

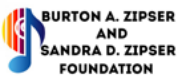


HOODS UNCLOAKED

STUDY GUIDE

MAY 1-9, 2026 | DETROIT FILM THEATER

RESOURCE GUIDE
Grades K-12 | Cross-Curricular Lesson Plans



Community
Foundation
FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This resource guide is designed to enrich young people's experience with *Hoods, Uncloaked* before and after attending. It may also be used as a standalone unit for classrooms that are unable to attend.

Hoods, Uncloaked is an original musical production created in collaboration with the youth ensemble of Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit, running May 1–9, 2026 at the Detroit Film Theater. The show is the culmination of a year-long participatory research project rooted in the themes of Robin Hood, developed under the direction of University of Michigan professor and playwright Shavonne Coleman. Every element of the production — the script, the music, the lighting design, the sound design, the scenic environment, and the costumes — was created with young people, many of whom are paid as working theatre professionals alongside adult mentors.

The lessons in this guide are organized into four thematic units, each available for four grade bands. All lessons are designed to be cross-curricular. Each lesson includes clear objectives, materials, step-by-step activities, discussion questions, and an extension activity.

UNITS IN THIS GUIDE

Resources		This section includes coloring sheets, logic games, escape room challenges, a reader's theater piece, discussion questions, and reading resources.
Unit	Title	Focus
Unit 1	World Building & Tech Theatre	Design, staging, the five senses, and the elements of theatrical design
Unit 2	SEL: Bravery, Justice & Problem Solving	Courage, standing up for what is right, and community problem solving
Unit 3	Art, Science & Technology	A technology and AI timeline game connecting theatre history to innovation
Unit 4	Songwriting & Figurative Language	Metaphor, simile, and personification through original lyric writing
Unit 5	Social Justice & Community	Wealth, fairness, and the Robin Hood story as a lens on modern Detroit
Unit 6	Collaborative Storytelling	Participatory research and the ensemble creation process

YOUNG ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

Makynzie,
1st Year Mosaic Youth Ensemble
Cass Technical High School



1. How did Hood's Uncloaked come together?

We started the season with devising. We read a few different articles about Robin Hood and explored different versions of the story, then talked about what's happening in our community today and what the future might look like. From there, we came up with an essential question to guide our work: "When the law protects the powerful, how do the powerless seek justice?" We did improv around that question, then wrote scenes, poems, and songs inspired by Robin Hood's themes but connected to the future and to Detroit. Our playwright, Shavonne, took pieces of our discussions, poems, and ideas and shaped them into a new script. We read through it, gave feedback, she edited it, and that became our final script. After that, the music was written, the tracks were created, and we got to work rehearsing the show.

2. How does your neighborhood or community show up in your art?

For this show specifically, we really wanted to center Detroit so the show is set in a futuristic Detroit. But overall, community is full of all kinds of people, and honestly, people don't always treat each other well. One of the roles I play in this show is someone who looks down on people who have less than them — which is completely opposite of who I am. Earlier this season we did *Enough: Plays to End Gun Violence*, and that hit close to home too, because gun violence is something so many of our communities are dealing with. We also did a piece that talked about when Hudson's was downtown.

3. What artists inspire you or influence how you make art?

Angela Bassett is my favorite. She always embodies her characters so fully, and as an actor, I aspire to that level of presence. I'm also really inspired by my teacher, Ms. Hicks, who studied theater and has taught me so much about writing.

4. What has been the most surprising thing you've learned about yourself through making art?

Honestly, I learned to work better under pressure. I've also learned that it takes real patience and focus to pull yourself back together after a long day — and consistent effort to lock in everything that goes into putting up a show. I discovered I really enjoy dancing, which I didn't expect. And maybe the biggest thing: taking constructive criticism gets you so much further than trying to figure everything out on your own.

5. What do you hope young people take away from seeing Hood's Uncloaked?

That you can be whatever you want to be. And not in a cliché way. Don't doubt your ability and keep working at it — no matter what anyone else says.

Name: _____

Robin Hood Word Search



FOLKLORE

SHERWOOD FOREST

NOTTINGHAM

LITTLE JOHN

MAID MARIAN

KING RICHARD

LIONHEART

POOR

RICH

OUTLAW

TAXES

SAXON

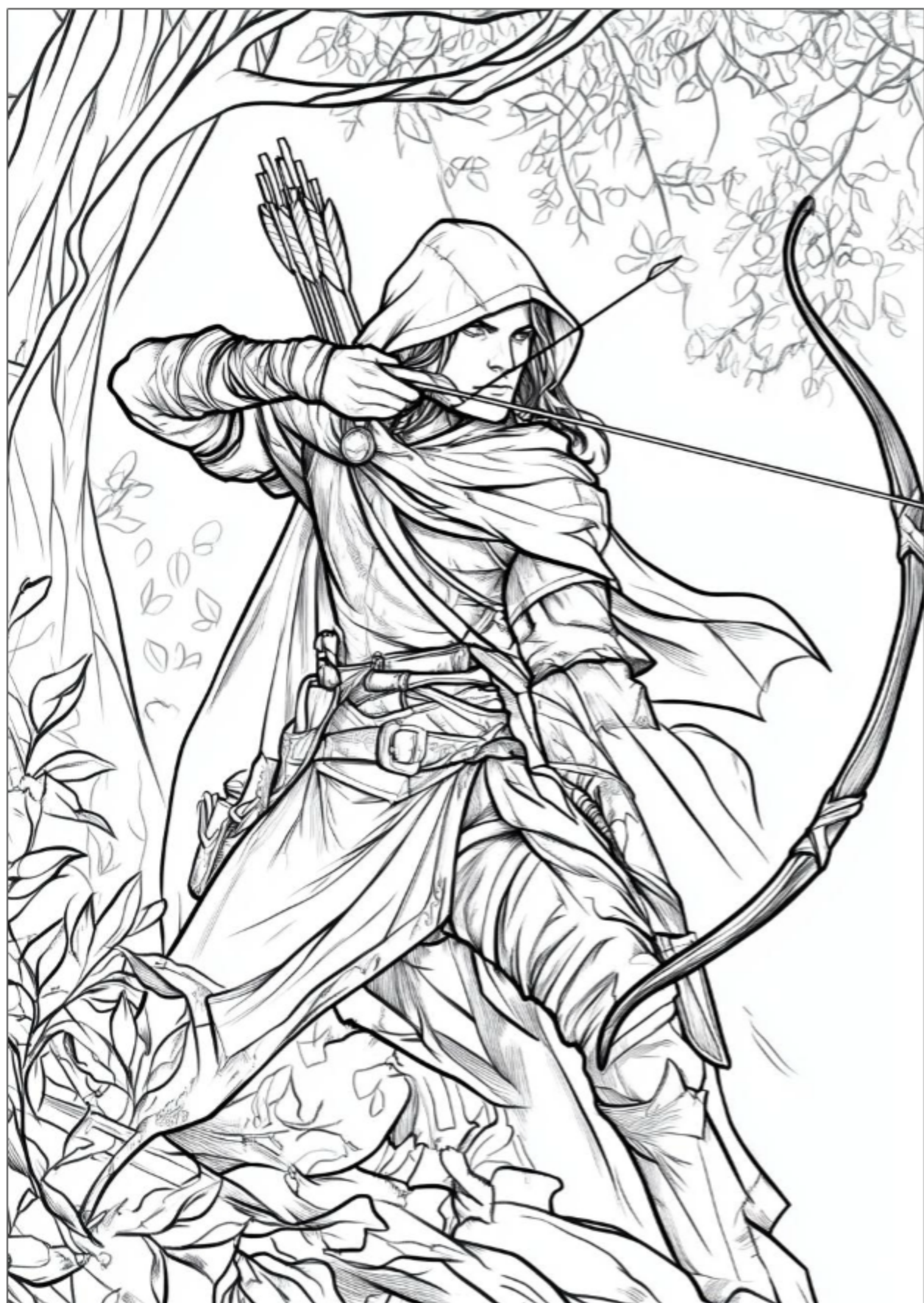
NORMANS

SWORDSMAN

ARCHER

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ROBIN HOOD’S FOREST MYSTERY: THE MISSING SUPPLIES

A Logic Puzzle for grades 6-8

Sherwood Forest is preparing for a secret mission to help the villagers of Nottingham. Robin Hood’s team must divide supplies fairly—but someone mixed up the deliveries!

