

Midland Park Public Schools

THEATRE 6-8

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Superintendent of Schools:

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Approved by the Midland Park Board of Education on

, 2022

Grade 6-8 Theatre Curriculum Overview
Exploratory Quarter Class

In this course students will gain a basic understanding of theatrical elements, principles, and conventions as well as develop their acting skills. Students will study selected theatrical material as well as identify and categorize historical/cultural heritages and theatrical conventions. Students will plan a dramatization, take part in its production, and discuss the results. Students will study characterization to expand the definition of characters.

Suggested Course Sequence*:

Unit 1: Elements of Theatre: 2-3 Weeks

Unit 2: History of Arts and Culture: 2-3 Weeks

Unit 3: Performance: 2-3 Weeks

Prerequisite: None

Unit # 1 - Overview

Content Area: THEATRE

Unit Title: Job Responsibilities and Different Forms of Theatre

Grade Level: 6-8

Core Ideas: In this unit, students will gain in-depth understanding of theatrical elements, principles, and conventions as well as develop their acting skills.

Unit# 1 Standards

Standards (Content and Technology): Visual and Performing Arts: 1.4 Theatre Standards By The End Of Grade 8

Statement: The practices reflect the steps that artists undergo in the process of creating, performing, responding and connecting to works of art (i.e., the artistic processes). To become artistically literate, it is essential that students are provided with the type of learning experiences that will enable them to engage in these practices as part of their art making processes.

Performance Expectations (NJSLS):

- 1.4.8.Cr1a: Identify, explore and imagine multiple solutions and strategies in staging problems in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cr1b: Identify, imagine and practice solving multiple design/technical challenges of a performance space in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cr1c: Explore, describe and develop given circumstances of a scripted or improvised character in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cr2b: Actively contribute ideas and creatively incorporate the ideas of others in existing or original theatrical work, demonstrating mutual respect for self and others and their roles sharing leadership and responsibilities in preparing or devising theatre.
- 1.4.8.Cr2a: Articulate and apply critical analysis, extensive background knowledge, sociohistorical research, and cultural context related to existing or developing original theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cr2b: Actively contribute ideas and creatively incorporate the ideas of others in existing or original theatrical work, demonstrating mutual respect for self and others and their roles sharing leadership and responsibilities in preparing or devising theatre.
- 1.4.8.Cr3a: Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process by analyzing and refining choices in a devised or scripted theatre performance.
- 1.4.8.Cr3b: Implement and refine a planned technical design using simple technology during the rehearsal process for devised or scripted theatre work.
- 1.4.8.Cr3c: Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Pr4a: Rehearse a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or theatrical performance that assist in the development of stronger character choices.
- 1.4.8.Pr4b: Use a variety of technical elements to create a design for a rehearsal or theatre production.
- 1.4.8.Pr5a: Examine how character relationships assist in telling the story of devised or scripted theatre work.
- 1.4.8.Pr5b: Use various character objectives and tactics in a theatre work to identify the conflict and overcome the obstacle.
- 1.4.8.Pr6a: Perform a rehearsed theatrical work for an audience**
- 1.4.8.Re7a: Describe and record personal reactions to artistic choices in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re7b: Compare recorded personal and peer reactions to artistic choices in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re8a: Investigate various critique methodologies and apply the knowledge to respond to a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re8b: Justify the aesthetic choices created through the use of production elements in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re8c: Assess the impact of a theatrical work on a specific audience.
- 1.4.8.Rea: Analyze how personal experiences affect artistic choices in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re9b: Identify and interpret how different cultural perspectives influence the evaluation of theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re9c: Examine how the use of personal aesthetics, preferences and beliefs can be used to discuss a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cn11a: Research the story elements of a staged drama/theatre work about global issues, including climate change, and discuss how a playwright might have intended a theatrical work to be produced.
- 1.4.8.Cn11b: Identify and examine artifacts from a time period and geographic location to better understand performance and design choices in a theatrical work.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies, and Key Skills:

- 9.1.2.CAP.1 Make a list of different types of jobs and describe the skills associated with each job.
- 9.4.8.IML.12: Use relevant tools to produce, publish, and deliver information supported with evidence for an authentic audience.
- 9.4.8.IML.13: Identify the impact of the creator on the content, production, and delivery of information (e.g., 8.2.8.ED.1).
- 9.4.8.IML.14: Analyze the role of media in delivering cultural, political, and other societal messages.
- 9.4.8.IML.15: Explain ways that individuals may experience the same media message differently.

