

# VERMONT DRAMA FESTIVAL

2011-2012 Handbook

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## CHECKLIST FOR PARTICIPATION IN VERMONT DRAMA FESTIVAL

- Schools participating in festival ensure that all students and adults understand that the Vermont Drama festival at all levels is primarily a *Celebration of Theatre*, and only incidentally a selection process for choosing plays to participate at the next level.
- A school wishing to participate in festival **must** have an ADULT representative, preferably the director/producer, who will read the guidelines, serve as the official liaison with the VDC and the school, and who will attend the January VDC meeting.
- The adult director/producer will make all students involved in the production aware of the dates of the regional festivals, state festival and New England festival **at the time the students audition** so that potential conflicts are avoided.
- A production should be designed so that it can be transported to and fits on the stages of the regional, state and New England festivals, and so that the entire show, **including set-up, performance and strike**, takes no longer than one hour. (As a guideline, set-up and strike each usually should take no longer than five minutes.)
- Productions presented at festival should be suitable for presentation to audiences that will consist of a wide variety of people, including younger family members.
- Schools presenting shows at festival must receive written permission from the copyright holders to produce the show as presented, receive written permission for any cuttings, and pay appropriate royalties, as indicated by a printed receipt. Copies of all these permissions will be brought to the festival site.
- Students participating in a festival will remain at the festival site, participate in all available workshops and forums, eat all meals and attend all shows allowed by the schedule. Students should have experience in peer critique and feedback prior to the festival so that they can participate in the forum process appropriately. (See the handout on “Critical Response” in this handbook for one suggested format for peer critique.)
- Schools will arrange and bring sufficient adult supervision for students, approximately 1 adult for each 8 students. Students and adults attending a festival shall treat the festival site with respect, and comply with the wishes of festival staff.
- All students and adults attending a festival should be aware of appropriate audience etiquette. These include the expectations that no one should enter or leave during a production, that no photographs, video or audio recordings be made of productions, and that no one should disturb the viewing enjoyment of other audience members.
- Schools will produce program information in the format indicated in the VDC handbook and will send a copy of this to the regional and state festival hosts by the deadline.
- Schools participating in a festival clearly announce whether they are an associate or participating production at the opening directors’ meeting.
- Schools who participate in a festival shall send thank you notes to the festival host.
- Schools who are participating productions should be aware of the significant meal, housing and transportation costs that accompany attendance at the state festival, and even more so, the New England festival (a cast and crew of 30 may have costs upwards of \$3000 for the New England festival).
- The director/producer will make principals, students and adults involved with the production aware of these expectations. The principal’s and director/producer’s signatures on the application form will indicate their awareness of these expectation

## VERMONT STATE DRAMA FESTIVAL

**PHILOSOPHY:** The goal of the Vermont Drama Festival is to stimulate and support high school drama programs in Vermont. This is done through presenting, watching and discussing one-act plays, participating in workshops, attending dinners, and being willing to “CELEBRATE THEATRE” by promoting the spirit of festival.

### I. INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

#### A. General Information

1. Sponsorship
  - a. The Vermont Drama Festival, sanctioned and financially supported by the Vermont Principals’ Association (VPA), is an activity for secondary schools in the state of Vermont. The Festival is co-sponsored by the VPA and by the Vermont Drama Council (VDC).
  - b. The VDC consists of interested Vermont high school theatre directors at VPA affiliated schools who volunteer their services to help coordinate the Vermont Drama Festival and to promote theatre at the secondary level in Vermont.
  - c. The Governing Board of the VDC shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Immediate Past President and the Vermont representatives to the New England Drama Council (NEDC).
  - d. The VDC shall administer the Vermont Drama Festival for the VPA.
2. Format
  - a. The Vermont Drama Festival consists of several regional festivals and a state festival.
  - b. During each festival, students from each school perform a one-act play, or a scene or cutting of a longer play, view plays presented by other schools, participate in forums and workshops, and interact with one another.
  - c. Schools may enter the Festival as PARTICIPATING productions or ASSOCIATE productions.
    - i. An Associate production chooses not to be considered eligible for participation in the State and/or New England festival. Associate productions will be evaluated, participate fully in all forums and other festival activities, but will not be included among the continuing schools. Student participants in Associate productions will be eligible for all awards.
    - ii. If a school does not plan to participate in the State and/or New England Festival, that school **must** claim Associate production status on the application form.
  - d. Two of the Participating productions from each festival will be selected to present their productions at the next festival level. The selected schools will be chosen by the adjudicators and the directors, as described below.
  - e. Adjudicators, two at regional festivals, three at the state festival, will view and evaluate plays, help select the continuing schools, and participate in the directors’ and student forums at each festival.
  - f. The VPA will provide a plaque to the state festival host school to acknowledge the school’s commitment to Vermont secondary school theatre.
3. Eligibility
  - a. Senior high schools and private academies are eligible for participation in the Vermont Drama Festival if they are members of the Vermont Principal’s Association.
  - b. Junior high schools, when they operate under a separate identity, are ineligible to represent the state at the New England Drama Festival.
4. Application
  - a. The application form is included in this handbook.
  - b. The form must be filled out and received at the offices of the VPA. **Application Deadline is December 16, 2011.** Form may be mailed or faxed to the VPA office.



