

THE LIGHT LADY

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THE EALRS OF THEATRICAL LIGHTING DESIGN

This paper addresses the Essential Academic Learning Requirements in Arts of stage lighting. As you will see stage lighting encompasses a wide variety of learning processes, skills, knowledge and life long benefits. I reference using the following code: "EALRS" refers to one of the four general learning requirements, "C" refers to the more specific component listed and "BM" refers to that component's benchmark. So a reference might look like this: EALRS 4, C 4.3, BM 2. I have not referenced every specific EALR, but you will see that stage lighting encompasses an wide range of artistic, technical and life skills, that it fulfills almost every aspect of the Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

Lighting design is a discipline that utilizes a blend of artistry, technical knowledge, physical effort and life skills. Lighting is a very specialized field which incorporates a broad range of skills such as: creative thinking, use of technology, use of mathematics, team work, decision making, problem solving, perseverance, working with different personalities and standards, analytical thinking, and responsibility. The learning objective is that students will be able to demonstrate artistic design theory and techniques such as color theory, use the four properties of light for mood manipulation and perform drafting basics, and demonstrate the above range of skills. Not only will students gain knowledge about a unique subject, but the skills students learn and use while working on a lighting crew will benefit them throughout their lives.

The learning objective for technical theory would start with students demonstrating an understanding of "easy electricity" for stage lighting, by role playing a human model of an electrical circuit. Students will also be able to state electrical calculations (EALRS 4, C 4.2, BM 3, integrating skills and concepts from other disciplines) needed specifically for the application of stage lighting. The learning objective for artistic theory would include students being able to demonstrate the McCandless Method of Lighting the Stage and the four properties of light as applicable to design. Students would demonstrate a working knowledge of color theory, mood and lighting motivation, with a hands on session on color manipulation and design. This section would incorporate art and design concepts children may already have a previous knowledge of. Students will also be able to define the historical periods of stage lighting. (EALRS 1, C 1.3, BM 2, recognizing the arts from a variety of historical periods, and EALRS 4, C 4.4, BM 2, understanding the role of the arts in the historical development of cultures.)

The learning objectives by the end of the practical application sessions would include students being able to demonstrate how their school's lighting system works, how to draft a light plot using templates and correct drafting techniques (EALRS 4, C 4.1 and C 4.2, connecting the concepts and skills from one art form to another), how to run the light board and house lights, and how to hang and focus lights for a physical, hands on understanding of stage lighting artistry and technology (if applicable – some schools do not allow the children to do this, in that case they would have the opportunity to observe a hang and focus session). Students would also have the opportunity to take apart the various light fixtures at their school, and would be able to relate how

they are designed and how they work to the design applications they are used for. By the end of the workshop students will also be able to demonstrate how to write and read cues, how to Stage Manage a show and how to call the cues. In addition, throughout the year students could also take it in turns to be supervised in running the lightboard and stage managing any productions and/or assemblies that the school would put on. (EALRS 1, C1.4, BM 1, 2, & 3, demonstrate and respond proper etiquette in art settings and performances, and EALRS 2, C 2.2, apply a performance process in the arts.)

The students can create a lighting design of their own (EALRS 2, C 2.1, develop, organize, apply and refine a creative process with instructor direction, assistance and independently, EALRS 2, C 2.2, BM 1, 2, & 3, selecting, developing, rehearsing and presenting refined work using a performance process, and EALRS 3, C 3.3, evaluating art presentations of self), thus demonstrating that the learning objectives had been met. This could take the form of a composition designed to a piece of music with manikins or models to stand in as dancers, or coincide with a school production such as an assembly, dance workshop, variety show or play. (EALRS 3, C 3.1, BM 1 & 2, expressing personal feelings and ideas through a variety of forms, EALRS 3, C 3.2, BM 3, using the arts for inspiration and persuasion, and EALRS 4, C 4.3, BM 1, identify how criteria impacts personal decision making.)

A field trip could be arranged to a local community theatre, for a tour of their stage and lighting system. This could be timed to coincide with a dress rehearsal, so that the students also have the opportunity to observe and critic someone else's design process and outcome. The learning objective is that students will attempt to analyze evaluate and interpret works of drama using concepts and vocabulary (EALRS 1, C 1.1 BM 3 and EALRS 3, C 3.3, BM 2), and analyze theatre and visual arts encountered in daily life (EALRS 3, C 3.4, BM 1)

Additional sessions with the students could address architectural lighting specialties. This would give students an opportunity to relate how an interest in lighting design can be turned into a lucrative career outside of the theatre. Students will also be informed of where to go for further education in this field. (EALRS 4, C 4.2, BM 1 & 2, and EALRS 4, C 4.5, BM 1, 2, & 3, connections between the arts and other disciplines, understanding and applying the role of art in the world of work.)

Lighting can be integrated into curricula in many ways. In an art class students can be taught to see how painters, photographers and other artists use light in their work. In a technical drafting class teachers can incorporate drafting lighting plots for the stage and or lighting plans for buildings. When studying architecture teachers could incorporate architectural lighting as a part of their lesson plans. The history of lighting is quite fascinating and could be incorporated into history or social sciences lessons about how people once lived. Electrical theory will fit in well within a science curriculum. Figuring out lighting needs for the theatre primarily uses the formula $W=VA$ (watts equals volts times amps), which is an exercise in simple algebra and can be incorporated into classroom math problems. Stage lighting is a discipline that draws from many aspects of the standard curriculum.