

Music / Piano Director

Overview

We sing a lot at camp. We sing in the mornings, we sing at meals, we sing at campfire, and of course; we sing at Drama! The most basic description of your role at Tamakwa is to work closely with the Drama Director to provide musical accompaniment to camp. This includes playing music with the campers, helping them learn songs, and helping with other aspects of the drama department. As well, you will be responsible for playing the national anthem in the mornings and accompaniment to evening sing songs.

In summary, you should be prepared to be a “pianist on demand”. A strong ear in folk, jazz, classical, and everything in between is helpful. The better your sight-reading and transposing skills are the easier this job is. Improvising over a wide variety of styles is also helpful.

Daily Tasks

Meditation - At the end of breakfast the music director will play a short tune on the piano for meditation. This is a 30 second to a minute long improvised piece that allows campers and staff a moment to prepare for the day ahead. Occasionally another staff member or camper may volunteer to do meditation.

Anthems - Following meditation is “flag raising” where the music director will play both the Canadian and American national anthems.

Plays - For each month’s two plays, the music director will practice and rehearse music and songs with the campers. You will be working primarily out of the Rec Hall. You will be given the opportunity to help teach campers their songs for each performance. If scenes are being blocked by the Drama Director, then moving to the dining hall piano is always available for practising. An overture to each musical is highly encouraged... just improvise and arrange a few musical selections. Aside from music-related things, help out the Drama Director when and where needed from child wrangling to painting sets.

Evening Program is the allocated time for a night time activity for all of the campers. It is usually organized by the program directors or the Activity Leaders. You will often be asked to spice these up with music or humour in general. Keep a binder of pop music chords handy just in case.

Planning the Play

Working closely with the Drama Director to create rehearsal schedule for individual choice periods is an important and ongoing task. The first few days of each month are dedicated towards auditions for both plays. Auditions for musicals are quite simple and take place within the first few days of a session.

-For the little ones, theatre games are encouraged to see who is shy and who can act/interpret/follow directions. Call backs can be easy by having them sing “Happy Birthday” or “Twinkle Twinkle” to hear who can carry a tune.

- For all senior campers you can, have them sing in groups of 5 or less and do a cold read. One last scheduling note: work with campers to see what periods work best for them but also keep in mind that campers may have to miss those periods - the show really comes together in 5 days as certain other camp programs interrupt the daily routine.

There will be many more times in camp that we will need you including Twilight and hubby hub drums circles, I am sure this sounds like nonsense now, but fear not, this will all be explained when you arrive at camp

Awards

There are no awards in your activity, so no need to worry! But you will help the Drama Director select those award recipients.

Staff

Outside of the staff who work at your activity, we encourage you and the Drama Director to think outside the box! If you see other staff members who can sing, use them! Some staff members may have experience outside of camp with plays and choreography or maybe set-design, feel free to ask around and ask for help!

Safety

While we always encourage campers and staff to have fun at everything they do, safety is paramount. Though Drama is usually a fairly physically safe activity compared for example to our water sports, emotional safety is something you should always keep in mind. Being on stage is often more scary for kids than diving off the tower. It is your job to keep the kids from getting into conflicts and provide a safe environment for them to rehearse. Encourage campers to step out of their comfort zone, and validate those who are encouraging and positive. This will help to create a positive learning and working space for your campers and staff.

Setting rules and guidelines in the rec hall will also keep the campers at your activity safe. Be sure to set boundaries and make sure all staff know and enforce the rules. Some suggested rules could be

- using the stairs instead of jumping on the stage)
- no running backstage
- no touching the equipment without permission

Summary

We know this is a lot of information. We do not expect you to memorize all of it. We do expect you to read it, take notes, and ask questions! We hope you are as excited as we are to have you with us on South Tea!