- c. Each school's principal will designate an adult chaperone to be with the cast and crew throughout the Festival. **Casts without adult supervision will not be allowed at the Festivals.**
  - d. The New England Drama Council states that any school entering the New England Drama Festival may be asked to submit a prepared production script with the following statement: "I hereby affirm to the New England Drama Council that this script will represent our school in the 2012 New England Drama Festival." This statement must be signed by the principal or headmaster and by the adult director/producer.
  - e. The adult director/producer's signature indicates his/her commitment to abide by the regulations and guidelines in this bulletin. The director/producer will ensure that students and adults involved with the production are aware of these expectations.
3. The adult director/producer of each school at festival is responsible for ensuring that all obligations to copyright holders are met. Failure to provide adequate documentation may result in a school being asked to withdraw from festival. Copyright requirements include the following:
    - a. Royalties for theatrical productions must be paid in advance of the festival and the copyright owner must be properly acknowledged in program information. A copy of the royalty payment receipt should be brought to the festival and presented to the Consultant on request.
    - b. Each theatrical production must receive, in advance, written permission from the copyright holder for cuttings and/or alterations of plays. A copy of this written permission should be brought to the festival and presented to the Consultant on request.
    - c. Each theatrical production must receive, in advance, written permission from the copyright holder for the use of music and other copyrighted material in a theatrical production. A copy of this written permission should be brought to the festival and presented to the Consultant on request.
  4. Productions that sign up as "Participating" **must** be available to perform at **both** the State and New England Drama Festivals. There are no Associate productions at the State festival. The adult director/producer of Participating productions should inform all auditioning students of the dates of the State and New England Drama Festivals so that they may determine whether to audition and plan their schedules accordingly. (See also I. D. 2.)
  5. **All adults hosts and officers entering a play in the Vermont Drama Festival must attend the local meeting in January. Winter Meeting (Mandatory for one act participants) at St. Johnsbury Academy, January 17, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. Snow date January 18, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.**
  6. No open flame, including smoking, will be permitted in plays presented as part of the Vermont Drama Festival. **Violation of the smoking or open flame rule will result in disqualification.**
  7. **If any member of a cast and/or crew is found to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, the production will be disqualified.**
  8. A list of alternate productions for participation in the New England Drama Festival will be kept by the president of the VDC. In the event that a school selected for the New England Drama Festival is unable to attend, an alternate must attend in accordance with the 100% rule of the New England Drama Council. According to that rule, each New England state must send two productions to the festival.
  9. All schools must send program information and technical requests to the regional festival host by **February 3, 2012, and by March 10, 2012** for the state festival. **Not meeting this deadline may result in exclusion from the printed festival program and/or technical requests not being met.**
  10. Each presentation at a regional or state festival is allotted a total time of one hour for set-up, presentation, and strike.

### C. Guidelines

1. The festival at all levels is primarily a *Celebration of Theatre*, and only incidentally a selection process for choosing plays to participate at the next level.
2. Musical comedies, musical plays, or operettas should not be presented.

3. Schools will produce program information in the format indicated in this handbook and will send a clean, camera-ready copy of this to the festival host well before the deadline.
4. The host school should be informed of any special lighting requests by the technical information request deadline. Special lighting requests will be honored for all schools according to the host school's capabilities.
  - a. If a school wishes to bring special lighting or audio equipment of their own, they must make this equipment available to the other schools who wish to use it, and inform other schools of this no later than the pre-festival meeting.
5. Each production will be scheduled for at least 40 minutes of technical rehearsal time to become familiar with stage and facilities. **It is not wise to use this time for a run-through.**
6. Appropriate awards to cast and crew members will be made at all Festival levels. All student cast and crew members, in both participating and associate productions, are eligible for individual awards.
7. Following each production, each director of a school in the audience should hold a quick discussion with his or her cast and crew to talk over features of the production they would like to commend, and to make nominations for individual awards, using the forms provided as a guide. These commendations and nominations will be given to the VDC consultant after each pair of shows.
8. Following each pair of productions, forums will be held for both the students and directors.
  - a. All students will gather and discuss the productions. These discussions will be moderated by a student familiar with effective peer critique techniques. The critique should celebrate the successes of the performances as well as providing constructive suggestions for improvement, in an environment of mutual respect and support.
  - b. The directors will gather and discuss the productions in a forum moderated by the VDC consultant. Although student directors are an important part of this process and encouraged to participate fully, the directors' forum is intended to be an opportunity for adult and student directors to have honest and direct opportunities for peer critique. Attendance at these forums will be limited to the VDC consultant, the adjudicators, the adult and student directors, and adult assistant or technical directors.
9. Each director and adjudicator, as well as the consultant, will maintain a "running order of preference" form during the festival on which the director or adjudicator records his or her ranking of the shows seen up to the moment. At the end of the festival, the last column must be completely filled-in and the form given to the VDC consultant. **If the last column of the running order of preference form is not completely filled in it cannot be used in the selection process.** Please note that adjudicators and directors should not rate the script.
10. All students and directors are expected to be in attendance for the entire festival. As part of the festival, all festival participants are expected to participate fully in the festival's workshops, performances, meals, and forums.
11. Cast control is the responsibility of the adult director/producer. There should be no less than one adult chaperone for every eight students.
12. The host school's facilities are being opened in a spirit of hospitality to schools attending a festival. The facilities should be treated with the utmost respect, and requests made by the hosting schools' staff should be treated with respect. Festival hosts appreciate written thank you notes after the festival.
13. All students and adults attending a festival should be aware of appropriate audience etiquette. This includes the expectations that no one should enter or leave during a production, that no photographs, video or audio recordings be made of productions, and that audience members should not disturb the viewing enjoyment of other audience members.
14. In order to emphasize the spirit of festival, the two schools continuing to the next level of performance are not announced as part of the closing activities of the festival. Instead, after the VDC consultant tabulates the results, the form announcing the two continuing schools is placed in the end-of-festival

packet provided to each director. The directors should not open these packets and share the results with the students until the bus carrying the school has pulled out of the parking lot of the host school.

15. Any formal protests should be lodged with the VPA Drama Committee as per the normal procedure.

#### **D. Finances**

1. Through the collaborative efforts of the VDC Governing Board and the VPA Drama Committee, a budget will be developed in March to support the Vermont Drama Festival activities and Vermont involvement with the New England Drama Council.
  - a. Budgetary items may include awards for the State Festival, the expense of printing programs at the State Festival, expenses for the attendance at VPA Drama Committee meetings, and expenses which VDC Governing Board members incur for operating and giving assistance at the Festivals.
2. **Schools continuing on to the New England Drama Festival are reminded that this will involve a large expense to the local school.** The cost of the trip to and participation in the New England Festival will be borne entirely by the local school, except for a modest grant provided to the school by the VPA, as described below. The VPA provides this grant in lieu of providing awards at the state festival.
3. The VPA Drama Committee will
  - a. grant each State Festival, each Regional Festival, and each school representing Vermont at the New England Drama Festival up to \$200.00 in operating expenses to cover a deficit.
  - b. present a plaque to the school that hosts the State Festival.
  - c. provide honoraria for adjudicators.

