



# PERFORMING ARTS

Project Guide  
Level 2

## **The 4-H Motto**

*"Learn to Do by Doing"*

## **The 4-H Pledge**

*I pledge*

*My **Head** to clearer thinking,*

*My **Heart** to greater loyalty,*

*My **Hands** to larger service,*

*My **Health** to better living,*

*For my club, my community, and my country.*

## **The 4-H Grace**

(Tune of Auld Lang Syne)

*We thank thee, Lord, for blessings great  
on this, our own fair land.*

*Teach us to serve thee joyfully,  
with head, heart, health and hand.*

*Written by*

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# INDEX

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What is 4-H.....	1
Performing Arts Introduction.....	2
Act 2: Flow Chart.....	4
Act 2: Scene 1: The Theatre .....	5
Act 2: Scene 2: Movement .....	9
Act 2: Scene 3: The Script .....	13
Act 2: Scene 4: Voice.....	17
Act 2: Scene 5: Character .....	21
Act 2: Scene 6: Acting .....	25
Act 2: Scene 7: Directing.....	29
Act 2: Scene 8: Technical Theatre.....	33
Resources.....	37
Tongue Twisters.....	40





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# WHAT IS 4-H?

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*4-H is a youth organization for young people between the ages of 9 and 20.*

4-H strives to provide members with the opportunity to:

- Acquire knowledge in the chosen project area
- Develop leadership skills
- Learn to communicate effectively
- Grow personally through increased self esteem
- Grow socially by interacting with other youth in the community, in Alberta, and in Canada

4-H administers over 30 different projects. Projects vary from the traditional agriculture orientated focus such as Beef clubs, to Craft clubs, to projects aimed at Environmental Protection to Computer and Web Design study. Performing Arts is the latest addition to the list of project opportunities.

4-H is more than just a local club. 4-H provides:

- Camp opportunities
- Inter club competitions
- Inter club personal skill development sessions
- Travel and Exchange trips
- Travel awards,
- Scholarships

## Requirements of a 4-H Member

4-H requires a commitment from members. Each year all 4-H members must:

- Register as a 4-H member and pay appropriate dues
- Attend 70 percent of club functions and meetings
- Complete a record book of years activities
- Take part in an achievement day project
- Take part in a communication activity

## Further Information

For additional information on the Alberta 4-H program contact the Provincial 4-H office:

Edmonton: 780 422-4H4H

or any regional 4-H office:

Lethbridge: 403 381-5167

Stettler: 403 742-7548

Barrhead: 780 674-8248

Fairview: 780 835-7537





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# INTRODUCTION

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## *Welcome to the wonderful world of performing arts!*

The 4-H Performing Arts Project is designed to introduce you to the skills, knowledge, and to build your confidence to a level which will allow you to perform in front of an audience.

The 4-H Performing Arts Project is multi-year project with a different performing art skill featured each year - be it the telling of the story, the writing of a play, or the presentation of a professional script. The skills which you will practice throughout this year will assist you in any type of performance and not just the activity you will be working on this year.

You will find the skills you learn will not only help you on stage but will improve the skills you need and use in every day life: communication, confidence, concentration, creativity, commitment.... and these are only the ones starting with the letter C. This project will make a huge difference in the quality of your life, and the lives of those around you.

For this to happen we need some guideposts. Like someone setting off on a road trip, we need to know some things if we are to arrive at our intended destination.

First we have to know where we are going. In the 4-H Performing Arts Project our destination can be described as:

Developing an appreciation for Performing Arts:

- Finding out what theatre and drama is all about
- Experiencing and participating in various types of presentations
- Increasing our ability to enjoy other's performances

Learning performing arts skills which include:

- Developing and improving our body and voice communication skills
- Gaining the ability to develop a story and bringing that story to life on a stage
- Learning how to create and share a character with an audience

Gaining the ability to work with others:

- Cooperatively staging a production
- Learning respect, empathy and acceptance of other's ideas and abilities
- Critiquing other's work without conflict or damaging criticism

And most importantly to increase our skills and knowledge in the areas of:

- Self image
- Self confidence
- Concentration
- Imagination
- Observation
- Organization
- Problem solving

To reach our destination we must know where we are starting from. For many members of our club this will be their first experience with any type of performance. Other members will have spent many hours on stage, singing in a choir, or speaking in public. Each year we will have new members joining our club who will not have the experience senior members of the club will have gained in past years and performances. So like a school bus picking up students at different stops, people will be joining us with a different experiences. But we are all going to end up at the same place at the end of the year.



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We also need a vehicle which can accommodate our wide range of skills, abilities, and experiences to reach our destination. As a club we want to journey together. So we will all work on the same basic skills a performer needs each year. This does not mean the project will be boring for senior members however. While we will be working on the same skills, we will be practicing these skills through different games and activities. These new games will both introduce new skills to someone who has never performed before as well as build on the skills of a senior member who is a seasoned performer. Every club gathering will be new and exciting. Our vehicle is like your family car. You may have the same car for a number of years and you could go to the same place every summer for a holiday in that car. But if you drove a different road each time, the holiday would be different each year.

Finally, just as there must be rules of the road, there are rules for the 4-H Performing Arts Project to make sure we reach our destination together, safely:

1. Participation – You cannot build performing arts skills by just reading a book, or talking, or listening. **YOU MUST DO IT.** This is why most of the project is activities and games. Everyone is expected to participate.
2. Acceptance – Performing is a creative art form, as such, people are not wrong and should not be criticized for their work. Learn to encourage and direct a person rather than criticize.
3. Emotional Safety – You can seriously hurt a person with words and actions (which you may have said just to be funny). So in all games and activities use your imagination to develop new characters rather than portraying or discussing neighbors, friends or fellow members.
4. Physical Safety Performing is a very demanding, physical activity and as such extreme care must be taken. Do not attempt things which you physically cannot do or which you do not feel safe doing. Do not use technical equipment for lights, sound, stagecraft, or even makeup without proper training and supervision. Never use open flame, fire, or flammable materials on stage. Never use firearms, knives, swords or other dangerous objects without proper authorization, instruction and expert supervision.
5. Behavior – You must follow all directions of your adult leaders of the 4-H Performing Arts Program. Use respect.

*So come on in, and take part in the 4-H Performing Arts Program*



	SCENE 1 THEATRE	SCENE 2 MOVEMENT	SCENE 3 SCRIPTING	SCENE 4 SPEAKING	SCENE 5 CHARACTER	SCENE 6 ACTING	SCENE 7 DIRECTING	SCENE 8 TECHNICAL
SUGGESTED DATE	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
BACK STAGE BUSINESS	Organize Club Elect Officers	Business Meeting Christmas Party?	Business Meeting	Business Meeting Public Speaking	Business Meeting	Business Meeting Plan Opening Night	Business Meeting Plan Opening Night	Business Meeting Opening Night Awards?
ROLL CALL	Own Name	Name of Alberta Theatre Group	Name of Person	Nursery Rhyme Character	Accent of Phase	Your Character's Objective	One Prop I Need	A Technical Effect Needed
WARM UP EXERCISE	Where Do I Belong	Its Me	Name Circle	Breathing	Character Walking	Energy Ball	Stage Directions	Technical Theatre Speaker Opening Night Rehearsal
REVIEW LAST MONTHS WORK				Public Speaking				
REHEARSAL EXERCISES	Pass The Squeeze Sensing Space Imaginary Ball Transforming Object Add A Piece	Explosion Tag Contrast Moving Group Movement Human Knot	Story Construction One Word Action Words Word Scripts	Nursery Rhyme Monologues Nursery Rhyme Reviews Emotion Nursery Rhymes Message Review	Neutral Conflict Open Scene Opening Night	Trust Tilts Bus Stop Opening Night Rehearsal	Body Positions Tableau Opening Night Rehearsal	
REVIEW MEETING								
CURTAIN CALL ASSIGNMENT	Opening Night Plan, Theatres	People Involved in Theatre	Nursery Rhyme Messages	Character for Message Delivery	Lines for Message Delivery	Property List	Technical Effects Needed	Complete Diary
SCRIPT	Remind members each meeting to read and complete Scripts							

Public Speaking Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Opening Night Date: \_\_\_\_\_

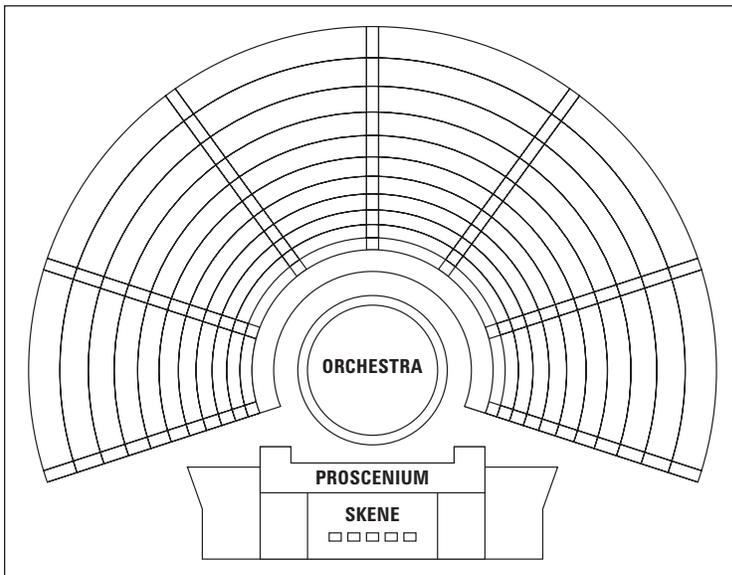
Extra Opening Night Rehearsal Dates: \_\_\_\_\_

# ACT 2: SCENE 1: THE THEATRE

Theatre may be man's earliest form of group communication. Historians believe stone age man re-enacted hunts around the fire to share their story of the hunt with other tribe members. History tells us ancient civilizations held elaborate ceremonies using costumes, masks, and movement to "communicate" with deities and supernatural forces. We know theatre has been a part of all civilizations throughout history and continues in all cultures of the world today. Theatre is not new nor is it only found in western civilizations!

