

Preface to Ratings Document

- 1) The teachers who created this document used the Film Rating System from the Classification and Rating Administration (CARA) as the basis for content. While it is true that live theatre and film are two different things, there were 2 factors to why we chose to use the FRS:
 - a. This is a rating system most people are familiar with
 - b. Currently live theatre does not have a universally accepted rating system
- 2) A list of terms will be given below – however when in question (as the creators of the document) the theatre teachers of MO Thespians will be the resource for defining all terms in question.
- 3) A list of musicals and plays is given to demonstrate what category we feel certain productions might be placed in and to be used as a guide for future production choices. It is not in any way to be considered a restrictive listing of choices – teachers will continue to choose productions based on the best educational interests and practices of the program they are leading.
- 4) In the event a production straddles categories (ie PG and PG-13) the production will be rated in the category it is most represented within.
- 5) Teachers will continue to follow their building’s practices of pre-production approval – but agree to place the rating system on any reasonably expected publicity (ie. posters, lobby displays, website advertising, etc.) for the production to help audience members make more educated choices of attending.
- 6) The borrowed phrase “***most*** American parents would believe” (from CARA) will be used in determining rating criteria for productions. While we understand there might be special circumstances where individuals would consider productions at a higher rating, it is the opinion of the theatre teachers of MO Thespians that we will follow the current practices of CARA as our model.
- 7) As always MO Thespians will make every effort to select material/content that has educational value first and entertainment value second. Teachers can provide (upon request) their reasons for a production choice to administration as necessary.
- 8) It should be noted that it is the age of the *characters* within the world of the play and not the *actors* playing them that will determine whether the actions are considered illegal (ie drinking and smoking).
- 9) Suggested grade levels for ratings (assuming ***most*** students at grade level)

No Rating: Children’s Theatre – PreK-Second

G: Second-Fifth

PG: Sixth-Eighth

PG-13: Ninth-Twelfth

R: Eleventh-College (would most probably not be considered appropriate for MO Thespians to produce)

NC-17: would not be considered appropriate for MO Thespians to produce

Definition/Examples of terms

Adult (activity): behaviors or actions appropriate for adults (ie drinking, sexual activity, smoking, gambling, etc.)

Adult (themes): the subject being discussed or described appropriate for adults

Common (pertaining to Language): occurring often throughout culture (ie darn, gosh, ect)

Conversational (content): the act of talking about (textual) rather than showing (visual)

Depiction: the action of showing something (in our case on stage)

Extreme/Intense: to a great degree (in our case done in a manner that might be considered gratuitous or mistaken for actual/realistic violence)

Hard (Language): words, expressions or gestures that would considered strongly impolite or offensive in any conversation (ie. c**t, dou**bag, motherf**ker). Would have no valid educational purpose in keeping within text.

Intense: of extreme force or degree (in emotions or actions)

Illegal (drug): drugs that are not prescription or allowed to be legally owed or used in our community (ie meth, heroin, marijuana, cocaine, LSD, etc)

Mild (Profanity): words, expressions, or gestures that would be considered insulting or rude or less than polite in everyday conversation (ie ass, bitch (verb), crap, damn, fucking, piss, etc)

Minimal: a small or negligible amount (in our case less than 5 instances in a full length production)

Occasional: happening sometimes but not often (in our case less than 10 instances in a full length production)

Persistent: happening over a prolonged period (in our case more than 10 instances in a full length production)

Profanity: words, expressions, or gestures that would be considered insulting, rude, impolite, or offensive (see Hard Language, Mild Profanity, and Strong Language)

References: mentioning or alluding to something

Strong (Language): words, expressions, or gestures that would be considered impolite or offensive in everyday conversation (ie. assh**e, bitch (noun), f**k, goddammit, sh*t). May have some valid educational purpose in keeping within text.

Suggested: to show or allude to something