Computer Science and Design Thinking:

- 8.2.8.ED.1: Evaluate the function, value, and aesthetics of a technological product or system, from the perspective of the user and the producer.
- 8.2.8.ED.2: Identify the steps in the design process that could be used to solve a problem.
- 8.2.8.ED.3: Develop a proposal for a solution to a real-world problem that includes a model (e.g., physical prototype, graphical/technical sketch).

8.2.8.ED.4: Investigate a malfunctioning system, identify its impact, and explain the step-by-step process used to troubleshoot, evaluate, and test options to repair the product in a collaborative team.

Intercultural Statements (Amistad, Holocaust, LGBT, etc...):

View and discuss contributions of African-Americans to the theater industry. View and discuss the Holocaust as depicted and perceived via theater. View and discuss LGBTQ challenges as depicted in theater. Shows/formats to consider are *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Kabuki Theatre, and *Rent*.

Anchor/Companion Standards:

NJSLSA.R1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

NJSLSA.R2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

NJSLSA.R3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

NJSLSA.W6. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NJSLS.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

NJSLSA.W3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

NJSLSA.W6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

NJSLSA.SL1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJSLSA.SL3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Unit Essential Question(s):

- How do we respond emotionally to diverse works of theatre?
- How do different components contribute to the overall theatrical performance?
- How do symbolism and metaphor contribute to meaning in the arts?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- All roles of a production team are valuable and interdependent
- Adjusting elements of style, setting, music, props, lights, and color integrated with the performers creates a unique aesthetic experience for the audience.
- Knowledge of spatial and sensory awareness, movement, and other techniques establish theatre preparation and warm-up techniques, including strategies for safe and correct use of the voice.
- The status of traditional theatrical roles (including director, stage manager, designers, operators, actors, producers) often dictates hierarchical structure within a production.

Unit Learning Targets/Objectives: *Students will...*

- Identify the members of a production team and explain how these roles are interdependent
- Understand how sound and lighting create mood in performance events.
- Identify key jobs integral to producing a play (e.g., actor, director, set designer, lighting designer, sound designer, costume designer.) and research the duties and responsibilities of these positions
- Interpret symbolism and metaphors used in selected theatre masterworks; apply metaphor and symbolism in the creation and performance of an original scene, and interpret symbolism and metaphors used in theatre scenes created by peers.
- Differentiate between "traditional" and non-traditional theatre masterworks and analyze the form, function, craftsmanship, and originality of the work.
- Differentiate among basic formal structures and technical proficiency of artists in peer and professional theatrical productions and use rubrics and scoring guides to evaluate the effectiveness of a theatre work.

Formative Assessments:

- Maintain a theatre portfolio over time (paper or digital) with journal reflections, research ideas, notation, videos, photographs, clippings about theatre from magazines and newspapers, theatre resources and performance “notes.”
- Evaluate informal in-class performances and video evidence of student performances using observation, discussions, drawings, video, and simple student-created rubrics

Summative/Benchmark Assessment(s):

- Maintain a theatre portfolio over time (paper or digital) with journal reflections, research ideas, notation, videos, photographs, clippings about theatre from magazines and newspapers, theatre resources and performance “notes.”

Resources/Materials (copy hyperlinks for digital resources):

- PowerPoint: Elements of Drama
- Video: Elements of Drama
- Elements of Drama Lesson Plan
- Glossary of Terms

Suggested Pacing Guide

Lesson Name/Topic	Lesson Objective(s)	Time frame (day(s) to complete)
Scene Creation	Stage a short scene showcasing different areas of responsibility that are integral to a theatrical production (e.g., actor, director, set designer, lighting designer, sound designer, costume designer.).	1 Week
Directing	Direct a short scene in collaboration that demonstrates a directorial vision and choices.	1 Week
Researching The Collaborative Process	Research various theatre personnel and their responsibilities and the skills and training that go into the position and how they work collaboratively to make a theatre production.	1-2 Days
Symbolism in Theatre	Identify and discuss symbols and symbolism in a selected design.	1-2 Days
Critical Viewing Experience	View and Evaluate productions with regard to the design and production elements.	1-2 Days