The physical theatre as we know it today had its roots in ancient Greece. Large, hillside amphitheatres (the largest seated 20,000 people) allowed the players (known as the "*chorus*") to chant lines in the centre of the amphitheatre in what was known as the "*orchestra*". There was no raised stage as we identify theatre by today.

*Picture of ancient Greek theatre*



During the height of the Greek empire the plays were primarily tragedies. Theatre tends to act as a release for society. When the times were good for the people of Greece they enjoyed the dark dramas. As Greek society declined comedies were introduced and accepted by the people as a diversion from their daily frustrations.

When the Roman empire rose to replace the fallen Greek society the Romans carried on the theatre tradition. They introduced the raised stage for the players, introduced movement by the players, and the playwrights created huge spectacles that the people flocked to see. However, the Christian Church disapproved of these lavish events and outlawed theatre as the Roman empire fell.

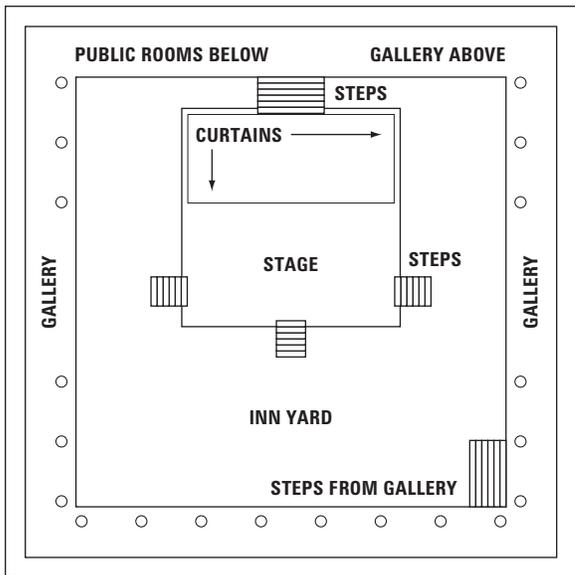
Strangely, the Christian Church was the force that revived western theatre. The Church needed to establish itself in communities so it began to re-enact religious stories (such as the nativity story) in the local churches. The success the church had in drawing people to see these stories led to the church moving the plays out of the church building and into the area in front of the church to accommodate the crowds. Soon local issues were being included in the plays.

Stable society in the 15th and the 16th century prompted society to rediscover the works of ancient Greece and Rome. These plays were presented on raised stages built in the courtyards of local inns. Galleries were constructed on three sides of the stage to seat the audience. People not only sat in these galleries around the stage; but they even sat on the edges of the stage as well.





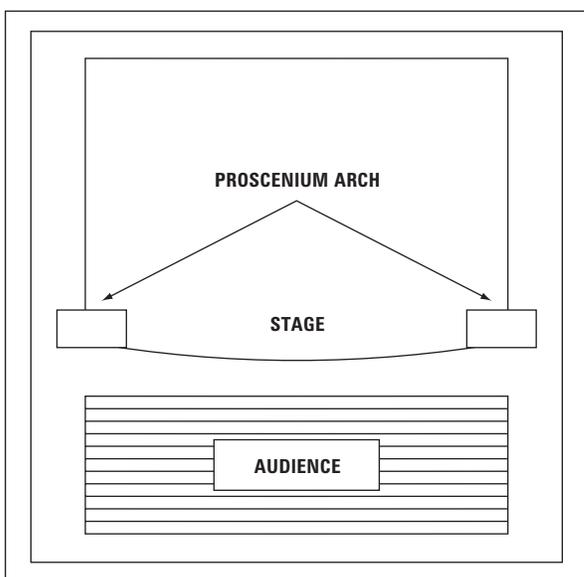
Picture of English theatre



Theatre gradually lost the religious tone and focused instead on loyalty to society and government. But the upheaval of governments in Europe during the 16th century resulted in playwrights fearing for their lives over what they wrote so religious and political topics were avoided. The great playwright William Shakespeare rose to fame in this period.

In 1642 the English parliament outlawed theatre so France began to dominate the western theatre scene. In French theatre costumes, dance, set, and scenery was the focus. The physical appearance became more important than the acting and the script. Nobility began to take note of these lavish productions so the theatre moved indoors for the comfort of the upper classes. This was the beginning of the *proscenium* stage as we know it today.

Picture and description of typical proscenium stage.





Two other major changes occurred in theatre in the late 17th century. For the first time women were allowed to perform on stage. Before this time young boys played the female roles. Second: The audience was forbidden to sit on the stage. The stage in front of the proscenium gradually disappeared. The audience was now seated only on one side of the stage.

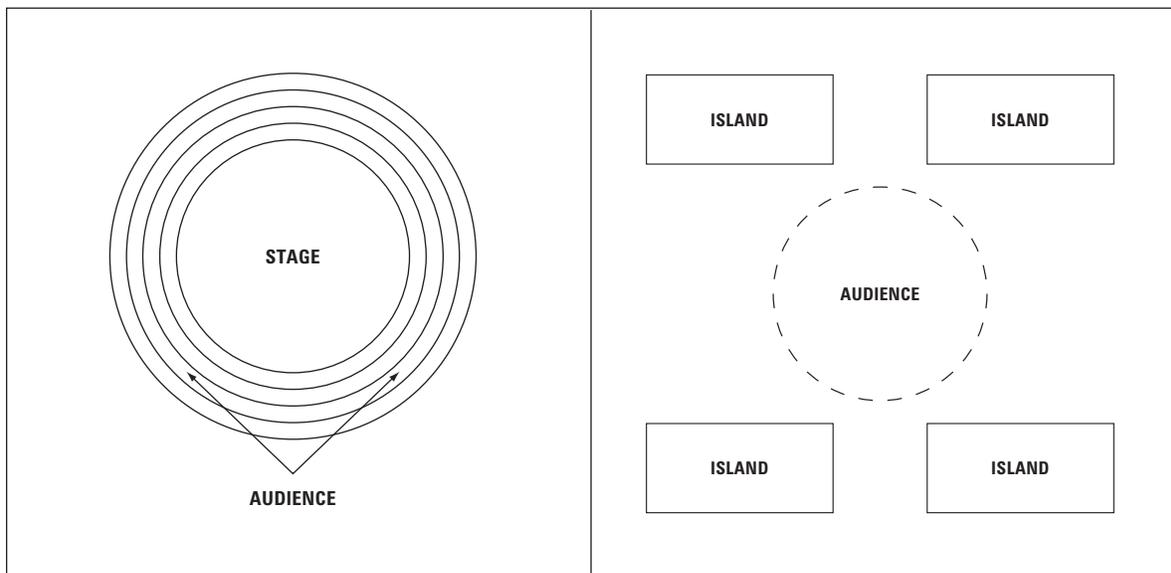
Gradually industrialists, then merchants, and finally the average person were drawn back to the theatre. They wanted to see the attractions that only the nobility had enjoyed for about 200 years. Playwrights began writing for this new audience of commoners incorporating common words and phrases and using natural speaking and movement styles.

The industrial revolution brought major changes to the theatre. Lighting was introduced. Revolving stages, elevators, and flying systems for changing scenery allowed for new writing styles. *Realism*, *naturalism*, *symbolism*, and *impressionism* are examples of terms used to describe different writing styles of playwrights and the shows that they produced.

Progress also challenged the theatre. The invention of film resulted in people choosing to go to movie houses rather than the theatre. The theatre responded with huge musicals to compete with this new entertainment form. Unfortunately, small communities could not host these large productions on their small stages, nor afford them. So many community theatres were converted to movie houses.

Still, theatre lovers wanted live theatre and "little" theatres began to appear. Today we know them as community theatres. These are amateur groups whose goal is to perform, promote, and celebrate live theatre. While very few members of amateur groups ever go on to become professionals, they certainly take pride in their theatres.

### *Other Modern Stage Types*



Theatre is alive and well across Alberta today. Theatre Alberta has a record of professional theatres, and amateur or community groups and there are more small theatre groups that have not members of Theatre Alberta.

What theatre groups can you find which are operating in your community or neighbouring community? What type of shows do they put on? When do they put on shows? Find out as much information as you can about theatre groups in your community or in neighboring communities.



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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 2: MOVEMENT

Movement means more than just walking across a stage. Movement refers to any physical activity in a performance. Movement may be as dramatic as a staged sword fight or as simple as sitting down in a chair. Here are common forms of movement found in most plays.

## Entrances and Exits

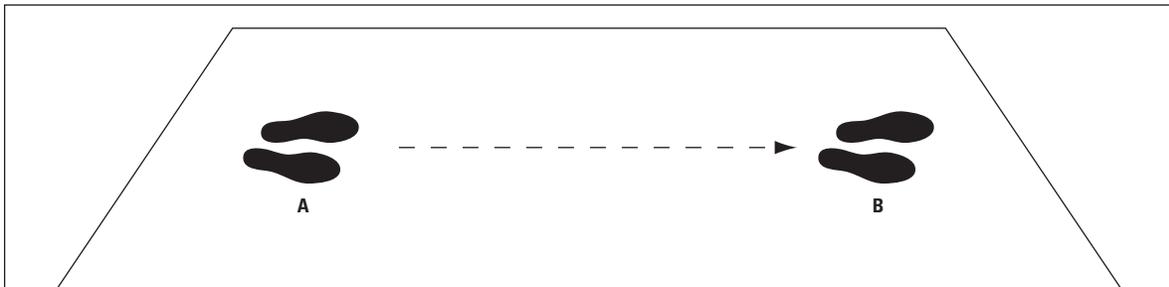
Most theatre productions have people coming on the stage to deliver some lines and then leaving. When an actor comes on stage it is called his entrance. When he leaves it is called his exit. Entrances and exits are very important to the show so they are always indicated in the script's stage directions. The way an actor moves onto or off of the stage will have a big impact on an audience. The way a burglar enters through the door of a house is much different from the homeowner entering through the same door after a long, hard day at work. Both of these characters will enter quite differently than a child running in through the door with the news he made the school team. An actor must enter the stage as the character he is portraying. If he is playing the part of someone who is young and excited he must enter as a young excited person. Acting does not start on stage or with the actor's first line. It starts well before the actor's entrance and continues until well after the actor exits the stage.

