



Why should my child/teen take a New River Stage drama class?

Many children get bit by the acting bug early and are eager to sign up for drama classes or participate in plays. Drama classes can be an excellent way to become a more confident speaker, to learn how to memorize more efficiently, and simply to learn about acting. A slightly shy child may find his or her voice in drama classes and gain more confidence, and the overly dramatic child may have an outlet for his or her passion that gives parents a bit of a break from too much drama at home.

A child's interest in taking drama classes should be the first signal. However, one might encourage a child who lacks a bit of confidence to try out drama classes in a safe and non-performance setting. A child who is very shy, but still loves the idea of acting might gradually become comfortable enough with other students in the class to try performing a bit, or might find comfort in performing in a group setting.

New River Stage encourages children to participate in the tech/backstage side of events as well. Maybe your child wants to be a stage manager, learn lighting or sound, design props, sets or costumes. Not everyone has to be an actor on the stage yet they can still be involved and LOVE theater.

Like all classes offered for children, drama classes will vary in method and quality. Looking to other parents for recommendations, and speaking directly with instructors prior to enrolling a child in drama classes is a good way to get a sense of the appropriateness of the class to your child. One should look for instructors who express patience and truly enjoy the teaching process, especially when a child is taking introductory drama classes. The goal is to foster continued interest and for the child, to have FUN. New River Stage offers experienced, loving teachers with inclusive class policies. Parents are always welcome to stay and observe classes and are encouraged to volunteer. This year's classes will be taught by AJ Moose, president of New River Stage who brings over 36 years of theater experience and Harmony Faye Tripp-Kaiser who earned a BA in Theater and has worked with the Giles Art Council creating the youth summer theater T.A.C.K. program.

Drama classes can definitely serve a child in many different ways. For example, in schools, children are often graded on their ability to memorize things, like math facts, and on the fluency with which they can read text. Learning memorization and fluency skills in drama classes can naturally transfer over to other aspects of the child's life. But as Hamlet said, "The play's the thing." Allow drama classes to at first be play as well as instruction. Teens can delve further into the theater process learning techniques for auditions, monologues, skit writing, stagecraft and more in depth technical skills.

Classes begin 2/1/16 Mondays for the OPENING ACT students and 2/4/16 Thursdays for the SECOND ACT students. Classes meet at the Blacksburg Children's Museum from 6-7:30PM. Classes run for 12 weeks. Class showcase is scheduled for Saturday May, 7th, 2016. Questions? Please email newriverstageinfo@gmail.com or call AJ Moose, President, New River Stage 540-239-2283.