Your job is to figure out who received which supply, from which village, and what role they play in Robin Hood’s band.

Characters

- Robin Hood
- Little John
- Maid Marian
- Friar Tuck

Supplies

- Bow & Arrows
- Healing Herbs
- Bread Rations
- Maps of Nottingham

Villages Sending Supplies

- Locksley
- Nottingham Edge
- Greenwood Hollow
- Sherwood Outpost

Clues

1. Robin Hood did not receive the Bow & Arrows.
2. The person from Locksley delivered the Maps of Nottingham.
3. Little John received supplies from Greenwood Hollow.
4. The Healing Herbs did not come from Nottingham Edge.
5. Maid Marian did not receive Bread Rations.
6. Friar Tuck received supplies from Sherwood Outpost.
7. The Bow & Arrows came from Nottingham Edge.
8. The Bread Rations were delivered to Robin Hood.
9. Maid Marian’s supplies came from Locksley.

Challenge

Fill in the chart:

Character	Village	Supply
Robin Hood		
Little John		
Maid Marian		
Friar Tuck		

ESCAPE SHERWOOD: THE LOST CROWN MISSION

Escape Room for grades 6-8

The Sheriff of Nottingham has hidden a stolen crown somewhere in Sherwood Forest. Robin Hood's band must recover it before sunrise—but the forest is locked with puzzles, codes, and traps. Solve each challenge to earn a number or word clue. Put them together to unlock the final escape code.

ROOM 1:

The Hidden Message (Word Puzzle)

Robin Hood left a scrambled message:
"EHT ONCRW SI ENIHTD EERBHT HLOAL"

Task:

Unscramble the message.

Clue you earn:

The first number is the number of words in the decoded sentence.

ROOM 2:

Sherwood Math Locks (Logic + Math)

The outlaws must choose the correct path:

- Path A: 12 arrows ÷ 3
- Path B: 18 arrows ÷ 6
- Path C: 20 arrows ÷ 5
- Path D: 15 arrows ÷ 3

Task:

Only the correct path opens the gate:
Choose the path whose answer is 4

Clue you earn:

The letter of the correct path = second code character

ROOM 3:

Who Said It? (Character Logic)

Match the quote to the character:

1. "We steal from the rich to help the poor."
2. "I trust the forest more than castles."
3. "Faith and food guide every journey."
4. "A bow is only as strong as its aim."

Characters:

- Robin Hood
- Little John
- Maid Marian
- Friar Tuck

Task:

Put them in correct order (1–4) by character age
(youngest → oldest).

Clue you earn:

The number of correct matches in order = third digit

ROOM 4:

Forest Directions (Pattern Puzzle)

Follow the path:

- North → East → East → South → South → West → ?

Task:

What comes next if the pattern repeats
symmetry?

Clue you earn:

The direction word length = fourth digit

FINAL ROOM:

The Crown Lock

You find a stone chest carved with:
"Only those who understand Sherwood may enter."

Enter your code:

[1st number][letter][number][number]

Example format: 5A32

ROBIN HOOD: THE ORIGINAL “SHARE BUTTON”

A Funny Readers Theater in Rhyme (Grades 3–6)

Cast:

- Narrator (1–2)
- Robin Hood
- Little John
- Maid Marian
- Sheriff of Nottingham
- Much
- Townspeople (group)
- Merry Men (group)

Scene 1: Welcome to Sherwood

Narrator:

Welcome, friends, to Sherwood green,
The wildest woods you’ve ever seen!
Where arrows fly and secrets grow,
And legends start (you’ll see it—
whoa).

Narrator 2:

There lives a hero dressed in green—
Not on your screen, but still quite keen!

Robin Hood:

No crown, no throne, no fancy hood—
Just call me Robin. Robin Hood.
I don’t like bullies. I don’t like greed.
I help folks out when they’re in need.

Merry Men:

He’s quick! He’s slick! He’s got great aim!
And kind of loves the fame.

Robin Hood:

Okay, okay... a little bit.

Scene 2: The Sheriff (aka Mr. Extra)

Narrator:

Now in the town—oh dear, oh dread—
The Sheriff rules (insert eye roll here).

Sheriff:

More gold! More coins! More shiny things!
I tax your carts, your pies, your strings!
If you sneeze twice, I’ll charge a fee—
ACHOO? That’s two coins—pay to me!

Townspeople:

That’s not fair! That’s just plain rude!
He taxed my bread! He taxed my food!

Townsperson 1:

He taxed my chicken!

Townsperson 2:

He taxed my shoe!

Townsperson 3:

I think he taxed my shadow too!

Scene 3: Robin Gets the Tea

Narrator:

Word spread fast (as gossip will),
Through every shop and over each hill.

Much:

Robin, listen—have you heard?
The Sheriff’s worse than a squawking bird!
Little John:
He’s stacking gold like pancakes high!

Robin Hood:

Well... looks like it’s time we stop that guy.

Maid Marian:

Let’s make a plan—be smart, not loud.

Robin Hood:

Disguises on! Let’s stroll through town—
And turn that Sheriff upside down.

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Scene 4: The Sneaky Plan

Narrator:

They tiptoed in with hats pulled low,
Moving fast—but acting slow.

Little John:

HELLO, GOOD SIR, WE ARE NOT SUSPICIOUS.

Robin Hood:

John... buddy... you're being ridiculous.

Much:

Look! The gold! Just sitting there!

Robin Hood:

Then grab it quick—with style and flair!

Narrator:

They scooped it up—zip, zap, zoom!
And vanished fast—like WHOOSH—no boom!

Scene 5: Sharing is Caring

Narrator:

Back in the woods, the crew returned,
With lessons learned (and gold well-earned).

Robin Hood:

This isn't mine—it's yours, you see.
Fairness matters. That's the key.

Townspeople:

You did it! You saved the day!
You chased that greedy Sheriff away!

Scene 6: The Sheriff Loses It

Narrator:

Meanwhile, back in his fancy place,
The Sheriff wore a shocked-up face.

Sheriff:

MY GOLD! MY COINS! MY LOVE-
LY STACK!
WHO DARED TO TAKE MY TREAS-
URE BACK?!

Guard:

Uh... Robin Hood?

Sheriff:

Of course it was!

Scene 7: Final Message

Narrator:

So what's the lesson? What's the deal?
Why does this story still feel real?

Maid Marian:

Stand up tall for what is right—
Even if it means a fight.

Little John:

Help your friends and lend a hand—

Much:

Share what you have (yes, that's the plan!).

Robin Hood:

You don't need gold or fancy things
To be the hero kindness brings.

All:

In Sherwood Forest, loud and proud,
We cheer for justice—say it loud!
With laughs, with heart, with courage good—
Be brave. Be kind. Be Robin Hood!

ESCAPE SHERWOOD: THE SHERIFF'S FINAL TRAP

Escape Room for grades 9-12

The Sheriff has hidden the royal crown deep in Sherwood Forest and locked it behind a sequence of coded defenses. Even Robin Hood can't break in without a team of sharp thinkers.

Each room unlocks a code fragment. You'll need all of them—and careful reasoning—to escape

ROOM 1:

Cipher of the Crown (Advanced Caesar Shift)

Encoded Message:

WKHFURZQLVKLGGHQLQWKHRDN

Task:

Decode the message using a Caesar cipher (shift backward by 3).

Clue you earn:

Count the number of vowels in the decoded message = Code #1

ROOM 2:

The Sheriff's Ledger (Algebra)

The value of the gold (G) is twice the arrows (A), plus 6.
 $A + G = 30$

Task:

Solve for A.

