

GSA APPLICANT GUIDE

Drama



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I. Program Description

GSA's Drama program is an intensive acting course with emphasis on development of vocal and physical expressiveness, exceptional storytelling skills, ensemble attitude, creative thinking, and promoting positive change through theatre. Drama students receive instruction in voice and speech, movement for the actor, monologue and scene study, improvisation, and creating original works. Drama students meet and study with a number of theater professionals, attend summer theater productions, collaborate with other GSA disciplines, and are provided with insights into educational opportunities and career options in theater. While the program is process-oriented, drama students work toward a final showcase of monologues, scenes, and ensemble pieces for the final day of the Summer Program.

II. Preliminary Round Application Requirements (due January 10th)

Submit the materials in this section through the online platform [Accepted](#) no later than January 10th. NOTE: Applicants will be prompted to pay a \$30 application fee when submitting their materials (or \$35 if applying in two art forms). Students on free/reduced lunch may opt to have this fee waived when payment is requested.

For the Preliminary Round, submit the following (*see below for more detail*):

- a. Two Recommendation Forms
- b. Personal Short Essay
- c. Personal Question Video
- d. Monologue Video
- e. *Optional:* Special Skill Video

a. Recommendation Forms (do this first!)

Identify two people to fill out recommendation forms for you: a school administrator (e.g. counselor) and a teacher/instructor (see below if those do not apply). Enter their names and email addresses in your online application, and the individuals will receive emails instructing them on how to complete the recommendation process.

- Before submitting your recommenders' information, contact them to ask for their permission to use them as a reference and explain why you want to attend GSA. Confirm with them when you submit their email addresses to ensure they receive the recommender email. Initiate this process as soon as possible so your recommenders have time to complete the forms before the application deadline.

- *Your teacher/instructor recommender does not have to teach at your high school, nor do they have to teach you in your art form of focus (although we recommend you choose someone who is familiar with your creative work, if possible).*
- *You do not need to submit letters of recommendation. Recommenders will receive an online form to fill out, which will serve as their recommendation for you.*
- *If you are home schooled, and/or you otherwise do not have a school administrator or teacher/instructor who can fill out your recommendation forms, please seek out another adult who can speak to your qualities/character/abilities in one way or another; this could include a mentor, a youth minister, a coach, etc.*
- *Applicants' parents/immediate family may not fill out their recommendation forms.*

b. Personal Short Essay (250-word max)

Provide an answer to the following question in essay form:

As you envision yourself attending GSA, describe to us one thing you will bring to/offer the community, and one thing that you know will challenge you.

Be open, honest, and authentic in your response – let us learn something about you. Upload this essay response as a document file; type out the question at the top of your response, so the question and answer are both in the document (the question restatement does not count toward the word count limit). When uploading your essay, title the file "Personal Short Essay."

c. Personal Question Video (90-second max)

Provide an answer to the following question in video form:

Artists play a vital role in society, ranging from sparking large cultural movements, to facilitating meaningful interpersonal connections. What impact do you seek to make on your community/world as an artist, and why is that an important impact to make? How will GSA help you achieve this?

- Be open, honest, and authentic in your response – let us learn something about you. While you are encouraged to prepare your thoughts before shooting the video and you may consult notes as you speak, please do not just read off a transcript. We want to get a sense of your personality.
- Record your answer in an interior space that is free from interruptions, noise, etc. Do not edit or splice the video. You do not need to include an introductory frame or any effects such as fades, etc.

- Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location. Review the video to ensure you can be seen AND heard. Ensure the video plays all the way to the end.
- When uploading your Personal Question Video, title the file "Personal Question Video."

d. Monologue (1 video, max 90 seconds)

Introduce yourself by stating your name, the character's name, and the name of the play. For example: "Hello, my name is Barry. I will be doing the Gentlemen Caller from *The Glass Menagerie*."

Your monologue should:

- be spoken by a character from a published play that you have read entirely, rather than a piece of poetry or prose. It can be dramatic, comedic or anything in between; just ensure it is a piece you are passionate about, and that you can easily discuss the character's objective (what they want or need during the moment the monologue happens in the play). Monologues downloaded from the internet will not be accepted.
- be active (a person speaking about a present situation, not telling a story from their past)
- be memorized
- not rely on props, costumes, make-up or any other technical elements
- not contain material or language that others might find offensive
- be a character close to your own age
- not require a dialect

More Monologue Requirements:

- Record your monologue in an interior space that is free from interruptions, noise, etc. Shoot straight on, leaving the camera in one location.
- Do not edit or splice your video. You do not need to include an introductory frame or any effects such as fades, etc.

- Review the video to ensure you can be seen AND heard. Ensure the video plays all the way to the end.
- Name your video file "monologue_last name"

e. Optional Special Skill Video (max 60 seconds)

If you choose, you can include a video demonstrating a special skill (e.g. performing a dialect, singing, dancing, telling a joke, roller skating, or whatever else you'd like to share). The purpose of this video is simply to get to know you better; this video is NOT scored or measured against criteria. If you choose not to submit this video, it will not be held against you. Name your video file "special_skill_last name".

III. Final Round Requirements

Some applicants will be invited to participate in the Final Round of GSA Auditions/Reviews, which will consist of the elements described below. All applicants will be notified on February 26th of whether they are invited to the Final Round. If you are selected to participate in the Final Round, you will be required to attend in-person on March 20th, 21st or 22nd in Lexington, KY at the University of Kentucky as scheduled by GSA.

