

Shakespeare's Greatest Hits! General Information 2025

Website: www.allgoodstories.com/classes

Email: sghcoordinator@gmail.com

Shakespeare's Greatest Hits (SGH), a high-quality drama class, is open to Christian* students ages 12-18 (with occasional exceptions for younger or older students.) It was created primarily for homeschooled students, but we welcome students from schooled settings. It is an exciting, educational, ten-week course culminating in a performance of selected scenes from two of Shakespeare's best plays, taught by professional actor/storyteller, Christopher Leebrick. Class is limited to 20 students (with occasional exceptions solely at the discretion of the director).

Although SGH is a rigorous program, which demands much of students (and parents), students also consistently report that SGH is one of the most rewarding highlights of their school year. So, while the following information should be taken seriously, please don't allow it to intimidate you. Feel free to ask questions!

Our performance features two plays, selected by Mr. Leebrick. This year our plays will be ***Much Ado About Nothing*** and ***Richard III*** depending on enrollment and Mr. Leebrick's final decision. There are two final performances on the same day: Saturday, March 22, 2025 at 1:00 and at 5:00 PM. Selected scenes are performed at ***both*** performance times from each play, with Mr. Leebrick filling in the narration between scenes. This makes it possible to perform each play in about one hour's time. So, our performances end up being about 2 ½ hours long at both 1:00 and again at 5:00.

All students meet two times during the first week for auditions. By the end of the first week, students are divided into two groups. Starting the second week, each group meets once a week on either Monday or Tuesday, depending on which play they are cast in. Classes are generally 5-6 hours long; The final week of classes all students meet three times including their normal class night, dress rehearsal on Friday, and the performances on Saturday. Final dress rehearsal is 7 hours on Friday. **As we draw near to the performance, practices will often run overtime...occasionally by as much as a full hour or so.** Every effort is made to

notify families of this ahead of time, but longer practices in the last few weeks should be expected, if Mr. Leebrick decides that these would be helpful.

FAQs

Attendance: Attendance at each rehearsal/audition is vital; therefore, students with foreseen conflicts should not take this class. (*This is the theater, and the show must go on!* ☺ *We have a limited amount of time to pull off some quality performances.*) Also, it is imperative that students arrive on time. If you will be late for any reason, or absent due to an emergency, please call our Stage Manager, Estelle Fordyce immediately at (503) 779-8009. Students with unexcused absences or consistent tardiness may lose their part, be “demoted,” or even be dismissed with no refund of tuition.

Attitude: Mr. Leebrick expects that students will come with a good attitude and willing to learn. He expects students to arrive on time, attend each practice, know their lines, and behave professionally. We rarely have any issues with attitude, but – should there be a problem – Mr. Leebrick reserves the right “demote” the student in his/her part, or ask the student to withdraw from the program. If this happens, there will be no refund available, and the student may not be allowed back into the program in future years.

Auditions are held the first week. On these two days, students must be prepared to present a memorized speech or monologue (1-3 minutes in length from *Much Ado About Nothing* or *Richard III*.) Students should choose a monologue which highlights their interest in a particular character. Beginning students need not be terrified of auditions. They are conducted in a very supportive environment! The second day of auditions consists of impromptu readings from the selected plays. (Note: to do their best, students should be as familiar as possible with both plays prior to auditions). One important thing to keep in mind: please do not use an English accent when speaking your lines!

Breaks: A one-week break is built into the class schedule: The program therefore extends over an 11-week period, starting January 6th, 2025, with 10 weeks of actual rehearsal. There will be a 15-20 minute break (approximately) during rehearsals. A light, healthy meal is provided at each rehearsal based on a rotating schedule among participating families. While rehearsals are long, there is usually ample time most weeks for students to relax, watch other students work, and practice on their own.

Students should remember to bring a water bottle, pencil, a notebook, and a full copy of the play in which they are performing to each class.

Carpooling: Students and families are responsible for their own transportation, but we will attempt to help you make car-pooling connections.

Class tuition is \$200 per student. Students are required to place a \$100 deposit down to hold their spot. The class consists of enough hours and instruction to be worth one full Carnegie unit toward high school fine arts requirements ... a great deal! (This is a year's worth of credit for one quarter's worth of a student's time.) At the end of the class, Mr. Leebrick supplies grades for each student, which parents can choose to use on high school transcripts or not.