Clue:

Value of A = Code #2

ROOM 3:

The Outlaw Grid (Logic Deduction)

Outlaws:

Robin Hood, Little John, Maid Marian, Friar Tuck, Will Scarlet

Items:

Crown, Gold, Keys, Maps, Food

Routes:

River Path, Tunnel, Forest Trail, Abbey Road, Watchtower Exit

Clues:

1. Robin Hood did not take the Crown.
2. The person with the Keys escaped via the Tunnel.
3. Maid Marian took the Maps.
4. Little John used the River Path.
5. The Crown was not taken through the Watchtower Exit.
6. Friar Tuck took the Food.
7. Will Scarlet did not use the Forest Trail.
8. The Gold went through Abbey Road.
9. Robin Hood used the Forest Trail.

Clue:

Person who took the Crown → count letters in their name = Code #3

ROOM 4:

Pattern Lock (Sequence)

Sequence:

3, 9, 27, 81, ?

Clue:

Next number $\div 9$ = Code #4

ROOM 5:

Direction Cipher

North = 1, East = 2, South = 3, West = 4

Path:

North → East → South → West → North → East

Task:

Convert to numbers and add them.

Clue:

Total = Code #5

FINAL LOCK: Enter your final code: [Code1]-[Code2]-[Code3]-[Code4]-[Code5]

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- This futuristic version of Robin Hood imagines a world where technology and AI control people's lives and limit their freedom. What are some ways technology helps us in real life, and what are some ways it might have too much control? How can people make sure technology is used to help communities instead of harm them?
- In this story, society is divided into two groups, the Hoods and the Collars, showing a world split between people with power and people without. Why do you think divisions like this happen in real life? What can individuals or communities do to bring people together instead of keeping them separated?
- Throughout the show, characters must decide whether to follow the rules or take risks to help others, even when it could get them in trouble. How do you make responsible decisions when something feels unfair? What factors should you consider before taking a risk that could affect you or your community?

READING RESOURCES

Grades 3–4 (Accessible Classics + Read-Aloud Friendly)

These versions are simplified, illustrated, and great for building background knowledge and fluency.

The Adventures of Robin Hood (various retellings)

- A classic, kid-friendly retelling with clear storytelling and adventure-focused chapters
<https://www.goodreads.com/search?q=adventures+of+robin+hood+children+retelling>

Robin Hood (Usborne Young Reading Series)

- Short chapters, strong illustrations, ideal for guided reading groups
<https://usborne.com/us/books/series/young-reading-series>

Robin Hood: The Graphic Novel (Classical Comics adaptation)

- Visual storytelling version that supports struggling and emerging readers
<https://classicalcomics.com>

Scholastic Storyworks (Robin Hood-themed plays & articles)

- Classroom-ready plays, nonfiction, and poetry for grades 3–6
<https://storyworks.scholastic.com>

Grades 5–6 (Deeper Themes + Stronger Literacy Demands)

These texts support analysis of character motivation, justice, and historical context.

The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood – Howard Pyle

- The most influential classic version of Robin Hood stories
<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/10148>
(Free full text)

Bows Against the Barons – Geoffrey Trease

- A socially conscious Robin Hood retelling with themes of fairness and class struggle
https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1719399.Bows_Against_the_Barons

Tales of Rowan Hood – Nancy Springer

- A modern twist focusing on a young girl in Robin Hood's world
<https://www.goodreads.com/series/40385-rowan-hood>

Robin Hood (Classic Starts Series)

- Abridged chapter-book version designed for upper elementary readers
<https://www.amazon.com/s?k=classic+starts+robin+hood>

Extension + Enrichment (All Grades 3–6)

These support cross-curricular learning, literacy extension, and creative writing.

Scholastic Storyworks Play Collections

- Includes drama scripts, comprehension questions, and performance-based learning
<https://storyworks.scholastic.com>

Folklore & Mythology Collections (Robin Hood context)

- Helps students understand how legends evolve over time
<https://www.worldoftales.com/legends.html>

Free Audio Versions of Robin Hood Stories

- Supports auditory learners and read-aloud comparison
<https://librivox.org/search?title=robin+hood>

UNIT 01

WORLD BUILDING & TECH THEATRE

Students explore the core elements of theatrical design — lighting, sound, and scenic environments — and use their imagination and the five senses to create dramatic worlds. This unit connects to Mosaic's model of youth-led design, where paid youth technicians serve as the lighting, sound, scenic, and costume designers for Hoods, Uncloaked.

Grades K-2

Build a World: Imagining a Stage

Time Required: 45–60 minutes

Overview

Students learn the three basic elements of theatrical design (lighting, sound, and scenic) and use their five senses to imagine and describe a dramatic world. Through guided storytelling and simple drawing, students create a “stage” for a story of their choosing.

Learning Objectives

- Students will identify the three elements of theatrical design: lighting, sound, and scenic.
- Students will use the five senses to describe an imaginary dramatic environment.
- Students will draw or describe a “stage world” they have created.

Materials

- Large paper or blank drawing sheets
- Crayons or colored pencils
- A flashlight (to demonstrate lighting)
- A device to play short sound clips (birds, rain, crowd, thunder, etc.)
- Chart paper and marker for teacher

Activity Steps

Step 1: Introduce the idea of a theatre stage. Ask: ‘Has anyone been to a play or a show? What did you see?’ Show the flashlight: ‘In theatre, lighting helps us know what time of day it is, how a character feels, and where we are.’

Step 2: Play two contrasting sound clips (e.g., a rainforest vs. a busy city). Ask: ‘How did the sounds make you feel? What world did they take you to?’

Step 3: Discuss scenic design: ‘What do you see on a stage? Furniture, trees, buildings — the set tells us where we are.’ Show a simple example (photo of a theatre stage if available).

Step 4: Introduce the five senses. Ask students to close their eyes. Read a short scene: ‘You are in a dark forest at night. The ground is soft. You hear owls and rustling leaves. A single blue light appears ahead. What do you smell? What do you feel?’

Step 5: Students draw their own ‘stage world’ — it can be a forest, a city, a spaceship, anything they choose. They must include at least one lighting choice (circle it), one sound idea (write or draw it), and their setting.

Step 6: Gallery walk: students briefly share their world with a partner using one sentence: ‘My world is ___ and it feels ___.’

Discussion Questions

- What makes a scary world different from a happy world on a stage?
- If you were designing the lights for a sunny day, what color would you use?
- What sound would you play if someone just found a treasure?
- How do designers help us believe in a story?

Extension / Assessment

Recommend families watch a movie or TV show at home and notice one design choice: lighting, sound, or set. Students share what they noticed the next day. Assessment: Teacher observation of the 'stage world' drawings and ability to name at least two of the three design elements.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

In *Hoods, Uncloaked*, the costumes, props, projections, and set were designed by youth technicians — students who are close in age to you. Before they drew or built anything, they imagined their world just like you did today. Every great design starts with asking: 'What does this place look like, sound like, and feel like?'

Grades 3–5

Mood by Design: How Theatre Creates Emotion

Time Required: 60–75 minutes

Overview

Students analyze how specific design choices — color, angle, shadow, sound texture, set materials — affect the mood of a scene. Working in small groups, they create a “design pitch” for a dramatic environment using a graphic organizer and present it to the class.

Learning Objectives

- Students will explain how lighting color, sound, and set elements create mood.
- Students will collaborate to design a dramatic environment for a given scenario.
- Students will present and justify their design choices using theatre vocabulary.

Materials

- Design pitch graphic organizer (Scene, Mood, Lighting Idea, Sound Idea, Set Idea, Why This Works)
- Color swatches or colored index cards
- Sound clips of varying moods (tense, joyful, eerie, hopeful)
- Images of theatrical sets (printouts or projected)
- Markers, colored pencils

Activity Steps

Step 1: Review the three design areas: lighting, sound, scenic. Introduce vocabulary: mood, atmosphere, contrast, texture.

Step 2: Play three different sound clips without context. Ask students to write one word describing the mood for each. Discuss as a class how the same space could feel different with different sounds.

Step 3: Show two images of the same simple room: one lit in warm orange light, one in cold blue. Ask: 'Which feels safer? Which feels lonelier? Why?'