Teacher Notes:**Additional Resources****Modifications:**

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Special Education Students
Create a visual identifying the elements of theatre.
Create a picture dictionary of theatre terminology.
Provide alternative response choices to questions on the elements of theatre. ● English Language Learners
Create a world wall with key theatre terms/vocabulary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At-Risk Students
Incorporate student choice in activities.
Use a graphic organizer to categorize elements of theatre.
Repeat directions as needed. ● Gifted and Talented Students
Create and lead the class in theatre games, activities, or process drama techniques. |
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Unit # 2 - Overview

Unit Title: History of the Arts and Culture

Grade Level: 6-8

Core Ideas: Students will study selected theatrical material as well as identify and categorize historical/cultural heritages and theatrical conventions.

Unit# 2 Standards

Standards (Content and Technology): Visual and Performing Arts: 1.4 Theatre Standards By The End Of Grade 8

Statement: The practices reflect the steps that artists undergo in the process of creating, performing, responding and connecting to works of art (i.e., the artistic processes). To become artistically literate, it is essential that students are provided with the type of learning experiences that will enable them to engage in these practices as part of their art making processes.

Performance Expectations (NJSLs):

- 1.4.8.Cr1a: Identify, explore and imagine multiple solutions and strategies in staging problems in a theatrical work. 1.4.8.Cr1b: Identify, imagine and practice solving multiple design/technical challenges of a performance space in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cr1c: Explore, describe and develop given circumstances of a scripted or improvised character in a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cr2b: Actively contribute ideas and creatively incorporate the ideas of others in existing or original theatrical work, demonstrating mutual respect for self and others and their roles sharing leadership and responsibilities in preparing or devising theatre.
- 1.4.8.Cr2a: Articulate and apply critical analysis, extensive background knowledge, sociohistorical research, and cultural context related to existing or developing original theatrical work.
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- 1.4.8.Cr3a: Demonstrate focus and concentration in the rehearsal process by analyzing and refining choices in a devised or scripted theatre performance.
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- 1.4.8.Cr3c: Develop effective physical and vocal traits of characters in an improvised or scripted theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Pr4a: Rehearse a variety of acting techniques to increase skills in a rehearsal or theatrical performance that assist in the development of stronger character choices.
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Intercultural Statements (Amistad, Holocaust, LGBT, etc...):

View and discuss contributions of African-Americans to the theater industry. View and discuss the Holocaust as depicted and perceived via theater. View and discuss LGBTQ challenges as depicted in theater. Shows/formats to consider are *The Diary of Anne Frank*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, Kabuki Theatre, and *Rent*.

Anchor/Companion Standards:

NJSLSA.R1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences and relevant connections from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

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NJSLSA.R3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

NJSLSA.W6. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

NJSLS.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

NJSLSA.W3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

NJSLSA.W6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

NJSLSA.SL1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJSLSA.SL3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Unit Essential Question(s):

- How does theatre influence life and life influence theatre over time?
- In what ways do we see the origins of theatre still present in more modern drama?
- How does theatre influence society?
- How does society influence theatre?
- How do past and contemporary works differ in the ideas and events they represent?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Actors can draw on personal experiences, culture, literature, and history to create drama and improvisations, and assume roles within dramatizations.
- Directors ensure that historical and cultural components, theatrical traditions and conventions, and technical aspects of production are consistent with the intent of the playwright.
- Cultural references and relationships are embedded within scripted scenes and influence and inspire character development

