EDUCATION AT THE MET

Curriculum Resource Guide for

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA GUILD
70 LINCOLN CENTER PLAZA
NEW YORK, NY 10023-6593

www.operaed.org

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EDUCATION AT THE MET
Creating Original Opera
Curriculum Resource Guide

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INTRODUCTION

For the past 15 years, over 250,000 students from the United States and Great Britain have formed their own production companies and created operas as part of the Creating Original Opera Program. In 1976, when JoAnn Menashe Forman, Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Director, worked with the Education Program at the Seattle Opera Association, a local school principal came to her and her colleague Bruce Taylor with what was then a novel request. He wanted them to somehow introduce his fifth grade students to opera as part of their general education. He maintained that his youngsters were not ready to go to, let alone sit through, a full production in the opera house—not just yet. The request challenged them since the thrust of the company's education program was to bring kids and their teachers to the opera house to experience live performances. After considerable thought and several meetings with the principal and teaching staff, it was proposed that the students should create their own opera. Initially, the reaction was one of skepticism and disbelief. Yet the school staff gradually became sufficiently curious to see whether their students could actually do what appeared to them to be the impossible.

In November 1976, a new opera company named "The Kids Do It All Company" debuted in Seattle. Patterned after a professional model, this company consisted of forty fifth graders with a production manager, stage manager, costume, set and lighting designers, carpenters, public relations staff, writers, composers, and performers. In only nine weeks, these ten- and eleven-year-old students had and written an original libretto; composed a score; designed and built costumes, sets, and lights; created and distributed publicity and press releases; and auditioned, rehearsed and performed the production. Opening night of "Aesop '77" was a huge success and several performances followed.

How did this night of nights for forty students, their parents and teachers happen? How was it possible for a group of elementary school students to generate and harness the energy and discipline needed to create and produce an original opera? What makes this particular approach so special to student-mounted productions and why has it flourished in so many schools? Why is this project relevant to elementary education?

First of all, the arts have always been an important part of the American heritage and contemporary culture, and thus a legitimate component of basic education. The arts belong in the classroom because of their intrinsic social value, as well as their conceptual and pragmatic connections across academic disciplines.

We want to create and nurture an atmosphere in which direct, first-hand involvement in the arts can take root and flourish. Opera is often alienating because it has no perceived relationship to students' experience. Yet when children put together original material about a subject of their own choosing and create their own productions from start to finish, they are better equipped to respond to, appreciate, and understand opera in a professional context. In addition, they reap other personal rewards along the way. We now have persuasive evidence that early exposure through sustained and supervised participation in the creative process enables a child to identify with the arts experience and gives the arts a familiar, personal meaning that will in all likelihood endure.

Two key words in our approach are *process* and *original*. By taking students through the process of creating something themselves, their mental and physical capabilities are fully challenged. Opera is used as a vehicle to find out what is important to young people, what affects them emotionally and what excites them. By forming their own company, not only do they take on the adult roles of their professional counterparts, they come to realize the importance of teamwork and their own responsibility in the learning process. Learning becomes meaningful and purposeful because we place children in situations in which they are motivated to take responsibility for their own learning.

Opera is a wonderful way to introduce young people to a wide variety of arts. In our approach, they get a chance to participate in and explore the multidisciplinary elements of the art form. They can investigate how voice, movement, drama, music and the visual arts can communicate individually and in combination. The project requires students to make use of knowledge and concepts from other curriculum areas such as social studies, science, physical education, mathematics and the language arts. They also apply analytical skills in the process of creating and mounting the production.

For example, the student-writers must read and write in order to perform their task. They must also determine appropriate subject matter, analyze its stage effectiveness and learn, in the process, the elements of a good story, plot and climax, plus the construction of an effective script. The student-carpenter uses mathematics when designing and building scale models and sets. Student-electricians require a knowledge of science in order to build footlights. Performing reinforces the use of language arts and movement as tools for communication. Participants in other aspects of the project develop vocabulary skills as they prepare publicity and write the libretto.

In the course of the project, each participant must analyze his or her task, execute it and evaluate the results. When students use the skills that enable them to harness theoretical knowledge, not only are their skills developed and knowledge increased, but their conception of learning can be radically altered. Learning means something. It is useful.

In addition to the development of skills essential for individual achievement and self-esteem, the project reinforces the value of cooperative effort. As the students engage in group decision-making and problem-solving with other members of the company, they begin to develop the communicative and interactive skills necessary to carry out various tasks. They also realize the degree to which the project is the result of a communal effort – one which would not be possible without the combined resources of the group – in which an individual has an important role to play. If the stage manager forgets her cues, or the lyricist doesn't finish his song, no one will fill the void to deliver the results.

Participation in this project is open to *all* students in the school. The audition or selection process focuses on potential rather than skill. It provides avenues for students who haven't had the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities, for gifted children to reach a higher level and for those with learning disabilities to exhibit their special talents.

This Curriculum Resource Guide for Creating Original Opera is the result of sixteen years of artist residencies in schools, ten years of teacher workshop series—reaching over two hundred elementary school teachers—and eight years of formal evaluation and documentation. After eight years of artist residencies, it became evident that we needed to train teachers to expand the program significantly and make it an integral part of the school curriculum. In 1983, as an outgrowth of the residency program, a teacher training program was established in New York City. Since then, the Creating Original Opera Teacher Workshop Series has been implemented on the state, regional, national, and international levels and continues to expand to this day.

Our work with teachers has been especially fulfilling. For those educators who have participated in this program, what we have accomplished is best summarized by such comments as, "I am without a doubt a better teacher, more sensitive to the needs and expectations of my students...", "The Met program has provided me with the vehicle to integrate arts education into the curriculum and help children to become active participants in their education" and "I have found new ways to help students achieve greater self-confidence and self-assurance – life skills for their future."

Partnership is key to this program—between the Metropolitan Opera Guild and the participating school and between the classroom and music teacher. As a team, the classroom and music teacher have opportunities to interact and to work towards mutual goals. Over time, through field testing and regular internal monitoring as well as independent evaluations, we have learned that this process provides teachers with a viable approach that enhances their teaching methods, invites them to take personal risks, sharpens their arts skills and expands their vision of children's capabilities. The Curriculum Resource Guide evolved because it became clear that the process needed to be written down, not only to serve as a resource during the workshops but also as an aid for teachers in the implementation process during the school year.

By forming their own company, the students in this program take ownership of their project—although they are guided and supported by advisors—and the challenge pushes them to use and extend their potential in order to make it a success. This is exciting—and the fruit of their efforts is immediately apparent in the production that comes together before their very eyes.

New York City, April 1992

PERFORMER AUDITIONS

The purpose of the audition process is to attract students who are interested in being cast as performers and to identify those who have the potential to act, to move and to sing. Motivation is important; the students must have a strong desire to be chosen and not feel pressured into the situation.

This process is deliberately structured to audition students in a group. The teacher should create a relaxed atmosphere which provides an opportunity for all students to participate on an equal footing regardless of any prior performing experience. In the group audition, individual students are not singled out or put on the spot — circumstances which often lead to tension, lack of spontaneity or self-consciousness. Students are not asked to read aloud or to recite a prepared text since these skills tend to reflect academic competence. Instead, students are given the opportunity to express their feelings, demonstrate the interpretive range of their imagination and indicate their desire to perform through a series of exercises. It is important that the director introduce each audition exercise by demonstrating it. This process also encourages a new kind of student-teacher interaction and establishes the teacher in the role of director.

As a result of these auditions, certain students will stand out from the group. Some of them, especially the shy or the boisterous, may rise to the challenge and surprise the teacher with personal qualities that were previously unnoticed or unsuspected.

OBJECTIVES

- To look for the performer who has the potential to act, move and sing. In general, this is the student with an active imagination, a comfortable awareness of his or her body, and the least number of affectations.
- To set up a non-competitive, relaxed atmosphere in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of individuals in the pool of applicants.
- To establish a situation which the teacher, as director, can easily control.
- To encourage students to volunteer to audition as performers.
- To give potential performers a feeling of a unique and common experience.
- To use a variety of activities in the audition process that are not dependent on reading or reciting ability.
- To emphasize the auditioning experience rather than the result.

MATERIALS

Chair
Blanket
Broom stick
Garbage can

ADVICE: Audition Materials

There is no limit to the number of inanimate objects which can be used in these auditions.

SEQUENCE

Both teachers should be involved in the audition process.

- Have a group of at least 10 and no more than 20 students form a circle and sit down. One teacher should be inside the circle and the other teacher outside it. The teacher inside the circle asks each student to speak his name clearly with both teachers recording the names for future reference.
- Explain to the students that they will soon be asked to do several activities while walking around the circle and that the preparation for each one will be "warning", "standby" and then "go". At the end of the exercise, the teacher says "stop" and "places" which tells the students to return to their original spot in the circle.
- After each audition exercise, the teacher inside the circle goes around and repeats each student's name. As this occurs, both teachers should mark a predetermined symbol on their list of names indicating their opinion of each student's effectiveness in the exercise. This approach ensures that each student is treated equally during the audition with no special attention given to any individual.

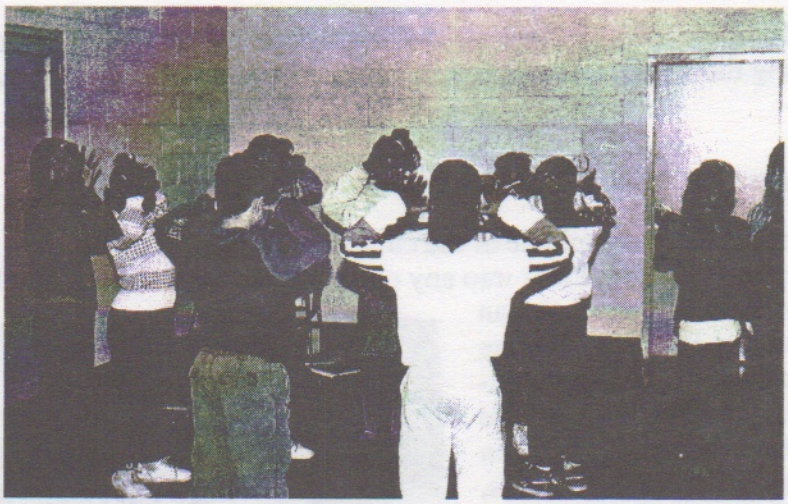
I. Audition Exercises

Take the students through these audition exercises in the following order (This process should not last more than 30 minutes):

Circle Imitation:

Description: Choose a student to make up his own sound and gesture. Have him or her go around inside the circle and stand in front of each student, who should then imitate the same sound and gesture simultaneously. While the rest of the students continue to imitate the same sound/gesture, the exercise is complete when the lead student has gone entirely around the circle. The teacher should serve as the model for this first exercise to demonstrate how it works, making it as ridiculous as possible. Select other students at random to make up a sound/gesture.

Purpose: To reveal how the students observe and imitate.
To reveal the student who is uninhibited or inhibited.
To "break the ice", since the students may feel tense and frightened.
To get the students' adrenaline up in a constructive manner.



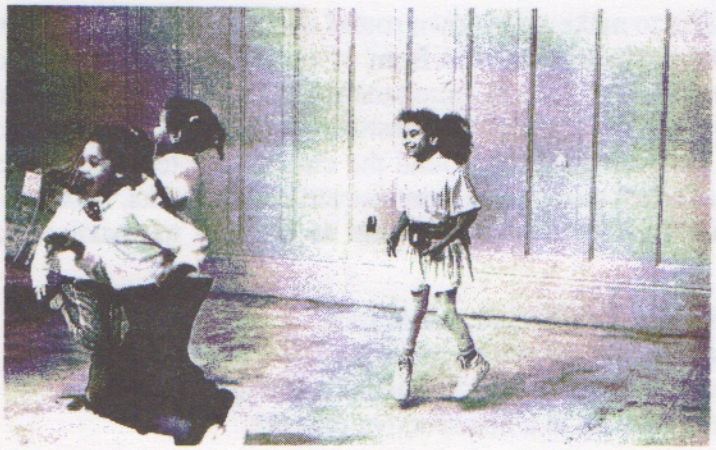
Multiplication:

Description: Have the students walk around clockwise in the circle and ask them to multiply 11 X 12 or any two two-digit numbers in their heads. The teacher calls on students at random. Note that the aim of this exercise is not to get the right answer.

Purpose: To allow students to concentrate on something other than themselves and to forget that they are being observed.
To identify the students' natural walk and physical mannerisms.

Environment:

Description: Have the students walk around the circle and ask them to imagine and then demonstrate how they would walk or behave in different environments. For example, try the following:



- You are in 6 inches of glue
- You are in a room filled with jello.
- You are in a frying pan on high heat
- You are on a floor that is a thin plate of glass with a 30 foot drop below
- You are in a room that is full of a thick, black, poisonous smoke

Purpose: To have students go beyond the limitations of their environment by demonstrating their ability to imagine an unusual environment and react appropriately.

Imagination with Objects:

Description: Put a chair in the middle of the circle and explain that with sounds and gestures they can make the chair into any object they wish other than itself. For instance, tell them that the chair can be a typewriter and demonstrate without using words. Ask the students to volunteer and demonstrate their own ideas. After a half-dozen or so examples by the students, change the object to a broom stick, garbage can, blanket etc.

Purpose: To have students use their imagination to transcend the usual, literal meaning of the object.
To encourage students to try new ways of thinking and perceiving.
To have students demonstrate the imagined object in a recognizable manner without using sounds or words.

Be an Object:

Description: With students sitting in a circle, ask for a volunteer. Have the volunteer go to the middle of the circle and ask him to pretend to be a lighthouse. Ask for other volunteers to show their different versions of a lighthouse. After several examples, change the object to, for example, a vacuum cleaner, two ice cubes, bacon in a frying pan, a cookie baking, a computer. For this activity, students should volunteer.

Purpose: To have students transform their bodies to represent and express inanimate objects.

Emotional Validity:

Description: Have the students walk around the circle and tell them that they "are suspicious of something or someone." Repeat this exercise with different emotions, such as:

- You didn't get what you wanted when expecting a gift.
- You dislike the person in front of you.
- There is something physically wrong with your insides.
- You are your own best friend.

Purpose: To observe the students' ability to express and project their feelings in an authentic and convincing manner.

II. Call-Backs

- These exercises are held after the initial auditions after the teachers have conferred. The following call-back exercises are the final steps used to determine who will be selected as performers.

Mini - Scenes:

Description: Have the group "count off" alternating A and B and position the pairs around the room. Explain that "person A owes person B money" and that they have a moment to think about the situation but cannot talk to each other. At the command "go", they are to act out the improvised episode. At "stop", ask each pair to explain their scene. Do one more scene, for example, "person A gives a gift to person B".

> **ADVICE: Observing Callbacks**
>
> *During this exercise, the teacher(s) should walk around the room listening to the pairs as well as observing them from afar.*

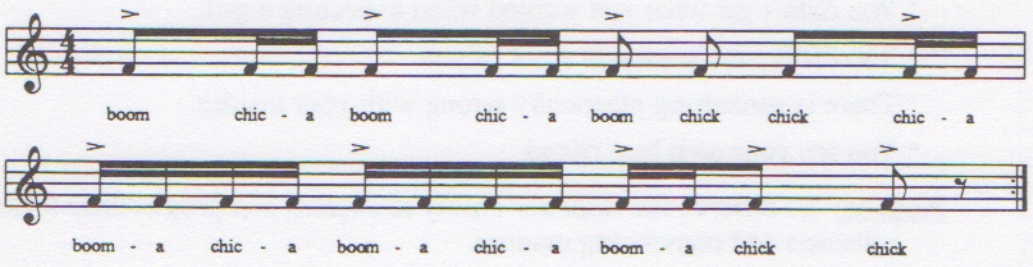
Purpose: To observe how students react spontaneously to another person.
To look for the students who are the least self-conscious about their bodies.
To identify the students who concentrate and don't break character.
To hear the voices and levels of assurance of the students as they describe their scenes.

Rhythm Exercise:

Description: Have the students get into three lines with an equal number of students in each line. Teach all of them the three rhythmic phrases, one phrase at a time. Each phrase should be repeated aloud several times. Assign one phrase to each line of students and ask them to speak the rhythms simultaneously. Rotate the assignments so that each line of students has the opportunity to say each phrase. Repeat this same process using individual students from each of the four lines.

Purpose: To identify students with rhythmic potential, good memory retention and the ability to concentrate.

Boom



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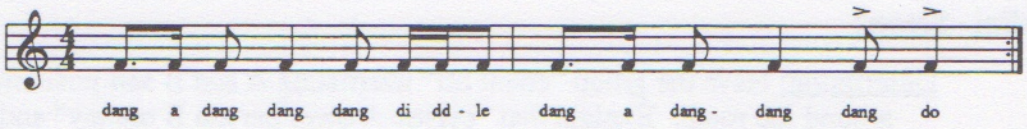

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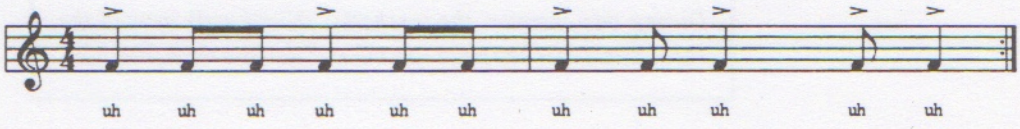

TERMINOLOGY

Affectation: A studied or artificial mannerism.

Audition: A set of tasks or exercises to test performance potential (e.g. voice qualities, body movement and coordination, and stage presence.)

Body Embarrassment: An over-awareness of the physical self resulting in self-conscious, restricted movement.

Emotional validity: Expression or projection of the feelings (of a character) that is honest, convincing and believable.

Mannerism: Marked or repeated use of an artificial or affected physical or verbal style.

"Places": A command to take or return to starting position.

Spontaneity: Without premeditation; resulting from a natural impulse.

"Warning"/"Standby"/"Go": When auditioning, "warning" is used to get students' attention, "standby" tells them to get ready, and "go" tells them to execute the audition exercise.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Develop a heightened sense of their own creative imagination.

— Express themselves in new ways, verbally and physically.

— Become more open-minded and willing to take risks.

— Become more self-confident and less self-conscious about their bodies.

— Accept individual differences.

— Think on their feet.

— React confidently to the unexpected.

— Understand the value of concentration.

— Work in and with a group.

— Listen and follow directions.

Performer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Performers should return all costumes to the Costume Designers and make sure personal items are collected from the changing rooms and performance space. Be sure any props used are removed from the stage and deposited with the Stage Manager.

Performers may also ask the Production Manager if help is needed by any of the other departments.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Performer for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as a Performer. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

No matter what happens, STAY IN CHARACTER!

Also, remember to:
- relax
- breathe
- enunciate
- project your voice
- make your entrances/exits at the appropriate time

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:
- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- speak backstage

When you are backstage waiting for your entrance, be absolutely silent and stay out of the way so the stage crew can do their job.

Any distractions could ruin all of your opera company's hard work.

language or a gesture that is unique to this character. Also, figure out what your relationship is to the other characters in the script.

Know your character thoroughly! You will be asked to answer questions from your biography *in character*.

B. Subtext

Subtext is the unspoken thoughts or feelings of the character. Try speaking the following sentence with the different subtexts suggested.

"Hi. How are you?"
(Subtext: "I hate you.")

"Hi. How are you?"
(Subtext: "You're late.")

"Hi. How are you?"
(Subtext: "I won.")

Assignment #3
Beneath every line your character says in the script, write a subtext appropriate both to the scene and to your character's biography. Also take into account your relationship with the other characters. Write it in pencil, as it may change. Be prepared to read a scene using subtext only.

JOB TITLE: **PERFORMER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To create, memorize and perform a role in an original opera production.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Performers will form an ensemble and work together to learn the basics of acting. After the script is complete they will develop their characters and learn how to perform on stage.

Performers are responsible to the Stage Manager and to the Director.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your work as a Performer showcases the work of all the other departments in the opera company. Because of this, your work needs to be your best — maybe even better than you think possible.

You will need to bring a notebook, a pencil, and this booklet to each meeting. A folder would be helpful to organize your work.

Assignment #1 — Biography
Create a character who is very different from you. Give this character a name, a stance (way of standing) or gesture, and a past. Write a biography of this character which covers their family (number of siblings, names, birth order, family problems), any important occurrences in their life, and at least one major event that helped make them who they are.

Write this biography and bring it to your next meeting.

Assignment #2 — Monologue
Prepare a monologue to be spoken by the character you created in Assignment #1. Pay special attention to the way your character uses speech and body language. This monologue will be performed at your next meeting in front of the Director and other Performers.

7. Working With the Script

Read through the script. You may be asked to read different roles so do not get attached to any one role! Once the Director has cast the script, you will be asked to create a biography for the character you are playing.

This is a place where you can be creative! You must include all the information about your character that appears in the script, but you can also add to that, to create a deeper character. Remember to include information about the character's past (not just what is mentioned in the script), their family situation, important events that have affected this character, and body

B. Projection

To "project" does not mean to yell. If you are breathing correctly, you should be able to speak very loudly without hurting your voice. If you combine proper breathing with good diction, you will be heard by audience members in the back row.

You can practice projecting during a meeting with the other Performers. Have one person go on the stage or across a large room. That person should read a short poem or line of text with which the others are unfamiliar. If those in the "audience" cannot understand your words, you have not projected sufficiently or enunciated enough.

The Director will have other exercises that you can do to practice projection and enunciation.

6. Character

Knowing your character is extremely important.

In acting, you pretend to be someone else, someone who is (most likely) very different from you. He or she will have different attitudes, likes and dislikes, body language, gestures and manner of speaking.

You will hear many times "Stay in character!" or "Don't break character!" This means that your responses to whatever happens should continue to be those of your character and not of yourself. To do this, you will have to know your character thoroughly.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

BLOCKING The plan of each character's position and movement on stage.

CHARACTERISTIC A trait unique to one person.

CROSSOVER A transitional scene, usually performed in front of the curtain.

DIALOGUE A conversation between two or more characters.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

ENUNCIATE To pronounce words with deliberate precision.

ENSEMBLE A group that works together.

FOCUS POSITION The "ready to work" position.

MONOLOGUE A speech made by a single character.

PROJECTION To speak and sing clearly and audibly.

SCRIPT The written text of a dramatic work.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

SUBTEXT The unspoken thoughts of characters.

THEME The idea on which the opera is based.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Focus

Focus is the most important aspect of being a Performer. You must be able to pay attention and follow directions. If you do not, you jeopardize the success of the entire company's efforts as well as your own performance.

A. Focus Position

The focus position looks like a neutral position, yet it is a total focus of mind and body. It tells the Director that you are ready to work. These are the main points of the Ready or Focus Position:

- feet shoulder-width apart
- knees slightly bent
- shoulders aligned over hips
- arms at sides
- spine straight
- head erect
- eyes straight ahead
- alert and relaxed at the same time!

B. Breath

The breath is the gasoline that drives the engine of a Performer. If you do not breathe correctly, you will not be able to perform to your greatest capacity. Remembering to breathe correctly will not only help you focus, it will help you relax and make your singing and speaking voice more powerful.

5. Vocal Production

One of the most important things you can learn as a Performer is vocal production. Without proper enunciation and projection, no one in the audience will understand what you are saying/singing and therefore the story will not make sense to them. Posture and breathing are very important in vocal production, as are enunciation and projection.

You have already learned correct posture and breathing techniques. Use them in conjunction with the following:

A. Enunciation

Practice these tongue-twisters to help you learn how to pronounce words clearly. Try to over-enunciate every word. Make sure you move your mouth more than you do when speaking normally. Repeat each line four times.

- red leather, yellow leather
- unique New York
- the big black bug bled black blood
- eleven benevolent elephants
- toy boat

D. Learning to Improvise

Improvise means to compose "on the spot", with no preparation.

It is important to learn how to improvise so that you will be prepared for any unexpected situations that might arise during a production.

The Director will give you some situations that will help you practice improvising.

4. Energy

Energy is extremely important in performing because it is something you share. You share it with your fellow Performers and with the audience, and they give the energy back to you. A low-energy performance will make the audience fall asleep!

You might not realize it, but you are in complete control of how much energy you communicate. It is possible to create energy even on days when you feel you have none. You will play games with the other Performers that will show you how energy can be created, passed along and returned to you.

To breathe correctly, start in Focus Position. Place your hand on your abdomen (diaphragm) and inhale. Imagine you are a bottle that is being filled up with water. The water rises from the bottom of the bottle to the top. So does the air you inhale. You should feel your diaphragm expand outward as you inhale and contract inward as you exhale. Your shoulders should not rise and fall as you breathe.

NOTE: When you are asleep you automatically breathe from your diaphragm. Therefore relaxing will help you achieve correct breathing.

2. The Stage

The stage is not a playground. The space should be respected by all those working there and proper stage protocol should be followed at all times.

A. Protocol

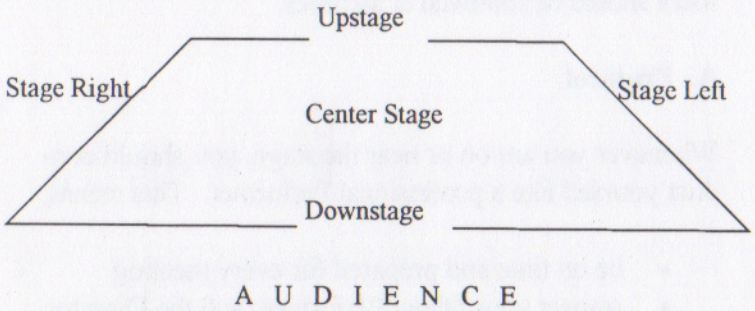
Whenever you are on or near the stage, you should conduct yourself like a professional Performer. This means:

- be on time and prepared for every meeting
- respect your fellow Performers and the Director
- do not speak if another person is speaking
- do not talk while other Performers are working
- use the stairs to approach the stage (if applicable)

The need for proper stage protocol cannot be overstressed!

B. Stage Terminology

Historically, the audience was located all on one level and the stage was angled ("raked") away from the audience, to allow them to see the action. Therefore the term UPSTAGE literally meant up and the term DOWNSTAGE meant down. STAGE RIGHT and STAGE LEFT indicate the Performers' right and left, as they face the audience.



3. Working Together

A. Warm-Up Exercises

At each meeting you will do a few minutes of warm-up exercises before you begin to work. These exercises are designed to promote flexibility and focus.

B. Creating Ensemble

Ensemble means "together"!

Any group of people who work together towards a common goal must learn to trust each other and appreciate each person's contribution to the whole. In many ways an ensemble becomes something greater than the sum of its parts, capable of doing things that one person alone could not. This is true whether the ensemble is a basketball team, symphony orchestra, construction crew or group of actors.

C. Trust Exercises

You will be doing a variety of ensemble-building exercises in your Performer meetings. Some might be:

- amoeba
- lifts
- eye contact
- talk about self

PRODUCTION AUDITIONS

In choosing students for production jobs, the teacher should look for highly-motivated students who have the basic skills or aptitude to function effectively in each position. All members of the production staff should be able to work both on their own and with others without a great deal of supervision. They should be organized, able to think for themselves and capable of following directions.

The production auditions are divided into two parts; the first part is structured to allow the applicant to demonstrate effort and desire for the position, while the second involves independent work which is usually taken home, to be turned in the following day.

OBJECTIVES

When filling the positions on the production staff, it is important to remember that if a student can work well both alone and with others, you can make up for practically any other lack or shortcoming they may have. A motivated, eager student without experience will always be more valuable to the company than an irresponsible "expert". The particular qualifications needed for production jobs are listed below:

Production Manager:
- Self-starter
- Has the respect of peers
- Relates well to adults
- Well-organized
- Self-assured

Stage Manager:
- Self-starter
- Responsible
- Calm under pressure
- Has the respect of peers (performers)
- Well-organized
- Self-assured

Set Designer:
- Imaginative
- Enjoys designing but does not necessarily have to draw well

Costume Designer:
- Imaginative
- Enjoys designing but does not necessarily have to draw well
- Resourceful — good scrounger
- Well-organized

Make-up:	Can work quickly and efficiently Meticulous Well-organized
Electrician:	Neat and precise Follows directions precisely
Carpenter:	Neat and precise Follows directions Works well independently
Public Relations:	Articulate Outgoing Relates well to adults Some artistic ability Literate

MATERIALS

Production Audition Forms

SEQUENCE

While the specific information requested in each audition form varies, the audition sequence for each position remains the same:

Students fill out preference sheets detailing the positions for which they want to apply.

The teacher groups students according to the position applied for, distributes the appropriate form, briefly reviews what the position entails, and asks the applicants to complete the questionnaire in a specified time period—usually 20 - 30 minutes.

After completing the first form, each student is given the second form with instructions on how to fill it out and asked to bring it back the following day. Students are told they are to work on their own with no assistance from another person and that if assignments are not handed in completed and on time, the student will be automatically disqualified.

When the students return with their assignments, the teacher should check them for completeness and ask students to explain some aspect of their paper to verify whether the student did in fact work independently and without assistance.

The teacher then reviews the students' work and determines what they were trying to say, draw, etc. and how effectively they communicated their intentions. Remember that effort and desire count for 80%. If a student has fantastic skills in a particular area, so much the better; otherwise, it is the teacher's own judgment of the work and the student's potential which determines the final selection. It is important for the sake of the company that you balance jobs that students deserve vs. jobs that students need.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Present themselves effectively.