Step 4: Introduce the scenario cards. Each group draws one: 'A market where stolen goods are hidden,' 'A forest where a secret meeting happens,' 'A wealthy lord's banquet hall,' 'A village after a storm.' These are all settings related to the themes of *Hoods, Uncloaked*.

Step 5: Groups complete the design pitch graphic organizer for their scenario. They must choose a lighting color and angle, a sound environment, and at least two set elements, and explain why each choice fits the mood.

Step 6: Groups present their designs in a 2-minute 'pitch' to the class. Class gives one piece of feedback using sentence frame: 'Your design made me feel ___ because ___.'

Discussion Questions

- Can two different designs make the same scene feel completely different? Give an example.
- What happens when the lighting and sound disagree — like cheerful music in a dark room?
- If you were designing for a Robin Hood story set in Detroit, what would your set look like?
- What skills do you think you would need to be a professional lighting or sound designer?

Extension / Assessment

Students write a one-paragraph 'Director's Note' explaining the mood they were going for and the key design choices they made. Assessment: Graphic organizer completeness and quality of verbal justification during pitch presentation.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The youth technicians who designed Hoods, Uncloaked completed a full design presentation — just like your pitch today — before a single light was hung or a piece of scenery was built. They had to defend their choices, take feedback, and revise. That process is exactly what adult professional designers do.

/ Grades 6–8

Design as Storytelling: The Physics and Art of a Production

Time Required: 75–90 minutes (can be split across two periods)

Overview

Students investigate the intersection of physics, art, and storytelling in theatrical design. They explore how light behaves (reflection, color mixing, angle), how sound travels, and how these scientific principles are used deliberately by designers to serve a story. Students create a scene-specific design concept with a written rationale.

Learning Objectives

- Students will explain how light behaves (reflection, color mixing, angle of incidence) and how this applies to theatrical lighting.
- Students will apply basic acoustic principles to understand how sound design functions in a performance space.
- Students will create a complete design concept for one scene that integrates both scientific and artistic reasoning.

Materials

- Flashlights, colored cellophane (red, blue, green)
- A darkened space or projection area
- Scene excerpt from a Robin Hood adaptation (provided or teacher-created)
- Design concept template (Scene Summary, Mood, Lighting Design, Sound Design, Scenic Notes, Rationale)
- Rulers, protractors (optional, for light angle demonstration)

Activity Steps

Step 1: Science hook: Darken the room. Use flashlights and colored cellophane to demonstrate additive color mixing (red + blue = magenta, red + green = yellow, all three = white). Ask: 'Why does theatre use color? How might a designer use this science on purpose?'

Step 2: Briefly introduce the physics of sound: how sound waves travel, reflect off hard surfaces (echoes), and are absorbed by soft materials. Ask: 'Why do you think theatres have carpet and heavy curtains? What does an echo do to a spoken line?'

Step 3: Connect to practice: Explain that Mosaic's paid youth sound and lighting designers had to understand both the technical and artistic sides of their jobs. They weren't just pressing buttons — they made intentional choices backed by understanding how their tools work.

Step 4: Students read a short scene from a Robin Hood-themed excerpt. Working individually or in pairs, they identify: What is happening emotionally? What does the audience need to feel? What is the time of day/location?

Step 5: Students complete the design concept template, including a written rationale of at least one paragraph explaining the scientific principle behind their lighting choice.

Step 6: Pair-share: students exchange concepts and give one piece of feedback on both the artistic and scientific choices.

Discussion Questions

- How is designing stage lighting similar to or different from designing lighting for a photography shoot or a film?
- What would happen to a performance if the sound design was technically perfect but emotionally wrong?
- The students who designed Hoods, Uncloaked are your age. What do you think was the hardest part of that job?
- Where else in your daily life do you see the intersection of science and art?

Extension / Assessment

Students research one professional theatrical designer (lighting, sound, or scenic) and write a one-page profile including their background, a notable project, and one design decision they made that required scientific understanding. Assessment: Design concept template and written rationale, evaluated on both technical accuracy and creative justification.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

At Mosaic, youth designers work alongside adult professionals in a real production pipeline. They attend design meetings, respond to director feedback, create technical paperwork, and run the show live. Hoods, Uncloaked is a professional quality production, built with young people.

Grades 9–12

The Design Process: Concept to Execution in Professional Theatre

Time Required: Two 60-minute sessions (or one 90-minute block)

Overview

Students engage in the full theatrical design process — research, concept development, presentation, and revision — for a scene from Hoods, Uncloaked. They work as a design team (assigning roles: lighting, sound, scenic, costume) and produce a professional-quality design package including a concept statement, reference images, and a technical requirements list.

Learning Objectives

- Students will execute a full design process from research through concept presentation.
- Students will work collaboratively in defined professional roles with clear responsibilities.
- Students will produce a design package that demonstrates both creative vision and technical planning.
- Students will give and receive constructive critique using professional language.

Materials

- Scene excerpt from Hoods, Uncloaked (or a teacher-provided Robin Hood scene)
- Design package template (Concept Statement, Mood Board, Technical Rider, Open Questions)
- Access to image search / mood board tools
- Large paper or digital design tools

Activity Steps

Step 1: Session 1 — Research and Concept: Introduce the design challenge. Students form groups of 4 and assign roles: Lighting Designer, Sound Designer, Scenic Designer, Costume Designer. Read the scene together. Each designer independently identifies 3 research questions about their area.

Step 2: Groups discuss the overall concept: What is the world of this scene? What do we want the audience to feel? They agree on a unifying concept statement (one sentence) that all four designs must support.

Step 3: Each designer creates a mood board (minimum 6 images) and a brief rationale. The group reviews all four boards for cohesion — do they tell the same story? Revise if needed.

Step 4: Session 2 — Technical Planning and Pitch: Each designer drafts a technical requirements list: what equipment, materials, or resources their design needs. The group compiles one unified technical rider.

Step 5: Groups pitch their design package in 5 minutes to the class, followed by 3 minutes of structured critique from peers using the format: 'I notice... I wonder... I suggest...'

Step 6: Designers respond to one piece of critique in writing: 'We heard [feedback]. We will address this by...' This mirrors the real revision process in professional production.

Discussion Questions

- What was the hardest part of aligning four different design visions into one unified concept?
- How does the design process in theatre compare to design processes in other fields — architecture, product design, UX design?
- What career pathways exist in theatrical design, and where do they overlap with other industries?
- If you were going to design a production about Detroit — not Robin Hood — what would your concept be?

Extension / Assessment

Students write a post-critique reflection: What feedback did you receive? How would you revise? What did you learn about collaboration? Assessment: Design package completeness, concept statement quality, participation in critique process, and written reflection depth.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The process you just went through is the same process that the Mosaic youth design team completed. They presented their designs, received notes from the director, and revised. On opening night, they ran the show live — calling cues, operating the board, and managing the technical elements of a production at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

UNIT 02

BRAVERY, JUSTICE & PROBLEM SOLVING

These lessons use the themes of *Hoods, Uncloaked*—rooted in the Robin Hood story—to explore social-emotional competencies: bravery, standing up for what is right, and community problem solving. All lessons are aligned to the CASEL framework, which Michigan schools use as the foundation for SEL instruction.

Grades K-2

Brave Choices: When Is It Hard to Do the Right Thing?

Time Required: 45–60 minutes

Overview

Using picture book characters and the Robin Hood story as a jumping-off point, students explore what bravery means in everyday life. Through role play and class discussion, students practice identifying situations that call for courage and brainstorm what they could do.

Learning Objectives

- Students will define bravery in their own words.
- Students will identify at least two everyday situations that require courage.
- Students will practice a brave response using role play.

Materials

- A picture book featuring a brave character (examples: Iggy Peck Architect, Henry's Freedom Box, Shiela Rae the Brave)
- Brave/Not Brave scenario cards (teacher-created)
- Chart paper: 'Bravery Looks Like...' anchor chart

Activity Steps

Step 1: Read aloud a picture book featuring a character who does something brave even when it is hard. Ask: 'What did this character risk? Were they scared? Can you be brave AND scared?'

