

# THE LIGHT LADY

[www.thelightlady.com](http://www.thelightlady.com)

## LEARNING GOALS

Students on a high school Lighting Crew will learn how to:

think creatively  
use technology  
work as a team  
make decisions  
be a responsible person  
problem solve  
think analytically

Participation on a Stage Lighting Crew incorporates many of the learning goals of the 1993 Educational Reform Act (RCW28A.150.210).

### **GOAL 1 – *reading, comprehension, communication***

Students must be able to read and quickly comprehend scripts, instructions, cue sheets and technical data. They must be able to clearly and effectively, through written and verbal means, communicate to other members of the production team, through the use of cue sheets, script cues and other written information pertinent to the production.

### **GOAL 2 – *mathematics, science, arts, fitness***

Stage Lighting utilizes a blend of technical knowledge, artistry and physical effort.

Students will apply the concepts and principals of maths and science in their work. They must be able to do basic algebra and will apply this knowledge to the study of electricity. For example, computations for figuring how many instruments of what wattage one can safely put on a circuit.

To some extent artistry may be an inborn trait, however art techniques can be taught, and the artistic talent which I believe is within each of us can be tapped. The students will learn about color choices, mixing colors, how different light angles affect the viewer's perception of an object, how to enhance an "object" (usually an actor or set piece), and how to create mood using color, angles and intensity of light. Drafting is also an important skill that Lighting Designers must know in order to communicate their design (the Light Plot) to the crew. Being able to draft and read a Light Plot is essential. Student will learn some basics about drafting for Stage Lighting.

Once the lighting plot is drafted, little time is spent sitting at a desk. Hanging and Focusing a production can be quite a rigorous task; ladders to climb, heavy instruments to carry, bolts which won't loosen, a lot of walking around and running here and there! At Bear Creek

Elementary, because of liability issues, the children are not permitted to go up on our Genie Lift to hang and focus lights (yours truly will do that!). However, I encourage children to come and help out at a Hang and Focus session, so that they can be a part of the process.

### **GOAL 3 – *think analytically, thinking creatively, problem solving***

Analytical thinking, problem solving, and creativity are very important in stage craft, as every play, show, dance and assembly is different. Students need to draw from what they have learned to integrate their experience and knowledge and apply it to each production. Each design will be different, and the problems that come up will be different for each production. Through their participation in workshop classes, shows and assemblies this year, the students will learn theory and practical lessons, and apply it to their own design at the end of the year.

### **GOAL 4 – *relate school experiences and learning to career***

While not everyone will want to be a Stage Lighting Designer as a career (although there are those who are very successful), the skills learned from one's experiences in the educational setting can help prepare students for the "outside world". These skills include, but are not limited to: responsibility, dependability, attention focusing, team work and problem solving.

In technical theatre (including the educational experience), as in many job situations, you are often the only person who can do your job. You turn up through sickness and in health. While lead actors will often have understudies, this is not the case with the tech crew. If you don't turn up one day it may be quite difficult for someone not familiar with what you were doing to take over. When you are the Light Board Operator, for instance, your job can be quite complicated. It is the Light Board Operator's responsibility to the Lighting Designer to make accurate records at rehearsals, so that the cues can be duplicated, as designed, at the next rehearsal and at performances. It is also the Light Board Operator's responsibility to the cast to write down cues and notes clearly so that someone could take over in an emergency. The Lighting Designer and his or her crew have a responsibility to the director and the cast to execute appropriate cues at the correct time, with the correct emphasis.

Rehearsals can sometimes be long and tedious. Students must be able to focus their attention for an extended period of time. Rehearsals can also be hectic and frustrating at times. Students must also be able to focus their attention on the instructions given to them, and to correctly record them and execute the cues.

Team work involves people of different skills and backgrounds working together to create one end result, in this case, a show. Working on a team can be challenging, because while people with different skills and mind sets are needed to fill each discipline it can also be hard to work with someone who doesn't think quite like you do. The team work we experience in the Lighting Crew helps students learn to work with different people, to appreciate these differences, to see how they can be valuable. The students learn how to work as a leader one minute and a follower the next. For example, Lighting Designers are experts at what they do. They are in charge of the crew who is running the show, and have the responsibility of creating the best lighting design, with the artistic and technical knowledge they have acquired. Yet, ultimately, the director is in charge, so the designer must use their skills to make the director's vision come to life. The Lighting Designer simultaneously leads the light crew, and is lead by the director. Teamwork is often like this in the "real" work world. You may be a leader in your field, but at the same time, you can be a subordinate to a "boss" or other company. Learning how to combine these two begins at school, and probably takes a lifetime to master.