— Become more familiar with parts of the job interview process.

— Develop decision-making skills.

— Respect the importance of follow-through.

JOB PREFERENCE

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

CHOOSE THREE JOBS
Mark the boxes with an "X"

- ☐ Set Designer
- ☐ Costume Designer
- ☐ Makeup Artist
- ☐ Carpenter
- ☐ Electrician
- ☐ Public Relation Officer
- ☐ Historian
- ☐ Production Manager
- ☐ Stage Manager
- ☐ Writer
- ☐ Composer
- ☐ Performer

Please answer the following questions:

Describe an accomplishment that made you feel proud of yourself.

Do you play a musical instrument? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, what instrument do you play? _____

For how long have you played? _____

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CARPENTER

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good carpenter?

3. Carpenters use many tools and supplies when constructing the buildings we live in. Make a detailed list of all the TOOLS and BUILDING MATERIALS that were used to build your home. Be as specific as possible.

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COMPOSER

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good composer?

3. What type of music do you listen to and why do you listen to it?

4. Use words to describe the music or sounds that would make the audience feel like they were:

   - on a busy city street

   - in a classroom during a math test

   - trapped in a castle during a storm

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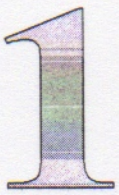
COSTUME DESIGNER

AUDITION – In Class



FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good costume designer?

3. Describe in **detail** the clothing of someone you know. (Include shoes, jewelry and accessories.) Are the clothes new or faded? Do they fit well? What are the colors or patterns of the clothing?

4. What do you think the person's clothes say about his or her personality?

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MAKEUP ARTIST

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good makeup artist?

3. Stage makeup is used to accentuate different parts of the face. Why is this necessary?

4. What parts of the face would you accentuate (and which colors would you use) to make a character look:

   Evil

   Tired

   Happy

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ELECTRICIAN

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good electrician?

3. Different colors of light can change the mood of a scene. What is the mood of each scene below? What colors would you use to create that mood?

   - a living room on a bright autumn afternoon

   - a castle stairway during an evening storm

   - a school playground on a late winter afternoon

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HISTORIAN

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good member of the documentation team?

3. As a member of the documentation team, you would be responsible for documenting the entire process of creating an original opera. This would involve interviewing other company members.

   Think of interesting questions that you could ask that are specific to each group's process and product. Write a different question for each group. Use the back of this form if necessary.

   Carpenter

   Performer

   Composer

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PRODUCTION MANAGER 1

AUDITION – In Class

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good production manager?

3. Respond to the following situation (use the back of this form if necessary):

   You notice that when your fellow students are supposed to be working independently, they are not doing their job and are bothering others who are trying to work. If these people were your responsibility, how would you handle the situation and get them back to work?

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good public relations officer?

3. In two weeks you will be holding a birthday party for your best friend. You have just found out that the circus will be in town the same day as your party, and you cannot change the date of your party.

   On the back of this page, create an invitation that will convince the people you are inviting to come to your party (and not the circus). Include all necessary information – the "who, what, where, when and why" of this event.

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SET DESIGNER

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good set designer?

3. You are designing a set for each of the following places. List five items (do not include people or animals) that will tell the audience they are in:

   - a school playground in winter

   - a room in a castle during a storm

   - a living room on a bright autumn afternoon

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STAGE MANAGER
AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good stage manager?

3. Respond to the following situations on the back of this form:

   A. A performer in the company is late to one rehearsal and absent from another. Besides replacing the performer, what could you do to solve this problem?

   B. As stage manager, you have scheduled a rehearsal and when you arrive someone else is using the rehearsal space. Give a step-by-step description of how you would handle this situation.

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WRITER

AUDITION – In Class

1

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Describe what you think is involved in doing this job.

2. Why do you think you would be a good writer?

3. Use your imagination to complete the following. (Use the back of this page if necessary.)

   I sat under the table in the dark and suddenly –

   When I'm in a crowd of people and nobody knows me, I pretend –

   I discovered a door that was huge and made of carved wood. The knob was cold but turned easily. I pushed open the door and –

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CARPENTER

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Draw a sketch of a toolbox.

2. If you were to build this toolbox so that it is strong enough to hold real tools, what materials would you need and what tools would you use to build it?

   MATERIALS TOOLS

3. Before building an actual toolbox, a carpenter would first create a *model*. Build a model of this toolbox from any material available. Make sure your name is on the toolbox and hand it in with this form.

4. Draw a plan (birds-eye view) of your living room on the back of this page. Show all doors and windows. What is the measurement of the longest wall in the room?

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COMPOSER
AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Create music or sound effects that evoke each of the following emotions. (You will have four different pieces of music.) Be prepared to share or demonstrate using voice or any instrument. To remember it, write or record it any way you can.

Anger

Fear

Confusion

Joy

2. Create a melody for these lyrics that incorporates one of the musical ideas that you created for question 1. (To remember it, write or record it any way you can.)

The people all along the sand
All turn and look one way
They turn their back on the land
They look at the sea all day.

(Robert Frost, "Neither Out Far Nor In Deep")

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COSTUME DESIGNER

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. On the back of this page, draw a complete costume for the character described below. Be specific and use color. (The time of the year is autumn.)

   - boy
   - has three older brothers
   - wants to be popular
   - enjoys cartoons, baseball and history
   - has a good sense of humor

2. List here the items you chose for this costume and explain why you chose them.

COSTUME ITEM	DESCRIPTION	REASON FOR SELECTION

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ELECTRICIAN

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. On the back of this page, draw a layout (birds-eye view) of your living room. Show where all switches, plugs and lamps are located. Show where each electrical appliance (lamps, TV, radio, etc.) plugs into the wall.

2. Answer the following questions:

   - How many light bulbs are in your living room?
   - Look on each light bulb and write down the number of watts it uses.
   - How many total watts are used in your living room?

3. Find definitions for these words:

   Footlight

   Dimmer

   Spotlight

4. In every home there is one circuit panel (also called a fuse box). Where is the circuit panel located in your home?

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HISTORIAN

AUDITION -- Take Home

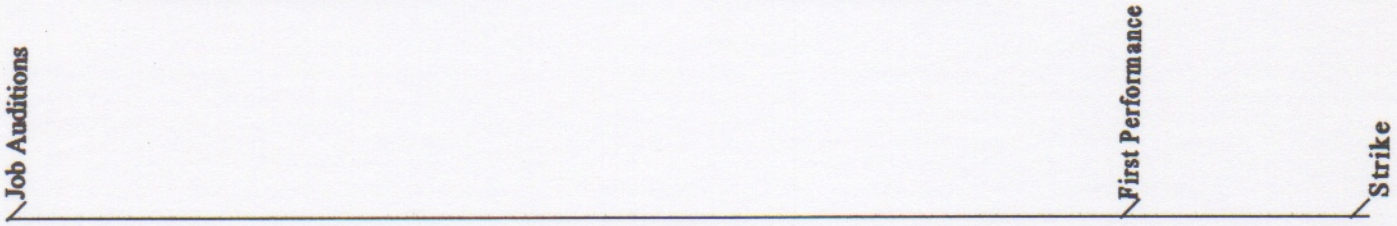
2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. The Documentation Team will be following the progress of the opera company. Put the following events on a timeline in the order in which they will occur. (Use a separate piece of paper.) Include at least three additional events that you think must happen for the opera to be a success. Put your name on the timeline and attach it to this form.

- Performers memorize script
- Set Designers complete set designs
- Performers learn 1st song
- Carpenters build sets
- Company decides on a company name
- Writers complete first lyrics
- Carpenters learn about their tools
- Make up team practices on performers
- Composers finish first song
- Documentation Team hangs exhibit
- Costume Designers measure performers
- Dress Rehearsal
- Public Relations invites the public to the show
- Final Performance



2. As a member of the documentation team, you would be responsible for creating an exhibit that documents your company's process leading up to the opera performance. Other than a timeline, what would you include in this exhibit?

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MAKEUP ARTIST

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. Define the following products and their uses. Use a dictionary if necessary.

   Lipstick _____

   Rouge _____

   Eyeliner_____

   Eye shadow _____

   Foundation _____

2. How would you design the makeup for the following character?

   - girl
   - black hair
   - dressed in reds and greens
   - was late to school because she got up late and did not get enough sleep

3. Sketch a close-up of this person's **face** on the back of this sheet. Use color.

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PRODUCTION MANAGER 2

AUDITION – Take Home

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. As a production manager, you would be responsible for the daily scheduling of your production company. Make a production calendar that:

   - consists of any four consecutive months
   - shows all working (in-school) and non-working (weekends, holidays) days
   - includes possible conflicts (½ days, field trips, testing)
   - includes the following 10 events in the order in which they might occur

- Set Designers paint the sets
- Performers learn first song
- Writers begin script
- Carpenters build the sets
- First company meeting
- Composers finish first song
- Documentation Team interviews writers
- Public Relations create company logo
- Dress rehearsal
- Final Performance

Produce the calendar on a piece of paper that is larger than this audition form, include your name on the back of the calendar, and attach it to this form.

2. What chores or other duties are you responsible for at home?

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PUBLIC RELATIONS

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. You have now decided to include the circus as part of your birthday party and you are going to invite the entire school! On a separate piece of paper, create a poster that includes the following information. Use color.

   - the name of the circus
   - the identifying symbol (logo) of the circus company
   - when and where the event will take place
   - cost of admission
   - a picture of the main attraction of the circus

   Include your name on this poster, and attach it to this form.

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SET DESIGNER

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

As a set designer, you would be responsible for designing the set for your production. Create the following designs on two separate sheets of paper. Use color. Do not include people or animals. Write your name on the back of your designs and attach them to this form.

1. Draw an interior (inside) scene that:

   - reveals a specific time of day and year
   - shows that something important has occurred in this room
   - includes two items that are meaningful to the owner of this room

   What is the specific mood or feeling of this scene?

2. Draw an exterior (outside) scene that:

   - reveals a specific time of day and year
   - includes something that looks out of place
   - shows that something important has occurred

   What is the specific mood or feeling of this scene?

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STAGE MANAGER

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. As stage manager, you would be responsible for designing and building a "callboard" which will notify your production company of all rehearsals and working sessions. Make a callboard that includes the following:

   - the name of the company and title of the show
   - a daily sign-in sheet for the company members
   - a schedule telling company members where and when to meet
   - space for company announcements

   Produce the callboard on a piece of paper that is larger than this audition form. Include your name on the back of your callboard and attach it to this form.

2. What chores or other duties are you responsible for at home?

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WRITER

AUDITION – Take Home

2

FIRST NAME_____ LAST NAME_____

CLASS:_____

1. List three things that are important to you and explain why:

   1. _____ Why? _____

   2. _____ Why? _____

   3. _____ Why? _____

2. Write a poem about something that is important to you. Use a separate piece of paper. This poem does not have to rhyme.

3. Define these words. (Use a dictionary if necessary.)

   Dialogue

   Conflict

   Monologue

4. Create a scene, in dialogue form, that deals with one of the topics you listed in response to question 1.

   - the scene must include three characters
   - two characters must have a conflict between each other
   - the conflict must be worked out by the end of the scene
   - the scene should be 1-2 pages long

Include your name on the poem and dialogue and attach them to this form.

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PRODUCTION CO. MANAGEMENT

The key element of the Creating Original Opera process is the formation of a production company and the smooth functioning of each job within that company. The production manager is responsible for the management and scheduling of people in order to provide leadership, organization, and supervision.

The teacher must make it clear to the school administration, teaching staff, and student company that the production manager is in charge of the entire company. To insure success, it is vital to provide support to the production manager and make sure that s/he has the opportunity to fulfill his or her role.

The foundation of this project rests on the belief that students can take responsibility for their learning and work in a cooperative fashion. The teacher must empower the manager to provide supervision of the production staff and take care of the logistics of running the company.

The production manager must be self-motivated, self-reliant, and well organized. The production manager will learn that respect for his/her peers, tact, consideration and understanding are the skills needed to work effectively with and to motivate most people.

The Production Manager leads a production meeting that takes place before the technical rehearsal.

OBJECTIVES: Production Manager

- To learn to speak in public
- To learn to organize and run a meeting
- To learn organizational skills
- To function as a liaison between the company and the school faculty
- To function as a liaison between teaching colleagues involved in the production
- To carry out unsupervised tasks (supervise production staff, maintain schedules, book rehearsal space)
- To be familiar with all aspects of production staff (except the performers)
- To supervise the entire production staff
- To locate and obtain resources
- To delegate responsibility
- To develop initiative

MATERIALS

3 ring binder
pen/pencil
markers
tag board
watch
notebooks
clipboard
ruler
planning calendar

INTRODUCTORY SEQUENCE

I. Introductory Meeting

Once the audition pool has been selected, an introductory meeting is required to inform students as to the jobs available in the production company you are going to form. Describe each job in detail and be frank as to the requirements for each job. Emphasize that there is no preparation possible for these auditions, students will not be singled out during the audition process, and the audition process does not favor past experiences.

It is important for students to realize during this introductory meeting that they are auditioning to be a member of a production company, not to hold a specific job in that company. It is also prudent to inform them that their work will be challenging and they will be asked to stretch themselves in new directions.

> **ADVICE: Stereotyping Jobs**
>
> *Many students will tend to think in terms of out-of-date stereotypes regarding the jobs for which they audition, i.e. make-up is for girls, carpentry is for boys.*
> *Teachers should encourage students to resist these initial judgements and those of their peers and audition for whatever jobs interest them.*

II. Preference Form

Once the Preference Form (2 - 4) is handed out, it usually advisable to have students limit their selections to no more than three auditions. The students should check their choices - not prioritize their audition preferences. It is their responsibility to arrive to the auditions on time, and with a pencil. If the student misses the audition for any reason, s/he cannot reaudition. Auditions are comparative based on the pool of applicants at the given audition time; it is unfair to those who audition to alter these conditions.

III. Parental Communication

It is suggested that an introductory letter be sent (via the students) announcing the audition process and a brief description of the Creating Original Opera program. This letter could be presented at a parents meeting to describe the program if warranted. (See 3 - 8)

IV. Announcing the Audition Results

In any auditioning process, there is hesitancy and dissappointment concerning those not accepted. In most cases, those who complete the audition process are accepted. If a student does not complete the audition process, it is an indicating factor as to their enthusiasm and effort.

If you auditioned students from more than one class, it is advisable to go to each class, thank all who auditioned, and pull the students who were selected to a new location, where they will meet other accepted students and be informed of their production company job.

As you announce each job, reiterate again what the job entails and how they will relate to other jobs in the company. Announce the job of Production Manager last - at that point, you will be handing over to that person the responsibility of running the Production Company Meetings as well as the management of the Production Company.

SEQUENCE: Student Management

I. Company Meetings

Once the company has been announced, the production manager calls all company meetings to order. If the directors have issues to address, then the production manager recognizes them.
The Production Company should meet on a periodic basis in order for members to inform each other of their progress, set goals, and redirect the company when necessary.

II. Student Contracts

It is important for students to realize that they have been "hired" to perform certain duties and that the rest of the company depends on their commitment. The contract should list all key dates that need to be reserved and provide a sense of and obligation to the production company. Both the student and a parent or guardian should sign the form. (See 3 - 9)

III. Choosing a Company Name

The students choose their company's name during the first company meeting. A company name characterizes or captures the spirit of a particular group of people and their perceptions of themselves. The name should reflect some singular aspect of the group (i.e. the kind of people they are, what they have in common, their aspirations or how they feel about something). Company names can be humorous, catchy, or straightforward.

Deciding upon criteria for choosing a company name should help the students consider the following:

- qualities which capture the unique aspects and vision of the group
- viewpoints which members of the group have in common
- methods of negotiation, compromise, and consensus in the group decision-making process

In order to choose a company name:

-have each company member write down, anonymously, a name s/he feels is appropriate for the company

-collect the suggestions and present the proposed names to the group, discussing the potential for each one

-names can be rejected if they are obscene, parts of the name are derivitive of some other organization, or if no reaction is given from the group when it is suggested.

-narrow down possibilities by being able to vote for ten names; then five; then two; etc.

ADVICE: Naming the Company

Do not allow a small group of students to dominate the process by becoming vocal about the quality of listed suggestions.

IV. Callboard

The production manager should make a list containing the names, addresses and phone numbers of all company members. A copy of this list should go to everyone in the company and a list of the performers should go to the stage manager. All company members should have the managers' phone numbers.

The stage manager is then responsible for building a callboard that will list all company members, contain announcements and working schedules, and provide a mechanism for each student to sign in each working day. The production and stage manager is responsible for keeping this callboard functioning at all times, and should follow through on any problems with company members not adhering to procedure.

The stage director and production manager discuss changes to the set.

V) Production Responsibilities

The Production Manager's job seems complicated at first because the sequence is vague. The better the performance of various jobs, the less there is to do. It should be the goal of the Production Manager to have the company members work together in a cooperative and cordial fashion so that the management job essentially becomes obsolete.

- Supervise the measuring of the stage area by the set designer and carpenters.
- Whenever any work is done by any of the production staff, make sure that their work areas are left clean and tools/materials are put away.
- Research and call the possible supply sources (lumber, hardware, paint) that can provide materials free of cost.
- Supervise set construction.
- Mediate any disputes involving production staff.
- Act as a liason between faculty/administration and the company (e.g. handle complaints about students, messiness, schedules, etc.).
- Keep steady contact with the faculty and administration concerning dates of performances, guest audiences, and any outside visitors.

- Write and deliver opening remarks prior to performance. Explain briefly what the project is about, the company name, and the title of the show. Thank everyone who has provided support and contributed goods, services or funding to the project.
- Make sure that the stage area is neat and clean after performance, that the costume and makeup areas are in proper order, and that all electrical power sources have been disconnected and dimmers shut down.

LEARNING OUTCOMES — PRODUCTION COMPANY

Students will learn to:

— Identify with and feel like part of a group with a common purpose.

— Understand that the whole (company, effort) is larger than the sum of its individual parts.

— Understand the nature and importance of responsibility for their own jobs and the degree to which their behavior affects others in the group.

— Understand the structure and operation of an opera or music theatre company, including the roles, functions and responsibilities of each member.

— Appreciate the process of arriving at group decisions through negotiation and consensus.

— Attend to and respect the rules and regulations for company members.

LEARNING OUTCOMES — PRODUCTION MANAGER

Students will learn to:

— Develop organizational skills.

— Encode and decode language (blocking, note-taking).

— Develop logical and sequential thinking.

— Manage time effectively.

— Develop conflict-resolution skills.

— Develop initiative.

— Cope with stressful situations.

— Develop gross and fine motor skills.

— Work independently.

— Improve oral communication skills.

— Speak in public.

— Develop leadership skills.

— Be a role model for peers.

— Build self-esteem and confidence.

— Develop an understanding and respect for people in a role of authority.

— Develop a professional work ethic through first-hand experience.

— Delegate authority and responsibility.

— Understand the relationship between authority and responsibility.

PRODUCTION COMPANY MANAGEMENT:
SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY PARENT LETTER

Date

Dear Parents,

Beginning today, your child will begin participation in the *Metropolitan Opera Guild Creating Original Opera Program* at your school through _____(Date)_____. Auditions will be held this week in order to form a student opera production company of writers, designers, performers, and managers.

If there are any questions, please do not hesitate to call us.

Sincerely,

_____
_____
_____

cc: Principal
Superintendent

PRODUCTION COMPANY MANAGEMENT: SAMPLE CONTRACT

Date

Dear Student:

Based on your recent audition, you have been selected for participation the METROPOLITAN OPERA GUILD CREATING ORIGINAL OPERA PROGRAM. You will form your own opera/musical theatre company and write, design, build, produce and perform your own musical theater production.

In addition to your school, hundreds of schools throughout the country will participate in the program this year.

We are very pleased to offer you participation in "The Company". The duties and responsibilities of students in this Company have been explained and students should understand the significance of their role in this project and their responsibilities to other members of this Company.

Your work will take place over the period of _____ through _____. All company members will be supervised at all times during these rehearsals.

In order to participate in all phases of this project, we will need both you and your parents' signatures below. These signatures confirm that all involved parties understand the requirements and commitments involved in the Creating Original Opera Program. Please return this form to school by _____ and if you should have any questions regarding this program please contact us.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

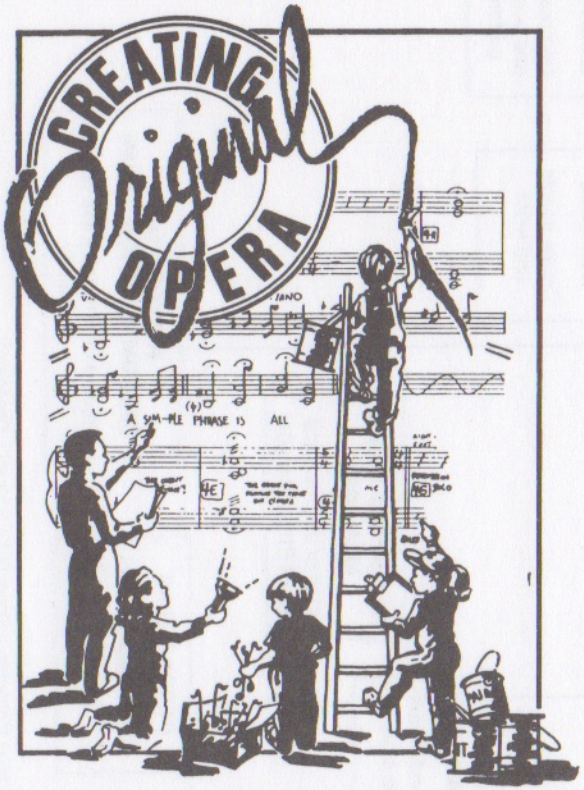
_____
_____
_____

_____
Student Signature

_____
Parent Signature

_____
Home Telephone Number

cc: Principal
Superintendent



Production Manager

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Before (or after) each performance be sure to welcome any special guests and thank them for coming.

Present your speech loudly and clearly. Be focused and calm.

If circumstances arise that require your help backstage during the performance, do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

After each performance is over, make sure the stage area is clean and neat. Check that the costume and makeup areas are in proper order and ready for the next performance.

YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Oversee all groups and give assistance where needed. Collect final inventories from Public Relations, Makeup, Carpenters and Electricians. When all inventories have been collected, give them to the Director.

DO NOT LET ANYONE LEAVE UNTIL ALL AREAS ARE CLEAN AND NEAT AND EVERYTHING HAS BEEN STORED AWAY.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be the Production Manager for your opera company.

As Production Manager your role is to provide leadership, organization and supervision. The Production Manager and Stage Manager have a common responsibility: the management of people, events and details.

The Production Manager must be self-motivated, self-reliant and well-organized. You must have respect for your company and the parts that make it work. As Production Manager, you will learn that respect for your peers, tact, consideration and understanding are the skills needed to work effectively with and motivate most people.

To be successful in this job, you will have to be responsible and think creatively to solve the problems you will encounter.

Good luck!

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D. Supervise Cleanup

Make sure that whenever any work is done by any member of the company that the work areas are left clean and tools/materials are put away.

6. Your Speech

It is your job to deliver the welcoming speech to the audience before each performance. You will be the first person the audience sees.

A. Write your speech

"Hello, my name is _____ and I am the Production Manager of the _____ Opera Company."

This is the beginning of your speech.

The speech should include the company name, the title of the show and what the show is about. Then talk about the company and how the show was created.

Make sure to thank everyone who has provided support and contributed materials, services or money to your production.

Rehearse the speech on the stage. Work with the Director and Stage Manager. They will help you learn how to project your voice and enunciate so that even the people in the last row will hear you.

B. Mediate Disputes

Sometimes disputes will arise between people who must work together in the opera company. It is your job to mediate any such disputes and help those involved come up with a solution to the problem.

REMEMBER: It is much easier to resolve problems if you discuss them in a professional, responsible and calm manner.

If a problem persists, or if you run out of ideas, bring it to the attention of the Director.

C. Contact Supply Sources

You should research and call supply sources (lumber, hardware, paint) that might provide free materials. Ask to speak to the manager in charge and explain to that person who you are and what your opera production company is doing. Then ask them if they would be interested in donating supplies for the production. Tell them they will receive acknowledgement in the program for any donations made. If they choose not to donate anything, you should still thank them for their time.

When materials are donated, make sure to give the donor information to Public Relations so that an acknowledgement can be written in the program.

JOB TITLE: **PRODUCTION MANAGER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To organize and oversee all aspects of the opera production company.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Production Manager is responsible for the smooth operation of the company within the production schedule. It is your responsibility to see that all members of the production company are doing their jobs to the best of their ability. You will also represent your company to the world. You should always, in all ways, set an example of how a company member should work and behave.

The Production Manager is responsible to the Director and to the production company as a whole.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

You are the Director's "right hand" — it's a great responsibility and an acknowledgement of your ability to stay focused and be organized.

Make a point of checking in with the Director every day, so you can keep up with changes in the schedule, or script, and any thing which could affect company operation.

Carry with you at all times:

- notebook
- folder
- pen or pencil
- calendar
- daily schedule for the opera meetings

This will save you a great deal of time and effort!

Sometimes it can be difficult being in charge. There are occasions when it will not be fun, but it is your job as Production Manager to do what needs to be done in order for the production to happen.

Do your best and you will be rewarded with a company that works well together and appreciates your leadership.

C. Weekly Schedule

Your Director will make out a schedule for each week. It is your duty to post it on the callboard. One event that will happen each week is the company meeting.

4. The Company Meeting

The Production Manager is in charge of conducting a weekly opera company meeting. Bring the meeting to order and ask each department to report to the company on what they have accomplished and what they will be doing next. This is a time for all to share their discoveries and report on their progress toward the production.

5. Represent Your Company

A. The Liaison

As Production Manager, you are the liaison (the connecting link) between the faculty/administration of your school and the company. If any problems arise that concern the opera company (schedule complaints, messiness, behavior), you are the person people should talk to. Be tactful, respectful and positive when interacting with faculty. Use your problem-solving abilities to work through any difficulties that arise.

Keep in steady contact with faculty and administration concerning dates of performances, special rehearsals, guest audiences and any outside visitors.

B. Production Schedule

Create a production schedule that spans from the first meeting to the final performance. On this schedule, indicate all conflicts simply by drawing an x through the day or half day. Everything you write should pertain only to opera activities.

Confirm the dates of your performance(s) and enter them on the appropriate day. Enter "Strike" one or one-half day after the final performance. Move backward in time and mark as many of the "products" of the various departments as you can on the calendar. Try to see if you can predict when the company should move from creation to production. Use a pencil. Your Director or teacher will help you complete this production schedule.

Hint: you will know that the company has moved into production when:

- the Writers have finished the script
- the Composers have completed the music
- the Performers are learning lines and songs
- Set Designers and Carpenters are discussing the construction of the set

Place these events on your calendar and post a copy of this schedule on the callboard.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

BACKSTAGE Any portion of the stage that is behind the main curtain.

CALLBOARD An announcement board specifically located so company members can find daily information about meetings, rehearsals and the company.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the opening show, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

MASTER CALENDAR This shows all events (national holidays, school holidays, classroom events, tests, trips) that will happen from the first opera meeting until the strike.

PRODUCTION SCHEDULE A time line of the stages and goals of the individual parts of the company that will add up to the final production.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT A "thank you" to the persons or organizations who donated time or resources to the production of your opera.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

TECH REHEARSAL A rehearsal that emphasizes all the technical aspects of the production, specifically the lighting cues and scenery changes.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE A weekly breakdown of the production schedule.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Gather Information

Just as the Carpenters make an inventory of their tool box you must also inventory your own "tool box". This includes the people, the places available in which to work, and the time that your opera company will need to create the production.

A. Contact Sheet

It is important for you to have the contact information for every member of your company so that you can contact them if there is a last-minute schedule change.

Make a list of every member of your company. Include:

- job title
- correct spelling of first and last name
- phone number
- address

The Stage Manager will aid you in collecting the contact information for Performers. This list is important. Make copies. Give a copy to the Director and Stage Manager, and keep a copy in your notebook. Have each company member check and double-check for spelling errors.

C. Department Time Frame

Once the company has been established, in order to be successful its inner workings (each department) must proceed in a certain order. (At the restaurant you cannot put the food on the table until it has been prepared.)

In Creating Original Opera, each department is dependant on some "product" from another department. The company decides on a name and then Public Relations uses this name to develop a logo. The Writers create lyrics and then the Composers set them to music, after which they are given to the Performers.

Here are some of the departments of your opera company and their "products" which are needed by other departments.

Job	'Product'	Used by
Writers	Theme/thesis lyrics characteristics, script	*Designers, Composers Performers*
Composers	Songs, underscoring	*Performers Musicians*
Set Designers	Theme drawings, concept boxes, scale drawing	*Carpenters*
Public Relations	Logo, press release	*Company*

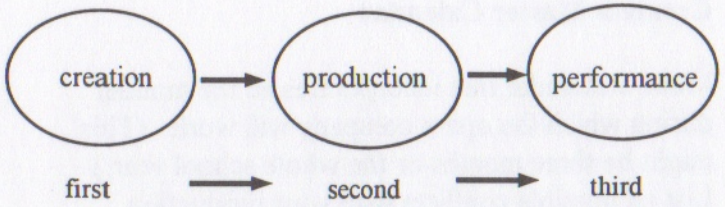
B. Company Time Frame

What comes first?