Step 2: Introduce the concept from *Hoods, Uncloaked*: 'In *Hoods Uncloaked*, a character tries to stop people who have a lot from taking away from people who have very little. Is that brave? Is it right? Can something be both?'

Step 3: Build the anchor chart together. Students call out ideas: 'Bravery looks like...' and 'Bravery feels like...' Teacher records all answers. Validate that bravery can feel different to different people.

Step 4: Scenario card role play: In pairs, students receive a card (e.g., 'Someone is being left out at recess. You can include them or walk away.' 'A classmate dropped their lunch. Other kids are laughing. What do you do?'). They act out the brave choice.

Step 5: Debrief: What made it easy or hard to be brave in your scenario? When does bravery require help from others?

Discussion Questions

- Is it brave to do something no one else can see?
- Can you think of a time you did something brave, even if it was small?
- What happens to a community when people help each other?
- Do you think Robin Hood was brave? Was Robin Hood right?

Extension / Assessment

Students draw one picture of themselves doing something brave. They write or dictate one sentence: 'I was brave when I ____.' Display as a class gallery. Assessment: Teacher observation of role play and ability to articulate one example of bravery.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

Every young artist in Hoods, Uncloaked stood on a stage at the Detroit Institute of Arts in front of hundreds of people and told a story they helped create. That takes bravery. And many of them said the bravest moment was not the performance — it was speaking up with their idea for the first time in a room full of peers.

/ Grades 3–5

Standing Up: Fairness, Power, and What We Owe Each Other

Time Required: 60 minutes

Overview

Students examine fairness and justice through the lens of the Robin Hood story and their own community. Using scenario analysis and structured discussion, they practice the skills of perspective-taking, advocacy, and problem solving.

Learning Objectives

- Students will distinguish between fairness and equality using concrete examples.
- Students will analyze a community problem from multiple perspectives.
- Students will propose at least one solution to a fairness problem using structured discussion.

Materials

- Fishbowl discussion setup (inner and outer circle of chairs)
- Scenario cards with fairness dilemmas
- Perspective frames: 'From where I stand...' / 'Someone who disagrees might say...'
- Optional: A short video clip explaining the difference between equity and equality

Activity Steps

Step 1: Open with a quick poll: 'Is it fair to give everyone the same thing? Or to give each person what they need?' Students raise hands. Discuss: fairness is complicated.

Step 2: Introduce the Robin Hood premise: A person takes from the wealthy and gives to the poor. Is that fair? Is it legal? Does it matter? Write responses anonymously on sticky notes first, then share.

Step 3: Introduce scenario cards. In groups, students read a modern fairness dilemma (e.g., 'One school has a new computer lab. The school across town has none. What should happen?'). They answer: Who has power here? Who needs something? What would be fair?

Step 4: Fishbowl discussion: Four students discuss one scenario in the inner circle while the outer circle observes and takes notes. Rotate speakers. Outer circle reflects: 'I heard... I wonder if...'

Step 5: Problem Solving Sprint: Groups brainstorm three possible solutions to their scenario. They must consider: Who benefits? Who might object? What is the cost?

Step 6: Class synthesizes: What makes a solution truly fair? What does it take to stand up for fairness?

Discussion Questions

- Is Robin Hood a hero or a criminal? Does it depend on who you ask?
- When is it okay to break a rule if you think the rule is unfair?
- What is the difference between feeling bad for someone and actually helping them?
- What is one unfair thing in your school or community that you would want to change?

Extension / Assessment

Students write a persuasive letter to a fictional decision-maker (school principal, mayor, community leader) advocating for a fair solution to their scenario. They must include at least two perspectives. Assessment: Quality of written letter — does it demonstrate perspective-taking and a reasoned argument?

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The young artists in *Hoods, Uncloaked* spent months researching the question: ‘When the law protects the powerful, how do the powerless seek justice?’ They explored various viewpoints, studied Detroit’s history, and brought their findings into the script and songs. The show is their answer to a fairness question. What would your answer be?

Grades 6–8

Systems and Solutions: Problem Solving When the Problem Is Big

Time Required: 75–90 minutes

Overview

Students examine structural inequality as a community problem-solving challenge. Using design-thinking principles, they move from empathy to problem definition to prototyping a solution. The Robin Hood story serves as a case study in well-intentioned but incomplete solutions.

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze a community problem using a systems-thinking lens.
- Students will apply the first three stages of design thinking: Empathize, Define, Ideate.
- Students will evaluate proposed solutions by identifying tradeoffs and unintended consequences.

Materials

- Design thinking template (Empathize / Define / Ideate / Prototype / Test)
- Data snapshot: One-page overview of wealth and resource inequality in Detroit (teacher-prepared from public data)
- Sticky notes, markers, large paper
- Timer for ideation sprint

Activity Steps

Step 1: Frame the challenge: ‘Robin Hood’s solution to poverty was stealing from the rich. Why didn’t that fix the problem permanently?’ Students discuss in pairs, then share. Introduce: symptoms vs. root causes.

Step 2: Data moment: Present one or two statistics about resource access in Detroit (food access, school funding, park access — use current public data). Ask: ‘What do you notice? What do you wonder?’ Resource: [Data Driven Detroit Open Data Portal](#)

Step 3: Empathize phase: Students choose a stakeholder perspective (a student at an under-resourced school, a neighborhood business owner, a community organizer, a city official). They write a brief first-person narrative from that perspective: ‘My biggest challenge is... What I need is...’

Step 4: Define phase: Groups share perspectives and work together to write one clear problem statement: ‘People who ____ need ____ because ____.’ This is harder than it sounds — push for precision.

Step 5: Ideate phase: 8-minute sticky-note sprint. No wrong answers. How might we solve this? Generate as many ideas as possible. Then group the ideas into categories.

Step 6: Evaluate: Groups select their two strongest ideas and apply a tradeoff analysis: Who benefits? Who is left out? What could go wrong? What resources would it take?

Step 7: Debrief: What did you learn about why big problems are hard to fix? What would it take to be more than a Robin Hood — to change the system, not just redistribute from it?

Discussion Questions

- What is the difference between charity and justice?
- Can art — like a play or a song — be a form of problem solving?
- If you had to pick one root cause to work on in your community, what would it be and why?
- What role do young people play in solving big problems?

Extension / Assessment

Students develop a one-page proposal for their strongest solution idea, including stakeholder analysis, implementation steps, and a reflection on limitations. Assessment: Problem statement precision, quality of tradeoff analysis, and depth of written proposal.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The youth ensemble at Mosaic looked at multiple versions of Robin Hood and explored social economic factors impacting Detroit. Their year-long project took real questions about fairness and power, examined them through the lens of Detroit youth, and transformed what they found into original songs and scenes. Hoods, Uncloaked is an act of civic engagement.

/ Grades 9–12

Courage, Complicity, and Change: Ethics in Action

Time Required: Two 60-minute sessions

Overview

Students engage in structured Socratic seminar and ethical analysis around three key questions: What does it mean to be brave? When is silence complicity? What is our individual responsibility to collective problems? These questions are anchored in the themes of Hoods, Uncloaked and grounded in real-world case studies.

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze the ethical dimensions of bravery, justice, and complicity using real and fictional case studies.
- Students will engage in structured academic dialogue, building on others' reasoning with evidence.
- Students will write a substantive personal argument connecting ethical reflection to their own lives.

Materials

- Socratic seminar texts: Excerpts from Robin Hood (original), one historical figure (e.g., Harriet Tubman, Malala Yousafzai), one contemporary activist
- Seminar discussion norms and sentence starters
- Argument writing graphic organizer (Claim / Evidence / Counterclaim / Rebuttal)

Activity Steps

Step 1: Session 1 — Text Study: Students read and annotate two short texts prior to seminar. In class, open with one question: 'Is Robin Hood a hero? Defend your answer with evidence from the text and your own reasoning.' Inner/outer circle Socratic seminar — 25 minutes.

Step 2: Debrief the seminar: What claims were most compelling? What evidence shifted anyone's thinking? What question went unanswered?