## II. INFORMATION FOR HOST SCHOOLS

### **A. The Process of Hosting**

1. Host schools must attend all Vermont Drama Council Meetings during the academic year they host.
2. Hosts should keep in mind that their primary job is to support and facilitate a Celebration of Theatre.
3. The Host needs to read and be familiar with all of the information in this handbook.
4. **All adults hosts and officers entering a play in the Vermont Drama Festival must attend the local meeting in January. Winter Meeting (Mandatory for one act participants) at St. Johnsbury Academy, January 17, 2012 at 4:00 p.m. Snow date January 18, 2012 at 4:00 p.m.**
5. The Host should arrange for theater and school use for the festival on the school's activity calendar well in advance. The Host should arrange for the following facilities:
  - a. A performance space with theatrical lighting and sound playback equipment and seats for anticipated festival participants and audience members. This does NOT have to be a formal theater space. Many excellent festivals have used cafeterias and gymnasias as performance spaces.
  - b. Space for the student forum (large enough for all students to gather).
  - c. A place for festival meals to be served and eaten.
  - d. A load-in area for schools to store and prepare sets prior to technical rehearsals and performances.
  - e. Home rooms for each school in the festival, including the host school. These rooms should be available for the entire duration of the festival, from the anticipated time of arrival of a school until its departure at the end of the festival.
  - f. A room for the directors' meeting and forums, and for the Consultant and Adjudicators to work. The meeting room often serves as a directors' lounge and is often separate from the Consultant/Adjudicator work room.
  - g. Rooms for any workshops.

- h. If possible, separate dressing/make up rooms for the two schools performing during each production slot
  - i. If possible, separate green rooms for the two schools performing during each production slot.
  - j. Parking space for school buses and set transportation vehicles.
6. The Host will arrange a schedule for the festival, in which adequate time is provided for:
    - a. technical rehearsals (equal periods of at least 40 minute on-stage time for each school);
    - b. performances, organized in pairs (one hour allotted for each school to set up, perform and strike);
    - c. forums, for both students and directors (30 minutes after each pair of performances);
    - d. workshops;
    - e. meals;
    - f. the initial directors' meeting; and
    - g. opening and closing ceremonies.
  7. The Host shall provide a program for the festival. Sufficient quantities should be made for all participants and the anticipated audience. The program should list the play performance schedule, the program information supplied by each school, and biographical information about the adjudicators and consultant. Each school's entry should acknowledge the copyright permission for the play performed. The program should also prominently describe the role of the VPA in the sponsorship of the festivals.
  8. The Host shall appoint student hosts to greet each school upon arrival and to be available throughout the festival to help that school.
  9. In keeping with the spirit of festival, the host school should carefully plan closing ceremonies. The VDC and VPA will cooperate in the presentation of awards. Further information regarding awards ceremonies will be available at VDC meetings.
  10. The Host should arrange for the availability of meals during the festival. Entrees should include both vegetarian and non-vegetarian offerings. Meal costs will be paid for by means of the per-participant registration fee that each school coming to the festival will pay. Special consideration should be given to schools who have technical rehearsals and performances near meal times.
  11. The Host should arrange for theatre-related workshops to provide educational and social experiences.
  12. The Host should have a calligrapher or computer operator to fill out certificates during the festival.
  13. It is the host school's responsibility to see that there is adequate supervision, either police or staff and often both, to ensure good crowd control.
  14. The VDC will work with the Host to provide a Consultant to the festival.

**B. Technical Hosting**

1. Each festival must have an adult Technical Director and a responsible House Manager.
2. All properties and set pieces are the responsibility of the participants unless prior arrangements have been made with the host. Hosts are encouraged to help schools in any way possible.
3. An area for the properties and set of each school should be provided.
4. The Technical Director will organize a technical crew sufficient to oversee the backstage operations of the festival, providing technical assistance as needed to schools participating in the festival.
5. Smoking and open flame are not allowed in the Vermont Drama Festival.
6. Theatrical lighting and sound playback equipment will be provided.
7. Schools will be allotted equal technical rehearsal time of at least 40 minutes *on-stage* time each. Time should be included between each technical rehearsal to allow adequate load-in and load-out time for each school.

8. The Technical Director should arrange a load-in and load-out schedule that allows the smooth operation of technical rehearsals and performances.
9. A clear communication procedure must be established between the backstage Technical Director, the House Manager, and the VDC Consultant to ensure that shows start in a timely manner, on schedule, with all relevant members in the audience.
10. The adult Technical Director should fill out an evaluation form that assesses the technical aspects of each production and give these forms to the Consultant. These forms may provide the basis for individual awards to members of the technical crews of each school.

### **C. Festival Financing**

1. The VPA will provide the host with a grant of up to \$200.00 to cover deficits, if any, at each festival.
2. The host school may charge a registration fee for each adult and student participating in the festival. The registration fee should be limited to covering meal costs. The application fee of \$150 paid by each school to the VPA will be used by the VDC to cover all costs associated with operating regional and festivals and participating in the New England Drama Council.
3. The host school keeps all ticket money, donations and registration fees after expenses are paid.
4. Host schools must submit the Vermont Drama Festival Financial Report directly to Cathy Archer, VDC President, 22 Stratton Road, Rutland, VT 05701. The VPA grant will not be paid until this financial report is received.
5. It shall be the responsibility of the host school to provide the stage facilities, custodial services, management services, security, workshops, meals, decorations and any needed host-family housing accommodations. The host school's expenses shall be paid from ticket proceeds, donations, registration fees, and from the \$200.00 festival grant – if needed - provided by the VPA. It shall be the responsibility of the host school at each festival to budget and finance its own festival. The VDC will serve in a financial advisory capacity, if needed, to each host school.
6. Each Participating and Associate school shall be responsible for payment of all royalty and production expenses for its play, transportation, registration fees, additional meals, commercial lodging expenses, and for any other expenses or fees incidental to its participation. Schools who sign up as "Participating" productions should anticipate expenses for the State and New England festivals.

### **D. Adjudicator Support**

1. Adjudicators are selected by the VDC. Hosts will be notified of names, addresses, and phone numbers in advance of the festival. It is the Host's responsibility to contact the adjudicators with festival information, including the schedule.
2. When the adjudication committee of the VDC has made the selections and placements for adjudicators, the names and addresses of the adjudicators will be immediately sent directly to Ron Lurvey, VDC Treasurer, 22 Stratton Road, Rutland, VT 05701. This will ensure that honoraria can be paid in a timely manner by the VPA.
3. A guide should be appointed to greet the adjudicators and the VDC Consultant upon their arrival. The guide should familiarize them with the meeting and stage facilities, including the lighting, prior to curtain time, the schedule, and serve as a contact person throughout the festival.
4. Each adjudicator will receive a program that not only lists the casts, but also the order of performances.
5. Adjudicators should send biographical information to the Host as soon as possible so that this information can be included in the program.
6. Each adjudicator should be furnished with a clipboard, flashlight, program, pencil or pen, and evaluation sheets for each production.
7. A room should be provided for the VDC consultant to meet with the adjudicators and directors, to conduct directors' forums, and to tally votes.