Things must happen in a certain order or sequence for everything to get done in a company. If your company is a restaurant, you must first have the idea, and develop a concept for what type of restaurant you will have. Then you must find a location, decide on what food you will serve, hire and train staff, advertise for customers, and finally open the doors of the restaurant and prepare and serve the food to your customers.

In Creating Original Opera there is an overall order for the company as it progresses toward it's goal of presenting an original opera.

The basic sequence of the company's progress as a whole is:



CREATION – *inventing*
(all departments generate ideas and develop skills)
PRODUCTION – *building/assembling the pieces*
(all departments develop these ideas)
PERFORMANCE – *presenting*
(all departments present the completed work to an audience)

B. Available Working Space Chart

Sometimes meetings of two or three groups will be scheduled at the same time and each of these groups will need a place to work.

Research and make a list of every room that is available for use by the opera company. Plot these rooms and the hours they are available on a weekly schedule.

C. Auditorium Schedule

Find out who is responsible for scheduling events in the auditorium or performance space. Contact that person and get a current copy of the schedule. Make sure your opera company's performance dates are on the schedule, as well as times for dress rehearsal and tech rehearsals.

If scheduling problems arise that you cannot solve yourself, consult the Director.

D. Class Schedule

If the Director is unfamiliar with your class schedule, write it out and give him or her a copy.

2. Understanding the Company

Each department of the opera company has a specific responsibility. The success of the whole company depends on each part doing its job. Here is a list of the various departments of the company and their areas of responsibility.

Job	Responsibility	Importance
Writers	Script and lyrics	*without the writers there would be nothing to say or sing*
Composers	Music	*without the composers the opera would be a play without music*
Set Designers	'Place' for the opera	*without the set designers the stage will be bare*
Carpenters	Sets	*without the carpenters the sets would not get built*
Electricians	Lights	*without the electricians the performers would be in the dark*
Makeup & Costume	Personal expression and facial expression	*Without costume and makeup the characters expressions and clothing would be hard to see*
Performers	Present the opera	*without the performers the opera would never be seen*
Public Relations	Audience	*without Public Relations no one would see the opera*
Documentation Team	Record the history of the company	*without documentation no one would be able to understand the complexities of an opera company*

3. Organizing and Understanding Time

The Production Manager and the Directors are the only people who will see all the pieces of your opera company "puzzle" as they come together. You will be the person others should ask if they need to know "When?" or "What comes first?"

A. Your Time at school

In order to produce an opera you will need to determine the days within the school year that opera activities can take place.

Create a Master Calendar

Make a calendar that incorporates all the months during which the opera company will work. (This might be three months or the whole school year.) List all possible conflicts with your production schedule. Conflicts might be weekends, national holidays, test days, planned trips, school vacations, etc. You will refer to this master calendar to create a production schedule/calendar.

WRITING

There are an infinite number of approaches to writing the script or libretto for an original opera or work of music theater. This particular approach works by asking the students to identify the theme, thesis, characters and their relationships before developing the scenario, lyrics and dialogue. It is a field-tested method which works very well with students, especially those who have never or rarely written an original music theater work for the stage.

Since the thought of creating an original opera may be intimidating to many students, the teacher's role as a listener, facilitator and editor is crucial to the success of this process. The teacher should ask questions, probe responses, encourage discussion of thoughts and feelings about any given topic and refrain from imposing value judgments on sensitive or controversial issues. Your chief aim in this part of the process is to encourage broad thinking; you are trying to get your students to respond to questions in new, imaginative ways and to develop as many facets as possible to a seemingly simple statement or subject. The idea is to challenge the students to dig deep into their minds and experiences so that they can break free of the mundane or the overly-familiar.

Throughout this process, there will be periods of frustration when the writers get stuck, resort to the stereotypical, or lose their concentration and sense of purpose. It is the teacher's job to help the students define and solve the problems encountered, to encourage them not to settle for the first (or easy) answer and to make sure they remain excited—if not passionate—about their chosen subject and the message they wish to convey to the audience.

OBJECTIVES

- To write an original script with lyrics on a central theme that has a point of view, interesting characters, and a meaningful progression from beginning to end.
- To learn to identify and be able to create a theme and thesis.
- To create characters that are interesting, vivid, and dramatically effective.
- To identify, create and develop relationships and conflicts between these characters.
- To write a scenario that has a beginning, middle and end that arises from the characters and their relationships and which will serve as the basis for the finished script.
- To write dialogue that is believable and dramatically effective.
- To determine the appropriate placement of musical moments.
- To write lyrics that are appropriate to the dramatic context and that express the feelings and mood of the characters.
- To develop self-discipline and critical judgment by editing and revising the first and successive drafts of the original work.
- To develop vocabulary while delineating character traits.
- To learn literary terminology.

MATERIALS

notebook/folder
pens and pencils
chalkboard and chalk
tape recorder
typewriter/word processor
access to duplicating machine
dictionary
thesaurus

SEQUENCE

As a participant in the writing process, the teacher needs to find a happy medium between being the leader and being the listener. The teacher should be a colleague who does not impose ideas, but is rather an editor and contributor. This does not mean that the teacher should abdicate all responsibilities for the process. The writers provide a perspective that the teacher does not have, and this should be respected, but the teacher's decision as to the context and appropriateness of the subject matter should be final.

I. Theme

The theme is the main topic or subject of the opera. It is the initial springboard, sparking discussion among the students and giving the teacher insight into the students' ideas and concerns.

- **The theme should be a subject the students care about deeply.** To discover what this may be, have the students write down three or more things that are important to them or affect them emotionally. There should be no constraints on subject matter.

- **Collect the papers** (which are submitted anonymously) **and list all of the items on the chalkboard.** The result can provide the writers with several points of departure.

- **Reduce the list to the themes that are most compelling to the students.** During this discussion phase, it will be fairly obvious which ideas cause agitation or excitement. Combine similar subjects under common headings. Develop a working definition for each subject or topic. Have the students explain their reasons for choosing the topics. The teacher should not impose his or her own values but instead should serve as a mediator by encouraging a great deal of discussion on each item in order to get the students' perspective.

- **Choose the main theme by going through another process of elimination.** All choices should be arrived at by group voice vote or consensus. The teacher should stress that the choice ought to be dictated by which topic seems to offer the most flexibility and potential for developing varying viewpoints, not simply the subject which on the surface appeals most to the writers.

> **ADVICE: Working Definitions**
>
> *Teachers should help come up with "working definitions"—collective understandings of terms or phrases—for key words. Begin with the dictionary.*
> *It is often helpful for the teacher to act as an editor, asking questions along the lines of "what do you mean?" and "why?" Play devil's advocate; this will draw out further argument and discussion. Each idea should be thoroughly discussed — don't race ahead. Each step opens up hundreds of possibilities.*

II. Thesis

The thesis is a complete sentence concerning the theme, i.e. what you want to say about the subject. Once the theme and thesis are established, set them aside; they will not be used again until the second step of "Conflicts". Again, good working definitions of key words will help focus discussion.

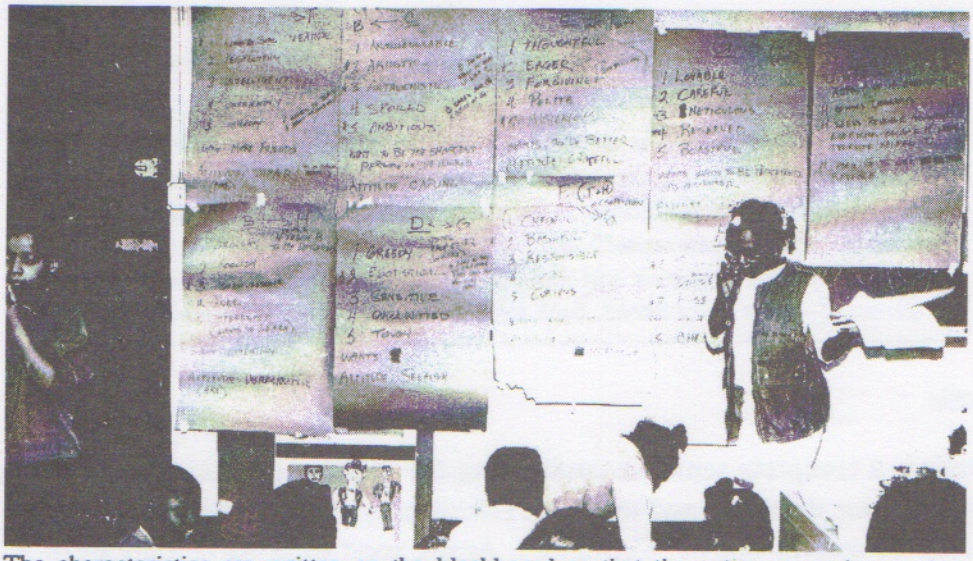
> **ADVICE: Developing a Theme**
>
> *Avoid a perspective on the theme that is obvious or uninspired (e.g. "you should not do x because it's bad"). If the thesis is a foregone conclusion, why bother with a libretto to illuminate it?*
> *Highlight some aspect of ambiguity in the theme or its thesis. This provides more opportunity for maintaining audience interest.*
> *Create several approaches or variations on a thematic idea using the initial thought as a point of departure.*

III. Characters

- **Determine the number of characters you need and assign each character a letter or number.** Five to seven characters is usually a good number to start building with, but you may make your own decisions based on experience or the number of actors. The number of characters may of course vary in your final scene.

- **List at least 5 interesting characteristics or personality traits for each character.** The five characteristics should not fall into a predictable pattern. Determine the characteristics without regard to sex, appearance, or social status. Your characteristics should define internal, not external qualities. For example, if identical twins dressed the same, what would make them different? No characters can share the same traits.

> **ADVICE: Creating Interesting Characters**
>
> *Remember that characters are not all good or all bad. Use the 3/2 rule: if a character has three bad characteristics, s/he should be given at least two good ones (and vice versa).*
> *Realize that some of the characteristics may become less significant later and others may dominate.*



The characteristics are written on the blackboard so that the entire group has a clear understanding of each characteristic as it is developed.

IV. Needs

A need is a character's motivation for behavior—what drives the character.

- **Based on their characteristics, determine what the characters need or think they need, not what the writers think the character needs.**

V. Primary Relationships

- **Each character has a primary relationship.** A character can have a primary relationship with one other character, several characters, all the characters, or even the character herself.

Several characters can have the same primary relationship. Relationships do not have to be reciprocal, nor are they necessarily positive.

VI. Conflicts

- **Develop a conflict between two characters that affects at least two more.** Be very general; not all characters need to have a conflict, but all characters can be affected by one. Map this out on the chalkboard to get a clear picture of the direction in which the group is heading. The following model may be of use when developing this initial conflict:

  "A conflict exists between [character] and [character] over [action or character] affecting [character] and [character]."

- Continue to develop the conflict (e.g. Character E enlists the aid of character A in character C and D's conflict).

- **Come up with a location or activity which requires the characters to interact.** (e.g. "What is it that brings these people together?) Discuss options and investigate how these interactions can illuminate the theme and thesis.

ADVICE:

At this point only deal with characters and their conflicts. Do not include a sequence of events or development.

- Investigate the conflict fully by asking "Who are these people?" and "What is happening?"
- Incorporate theme and thesis into your conflict.

VII. Scenario

Before you begin to write the scenario or outline of the piece, discuss the basic structure of a dramatic work: beginning, or Exposition; middle, or Development; and end, or Resolution.

ACT/SCENE	CHARACTERISTICS	MAJOR ACTION
I. Beginning/Exposition: (5-8 min. in length)	Identify setting and action, introduce characters and relationships, pose dramatic question(s), present problem.	Inciting Incident
	CROSSOVER	
II. Middle/Development (10-15 min. in length)	All characters introduced, evolution of the crisis, destruction of the status quo.	Crisis Event
	CROSSOVER	
III. End/Resolution: (5-8 min. in length)	Solution to the problem, irreversible change in character(s).	Resolving Action

- **Develop the characters, their relationships and conflicts into a sequence of actions.** As this sequence develops, put it into a scene structure. Your conflict should be placed into this structure and then built upon further to develop a scenario with a beginning, middle, and end. Each scene or act should include components of dramatic structure and center on a particular essential *action*.

VIII. Musical Moments

Discuss and decide the appropriate placement of "musical moments." Any section of a dramatic work can be musical; music is often used to heighten or dramatize any of the following:

- Reflective moments, internal thoughts
- Emotional peaks, strong feelings
- Specific actions or plot twists
- Character traits
- Relationships between characters

When determining the placement of the music you should also be able to justify the following:

- Purpose (What do you want the music to accomplish?)
- Subject (What is the music really about?)
- Mood
- Dramatic Context
- Texture (Quality of sound)

IX. Narrative

Take each scene in succession and develop it into a detailed sequence of actions. The narrative should include basic descriptions of what occurs; quotes and characterizations, however, will be left until later.

> **ADVICE: Narrative Detail**
> *The narrative should include a level of detail sufficient to explain what is happening on stage to someone who cannot see.*

X. Lyrics

Each musical moment will have its own shape and character determined by the way in which the lyrics and the music work together. Lyrics provide the framework for the music, and as you begin writing it is essential to maintain an awareness of the musicality of the words. Students should read their lyrics aloud in order to hear the musical elements of the language such as pulse, dynamics, and rhythm.

Consider the following guidelines during the lyric writing process:

A. **Subject and Character:** Determine the subject of each musical moment and which characters will be singing; then consider their feelings and motivations concerning the subject.

> **ADVICE: Getting Started**
>
> *If you are stuck looking for a place to jump in, you might try looking for a central image or metaphor that will run through a particular lyric. You might look back to your theme or your thesis for an initial thought.*

B. **Dramatic Shape:** Determine the dramatic structure of the musical moment. Every musical moment has a beginning, middle, and end, just like the script. This shape will influence choices regarding language, form, rhythm and development of metaphor.

C. **Vocabulary:** Determine the vocabulary and style of each character's voice. Encourage your students to listen for similarities and differences in the way each character speaks—in the choice of words and inflection. The more voices in a song, the more important it is that the choice of words help to differentiate between characters.

D. **Musical Vocabulary:** There are natural musical elements to words. Every word incorporates a number of the following:

Timbre (quality, tone color)
Dynamics (soft/loud)
Meaning (does the sound of a word support or contradict its meaning)
Pitch (high/low)
Tempo (fast/slow)

E. **Rhythm:** words in sequence can influence certain musical rhythms. Choices of different rhythms for different characters can help a listener distinguish individual voices in a multi-part piece.

F. **Metaphor:** Use metaphors to provide striking imagery and colorful language. A metaphor is a figure of speech which takes the qualities of one object and uses them to describe a different object (e.g. "The fog crept in on little cat's feet"—you are speaking of the fog as if it were a cat, and taking the quality of cat's feet and applying them to the movement of fog). Come up with at least three metaphors for the subject of your lyrics. Choose one as your basic image. Then, take the basic metaphor for the subject of your lyrics and expand upon it in as many ways as possible. For example:

Subject: Friendship

Metaphors: Tree, flower, linked chain

Basic Metaphor—Tree:

- roots as a symbol for longlasting friendship;

- *leaves that fall away with changing seasons representing the changing nature of friendships;*
- *boughs that break under the stress of heavy winds representing friendships that break under strain. This process will provide you with plenty of good and imaginative material for your lyrics.*

G. **Form:** Lyrics may suggest a musical form, such as verse/refrain rondo, through-composed, etc.

H. **Rhyme:** Rhyme is certainly one of the most accessible musical elements involving the relationship of words. It is also the most obvious, and should be avoided if it becomes predictable or draws attention to itself and away from the drama. Similarly, elegant but archaic syntax (e.g. "...said he"), although an easy solution to some rhyming problems, sounds false and will produce a cheap effect.

> **ADVICE: Economizing Words**
>
> *Avoid using "filler" phrases to adhere to a rhyme or rhyming pattern. However, repetition of key words or syntactical structure is one of the most effective and accessible musical techniques.*
>
> *The verse-chorus form is easy, and also obvious. It, too, should be avoided if it draws attention to itself and away from the drama.*

XI. Revising Lyrics

- Lyrics are puzzles with more than one correct answer. Encourage your students to find the best possible solution and avoid one which is merely suitable.

- Lyrics are usually written before the music and at the same time as the dialogue. However, musical and dialogue choices will undoubtedly affect the first draft of lyrics. In an ideal collaboration, the lyricists will listen attentively to the comments of the composers, and will then come to a consensus on appropriate changes which may affect the song or the opera as a whole.

- After hearing the composers' music, you may well find that you can dispense with many of the words or even verses in a lyric because the music is communicating or expressing the thoughts or feeling better than the words. Constantly economize, since a lyric should have just the right number of words. For example:

Prose: To determine what the "right number" is, when in doubt see how many words you can eliminate while still getting across the essence of the thought.

Lyric: Doubting...how many gone...thought remains.

XII. Dialogue

When the scenario and narrative steps are completed thoroughly, the dialogue should flow in an easy fashion. Do not attempt dialogue if the narrative is unclear or vague at any point. The following guidelines and points should be kept in mind when scripting an original work:

- It will be helpful for the writers to see the action in their mind's eye and say the lines aloud as they write them; scripts are meant to be heard, not read.
- Avoid the one-minute scene. Push the writers to provide enough substance for at least two pages of dialogue before music is introduced or three pages if the scene is only dialogue.
- Each spoken line must have a dramatic purpose that will either propel the action, provide important information, or reveal something about the character.
- The line must sound natural and not stilted or contrived.
- Do not attempt to script easily improvised atmospheres (i.e., entering a classroom, playground activity, cafeteria settings, etc.).
- The line must be written in such a way that only the character delivering it would say it. If you can have any character say the line in question, that's a problem.
- The line must be motivated — the character must have a valid reason to say the words.
- Make sure that each idea introduced is resolved or carried to a conclusion. There should be no loose ends.
- Don't overwrite.
- Reveal something important about the character's state of mind, her history, background, or opinions.
- Reveal essential information to help the audience understand what has occurred or is about to happen.
- As a rule of thumb, one minute of dialogue is equal to one double-spaced typed page.

TERMINOLOGY

Articulation: The amount and quality of accent on the initial sound of a word.

Character: An animated entity that serves a dramatic purpose.

Conflict: Opposition between characters, interests or principles.

Crisis: A crucial turning point; a critical moment at which the characters are unable to return to the status quo and must undergo a decisive change.

Crossover: A transition scene, usually in front of the curtain, that serves to cover set and/or costume changes behind the curtain.

Development: In this section, the theme and thesis evolve and the conflict is developed, culminating in a crisis.

Dialogue: A conversation between two or more characters.

Dynamics: The volume level of music (e.g. loud, soft, very loud, very soft, etc.).

Exposition: The first section of a play or musical piece that presents the inciting incident and introduces the characters.

Inciting Incident: The action, based on conflict, that sets the drama in motion, leading to the crisis.

Interior Monologue: A soliloquy that gives voice to what a character is thinking.

Lyrics: The words of a song.

Metaphor: A figure of speech in which one object is likened to another by speaking of it as if it were that other object.

Monologue: A discourse by a single speaker.

Motivation: What causes a character to act.

Movement: As it pertains to lyrics, the direction and manner in which the words go.

Musical Moment: An appropriate place in the action to include music.

Narrative: A detailed written description of the action.

Pitch: The height of a sound in musical space, which is determined by the tone's vibration frequency.

Plot: The sequence of action or the narrative line of a dramatic work.

Resolution: The final section of a play or musical piece in which the major conflict is resolved.

Rhythm: A relationship within time between two or more notes; the recurrence or repetition of stress, beat, sound, accent, etc. usually occuring in a regular pattern; the relative duration and accent of musical sounds.

Running time: How much time it takes to perform a dramatic work.

Scene: A division of an act in a play; a comprehensive event; the place in which action occurs; a setting or locale.

Scenario: An outline of the plot.

Script: The written text of the dramatic work.

Shape: As it pertains to music, the form used to convey a mood.

Subtext: The unspoken thoughts of characters; they often contrast with what they are saying in the text.

Tempo: The rate or speed of a composition.

Theme: The main subject of a dramatic work.

Thesis: A statement based on the theme.

Timbre: The characteristic quality of a sound produced by a particular instrument or voice (e.g. the difference in the sound quality of a piano and a flute).

Voice: The specific manner or style in which each character speaks.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Recognize that their own experiences are legitimate subject matters for opera.

— Analyze, synthesize, evaluate, make informed judgments, arrive at conclusions, and employ inductive and deductive reasoning skills.

— Develop critical thinking skills and the ability to apply and transfer learning from this process to other studies and life situations.

— Develop and reinforce spelling, grammar, syntax, sentence structure, punctuation, and fine motor skills.

— Identify the structure (beginning, middle and end) of both prose and poetry.

— Understand the power of words and language to communicate ideas, thoughts and feelings.

— Develop word association and word grouping skills and write thoughts in a cohesive and meaningful way.

— Develop editing and rewriting skills.

— Hear the meter in words and the music in language.

— Develop and reinforce terminology and skills needed to create poetry (e.g. metaphor, symbol, time, rhyme, imagery).

— Investigate other forms of literature and poetry.

— Use resource materials (e.g. thesaurus and dictionary) to express their intentions in a variety of ways.

— Increase vocabulary.

— Identify and develop a topic.

— Challenge themselves and develop higher criteria and standards for the quality of their own work.

— Adapt existing written material.

— Develop outlines and note-taking skills.

— Speak and write with their own voice.

— See and hear their words brought to life.

— Have a new awareness and respect for reading material.

— Develop a sense of accomplishment and self worth.

— Improve oral communication skills.

— Develop or reinforce the ability to compromise.

— Develop or reinforce leadership qualities.

— Develop or reinforce listening and other perceptual skills.

— Develop or reinforce respect for individual differences.

Essential Thoughts Concerning the Writing of Any Dramatic Work

1. A script is meant to be *heard and seen* rather than read from a piece of paper.

a. It is merely a device for communicating to other collaborators what you wish to see and hear happening.

b. Punctuation, grammar, spelling and syntax are only means toward the end of making your thoughts known to your audience; one should not be overly concerned with what is gramatically correct, e.g., "wanna" may in some cases be more appropriate than "want to".

2. There is an audience to be considered that cannot read the script, but will watch it brought to life.

a. What do you want the audience to know? When do you want them to know it?

b. Do they understand what is going on? Have they been given the information necessary to understand what comes next?

c. Can you manipulate the audience with what is taking place on the stage in order to make the work effective?

d. Put yourself in the place of the audience as you write the script; are you curious, confused, surprised, interested, intrigued, or excited? Are you bored?

3. Your play takes place in *literal* time and space.

a. Is there time and space to make the scenery changes called for in the script (in addition to what the set designer dreams up that is not mentioned in the text)?

b. Does the length of the scene justify the resources put into it (e.g. a two minute scene with 13 characters in a multi-level apartment during a raging thunderstorm)?

c. Have you taken into account the limitations and demands of your performing facility?

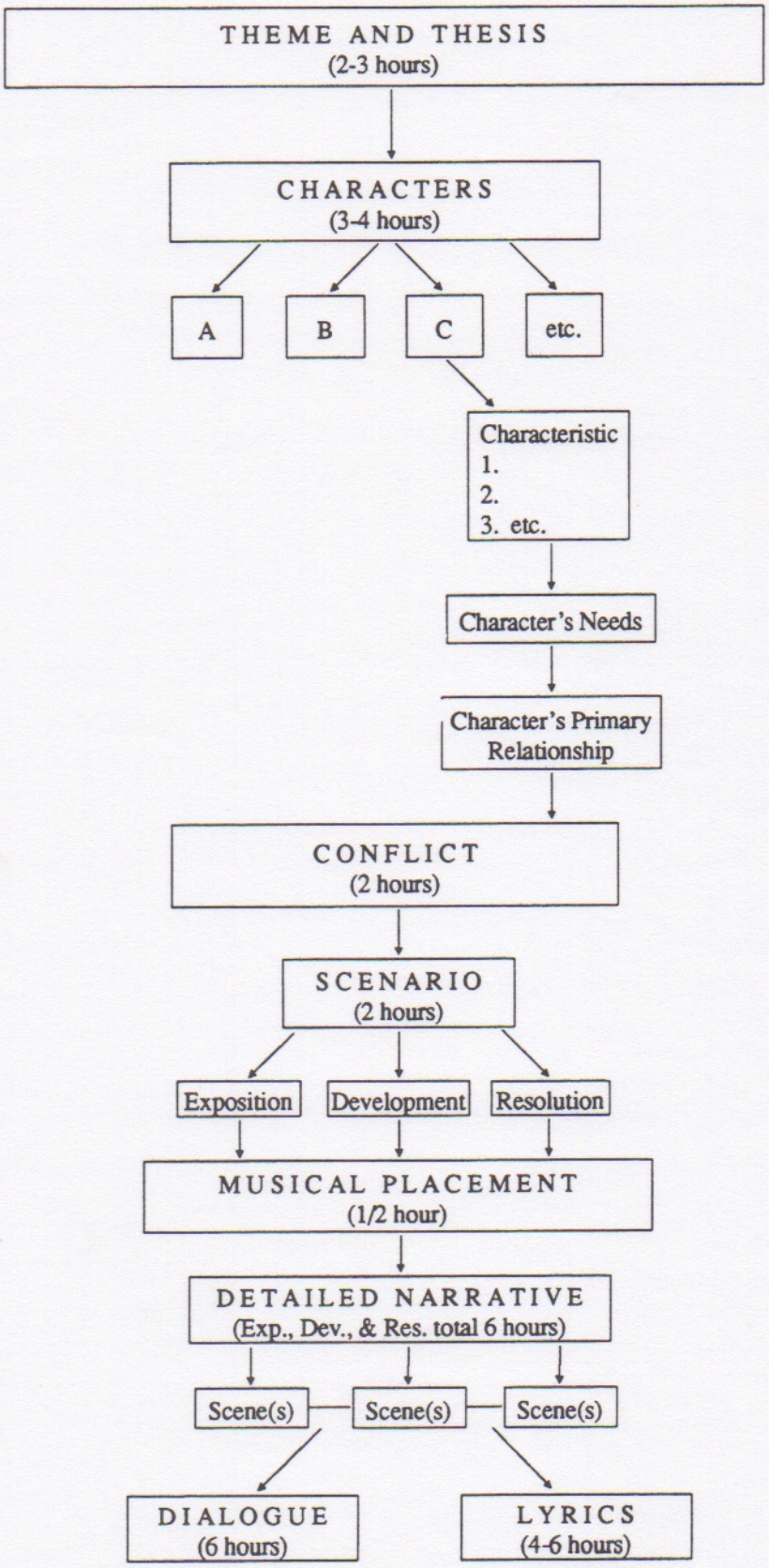
d. Have you given the actor who plays the character that goes through four costume changes time to effect the changes during the running of the play?

4. **Will the audience accept the character as s/he is portrayed and written?**

a. Is each character a unique one, with his or her own voice, behavior, and attitudes? Or could you put any other character's name to any line without it making a difference?

b. Does the character do what s/he wants to do or what you want her to do? (The former is preferable.)

c. Is every word the character speaks necessary for the progress of the work? Do characters' actions grow out of their motivations?


THEME AND THESIS
(2-3 hours)
CHARACTERS
(3-4 hours)
A
B
C
etc.
Characteristic
1.
2.
3. etc.
Character's Needs
Character's Primary Relationship
CONFLICT
(2 hours)
SCENARIO
(2 hours)
Exposition
Development
Resolution
MUSICAL PLACEMENT
(1/2 hour)
DETAILED NARRATIVE
(Exp., Dev., & Res. total 6 hours)
Scene(s)
Scene(s)
Scene(s)
DIALOGUE
(6 hours)
LYRICS
(4-6 hours)

Writer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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As a rule of thumb, one double-spaced, typed page is equal to about one minute of dialogue. Therefore, you need a 25–30 page script for a thirty-minute opera.

YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Once the script is complete, the Writers' primary job is finished. You can best help at this point by stepping back and allowing the other departments to do their jobs.

YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Writers should help the Public Relations team clean up after the audience and make sure that the rooms used by the opera company are clean and in order .

Writers may also ask the Production Manager if help is needed by any of the other departments.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Writer for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as a Writer. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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Duties during strike 16

You now have all the information you need to complete a song from any character's point of view! Don't forget to use the ideas of contrast and song form as previously discussed. And remember, every song has a beginning, middle and end.

9. Dialogue

Review the narrative that you wrote. If it is detailed and clear, the dialogue will flow easily. Do not attempt the dialogue if the narrative is unclear or vague at any point.

Scripts are meant to be heard, not read. Say the lines aloud as you write them and try to see the action of each scene in your mind's eye.

Each spoken line should sound natural and use the language that is unique to that character. The lines should also reveal information that helps the audience understand what has occurred or what is about to happen.

In addition each spoken line should:

- propel the action
  or
- provide important information
  or
- reveal something about the character
  or
- all of the above

Make sure that each idea introduced is resolved or carried to conclusion, so that there are no loose ends.

8. Character Song

A. Metaphor

Look closely at the musical moments you've selected. For each place, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the mood?
- What is the central action of this moment?
- What is the main desire or need of the character or characters at this time?
- What should be emphasized?

Come up with three metaphors that the character would use to describe himself or herself at this moment.

Come up with three metaphors that the character would use to describe his or her situation at this moment.

