



The Theatre Arts Department at ASFA

The Theatre Arts Department at ASFA offers exceptional students at the middle and high school levels the opportunity to take classes in a wide range of theatrical styles and disciplines. Students receive a plan of study carefully devised to create highly trained, dynamic, and imaginative young people prepared for success at the next level.

Accomplishments

Theatre Arts students are involved in many nationally recognized festivals and have won awards on the state and national levels including these:

- Presidential Scholar in the Arts
- National Finalists in the Young Arts competition in Miami
- National Finalists of the August Wilson Monologue Competition
- Annual Medals for top performers at the Alabama Thespian Conference and at the Walter Trumbauer Competition, Alabama's state-wide theatre arts competition in Acting, Musical Theatre, and Technical Theatre
- Acceptances into nationally ranked arts programs including Carnegie Mellon, New York University - Tisch School for the Arts, University of Southern California, North Carolina School of the Arts, Columbia College - Chicago, and Fordham University.

Theatre Arts: Middle School

Students in the 7th & 8th grades experience an exciting program of self-exploration and rigorous technique in Acting & Musical Theatre. The Middle School program is designed to lay the foundation for comprehensive training for successful entrance into the 9th grade. Middle School students receive an extended specialty period each day of foundational courses in Musical Theatre & Acting which are taught by ASFA's award-winning faculty and top professional teaching artists. They also perform a Musical Theatre showcase on our mainstage each December. Middle School students who complete the 8th grade successfully, including the completion of a jury examination, are not required to re-audition for entrance into high school.

Middle School Curriculum

- Theatrical Dance, Musical Theatre & Elements of Acting

Theatre Arts: High School

Students entering the 9th grade are immersed in a comprehensive training program in Theatre Arts taught by a team of exceptional educators and theatre professionals. This program is one of the most comprehensive of its kind and allows students to find their area of passion while challenging them to

grow as artists, thinkers, and individuals. Every student who graduates from the Theatre Arts program will have had the chance to explore courses in Acting for the Stage, Musical Theatre, Scenic Design, Costume Design, Directing, Stage Management and Acting for the Camera, plus many more. Additionally, ASFA brings industry guests of regional and national acclaim to present workshops and guest lectures, exposing students to industry leading role models.

At ASFA, students make the art. Students have the opportunity to perform and/or work-behind-the-scenes in all mainstage shows, senior directed one acts, and showcases. At ASFA our students do it all: they build the sets, make the costumes, hang the lights, and perform the roles.

High School Four Year Sample Course Matriculation

- 9th Grade: Musical Theatre, Fundamental of Acting, Stage Craft, and Intro to Theatrical Design
- 10th Grade: Voice and Speech, Role Analysis, Musical Theatre Workshop (taught by industry professionals at Birmingham Children’s Theater), Design Fundamentals, Costume Design, Stage Management
- 11th Grade: Theatre History, Lighting Design, Costume Construction, Monologue Study, Musical Theatre Workshop II, Stage Combat, Acting for the Camera
- 12th Grade: Directing, Acting Styles, Advanced Screen Acting, Scenic Design, Advanced Theatrical Design & Sound Design

Application Procedure

To apply to the Theatre Arts Department at ASFA, you must be a rising 7th–11th grader.

To complete an application, you must follow and complete STEPS 1, 2, & 3 as outlined on the school’s website. If you are reading this document, you should have already completed STEPS 1 & 2. This document instructs you how to complete STEP 3: *Complete & Submit Pre-Audition Requirements*.

Application Deadline: You must complete STEPS 1, 2, & 3 and ASFA must receive all required materials by January 31, 2025.

STEP 3: Complete & Submit Pre-Audition Requirements

Theatre Arts applicants are required to submit a pre-audition video which must be less than 4 minutes.

Required for Video:

- 1) Student performing one monologue (less than 2 minutes)
- 2) Student should add 30 seconds to their audition and explain their technical theatre experience, especially if it is their main area of interest.

Optional for Video:

- 1) Students may choose to sing 30 seconds acapella (or with their own track)
- 2) Technical Theatre students may create a montage of photos of their relevant work and submit them in video form.

Choosing a Monologue for the Pre-Audition Video

Students may choose one of the pre-audition monologues included on the Theatre Arts Department page on the ASFA website (click [here](#)) or choose a monologue from a similar published play. Choose a monologue that you relate to and inspires you. We strongly encourage applicants to choose monologues that are not on our website, especially if you feel a deep connection to the monologue and it speaks to who you are as an artist.

Some Guidance in Selection of Monologue Material

A monologue is a continuous speech made by a single character. Our preferred source of monologues is published plays. It is acceptable to use literary works for pieces as well. We have provided a list of suggested pieces on our website (go [here](#)).

Please Note: Many monologues in the modern era contain strong words or refer to adult situations. Please tone down any adult language. Also, please avoid any material whose subject matter is beyond the applicant's personal experience for the audition.