Unit Learning Targets/Objectives: *Students will...*

- Articulate the cultural, historical and social context of their original work, and a clear statement of theme.
- Identify major movements and periods in history, recognizing that theatre reflects the society and culture of its time.
- Describe and discuss a written text or live performance in terms it social, historical and cultural context
- Identify and articulate the cultural and historical components of the work and how these components create a particular world of behaviors.
- Compare and contrast changes in the accepted meanings of known artworks over time, given shifts in societal norms, beliefs, or values. Create and perform in stylistically nuanced scene work from known plays, aligned to the cultural norms and theatrical conventions appropriate to the era of the play.
- Categorize historical innovations in Western and non-Western theatre history up to and including the early 20st century that stemmed from the creation of new technologies.
- Distinguish ways that theatre has reflected and impacted the society and culture of its time in Western and non-Western theatrical traditions.
- Apply characteristics of various Western and non-Western theatrical traditions to scene work that emulates theatre of various and diverse eras and cultures up to and including the 21th Century.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments:

- Create PowerPoint presentations on actors who greatly impacted theatre.
- Evaluate written reflections on theatre principles, including reports and journal responses, using a student-created rubric.
- Evaluate informal in-class performances and video evidence of student performances using observation, discussions, drawings, video, and simple student-created rubrics.
- Additional Assessments may include:
 - Analyzing primary source documents on the history of theatre and the cultures of origin.
 - Conduct short research projects on the cultural origins of theatre to support analysis, reflection, and research
 - Use technology to create a presentation on the impact of theatre on specific groups of people and historical events.

Summative/Benchmark Assessment(s):

Maintain a theatre portfolio over time (paper or digital) with journal reflections, research ideas, notation, videos, photographs, clippings about theatre from magazines and newspapers, theatre resources and performance “notes.”

Resources/Materials (copy hyperlinks for digital resources):

1. [Video: What is Theatre?](#)
2. A Cultural History of Theatre by Jack Watson and Grant McKernie
3. History of the Theatre by Oscar Gross Brockett and Franklin J Hildy

Suggested Pacing Guide

Lesson Name/Topic	Lesson Objective(s)	Time frame (day(s) to complete)
Western and Non-western Theatre	Contrast and compare one major Western and one non-Western type of theater, recognizing similarities in intended purpose and performance style), such as an ancient Greek arena and Vietnamese water puppets.	2-3 days
Greek and Roman Theatre	Use online and video resources to research and guide the creation of a project that examines Greek, Roman or early non-Western theatre.	2-3 days
Theatre Creation	The student will plan and improvise plays based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history for informal and formal theater.	2-3 days
Performance	Create and perform a theatre piece using masks from a chosen historical era or tradition (e.g., Greek, Commedia Dell’Arte).	1 Week
Collaboration	Collaborate to write a short play based on a historical or current event.	1 Week

Teacher Notes:**Additional Resources****Modifications:**

Special Education Students

- Create a visual identifying the elements of theatre.
- Create a picture dictionary of theatre terminology.
- Provide alternative response choices to questions on the elements of theatre.

English Language Learners

- Create a world wall with key theatre terms/vocabulary.

At-Risk Students

- Incorporate student choice in activities.
- Use a graphic organizer to categorize elements of theater.
- Repeat directions as needed.

Gifted and Talented Students

- Create and lead the class in theatre games, activities, or process drama techniques.

Unit # 3 - Overview

Content Area: THEATRE

Unit Title: Performance

Grade Level: 6-8

Core Ideas: Students will plan a dramatization, take part in its production, and discuss the results. Students will study characterization to expand the definition of characters.

Unit# 3 Standards

Standards (Content and Technology): Visual and Performing Arts: 1.4 Theatre Standards By The End Of Grade 8

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- 1.4.8.Re9b: Identify and interpret how different cultural perspectives influence the evaluation of theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Re9c: Examine how the use of personal aesthetics, preferences and beliefs can be used to discuss a theatrical work.
- 1.4.8.Cn10a: Examine a community issue through multiple perspectives in a theatrical work.**
- 1.4.8.Cn11a: Research the story elements of a staged drama/theatre work about global issues, including climate change, and discuss how a playwright might have intended a theatrical work to be produced.
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- NJLSA.W6. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
- NJLS.RL.9-10.3 Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
- NJLSA.W3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured

event sequences.

NJSLSA.W6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Interdisciplinary Connections:

NJSLSA.SL1. Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

NJSLSA.SL2. Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

NJSLSA.SL3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

Unit Essential Question(s):

- Why is it important to create a personality and a background for a character?
- How do posture, breathing, and voice control affect a presentation?
- How do movements, gestures, and expressions help and improve and support a scene?
- How do performers use vocal techniques to communicate meaning and character?