Any of these metaphors can be a starting point for your lyric.

B. Language

How would each character express himself or herself? Things to consider are:

- short or long sentences
- simple or complex words
- slang or repeated words
- rhythms of speech
- rhyme or no rhyme

JOB TITLE: **WRITER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To write an original script and lyrics.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Writers will begin by deciding on a theme and thesis, and then creating characters. They will choose a setting for the opera and will write lyrics and dialogue.

Writers are responsible to the Director and to the Production Manager.

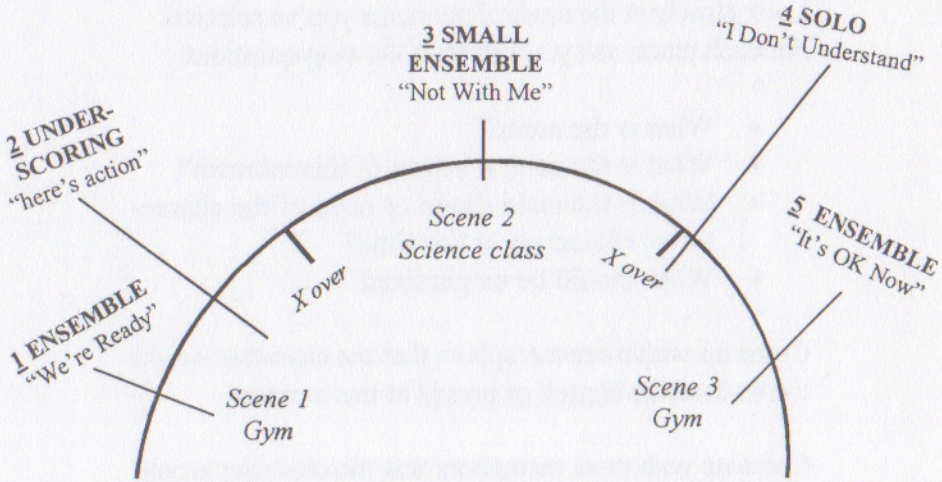
THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your work as a Writer is the foundation upon which the performance is based. Because of this, your work needs to be your best — maybe even better than you think possible.

The Writers will start immediately and will work intensely for the first few weeks. You will be creating characters that are your own age and will present situations that stem from your own experience. Your work must be finished before the work of other departments can be completed.

You will need to bring a notebook, a pen or pencil, and this booklet to each meeting. A folder would be helpful to organize your work and keep track of early drafts.

Do not throw anything away! Upon completion of the script, all initial drafts of dialogue, lyrics and character sketches should be given to the Documentation Team for their records.



7. Narrative

Write a detailed sequence of the actions that take place in each scene. Include detailed descriptions of what occurs, but not what the characters say. Determine the final placement of the musical moments. Make sure they are distributed evenly throughout the three scenes and that there is a variety of moods, styles and characters singing (solo, duet, ensemble).

6. Musical Moments

What moments in your scenario are powerful enough to be musicalized (set to music)?

Any section of a dramatic work can be musical. Music is often used to enhance:

- reflective moments, internal thoughts
- emotional peaks, strong feelings
- character traits
- specific actions or plot twists

Find all the places in your scenario that could be musical moments. (Find as many as possible so you can make choices.) Give each place a working song title (for example "Fight Song").

Now, choose four of these points to musicalize. You should choose places that offer moments for one of each of the following:

- solo
- small ensemble (duet, trio)
- large ensemble
- underscoring

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

CHARACTERISTIC A trait unique to one person.

CONFLICT Opposition between characters, interests or principles.

CROSSOVER A transitional scene, usually performed in front of the curtain. It may serve to cover set changes happening behind the curtain.

DIALOGUE A conversation between two or more characters.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

LYRICS The words of a song.

MONOLOGUE A speech made by a single character.

NARRATIVE A detailed written description of the action.

SCENARIO A basic outline of the action or plot.

SCRIPT The written text of the dramatic work.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

THEME The idea on which the opera is based.

THESIS A point of view about the theme.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Decide on a Theme

The theme is the main topic or subject of your opera. It should be something you care about deeply. The theme will be determined by the writing group after much discussion. A theme should be easily conveyed in one word.

2. Develop a Thesis

The thesis is what you want to say about the theme. It can be your point of view or how you feel. The thesis will be determined after a group discussion.

Your challenge as a Writer is to come up with a thesis that is unique and interesting. Try to consider many points of view before deciding on your final thesis.

3. Theme Song

Have a discussion about your theme and thesis. Create a list of images that your theme/thesis suggests. Are any of these images similar? In what way?

This list may help you in deciding on a central metaphor for your song.

Assignment #3
Take a story that you know and simplify it to fit this format. Bring your work to the next meeting.

Section	Example	Your Story
Beginning "Exposition" (Main characters & relationships introduced. Problem presented.)	*"A" yearns for a place where dreams come true. Twister carries A to faraway land.*	
LOCATION	*A Farm*	
Middle "Development" (All characters introduced. Problem evolves.)	*A meets B, C & D. They try to help A get home. "E" tries to prevent this in order to get A's magic shoes.*	
LOCATION	*A Fantasy World*	
End "Resolution" (Problem resolved, character has changed.)	*"A" succeeds in returning home. Realizes "there's no place like home."*	
LOCATION	*A Farm*	

B. Completing the Scenario

The scenario for your opera will be developed in class as a group. Resist giving your characters names or genders as you develop your scenario.

C. Primary Relationships

Each character has a primary (main) relationship. This relationship can occur with another character, several characters, all the characters, or even with him or herself. (It does not have to be a "positive" relationship.)

D. Conflict

Every story has at least one conflict. The basis of your story will be a conflict occurring between two characters that affects at least two other characters.

Assignment #2
Observe a 1/2 hour TV show or select a book that you have read. Determine what the main conflict is and who is involved. Write down this information and bring your work to the next meeting.

5. Scenario

Every dramatic work has a beginning, middle and end. These sections are also called exposition, development and resolution. A scenario is a sequence of actions that takes you from one section to the next.

A. Location

Consider various locations that would cause your characters to interact. Discuss alternatives and decide on two contrasting locations.

A. Metaphor

A metaphor is a figure of speech which takes the qualities of one object and uses them to describe something else. For example: "The fog crept in on little cats' feet" speaks of the fog as if it were a cat sneaking in silently.

Come up with at least three metaphors from your list of images and decide on one central metaphor for your lyric.

B. Song Structure

Like a story, every song has a beginning, middle and end. Think about what you want to say about your theme and then write a brief description of your song's structure (its beginning, middle and end).

C. Lyrics

Based on your central metaphor and the structure of your song, write a minimum of four lines for the beginning section.

Label these first lines section "A". If these are very general ideas they might be a chorus. If they are specific ideas they might be a verse.

Now write a second contrasting section that expresses the middle part of your song.

Some ways to create contrast are:

- present a different point of view
- vary the number of lines
- make the lines longer or shorter
- change the rhythm

Label these lines section "B".

D. Song Form

With the completion of section A and section B, you now have the basic building blocks of song form! These can be combined in many different ways. Some examples are:

- ABAB
- AABA
- ABBA

If you write another contrasting section, that would be section "C" and it would create more opportunities for song form.

- ABACA
- ABCBA
- ABCA

Finish writing lyrics for your theme song based on these new discoveries.

4. Create Characters

Build five characters and assign each character a letter (A, B, C, D, E). The personality of each character will be different.

A. Characteristics

Everyone has many sides to his or her personality. A characteristic is an adjective that describes how a person is on the inside. (For example: stubborn, decisive, curious.) All characters have both "good" and "bad" characteristics.

Assignment #1
Create a list of 20 or more adjectives that could describe a person on the inside. Make sure to include both "good" and "bad" characteristics. Be specific and imaginative. Avoid adjectives that describe physical appearance (tall, curly hair). Bring this list to class for discussion. You will build characters together from your lists.

B. Character Needs

Discuss as a group each character's inner traits and decide on a basic need for each character. A character is motivated to act by his or her need. (The character might not be aware of this need.)

COMPOSITION

Musical elements are combined in composition just as words are combined in writing. Musical notes, phrases, and sections are analagous to words, sentences, and paragraphs; all combine to make a final product. Once musical vocabulary is understood, composition can become an exciting communicative medium for students and teachers.

Music composed for opera and musical theater rarely stands by itself. Written for a dramatic purpose, it is specific to the content and action of the story as well as the emotional mood of the characters. Musical moments should be placed in the libretto where certain feelings and ideas are best expressed through lyrics and music or with underscoring.

The composer makes minor revisions and finishing touches during a rehearsal to respond to the students' vocal abilities and the stage director's needs.

Music written explicitly for a specific moment can establish mood, foreshadow or recapitulate important events, and provide insight into the characters and their feelings or motivations. As such, it and the dramatic text which surround it are inseparable.

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the appropriate placement of musical moments.
- To determine the relationship between the musical moments.
- To understand the character of each musical moment.
- To determine which voices will sing within each musical moment.

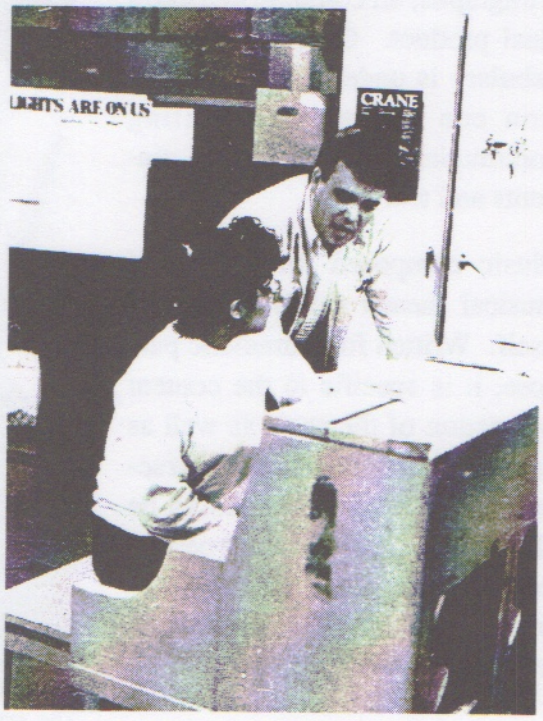
- To determine the musical vocabulary of each voice.
- To understand the musical elements of the lyrics.
- To determine whether the music will work in support of or in opposition/contrast to the lyrics.
- To learn critical judgment by editing, adapting and revising the music.
- To put the music into written form.

MATERIALS

Music Paper (optional; it is not absolutely necessary to write down the music for performance.)

Tape Recorder (optional, but extremely helpful)

Musical instrument(s) that you and the sutdent are comfortable playing.



SEQUENCE

I. What is opera?

Too often, students have stereotypes and misconceptions about opera, misapprehensions based in the musical style of nineteenth century western European music. They will most likely perceive opera to be an entirely sung composition of great length written in a foreign language, with an impenetrable storyline, complicated and irrelevant to their way of thinking.

In fact, the opposite is true. Opera creators have always written in the language of their audiences, often focusing on a contemporary theme, and using a variety of musical styles from the popular to the academic. Just as the writers are asked to develop a script that springs from their experience, student composers should be encouraged to write in styles with which they are familiar. While many operas do contain only sung, not spoken, text, it is more appropriate to look at opera as an integrated musical/theatrical form in which neither element is complete without the other. Since the lyrics will be written as part of the narrative, the musical moments will communicate essential action rather than reiterating what has already been said in the script.

II. The function of the musical moment

There are many kinds of musical moments, both sung and instrumental. Whatever their form, style, or content, they must all relate to the dramatic action and may serve any number of purposes. The most successful musical moment will function in a variety of ways keyed to the dramatic structure of the piece. Specifically, music can:

- Heighten emotion
- Establish mood
- Disclose character and plot information
- Advance the action
- Reveal a character's inner thoughts
- Show relationships between characters
- Express a number of thoughts, emotions, and ideas simultaneously
- Provide a transition between scenes
- Recall dramatic themes

III. Understanding music

- The composers do not wait until the script is finished to begin their work. Rather, composers develop a musical vocabulary and generate a pool of musical material in tandem with the writing process.
- Begin by defining the basic elements of music. Let the student formulate definitions and related descriptive terms in their own words.

MUSICAL ELEMENT	DEFINITION	DESCRIPTIVE TERMS
Pitch	tone	*high, low*
Melody	tune	*rising, falling*
Tempo	pulse/beat	*fast, slow,*
Dynamics	volume	*loud, soft*
Rhythm	duration of notes	*long, short*
Harmony	accompanies the melody; two or more notes played simultaneously	*major, minor, dissonant, consonant*
Timbre	quality of sound; what distinguishes two voices or instruments from each other	*bright, dark, harsh*
Articulation	how the notes are played	*legato, staccato*

ADVICE:

Students tend to confuse volume with pitch, using up/down and high/low interchangeably. They may also perceive a fast musical selection as loud and high and a slow one as low and soft.

- Assignments should be made to listen to music of many styles. Have them describe these styles using the terms they've defined.
- Students should observe film or television or a videotaped musical theater work and describe the musical characteristics and dramatic function of the music used in the soundtrack.
- Devise exercises to explore the creation of each musical element.

IV. Integrating the composition and writing processes

The composition process begins with the theme and thesis and continues through each step of the writing process. Each choice the writers make will provide information that can guide the composers as they develop musical material. Some questions to ask and processes to consider are outlined below:

Theme/Thesis

-What musical qualities do the theme and thesis suggest? Direct this discussion using the vocabulary defined by the students.

-Create musical ideas to represent the theme and thesis.

Characters/Needs/Relationships

-Develop motifs and gestures to represent each character and his or her characteristics.

-Express musically the relationships and conflicts between the characters.

ADVICE: Beginning Ideas

Melodies are not the only element that can be used in beginning the composition. Characters may be best expressed starting with a rhythm, harmonic idea, or timbre.

V. Scenario/Musical Moments

In developing the scenario, the writers have determined certain points at which words alone cannot fully express the dramatic moment. These musical moments come in five types:

- **Ensemble:** a group singing with one voice
- **Solo:** one character in a moment of heightened emotion or reflection
- **Duet/Trio:** two or more distinct voices singing simultaneously

- **Underscoring:** music under dialogue or action
- **Crossover:** music providing transition during scene changes or passages of time

VI. Lyrics

Terms used to discuss musical qualities are explained on 5 - 3; talk about the lyrics using these terms as well. As in the writing process, your discussion will include many ideas and possibilities; all these ideas must be discussed fully in order to arrive at the most productive starting point. Note that any point can be your source for generating music.

VII. Composing the Music

As in the writing process, the teacher does not compose the music but rather sparks ideas, guides the process, and provides an editorial viewpoint. By discussing musical terminology and the dramatic function of music, you have provided the students with the resources for generating musical ideas. By examining the lyrics in depth, you have provided a dramatic core from which the music will spring.

As you listen to the material students have composed, encourage them to consider the following:

-Is the music appropriate for the dramatic action?

-Is it interesting?

-Is it written in the appropriate range for the student performers?

-Does the accompaniment support, comment on, or contrast the lyrics and melody? It should function as more than just background to the melody. Use counterpoint to create interesting musical textures.

Orchestration: Use whatever instruments with which you or your students are comfortable. Care must be taken to provide an accompanying instrumentation that supports the singer and enhances the dramatic moment. Crossover music and underscoring are a great opportunity to expand the musical texture. Electronic keyboards and synthesizers may be used, but should be in-

corporated *after* describing timbres—don't let canned preset sounds dictate your choices. Don't forget creative vocal choices as well, and never use tape—it traps the performers.

Form: The form generally follows the content, but verse-chorus or A B A-type forms will be helpful in structuring pieces.

Back to the Writers: Small word changes or eliminations may be undertaken without consultation if you are pressed for time, but it is always better to request (not demand) rewrites. Composers may find a musical verse structure that seems to call for a similar lyric structure in subsequent verses—give this rewrite task back to the writers.

Revision Process: Be ready to transpose (songs, sections, or notes), rewrite, change sung text to rhythmically chanted to spoken, etc. in response to the needs of the performers. When music-directing, be open to opportunities to make the music more dramatic, i.e., speaking a line, whispering, letting a performer add interpretive qualities through timbre changes, tempo changes, etc. In addition, writers and composers, when hearing material, may have concerns and/or ideas for improvement. Remember that what they (and you) hear in rehearsal is not yet at performance level. Trust performers' abilities as well as your own to bring a musical idea to fruition.

VIII. Vocal Ranges

Students should sing comfortably from middle C and to an octave and a fourth above that. Too often, music is written too low for the students. In performance, students are often unable to sing notes that seem low and comfortable in rehearsal. As the composition process progresses, so does the vocal production process that will give the performers the foundations they need to use the full range of their voice.

ADVICE: Vocal Harmony

If the composers can sing it, so can the performers. You can always simplify in rehearsal.

TERMINOLOGY

Aria: A song written for one voice.

Arpeggio: Notes of a chord played one after another.

Articulation: The amount and quality of accent on a sound.

Character vocal range: The distance between the lowest and highest notes determined to be appropriate for a certain character.

Chorus: Music written to be sung by a group.

Counterpoint: The relationship or intersection between musical lines or voices.

Da Capo: A term used in musical notation meaning "from the beginning". It indicates a repetition of a previously played passage.

Duet: Music written for two voices or instruments.

Dynamics: The volume of the music (loud/soft).

Ensemble: The name given to a musical group that sings or plays together. An ensemble can be vocal or instrumental.

Harmony: The musical accompaniment to melody, conceived vertically.

Interlude: Instrumental music heard within (or between) the acts or scenes of an opera. Also defined as an entr'acte.

Key: A tonal center.

Lyrics: The words to a song.

Melody: A succession of musical tones having pitch and duration.

Overture: The music heard before the performance begins.

Pitch: How high or low a note is.

Rhythm: A relationship within time between two or more notes.

Strophic Song: A song in which every stanza is sung to the same melody.

Tempo: The rate or speed of a composition.

Through-composed: Songs in which musical material is different from stanza to stanza.

Timbre: The characteristic quality of a sound produced by a particular instrument or voice (e.g. the difference between the sound qualities of a piano and a flute).

Transition Music: A brief linking passage between two sections in a musical composition.

Trio: Music written for three voices or instruments.

Underscoring: Musical accompaniment to the spoken word or stage action.

Vocal range: The distance between the lowest and highest notes comfortably sung by an individual.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Understand the meaning of emotional content.

— Become familiar with the textures of sound.

— Create within given constraints.

— Understand that rhythm is an integral part of the world around us.

— Recognize the value of everyone's creative abilities.

— Express themselves in a non-verbal medium.

— Develop analytical skills.

— Develop critical judgement skills for a non-verbal medium.

— Translate meaning from a verbal to a non-verbal medium.

— Develop a hypothesis, field-test it, and make appropriate adjustments.

In many cases, the teacher will act as the accompanist for the performance.

COMPOSITION:. LYRICS PREPARATION

Production _____
Song Title _____

ACT _____ Scene _____

FUNCTION

Subject: _____

Mood: _____

Characters Involved: _____

Setting: _____

Shape/Form: _____

TEXT

Subtext: _____

Evocative Words: _____

Keywords: _____

Stresses: _____

Pace/Space: _____

MUSICAL QUALITIES

Rhythm: _____

Contour: _____

Introduction: _____

Fill Spaces: _____

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Composer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Composer for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as Composer. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Complete the musical instrument inventory form and hand it in to the Production Manager. Put away the musical instruments and return any borrowed instruments to their rightful owners. You can then help the Public Relations team clean up after the audience and make sure that the rooms used by the opera company are clean and in order.

Composers may also ask the Production Manager if help is needed by any of the other departments.

YOUR DUTIES
DURING THE PERFORMANCE

The Composers usually help perform the music and accompany the singers onstage. They might play a keyboard, other traditional or homemade musical instruments, or found objects. As the "orchestra" you must provide a steady and secure accompaniment that will allow the Performers to work effectively and with confidence.

It is important that the "orchestra" not draw attention to itself during the production. There should be no talking or unnecessary movement while a performance is in progress. If you are not needed as part of the orchestra, you should sit with the rest of the company members in the audience until it is time for your bow.

JOB TITLE: **COMPOSER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To compose original music based on the characters, lyrics and dramatic situations given to you by the Writers.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Composers work to enhance the dramatic moments of the script, heightening emotion and advancing the plot with music. They also express the characters through melody, rhythm, harmony etc. Composers must be thoroughly familiar with the script and characters.

Composers are responsible to the Director and the Musical Director, as well as the Production Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your work as a Composer is the musical foundation upon which the performance is based. It is your work that will transform this script from a play into an opera.

An opera is not defined by a particular musical or singing style. Instead, it is a work combining dialogue, lyrics and music to convey a specific emotional mood and dramatic meaning.

The composition process does not begin after the script is written, but *while* the script is being written. As the Writers begin to develop ideas, the Composers can use these ideas and set them to music. Characters will express themselves with musical qualities as well as words.

You will need to bring a notebook, a pen or pencil, and this booklet to each meeting. A folder would be helpful to organize your work and keep track of early drafts.

Do not throw anything away! Upon completion of the music, copies of all musical sketches should be given to the Documentation Team for their records.

7. Accompaniment

The melody a character sings represents only part of how he or she is feeling. The accompaniment can reveal hidden thoughts or emotions, provide atmosphere, or increase the intensity of the moment. An interesting accompaniment usually interacts with the melody in contrasting ways — with a different rhythm, harmony, articulation, etc. This is called counterpoint.

Consider building an accompaniment based on musical motifs you have previously created.

Try playing the accompaniment on a variety of instruments or found objects. How does a different instrument change the mood of the music?

6. Underscoring

Music is used both to advance the action and to make dramatic transitions between scenes.

Assignment #3
Observe two 1/2 hour television programs. For each, take special note of when music is used. Answer the following questions for each occurrence.

- What was the action (if any) during the music?
- Were characters speaking while the music played?
- How did the music make you feel?
- Did the music lead you to expect something would happen? What?

Once you receive the completed script from the Writers, read through it and identify places where underscoring or transitional music would be effective. Music may also be needed to fill the time between scene changes.

When composing underscoring, consider using musical themes from elsewhere in the piece to provide continuity or reveal hidden meaning.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

CHARACTERISTIC A trait unique to one person.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the opening show, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

DUET Music written for two voices or instruments.

ENSEMBLE A musical group that sings or plays together.

INTERLUDE Instrumental music heard within (or between) the acts or scenes of an opera.

LYRICS The words of a song.

SCRIPT The written text of the dramatic work.

SOLO Music written for one voice or instrument.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

SUBTEXT The unspoken thoughts of characters.

THEME The idea on which the opera is based.

TRIO Music written for three voices or instruments.

UNDERSCORING Musical accompaniment to the spoken word or staged action.

VOCAL RANGE The distance between the lowest and highest notes comfortably sung by an individual.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Inventory

It will be very helpful in writing music if you know which instruments are available.

Create a list of all the available musical instruments. Consider borrowing or making instruments, or bringing things from home.

2. Pieces of the Puzzle

Music is made up of many different elements. Each element can be a starting point in developing a composition. These elements are your vocabulary with which you can discuss and compose music. With your teacher, come up with simple definitions for the following terms:

Pitch_____

Melody_____

Tempo_____

Rhythm_____

Dynamics_____

Harmony_____

Timbre_____

Articulation_____

Form_____

B. Rhythmic Foundation

There is a natural rhythm and melody to the spoken word. Say the lyrics over to yourself or to each other until you can hear their natural pattern or rhythm. Notate the rhythm any way you can or tape record it.

C. Melody

As you speak the lyrics in rhythm, listen to the pitch levels of your voice. Take care to note which words are stressed, as these are often the highest notes in a melody. Consider the character or thematic motifs you created earlier and see if you can incorporate them into the music. When a melody emerges, write or record it any way you can.

Once you receive the completed script from the writers, read through it and identify places that offer moments for one of each of the following:

- solo
- small ensemble (duet, trio)
- large ensemble
- underscoring

5. Writing a Song

Assignment #2
Develop musical ideas based on your ordinary daily routine (brushing your teeth, riding a bus, eating lunch, etc.)

Now, alter the music to express the same action with a different subtext. (Brushing your teeth when you're angry, riding a school bus by yourself, eating lunch when you are excited.) Bring this music to share with the group.

A. Preparation of Lyrics

Composition begins with a discussion of the lyrics. Once you have a clear understanding of the lyrics (their meaning, form, mood, etc.) you will have a clear understanding of the type of music you need to compose.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is the subject of this lyric?
- Which character(s) sings this song?
- What is the subtext?
- What is the mood?
- What are the most important words?
- Is a rhythm suggested by the words?
- Is there a form to the lyric?

Demonstrate these elements to your classmates with voice, instruments or found objects. After all the elements have been explored, try demonstrating two at a time. Then do three at a time.

Did you know that every song you hear incorporates all nine musical elements?

Assignment #1
Using objects you can find at home (not traditional musical instruments), create a musical composition with a beginning, middle and end. Incorporate what you just learned about the elements of music. Perform the composition for your fellow Composers at the next meeting.

3. Remembering the Music You Write

One way to remember the music you write is to have a tape recorder running while you are working.

Another way is to write the music down (notate it).

It is not necessary to know how to notate music in the traditional way in order to be a Composer. Musical notation can be anything that helps you remember what you have written. Experiment in class with new ways to notate the piece of music that you composed in Assignment #1.

4. Develop Musical Motifs

A "motif" is a short melody or musical idea that represents a dramatic element. It can be used as a starting point for developing a song or underscoring.

Once the Writers have developed the theme and thesis of your opera, you can create a musical motif that expresses that theme.

A. Theme

Think about the music that leads into your favorite television show.

- Is there any melody or musical idea that repeats over and over?
- What does this music tell you about the atmosphere of the show?
- How does this melody or musical idea make you feel?
- Does it suggest comedy, tragedy, danger, suspense etc.? How?

Now, create a musical motif that expresses the theme of your opera.

B. Character

As the Writers are developing characters in the script, the characters can also be developed musically by the Composers.

Think about television shows, movies or cartoons you have seen in which characters are represented by musical motifs.

- What does the motif tell you about that character?
- At what points does the motif recur?
- Does the motif ever occur when the character is not there?

Now, create motifs for each character in your opera. Try to incorporate two character traits into one motif!

SET DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION

The primary purpose of the set designer is to inform the audience as to when and where the action of each scene is taking place. An effective set provides the visual essence of the opera and should convey a feeling or mood even before the action begins. Achieving this effect requires simplicity both in creating and executing the design. The set designer must always remain faithful to the opera as written by the writers and composers.

The creative challenge is to design a set which contains only the bare essentials without reducing its intended impact or meaning. Discourage students from designing a literal set (e.g. an exact replica of a classroom), as this is the most obvious way to design but may not be the most effective. Encourage them to think in terms of symbols or concrete clues which quickly indicate time and place. Remember that the goal of the set designer is to reflect and enhance the action and characters in the opera, not to upstage or overshadow them.

Technically, the set designer must work within a three-dimensional context and be aware that this condition imposes a number of constraints: the size of the stage, how the set is going to be built, how the set will be moved on and off stage, where it will be stored, and, of course, the budget.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand that set design should tell the audience something about the opera visually before any performer appears on the stage.
- To develop an idea for a set that will conform to the constraints of the performance space.
- To develop a two-dimensional set design sketch or drawing.
- To construct a three-dimensional scale model in 1/2" = 1', 1/4' = 1' or 1" = 1'.
- To learn the components of set design (eg. color, shape, texture) and the relevant terminology of stage craft.
- To master the key techniques in the execution of set design (e.g. gridding and scaling).

- To determine whether the scenery is practical, workable, and safe within the constraints of the space and the budget.
- To become proficient in the safe and proper use of tools.
- To determine what materials are needed and available.

MATERIALS

Carpenter Tools	Carpenter Materials	Set Designer Materials
Hammer	Duct tape (Cloth Backed)	Ruler
Nails	Nails	Scissors
Screws	Screws	Pencils and Pens
Screwdrivers (Flathead & Phillips)	Hinges	Crayons/Markers
White or carpenter's glue	1 x 3 x 8 furring strips	Paper (plain, graph, assorted colors)
Electric and manual saws	4 x 8 x 1/8 masonite	Cardboard
Power Drill with wood bits	4 x 8 x 1/4 plywood	50' measuring tape
Tape Measures	Foam brushes	Snap/chalk line
	Latex paint	

SEQUENCE

The students should know how to use a ruler and have a knowledge of basic math and fractions before they begin the sequence.

WARNING: Do not have students use power tools unless properly supervised!

Teachers should lead students through the following outlined process:

I. Design

- Determine the performing area.
- Draw a sketch of the performing space.
- Find out the exact dimension of the performance space by taking measurements of the stage—height as well as width and depth—and match them to a sketch of the stage. Make note of anything that is in the performing space that might be there during a performance such as curtains or any immovable objects like water pipes, columns, or lights.
- Make a ground plan to scale of the information you have acquired.
- Read and study the script and discuss the interpretation of each setting with the director.

Time Period: The script should give you an idea of the time period in which this play takes place. This should reflect itself in your design.

Time of Day: Note what time of day the play takes place. Your design should reflect this.

Mood: What is the mood of the play: happy, sad, scary? This will give you a clue as to the style of your design.