## Crosses

This term refers to an actor moving from place to place on stage. He may move from left to right across the stage, from the back of the stage to the front, or at any angle across the stage. He may cross to get to an object, to go to another person, or to move to a specific spot on the stage. The important thing to remember is he must always have a reason to make the cross before he does it.

### *Direct Cross*

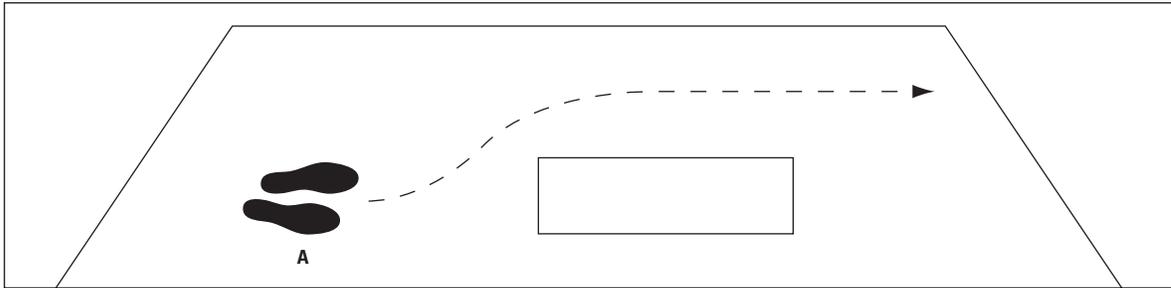
If the actor moves directly to the person, object, or spot it is known as a *direct cross*. A direct cross is a very strong movement. It adds strength to a character. Since this movement is strong, the stop at the end of the movement should be strong as well. You should not move your feet, or adjust your body once you reach your destination. Strong characters using a direct cross always try to pass in front of other actors on stage so they remain in the view of the audience at all times.



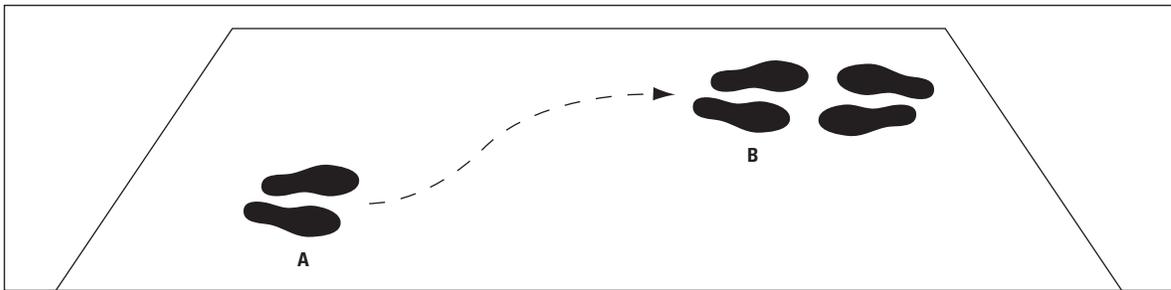


### *Curved Cross*

Direction must sometimes be altered do to avoid obstructions, or other actors. This requires a curved cross.



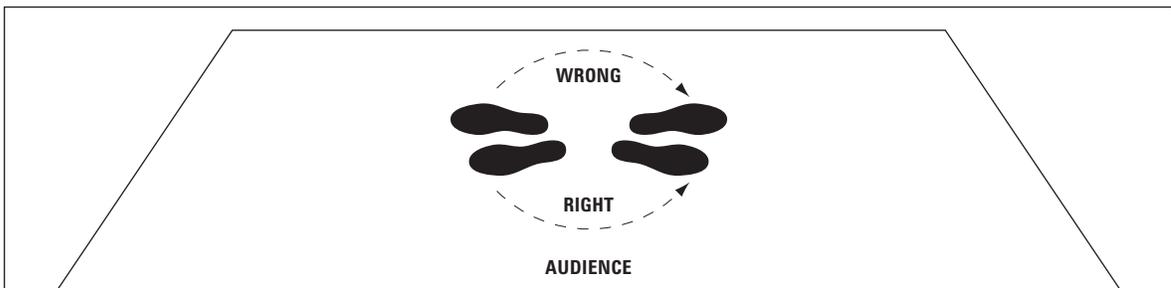
A curved cross is also used to position an actor so he will be able to speak to another actor without either of them having their backs to an audience.



### *Face the Audience*

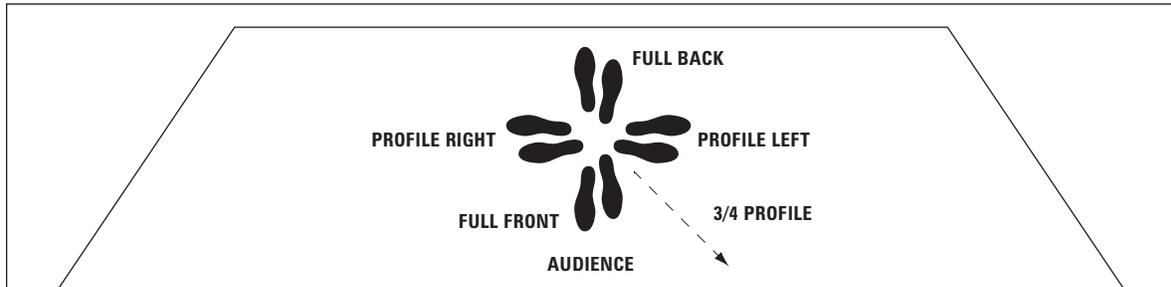
If an actor has his back to the audience it weakens his character. It also hides the actor's face and expressions from the audience. The actor's face is the best way the actor has to show his reactions and emotions. However, the biggest problem caused by facing away from the audience is an actor will lose the ability to project his voice at the audience. In fact, in a large theatre an actor might not be heard by the audience if he is not facing towards them.

For these same reasons actors must take care when turning on stage. Since actors rarely want their backs to the audience turns should be made so you turn facing the audience rather than turning so your back appears to the audience.





When standing on a stage an actor can stand fully facing the audience, facing full away from the audience, sideways to the audience (*profile*) or at any angle between these positions.



The strongest acting position is full frontal. The weakest is full away. Typically actors attempt to remain 3/4 profile or better. A trick you can use to make sure you remain turned to the audience is to keep the downstage foot (the foot closest to the audience) slightly behind the upstage foot (the one furthest from the audience). A stance with the downstage foot slightly back of the upstage foot turns the body and opens the body to the audience. This stance is also comfortable and provides good balance and allows a wide range of motion. This stance also encourages turning correctly. Without even thinking you will turn through the audience because you cannot naturally turn away from the audience without moving your feet.

Here are some other basic theatre terms that define movements. See how many of these you can find out the meaning they have in theatre.

*Freeze*

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*Focus*

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*Gesture*

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*Alignment*

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*Choreographed Routine*

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*Shape*

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*Space*

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*Warm-up*

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*Direction*

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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 3: THE SCRIPT

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In act 1 we concentrated on the telling of a historical *topical documentary*. But a playwright can use other forms and methods to present a message to an audience. It is these styles we want to look at this year.

A playwright can tell the same story in a number of different ways. He may want to write a story that is funny. A *comedy* is a story whose main purpose is to amuse an audience. This does not mean comedy cannot carry a message. In fact most comedies comment on some aspect of life. Not all comedies are the same. There is a great deal of difference between the comedy of the TV shows *Three's Company* and *Frazier*. The humour in *Three's Company* is much more obvious. The humour is often gross and does not require a lot of thought to be understood. The audience does not have too sophisticated in order to understand the humour. In theatre terms, this type of comedy is called *low comedy*.

*High comedy* requires an audience who understands the irony in interactions between people and extremes people go to preserve the social order and conventions. The audience must be able to recognize these interactions exist and the behaviour they are watching on stage varies from the normal or the expected.

This is not to say one form of comedy is better than the other. It will simply appeal to different audiences. People who enjoy one type of comedy, may or may not enjoy the other type.

When trying to write either form of comedy, there are a number of ways to create humour:

- **Superiority of observer:** In this style of writing the audience feels superior to the characters on stage. They would never do what the character on stage is doing. They may feel they are smarter, or better than the character the actor is portraying.
- **Incongruity:** The audience never expects to see the character on stage being placed in that situation.
- **Sharing of Similar Experiences:** In this type of comedy the audience members find they have been in a similar situation in their own lives and much of the laughter is from remembering their own situation.
- **Turn of Phrase:** This humour results for the line itself. The phrase, if said properly, is humorous on its own. This type of humour requires an actor and director willing to try saying each line of the script various ways in order to discover the most humorous way of delivering it.

**Exercise:** Can you list an example of each of these types of humour?

## Farce

There is another style of humour which most people label comedy but which is really a type all of its own. This type of humour is called *farce*. A farce is highly exaggerated, almost to the point of unbelievability. Using our TV example *The Simpsons* would be an example of a farce.

