

GUIDE

The Drama Teacher's Guide to Summer Camp Success

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INTRODUCTION

Making An Impact This Summer

Summer camps for educational theatre are an excellent way to keep students engaged and excited about the performing arts during the summer months. These camps provide a unique opportunity for students to continue their theatre education, develop new skills, and work with a variety of professionals in the industry.

In this book, we will share ideas and strategies for making the most of your summer theatre program. You will learn how to structure your days, create a supportive and inclusive environment for all students, and how to build relationships with parents and community members to ensure the success of your program. With this ebook, you will have everything you need to plan, prepare, and execute a successful summer theatre program that will benefit your students for years to come.





1 Summer Theatre: Act, Learn and Play

As we dive into the topic of summer camps for educational theatre, it's crucial to first reflect on the purpose behind these programs. Why do we invest time, resources, and energy into creating summer camps for students interested in theatre? The answer is simple: to provide a safe and nurturing space for students to explore their creative passions, develop their skills, and build their confidence. With the increasing pressure students face during the school year, summer camps offer a unique opportunity to step away from the stresses of academics and dive into the world of performing arts.

Why We Do What We Do



Alleviating the Pressure

With the increasing emphasis on achieving stellar grades and excelling in testing, students face immense pressure during the school year. The summer offers a much-needed break with a less hectic schedule and a more receptive mindset for exploring creativity. Engaging in the arts during the summer is a great way for students to nurture their innate creativity in a stress-free environment!



Welcoming Incoming Students

Summer camps can be an excellent way to introduce new students to a theatre company and its culture. By participating in a summer camp, they can become familiar with the company's values, expectations, and procedures, which can help them become productive members of the team.



Leadership Opportunities

Summer camps are a great time of year for current or older students to engage in leadership roles and build their volunteering credits. They can play a huge role in welcoming those incoming students and leading exercises and games, or even getting involved in production roles! And in turn, they will become even more invested in the program's success!



Supporting Parents and Guardians

Day camps in the summer are a great and affordable way for parents to make sure their kids are having a wonderful time when they're at work rather than sitting at home. Plus, the earlier they can figure out what and where they can send their kids, the more likely they will sign them up- so get the word out early!



Cultivating the Next Generation of Artists

Students can have the opportunity to learn from experienced people like you and master new skills in acting, singing, dancing, writing, or technical theatre. Having a structured environment to explore these talents might just be the first step toward a future in the arts!

Why We Do What We Do



Develop New Skills and Techniques

Students who attend summer camps for educational theatre can explore skills they may not have before and refine the skills they already have in their toolbox. They can receive personalized feedback, hone their craft, and gain confidence in their abilities.



Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem

As students master new skills and techniques, they gain a sense of accomplishment and pride in their work. They also have the opportunity to perform in front of an audience and receive positive feedback, which can boost their self-esteem and confidence.



Teamwork and Collaboration

Unlike the traditional classroom setting, summer camps provide an immersive and dynamic space for students to work together to create performances, build sets, or design costumes. This teamwork allows students to learn valuable communication skills, develop respect for each other's ideas, and cultivate their problem-solving abilities in a creative and supportive environment.



Boost Your Program's Income

Sun's out, funds out! In addition to all of the other benefits we listed above that will boost your revenue in the long run, camps are a great way to get a quick buck before the fall season. Your future will thank you for a little extra in your pockets this fall!



Creative Outlet

Summer camps offer a unique space for students to unleash their creativity and explore their passions in a fun and supportive environment. They can experiment with different forms of expression, challenge themselves with new techniques, and collaborate with other like-minded students.



Engaging Feeder Schools

By reaching out to feeder schools and welcoming their students to your camp, you can establish a relationship that can lead to a steady stream of talented young actors in the future. Not only does this create more opportunities for your current students, but it also fosters a community love of theatre.

Feeder programs also:

- **Create awareness:** By reaching out to feeder schools and welcoming their students to your camp, you can raise awareness about your program and attract new students who might not have known about your program otherwise.
- **Build relationships:** Developing relationships with feeder schools can help you to build a network of educators, students, and parents who are invested in your program and can help to spread the word about your work.
- **Expand your talent pool:** By working with feeder schools, you can expand your pool of potential actors and create a more diverse and dynamic program.
- **Foster a sense of community:** Help to create a sense of community among young actors who are passionate about theatre by engaging them in the summer!
- **Develop a reputation for excellence:** By establishing relationships with feeder schools and consistently delivering high-quality summer camps and theatre programs, you can develop a reputation for excellence that will attract even more talented students to your program.

2 Finding Your Perfect Role in the Camp Scene

As an educator, choosing the right summer camp for your students can be a challenging task. You want to ensure that the camp meets the needs of your students, while providing a fun and engaging experience. Whether you're looking for a camp that emphasizes performance, technical skills, or creativity, there's a summer theatre camp out there that will meet your needs.