- Come up with a concept; as a point of departure, create one item which defines the setting (i.e. bed equals bedroom, couch equals livingroom, etc.), then add details to expand the idea (e.g. is the family poor, rich, urban, rural, etc.).

  What is the point, purpose, or theme of the script? What is it trying to say? What can be done to help express it? The answers to these questions form a concept which becomes the foundation for the design. In short, what are you trying to say about the play through the scenery?

- Based on the interpretation of each setting, come up with several ideas in sketch form.

  Both the performing facility and the script define and limit what can be done. These limitations should inspire the designer to be imaginative, perhaps using these limitations to her advantage.

- Discuss sketches with the director.

- Refine selected sketches and select final sketches for work.

- Come up with the parts of scenery that make your concept come to life.

  What sort of colors will be included? Would you use bright yellow to express a sad concept? Is the scenery realistic, unrealistic or exaggerated? Is the look of the scenery sharp or fuzzy, hard or soft, heavy or light? What does the scenery represent? A real life situation, a dream, a nightmare?

- Make scale drawings of designs. Check with the director to see if the scale drawings are correct.

- Make a scale model.

  For the purposes of this project, the model usually can be made out of carefully cut posterboard. With this model, the designer and the director can work out how the actors will work within the confines of the set and how the scenery is going to function. The model is also helpful for the actors so that they can see with what they will be dealing.

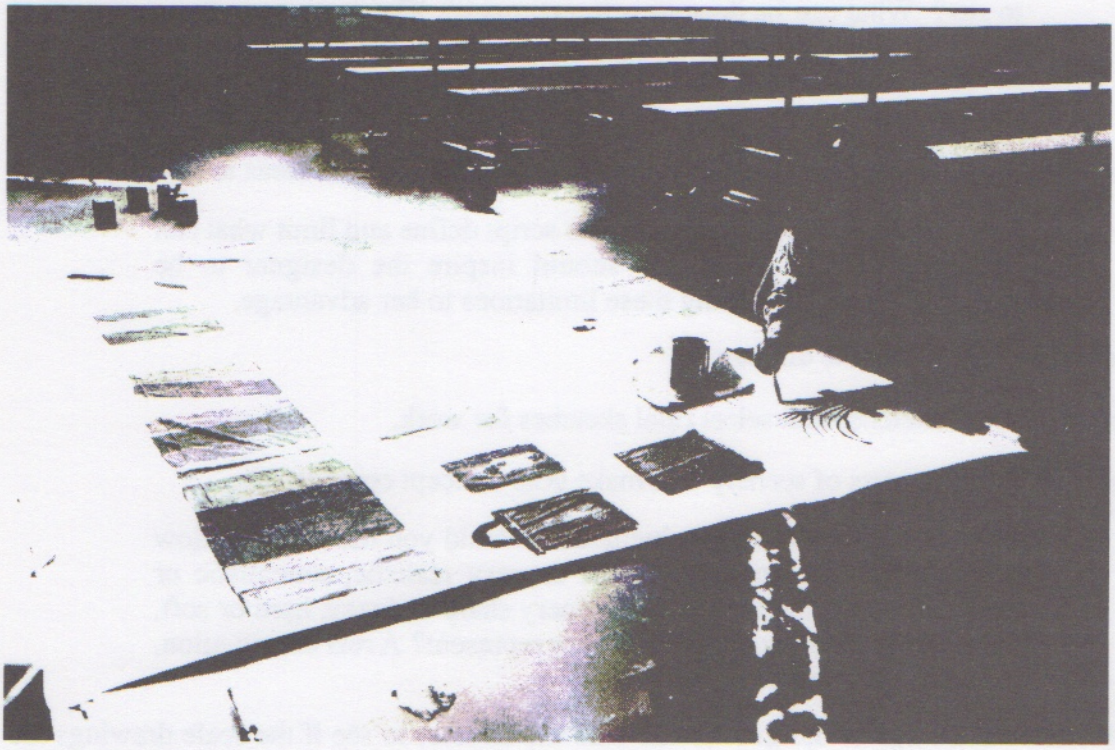
- In order to make the model come to life, answer the following questions:

  How is the scenery going to be built? Will the scenery be made out of flats or drops? Can you use things you find on the street or will you build everything? Will the way you build your scenery make the pieces light enough to be handled by the stage crew? What materials

will you use to make your scenery? How much will the materials cost? Where can you borrow or find the materials?

II. Preparation for building the scenery:

- Determine the time allowed for each scene change—scene changes should last no longer than 1-2 minutes.
- Determine the size of the scenery.
- Determine what the scenery should be made of—make sure the scenery is mobile and light enough to move easily.
- Determine where it will be built and how long it will take.



After the gridding has taken place, the painter paints the drop.

III. Building:

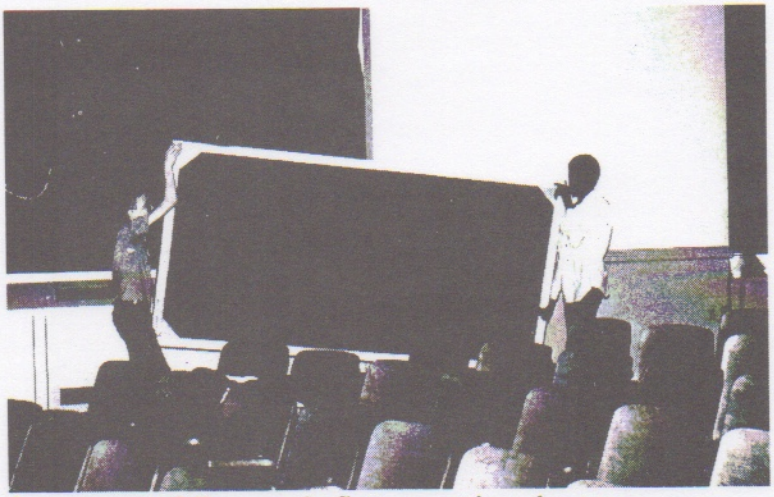
- According to the scale model, work with carpenters on building and painting the scenery.
- Work with carpenters on gridding out what needs to be painted.
- Determine where everything is placed during each scene and where sets are stored between scenes.

ADVICE: Paints and Brushes:

Latex paint is permanent but easy to clean up; it is quick drying but removable from clothes as long as it is still wet. Avoid Oil or Acrylic as it is very messy. Tempera paint is water based and cheap, and best to buy as powder. A good way to save money is to buy paint which was not mixed to a previous customer's satisfaction; oftentimes you can save a lot of money if you find a color you like. Foam brushes are less expensive than regular brushes and don't drip as much.

IV. Performance:

- Check the preset of the scenery prior to a performance.
- With the carpenters, make sure that the stage is clean and all scenic components are where they should be for the top of the show.
- Take part in scene changes and make sure that the scenery is set properly for each scene. When each scene is checked, tell the stage manager so s/he can go on with the performance.
- After the performance, make sure that the stage is left clean and in good order.
- Wait to be released by the production manager.



Carpenters carefully move the flat to preset it on the stage.

Center line: The middle of the stage.

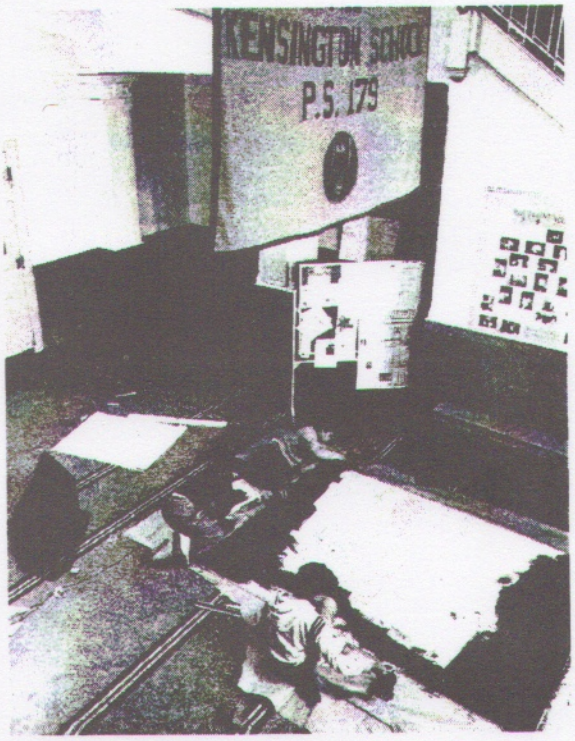
Chalk or Snap Line: A device made of string and chalk dust that can snap down a straight line on a large surface. Very useful in "gridding out" a drop.

Cut/"It's Dead": Remove, get rid of, do not use.

Downstage: Towards the audience.

Drop: A large piece of fabric that is suspended on the stage ("dropped"in place) without framing (thus creating the term "soft" scenery) and in such a way that the audience can only view one side of it.

Elevations: For working drawings, the front views of the pieces. The specific views of the scenery are what the audience sees.



Flat: A piece of scenery that is made by stretching cloth material (usually canvas) over a wood frame that creates a two-dimensional piece of scenery.

Gridding: Gridding means drawing a design on regular-size graph paper and copying or transferring the design onto a much larger gridded surface. Gridding ensures a much more accurate copy than free-hand transfer.

Groundplan: A drawing (usually done to scale) that shows the layout of something as if one were looking at it from the ceiling. Another way to think of a groundplan is that it is the "footprint" of the set.

Kill: Turn off, remove, get rid of.

Masking: A piece of fabric, usually a dark, solid color, used to conceal parts of a stage from the audience.

Preset: The set as it is before the show begins.

Scale: A system of proportion or ratio, such as "1 inch = 1 foot". In this example a 1 inch portion of a drawing would represent 1 foot of the real thing. Therefore an object that is actually 4 1/2 high would appear on the drawing as 4 1/2 inches. Usually, plans and drawings are done on a scale of 1/4 inch = 1 foot or 1/2 inch = 1 foot. In the 1/2 inch scale, an object that is 4 1/2 feet in real life, would be 2 1/4 inches. In the 1/4 inch scale, the same object would be drawn as 1-1/8 inches.

Scrim: A material similar to cheesecloth that is a fabric mesh and generally hung downstage, just behind the curtain. The advantage of this type of soft scenery is that when light is thrown on the front of it, you are unable to see through it. However, if you put light behind it, it becomes transparent.

Setting Line: The line perpendicular to the center line. This line determines the width of the stage and is usually placed along the curtain line.

Stage Left: The actor's left when facing the audience.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Apply basic mathematic skills: ratio, proportion, measuring, use of graphs, geometry, addition, subtraction, division, fractions, whole positive and negative numbers, and scale.

— Transform 2-dimensional designs into 3-dimensional objects.

— Solve problems of design by utilizing certain design principles: color, shape, and texture.

— Symbolize the elements of each scene visually.

— Increase vocabulary.

— Read and follow directions in designing and building sets.

— Develop a blueprint (plan) and execute it.

— Develop and carry out a complex sequence of steps.

— Exercise appropriate judgment in the choice of materials and learn properties and limitations of materials.

— Make an abstract thought concrete.

— Develop analytical thinking skills.

— Develop and reinforce problem-solving skills.

— Make artistic and practical decisions.

— Develop aesthetic sensibilities and the ability to make judgments accordingly.

— Develop gross and fine motor coordination skills.

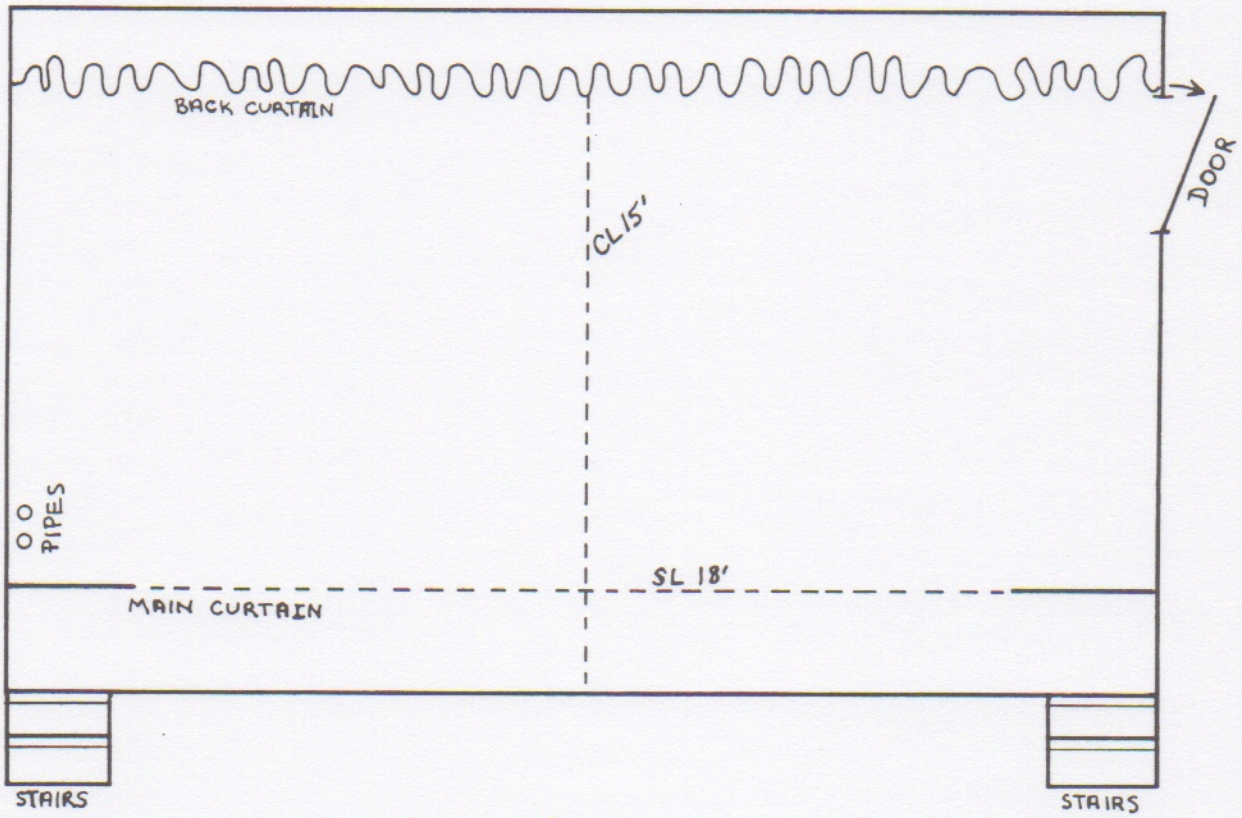
— Communicate ideas both verbally and visually.

— Work both independently and cooperatively.

— Work within a time constraint and meet deadlines.

SET DESIGN: SCALE DRAWINGS

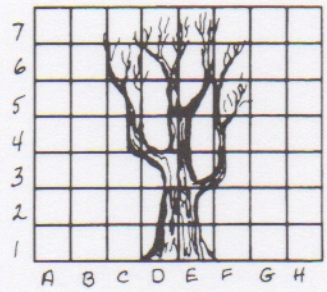
A scale drawing should include all elements of the performing space (doors, drapes, pipes, steps, etc.). The set designer should first sketch the space free-hand to facilitate the actual measurement of the stage.



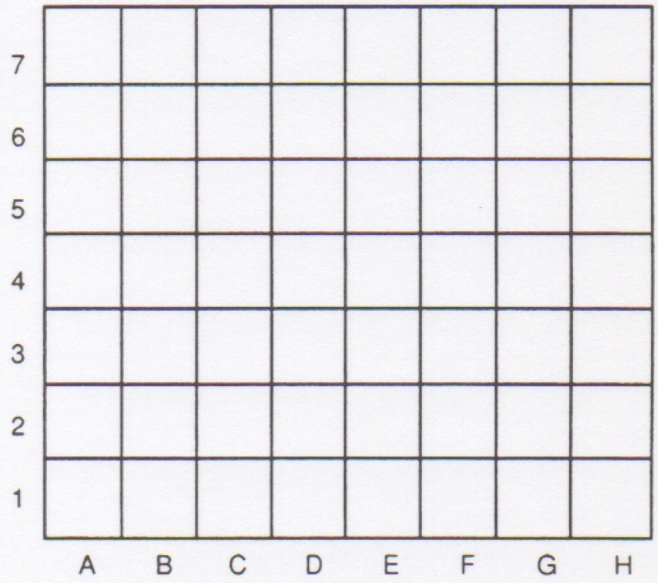
CL – CENTER LINE
SL – SETTING LINE
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'

SET DESIGN: GRIDDING SEQUENCE

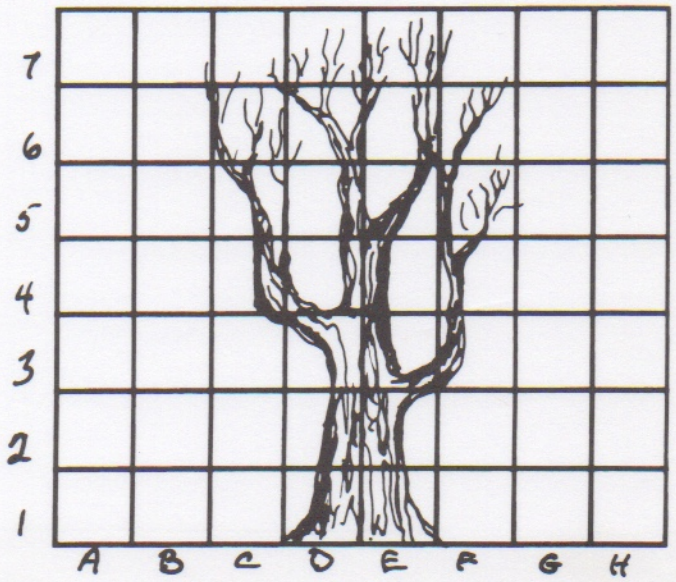
1: Make a scale drawing of a proposed two-dimensional item on a gridded surface.



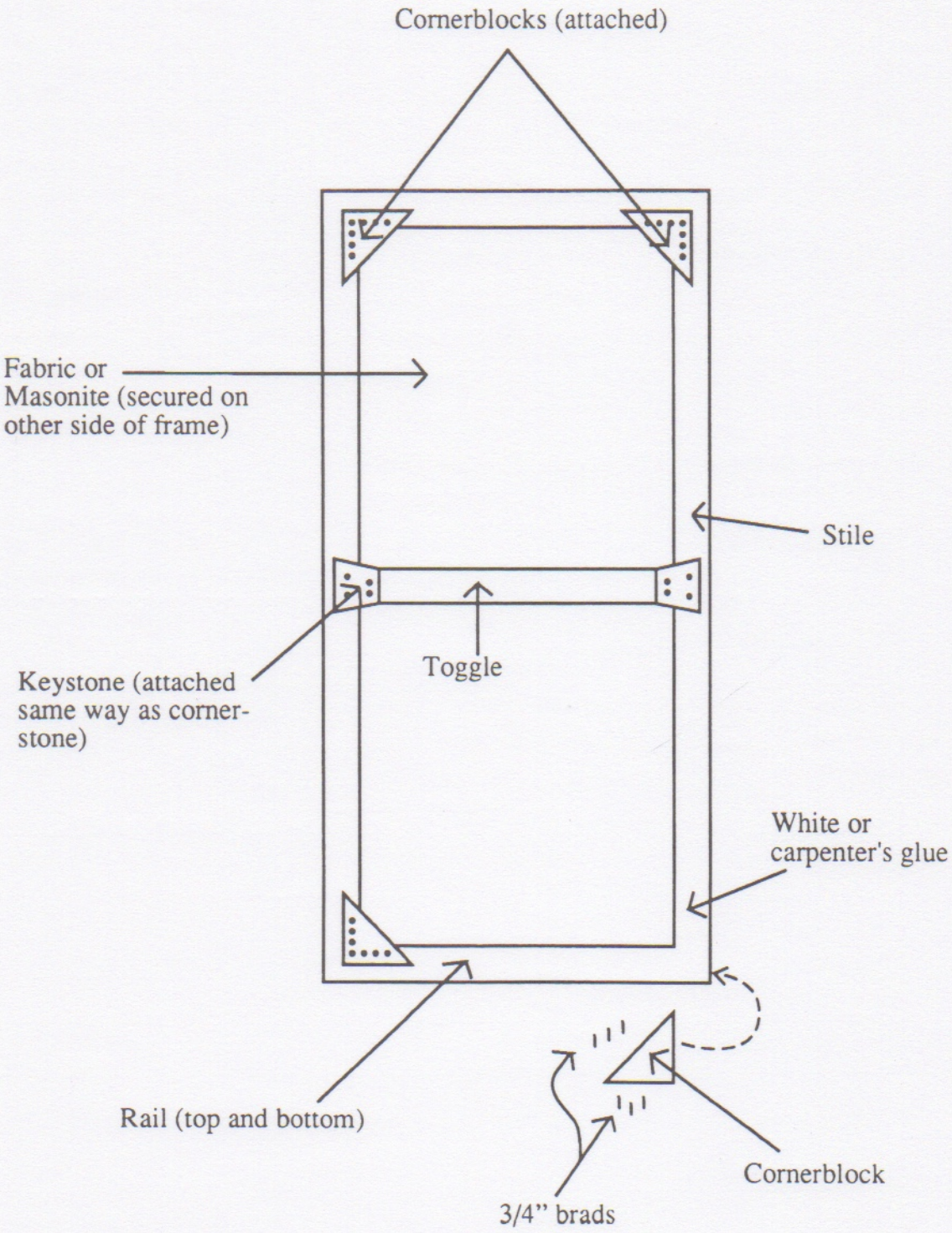
2: Reproduce the grid on the actual surface using a chalk/snapline or ruler and straightedge and plot points of intersection on the actual surface



3: Duplicate the smaller drawing.



SET DESIGN: BUILDING A FLAT



Set Designer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

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PERFORMERS
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HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Set Designer for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as a Set Designer. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Your job is completed before the performances begin. However, you may be required to help the Carpenters move the scenery during set changes. If this is the case, you will be sitting backstage during the performance. Find an out of the way place and do not move from it until the Stage Manager gives the cue to change the set.

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

Any distractions could ruin the hard work of the other company members.

YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Assist the Carpenters with storing the scenery and other set pieces neatly in the appropriate place. Double-check the stage to make sure that nothing was left behind. Sweep the stage and make sure it is cleaner than you found it.

To transfer the grid to a flat, first mark off measurements in 1' intervals along both sides and the top and bottom. Use a chalkline or straightedge to connect the marks across the flat and you have created a large grid!

Next, look at your drawing. Notice where the lines of the drawing intersect the lines of the small grid. These are called "points of intersection." Mark these points of intersection on the flat. Connect the points and fill in the outline of the image. Your drawing is now 12 times larger than it was!

Mix paint into the colors that you used in your original drawing and carefully paint the flat.

A NOTE ABOUT PAINTING

Always use a drop cloth or newspapers underneath the item you are painting. Paint with careful, even strokes; quick painting leads to droplets everywhere and a messy cleanup. Make sure you use a brush size appropriate for the job you are doing and wash it thoroughly afterwards with water. When finished painting, cover the paint and put it away. Wipe up any droplets or spills and leave the area clean.

JOB TITLE: **SET DESIGNER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To design a stage set that will best reflect the elements of the script, its characters and their relationships.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

You will create sketches, scale drawings and scale models of the set that you design. You will also work closely with the Carpenters, helping to build and paint the set.

Set Designers are responsible to the Director and the Production Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

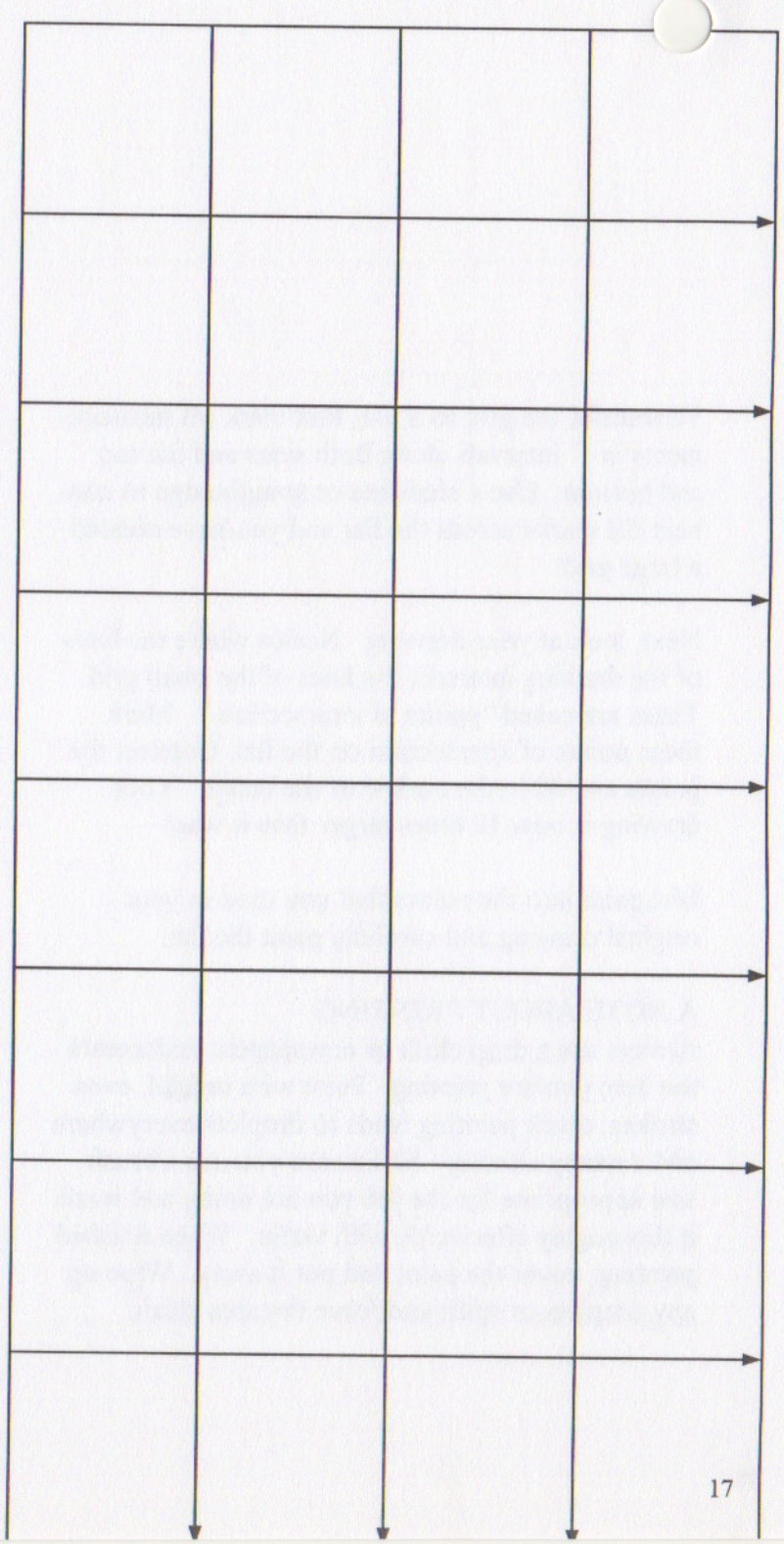
Your work as a Set Designer is based on the script. It will give you the following information about each scene in your opera:

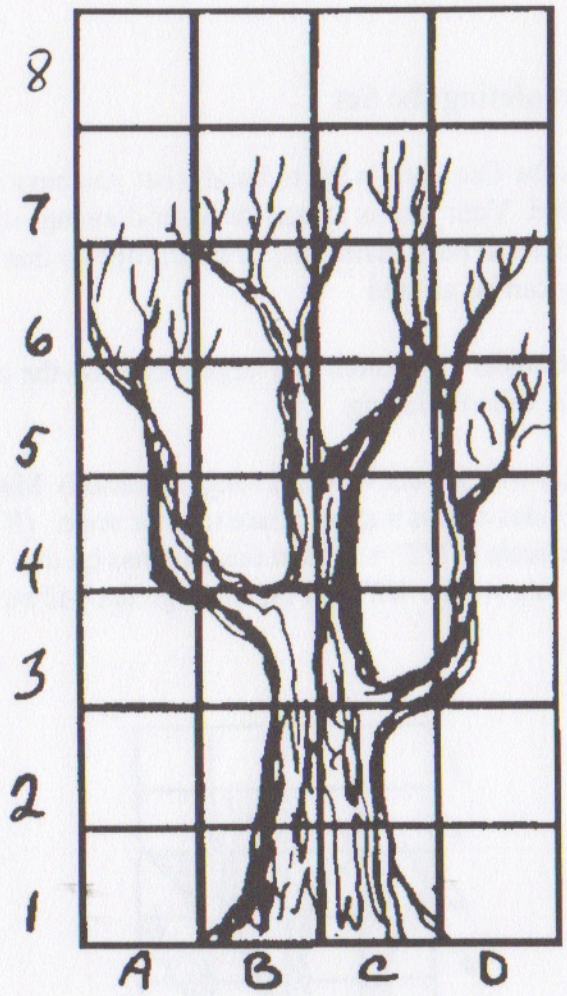
- time of year
- time of day
- mood
- location

With this information, you will design a set that informs the audience as well as incorporates an overall design concept. Remember: the theater does not have to be *literal*. The location may seem like an everyday place but on the stage it does not have to look that way. If it is appropriate for your script and design concept, you are free to follow your imagination and create a stage set that is unique, unusual and breaks all the rules. Be creative!