## **E. Scheduling and Communications**

1. Each host should arrange a meeting for the directors in the regional festival, prior to festival, and preferably before February 14.
2. The Host should prepare an information packet to be distributed to directors at the pre-festival meeting, for each school entered in the festival. The packet must contain the following information:
  - a. The exact date, time, and place the festival will be held.
  - b. A festival schedule, including the following:
    - i. Schedule for technical rehearsals on stage;
    - ii. Order and times of performances;
    - iii. Workshop slots, meals and preparation times for schools getting ready to perform;
    - iv. Major activities, including opening and closing ceremonies, and the director's meeting prior to performances.
  - c. A plan diagram of the stage showing the dimensions and acting areas.
  - d. A description of the lighting and sound equipment available, acting areas, entrances and exits, and any other special characteristics of the theatrical space.
  - e. Meal menus, registration fee (which should be limited to meal costs) and any special information regarding meals.
  - f. Information regarding advance sale of tickets to encourage as many adults and students as possible to attend from the participating schools.
3. Each Host should prepare a form, thanking the director for participation in the festival, with spaces available for clearly announcing the names of the two schools and plays that will participate in the next festival level. These forms should be given to the VDC Consultant, who will fill them out and distribute them to the directors at the end of the festival. Usually they are given to the director as part of the packet of post-festival information immediately following the closing ceremonies at the festival and read on the homeward bound bus or thereafter.

## **F. Festival Consultant Job Description**

1. The Consultant to the Festival is designated by the VDC to facilitate forums, assist the festival host by fielding questions regarding VDC procedures, and support the deliberation of the adjudicators and directors, and to serve as a tie-breaker. The Consultant also works with the festival host, the Technical Director, and the House Manager to ensure a smoothly run festival.
2. General Information
  - a. The Consultant is invited by the VDC, in conjunction with the festival host, to assist at that festival;
  - b. The Consultant facilitates the adjudicators' and directors' understanding of festival procedures;
  - c. The Consultant will introduce the adjudicators to the directors in the directors' forums and to the students in the student forums (when there are two consultants).
3. Duties
  - a. Before the festival:
    - i. The Consultant should meet with the host to become familiar with the site;
    - ii. The Consultant will facilitate the directors' meeting at the start of the festival, at which directors and adjudicators are introduced, program information is updated, the start and finish of each show is clarified, and adult workers are clearly identified.
    - iii. The Consultant will work with the host to ensure that the necessary forms in sufficient quantity for each adjudicator and director have been photocopied and are ready for use.

- iv. The Consultant should read a copy or summary of Liz Lerman’s article, “Toward a Process of Critical Response,” as a guideline for forums. A summary is included in this handbook.
- b. During the festival:
- i. The Consultant is the on-site representative of the VDC and will serve as the local arbiter of any questions concerning rules and regulations of the festival.
  - ii. The Consultant will carefully monitor the time to ensure that the schedule remains as close to the schedule as possible.
  - iii. The Consultant will ensure that no show starts sooner than its scheduled time, so as to ensure that audience members who have traveled to the festival are allowed to see the shows.
  - iv. The Consultant will ensure that before a show has started that the cast and crew are in places, that the technical director is ready, and that all of the directors and adjudicators are in the hall.
  - v. The Consultant will work with the house manager to ensure audience etiquette, and that once a show has started that no one enters or leaves the auditorium.
  - vi. If weather conditions warrant it, the Consultant will consult with the Host to determine the appropriateness of continuing, shortening, postponing or canceling the festival.
- c. After each block of performances at the festival:
- i. The Consultant facilitates the directors’ forum, which consists of a discussion that allows:
    - (a) The use of one of the two following formats:
      - (1) the director poses any questions to the group, followed by a round-table discussion in which each participant (the other directors and adjudicators) are allotted an equal amount of time to comment on the show (approximately two minutes), and use of the discussion format sheet and its “I liked...”, “I would suggest...”, “I want to thank you for...” prompts; or allowing directors to ask a question as the starting points; or
      - (2) the format described by Liz Lerman in the article “Toward a Process of Critical Response” that allows for periods of (a) affirmation; (b) opportunities for the presenter to ask questions of the audience; (c) opportunities for the audience to ask neutral questions of the presenter; and (d) opportunities for the audience to provide opinions on the production they have seen, with the permission of the presenter.
    - (b) the use of time constraints to encourage everyone to be succinct, non-repetitive and focused;
    - (c) participants to take into account the emotional state of directors, the need for fairness, and the importance of commenting on the performance and directorial choices, not the script;
    - (d) an environment that encourages free-flowing discussion. In particular, attendance at these forums should be limited to adult and student directors, adult assistant and technical directors, and the adjudicators. Experience has shown that large numbers of spectators, either adult or student, inhibit free-flowing discussion.
  - ii. before each forum session, the Consultant shall read the following:
 

“The Vermont Drama Council sees this session as a dialogue between the production director and the other directors at the festival. It is an opportunity to discuss directorial choices and decisions, as well as a chance to exchange ideas about each individual’s interpretation and responses to a given performance. The VDC assumes these discussions will deal with professional questions at the directorial level, focusing on the actual production, not the process. It is the director’s choice as to which information will be filtered to the students. Confidentiality in relation to discussion of critiques of other shows is assumed.”

- iii. The Consultant will ensure that the adjudicators and directors have completed Comment Sheets for each play performed with each block of performances, and keep current their Order of Preference Forms. The Consultant should fill out his or her own order of preference form.
  - iv. The Consultant will receive the individual award nominations from the directors and tally them to make award decisions. No definitive criteria exist for making these decisions. Rather the Consultant will use patterns of nomination from the casts, directors and adjudicators as a guide for individuals to be recognized. Care should be taken to ensure that individuals from all schools receive recognition, though there is no expectation that the numbers of awards should be equal. In addition, the Consultant may make awards to technical crew members based on the technical evaluation forms filled out by the adult Technical Director.
 