Camp Theme Ideas

Musical Marvels: A Summer of Song and Dance

This is the bread and butter of theatre camp! Here, students can develop their vocal and acting abilities while learning to integrate dance into their performances. Participating in a musical theatre camp can also help students build their confidence, develop their stage presence, and get valuable live performance experience.

Theatrical Trailblazers: Building Leaders on and off the Stage

Theatre leadership camps are designed to help students build their leadership skills while learning about the behind-the-scenes work that goes into producing a theatre production. This can be especially beneficial for students who are interested in pursuing careers in theatre or performing arts management!

Tech Troupe: Behind the Scenes of Theatre Magic

This is a great way to offer students the opportunity to learn about and engage in the technical aspects of theatre production, such as lighting design, sound engineering, and set construction. This hands-on experience can be invaluable for students!

Improv Intensive: Unleashing Spontaneity and Creativity

Improv camps are designed to help students develop their improvisational skills, through a series of exercises and games that encourage spontaneous thinking and collaboration. These camps can be a great way for students to build their confidence, develop their communication skills, and learn how to think on their feet.



Camp Theme Ideas, *Cont'd*

Choreo Camp: The Art of Stage Movement

These fun camps can help students develop their skills in dance and movement, as well as their ability to create and teach choreography. You can focus on a specific style of dance, such as ballet or hip-hop, or encourage students to explore a variety of styles!

Screen to Stage: Bringing Theatre to Life in a Digital Landscape

By leveraging technology and innovation, school programs can provide an inclusive experience for all, while also creating significant revenue. With the use of VOD or streaming presentations, the program can expand its reach to students everywhere!

Comedy Central: Make Summer Brighter with Humor

With workshops on improvisation, sketch comedy, and stand-up comedy, these camps can be a great way for students to build their confidence and explore their humor!

Artistic Adventures: Exploring Theatre through Visual Art

These camps involve set design, costume design, and prop creation! They're a great way for students to develop their artistic skills, while also learning about the important role that visual elements play in creating a successful theatre production.

Acting Academy: The Art of Bringing Characters to Life

Through a variety of workshops and exercises, acting camps may focus on topics such as script analysis, character development, and improvisation, and often culminate in a showcase performance where students can demonstrate their skills.



Choosing Your Theme

Now that you know a few different options for your camp, we've compiled a list of key things to consider when choosing which theme is right for you.

- **Focus on your program's needs:** When choosing summer camp programs, consider areas of your theatre program that need improvement or expansion. For example, if your program lacks technical skills, consider a tech camp that teaches students how to design and operate lighting and sound systems.
- **Consider student interests:** It's important to choose summer camps that align with your student's interests. If you have a group of students who are constantly goofing off in rehearsal, they might really enjoy a comedy theatre camp!
- **Think about skill level:** When choosing summer camps, it's important to consider the skill level of your students. For beginners, introductory camps or camps that focus on the basics of acting or tech may be a good fit, while advanced students may benefit from more specialized camps or leadership programs.
- **Understand your leaders:** Who would be helping you run these camps? When thinking about the themes or types of programs you're going to do, you want to make sure you can provide a valuable experience for your campers, and that includes having someone who is well-versed in the subject area. You wouldn't want to do a choreography camp without a choreographer!
- **Thinking about the future:** By designing the curriculum to align with the content of future theatre classes, participants can gain a deeper understanding of the material and build a solid foundation. This approach not only provides a more rewarding experience for participants but also can be a valuable marketing tool for community theatre programs looking to attract students interested in pursuing theatre as a career.

Putting it All Together

If you want to reach beyond the stars this summer, consider an end-of-summer event that brings together all the skills and talents of your summer theatre camp participants. From full-length musicals to one-act plays and even a variety show, this culminating production promises to dazzle and impress!

To do this, you can plan each week of the summer camp to support production pieces of one final show (the art camp makes the set, the choreography camp creates the dances to teach the musical theatre camp later in the summer, etc.) By allowing students to participate in different parts of the production they're comfortable with, your enrollment will be much higher. This also allows flexibility for parents in planning out their summer activities. And, you can all come together in one final performance week at the end of the summer for an amazing sense of community accomplishment!

This grand finale is not just a showcase for students but an opportunity to unite the entire school community in celebrating the arts and the amazing young artists who have worked tirelessly to put on this incredible show.

That being said- whether you coordinate a big summer production or have separately engaging camps, you will surely be blown away by the artistic prowess of your students!

3 Making Your Program Engaging

Summer theatre programs can be a great opportunity for students to explore their creativity and improve their skills while having fun in a relaxed, low-pressure environment. However, it's important to remember that a successful program requires careful planning and consideration to ensure that students remain engaged and enthusiastic throughout the summer.

By taking the time to create a program that is both fun and educational, you can inspire a love of theatre in your students that will last for years to come. In this section, we'll explore some tips and tricks for creating a summer theatre program that is engaging, appealing, and most importantly, easy to implement!