You will need to bring a notebook, a pencil, and this booklet to each meeting. A folder would be helpful to organize your work and save early drafts.

Do not throw anything away! Give all sketches, models and final versions to the Documentation Team for their records.





If you are using 4 x 8' flats, copy the diagram on the next page and transfer your sketch onto it. The diagram is four by eight inches. This will give you a 1" = 1' scale drawing.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

APRON The stage area in front of the main curtain.

CHALK LINE A tool used to mark off straight lines using a string and chalk.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

ELEVATION A drawing showing the front, side or back of an object. It is usually drawn to scale.

MODEL A three-dimensional miniature of an object.

GRID A layout of measured squares used for transferring a design.

PLAN A drawing of something from a "bird's-eye view." It is usually drawn to scale.

SCALE A proportion or ratio. A measurement on the page that represents an actual size or distance.

SCALE DRAWING A drawing to scale. If the scale is 1/2" = 1 foot, that means that every foot is represented by 1/2" on paper. A blueprint is an example of a scale drawing.

SPIKE Marking the position of a unit of scenery on the stage using tape.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

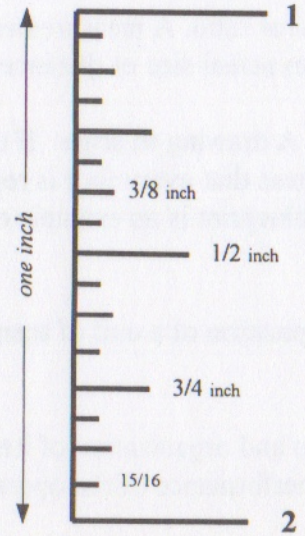
YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Tools

Tape Measure

The tape measure is a ruler that is made of thin metal and is usually 10-25 feet in length. It is wound around a spool and held with a spring so you can extend it or retract it as needed.

Tape measures are divided into 1 foot units. Each foot is divided into 12 inches and each inch is further divided into 16 equal units (known as 1/16th of an inch). Larger divisions are 1/8's, 1/4's, and 1/2's. These are clearly indicated by the length of the line on the tape measure. See if you can fill in the measurements that are not labeled in the following diagram. (The longest line is an inch, the next longest is 1/2 inch, the next is 1/4, and so on.)

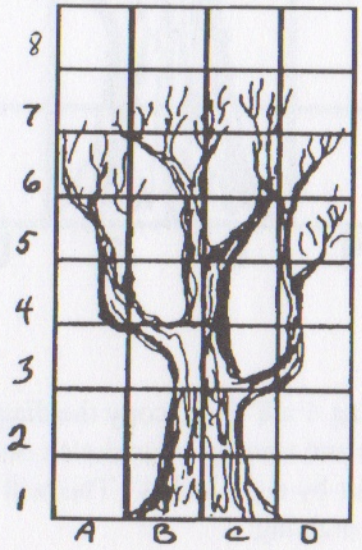


6. Completing the Set

It is the Carpenter's job to build what you have designed. Your task is to transfer your drawings to the completed flats, platforms, or backdrops so that they can be painted.

To transfer any sketch to a larger scale use the technique called gridding.

Begin with a front view drawing (elevation). Mark grid lines across it appropriate to your scale. (If your scale is 1/2" = 1' then the gridlines on the drawing will be 1/2" and on the large flat will be 1'.)



5. Building the Set

A. Practical Questions

Now that you have your set designs, you should meet with the Carpenters and answer the following questions:

- How will you construct the set?
- Do you have the materials you need to make it?
- What pieces can you find or borrow, rather than make?
- Where will it be built?
- Will it fit through the doors?
- Can it be stored out of sight while other scenes are being performed?
- Will some of the same scenery be used in several scenes?

B. Model

Assignment #3
Create a model to scale of the stage and set. This is a three-dimensional version of your original scale drawing of the stage. Include all set design elements. You can even make scale models of your Performers!

Chalk Line
This is used to create long, straight lines for cutting or making a grid. Do not snap the string too hard or it will leave too much chalk on the material.

2. The Performance Space

A. Examine the Space

It is important that you know everything about the performance space for which you will be designing sets.

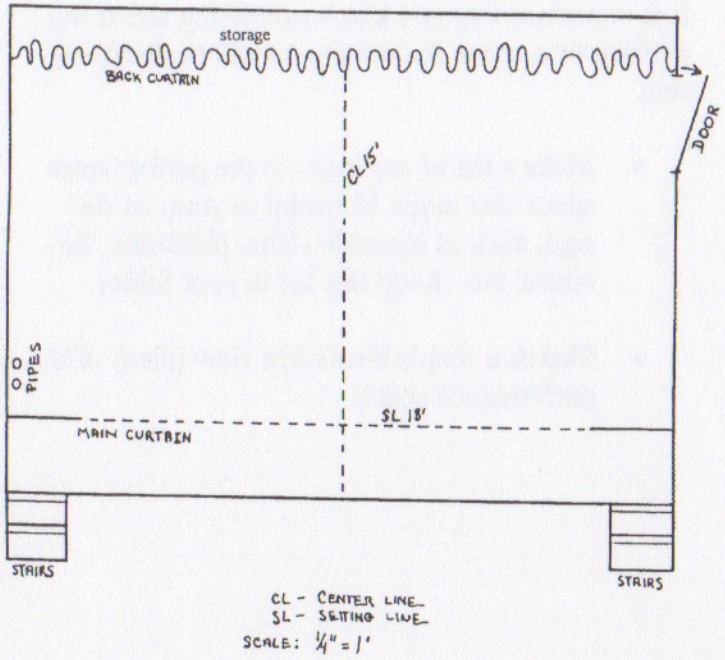
- Make a list of any items in the performance space that might be useful to your set design, such as movable stairs, platforms, furniture, etc. Keep this list in your folder.

- Sketch a simple bird's-eye view (plan) of the performance space.

B. Dimensions of the Performance Space

Work together to determine the width and depth of the performance area and transfer these dimensions to your drawing. (Often two or more Set Designers can use the tape measure while one marks the drawing.)

Draw a dotted line where the main curtain crosses the stage to differentiate the main part of the stage from the apron. Draw in any stairs leading up to the stage, any doorways backstage, and anything else that may be helpful to know. If your performance area is not a traditional stage, how will you create a space that will work for your performance? Consult the Director and the Stage Manager for ideas.



- Will it look realistic, unrealistic, exaggerated or abstract?
- Will it look sharp or fuzzy? Hard or soft? Heavy or light?
- Will each scene be a real life situation? A dream? A nightmare?
- What are the least number of objects you can put on stage to accomplish what you need?

Generate set design sketches for each scene in your opera using the answers to these questions and your abstract sketches and concept boxes. Use color.

Discuss your designs with the group and decide which works best. You might want to incorporate ideas from a few different designs into one that everyone agrees on.

What set design elements (flat, backdrop, free-standing element, platform) will you use to translate your design?

It may be helpful to play with miniatures to get an idea of how these different elements work together on the stage. (Flats can be made from index cards.)

Don't forget to save all versions and sketches for the Documentation Team. They will put these in the opera company exhibit and archive.

4. Interpreting the Script

When the Writers have completed the script, read it thoroughly and discuss the following questions with the other Set Designers:

- What is the time period of the opera?
- What is the script trying to say?
- How can a set design express the mood of this opera?
- What do you want the set design to say to the audience about your interpretation?

Read the script again and look for the following information about *each scene* of the opera:

- main location or place of action
- time of day/time of year
- mood of the scene

Now that you have a good understanding of the script, how will you interpret it? Consider the following questions:

- How literal do you want to make your interpretation? (If Scene 1 is set in a classroom, will you try to represent desks and shelves, or will you choose to render the place as "enclosed" or haunted? Imagine how the scene would feel if the desks were larger than life size, or tiny as toys!)

C. Scale Drawing

Assignment #1
Use your sketch with measurements to create a scale drawing of the stage. You may use any scale you wish (1 foot =1/2", 1 foot = 1/4", 1 foot =1") although the size of the available paper may determine which scale you use.

3. Design

A. Elements of the Set

As a Set Designer you can transform any space into a performance space. The main elements you will be using in your set designs are:

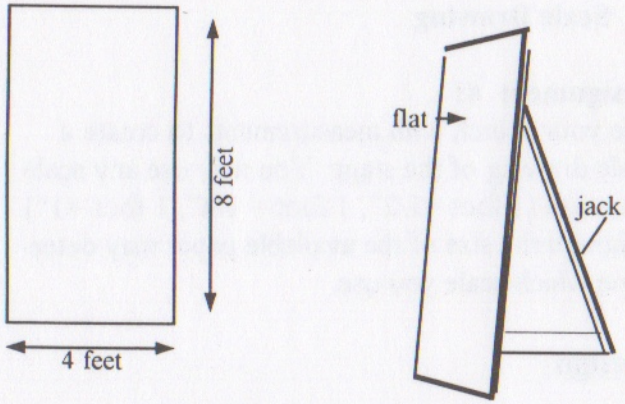
BACKDROP A painted cloth hung at the back of a scene or at the rear of the stage.

FREE-STANDING ELEMENT A three-dimensional set piece that stands on its own, such as a table or tree.

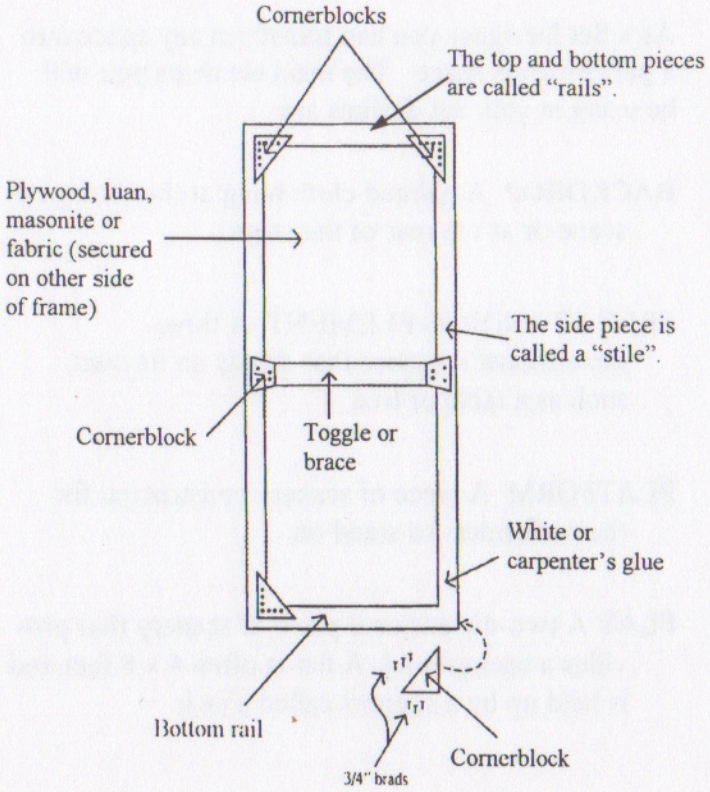
PLATFORM A piece of scenery constructed for the performers to stand on.

FLAT A two-dimensional piece of scenery that provides a background. A flat is often 4 x 8 feet and is held up by a support called a jack.

These are the basic dimensions of a flat.



This is a detailed diagram of a flat.



B. Integrated Design: Theme

Once the Writers have decided on a theme and thesis for your opera, have a meeting with the Public Relations team, Costume Designers, Electricians and other Set Designers. Discuss the theme and thesis. Work together to come up with:

- a color (or colors)
- a texture
- a shape
- a line

that best represents your theme.

Assignment #2

1. Create an abstract design that uses the line, shape, color(s) and texture you decided upon for your theme. Bring this design to your next meeting.

2. Concept box

Use a shoe box in any way you like to make a three dimensional "environment" that uses the color, line, texture and shape of your theme. Remember, this is still an *abstract* design. There should not be any recognizable items (figures, furniture, etc.) in your concept box. Concentrate on trying to express your feelings about the theme using the visual vocabulary of color, line, shape and texture.

Carpenter

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Store the scenery and other set pieces neatly in the appropriate place. Double check the stage to make sure that no pieces were left behind. Take a final inventory of your tool box and any remaining supplies. Pack your tool box neatly and box and label all paint and supplies. Give the finished inventory to the Production Manager. Sweep the stage and make sure it is clean and empty.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Carpenter for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as a Carpenter. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Before each performance, make sure the stage is clean and set up correctly for the opening scene. Double check that all flats and other scenery are in good working order and make any necessary last-minute repairs.

If you are working backstage during the performance as part of the technical crew, sit quietly out of the way while the Performers are onstage. Move from this spot only when the Stage Manager gives you the cue for a set change. When this moment comes, work quickly and quietly. If you *must* communicate, use hand motions or whisper, but only when you are very close together.

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

Any distractions could ruin the hard work of the other company members.

Assignment # 3
Make a miniature flat and jack out of paper or cardboard that is 4 x 8 inches. (This model has the same proportions as your actual flat and jack but is in the scale of 1 inch = 1 foot.) Now, measure a piece of furniture in your school (bench, desk, locker, etc.) and create a model of it from any material available. But make this model at the scale of 2 inches = 1 foot!

7. Set Changes

Once you are certain of the placement of each flat or other item, you must "spike" the stage. This means putting a small piece of tape on the floor, marking the bottom corners of every piece, so you know exactly where each should be.

Practice the set changes! This can be very hard work, but the more you practice, the easier it will be. Work together and think of the set changes as a dance. Know which pieces are your responsibility to move, and in what order they should be moved. (This will be worked out with the Stage Manager.) Your goal is to make the set changes quickly and silently.

JOB TITLE: **CARPENTER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To create or construct the set planned for the performance area.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Carpenters work closely with the Set Designers in building the sets needed for the opera production. They may also work backstage during the performance as part of the stage crew, helping to move the sets during scene changes.

Carpenters are responsible to the Set Designers and to the Production Manager. During performances, Carpenters are responsible to the Stage Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your work as a Carpenter makes the set designs possible. It is your job to build the pieces used for the set and, if needed, to help paint them. Your job is also critical to the performance itself. Once you have constructed the elements of the set, you will move them where they need to go quickly and quietly during the performances. Your work needs to be your best... maybe even better than you think possible.

You will need to bring a notebook, a pen or pencil, and this booklet to each meeting. A folder would be helpful to organize your work.

5. Elements of the Set

There are four basic elements (including a flat) that are used to create a set onstage:

BACKDROP A painted cloth hung at the back of a scene or at the rear of the stage.

FREE STANDING ELEMENT A three-dimensional set piece that stands on its own such as a table or tree.

PLATFORM A piece of scenery constructed for the Performers to stand on.

FLAT A two-dimensional piece of scenery that provides a background.

In addition to building flats, you may be requested to construct a free standing element like a piece of furniture or a tree, or to paint a backdrop. Meet with the Director to decide on how best to approach the construction of these elements.

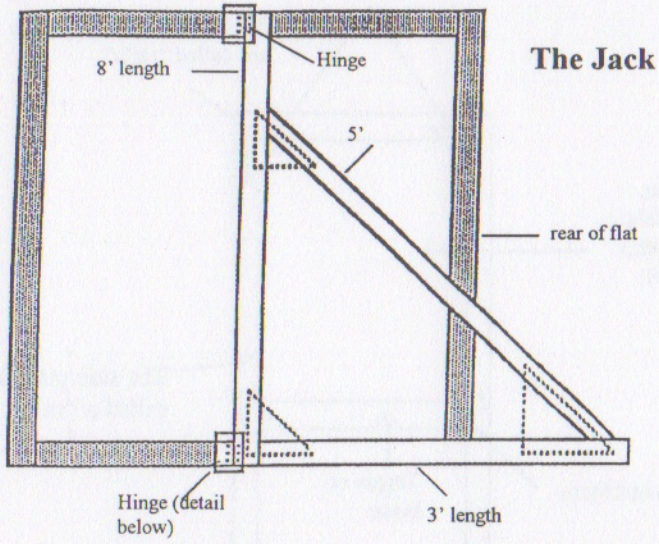
6. Scale

The Set Designers have created a scale drawing (plan) of the performance space. This is a "bird's-eye" view with the same proportions as the actual space. Get a copy of this plan (or make your own) and determine the placement of the set pieces in each scene, both those that are onstage and those that must be hidden backstage. This will also help you determine how set changes will be made.

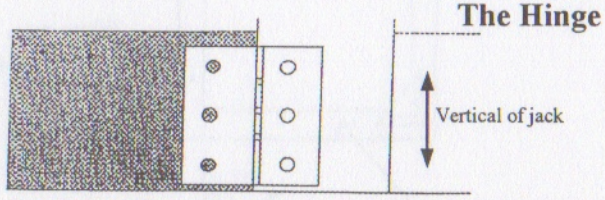
B. Constructing and Attaching a Jack

A flat that must stand on its own has to be supported by a jack. This is constructed out of 8' long 1 x 3's, with cornerblocks cut from plywood.

To build a jack and attach it with hinges, look carefully at the diagrams below. Ask your teacher if you have any questions.



The Jack



The Hinge

Use a 2" or 2 1/2" hinge. Screw right side into the 8' length of the jack. Screw the left side into the bottom rail of the flat. Attach hinges at both top and bottom as indicated in the above illustration.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

BACKSTAGE Any portion of the stage that is behind the main curtain.

CUE The signal to move scenery during the running of a performance.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the opening show, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lighting and music.

FLAT A piece of scenery built by attaching fabric or wood to a frame.

OFFSTAGE Out of view of the audience.

SCALE A proportion or ratio. A measurement on the page that represents an actual distance.

SPIKE Marking the position of a unit of scenery on the stage using tape.

STAGE RIGHT/LEFT The performers' right/left when facing the audience.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

TECH REHEARSAL A rehearsal emphasizing the lighting cues and scene changes of a production.

UPSTAGE/DOWNSTAGE Upstage is the area of the stage closest to the audience; downstage is the area furthest away from the audience.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Inventory

Make a list of all the tools and supplies that are available for you to use. Keep this inventory list in a safe place, as you will need it again at strike.

2. Tools and Materials

A. Tools

Some of the tools you will be working with may be unfamiliar to you. It is important to learn their names and the appropriate way to use them.

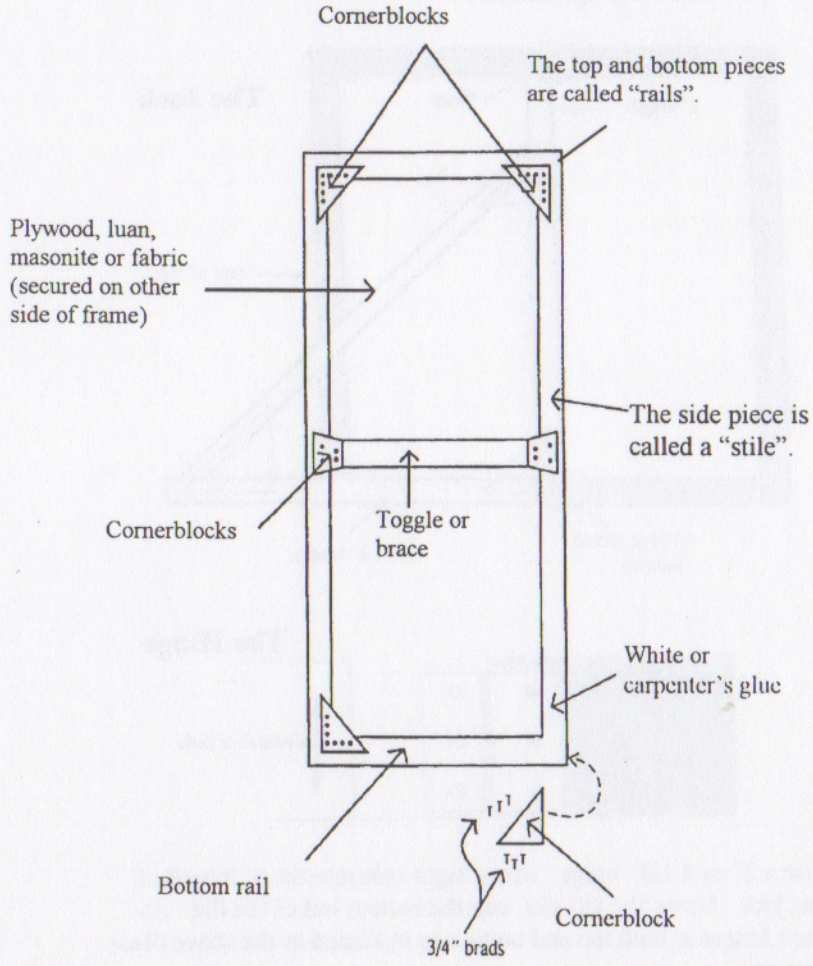
Always remember that tools are TOOLS. They are not playthings. Keep the tools neatly in a toolbox and use them correctly. Here are descriptions of some common tools and their appropriate uses.

Hammer
When using a hammer, do not be delicate about it. Grip the handle halfway down, keep your wrist stiff, and move your arm at the elbow. Let the weight of the hammer's head do the work for you. When you are hammering, make sure to look at the nail — not at the head of the hammer!

Saw
Whatever you are cutting should be stable and held down under your knee, or by a fellow Carpenter. Keep your wrist stiff and let the saw teeth do the

A. Constructing a Flat

A flat is constructed from one 4' x 8' piece of luan, 6 cornerblocks, and a frame made of 5 pieces of fir-ring strips. The following diagram shows you how to build a flat. Study it carefully. Your teacher can help you if you have questions.



Remember, before cutting always:

- Use the tape measure and a pencil to mark the wood at the appropriate dimensions.
- Make sure that you are cutting on level surface.
- Help each other to hold the wood steady.
- Keep fingers away from sharp edges and blades.
- Measure twice, cut once.

Cutting wood creates sawdust, which can be very slippery on the floor. Be sure to sweep the area clean when you are done, and throw out the shavings.

4. Building Flats and Jacks

You should build in an area that is large enough to accommodate all the lumber you will need plus about 3 feet more on all sides of the room. Make sure the space is clean and wear clothes that can get dirty.

Remember that you are a member of a team. Always work *together* when constructing large pieces of scenery. It will make your work go faster and there is less chance of someone getting hurt.

cutting. Do not try to force the saw through the wood. Look at the mark on the wood that you are cutting, not at the saw itself.

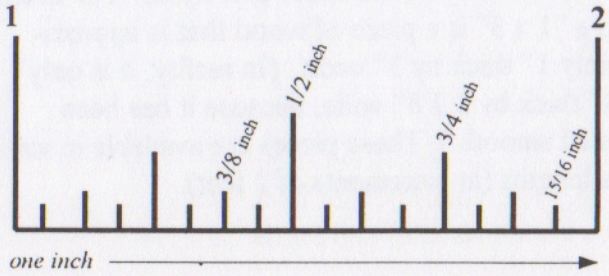
Screwdriver

There are two types of screwdrivers: Phillips head, which looks like an "x" at the point, and a blade, or flat head, which has a flat tip. When using a screwdriver, make sure that your arm, wrist, hand and the screwdriver form a straight line through to the screw.

Tape Measure

The tape measure is a ruler that is made of thin metal and is usually 10-25 feet in length. It is wound around a spool, and held with a spring so you can extend it or retract it as needed.

Tape measures are divided into 1 foot units. Each foot is divided into 12 inches and each inch is further divided into 16 equal units (known as 1/16th of an inch). Larger divisions are 1/8's, 1/4's, and 1/2's. These are clearly indicated by the length of the line on the tape measure. See if you can fill in the measurements that are not labeled in the following diagram. (The longest line is an inch, the next longest is 1/2 inch, the next is 1/4, then 1/8, then 1/16.)



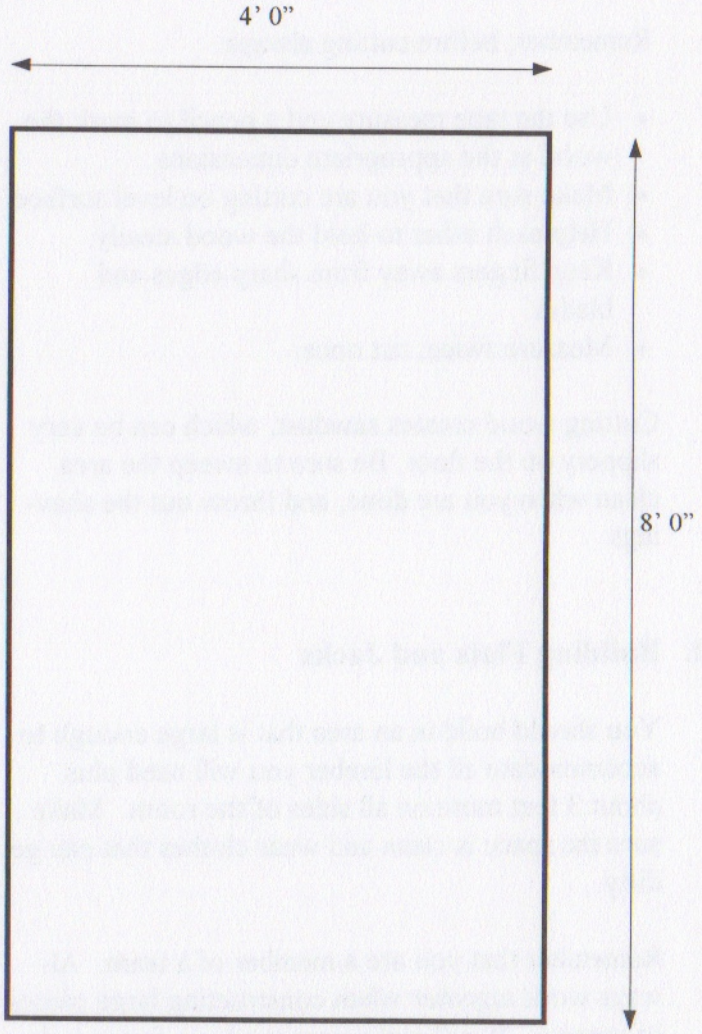
Chalk Line
This is used to create long, straight lines for cutting or making a grid. Do not snap the string too hard or it will leave too much chalk on the material.

Staple Gun
This tool is usually used to attach thin material such as fabric or cardboard to wood. Make sure the staples are only as long as you need. Keep the gun tight and level against the material you are stapling.

Hot Glue Gun
This electric tool uses glue sticks that melt and come out of the tip. The glue dries almost immediately, so be sure of what you are doing first! Glue guns are useful for bonding almost any material together or for creating decorations on any material. The glue designs can then be painted.

B. Materials

As a Carpenter, you will be working with many different types of materials. Most wood products are available in standard sizes. Sheet stock (plywood, luan etc.) is available in 4 x 8 foot sheets. Lumber is referred to by its thickness and width. For example, a "1 x 3" is a piece of wood that is approximately 1" thick by 3" wide. (In reality, it is only 3/4" thick by 2 7/8" wide, because it has been planed smooth.) These pieces are available in various lengths (in increments of 2 feet).



Reproduce this diagram and your solution on a separate sheet of paper. Make sure the diagram is 4 x 8" (1" = 1' scale).

B. Scale Diagram

A scale drawing maintains the correct proportions of the material but reduces it to a manageable size. For instance, if your wood is 4 x 8 feet, your scale drawing will be 4 x 8 inches — much easier to work with! Do the same with the pieces you need. Then move them around like puzzle pieces on the sketch of the original material until you have determined the best placement for them, using the least amount of wood and requiring the least number of cuts. This method saves time, helps avoid mistakes and uses the material economically.

Assignment #2
Try to figure out the most economical way of using a larger piece of wood! If you have a sheet of plywood that is 4 x 8 feet, how would you lay out the following pieces so you have as big a piece as possible left over?

- one piece 2 feet square
- one piece 3 feet long by 1 foot wide
- one piece 6 feet long by 1 foot wide

Plywood is layers of wood bonded together to form a thin sheet. These are usually 4 x 8 feet and vary in thickness. The common thicknesses are 1/4, 1/2, 5/8 and 3/4 inches. There are many different kinds of plywood.

Luan (loo-ahn) is a lightweight plywood that is easy to paint. Luan is often used for building flats. Another kind of plywood that can be used for flats is called masonite.

Lumber
Pieces of trees milled into boards are called "lumber". Trees are divided into "hardwoods" (hickory, oak, walnut) and "softwoods" (spruce, pine, fir) depending on how fast they grow. Softwoods are faster-growing (and less expensive) and most often used to build stage sets.

Strapping or Firring strips
These rough 1 x 3's come in bundles of 10 and are most commonly used for the frame or jack of a flat.

1 x 6 Common Pine
These smooth pine boards are 3/4" thick and 5 1/2" wide. They are used as the bases for the Electricians' footlights.

Screws
Screws are available in many thicknesses and sizes. A 3/4" x 6 screw is 3/4" long and is a #6 in diameter. (The larger the number, the thicker the diameter of the screw.) Screws can be started with a hammer, but should always be finished with a screwdriver.

Nails
Nails come in several lengths and sizes. Nails with large heads are called common, and nails with smaller and more inconspicuous heads are called finish.

Brads or Wire Nails
These are finish nails that are 1/2" or 1" in length. They are used for small work such as attaching corner blocks to flats or jacks, or attaching luan to the frame of a flat.

Roofing nails
These are nails that are 1/2" to 1" in length. Roofing nails have very large heads. These are also used for small work such as attaching corner blocks.