## Tragedy

If a play is not a comedy or a farce then most people consider the play to be a drama. A drama is any play that presents a serious consideration of the subject matter to an audience. But there are difference forms of drama. A *tragedy* is the most serious. Typically in a tragedy a person with unquestionable standards sets out on a lofty goal only to fail or die. A true tragedy will result in an audience feeling fear and pity for the character who has failed. This was the main style of ancient Greek theatre and since that time few real tragedies have been written.





## Melodrama

At the other end of the drama scale lies *melodrama*. This type of production is not seeking to move or persuade an audience but is simply interested in shocking or exciting theatre patrons. The villain tying the heroine to the railroad tracks jumps to mind when we talk to melodrama. We are never told why the villain is tying the heroine to the tracks. A clue the show may be a melodrama is background music is used to add suspense or sorrow to a scene.

## Drama

Between these extremes lies the style referred to as *drama*. By definition a drama presents a problem and then attempts to evoke a predicted response from an audience.

## Fantasy

The opposite of a documentary show is a *fantasy*. This type of play asks the audience to consider something that has never occurred and likely never will. A fantasy the shows us what would happen if this could occur. An example of a fantasy is Peter Pan.

## All Have the Same Ingredients

No matter what type of play is written there are common characteristics between all types.

- There must be a *plot*. Plot refers to the story line. A playwright wants to order the events he is using to tell his story such that the audience will have the greatest reaction.
- There must be *characters*. Characters are the on-stage personalities which the actors assume to tell the story to the audience.
- Most plays has two primary characters. The *protagonist* is the character who keeps advancing the plot. Typically the protagonist is the hero. Opposite the protagonist is the *antagonist*. This character impedes the action in the play.
- A play may have other supporting characters. Each supporting character will play a specific role. See if you can find out what each of these types of characters contributes toward a performance: *Utilitarian Character, Confidant, Raissonneur, Narrator, Typical Personages, Delightful Eccentric*.
- All characters must have an *objective*. Objective is what the character wants. In order for the play to make sense, everything the character does must be done so he is closer to reaching his objective. The audience must be understand what each character's objective is.
- A play always contains *conflict*. The conflict between a protagonist and antagonist is usually clear and well understood. There may be additional conflict in the play that should be explored as well. There may be secondary conflict between other characters. You may have conflict between a character and the environment. Some plays even deal with internal conflict within a character.
- *Language or diction* is of prime concern to a playwright. Words are one of the main ways an actor has to express himself. A playwright must be careful that the words he writes fit the character he is writing the words for.
- The playwright must also concern himself about *mood*. Mood refers to the emotional state you wish to expose the audience to. A love story will have a much different mood than a documentary style play.
- *Pace* is a very important consideration when writing or producing a script. Pace refers to the speed at which characters speak and move. While pace is principally a directing term, the playwright must be aware of pace when writing the script. The playwright must decide at what speed actions and words should be delivered to give the most emphasis to the message. This decision will influence the words and stage directions a playwright puts on paper.
- Anyone who has ever written anything knows there must be *structure*. In other words there must be a shape to the script. There must be a beginning, middle and end with action rising from the initial incidence to a climax and then an ending.



## Style

Not all playwrights give the same weight to all of these characteristics. Some playwrights place more emphasis on language. Others give the character and mood more attention. The way playwrights write is largely determined by their environment. This broad division of writing is known as the *style*. Generally the formal, simple, yet grand style of writing of the ancient Greeks is known as *Classic*. The Shakespearean writings have become part of the *Romantic* style. *Realistic* writing replaced the romantic period and describes most plays written today.

Today the realistic style is the most common because modern theatre only gives a playwright a couple of hours to deliver his message to the audience. The playwright has little time to say things that do not advance the story. Messages tend to apply to daily life of the audience so the playwright tries to present a real life picture on stage.

There are other styles of writing which modern playwrights use to deliver their messages. Playwrights may write in naturalism, impressionism, formalism, or expressionism to name a few.

## Try This

If you want to become a playwright, the first thing you must do is study work of other playwrights. Choose a play, or if no play is available choose a book or even your favourite TV show. See if you can figure out the following things about the play, book, or TV show you have chosen to study.

- What is the plot?
- Who is the protagonist? Who is the antagonist?
- What is the objective of each of these characters?
- What is the conflict between the characters?
- What is the purpose of any other character in the play?
- What type of play is this and in what style is it written?
- If it is not a play you choose to study, could this be performed on a stage? What scene changes would be needed and how could they be done on a stage?



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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 4: VOICE

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The biggest frustration for an audience at a theatre or concert is being unable to hear or understand the performer. An audience will quickly lose interest in a show if they cannot hear. Members of the audience who cannot hear will often ask the people around them what is happening. The resulting talk by audience members means even fewer people will hear what the performer is saying. The actor who fails to reach a few members of the audience will ultimately be responsible for many people missing significant parts of the performance.

## Projection

All performers must practice *voice projection*. This is the ability to fill the entire audience space with your voice. Projection means talking loud enough so everyone in the theater can hear you. Projection includes aligning your body so your voice is directed to the audience. Even though an actor is talking to another character on stage he wants to address his words to the audience. Rarely will an actor ever speak a line while facing away from the audience because the actor knows his line will be lost in the set.

## Variety

Variety of voice is another characteristic all actors must work on. Just being loud is not good enough. The actor who says every word and sentence in the same loud voice throughout an entire performance becomes boring. In our daily conversations we speak with varying volume depending upon who we are speaking to, who else might be listening, what we are saying, and the emotion that accompanies the words. An actor must have the ability to vary their voice on stage. He must be able to shout if angry or speak in a whisper if telling a secret. However, unlike a whisper between two people in real life, the actor must be able to whisper in a voice that another actor a few feet away on the stage appears not to hear yet everyone else in the theatre hears without difficulty.

## Tone

Besides varying volume, an actor must also be able to vary the tone of their voice. We have all listened to someone who speaks for a long period of time in the same tone of voice. We call this speaking in monotone. Someone who does not vary the pitch and volume of the voice again loses the attention of the audience.

You can hear these differences if you listen to the way people speak in everyday life. If you stand by a lunch counter or snack bar you will hear difference in the way food is ordered. Some people will order with a tone which is almost apologetic. Others will ask in a tone which is rushed. Some people will be so demanding it sounds almost like a military order.

## Curtain call exercise:

Go to a fast food court in a mall and sit at a table where you can hear the orders being given. For each order write down an adjective for the way the person gave the order. For example: demanding, friendly, apologetic, coolly. See how many different ways of ordering you hear. If you do not have a mall, a fast food restaurant may have tables close to the order counter. Or you might stand and listen as people pay for tickets at a movie theatre, or at an amusement park ride or at a public sporting event where admission tickets are sold. Other business establishments where the customer places an order or makes a request of the staff may also work however most businesses do not appreciate someone standing around the cash register. You should ask permission before trying this in a business setting.





## Pitch

You may note the pitch of a person's voice changes when orders are given. If you listen carefully you may find those who order with a voice that drops in pitch from the first syllable spoken to the last syllable sound rude or demanding. On the other hand, those people whose voice starts out low and rises in pitch sound as if they are asking a question. Try saying: "Two tickets please." Now say this again starting with a normal voice and dropping the pitch as you speak. Say it again with a rising pitch. Can you hear a difference? This is referred to as a *falling or rising inflection*.

## Emphasis

Besides varying the pitch, a good speaker also varies the emphasis on individual words. He does this by slightly varying the volume and speed of important words. Say this line: "That's far enough!" Say it a couple of times. Does each word get the same emphasis? Now say it with more strength, and by stretching the word far. Do you hear the increased meaning you get by emphasizing the word far? Many people exaggerate normal speaking by elongating the vowels in important words. For example: "I LOOOOOOOVE IT!" This style of speech may be required to play certain characters.

When you are adding emphasis to a word you must be very careful not to change the meaning of what you are saying. The book "Acting An Introduction" by Bowskill looks at the sentence "I know you like your red shoes." In normal conversation the emphasis would be on "know," "like," and "red shoes." However, if you place the emphasis on other words in this sentence then the intent of the statement changes. See if you see the difference author Bowskill describes when you say each sentence with the emphasis on the word that is in bold.

I **know** you like your red shoes

Normal pattern.

I know you like your red shoes

Speaker knows something others may not know.

I **know** you like your red shoes

Special affirmation of speaker's knowledge.

I know **you** like your red shoes

You may like them but others may not.

I know you **like** your red shoes

While you like them that is not good enough.

I know you like **your** red shoes

You like your red shoes only because they are yours.

I know you like your **red** shoes

But none of your other shoes?

I know you like your red **shoes**

But not because they are red.

It is these subtle differences in meaning that the audience hears that determine how an audience will respond to the action on stage. So we must learn the meanings of the words we are saying first. Then we must say the words in a manner that will express the meaning we want the audience to hear. Not all audiences will respond in the same way to the same expression and the same words. It is up to the actor and director to determine the best way to express each sentence to convey the intended meaning to a particular audience.

Individual words can have their meaning changed by putting the accent on different syllables. Consider the word rebel. If you put the accent on **rebel** you have a noun that refers to a person who opposes authority. If you place the accent on **rebel** you have a verb that means to resist. As a curtain call assignment, try to find other words which have different meanings depending on how the word is accented.



## Accent or Dialect

There is a strong temptation for actors to play a character with an accent or dialect. For example: If the setting of the play is London many actors want to speak with in an English dialect. But which English accent do you use? The Queens English? Cockney? Liverpool? Welsh? We have all heard the Texas drawl. Yet this is not representative of the way all people speak in the United States. The people of the Maritimes speak differently than those in western Canada. Even in the Maritimes there are vast differences in speech between the provinces.

Rarely is an accent absolutely necessary for a performance. As a rule, the better the writing and the script the less important is the need for the accent. Accents are like icing on the cake. It adds to the presentation in looks and flavor but rarely adds nutritional value.