5 Ways to Engage Campers

- 1 Be sure to balance fun and learning**

While it's important to provide a fun and engaging environment for your students, it's equally important to maintain a focus on learning and skill-building. Incorporate activities that help students develop their theatre skills, such as voice and movement exercises or scene work, while also providing opportunities for them to have fun and build relationships with their peers.
- 2 Consider bringing in guest talent**

Inviting guest artists to your summer program can provide your students with a unique learning opportunity and add an exciting element to the program. This can be anyone from a professional actor to a local playwright who can provide feedback on student writing!
- 3 Incorporate technology into camp activities**

In today's digital age, incorporating technology into your summer program can make it more engaging and relevant for your students. Consider using video production tools to allow students to create their own short films or using online resources to help students research and develop their own plays.
- 4 Enjoy the outdoors**

All things tech considered, it is summer after all! Getting kids outside for theatre camp allows them to experience a change of scenery and environment, which can spark creativity and inspiration, while also providing an opportunity for physical activity and fresh air, to improve mood and overall well-being.
- 5 Showcase student work**

Hosting a final performance, a showcase of scenes and monologues, or a film screening, allows students to show off their hard work and accomplishments.



Keep in Mind

Fostering a supportive and inclusive environment is crucial to the success of any summer theatre program. Encourage collaboration, respect, and self-advocacy among your students and provide a safe and welcoming space for all participants to explore their creativity and grow as artists.

"Thank you for making this process so stress-free and supporting me along the way... I am impressed with the ease of the site builder, the customer support, and the user-friendly nature of the program. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!"

Adrienne Roach, *Drama Director*



4 Getting the Show on the Road

As the school year begins to wind down, it's important to start thinking about your summer theatre camp programs. Summer camps provide students with the opportunity to continue learning and growing in a fun, creative environment outside of the regular school year. However, in order to ensure a successful program, it's important to start planning and marketing early. Let's explore why (and how!) getting a head start is imperative to the success of your summer camps.

Getting a Head Start



Spreading the Word

Start marketing your summer theatre camp program as early as possible to maximize interest and attendance. Use school newsletters, social media, flyers, and email to reach out to parents and students!



Securing Administrative Support

Your administrative board or leadership team can provide valuable resources, such as funding or access to facilities. Knowing as early as possible what kind of support you will be getting is crucial because it will likely influence many other decisions in the planning process.



Early Registration

By promoting your program early, you can also encourage early registration, which can help you better plan for the number of students attending and secure the resources needed for the program. With early bird discounts, you can also add incentives for parents to get their kids enrolled!



Preparing Materials

Starting early can help you ensure you have everything you need in time for the program, such as scripts, music, audition materials, and/or costumes.



Avoiding Conflicts

Getting the word out early will help you avoid scheduling conflicts with other programs and events that may be happening during the summer, increasing the chances of a successful and well-attended program.



Securing Resources

Early planning can help you secure resources for your program, such as funding, volunteers, and equipment, which can be in high demand during the summer months.



The Summer Camp Director's Ultimate Checklist

- Decide the theme or focus of the camp.**
- Determine the age range and skill level of the students who will be attending.**
- Secure a location and determine the dates and times for the camp.**
Be sure to keep in mind all the workshops, rehearsals, and performances that you intend on doing with your campers, and make sure the space fits your needs.
- Create a detailed schedule of daily activities.**
- Plan for and purchase necessary supplies.**
Don't leave out anything! Include scripts, costumes, set materials, and even bandaids!
- Make sure you have your staff lined up and confirmed.**
This should include making sure that all staff and volunteers are properly trained and prepared to provide a safe and enriching environment!
- Ensure that all necessary permissions and releases have been obtained from parents and guardians.**
- Develop clear policies and procedures for the camp.**
Make sure to think ahead about emergency plans and protocols!
- Consider partnering with other organizations or professionals to enhance the camp's programming and resources.**
- Plan and implement effective marketing and promotion strategies to attract students and build interest in the camp.**
- Establish a clear and reasonable pricing structure, including any discounts or scholarships that may be available.**
- Think about transportation, especially if the camp is off-site or involves field trips.**
- Create a website or registration page as a homebase for everything about camp!**
With On The Stage's website builder, you can have everything your campers and parents need to know, including dates, pricing, activities, and themes, up and running in minutes!



Summer is About Making Memories

Organizing a successful theatre summer camp for your school can seem like a daunting task, but with careful planning and preparation, it will be an incredibly rewarding experience for both you and your students. By starting early, seeking some administrative support, and marketing your program effectively, you can create a summer theatre program that engages and excites your students, while also showcasing your program and strengthening your school community. Remember, the sooner you start planning, the less overwhelming it will be, and the more time you'll have to create an unforgettable summer of theatre!

On The Stage

At On The Stage, we understand the importance of creating meaningful experiences for your students and community through summer theatre programs- and that's why we offer a free-to-use comprehensive suite of tools and services to empower you to do exactly that.

From marketing and fundraising to registration and ticketing, everything you need is all in one place. With On The Stage, you can focus on what matters most - providing an unforgettable experience for your students.

To learn more about On The Stage and becoming part of our community of theatermakers, schedule a personalized demo today.

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