Wood Glue
This is a special glue used for bonding wood. Often screws are used to hold the wood pieces together until they are dry. You may also clamp two pieces of wood that are being glued together.

Paint
Use only LATEX paint, which can be washed off with water but is permanent once it dries. You can use "flat" paint, which has a dull finish, or "satin" paint, which has a slight gloss, or "glossy" paint, which is shiny. Latex paint usually dries within an hour. It is better to apply two thin coats of paint to a flat than to apply one thick coat.

3. Getting Ready To Work

Carpenters build things from pieces. Before you do any building, you should make a sketch of what you will build and a sketch of all the pieces that will be assembled to make it. Each piece should be labeled with its name (frame, leg, etc.) and dimensions.

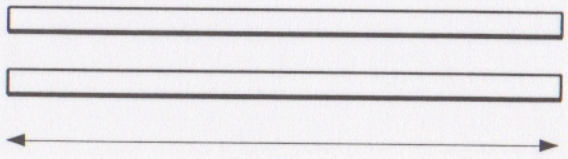
Assignment #1
Choose a piece of furniture in your home. Draw a picture of it. Measure it for width, length and height. Create another drawing of all the pieces that were used to assemble this piece of furniture. Bring your work to your next meeting.

A. Cutting Diagram

In order to use the wood (or other material) in an economical fashion, create drawings of the material you have and the pieces you need to cut from it. This is called a "cutting diagram."

For example, if you have two 8 foot long 1 x 3's, and you need pieces that are the following lengths, what would be the best use of the material?

- one 4 feet long
- one 3 feet long
- two 2 feet long



LIGHTING

The purposes of lighting are to illuminate the performing area, focus attention on the central points of dramatic action and create a mood. This section deals with the criteria which govern each decision in creating the lighting design for a production:

1. **Illumination:** Can the audience see the actors and the action?
2. **Focus:** Will the audience look where the action is occurring?
3. **Mood:** How is the audience supposed to feel?

Checking the connections between the dimmers and footlights and reviewing cues prior to dress rehearsal.

The lighting section also contains practical information about electricity that can be applied immediately in the school's performing space as well as in the home. However, there are two very important rules to keep in mind while working on this aspect of the opera:

1) Each electrician must thoroughly understand the relationship of watts to amps and how power is broken down from the source to the receptacle.

2) No student is allowed to plug in any piece of equipment unless the teacher has checked it and plugged it in already.

If either one of these rules is broken, the student should not be allowed to continue as an electrician.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand that the function of lighting in theater is to illuminate and enhance the action on the stage, to create mood, and to focus the attention of the audience on a particular area.
- To understand, construct, and use lighting equipment appropriate to the production.
- To learn about the power and potential dangers of electricity.

- To understand volts, amps, watts, and ohms and their relationships to each other.
- To draw a schematic showing the distribution of electrical power in a building.
- To understand the function of fuses, circuit breakers, and dimmer switches.
- To design and construct a set of footlights and a dimmer board.
- To understand all terminology relevant to the building of footlights.
- To locate and use a circuit panel.
- To write and execute electrical cues.
- To identify and understand the purpose of colored gels.

MATERIALS

Tools:

Screwdriver (flathead & phillips)
Sharp Jacknife
Hammer
Tin Snips
Pencils
Paper
Gels

Supplies:

Male/Female plugs
16 guage/18 guage wire
Cloth duct tape
Recepticle boxes
No. 10 cans (food service size)
Black spray paint
6' extension cords
Light bases
600W rotary dimmers
Switch plates
100W light bulbs
White caulk

SEQUENCE

Teachers who supervise this activity with students must have a thorough command of the vocabulary and procedures in this process; they must have mastered the tasks they will be asking their students to do.

Beginning Criteria

- Students who participate in the entire process from the beginning (understanding electricity) to the middle (constructing footlights) to the end (operating footlights) because it is a potentially dangerous activity.
- Students must completely master each step in the process before continuing.
- Teachers must closely supervise each step from the beginning to the end.

Teachers should lead students through the following outlined process:

I. Understanding Electricity

• Learn about the components of electrical current.

There are four terms that must be understood fully: volts, amps, watts, and ohms. To explain these four terms, it helps to compare electricity to the flow of water:

Volts measure the **speed** or amount of pressure of the water/electricity's **current**.
Amps measure the amount of water/electricity **available** for use.
Watts measure the amount of water/electricity **needed** to run something.
Ohms measure the **resistance** of the water/electricity to the flow.

To put it another way, use the term "power":

Volts measure the speed of the power.
Amps measure how much power is available
Watts measure how much power is needed to make something run.

• Learn how these components are involved in the distribution of power.

Volts: For your purposes, you will be dealing with 110 — 120 volts.
Amps: You will be dealing with 15 or 20 amps.
Watts: You will be dealing with between 1500 and 2000 watts.

• Learn about the relationships between these components.

There is a key relationship that you must always keep in mind whenever working with your lighting instruments: **100 watts = 1 amp**. This ratio is not exact in terms of the actual formula, but it errs in your favor. If you are not sure that you understand this relationship, consider the following example:

Example: You have ten 75-watt bulbs in one of your lighting instruments. How many amps is it? Since 10 X 75 = 750 watts, and 100 watts = 1 amp, then you are dealing with 7.5 amps.
This is important, because the average wall socket carries 15 or 20 amps; if your lights add up to more than 2000 watts or 20 amps, you are running the risk of either blowing a fuse, burning up a circuit, or starting a fire.

II. Construction

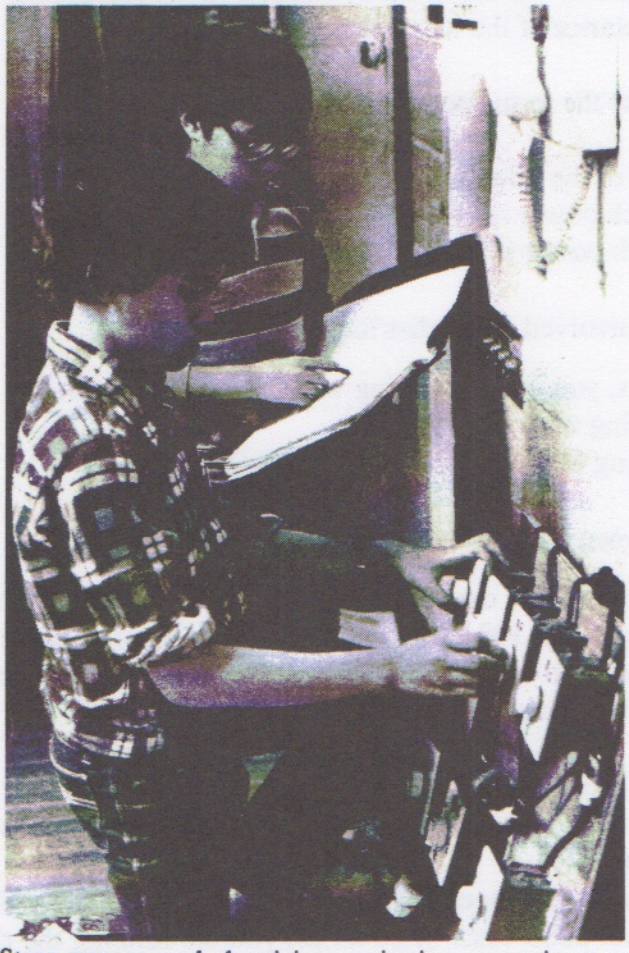
• Find the circuit panel, breaker panel, or fuse box for your performing space.

When open, your will see a panel with a line of labeled switches; these labels indicate what each switch controls, how the circuits are divided on the stage, and the amp capacity for each circuit.

• Learn about the effects of theatrical lighting.

One of the simplest and most effective ways of improving the visual quality of your production is a "theatrical" use of light: placement (focus), intensity (through the use of household dimmers and color gels), and selectivity (light where you want the audience to look and dark where you don't).

Inventiveness with light can lead to good use of special effects like strobes and flash bulbs, subtle changes that affect your audience's response through careful and timely use of cue sequences, and the increased dramatic value of the action on the stage.



Stage manager and electricians reviewing cues prior to a performance to make sure that everything is working and in order.

CHECK THE LIGHTING EQUIPMENT BEFORE HOOKING IT UP AND PLUGGING IT IN.

• Construct footlights. (Refer to "Building the Footlights" for details on this process.)

• Construct dimmer boards. (Refer to "Dimmer Board Layout" and "Dimmer Detail, Side and Front View" for details on this process.)

• Locate power sources in the facility and determine how to hook up your equipment to it.

• Add appropriate color gels to lighting equipment.

> **ADVICE: Gelling**
>
> *Try light pink for comedy and an up-mood or action, light amber for drama and a "normal" mood, and light blue for a somber, down-beat mood.*

III. Operation

• Decide on placement of lighting equipment with the director.

• Write down the director's lighting cues (see Staging Section: "Prompt Book Layout").

• Practice lighting cues.

• Develop pre- and post-performance procedure.

• Execute cues during the performance by following the stage manager's instructions.

TERMINOLOGY

Amp: The amount of power available.

Circuit Breaker: A device for interrupting an electric circuit when the current becomes excessive.

Current: The flow of electricity.

Dimmer switch: A device for varying the intensity of light.

Electricity: A source of energy.

Fuse: A device that interrupts an electrical current when the current exceeds a given electrical load.

Gel: A sheet of color that is put over lights to produce different colors and effects on the stage. A color medium through which part of the spectrum can pass.

Illumination: The process of highlighting or making something light or clear. In physical terms, the process of lighting through the use of bulbs, candles, etc.

Kill: Shut off, as in "kill the lights".

Ohms: The amount of resistance to the flow of power.

Tech. rehearsal: A rehearsal in which the technical crew is present and works on identifying and solving problems that may arise during the actual performance. The actors are generally not present, but when they are they only give cues for their lines to the crew members.

Volt: How fast the power flows.

Watt: The amount of power needed to make something run.

Careful use of tools and an understanding of the theory of electricitiy allow the student electrician to effectively build the dimmers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Develop higher mathematical concepts through the concrete application of an abstract concept.

— Use abstract numbers in real-life situations.

— Make use of computation skills (addition, subtraction, division, conversions, ratio).

— Deal with fractions, decimals, and whole numbers.

— Deal with linear measurements and their practical applications.

— Understand the practical uses of electricity.

— Understand the concept of reflected and refracted light.

— Identify alternatives and proper choices for a given situation.

— Obtain, organize, analyze, and synthesize data.

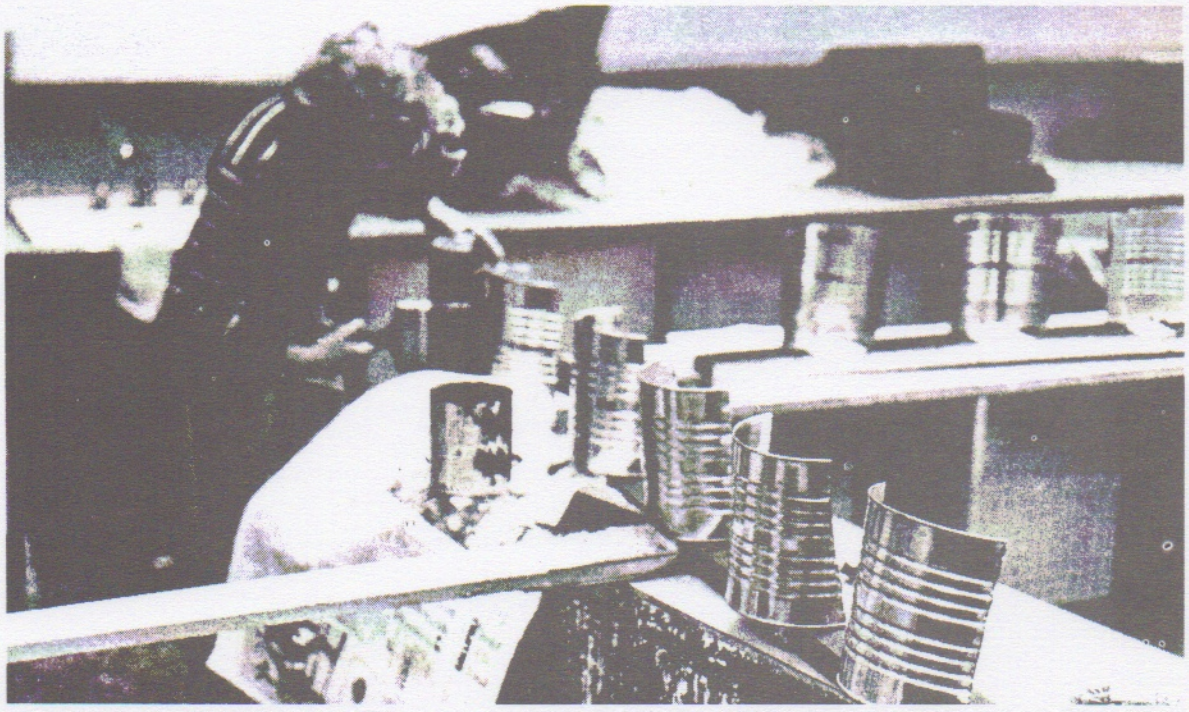
— Develop vocabulary.

— Develop logical and sequential thinking skills.

— Develop gross and fine motor skills.

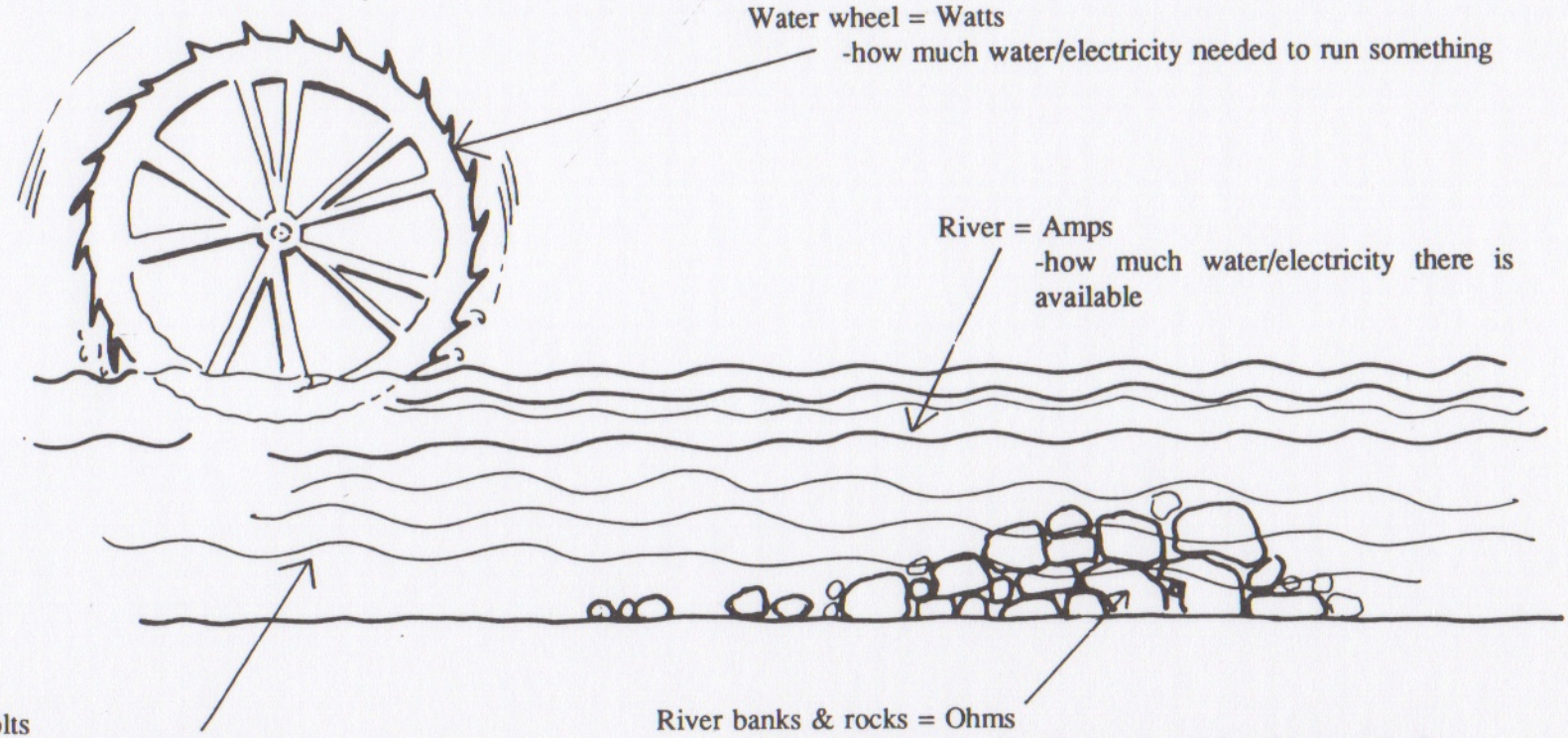
— Develop organizational skills.

— Understand the need and value of working together.

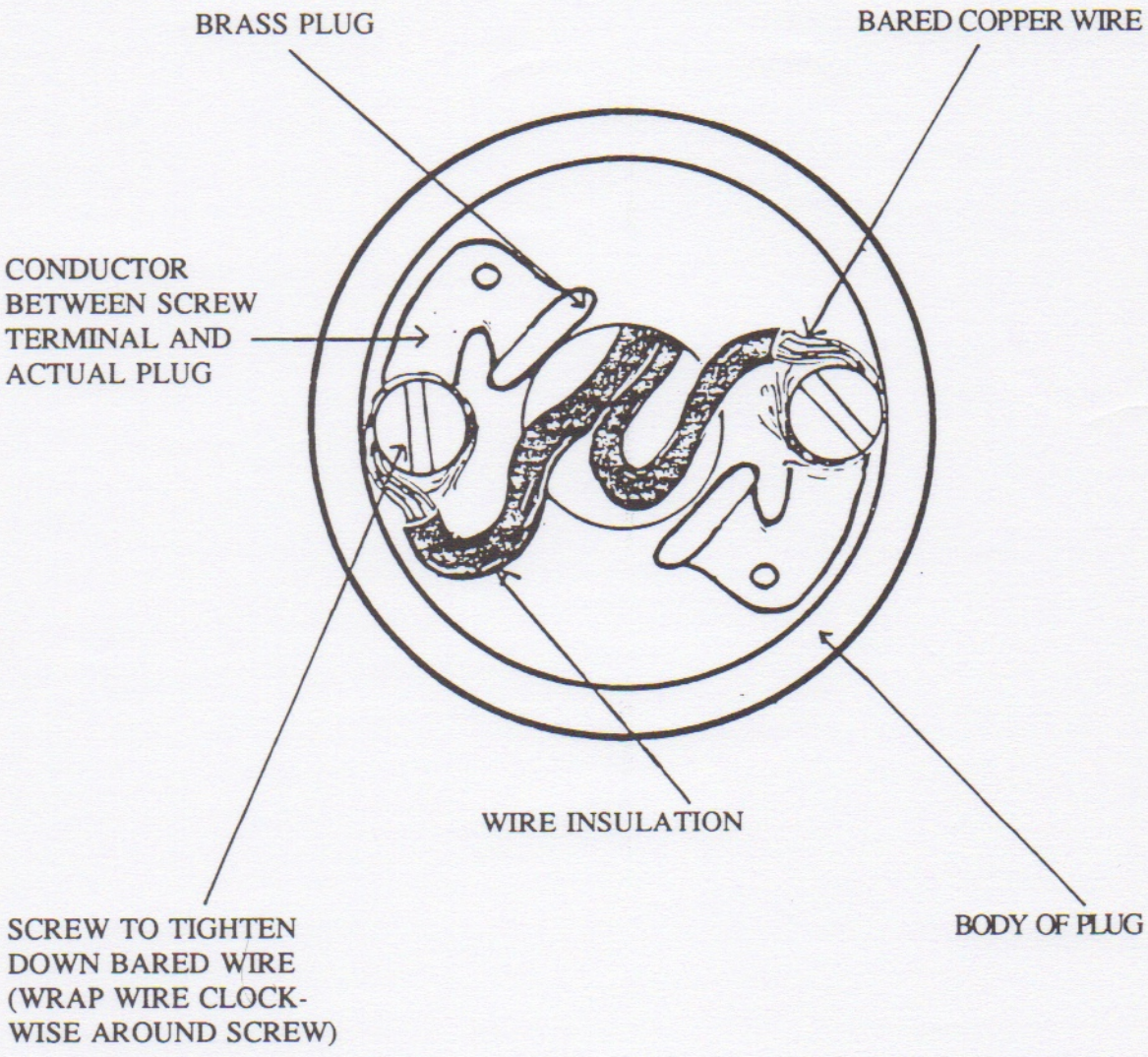


The lighting designer/electrician paints the backs of the footlights black so that they are not seen during the performance.

ILLUSTRATION: Water wheel diagram explaining watts, volts, amps, ohms, and their relationships



PLUG WIRING DIAGRAM

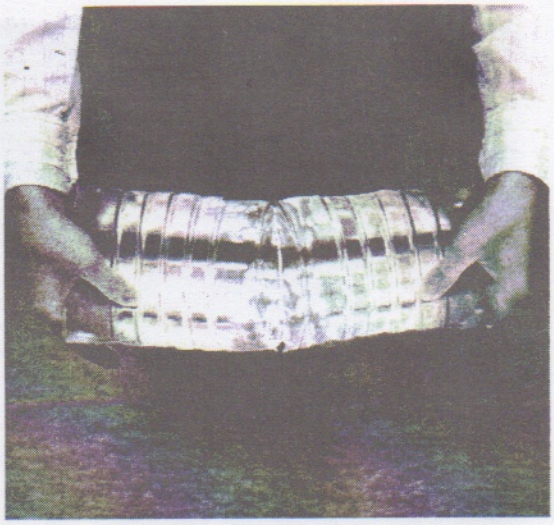


How to wire a plug:

- Take your two-wire cord (it should only have two separate wires) and split it down the middle about two to three inches.
- Cut away about 1" of insulation for each wire. Now you have two wires of bared copper.
- Take the cord and push it up through the back of the plug until it comes out the front.
- Take each section of bared copper and wrap it clockwise around one of the two screws that you see in the plug. Make sure you have only one wire for each screw.
- Tighten the screws down.
- Make sure that at no point does any portion of the bared copper come into contact with the other section of bared copper; this would cause a short circuit.

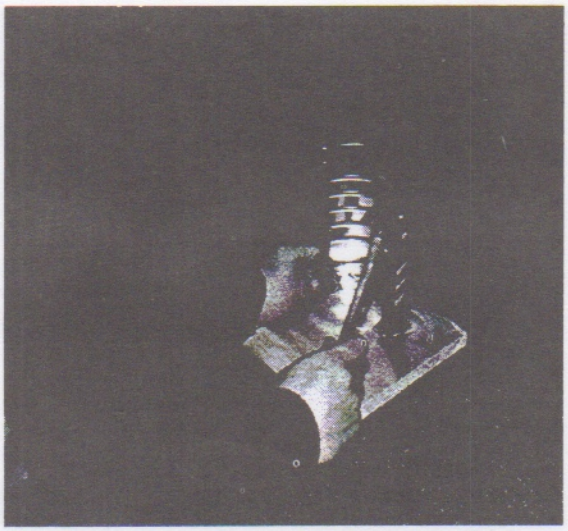
BUILDING THE FOOTLIGHTS

1. Cut coffee cans (or cafeteria size cans are excellent) in half.

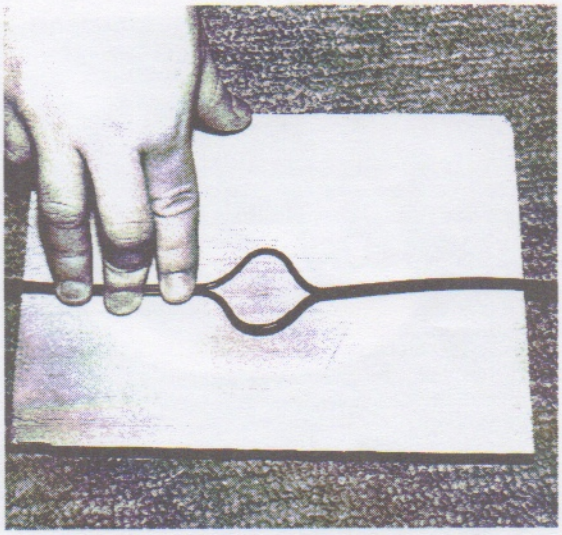


2. After cutting, flex the two halves back and forth until they break apart.

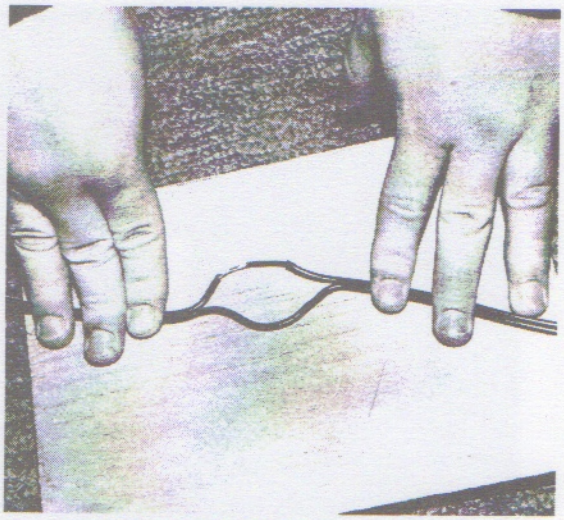
3. Cut a half circle out of the bottom of each half. Use duct tape over the sides that have been cut.



4. Proportion the can(s) on the board (a maximum of four lights per board) and nail it.

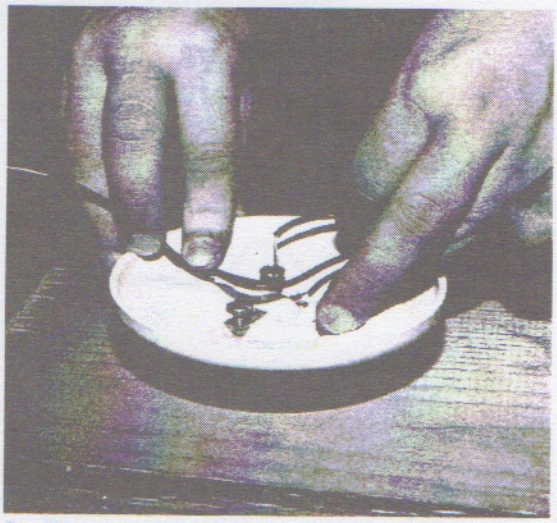


5. Make an extension cord the length + 15" of the board you will be mounting your footlights on. Place cord over the board and make a 2" separation in the wire where the light bases will be placed (DO NOT CUT THE WIRE).

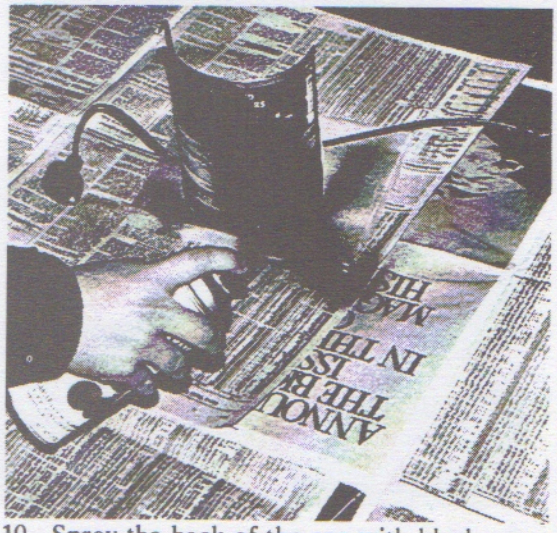


6. On both halves of the 2" separation, strip off 1" of insulation (DO NOT CUT THE WIRE).

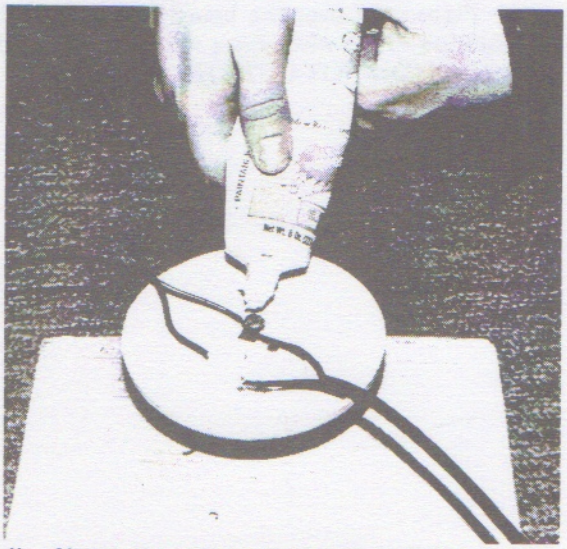
9. Screw bases into the board (DO NOT SCREW THROUGH THE WIRE).