If you decide to use a dialect here are some key points to remember:

- The entire script must be presented in the accent. You cannot just use the odd word here and there and expect the presentation to be believable.
- All characters must have the same accent, unless they are playing a role of a character of a different ethnic group or from a different place or environment.
- All characters must be proficient with the accent. A poor accent is much more distracting than no accents at all.

The best way of learning an accent is to find a person who speaks with the dialect you want to use, and work with that person. Listen to their voice carefully. Listen to their words, tone, and rhythm. Watch their face to see movement of the lips, and mouth as words are formed. Have the person who is helping you with the dialect tape record your lines so you can listen to the way you are to say if each and phase. Most importantly, prepare to spend a great amount of time learning the accent. Actors trying to be proficient with a new accent will probably spend as much time (if not more) learning the accent as they spend learning the lines.

If you do not have access to a person who speaks in the dialect you wish to use check if your local library has records, tapes or CDs that teach accents.

### Curtain Call Exercise:

If you know someone in the community who speaks with an accent try to learn a phrase they often use which is unique in language to people of their ethnic group and background. Learn the words and how to say it in the dialect of the person.



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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 5: CHARACTER

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When you agree to play a character on stage you have actually agreed to be another person while you are on stage. You are to leave everything about yourself in the dressing room and bring all the knowledge, background, feelings, wants, and desires of the character you are playing to the stage. This is very hard to do.

## Observation

Before you attempt to develop a specific character you must understand how actors develop characters. The greatest tool actors have in developing a character is *observation*. This does not mean merely watching people. This means understanding people. To do this an actor must study people and the environment they live in.

Practice this skill at school. Watch how other students react to a new situation. How do they carry themselves? How do they respond? How do they sound?

Practice this skill when you are walking in a mall. Listen to the sound of footsteps of people you meet. How does the sound of high heeled shoes vary from that of cowboy boots? Does the speed at which people walk vary? Why might that person be hurrying?

Sit in a mall food court and listen to the conversations around you? How does the person with the new baby talk to her friend who has joined her on the shopping trip? How do the store owners sound as they have lunch together and discuss business in the mall?

In each of these instances don't simply accept the situation as it appears on the surface. Try to figure out why the event you are witnessing is happening. Get as many details as you can. If you do not know why an event is unfolding as it is, think of possibilities that could have caused the response you are watching.

As you observe people try not to judge them. For example: If you happen on what appears to be a homeless person laying drunk on the sidewalk do not simply judge that person as lazy, or a deadbeat, or an alcoholic and hurry past. Instead, observe the person lying there and ask yourself why would this person have ended up on this street in this condition.

*Become a student of all people!*

## Memorization

To simply observe is not enough. You must record your observations in your *memory*. The more memories you have of people, the greater variety of characters you will be able to create.

To store a character in your memory you should visualize the person in an action. If you want to remember a physical object you should take note of the feel, smell, and possibly even the taste as well as the shape, color and weight.

We want to consider how this observation relates to other memories we have. Does this experience reinforce another picture? Or does this memory contradict a previous experience? Why is there a difference?

We should also try to remember how we felt when we first observed what we are trying to keep in our minds. For instance: Did we feel sorry for the homeless person on the sidewalk or were we revolted by the sight? Or did you experience some other feeling all together? If the memory was scary, did it increase your heart rate and blood pressure? We want to remember these emotional reactions to all our observations.





Add fictional characters to your memory too. Read books and watch movies, TV, and newscasts to build a mental file of every conceivable character. Try to remember your feelings as you read the book, or watched the movie as well. A great actor knows what is going on in the world and how people are reacting to these events.

It is extremely unlikely you will ever end up facing death by the electric chair. You will never personally know the dread and the fear this experience would instill in you in the moments before you are to be put to death. However, if you have worked on remembering details of other events you will have probably stored feelings of dread and fear in your mind from times when you were scared. Perhaps you walked through some dark woods one night and found yourself wondering what was behind every tree. Perhaps you had to run down a dark, narrow, cluttered, city alley. Or maybe you can remember thinking there were monsters under your bed when you were little. If you can remember strong feelings like fear from other situations you can mix and match your memories so you can exhibit the appropriate fear and dread when you are pretending to be in a life threatening situation on stage, like facing the electric chair.

## Imagination

The process we use to create these new scenarios is called *imagination* and this is the 3rd skill all actors must practice and enhance. What the imagination does is to widen our view. It allows us to consider situations we would never experience. It also allows us to narrow our focus. With imagination we are able to pinpoint the tiniest of details and study those details repeatedly until we understand them completely.

Everyone has an imagination. But, like muscles, if an imagination is not used it becomes weak and lazy. Most people believe children have the best imagination. In fact their imagination is very limited because they have not had the experiences to give their imagination the range which an adult is able to. However, they are enthusiastic users of their imagination and are constantly exercising it. As a result, it appears their imagination is better because it is used far more often and with more intensity than the imagination of most adults.

## A Combination for Success

An actor with a large mental file of character observations, emotional memories and an active imagination will be able to create an incredible number of different characters.

## Concentration

Actors need to work on a fourth skill as well. They need to control the characters their mind creates. The skill needed for control is *concentration*. Concentration is the ability to focus all your attention to a problem at hand in spite of distractions which are happening around you. We all know of someone who is a bookworm. Someone who gets so caught up in the story their house could fall down around them without disturbing their reading. This is concentration.

Theatre audiences must have an excellent concentration ability. We are asking them to imagine what they see on stage is real. Therefore, they must concentrate on the action on stage. They must ignore the proscenium arch framing the actors, the person coughing in the next seat, and even the actor who falls out of character on stage if they are to go away with an appreciation of the story, the message the playwright is trying to tell us, and the work of the cast and crew in presenting the story.

The concentration which persons in the audience use to watch theatre must be matched by the concentration the actor uses in playing the role on stage. If the actor fails to build the character to the level the audience is imagining the role to be the audience will not believe in the character.

If an actor wishes the audience to believe in an object just off stage, the actor must totally believe that object exists in the specified place if he is to convince the audience it is there.



## Be a Part of the Team

The actor must believe not only in his own character but in all the characters on stage if he is to be able to relate to them at all levels and for the audience to see all the characters as real people rather than actors on a stage.

Amateur actors often take great delight in seeing if they can make another actor “lose it” on stage. Amateur actors also are tempted to add their own lines, quips or jokes into the play. This action never adds to the quality or message of the play; in fact it distracts from the show. This childish behavior could be compared to the bully in the movie theatre who throws popcorn at the screen, or in a loud voice makes wisecracks, or tells what will happen next. We know how we dislike this behavior if it distracts us from watching the movie. If the distraction is caused by an actor on the stage it is even more distasteful to the audience. It is for this reason it is in the best interests of every actor to help other characters understand their role fully. Rather than tearing down another actor it is better to build the other characters up because the more believable another character is the more believable your character will be.

It is for this reason actors on stage do not compete. Acting is not competitive it is complementary and cooperative. Amateur actors working together can probably present a better show than even the best professional actors if they are working against each other.

## Curtain Call Assignment:

Your club has chosen to write its own play this year. By now you will have an idea of the character you wish to play in your Opening Night. Your curtain call assignment this scene is to describe the character you want to play. Make sure you describe the character physically, emotionally, occupationally, religiously, the character’s ethnic background, how they were raised, and any other points that will have an effect on the way the character acts.





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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 6: ACTING

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One of amateur actor's biggest fears is learning the lines. Much of this fear probably stems from the memory work that was required in school. Everyone had to memorize the times table, spelling lists, and what some students felt were useless historic dates, times, and places. We all remember the work this memorization took. So when a novice actor is presented with a 100 page script he faces fear. However, there are ways to learn lines that can make memorization a rewarding experience instead of something you swear you will never do again.

## What does an actor need to learn?

It is very important in a theatre performance that actors present the lines completely and precisely. Actors take their cue from the words other actors speak. Therefore, if an actor misses part of a line or changes words the response from the actor who speaks next may not make sense or be missed altogether. You are responsible to your character, the playwright, and every other actor on-stage to say the lines as they are written in the script.

To play a character you must know the meaning behind each and every word and line the character is saying. If you do not understand what the character is saying it is highly unlikely you will know the character you are trying to play. Actors who do not know what the character is thinking will constantly be asking themselves "What do I say next" instead of listening to other actors and responding in character to the action on stage.

## When should I learn my lines?

Too many amateur actors believe they will learn lines in the rehearsals. This is too late! If you have waited for the start of rehearsals you will not understand the character you are playing. Other actors will not be able to relate to your character because they do not know who you are trying to be. You will be holding a script that limits how you use your hands, body, props and any actions you need to do as the character. Most importantly, if you are concentrating on learning gestures, movements, your character, and your lines chances are you will learn none of these things. Rehearsals will be a very frustrating for you, other actors, the director, and everyone involved in the production.

Consider a person learning to golf. Does this person learn to golf before he picks up a club? Or does this person learn what golf clubs are, which one to use, how to hold it and how to swing it before playing. The lines we must learn are just like the golf club to the golfer. Unless you know your lines there is no way you can be the character on stage relating to other characters, move around a set, conduct business, and take part in the action necessary to tell the story.

So learning lines must start well before rehearsals. It must start the moment you first read the script. The first time you study the script you should try to discover the story line and the relationship of characters. Then you must begin to develop your character. You must discover the message your character is delivering each time he speaks. Ask yourself "What is the reason for that line?" for each and every line you have in a play. By asking this question you will begin to memorize ideas rather than words. Suddenly what you are trying to learn will make sense. Instead of relying on rote memory we will have both our conscious and subconscious working on ideas rather than just words.