Step 3: Introduce the complicity frame: 'If you see an injustice and do nothing, are you responsible? If you benefit from an unjust system, are you responsible?' Students journal for 5 minutes, then pair-share.

Step 4: Session 2 — Case Study and Writing: Present one contemporary case study of a young person who acted on a justice issue (choose a non-partisan example). Analyze: What was the risk? What was the cost of silence? What changed?

Step 5: Students write a structured argument (4-5 paragraphs) in response to one of three prompts: (1) Is individual courage enough to create community change? (2) When, if ever, is breaking a rule ethically justified? (3) What does it mean to be brave in the context of your own life right now?

Step 6: Writers' circle: Students share one paragraph with a partner for feedback on argument clarity and use of evidence.

Discussion Questions

- Can someone be brave in private — in a way no one ever sees?
- What is the relationship between privilege and the cost of speaking up?
- Where in your own life have you experienced the tension between what is safe and what is right?
- What do you think the young performers in *Hoods, Uncloaked* were trying to say about courage?

Extension / Assessment

Students revise their argument based on peer feedback and submit a final draft with a one-paragraph reflection on how their thinking changed during this unit. Assessment: Argument essay evaluated on claim strength, quality of evidence and reasoning, acknowledgment of counterclaim, and revision quality.

Connection to *Hoods, Uncloaked*

Every young artists engaged with *Hoods, Uncloaked*— performer and technician alike — made a choice to stand in a public space and say something true. The show asks its audience to sit with uncomfortable questions about wealth, fairness, and responsibility. That is a deliberate, brave act of artistic citizenship.

UNIT 03

ART, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY — THE INNOVATION TIMELINE GAME

These lessons use a timeline game format to explore how technology has transformed theatre — from candlelight to LEDs, from live orchestras to digital sound design, and from hand-painted backdrops to AI-generated imagery. Students engage with both the history of innovation and the ethical questions it raises for artists today

Grades K-2

Lights Through Time: How Theatre Got Brighter

Time Required: 45 minutes

Overview

Students learn that technology changes over time by exploring how theatre lighting evolved from candles to electric lights. Using sequencing cards, they put major innovations in order and discover how each change enhanced storytelling.

Learning Objectives

- Students will sequence at least four theatre technology innovations in chronological order.
- Students will explain in simple terms why each innovation was an improvement.
- Students will connect technology change to storytelling possibilities.

Materials

- Timeline innovation cards (teacher-printed): Candles (1500s), Gas lamps (1800s), Electric lights (1880s), Dimmer switches (1930s), LED lights (2000s)
- Long piece of butcher paper for class timeline
- Simple images of each innovation
- A candle (battery-operated), a flashlight, a colored LED to compare in class

Activity Steps

Step 1: Ask: 'How do you think theatres were lit before electricity?' Show an image of a candle and ask students to imagine watching a play lit only by candles. What problems might there be?

Step 2: Introduce the innovation cards one at a time, in order. For each: What is it? When did it appear? What problem did it solve?

Step 3: Students work in pairs to sequence their own set of cards from earliest to newest. Share and compare — did everyone agree?

Step 4: Build the class timeline on butcher paper. Students tape their cards in order and draw one picture of what they imagine the theatre looked like at each stage.

Step 5: Compare the items you brought: battery candle vs. flashlight vs. colored LED. What is different? Which gives a designer more control?

Step 6: Closing: 'If you could invent the next big theatre technology, what would it do?'

Discussion Questions

- What was dangerous about candles in a theatre full of people?
- How did electric lights change what actors could do on stage?
- What technology do we have now that people 100 years ago could not have imagined?
- If a youth designer at Mosaic has a tablet that controls all the lights from one screen, is that better than a big switchboard? Why?

Extension / Assessment

Students draw and label their own 'invention' — a future theatre technology that doesn't exist yet. They share their invention with the class and explain what problem it solves. Assessment: Correct sequencing of innovation cards and ability to explain one improvement.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

For Hoods, Uncloaked, the lighting designer used a computerized lighting board to program and run every light cue in the show. That board is the result of 500 years of innovation — from the first person who realized a candle in front of a mirror could make things brighter.

Grades 3–5

Sound and Light: The Technology Timeline Game

Time Required: 60–75 minutes

Overview

Students play a collaborative card game in which they sequence major innovations in theatre technology (lighting AND sound) and identify the problem each innovation solved. They then encounter AI-powered tools and discuss: What is gained, and what might be lost?

Learning Objectives

- Students will sequence 8-10 theatre technology innovations across lighting and sound.
- Students will identify the problem solved by each innovation.
- Students will discuss the role of AI in creative industries and articulate at least one benefit and one concern.

Materials

- Innovation card decks (one per group of 4) — cards include: Candle footlights, Gas lamps, Arc lights, Electric spots, Dimmer boards, Recorded sound effects, Microphones/amplification, Digital audio workstations, LED intelligent lights, AI sound design tools, AI lighting generation
- Timeline game mat (printed number line with 'Then' to 'Now')
- Discussion question cards

Activity Steps

Step 1: Introduce the game: Groups receive a shuffled deck of innovation cards. Their goal is to place all cards on the timeline mat in the correct order. Cards include a clue (decade or era), a name, and an image.

Step 2: Groups work to sequence cards. Teacher circulates, asking groups to explain why they placed cards where they did. After 15 minutes, reveal the correct order.

Step 3: For each card, one group shares: 'This was invented in ___ and it solved the problem of ___.'

Step 4: Introduce the AI cards (placed at the end of the timeline). Ask: 'What do AI design tools do? What might a human designer feel about them?' Introduce vocabulary: automation, creativity, authorship.

Step 5: Small group discussion using question cards: 'If AI can design lights automatically, why do we still need human designers?' 'Can AI be creative? What does creative mean?'

Step 6: Class synthesis: Create a T-chart: 'What technology makes better / What only humans can do.'

Discussion Questions

- What has stayed the same about theatre even as technology has changed?
- If a computer could write a play, would you want to see it? Why or why not?
- What do you think a youth sound designer does that a computer cannot do?
- What careers might not exist in 20 years? What new careers might?

Extension / Assessment

Students write a one-page 'Tech Forecast': What theatre technology will exist in 2050? They must invent at least one new tool, explain what problem it solves, and identify one thing it cannot replace. Assessment: Timeline accuracy, participation in AI discussion, and quality of Tech Forecast writing.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The youth technicians in *Hoods, Uncloaked* used professional tools that are among the most advanced in the industry. They also made choices that no AI could make for them — choices rooted in their own experiences, their research, and their relationships with the performers on that stage.

/ Grades 6–8

From Craft to Code: AI, Creativity, and the Question of Authorship

Time Required: 75–90 minutes

Overview

Students investigate the history of technology in theatre and arts, then engage in a critical inquiry into AI's emerging role in creative production. They experiment with an AI tool (image generator or text generator) and reflect on questions of authorship, labor, and the future of creative careers.

Learning Objectives

- Students will trace the history of technology in theatre from the industrial era to AI.
- Students will experiment with an AI creative tool and critically evaluate its output.
- Students will write a structured argument on AI's role in creative industries.

Materials

- Access to a free AI image generation tool (e.g., teacher-moderated session with Adobe Firefly or similar)
- OR: Printed examples of AI-generated artwork, music descriptions, and set designs
- Timeline cards (10-12, spanning 1800 to present) — teacher-created
- Argument writing template

Activity Steps

Step 1: Open with the timeline card game: Groups sequence 10 theatre/arts technology innovations from 1800 to present. Focus on the last decade: digital audio workstations, LED moving lights, projection mapping, generative AI. Where does the pace of change feel fastest?

Step 2: AI experiment: Students use (or view outputs from) an AI image tool prompted to 'design a set for a Robin Hood story set in Detroit.' Compare outputs. Ask: Is this good design? Who made it? Who owns it?

Step 3: Introduce vocabulary: authorship, intellectual property, creative labor, training data. Discuss: AI tools are trained on human-made art. Does that matter?

Step 4: Structured discussion: 'Should theatres use AI to generate set designs?' Students must argue a position they are assigned (not necessarily their own). After 10 minutes, switch positions.