Unit Enduring Understandings:

- Theatre artists acquire skills in creative thinking, which allows them to exercise flexibility when making decisions and creating worlds through imagination.
- The arts demand learning to reach beyond one's perceived capacities by taking a creative risk.
- Theatre artists use curiosity, questioning, observations, experiences, and problem solving to generate ideas, concepts, and feelings that shape a work of theatre.
- Theatre artists explore playfully without a preconceived plan.
- Characterization results from careful analysis of roles and incorporates appropriate vocal delivery, movement, costuming, and makeup.
- Improvising dramatizations include plot, characterization, and setting.

Unit Learning Targets/Objectives: *Students will...*

- Define "believability" by identifying common traits of believable performances.
- Differentiate between a character's actions, intentions and internal dialogue and apply these distinctions to the portrayal of a character.
- Analyze scripted scenes to determine how a character's objectives change throughout a scene and how his or her tactics and subtext change within a scene in response to the actions of other characters. Apply the analysis to the portrayal of characters in a performance.
- Maintain focus and concentration in order to sustain improvisations, scene work and performance.
- Use distinct physical, vocal and emotional choices, to build a believable, multi-dimensional character and perform a scene and/or monologue within the context of two different genres. Compare and contrast the stylistic choices in each scene.
- Make imaginative and expressive use of scenery, props, costumes, lighting and sound in improvisations, scene work and performances.
- Use the body and voice expressively in theatre exercises, improvisations, scene work and performances.
Use theatrical improvisation, both short and long form, as a means of exploring character development (from a physical, vocal and emotional standpoint) while also focusing on objectives and tactics.

Evidence of Learning

Formative Assessments:

Evaluate informal in-class performances and video evidence of student performances using observation, discussions, drawings, video, and simple student-created rubrics.

Summative/Benchmark Assessment(s):

Maintain a theatre portfolio over time (paper or digital) with journal reflections, research ideas, notation, videos, photographs, clippings about theatre from magazines and newspapers, theatre resources and performance "notes."

Resources/Materials (copy hyperlinks for digital resources):

Suggested Plays

- The Effect of Gamma Rays On Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds by Paul Zindel
- Our Town by Thornton Wilder
- A Thousand Cranes by Kathryn Schultz Miller
- Step on a Crack by Susan Zeder
- Getting Near to Baby by Y. York
- Wiley and the Hairy Man by Susan Zeder

- Still Life with Iris by Steven Dietz
- Selkie: Between Land and Sea by Laurie Brooks

Glossary of Terms

Suggested Pacing Guide

Lesson Name/Topic	Lesson Objective(s)	Time frame (day(s) to complete)
Embodying Character	Create appropriate physical gestures and facial expressions that align to a character.	1-2 Days and throughout
Improv	Participate in group exercises, drills, improvisations and theater games.	1-2 Days and throughout
Scene Performance	Rehearse and perform a scene in front of others.	1 Week
External Traits	Research and portray a character, using at least one appropriate costume piece, prop, gesture, need and physical shape.	1 Week
Peer Critique	Provide feedback to scenes performed by peers in the “director’s voice,” noting character choices, vocal projection and stage pictures.	1-2 Days and throughout
Actor Prep	Demonstrate physical and vocal warm-ups used as preparation for rehearsal and performance.	1-2 Days and throughout

Teacher Notes:

Additional Resources

Modifications:

Special Education Students

- Choose time, place, mood or theme to focus on when performing a particular theatrical piece.
- Work with a peer to develop a short theatre performance.
- Highlight individual speaking parts to provide visual assistance during performance.

English Language Learners

- Create visuals of common character emotions.
- Display labelled image of stage components.
- Highlight individual speaking parts to provide visual assistance during performance.

At-Risk Students

- Invite parents/guardians to view and/or participate in a theatre performance.
- Break dialogue into smaller pieces.
- Conference with teacher during the acting planning process.

Gifted and Talented Students

- Compare and contrast performance techniques from two or more theatrical styles and present findings to peers.
- Write and perform longer theatrical works, individually and in collaboration with peers.