Costumes - Parents are responsible for supplying their children's rehearsal and performance props and costumes, and for doing so by the appropriate deadlines. However, there is help available for ideas and suggestions, and the students are often able to create their costumes through borrowing from others or by visiting the local Goodwill. Plus, as the program has been running for many years, we have collected many costume pieces that past parents/students have generously donated. This means that we often have costumes or good portions of costumes available to use. So don't let costuming scare you away from a great class!

Day Exceptions: Students who take the class must be willing and available to be cast in either group. No day preferences are normally considered. Casting will determine which group a student is in (and therefore what day they will be attending rehearsals.) If you have a day conflict, you will be placed on a waiting-list. If the class does not fill by a week before the first class, you may be admitted to the class even with your day conflict. So, if you are interested, and have a day conflict, you should still fill out your materials and send in a deposit. The deposit will be returned to you should you not get a place in the program.

Day Preferences: We also ask that you not specify a day preference. If you can come on either day, then preferences cannot be considered. If you do get in with a day *exception*, then you must understand that it *may* affect your casting, and you *may* get a less desirable part.

First Day Welcome Meeting: On the first day of auditions, students should attend with a parent (if possible) for a meeting during the first hour or so of class. During

this time, you will be able to meet Mr. Leebrick, ask questions, and hear about the class and our expectations. During this meeting, parents will be given an opportunity to sign up for volunteer jobs. Parents are always welcome to attend rehearsals.

Parent Involvement - SGH requires substantial parent involvement. We put on a great show, and we could not do it without your help. ☺ We will need help with Ad Sales Coordination, Show Day Coordination (Backstage and Lobby), Costumes, Cast Party and Between-Show Coordination. More details will be provided at the first rehearsal. Between us all, we can make it happen!

Program Advertising and Ticket Sales - To help cover the costs of SGH, each student is responsible for selling two advertising spots for the play program. This will not be difficult--think of it as selling cookies during baseball or soccer seasons--and will be discussed in detail around the third or fourth week of rehearsal. SGH families also help with ticket sales by encouraging attendance from extended family and friends. The show is usually quite entertaining and a great time for young and old!

Performance Tickets – There are no complimentary (free) tickets for performances. All family members, including parents and friends, are required to purchase tickets.

Roles: There is no guarantee of females playing female roles, since there are very few female roles in Shakespeare's plays. In fact, female students should sign up expecting to play a male role. If it works out otherwise, it will be a nice surprise!

Siblings: There can be no guarantee of siblings being placed in the same group (on the same day); although when casting makes it possible, Mr. Leebrick will try to accommodate siblings being in the same group.

Questions or Concerns?

Most questions regarding ***Shakespeare's Greatest Hits*** should be directed to SGH Coordinator, Joanne Applegate (these include logistics, auditions, enrollment, money, etc.) at (503) 277-9074 (call or text) or e-mail: sghcoordinator@gmail.com.

Estelle Fordyce will serve as SGH Stage Manager this year. She is an SGH alumni herself, and we are excited to have her. You can contact her at (503) 779-8009. Please

contact Estelle about attendance issues (please try not to have any! ☺) We will miss our beloved Katie Minter as Stage Manager, but wish her all the best.

Questions or comments about acting, direction, or the play itself should be directed to Mr. Leebbrick at chris@allgoodstories.com or 503-656-9567.

If in doubt, please contact Mrs. Appelgate or Estelle first!

* While the class will be taught with a Christian worldview, there is no statement of faith to sign or specific religious requirements for enrollment.

**Deposits are only refundable due to a true emergency. What constitutes an emergency will be decided by SGH based on information supplied by the family. Families should consider the deposit to be fully NON-refundable under most circumstances.

Director's Biography - Christopher Leebbrick is a professional theatre artist (actor, storyteller, director, and teacher). He has also published his first book, "The Art and Craft of Telling Stories"! He graduated with honors from the Drama program at UC-Irvine and also studied theatre at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He is the former artistic director of the *Lord Leebbrick Theatre Company* in Eugene. As an actor, he has portrayed major stage roles ranging from Shakespeare to modern drama and musical comedy. As an award-winning storyteller he performs at schools, libraries, festivals, churches and campfires throughout Oregon and beyond. He created *Shakespeare's Greatest Hits!* for homeschooled students in Eugene in 1993, and has directed the Woodburn program from 1999-2022, and now in Mt. Angel since 2024. He currently resides in West Linn and is married with two grown children. www.allgoodstories.com