Step 5: Individual writing: Students write a 3-paragraph argument answering: 'Is AI a tool or a threat for artists?' They must include a concession (acknowledgment of the other side).

Discussion Questions

- What makes something 'creative'? Does it require consciousness?
- If an AI writes a song, who owns the copyright?
- What do human artists have that AI does not, and does it matter?
- What do you think young artists today should learn to protect their futures?

Extension / Assessment

Students research one working artist or designer who has spoken publicly about AI and summarize their perspective in a one-page response that agrees, disagrees, or complicates the artist's position. Assessment: Quality of argument writing — claim, evidence, concession, conclusion.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The youth designers who worked on Hoods, Uncloaked made choices that were rooted in lived experience, in months of relationship with the performers, and in their personal creative vision. An AI cannot sit in a rehearsal room, watch a performer struggle with a scene, and make a lighting choice in response to what it feels. That responsiveness is one of the things that makes human design irreplaceable.

Grades 9–12

Creative Labor and Machine Intelligence: Ethics at the Frontier

Two 60-minute sessions

Overview

Students engage in a deep inquiry into AI in the creative industries — examining its history, its technical foundations, the ethical debates around training data and labor displacement, and the implications for young people pursuing careers in arts and technology. Students produce a researched position paper.

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze the technical basis of generative AI and its application in creative fields.
- Students will evaluate competing ethical claims about AI and creative labor.
- Students will produce a researched argument paper drawing on multiple source types.

Materials

- Selected readings: One technical explainer on how generative AI works, one artist perspective (positive), one artist perspective (critical), one labor/economic analysis
- Access to research tools
- Position paper template with annotation requirements

Activity Steps

Step 1: Session 1 — Research and Analysis: Students read and annotate all four texts. In groups, they map the argument landscape: What claims are made? What evidence is used? Where do sources agree and disagree?

Step 2: Introduce the timeline: How did we get here? From punch card computing to neural networks to transformer models to generative AI — what are the key moments and what do they mean for creative industries?

Step 3: Students form a position and draft a thesis. They must be specific: not 'AI is good/bad for art' but something more precise (e.g., 'AI image tools undermine the economic sustainability of working illustrators in ways that require policy intervention, not market solutions').

Step 4: Session 2 — Writing and Peer Review: Students draft their position paper (4–5 pages, minimum 4 sources). Peer review using a structured protocol focused on: Is the thesis arguable? Is evidence sufficient? Are counterarguments acknowledged?

Step 5: Class closes with a panel simulation: 4 students present their positions in 3 minutes each. Class questions for 10 minutes.

Discussion Questions

- Who benefits most from AI in the creative industries? Who bears the costs?
- If AI makes creative tools more accessible, does that democratize art or devalue it?
- What is the relationship between technological change and labor rights historically? What does history suggest about AI?
- If you were advising a 14-year-old today who wants to be a theatre sound designer, what would you tell them?

Extension / Assessment

Students submit final paper with a reflection on how their position evolved from their initial thesis.

Assessment: Thesis specificity and defensibility, quality and diversity of evidence, handling of counterarguments, and revision quality.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The youth on sound and lights for Hoods, Uncloaked are entering a creative workforce that is actively debating these questions. As young creatives they are stakeholders in decisions about what AI does and does not replace. This is their conversation to lead.

UNIT 04

SONGWRITING & FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

These lessons connect the original music of *Hoods, Uncloaked*— written in part by Mosaic young artist— to the craft of lyric writing. Students explore how figurative language (metaphor, simile, and personification) works differently in songs than in prose, and then write their own original lyrics.

Grades K-2

Songs That Paint Pictures: Simile in Lyrics

Time Required: 40–50 minutes

Overview

Students learn what a simile is through familiar songs and nursery rhymes, then practice creating their own similes to describe a character or feeling. They collaborate to write one line of a class song using a simile they created.

Learning Objectives

- Students will define simile and identify examples in songs.
- Students will create original similes to describe a feeling or character.
- Students will contribute one lyric line using a simile to a class song.

Materials

- A simple familiar song with simile ('You are my sunshine,' 'Brave' by Sara Bareilles, or similar)
- Simile sentence frames: '___ is like a ___.' / '___ as ___ as a ___.'
- Chart paper
- Index cards for individual similes

Activity Steps

Step 1: Sing or play a familiar song. Ask: 'Did you hear any comparisons — any time the singer said something was LIKE something else?'

Step 2: Teach simile with movement: 'I am as tall as a tree!' Students make themselves as tall as possible. 'I am as tiny as a mouse!' Students scrunch down. Similes paint pictures.

Step 3: Students think of a character or feeling: brave, lonely, excited, sneaky. Using the sentence frame, they create a simile on their index card: 'Being brave is like ___.'

Step 4: Pairs share similes. Teacher selects several to build into a class verse using a simple repeated melody (teacher can improvise or use a known tune).

Step 5: Sing the class verse together. Point out: 'You just wrote a song lyric — just like the young performers in *Hoods, Uncloaked* did.'

Discussion Questions

- Why do songwriters use similes instead of just saying what something is?
- What is the difference between 'I am scared' and 'I am as scared as a mouse in a kitchen'?
- What is Robin Hood like? Finish the simile.
- If your classroom was a song, what would it sound like?

Extension / Assessment

Students take their index card home and add a picture to illustrate their simile. They share with a family member and come back with one more simile they came up with together. Assessment: Student can identify a simile in a song and produce one original simile using the sentence frame.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The young artists in Hoods, Uncloaked wrote lyrics to the show's songs during their year of rehearsal and research. They asked: 'How do we say what we mean in a way that makes people feel it?' Similes were one of their tools — just like you used today.

Grades 3–5

Figurative Language in Lyrics: Metaphor, Simile, and Personification

Time Required: 60–75 minutes

Overview

Students analyze figurative language in song lyrics, identifying and comparing examples of metaphor, simile, and personification. They then write a complete verse (4–8 lines) using at least two types of figurative language, connected to a theme from Hoods, Uncloaked.

Learning Objectives

- Students will define and distinguish among metaphor, simile, and personification.
- Students will identify all three devices in provided song lyrics.
- Students will write an original verse using at least two figurative language devices.

Materials

- Printed lyrics from 2–3 contemporary songs featuring figurative language (teacher-selected, age-appropriate)
- Figurative language identification chart (three columns: Metaphor / Simile / Personification)
- Theme word bank: justice, shadows, hunger, power, gold, voice, silence, streets
- Rhyme optional — students can write free verse

Activity Steps

Step 1: Quick review: Define metaphor ('X IS Y — not 'like'), simile (X is LIKE Y), personification (giving human qualities to non-human things). Give one musical example of each.

Step 2: Lyric analysis: Students read the provided lyrics and sort every figurative phrase they find into the three-column chart. Share and compare — did everyone agree? Some are ambiguous.

Step 3: Discuss: Why do songwriters use these devices? What would the song lose if the writer just said what they meant directly?

Step 4: Introduce the Robin Hood theme connection: 'The songs in Hoods, Uncloaked explore themes of fairness, power, taking risks, and community. Pick one theme from our word bank or your own.'

Step 5: Students draft a verse (4–8 lines). Requirement: use at least one metaphor OR simile AND at least one personification. Rhyme is not required.

Step 6: Author's chair: Volunteers share their verse. Class identifies the figurative language used and discusses its effect: 'What image did this create for you?'

Discussion Questions

- Which is more powerful — a metaphor or a simile? Does it depend on the situation?
- Find a line in your verse where you could make the image stronger. How?
- If justice were a person, what would it do in your verse?
- What is harder: writing lyrics or writing a story? What is the difference?

Extension / Assessment

Students revise their verse based on peer feedback and add a second verse or chorus. They can optionally set it to a melody (hummed or sung). Assessment: Verse contains at least two different figurative language devices, used meaningfully (not just inserted randomly).

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

The youth artists in Hoods, Uncloaked spent months revising their lyrics. They weren't boxed in by making them rhyme. They focused on the lyrics saying exactly what they meant. They used figurative language deliberately to help the audience feel what is often too hard to say directly.