- Look for monologues that express ideas and experiences you respond to personally.
- If you must edit, make sure the words fit the material comfortably into the time limit.
- **Truthfulness and honesty of expression are more important than the number of words.**
- Avoid monologues that require telephone conversations, props, writing letters, recalling dreams, or the character telling a story from their past.
- Poetry may be used for the first monologue, but only if it is dramatic and you passionately feel something for the message or language that is being used.
- Avoid using Shakespeare or verse plays for your audition unless you have a complete understanding of the words and have read or seen the play.
- Monologues must be less than 2 minutes.
- **When possible, read the entire play to get proper context to have a better grasp of the circumstances surrounding the character's monologue.**

Plays can be purchased online or borrowed from a local public library.

Making the Pre-Audition Video

Begin by placing the camera in a stationary position where the applicant's full body (from the knees up) can be captured whether standing or sitting. Make sure there is ample lighting and applicant's voice can be clearly heard. This place could be a blank wall or open space in your home or school.

Applicants should state their name, the title of the play from which they chose their monologue and then begin.

Do **not** edit, cut, or add any special effects like music or lighting. Nothing should distract from the applicant's performance. You are not making a movie and we are only judging your performance.

Do **not** submit excerpts from live productions. They are not as effective because they tend to be of poor production quality and make it difficult to hear and see the applicant's work.

Tips for Good Pre-Audition Video

- Stay “in the scene,” stay in character throughout the piece.
- Place the person you are talking to in the monologue to either side of the camera, so we can see your face and eyes.
- Do not pace or move without purpose.
- Wear clothing appropriate for the movement required in the monologue. Flip Flops and shoes with high heels are poor choices for footwear because they severely limit your movement. We want you to be free and comfortable in your monologues.
- Avoid excessive close-up shots which exclude the movement of the whole body; We want to see your whole body. Keep camera stable.

If in doubt, look for a reputable acting coach, drama teacher or theatre professional to help you with your pieces, or please ask the Chair of the Theatre Department (jmanzelli@asfaschool.org) any questions you have about the audition as soon as possible. While no member of the ASFA Faculty may coach or assist any pre-audition, we are happy to help answer questions and point you in the right direction.

How to Upload and Share Videos in Google Drive

From your computer:

1. Visit www.drive.google.com on your computer and ensure you are logged into your Google account.
 - a. If you do not have a Google account, you can quickly create one at www.myaccount.google.com and select "Create Account."
2. Click the "+New" button on the left-hand side and upload your video. If your video file is already uploaded to Google Drive, locate it in your drive's file list.
3. Click on the video file once to highlight it.
4. Right-click on the file name to open a menu of options (desktop).
5. Click "Share" from the options list.
6. In the pop-up window that appears, type in the contact email addresses of the people you would like to share the video with (see emails to share with on the following page).
7. Click "Send."

From your phone:

1. Open the Google Drive app on your phone and ensure you are logged into your Google account.
 - a. If you do not have a Google account, you can quickly create one at www.myaccount.google.com and select "Create Account."
2. Click the “+” circular button on the bottom right and upload your video. If you video is already uploaded to Google Drive, locate it in your drive's file list.
3. Click the “...” next to the video file.
4. Click “Share” from the options list.
5. In the pop-up window that appears, type in the contact email addresses of the people you would like to share the video with (see emails to share with on the following page).
6. Click “Send.”

Please share with all of the following email addresses:

For THEATRE share with:

- kgordon@asfa.k12.al.us
- jmanzelli@asfaschool.org
- phammond@asfaschool.org
- lprim@asfaschool.org
- zwirt@asfa.k12.al.us
- ymyles@asfa.k12.al.us

IMPORTANT: The pre-audition requirements here in STEP 3, along with the information you completed in STEPS 1 & 2 will be reviewed to determine if you will be invited for a live, on-campus audition on March 8, 2025. To learn about the live, on-campus audition requirements, you may continue to read into the next section.

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Live, On-Campus Auditions

Theatre Arts applicants selected for the live audition will be invited via email in mid-February. Students invited to the live, on-campus auditions will be sent a **selected group of monologues to choose from to prepare**. All students invited will receive the same group of monologues and only those pieces will be accepted. The applicant will also participate in coaching and warmups under the direction of the Audition Committee and perform a variety of improvisational exercises meant to show the range of their acting skills.

Students are accepted into the program who wish to pursue traditional Theatre and Film or Musical Theatre.

Students who wish to be considered as Musical Theatre performers should prepare 32 bars of a song of their choice, preferably a piece that shows off their range and ability. Musical Theatre applicants may be asked to perform a dance combination as well.

If you are not a Musical Theatre performer, you do not have to sing.

- Applicants should wear clothing which allows access to their full range of movement. No flip flops, no short skirts or restricting clothing which could inhibit range of motion for character.
- No props or costume pieces should be brought to the audition.
- **IMPORTANT:** The panel may ask the candidate to make adjustments which would require repeating the monologue. This is common and meant to explore the student's range of ability while demonstrating how well they can work with a teacher to grow as an artist. Do not consider it a negative judgment on your monologue. Consider it an opportunity to show the committee additional skills.

Good luck as you complete your application!

Any information submitted by mail should be sent to:

Katie Gordon
Alabama School of Fine Arts
1800 Rev Abraham Woods, Jr. Blvd.
Birmingham, AL 35203

For questions about your application contact

Katie Gordon
205.252.9241
Email: kgordon@asfa.k12.al.us

For questions about specific pre-audition requirements contact

John Manzelli
Chair, Theatre Arts Department
Email: jmanzelli@asfaschool.org