Note that ensemble awards should be reserved for those situations when a group of actors works together as a unit; all members of the ensemble should receive a certificate for this reward. Separate acting awards should usually not be awarded to the members of an ensemble unless they distinguish themselves outside the context of the ensemble.
  - v. The Consultant should give award decisions to the calligrapher to begin preparing the certificates for the adjudicators' eventual signature.
- d. After all plays have been performed at the festival:
- i. The Consultant makes sure the adjudicators and directors have filled out all Comment Sheets gathers them, so that they can be handed to the directors at the closing ceremonies;
  - ii. The Consultant collects the Order of Preference forms and tallies the votes to determine the continuing schools.
    - (a) For each Order of Preference form received, points are awarded as follows: First place – 12 points; second place – 11 points; third place – 10 points; and so on until all schools have been included. **If the final column of a director's Order of Preference form is not filled out completely, it cannot and should not be included in the point totals.**
    - (b) At regional festivals, the directors' and adjudicators' votes are all summed together to give the final score for each school. Adjudicators' and directors' votes are weighted equally. **THE TWO LOWEST TOTAL SCORES ARE THE CONTINUING SCHOOLS.**
    - (c) At the State Festival, the score given by an adjudicator to each school is multiplied by three. Thus, each adjudicator's score is weighted three times each director's score. **THE TWO LOWEST TOTAL SCORES ARE THE CONTINUING SCHOOLS.**
  - iii. The Consultant acts as a tie-breaker, and, if needed, indicates that role on the forms that are sent to the VPA;
  - iv. The Consultant checks the awards to be presented. The Consultant will consult with the Adjudicators to make any additional awards they feel appropriate, and, if a school has been inadvertently omitted from the awards, to decide on appropriate awards for that school;
  - v. The Consultant coordinates, with the closing ceremony host, the manner in which the awards will be announced to the students.
  - vi. The Consultant prepares a packet for each school that contains:
    - (a) The form announcing the two schools continuing to the next festival level;
    - (b) Information provided by the host of the next level for the two continuing schools;
    - (c) The written comments provided by adjudicators and other directors evaluating the school's production.
    - (d) The technical evaluation sheet filled out by the technical director.

The packet should NOT contain the nominations for individual awards, running order of preference sheets and other confidential information.

- vii. After the closing ceremonies, the Consultant ensures that each director receives the school's packet and instructs each director that the packet is not to be opened until the bus has left the school grounds.
- viii. The Consultant places the Order of Preference forms in an envelope that is to be sealed and mailed to the VPA or VDC representative named on the form. The actual ranking of the schools is confidential and should not be discussed with the festival participants. The Consultant also fills out the Adjudicator mailing address form and sends it the VPA representative named on the form. This will ensure that adjudicators receive their honorarium.
- ix. The Consultant of a regional festival, at the soonest opportunity, should mail a clean copy of the festival program to the state festival Host and to the President of the VDC, along with the identity of the two continuing schools. In addition, the Consultant should contact the state festival Host and VDC President by phone or e-mail to communicate the identity of the two continuing schools. The Consultant at the state festival need only contact the VDC president.

### III. INFORMATION FOR ADJUDICATORS

#### A. General Information

1. The Vermont Drama Festival is an annual event for secondary schools in Vermont, administered by the Vermont Drama Council (VDC) and sponsored by the Vermont Principal's Association (VPA).
2. The Festival has several purposes:
  - a. To encourage the development and growth of theatre education in Vermont;
  - b. To provide a culturally enriching event for students in Vermont schools;
  - c. To educate directors and their casts in the effective use of theatre by sharing production techniques;
  - d. To expose students to the creative merits of theatrical productions by their peers from other schools;
  - e. To provide directors and casts an opportunity to share in discussions of all productions with qualified adjudicators in forum settings, for the purpose of encouraging schools to learn more about drama, and to continue their interest in and development of a theatre program.
3. Notification of Adjudicators
  - a. Based on the responses to the survey sent to potential adjudicators, adjudication assignments will be made by February 1, 2012.
  - b. A panel of two adjudicators at regional festivals and three adjudicators at the state festival will be assigned to each festival site. The adjudication assignments will be made by letter and confirmed with a phone call.
  - c. The name, address, phone number and e-mail address of the contact person for each festival will be provided when the adjudication assignments are confirmed.
  - d. From this point on, it is the duty of the festival Host to apprise the adjudicators of the festival schedule, necessary times of arrival, and directions, as well as other important festival information.
  - e. An alternate adjudicator will be assigned to each site, if possible. This person will be available up to the morning of the festival. If the alternate has not been notified by this time, the alternate's attendance at the festival will be optional.
  - f. Appropriate housing will be provided for each adjudicator at the state festival.
  - g. Regional festival adjudicators will receive an honorarium of up to \$100.00; state festival adjudicators will receive an honorarium of up to \$200.00.

#### B. Duties of Adjudicators

1. Before the festival each adjudicator should:

- a. read the guidelines and regulations contained in the current VPA Drama Handbook. The handbook is updated yearly and the current handbook should be used. Each adjudicator will receive a handbook when they have been assigned.
  - b. Provide the festival host with a short biography for inclusion in the festival program. Hosts should receive this no later than February 3, 2012 for regional festivals and March 10, 2012 for the state festival.
  - c. Plan to arrive at the festival site in plenty of time to meet the host and the VDC Consultant, who will facilitate communication during the festival, and to have a tour of the facility.
2. At the festival each adjudicator should:
- a. Meet with the other adjudicator(s), the festival host, the VDC Consultant, and the directors to update program information and to clarify procedures. This will usually happen at the initial directors' meeting prior to the first performance on the day of the festival.
  - b. View each play.
  - c. Participate in the directors' forums or student forums as your host directs.