## One Scene at a Time

After you have this basic understanding of the script you can learn the lines. Try to learn packets of information rather than single lines. Ideally, learn a scene at a time. A scene is a portion of the script in which a minor objective is reached or a minor conflict resolved. Working on a large chunk of script as a unit will allow you see the flow of the action and the rhythm of the words. What you are learning will make more sense. This may mean learning two pages at a time or perhaps even ten pages. The amount of script you should work on depends on the script and the writing. Generally, the larger the amount of script you can deal with at a time the better. With experience each person will find out what amount of script is easiest for them to learn at one time. As a general rule, never try to learn less than half a page at a time and never attempt to learn one line at a time.

## Tips for Memorization

- Studies of human memory all indicate the deeper your **concentration** the faster memorization will occur. The more intense you study the easier it is to memorize. So memorize away from all distractions. This means no TV or radio while studying.
- **Limit** the amount of time you spend memorizing to the length of time you are able to concentrate deeply. For most people a number of short memorization sessions are much more efficient than one long one. Think of the knowledge you retain in school. One year later do you remember the things that you crammed the night before an exam? Or do you remember the things you studied daily throughout the course? Short and sweet could be used to describe the best way of memorizing. So be alert to memorize. Curling up in your favorite chair, laying on the couch, or tucked into bed with the script are not great places to memorize. Learn lines at a place where you are most productive and work well. If you have a large open area you may want to learn the lines as you move around a stage sized area.
- Do not try to learn the lines silently. **Read the lines aloud.** Then say the lines aloud as you are learning them. Say the lines into a tape recorder and listen to what you have recorded. Work on the tone of your voice as you learn the lines too. Is your voice carrying the message you are supposed to be delivering in that scene?
- **Get rid of the script as soon as you can.** Work with a partner if possible. Have your partner prompt you as soon as it is apparent you do not remember the next line. If you strain to remember a line it will actually slow the learning process.

Consider the pattern of retention when learning lines. When we read something we will retain about 10% of what we read. If we hear something we remember about 20%. If we see something happening we retain 30%. If we hear and see something occur about 50% of the action will be retained. If we say something we remember about 70%. If we say something and do something at the same time we will retain about 90%. These percentages reflect ideas. They do not represent word for word memory. However, the ratios for memory are similar. By speaking our lines we will decrease the time it takes to memorize. If we learn ideas instead of just words and think as our character does when learning the lines then the memorization will be much easier and possibly a rewarding experience.



## Try these Methods

Every person must discover their own process for memorization. What works for one person will not work as well as another method for someone else. Keep trying new ways of memorization until you find what works best for you. Following are some ideas that other actors have tried and which works for them.

1. Write out your lines on cue cards and carry them with you everywhere you go. Whenever you have a few spare minutes you should pull out the cards and work on your lines.
2. Type out your lines over and over and over and over.....
3. If you are bilingual, translate the lines into another language
4. Write out your scene in your own words, then write it out in the language of the script.
5. Tape record the reading of the play and listen to this recording every chance you get, saying your lines over top of the recording. When you are comfortable turn the volume down on your lines so you are no longer speaking over top of your own line.
6. Record your scenes in a monotone voice and play it softly while you sleep each night.
7. Use poster board and write out one scene in very large letters. Tape the poster to the ceiling above your bed. Before you go to sleep at night and when you wake up in the morning read the entire scene over 3 times. When you know one scene, change the poster to a different scene.
8. If this play has been made into a video, or TV program, or is being performed by another group of actors else, watch that production. **WARNING** Make sure you have studied the play first to determine your character, or the influence of the video may have a detrimental effect on your character.
9. Tie each line to a specific emotion, action, or prop that will be used in the play. This helps memory, but it can certainly can result in missed cues if action changes, or if a prop is forgotten during the show.

Not all of these methods will work for all people. These ideas are simply methods that have that have worked for some actors. Some people will find sitting down at a desk works the best. They may find concentrated study will yield better results than any of these ideas.

Memorization is hard work and must be done as soon as possible in the rehearsal process. Until lines are memorized productive work between cast members and the director on movement, gestures, and props is just not possible.



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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 7: DIRECTING

Theatre has developed its own language. If actors know the language of theatre it makes the director's work easier. Here are some terms every person involved in theatre should know.

## Stage Directions

When the director is sitting at the back of a theatre it is time consuming and difficult for the director to explain where he wants an actor to move to unless both the actor and director understand the directions. To clarify movement directions, the stage has been divided into 9 primary areas. Each area has a name. A director simply has to tell the actor which area of the stage he wishes the actor to move to.

If an actor is standing in the exact center of the stage facing the audience, the third of the stage on his left is called stage left. The third of the stage to his right is stage right. The remaining third of the stage, where he is standing is known as center stage. The stage has also been divided into 3 sections running parallel to the audience. The third of the stage closest to the audience is down stage. The third furthest from the audience is known as upstage. (In medieval times the stage was often sloped. The area next to the audience was lower and the stage was higher at the back to provide better sight lines for the audience. This *raking* of the stage is why the back of the stage is referred to as up and the front of the stage as down.) The third of the stage across the middle is referred to as center stage.

So basically the stage is divided into 3 rows and 3 columns with resulting intersecting spaces being named by combining the row and column terms. For example: The corner of the stage to the actors left (as he faces the audience) and closest to the audience is Down Left. If the director wants the actor to move to this area he only has to say go down left. The following diagram names the 9 primary stage areas.

UP RIGHT	UP CENTER	UP LEFT
RIGHT	CENTER	LEFT
DOWN RIGHT	DOWN CENTER	DOWN LEFT
AUDIENCE		

The amount of attention the audience gives a character varies depending where on stage the character is. Down center is the strongest place on stage. The audience's attention will be riveted by anyone delivering a line from this position. An audience will be distracted by an actor down center when another actor elsewhere on stage is attempting to get their attention. A violent scene staged down center may appear so brutal it will turn an audience off. The same scene may be well received if played up left or right. Upstage center, and down left and down right are also strong areas. The weakest areas on a stage is up left and up right. Actors in these areas will be lost to the audience if other characters or actions are in strong stage positions. A director can make weak areas stronger by placing the actors in weak areas on raised platforms so actors in these areas dominate physically. The director may also use stronger lighting in these areas. He may place a dominant piece of furniture to give the area a commanding presence.





## Ground Plan

A Ground Plan is a drawing of the placement of all walls, entrances and exits, windows, stairs, platforms, fireplaces, and all other architectural structures. The ground plan includes all furniture, furnishings and scenery on stage. Everything will be drawn exactly where it will be placed on stage and the ground plan will be drawn to scale. If more than one set is required for the production there will be a ground plan designed for each set. Since the director has studied the play and the playwright's message it is his responsibility to complete the ground plan. The director will be assisted by the set designers and technical people. Once the basic layout is completed the designers and stage crew will add the aesthetic qualities to provide the interest and beauty to the audience.

## Blocking

Blocking refers to designing the movement for the actors. The script provides the necessary entrances and exits to convey the story but rarely is the exact position actors are to move to specified because of the variance in the size of stages. Once the director has a ground plan he can design each and every movement of the actors. The ground plan will show the director how much distance there is between objects on stage so he knows how many steps are required to move this distance and therefore the time it will take to move the distance. With this knowledge the director can decide exactly when and where an actor should move. Before the real set has been built and probably before the actors have been cast the director is already planning every movement which will happen in the play.

Inexperienced actors require every movement to be planned out. Professional, experienced actors will require much less direction. Only major movement might be planned for experienced actors and the actors will add additional movements that fit their character.

## Prompt Book

Prompt Book contains all the details of the ground plan and blocking. A director can not be expected to remember every movement that he has blocked. So the movements are detailed in a copy of the script. The pages from a script are often separated and then pasted onto loose-leaf pages which are kept in a binder. This allows additional paper for each page of script. The extra paper is for the director to write in each movement the character makes. Usually a drawing of the ground plan with lines depicting the movements of each actor is included on each loose leaf page. Now the director has written details of everything he has planned as well as a sketch of the movements which are to occur.

The director can now follow each movement during rehearsals to make sure a movement is not missed. If a movement is changed during rehearsal the change can be immediately marked in the prompt book by the director. The prompt book also provides a written record of exactly how the play should be performed. This record can be easily passed on to the stage manager who runs the show once it opens. Finally, the prompt book is a wonderful historical record of the performance for the theatre to maintain in its library.

## Business

Business is used in theatre to refer to all physical activities that are not considered movement. This would include gestures and body language. It is the term which refers to the use of hand props. For example: If an actor eats on stage it would be considered business. If an actor is cleaning his glasses on stage it is business. Business includes stage fighting or the use of a sword or knife on stage. Some business is *necessary* to the story line and has been included in the script. If the script calls for a character to be stabbed in full view of the audience, business with a knife will be essential.

The director or actors may also add business into a play to build a character, to create the mood or atmosphere, or to clarify a situation. This *imposed* business is not essential to tell the story but has been included because the director feels it adds to the story.



## Scenery

Scenery refers to all the components that depict the place where the action is taking place. Set is a very similar term but many people use the term set only to describe the flats that form the walls and the large furniture pieces. Scenery is a broader term that also includes all the decoration on the stage. Scenery may be a simple arrangement of screens instead of walls in an open set. It may refer to the curtains hanging at the back if the actor is working on a bare stage. Scenery even refers to the light design on the back wall or curtains if only light is used to define the acting area.

No matter what comprises the scenery the function is the same. The scenery must provide a background for the action. This background must be relevant to the play. The scenery must support the action of the play. If an exit or entrance is required, the scenery must somehow permit an entrance or an exit. Scenery also conveys information about the play. It will tell us where, maybe why, and maybe give us clues about the people who would be in such a place. The scenery is usually the first thing an audience sees of a play so it is of immense importance and must be well planned and well constructed.

