First question: do you believe the class traits are simplistic enough to understand and apply to your daily rehearsal routine? Second question, do you believe there are clear expectations for the various parts of your rehearsal period? Last, do you understand and agree with the accountability expectations? In your groups, discuss any differences in your answers and evaluate how you can be of service to your teammates if anyone needs help. If you have any questions for me, please raise your hand and I will visit your group."

**Learning for all: Please use the space below for suggestions for any specific adaptations or accommodations needed for neuro-diverse or atypical learners.**

This lesson lays in the laps of the students and their abilities to work together to create their own guidelines for success. This allows students to actively engage with students within and outside of their race, ethnicity and other affiliations. Students with disabilities can share their needs, or students can serve as mentors to advocate for these students and their personal needs that will enable them to succeed in a rehearsal environment.

**How does this lesson's content model inclusivity and honor diversity?**

Learning what a working rehearsal consists of and how to work effectively with a group of students is at the heart of this lesson. Building relationship skills and the ability to support and encourage others, regardless of one's color, disability or other marginalized attribute is imperative to the success of this lesson.

**Works Cited:** N/A

**Additional Tools & Resources:** N/A