

DESIGN

Design can help you explore SETTING, CHARACTER, and MOOD by allowing students to MAKE CHOICES through visual elements...

Character: How can costume and set communicate characters' relationships to each other? How can costume and set communicate status? Which character is the focus of the scene and how can costume show that?

Setting: How can set and lighting communicate where and when the scene takes place? How large is this place? Is this place rural or urban? Are there lots of people or few people here? What time of day is it? What time of year? What time period is it?

Mood: How can set, costume and lighting communicate the mood of the scene? Is the scene happy or sad? Does the mood feel heavy or light, gloomy or cheerful, peaceful, suspenseful, etc.?

The Design TOOLBOX:

Collage: Designers often create the world of the play by creating a "vision board" or collage (pieces of material such as photos, paper, and text that are cutout and glued to backing usually with overlapping pieces). The collage can communicate the mood and setting of the play or the inspiration for a particular character's costume. A collage can deal only with color or texture. The purpose of the collage is to communicate ideas.

Drawing: Designers generally draw or sketch their ideas prior to building the actual pieces. Designers draw a sketch of a costume or a set to map out their ideas and communicate with their collaborators. In the sketch a designer may use the drawing to communicate the line, color, texture, or shape of a set piece or costume.

Building: Building refers to the actual pieces used in the scene and how they are made. A costume or set piece might be built by the students to enhance the scene or communicate additional information about the scene. Costume and set pieces that are built and used in the scene help to create the world of the scene. Pieces may be built (pieced together) from found objects, sewn, made from paper or cardboard or fabric, painted, etc.

Ground Plan: Students can create a drawing of the stage as seen from above to indicate set and set pieces such as furniture.

Model: Students can build a model (similar to a diorama) to communicate their ideas for the set.

Elevation: In addition to a ground plan, students can also create a sketch of the set as seen from the audience’s point of view. Looking at the model, the elevation, and the ground plan can be an exercise in examining perspective.

Props: Objects used by the actors on stage. Students can create props to better communicate the action of the scene.

Backdrop: Students can explore setting by creating a backdrop, or painted cloth hung at the back of a stage space, to communicate the landscape of their setting.

Costume: Costumes or costume pieces may be created to communicate character. Students can make choices about status, relationship, professional, animal, mythical creature, etc. by creating simple costumes. Costumes can be made from found clothing pieces, fabric, paper, etc.

SHAPE	COLOR	LINE	TEXTURE	SCALE
The form or figure.	The combination of hue (shades i.e. red, yellow, green), value (lightness or darkness), and intensity (brightness or dullness).	The continuous marks or paths (vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curved, or spiral).	The surface quality of an object (rough or smooth).	The size in relation to other people and objects on stage.
<p>Costume: What is the Length and Width of the costume? What is the shape of the body (lanky, round, stout, short, tall, etc.)?</p> <p>Set: What shapes are used? Why? Are there many circles? Are there lots of boxes or straight lines?</p>	<p>Costume: What color is the main character wearing? Does it make him/her stand out? What do the colors represent for the characters? Can color show profession?</p> <p>Set: What colors are used to show location, mood, etc.?</p>	<p>Costume: How does the costume conform to the actor’s body? Is it loose or fitted to the form? Is the costume smooth and flowing or sharp and jagged?</p> <p>Set: Do the lines cut across the set or are they on the edges? Do they curve or are they straight?</p>	<p>Costume: What material is used for the costume? Is it smooth and silky or rough?</p> <p>Set: How do the color, pattern, and material vary? Could the texture suggest a certain type of building (brick, stone, etc.) or a type of fabric (velvet, silk, etc.) that will help to communicate setting?</p>	<p>Costume: Are the characters larger than life or realistic? How does the character look in relation to the space?</p> <p>Set: Are the set elements larger than life or realistically sized? What size are the set elements in relation to the actors and other set elements? How does scale communicate drama and focal points?</p>

LIGHTING TOOLBOX: Students can experiment with light using flashlights or clip lights to communicate setting or mood.

COLOR	INTENSITY	ANGLE	MOVEMENT
What is the hue (red, yellow, green, etc.) and value (lightness or darkness) of the light? Are you using warm colors (reds, oranges, yellows) or cool colors (blues, purples)?	How bright or dull do you want the light? What gradation?	What is the direction of the light? From where does it shine? How is the light distributed? Is the light sharply focused or a wash of light?	Does the light move? Where? Why? How does the light change?

ASSESSING and REVISING Design...

Students can assess design choices by asking the following **KEY QUESTIONS** and revise by making changes to the elements in their toolbox:

Are the **WHO**, **WHERE**, and **WHEN** clear?

Was it clear who the main character is?

Was the mood the audience saw the mood that was intended?