## Dramatic Value

Dramatic Value is the qualities, ideas, actions, or relationships which will arouse the response we are looking for from an audience. These parts of the play, which the director feels will influence the audience in the manner desired, must be highlighted and presented.

## Aesthetic Value

While dramatic values are necessary to appeal to the emotions and minds of the audience, a play must also be a pleasure to watch and listen to. The qualities of writing which appeals to the senses is called its aesthetic value. Aesthetic value may come from a beautiful set or from language that flows easily and is a pleasure to listen to.

## Balance

An audience views a stage as a whole single unit. As a result they expect activity and actors to utilize the entire stage. If one side of the stage is crowded, and the other empty, the audience will find this picture annoying because it is not balanced in their minds.

## Mood

Mood refers to the feeling the play presents to the audience. The mood is expressed by a combination of the emotions expressed by the actor's words and actions, the scenery, the lighting, and music or sound included in the production. Simply changing the colors in the lights can totally change the way an audience sees characters and the story.



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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# ACT 2: SCENE 8: TECHNICAL

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We always hear of the importance of first impressions. Delivering the proper first impression on stage is critical because an actor does not have the time or opportunity to change an audience's first impression. Appearance is probably the biggest factor which people base the first impression on so it is critical an actor presents an appearance that is appropriate for the character he is representing. Some appearance factors like height, weight, and body shape can only be met through cast selection. You cannot make a heavy set person look small and trim. However, a director can change the impression an audience has of any actor through use of costumes, movement, hand props, and especially with the use of makeup.

## Transformation

Suppose you have been cast in the role of an aging boxer who has lost every fight. Unfortunately, you're a young person who has never been in a fight in your life. You have very fine facial features and look closer to 10 than to middle aged. If you walked out on stage without makeup the audience members would not believe you are a middle aged boxer because audience members have a picture in their minds of what such a character would look like. They expect to see someone who has a nose that has been broken and is no longer straight. They expect scars on the face (especially around the eyes) from cuts from boxing, swollen ears and roughened skin. They expect the face to appear old, older in fact than the actual age of the character because of the hard life and abuse a losing boxer would have faced.

## Makeup

A skilled makeup artist could easily take even the prettiest of faces and change the features to look like what an audience thinks a losing boxer would look like. The makeup artist would age the person by adding lines to the face. Skin tone would be changed to a reddish rough look with the use of makeup. A broken, crooked nose could be created with nose putty. The same putty could be used to form cauliflower ears. Scars would be added to show the damage from previous matches and to create a fierce and threatening appearance. An actor wearing this makeup could walk on stage and instantly have the audience thinking: "I wonder what happened to him?" Or: "I sure wouldn't like to meet him in a dark alley!" Or ideally: "He looks like an old boxer!" No matter which of these thoughts jump into the minds of the audience, all are first impressions that the person they see now is a threat and as a dangerous character.

Use of makeup to enhance the character is the number one reason an actor uses makeup. Makeup for this purpose is the same as putting on a mask. We want to hide our features, and portray other features. Using makeup to create a character is a relatively recent addition to theatre. For most of history actors actually used masks on stage to hide their identities and to play other characters. It was not until the 1800's when actors started to take charge of theatre that masks began to be replaced with makeup.

Initially makeup was applied very lightly. The factor that not only increased makeup use but made makeup essential in theatre was the discovery of electricity. Theatre moved indoors and the invention of arch lamps resulted in the stage being lit by blinding light. While the lights helped the audience see the actors, the light was so bright it would wash all the color out of the actor's faces. Makeup became critical so actors would not appear gray and lifeless on stage.

As actors began applying more makeup they realized not only did it add color to the skin and added to the character, it could also be used to enhance the face to allow the actor to communicate feelings to the audience easier. Application of makeup around the eyes and mouth would enhance these features and help the actor express feelings and emotion. Very few actors would go on stage today without some makeup applied around the eyes and mouth.



## Tools of the Trade

Makeup is very personal. In professional theatre makeup is usually the responsibility of the actor themselves. The actor is familiar with his own skin and has practiced the techniques required to bring a specific character to life. He knows the makeup tones and brands which work best on his skin. A professional actor has his own makeup kit containing the makeup he needs. Just like a carpenter has his own tools, a professional actor carries his own makeup kit.

There are two other reasons an actor has his own makeup. First: applying makeup yourself helps you become the character you want to portray. With each stroke of a makeup brush you gradually change from yourself into the character.

The second reason actors prefer doing their own make up is that sharing makeup is a great way to share bacteria and infections. Eye infections are easily transmittable on eye liner pencils and eye lash brushes. Sharing lipstick transfers cold sores and sore throats. Sponges and pads used to apply the foundation, shadow, and highlights easily transfer bacteria off the skin of one person to another.

## Safety First

Community theatre, where many amateur actors do not know the techniques for applying makeup and where the actors do not have the makeup required for the character they are to play, often share makeup and have a community makeup person apply it. If your group is going to share makeup it is very important you take precautions to prevent contamination of the makeup, or sharing bacteria as well as makeup. Practice basic hygienic techniques. Make sure both the actors and makeup person wash well before application of makeup on anyone. Make sure each actor has their own application sponge or pad for applying makeup. Throw out these sponges after the actor is finished with them. Clean the makeup and pencils with alcohol when finished with one actor and before moving on to the next person.

If members are willing to purchase and apply their own makeup, encourage the practice. Have your community makeup person assist in planning the makeup rather than actually doing the work. Make your makeup person an instructor in the art of applying makeup instead of the person doing it. Not only will your members benefit from applying their own makeup, but the characters they create will be better too.





## Follow these Rules

No matter what makeup is required for your character there are some general rules of makeup actors always follow:

- You cannot change your face; you can only work with what you have. You must learn to modify your own features rather than attempting to build new features. You are not putting on a mask; you are painting your face.
- Never apply makeup just to have makeup on. You must have a reason for what you apply, the color you apply, and how you apply it.
- A mistake many amateur actors use in applying makeup is to try to age themselves by drawing lines on the face. Rarely are drawn lines realistic or appropriate. Instead, use modeling. Use dark and light makeup to create shadows and highlights on the face instead of lines. Darken areas of the face you want to recede and lighten areas that you want to stand out.
- You must not apply makeup only to the face. You must apply makeup to all exposed skin. Many amateur actors appear on stage with a beautiful tanned face, but their ears, back of the neck, hands, arms, and legs are as white as a ghost under the stage lights because they have only applied makeup to the face. The only visible skin you do not cover with makeup is the palms of your hands. Leaving the palms without makeup will help prevent you from leaving makeup smudges on the scenery.
- A lot of makeup is not better than a little. Use only enough makeup to cover the skin. Makeup must blend with your own skin, rather than coat your skin. Heavy makeup looks unnatural, causes you to sweat on a hot stage, and rubs off easily.
- You must consider the lighting used in the show when planning your makeup. The brighter the lights, the darker the makeup required to maintain the desired skin tone. Most lighting also includes color in the light. The colors used in lighting will have a big effect on which makeup you can use. For example: if pink tones are used in the lights, the makeup and your skin will appear rosy. Amber is often used in lights, and this brings out yellow and oranges, not necessarily the color you wish to appear to be on stage. Dark blue lighting will turn the red tones in makeup gray. Unless you are playing a ghoul, you must adjust your makeup so you retain a normal appearance under blue tones in the light. You will have to try various shades of makeup under the actual lighting conditions before deciding what makeup you need for your role.

Most actors have switched from grease paints to water based pancake makeup. Pancakes are easier to apply and require only a damp sponge to spread the makeup evenly across the face. No matter if grease paints or pancakes are used, the same order of application is followed. The face is cleaned. Then the foundation color is applied. Rouge is then applied. Then shadows and highlights are applied. Lines are enhanced. While pancake makeup does not require powder to set the makeup, powder is often applied to reduce reflection of light from the face. Instruction from a skilled makeup artist is invaluable to teach you the correct method of application of makeup.

For amateur actors who want to build their own basic makeup kit, theatre supply stores often sell basic kits for men or women. Top quality stores have staff trained to judge the actors skin type and these stores will modify a basic kit to stock it with colors that match the skin tone of the actor. In the resource section of this manual you will find a listing of theatre supply stores that may stock basic makeup kits.



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# NOTES

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## Back Stage Business

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## Rehearsal Activities

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## Curtain Call Assignments

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## Opening Night Planning

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# RESOURCES

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There are many, many resources available if you want to supplement the material supplied in this manual. Following is a list of a few of the resources. This list has been subdivided into categories to assist you in your search.

## Recommended books used in production of this manual

(These books are highly recommended. They were used as a basis for this manual, and contain additional information and exercises which could easily be adapted to a 4-H club. Both of these books are written in a style suitable for theatre novices and would be excellent additions to a club library.)

- ***Theatre Games for the Classroom***, Viola Spolin, Northwestern University Press 1986
- ***The Complete Play Production Handbook***, Carl Allensworth, Harper and Row 1982

## Other books used in production of this manual

(These texts were also utilized in the writing of this manual, but the information is advanced and the writing is quite technical so they may be of limited value to a theatre novice.)

- ***Acting, An Introduction***, Bowskill, Prentice Hall, 1977
- ***Studying Drama***, Bradley Thomas Pickering, Croom Helm Ltd, 1983
- ***The Director At Work***, Robert Benedetti, Prentice Hall, 1985
- ***The Art of Directing***, Kirk & Bellas, Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1985

## Other Resources used in production of this manual

(All of these resources were used in production of this manual and are of high value for a 4-H Performing Arts club.)