The Final Round for Drama will include:

- a. Questionnaire
- b. Group Audition
- c. Group Interview

a. Questionnaire

When you arrive at the main registration table for your auditions/reviews, you will receive and complete a one to two-page questionnaire. This questionnaire may cover a range of topics, including your previous experience in your art form, your favorite artists, and/or your college and career goals. The questionnaire is not a quiz and is not scored, but it is a way for adjudicators to get to know you. The questionnaire may be used to customize questions in your interview.

b. Group Audition

You will participate in a group audition. The audition lasts approximately 45 minutes. During the audition, you will participate in:

- Ensemble theater games and exercises
- Improvised scene work

c. Group Interview

Applicants will participate in a brief group interview with the adjudicators.

Please note: You will **NOT** perform your monologue in the live audition.

IV. Criteria

The work of each student will be given an objective review by the adjudicators as to how they fulfill each of the following criteria:

Creative Choices

An ideal applicant makes original and inspired dramatic choices that enhance the performance of the monologue, scene, or ensemble work.

Voice

An ideal applicant will speak text with clear pronunciation and supported tone while effectively using their voice to create meaning (e.g. the voice expresses the character's intentions and feelings adequately).

Body

An ideal applicant exhibits physicality which is true to the character and circumstance of the story. Additionally, this physicality clarifies the objectives and tactics of the character (e.g. body expresses the character's intentions and feelings).

Dedication to Art Form, Growth, and Community An ideal applicant demonstrates a commitment to and passion for their art form, as well as a desire and ability to grow as an artist. The applicant can thoughtfully and authentically explain why they want to attend GSA and how they are uniquely qualified to contribute to a robust, diverse community of artists.

Ensemble Attitude (Final Round only)

An ideal applicant works as part of an ensemble collaboratively; supporting consensus based on mutually agreed ideas; giving feedback about group

process and sequence of work. The actor supports the work process of others and exhibits an understanding of how their role is "a part of a whole."

V. Tips

These tips are suggestions. They are NOT eligibility requirements for admittance to GSA.

Here are suggested tips for finding monologues:

- *First off, know that finding the right monologue for you can be time-consuming and challenging – but you can do it! Schedule out time for your monologue search, in addition to time you put aside for monologue rehearsal.*
- *Look for plays to read in libraries, used bookstores, or online resources like playscripts.com. If you find a monologue from a monologue book (not suggested), you MUST read the play that it is from.*
- *Ask teachers if they can help you find scripts (your English teacher may be a great resource if there isn't a Drama teacher at your school).*
- *If you use a movie streaming service (e.g. Netflix), search for movies of plays.*
- *Research actors who you admire/are a similar type as you – look online for their resumes to see what stage work they have done; read the plays that they have done and any reviews of their performances.*
- *Research theater companies with good reputations and read plays they are producing or have produced during the last five years.*
- *Read less popular plays by important playwrights.*
- *Go to the theater whenever you have the chance! See plays!*

Here are suggested general tips:

- **Do not use a monologue that is not from a complete play.** If you find a monologue on the internet and the site does not name the source of the play, it is most likely not from a complete work and is not to be used.

- Be sure to **read the play** and develop your intellectual understanding of the words, syntax and meaning of your selected monologue. Develop an understanding of your character's objectives, tactics, obstacles, and word choice. If you do not understand a word, look it up in a dictionary.
- **Memorize** the lines accurately and thoroughly; rehearse the monologue until you feel absolutely confident to play it easily.
- After you introduce your monologue, **take a moment** to connect with the person/object you are speaking to in a way that allows the viewer to see you transition from you to your character. Do not look at the floor or turn your back to the camera for this transition.
- **Don't rush** the final moment of your monologue. Take a moment at the conclusion of the piece, and then acknowledge that you are finished with a simple "thank you" to your audience.
- Be sure to **support your voice with breath** in order to create a supported sound and enunciate your words when you speak.
- Develop your **physical and facial expressiveness** as a reflection of the character.
- Consider practicing **mock auditions** for your teacher, peers or family members.
- Be sure to **dress appropriately in clothes that are presentable, yet do not restrict your movement**.
- If you submit a special skill video, **do so with intention** and care (just like you would with your monologue video). Share something that lets us learn more about you, your hobbies, and/or your personality, as opposed to something random just for the sake of submitting another video.
- Remember: **be yourself** and let your personality shine through.
- Pay close attention to the adjudication criteria. While GSA students are accepted based on their holistic identity as a young artist, the criteria are the foundation of how your materials are being scored.
- **Remember the adjudicators are very excited to see your work and they want you to do well!** We know it takes hard work to submit this application, and that it can be scary to "put yourself out there." We have faith in you, so put your best foot forward and don't be afraid to show us

the wonderful artist you are. You prove a level of dedication just by submitting your application, and you should be proud of yourself.

VI. Class Announcement

From the Final Round in March, adjudicators will choose the 2020 GSA Summer Program class for all 9 art forms.

On **Friday, April 10** you'll receive your results via email. GSA will also make a big announcement on our website: www.kentuckygsa.org. Accepted and Alternate students will be listed. Accepted students will also receive paper written notification of their results via standard mail.

For technical support with the application contact Acceptd

Email: support@getacceptd.com

Phone: 1.888.725.2122, press 2

For questions about Summer Program, the content and/or requirements of the application, contact GSA

Email: gsainfo@kentuckycenter.org

Phone: 502.566.5192