As adjudicators plan their comments they should keep in mind that the members of the VDC have worked very hard to develop drama festivals that exhibit a true "festival" atmosphere and give everyone a chance to "Celebrate Theatre." Within this context, however, the VDC also needs a process for selecting shows to represent a region at the state festival and to represent Vermont at the New England Festival. The VDC has tried to emphasize the sharing aspects of the festival and also the critiquing process in the following ways:

- i. Workshops are provided at all levels of the Festival as part of the sharing process;
- ii. The award format has been expanded to include many aspects of production; therefore technical elements as well as acting elements should be discussed as part of the forums;
- iii. All festival participants, directors, and students are expected to attend all forums, so everyone has a chance to learn. Therefore, we suggest that the terms "contest," "winners," "best," and "competition" be avoided, that good things be said about every production, as well as constructive comments and suggestions for improvement.
- iv. Productions should be evaluated, not scripts.
- v. Each production should be evaluated on its own merits, and not in terms of productions of the same show the adjudicator has seen or participated in;
- vi. Remarks should be confined to whether or not a director's interpretation is consistent and effective, as opposed to whether the director's artistic vision matches the adjudicator's own.
- vii. Since schools of many different sizes, budgets, and experience levels may be participating at the same festival, it is the VDC's intention that the Festival will provide a learning experience. The VDC hopes to encourage a school's theatre group to produce better theatre, rather than discourage their attempt by abject comparisons with other productions. In the past, several schools have dropped out because they felt they couldn't "compete" with the larger schools. The members of the VDC feel that the attitude of the adjudicators in assessing productions, not schools, is critical in addressing this problem.
- viii. Directors and students respond favorably to an informal, relaxed forum that allows for mutual give and take among the participants. The adjudicators should communicate their positive as well as negative impressions in a constructive, encouraging manner for all participants.
- ix. For many schools, the forums are the most valuable part of the Festival experience. We would like the adjudicators to appreciate the responsibility that they have in helping to foster a sense of achievement for the participants, especially for those schools that are new to Festival.
- x. Liz Lerman's article, "Toward a Process of Critical Response," provides a vision of the critique process that is consistent with the VDC's philosophy. Some Consultants will use these ideas as a guideline for forums. A summary of the article is included in this handbook.

- d. Complete the Adjudicator Comment Sheet. Since these written comments will be read and re-read by directors and their casts, we ask that that adjudicators be constructive and specific in the commendations and recommendations.
- e. After the second show, ensure that the Order of Preference Worksheet is up to date and updated throughout the festival.
- f. Keep a list of potential award candidates.
  - i. Prepare a list of students that should be named to the Festival Honorary Company. This recognizes excellence in acting and technical work - such as lighting, set design and/or construction, make-up, costuming, properties, sound, or special effects – by individuals from any or all productions.
  - ii. It is the philosophy of the VDC that while there is no restriction on the number of these awards, each school's cast or crew should receive at least one award recognizing some aspect of their production. These awards are to be used to recognize student, not adult, achievement. Both Participating and Associate productions are eligible for individual awards. However, schools who have entered Associate productions have chosen not to be considered for participation in festivals at the next levels. If you have any questions about this, be sure to speak to your VDC Consultant for clarification.
  - iii. On special occasions adjudicators may give an ensemble acting award to an entire cast or section of a cast, instead of acting awards to individuals. Such an ensemble award recognizes acting excellence by the ensemble as an ensemble unit, and should be given sparingly. Ensemble acting certificates should be prepared for each cast member so awarded.
  - iv. At the close of festival, the Consultant will provide a list of awardees nominated by the casts and directors. If the adjudicators feel that additional awards are merited, they should inform the consultant who will ensure that the awards are made.
- g. Using the information on the Order of Preference forms, vote for two schools to represent this festival at the next level of festival and give your forms to the VDC Consultant who will tabulate the results. It is important that the Order of Preference form – in particular, the final column - be completely filled out.
- h. Sign all certificates of participation and award certificates. Adjudicators may be able to do some of this during the day. It also might be possible to sign blank certificates at the start of the festival.
- i. Adjudicators are encouraged to continue one-on-one discussions with directors outside the context of the directors' forums.

Using your word processor:  
*Set the margins at 1 inch on all sides.*  
*Set a right justified tab at 6.5" with a dot leader.*  
*Use either center-justified text or left-justified text for the body.*  
*Experiment with font sizes and line spacings to determine what fits and looks good.*

Name of School  
Name of Town, State  
Presents

*It's important to list the name of the town and state so that the program is usable for the NEDF.*

# NAME OF PLAY

By Author

Scene: Somewhere  
Time: Sometime

*This is intended as a guide. We are aware that some shows may require some modification of this format.*

(in order of appearance, or alphabetical or whatever applies)

First Character..... First Actor  
Second Character ..... Second Actor  
Third Character ..... Third Actor  
Fourth Character ..... Fourth Actor  
Fifth Character ..... Fifth Actor  
First Chorus..... Sixth Actor, Seventh Actor, Eighth Actor, Ninth Actor  
Tenth Actor, Eleventh Actor, Twelfth Actor  
Sixth Character..... Thirteenth Actor

*This line is right justified text.*

## PRODUCTION STAFF

*Asterisks indicate adult.*

Director ..... Director Name\*  
Technical Director ..... Tech Director Name\*  
Set Designer ..... Designer Name, Designer Name  
Lighting Designer ..... Designer Name  
Costume Designer ..... Designer Name  
Stage Manager ..... Manager Name  
Lights ..... Light Tech Name  
Sound ..... Sound Tech Name

## CREW

Crew Name, Crew Name, Crew Name, Crew Name, Crew Name, Crew Name  
Crew Name, Crew Name, Crew Name,

Produced by special arrangement with Publishing Company Name

*It's crucial to list copyright permissions!!*

## EFFECTIVE CRITIQUE

(summarized and adapted from Liz Lerman, *Toward a Process of Critical Response*. Lerman is a professional dancer and a 2002 winner of one of the MacArthur Foundation's "genius" awards!)

**The most accurate feedback does no good if it is not heard and accepted.** The format below was devised by dancer Liz Lerman to ensure that the artist has the greatest opportunity to receive feedback that will be heard and used during the revision process. Effective feedback requires that the performer be ready to receive the information that is offered; however, performers are usually in a fragile place with respect to their own work, particularly if it is fresh. The crucial point is that the feedback is *creator-centered*, and not *observer-centered*. The facilitator must keep things moving and keep people on track to ensure critique sessions are geared to the needs of the creator.

As you work with your students, you will find that they struggle with developing questions (in both steps 2 and 3) that lead to useful responses. Performers must have a reflective approach to their own work; observers should look at the questioning as a process of inquiry.