Grades 6–8

Writing with Precision: Figurative Language as Argument in Song

Time Required: 75–90 minutes

Overview

Students move beyond identification of figurative language to analyze how it functions as a persuasive and emotional tool. They study how professional songwriters use extended metaphor and personification to build an argument across a full song, then write a complete verse-chorus unit with a clear thematic intent.

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze how figurative language functions argumentatively across a complete song.
- Students will write a verse-chorus unit with a clear theme, using at least three figurative devices.
- Students will articulate the intent behind each figurative choice in a brief writer's note.

Materials

- Two printed songs with extended figurative language (teacher-selected: protest songs, narrative songs, or contemporary artists known for lyrical craft)
- Songwriter's journal or lined paper
- Extended metaphor diagram (central image → related images that extend it)
- Theme prompts related to Hoods, Uncloaked

Activity Steps

Step 1: Close reading: Students read Song 1 and map the central metaphor. What is the main comparison? Where does it appear in the song? How is it extended across verses?

Step 2: Analysis question: Is this song making an argument? If so, what is it? How does the figurative language support the argument more powerfully than a direct statement would?

Step 3: Model extended metaphor: Demonstrate how to build one image out. Example: 'Voice = fire.' Now extend: What does fire do? It spreads, it warms, it burns, it illuminates, it can be extinguished. Each of these becomes a possible lyric line.

Step 4: Students choose a theme: unfairness, belonging, hiding, rebellion, reclaiming. They build an extended metaphor map.

Step 5: Students write: one verse (6–8 lines) + one chorus (4–6 lines). The verse develops the situation; the chorus carries the core message with figurative punch.

Step 6: Writer's note: In 3-5 sentences, students explain: What is your central metaphor? What are you arguing? What is the effect you intended with one specific figurative line?

Discussion Questions

- What is the difference between a song that describes an emotion and one that makes you feel it?
- How do protest songs use figurative language differently than love songs?
- Find one line in your song where you could push the image further. What would you change?
- If a song's figurative language is too obscure, does it fail? Where is the line?

Extension / Assessment

Students develop a second verse that complicates or challenges the argument of the first verse — building tension before the chorus resolves it. Assessment: Presence and effectiveness of three figurative devices, clarity of thematic intent, and quality of writer's note.

Connection to Hoods, Uncloaked

Some of the original songs in *Hoods, Uncloaked* were written by young artists who asked the same question you are grappling with today: 'How do I say what I mean in a way that sticks?' Their answers are on stage at the DIA. What would yours sound like?

Grades 9–12

The Architecture of a Song: Craft, Voice, and the Work of a Lyricist

Two 60-minute sessions

Overview

Students study songwriting craft — structure, voice, figurative language, and sonic texture — then compose an original song (minimum two verses, chorus, and bridge) on a theme connected to *Hoods, Uncloaked*. The unit culminates in a workshop critique session modeled on professional songwriting rooms.

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze the architectural structure of a song (verse, chorus, bridge, hook) and explain how each element serves a function.
- Students will compose a complete original song using extended metaphor, simile, and personification with intentionality.
- Students will participate in a professional-style critique workshop, giving and receiving specific, craft-based feedback.

Materials

- Two full songs for analysis (teacher-selected for lyrical complexity: suggest Hozier, Kendrick Lamar, Lianne La Havas, or similar — age-appropriate, lyrically rich)
- Songwriting structure diagram: Verse / Pre-Chorus / Chorus / Verse / Bridge / Chorus
- Craft vocabulary list: hook, motif, resolution, tension, internal rhyme, assonance, anaphora
- Songwriter's journal

Activity Steps

Step 1: Session 1 — Craft Study: Structural analysis of Song 1 as a full class. Map: What happens in each verse? How does the chorus function differently? What does the bridge do that the verses couldn't? Identify every figurative language device and label its type.

Step 2: Introduce extended craft vocabulary: internal rhyme, assonance, anaphora. Find examples. Discuss: 'These are not decorations. They are structural tools that create emphasis and memory.'

Step 3: Students draft their song in the remaining time. Requirement: minimum two verses, one chorus, one bridge. Theme must connect to justice, power, community, or identity — themes from *Hoods, Uncloaked*. At least three distinct figurative language devices.

Step 4: Session 2 — Songwriting Room Critique: Establish workshop norms (from professional songwriting rooms: 'No fixing, only questioning. No 'I don't like it,' only 'I notice / I wonder / What if...').

Step 5: Students share one section of their song (verse or chorus). Group responds with structured craft feedback: What image was most vivid? Where was the intention unclear? What is one question the lyric raised?

Step 6: Writers revise one section based on feedback. Share revised version. Class discusses: What changed? What became clearer or stronger?

Discussion Questions

- What makes a lyric a lyric instead of a poem? What does the musical frame change?
- When figurative language calls too much attention to itself, it can undermine the song. When is that the right choice, and when is it a mistake?
- What did you learn about your own voice as a writer from this exercise?
- The young artists in *Hoods, Uncloaked* wrote with both artistic and political intent. Is there something you want to say — about your life, your community, your moment — that you haven't found the words for yet?

Extension / Assessment

Students complete and record a voice memo of their full song (sung, spoken word, or hybrid). They submit with a one-page craft essay: What choices did I make? What did I learn? What would I revise with more time? Assessment: Song completeness, intentional use of three figurative devices, and quality of craft essay reflection.

Connection to *Hoods, Uncloaked*

The young composers and lyricists of *Hoods, Uncloaked* went through exactly this process — drafting, workshoping, being asked hard questions, and revising. The songs you will hear at the DIA are the result of hours of this kind of work. Every lyric you heard started as a draft someone was not sure about.

UNIT 05

SOCIAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY — THE ROBIN HOOD QUESTION

This supplemental unit invites students to examine the central question of Hoods, Uncloaked more directly: What does the Robin Hood story mean today? Who are the 'haves' and 'have-nots' in our community? What would a modern Robin Hood look like — and would we call them a hero? These lessons are designed for flexibility and can be used as a standalone unit or as a complement to Unit 2.

Grade-band suggestions:

- K-2** Read *The Invisible String* or a simple picture book about sharing. Discuss: Is it okay to take something to help someone else? Make a class mural of 'helpers in our community.'
- 3-5** Research a real community organization in Detroit that redistributes resources (food bank, community garden, free store). Create an informational poster or brief presentation.
- 6-8** Map local resources and resource gaps using public data. Discuss: Who decides where resources go? What would it look like to change that?
- 9-12** Research one historical or contemporary figure who acted outside the law for a justice cause. Analyze: Were their methods justified? What was the outcome? Write a researched position paper.

ABOUT MOSAIC YOUTH THEATRE OF DETROIT

Mosaic creates pathways to equity and opportunity through arts experiences that engage, transform, and inspire youth and communities.

Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit empowers Detroit area youth with the skills they need to achieve excellence: on stage and in life. Through intentional, innovative programming, youth engage in comprehensive arts training, professional mentorship, and college & career pathways support to cultivate leaders and life-long learners.

Our programs goals can be consolidated across these four strategic pillars:

CREATE confident creative thinkers through comprehensive pre-professional arts training, leadership and personal development.

CONNECT youth to professional artists/mentors and development opportunities, equipping them with the skills and resources they need to thrive through adulthood.

PREPARE young artists for college & career pathways within the creative industry and other industries requiring creative problem solving, critical thinking, emotional intelligence and 21st century skills.

AMPLIFY the voices of young people and empower them as the next generation of leaders, artists, ambassadors and advocates for a thriving Detroit.

Hoods, Uncloaked runs May 1–9, 2026 at the Detroit Film Theater. School matinee tickets are \$5. Youth tickets to public performances are free.

To get tickets for student matinee or for more information, visit www.mosaicdetroit.org or contact Edmund at Sales@mosaicdetroit.org



MOSAIC YOUTH THEATRE OF DETROIT

2251 Antietam Avenue, Detroit, MI 48207

info@mosaicdetroit.org
313.872.6910 | Phone



MosaicDetroit.org
@mosaicdetroit