- ***All The World's A Stage***, (Ontario and Saskatchewan 4-H Theatre Project) Hamilton, Ontario Queen's Printer, 1993
- ***Theatre Arts Adventure***, (United States 4-H Theatre Arts Series) 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System. Minnesota Extension Service, University of Minnesota, 1997
- ***Speak Pack***, (available through 4-H catalogue) Hugh Phillips, Alberta Agriculture
- ***Alberta Learning Junior High and Senior High Drama Curriculum Guide***, Alberta Learning, 1987
- ***Workshops By Request Seminars***, (These are theatre workshops organized by Theatre Alberta for Community Theatres. Information is provided by theatre professionals on a topic requested by the theatre organization hosting the workshop. Information by various speakers on a number of topics presented to the Kelsey Community Society was used in this manual. Details on how to request a workshop is listed later in this resource list)

## Other Recommended Books

The following books were not used in the production of this manual, however they have been evaluated by Alberta Learning and are recommended in the Alberta Learning Drama Curriculum Guide as resources for teachers in Junior High and Senior High Drama Courses.

- ***Interpretation: Working With Scripts***, Lundy & Booth, Academic Press, 1983
- ***The Theatre Experience***, Wilson, McGraw-Hill, 1988
- ***Living Theatre: an Introduction to Theatre History***, Wilson, McGraw-Hill, 1983
- ***Fundamentals of Voice and Diction***, Mayer, W.C. Brown, 1988
- ***Backwards and Forwards: A Technical Manual for Reading Plays***, Ball, Southern Illinois University Press, 1983
- ***Scene Design, Stage Lighting, Sound, Costume & Makeup: A Scenographic Approach***, Bellman, Harper & Row 1983
- ***Improvisation: Learning Through Drama***, Booth, Academic Press, 1985





- ***A Practical Handbook for the Actor***, Bruder, Vintage Books, 1986
- ***Writing, Producing and Selling Your Play***, Catron, Prentice-Hall 1984
- ***Fundamentals of Play Directing***, Dean & Carra, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1980
- ***Respect for Acting***, Hagen, Macmillan, 1973
- ***Improvisation***, Hodgson, Grove Press, 1979
- ***Stage Crafts***, Hogett, Adam & C. Black 1975
- ***A Guide to Improvisation: A Handbook for Teachers***, James & Williams, Kemble Press 1984
- ***The Stage and School***, Ommanney & Schanker, McGraw-Hill 1982
- ***Theatre Technology & Design***, Potts, International Thespian Society 1982
- ***The Actor's Image: Movement Training for Stage and Screen***, Sabatine, Prentice-Hall, 1983
- ***Improvisation for the Theatre: A Handbook Of Teaching and Directing Techniques***, Spolin, Northwestern University Press 1983
- ***Mime: Basics for Beginners***, Straub, Plays Inc, 1984
- ***Basic Drama Projects***, Tanner, Clark Publishing Co. 1987
- ***Creative Communication: Projects in Acting, Speaking, Oral Reading***, Tanner, Clark Publishing Co. 1985

## Other Resources

There are a wide range of other resources available. A few you may be interested in:

- **Books:** There are a great many other books available through the Alberta Library System or through book stores which may or may not be equally good , but which have not been reviewed by Alberta Learning.
- **National Film Board:** The national film board has offices in Edmonton and Calgary. They have films and video available for loan, some of which relate to Theatre and Performing Arts.
- **Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism:** Maintains a small library of videos of musicals. Can be contacted through the Performing Arts Branch, Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, Edmonton.
- **Theatre Alberta:** Maintains the largest script library in Western Canada. Must be a member of Theatre Alberta to use the library. Members also receive a newsletter about Theatre Arts in Alberta, a listing of all member theatres in Alberta and their upcoming productions. Also conducts youth drama camps during the summer. The office is in Edmonton
- **Workshops By Request:** Administered by Theatre Alberta. Theatre Alberta will provide a professional theatre person to conduct a workshop on any theatre topic, both performing and stage craft. Theatre Alberta subsidizes the cost of the workshop, picking up travelling expenses and hotel room (if necessary) for the instructor. The host of the workshop is charged a set fee depending upon the length of the workshop. Details of Workshops by Request available through Theatre Alberta Office, Edmonton.
- **Community Theatre:** Many communities have a local community theatre. Contact with community theatres may yield skilled people who will assist in your 4-H club. To find the contact person for closest community theatre call Theatre Alberta's Edmonton office.
- **Theatre Supply Stores:** There are a number of stores throughout Alberta dedicated to supplying the needs of live theatre. It would be impossible to provide a complete listing of all stores. However two stores which provide a wide range of theatre makeup, costuming and other on stage materials worth mentioning is Don's Hobby Shop, Calgary, Michael's Amusements, Spruce Grove and Shirley Potter, Edmonton.

*Theatre Alberta is the best place to start your search for anything related to theatre in Alberta. They have an excellent web site, with links to other organizations as well as an online membership application. Your first step in expanding your theatre connections in Alberta should be [www.theatrealberta.com](http://www.theatrealberta.com)*



## Play Catalogues

Following is a list of script catalogues and contact addresses. (from Junior High Curriculum Guide, Alberta Learning) Many of these publishing houses now have their catalogues online. A web search will provide information. Note: Exchange rates, custom charges, and shipping fees can make ordering scripts from outside Canada expensive.

- **Alberta Plays and Playwrights: An Annotated Bibliography**, Writers Guild of Alberta, 10523-100 Ave., Edmonton AB T5J 0A8
- **Baker's Plays**, 100 Chauncey St, Boston MA 02111
- **Basic Catalogue of Plays**, Samuel French, 80 Richmond St East, Toronto, ON. M5C 1P1
- **Basic Catalogue of Plays and Musicals**, Performance Publishing Co. 978 North McLean Boulevard, Elgin, IL 60120
- **Canadian Plays for Young Audiences: Pre-School through Grade 13**, Playwrights Union of Canada, 8 York Street, 6th Floor Toronto, ON. M5J 1R2
- **Catalogue**, Drama Book Specialists, 821 Broadway, New York ,NY, 10003
- **Catalogue of Plays and Musicals**, Pioneer Drama Service, PO Box 22555, 2172 South Colorado Boulevard, Denver, CO, 80222
- **Catalogue of Select Plays**, Art Craft Publishing, Box 1058, Cedar Rapids, IA, 52406
- **Contemporary Drama Service**, 7710-R, Colorado Springs, CO, 80933
- **Dramatists Play Service**, 440 Park Avenue South, New York NY 10016
- **Eldridge Church Entertainments**, PO Drawer 216 Franklin, OH, 45005
- **Music Theatre International**, 119 West 57 Street New York NY 10019
- **Plays that Capture the Audience**, The Coach House Press INC, PO Box 458 Morton Grove IL 60053
- **Plays INC**, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116
- **Plays and Musicals**, The Dramatic Publishing Company, PO Box 109, Woodstock, IL 60098
- **Plays for Young People**, Anchorage Press, PO Box 8067, New Orleans, LO, 70182
- **Plays for Youth**, Macdonald and Young, 152 The Grove, West Wickem, Kent, England, BR49VZ
- **Playwrights**, Union of Canada 8 York Street, 6th Floor, Toronto, ON. M5J 1R2
- **Reader' Theatre Script Service**, PO Box 178333 San Diego, CA 92117
- **Tams-Witmark Music Library**, Inc 560 Lexington Ave, New York NY 10022

## Post Secondary Performing Arts Programs:

Most post secondary schools in Alberta offer a drama studies program. Members interested in pursuing theatre studies should check these schools for information on their programs.

These schools may also have performances which your club may be able to attend, or provide tours of their facilities for a club.

Banff School of Fine Arts.....	Box 1020 Banff, AB T0L 0C0
Mount Royal College .....	4825 Richard Road SW Calgary, AB T3K 6K6
University of Calgary.....	2500 University Drive NW Calgary, AB T2N 1N4
Augustana University College .....	4901 - 46 AVE Camrose, AB T4V 2R3
Grant MacEwan College.....	Box 1796 Edmonton, AB T5J 2P2
The Kings College.....	10766-97 St Edmonton, AB T5H 2M1
University of Alberta .....	3, 146 Fine Arts Building, University of Alberta, T6G 2C9
Grande Prairie College.....	10726 - 106 Ave Grande Prairie, AB T8V 4C4
University of Lethbridge .....	4401 University Drive, Lethbridge, AB T1K 3M4
Medicine Hat College .....	299 College Drive, Medicine Hat, AB T1A 3Y6
Red Deer College .....	Box 5005, Red Deer, AB T4N 5H5
Rosebud School of the Arts .....	Box 654 Rosebud, AB T0J 2T0
Keyano College.....	8115 Franklin Ave Fort McMurray, AB T9H 2H7
Concordia University College .....	7128 Ada Boulevard, Edmonton AB T5B 4E4



# TONGUE TWISTERS

1. She sells sea shells by the sea shore
2. How much wood could the woodchuck chuck, if the woodchuck could chuck wood
3. Betty Balta bought a bit of bitter butter to make her batter better
4. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. Did Peter Piper pick a peck of pickled peppers? If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where's the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?
5. I saw Esau kissing Kate. Fact is we all three saw. I saw Esau, he saw me, and she saw I saw Esau
6. Tip of the tongue, tip of the tongue, tip of the tongue
7. The old cold scold sold a school coal scuttle
8. I saw a yacht and a yawl over yonder yesterday
9. Six silky, slithering snakes slid along, simpering and slyly sneezing, slipping sleazily from side to side
10. The sixth sheikh's sixth sheep is sick
11. Does this shop stock short socks with spots?
12. Theophilus Thistle, thistle sifter, sifted a sieve of unsifted thistles; where is the sieve of unsifted thistles Theiophilus, the thistle sifter, sifted?
13. Fine white wine vinegar with the veal
14. The skunk thunk the stump stunk but the stump thunk the skunk stunk
15. The guests drink toasts at the host's behest, 'til one insists that the host fast while he feasts and persists in his boasts.
16. A big blue bug bit a big black bear.