### STEP ONE: AFFIRMATION

Right after a performance, performers need to hear positive, affirmative information about their work. People want to hear that what they have just completed has meaning to another human being. Phrases such as, "when you did such-and-such it was [surprising, challenging, evocative, compelling, delightful, unique, touching, poignant, interesting, etc] because..." provide this affirmation.

### STEP TWO: ARTIST AS QUESTIONER

*The creator asks the questions first*, which need to be quite specific. The more artists clarify what they are working on and what their own questions are about their own work, the more intense and deep the dialogue becomes. It doesn't work to say, "tell me what you think," especially since performers usually don't really mean it, and if observers do tell them, they get defensive. If the question is specific and pointed, then the respondents are given the opportunity to say exactly what they think in a way the creator is prepared to hear. Questions with "Yes/No" answers tend to stop discussion, and should be avoided. The job of the facilitator is to help the artist find the specific questions that get at the heart of the matter. But, the artist needs to raise the question first; the facilitator can probe with more questions to expand on the performer's intent, if needed.

### STEP THREE: RESPONDERS ASK THE QUESTIONS

The responders form their opinions in a neutral question. Forming opinions into neutral questions is precisely the process necessary to get to the questions that matter for the artist. It's important to remember that this process is NOT about telling or hinting to an artist how to improve their work. However, one can say whatever is important through this mechanism, and what can't be said probably couldn't be heard, or isn't relevant.

### STEP FOUR: OPINION TIME

After the neutral questions have been asked, if issues remain, the responder can ask permission to state an opinion: "I have an opinion about the costumes. Do you want to hear it?" I have never been at a session when the artist hasn't been willing to hear from everyone. But the asking of permission puts the opinion in a different place than it usually is; the artist is ultimately in control, and can say, no - or yes - or not now, but later. In many situations, there is not much left to add.

*If time permits, then the following steps can be added, usually in a one-on-one setting.*

### STEP FIVE: SUBJECT MATTER DISCUSSION

Extended discussion about the content and/or context of a piece that usually happens one-on-one.

### STEP SIX: WORKING ON THE WORK

Follow up lab work on a piece, based on the discussions that have preceded it.

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## A History of Vermont's Participation in the New England Drama Festival

<u>Year</u>	<u>Host</u>	<u>Vermont Schools</u>	<u>Plays Presented</u>
1931	At Pawtucket RI	Burlington High School.....	"The Dweller in the Darkness"
1932	(no festival)		
1933	At Manchester NH	Middlebury High School .....	"Circumstances Alter Cases"
		St. Johnsbury Academy .....	"The High Heart"
1934	At S. Portland ME	Bennington High School.....	"The Wasp"
		Leland & Gray Seminary .....	"The Violin Maker of Cremoner"
1935	At Arlington MA	Bennington High School.....	"Sun Up"
		Wallingford High School.....	"Where the Cross is Made"
1936	At Manchester NH	Essex Jct. High School .....	"A Message from Khufu"
		Leland & Gray Seminary .....	"Oliver Twist"
1937	At Pawtucket RI	Leland & Gray Seminary .....	"Will o' the Wisp"
		Montpelier High School .....	"Campbell of Kilingor"
1938	At Warwick RI	St. Johnsbury Academy .....	"The Last of the Loweries"
		Montpelier High School .....	"Lonesome Lake"
1939	At Northfield VT	Pittsford High School .....	"Which Way to Boston?"
	Norwich Univ.	St. Johnsbury Academy .....	"The Boy Comes Home"
1940	At Greenwich CT	Montpelier High School .....	"The Old Lady Shows Her Medals"
		Wallingford High School.....	"The First Dress Suit"
1941	At S. Portland ME	Newport High School .....	"Circumstances After Cases"
		Peoples Academy.....	"The Wedge"
1942	At Worcester MA	Montpelier High School .....	"The Flattering Word"
	Clark University	Poultney High School.....	"Goodnight Please"
1943	No Festival		
1944	At Middlebury VT	Middlebury High School .....	"The Happy Journey to Camden and Trent"
		Montpelier High School .....	"Parting at Innsdorf"
1945	At Brown University	Waterbury High School .....	"The First Dress Suit"
		Montpelier High School .....	"A Marriage Proposal"
1946	At Rochester NH	Springfield High School .....	"Mooncalf Munford"
		St. Johnsbury Academy .....	"The Barretts of Wimpole Street"
1947	At Middletown CT	Waterbury High School .....	"Goodnight Please"
		Bellows Falls High School .....	"Antic Spring"
1948	At Westbrook ME	Spaulding High School.....	"The Chinese Waterwheel"
	Westbrook Jr. College	Putney School .....	"The Marriage Proposal"
1949	At Swampscott MA	Montpelier High School .....	"The Bishop's Candlesticks"
1950	At Durham NH	St. Johnsbury Academy .....	"This Sweetmeat Game"
	UNH	Waterbury High School .....	"This Daring Generation"
1951	At Providence RI	St. Johnsbury Academy .....	"Will o' the Wisp"
	RISD	Putney High School.....	"The Anniversary"
1952	At St. Johnsbury VT	Brattleboro High School.....	"How to Propose"
	St. Johnsbury Academy	Windsor High School .....	"Mooncalf Munford"
1953	At Woodbury CT	Springfield High School .....	"Sunday Costs Five Pesos"
		Burr & Burton Seminary .....	"Love Hits Wilbur"
1954	At Sanford ME	Waterbury High School.....	"The Imaginary Invalid"
		Burlington High School.....	"Mr. Vincent"
1955	At Marblehead MA	Burlington High School.....	"The Wonder Hat"
		Waterbury High School .....	"My Lady's Lace"
1956	At Concord NH	Burlington High School.....	"One of Us"
		Waterbury High School .....	"Arsenic and Old Lace"
1957	At Barrington RI	Lamoille Central Academy.....	"Papa is All"
		Mt. St. Joseph Academy .....	"This Way to Heaven"
1958	At Montpelier VT	Middlebury Union High School .....	"Sorry, Wrong Number"
	Montpelier High School	Bellows Falls High School .....	"Rise and Shine"

1959	At Cheshire CT	Arlington High School.....	"I'm a Fool"
		Waterbury High School.....	"The Maker of Laws"
1960	At Westbrook ME	Brattleboro High School.....	"The Odyssey of Runyen Jesseo"
		BFA – St. Albans.....	"Riders to the Sea"
1961	At Newton MA	Lamoille Central Academy.....	"The Glass Menagerie"
		Middlebury Union High School.....	"Box and Cox"
1962	At Rochester NH	Lamoille Union High School.....	"The Cradle Song"
		Middlebury Union High School.....	"The Lark"
1963	At Warren RI	Vergennes Union High School.....	"The Heiress"
1964	At Middlebury VT	Burlington High School.....	"The Undercurrent"
	Middlebury Union HS	Lamoille Central Academy.....	"The Emperor's New Clothes"
1965	At Bangor ME	Middlebury Union High School.....	"The Sandbox"
		Lamoille Central Academy.....	"Mother Courage and Her Children"
1966	At Boston MA	Brattleboro Union High School.....	"The Potato Jungle"
		Lamoille Central Academy.....	"The Dumb Wife"
1967	At Durham NH	Mt. Anthony Union High School....	"The Sandbox"
	UNH	Lamoille Central Academy.....	"The Caucasian Chalk Circle"
1968	At Providence RI	Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"Katherine and Petruccio"
	Rhode Island College	Spaulding High School.....	"Mannequin's Demise"
1969	At Lyndon Center VT	Thetford Academy.....	"The Bald Soprano"
	Lyndon Institute	Milton High School.....	"Six Who Pass While Lentils Boil"
1970	At Rumford ME	Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"Spoon River Academy"
		St. Johnsbury Academy.....	"The Old Jew"
1971	At Boston MA	West Rutland High School.....	"The Brick and the Rose"
		BFA – Fairfax.....	"The Brick and the Rose"
1972	At Portsmouth NH	BFA – Fairfax.....	"Hello, Out There"
		BFA – St. Albans.....	"Curse You, Jack Dalton"
1973	At Providence RI	BFA – Fairfax.....	"The Royal Hunt of the Sun"
		Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"This is the Rill Speaking"
1974	At Bellows Falls VT	BFA – Fairfax.....	"The Barber of Seville"
	Bellows Falls HS	Springfield High School.....	"The Lesson"
1975	At Skowhegan ME	Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"Viet Rock"
		BFA – Fairfax.....	"Pelleas and Melisande"
1976	At Weymouth MA	Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"Games"
		BFA – Fairfax.....	"An American Ceremonial"
1977	At Portsmouth NH	Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"Wings"
		BFA – St. Albans.....	"Wings"
1978	At Providence RI	Mill River Union High School.....	"Adaptation"
		Proctor High School.....	"The Sandbox"
1979	At Castleton VT	Lamoille Union High School.....	"Is There Life After High School?"
	Castleton State College	Mill River Union High School.....	"The Trial of the Catonsville Nine"
1980	At Skowhegan ME	Mill River Union High School.....	"Spoon River Anthology"
		Colchester High School.....	"Overs"
1981	At Bridgeport CT	Mt. Abraham Union High School....	"Who Am I This Time?"
	University of Bridgeport	Milton Jr-Sr High School.....	"The Game"
1982	At Peabody MA	Milton Jr-Sr High School.....	"The Little Toy Dog"
		Mt. St. Joseph Academy.....	"Wings"
1983	At Portsmouth NH	Mill River Union High School.....	"Wiley and the Hairy Man"
		Randolph Union High School.....	"My Cup Runneth Over"
1984	At Newport RI	BFA – Fairfax.....	"Salome"
		Vergennes Union High School.....	"Voices From the High School"
1985	At North Clarendon VT	Mill River Union High School.....	"Waiting for Lefty"
	Mill River Union HS	Milton Jr-Sr High School.....	"Persephone"
1986	At Wallingford CT	Colchester High School.....	"The Lovers"
	Choate Rosemary Hall	Winooski High School.....	"The Bridge"
1987	At Bar Harbor ME	Champlain Valley Union HS.....	"Tales of Trickery"
	Mt. Desert Island HS	U-32 High School.....	"Candid"

1988	At Brockton MA Brockton High School	Chelsea High School..... "Asylum" Milton Jr-Sr High School..... "Flowers from Lidice"
1989	At Gilford NH Gilford Middle-HS	Randolph Union High School..... "Lemonade" U-32 High School..... "Assembly Line"
1990	At Cranston RI Cranston East HS	Mt. Mansfield Union High School . "El Grande de Coca Cola" Woodstock Union High School..... "Medea"
1991	At Woodstock VT Woodstock Union HS	Mill River Union High School ..... "The Blue Men" Woodstock Union High School..... "Korea"
1992	At Guilford CT	Mill River Union High School ..... "Iz She Izzy or Iz He Ain'tzy or Iz They Both?" Mt. Mansfield Union High School . "I Will Breathe"
1993	At Westbrook ME	Middlebury Union High School ..... "Alice in Love" Woodstock Union High School..... "Oedipus the King"
1994	At Acton MA Acton-Boxborough HS	BFA – St. Albans..... "The Doctor's Duty" Woodstock Union High School..... "Al and the Minstrels of Wonderment"
1995	At Amherst NH	Thetford Academy ..... "High Tide" Woodstock Union High School..... "Strider"
1996	At Providence RI Hope High School	St. Johnsbury Academy ..... "Interview" Woodstock Union High School..... "Macbeth"
1997	St. Johnsbury VT St. Johnsbury Academy	Randolph Union High School..... "15 Minute Hamlet" U-32 High School..... "ALiCE"
1998	At Uncasville CT St. Bernard High School	Mt. St. Joseph Academy ..... "Diviners" Thetford Academy ..... "Postponing the Heat Death of the Universe"
1999	At Bangor ME Bangor High School	U-32 High School..... "Dogg's Hamlet" Hartford High School ..... "Property Rites"
2000	At Andover MA Andover High School	St. Johnsbury Academy ..... "Carnival of the Animals" Hartford High School ..... "Jane"
2001	At Gilford NH Gilford High School	Milton High School ..... "The Dark Ages" U-32 High School..... "The Birds"
2002	At Cranston RI Cranston West HS	Milton High School ..... "The Drowned and the Saved" Peoples Academy..... "Eleemosynary"
2003	At Milton VT Milton High School	Randolph Union High School..... "Three Tables" St. Johnsbury Academy ..... "Of Widows and Vegetables"
2004	At Fairfield, ME Lawrence HS	Milton High School ..... "Women and Wallace" St. Johnsbury Academy ..... "Fearful Symmetry"