7. Wrap each half around a terminal screw on the light receptacle base.

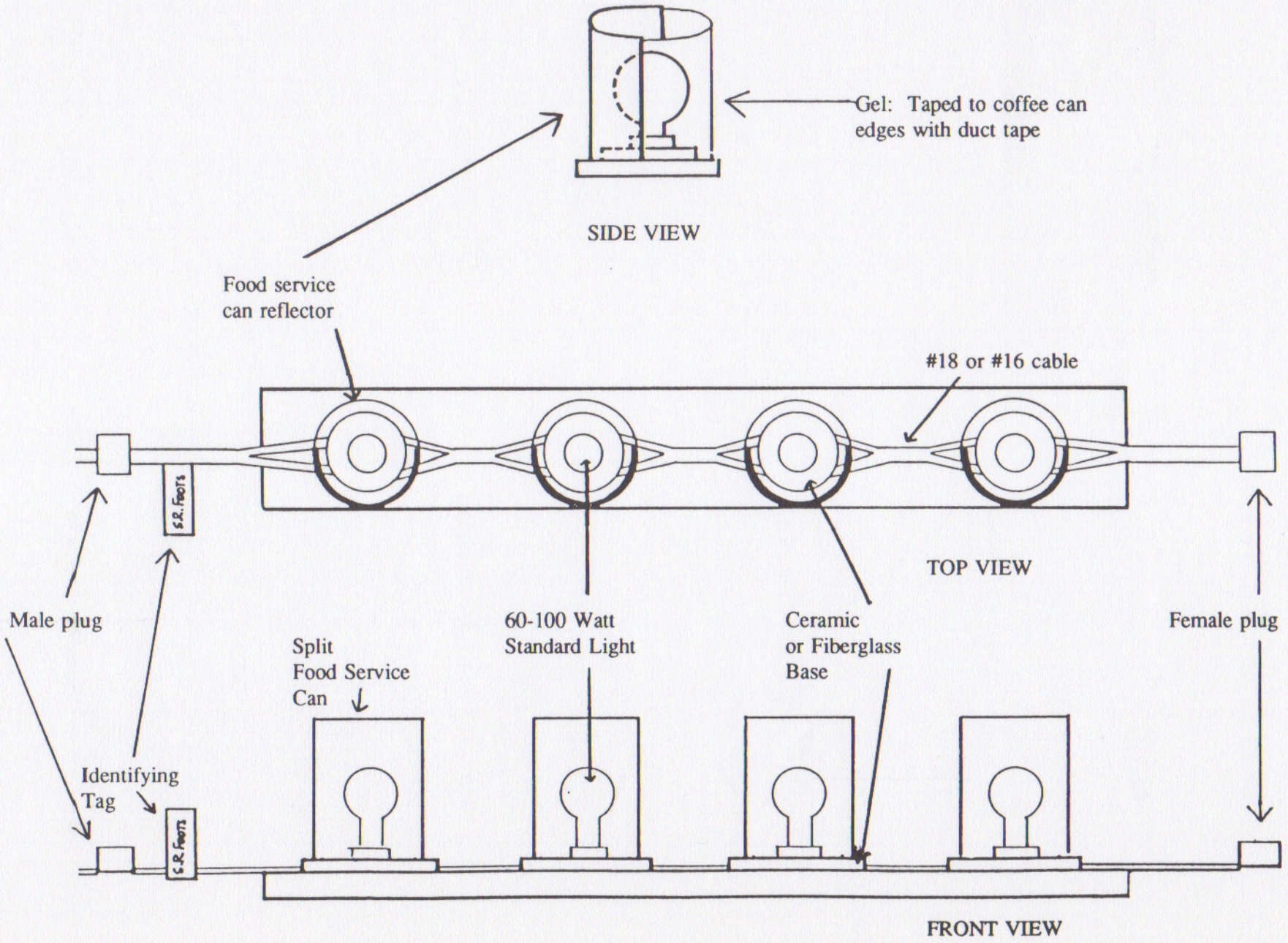


10. Spray the back of the can with black spray paint (do not spray paint inside of the can).

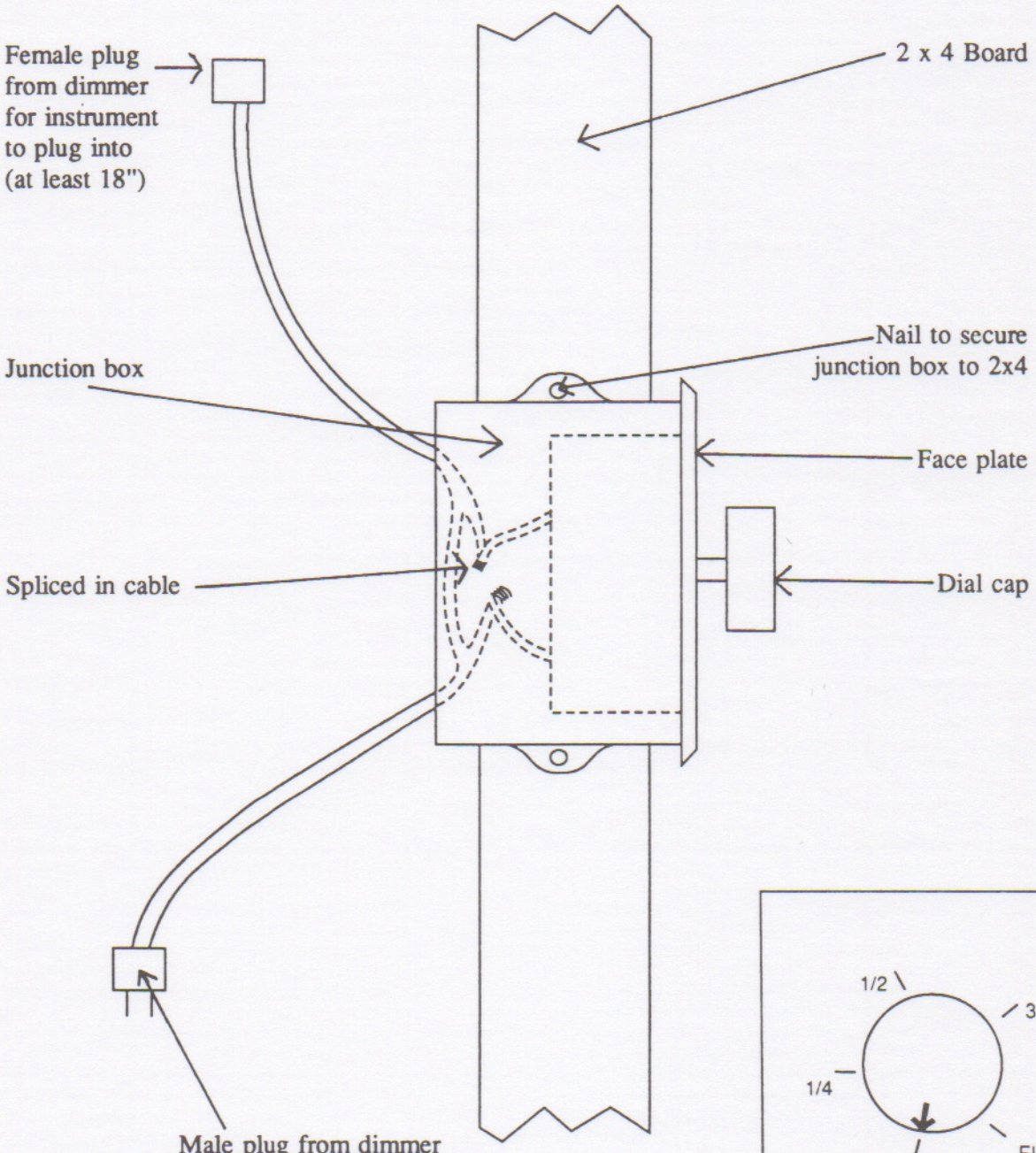


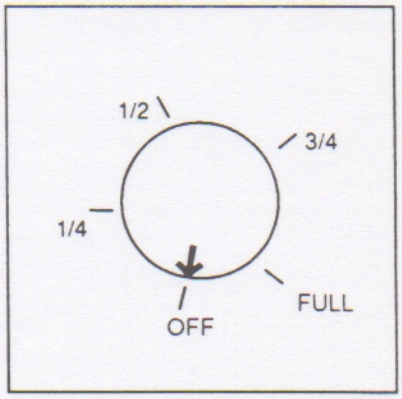
8. Cover the terminal screws and the copper wire with silicon.

ILLUSTRATION: FOOTLIGHTS DIAGRAM



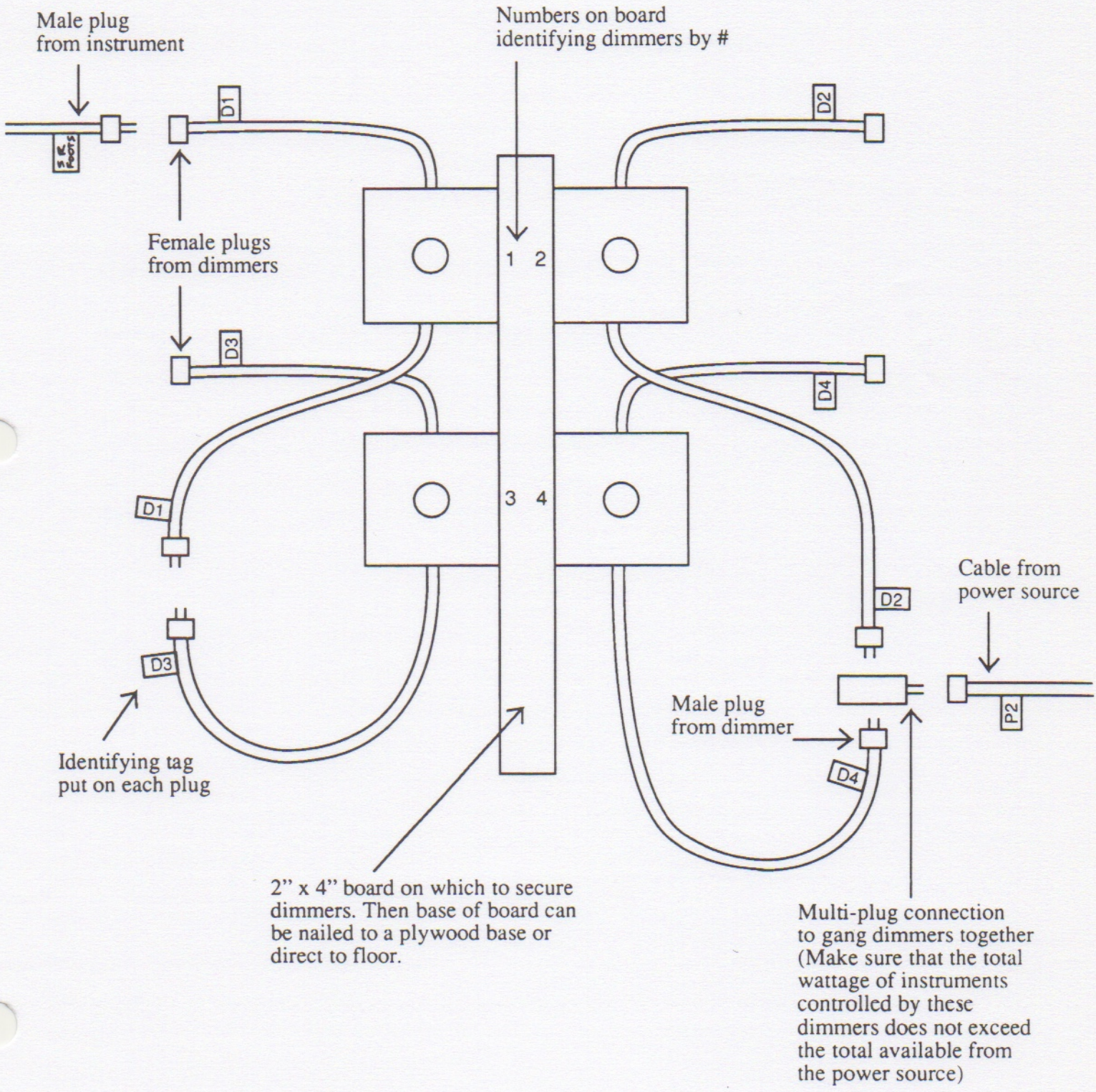
DIMMER DETAIL, SIDE AND FRONT VIEW

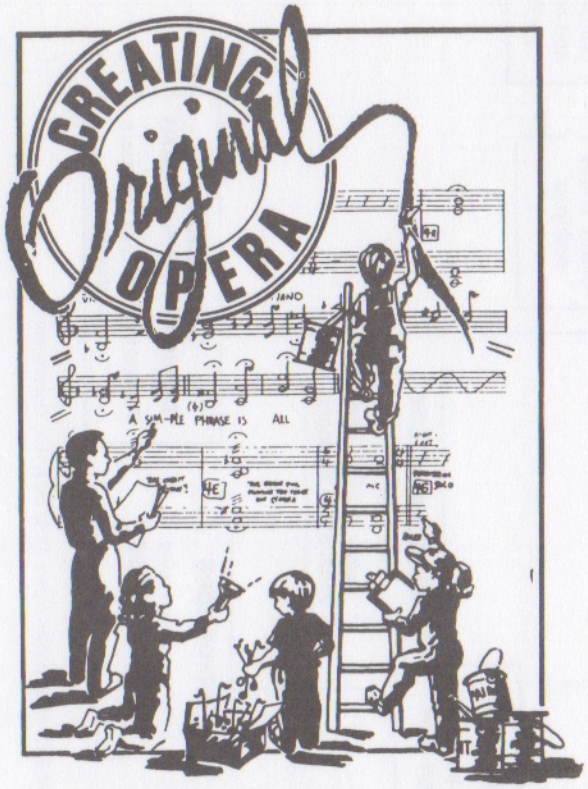




Need to determine these level with the instrument and then mark off the face plate with magic marker

DIMMER BOARD LAYOUT





Electrician/ Lighting Designer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be an Electrician for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as an Electrician. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Unplug all lights and disconnect all cords. Remove any duct tape attached to cords and wind cords into loops. Tie each cord separately with string and store away. Remove the gels from the footlights, making sure there is no remaining tape attached, and store them carefully in a folder or between two large pieces of paper. Remove the footlights and dimmers from the stage area and store them in an appropriate place.

Double-check the stage to make sure that nothing has been left behind. Take a final inventory of your tool box and any remaining supplies. Give the finished inventory to the Production Manager.

YOUR DUTIES
DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Immediately before each performance, make sure all the footlights and dimmers are in good working order. Check that the gels are attached securely and that all bulbs are working.

It is important that you remain absolutely silent when you are backstage during a performance. Sit quietly at your post and do not move away from it until the performance is over. Do not talk to the Performers, even if they talk to you. If you absolutely must communicate, use hand motions or whisper, but only when you are very close together.

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

Any distractions could ruin the hard work of the other company members.

JOB TITLE: **ELECTRICIAN**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To build lights and create a lighting design that most effectively illustrates the script.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Electricians need to thoroughly understand the relationship of watts to amps and other basic electrical concepts. You will be responsible for building some of the lights, connecting them to power sources, designing lighting cues and running the lights during performances.

Electricians are responsible to the Director and the Production Manager. During performances, Electricians are also responsible to the Stage Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Electricity has the potential to be extremely dangerous if not handled properly and not understood thoroughly. This booklet will only cover aspects of electricity that are important to you in order to do your job.

You will need to bring a notebook, a pen or pencil, and this booklet to each meeting. A folder would be helpful to organize your work.

6. Lighting Cues

Once the lights and dimmers have been tested and you are certain the stage is wired correctly, work with the Stage Manager and Director to create a series of lighting cues for the entire production.

The Stage Manager will be calling the lighting cues. It is important that you stay focused during the performances so that you do not make a mistake and miss a cue.

"WARNING" - This means get ready; a lighting cue is coming up.

"STANDBY" - This means your hand should be on the dimmer knob(s), ready and waiting.

"GO" - This means execute the lighting cue required.

Practice these lighting cues with the Stage Manager and other Electricians until you can perform them flawlessly.

B. Problems

Occasionally a light or a dimmer stops working. This is usually because something has become unplugged. Don't panic! Try to find the problem in a logical and methodical fashion by checking each connection, beginning with the power source.

Then, follow the cords from each footlight to the dimmer board, making sure all extension cords are securely plugged together. Then make sure the dimmer is connected to the power source. (This is why it is important to label each connection with the number of the corresponding set of footlights.)

Repeat this procedure for all remaining footlights until you find the problem.

Many times a simple solution solves the biggest problem.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

BACKSTAGE Any portion of the stage that is behind the main curtain.

CIRCUIT A closed path for an electrical current.

DIMMER An adjustable switch that controls the amount of electricity to a light.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

GEL A tinted piece of plastic-like material that is placed over a light in order to add color to that light.

LIGHT CUE The signal to change the lighting in some manner during the running of a performance. For the specific language of a light cue see page 19.

STAGE RIGHT/LEFT The performers' right/left when facing the audience

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

TECH REHEARSAL A rehearsal that emphasizes all the technical aspects of the production, specifically the lighting cues and scenery changes.

UPSTAGE / DOWNSTAGE Upstage is the area of the stage closest to the audience; downstage is the area furthest away from the audience.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Inventory

Make a list of all your tools and supplies. This is important in order to learn about tools you may not be familiar with, and to help you keep track of every item you have. Keep this inventory list in a safe place; you will need it again at strike.

2. Understanding Electricity

A. Terms

There are four terms that must be understood fully before you can begin building the lights for your performance. These terms are described here and on the next page. There is a corresponding diagram that illustrates the flow of electricity as if it were water on page 9.

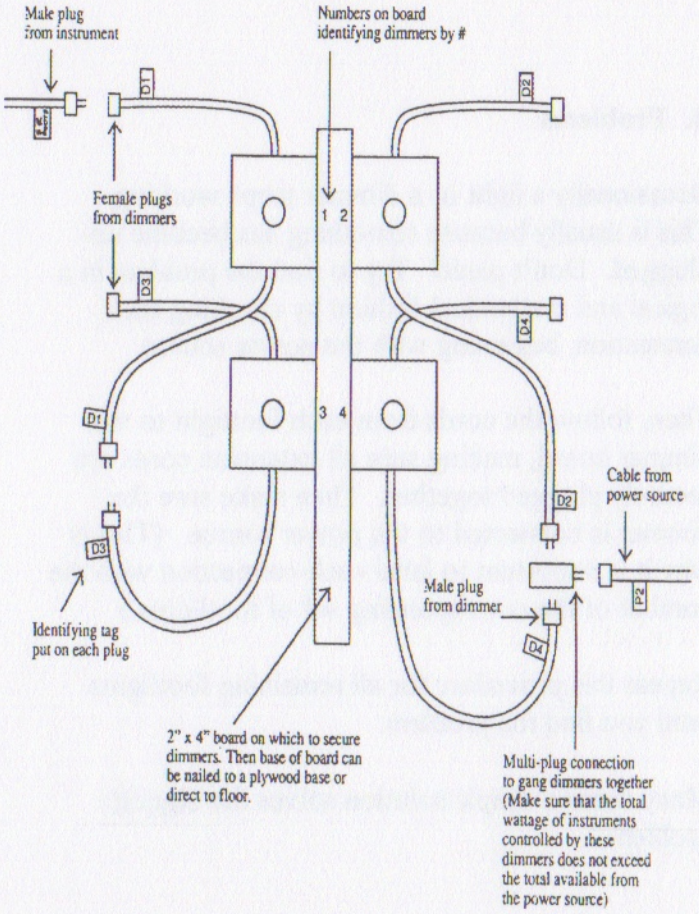
VOLT The speed or the amount of the water/electricity's current

AMP The amount of water/electricity available for use

WATT The amount of water/electricity needed to run something

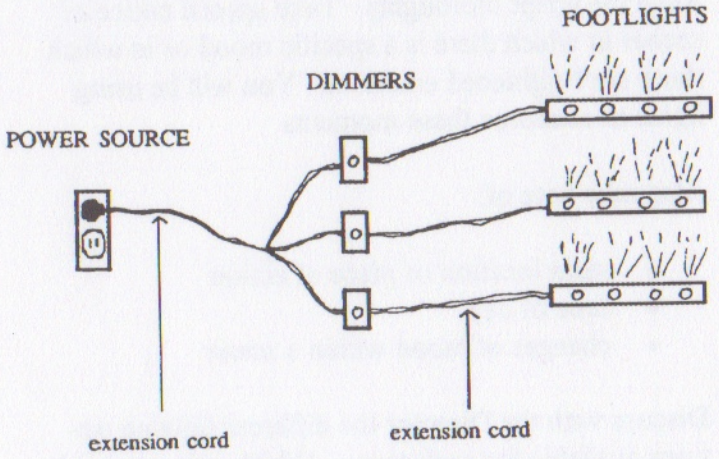
OHMS The resistance to the flow of water/electricity

DIMMER BOARD LAYOUT

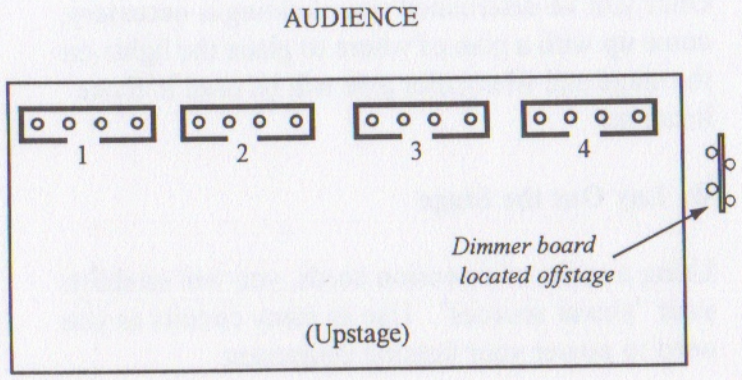


This diagram shows you how to group your dimmers onto one board for easy operation. Be sure to number all dimmers and cords with the corresponding number of each set of footlights.

First, connect the lights you have built to dimmer switches (one dimmer switch per set of footlights) and then connect the to the power sources, as shown below.



The following diagram shows a typical layout of four sets of footlights on the stage.



These terms can be readily defined by substituting the word "power" for electricity.

Electricity = Power

VOLT	How fast the power flows
AMP	How much power is available
WATT	How much power is needed to run something
OHMS	The resistance to the flow of power

Assignment #1
Study these terms and the diagram on page 9. You will be tested on this information at your next meeting.

B. How the Terms are Related

100 watts = 1 amp

This formula is essential in your work with electricity. The formula is not exact, but the slight miscalculation errs on the side of safety. Let's look at the following example:

A room has ten 75 watt light bulbs. Therefore, 10 bulbs x 75 watts = 750 watts. Since 100 watts = 1 amp, then we are dealing with 7.5 amps (750 divided by 100). This means that 750 watts are needed and 7.5 amps are available.

The average circuit carries 12 to 20 amps. So if you need more than 20 amps (2000 watts), you are not going to have enough power. You will either blow a fuse, turn off a circuit or start a fire.

Assignment #2
Convert the following to watts or amps.

WATTS		AMPS
100	=	_____
_____	=	2.5
5000	=	_____
_____	=	3.0
1000	=	_____
_____	=	4.25
2650	=	_____

5. Preparing for the Production

A. Interpreting the Script

Read the script thoroughly. Take special notice of scenes in which there is a specific mood or in which there are heightened emotions. You will be using lights to reinforce these moments.

Also take note of:

- main location or place of action
- time of day
- changes of mood within a scene

Discuss with the Director the different lighting options available for each scene. Which colors would best enhance the mood of specific moments? (For instance, a sad solo moment might be enhanced by soft, blue light.) Don't forget to consider the intensity of the light as well (dimmers on full, dimmers at glow, etc.).

Once you've determined what lighting is necessary, come up with a plan of where to place the lights on the stage and what color gels will be used in those locations.

B. Lay Out the Stage

Using a series of extension cords, you will establish your "power sources". Use as many circuits as you need to power your lighting equipment.

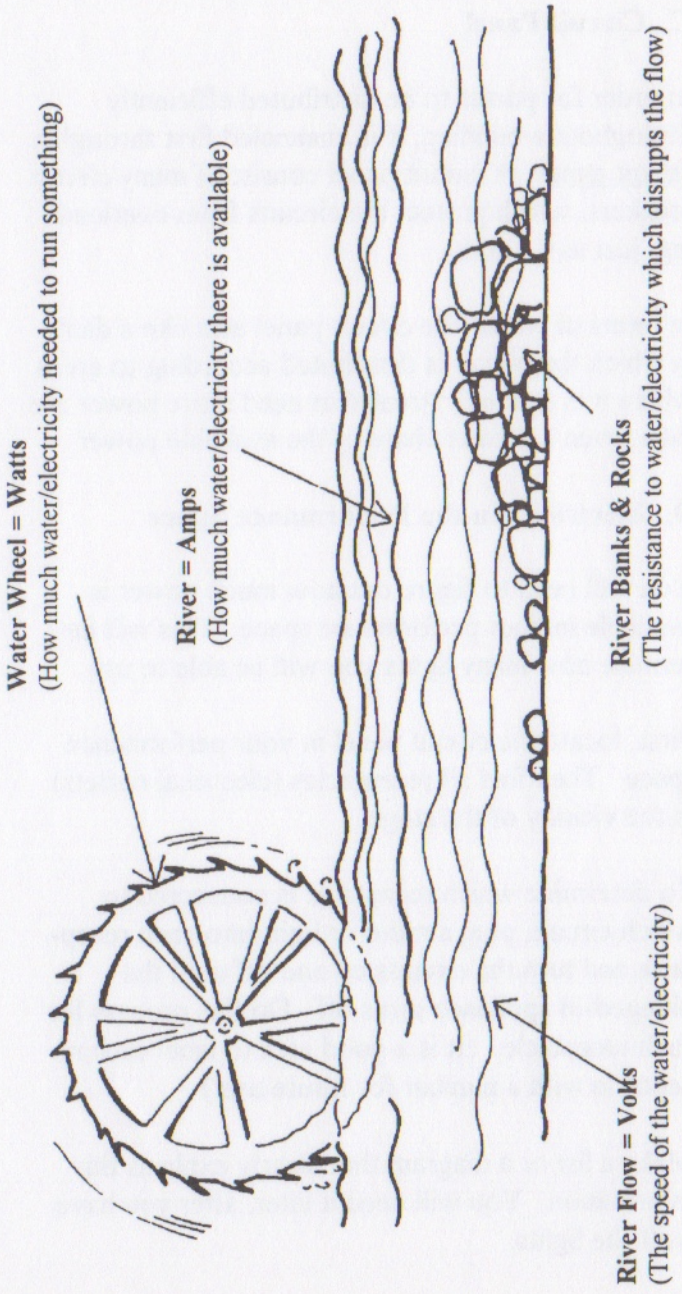
C. Creating Your Own Extension Cord

If you are not using ready-made extension cords, you will have to build your own. The steps on the following page will show you how to do this. You will need the appropriate insulated wire and both male and female plugs.

Wiring a Plug

- Cut wire to desired length
- Separate the halves of the wire on both ends (splice)
- Strip off 1" of the plastic insulation that prevents the copper halves from touching
- Separate the wire into fourths. Each side of the stripped wire should be divided in half.
- Twist each half around the terminal screws of the plugs. NEVER LET THE COPPER WIRE OF ONE HALF TOUCH THE COPPER WIRE OF THE OTHER HALF.
- Make sure to put a male plug on one end of your cord and a female plug on the other end.

AN IMPORTANT REMINDER: DO NOT plug in footlights, dimmers or extension cords until your teacher has checked them first!



C. Circuit Panel

In order for power to be distributed efficiently throughout a building, it is channeled first through a circuit panel. A circuit panel consist of many circuit breakers, which protect the circuits from overloading, just as fuses do.

In terms of water, the circuit panel acts like a dam in which the power is distributed according to areas where it is needed. Areas that need more power are then given a greater share of the available power.

D. Electricity in the Performance Space

You will need to figure out how much power is available in your performance space. This will determine how many lights you will be able to use.

First, locate the circuit panel in your performance space. Then find all receptacles (electrical outlets) in the vicinity of the stage.

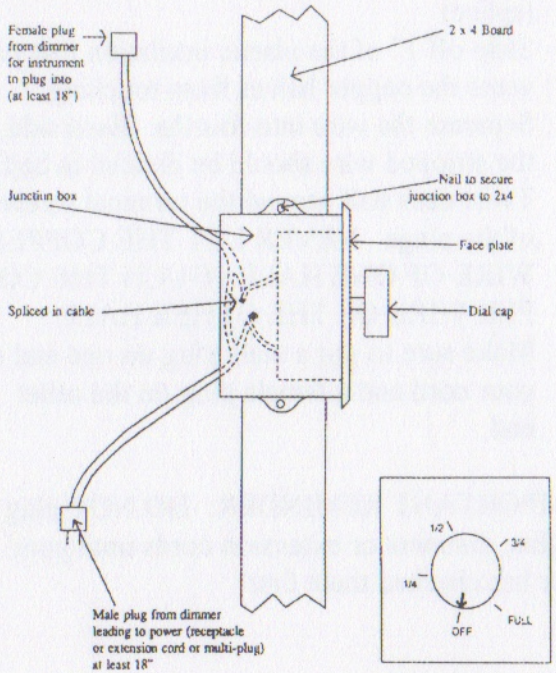
To determine which receptacle is connected to which circuit, plug a radio or light into each receptacle and turn the circuits on and off until the plugged-in appliance turns off. Do this process for each receptacle. (It is a good idea to label each receptacle with a number for future use.)

Make a list or a diagram that clearly explains this information. You will need it later, after you have built the lights.

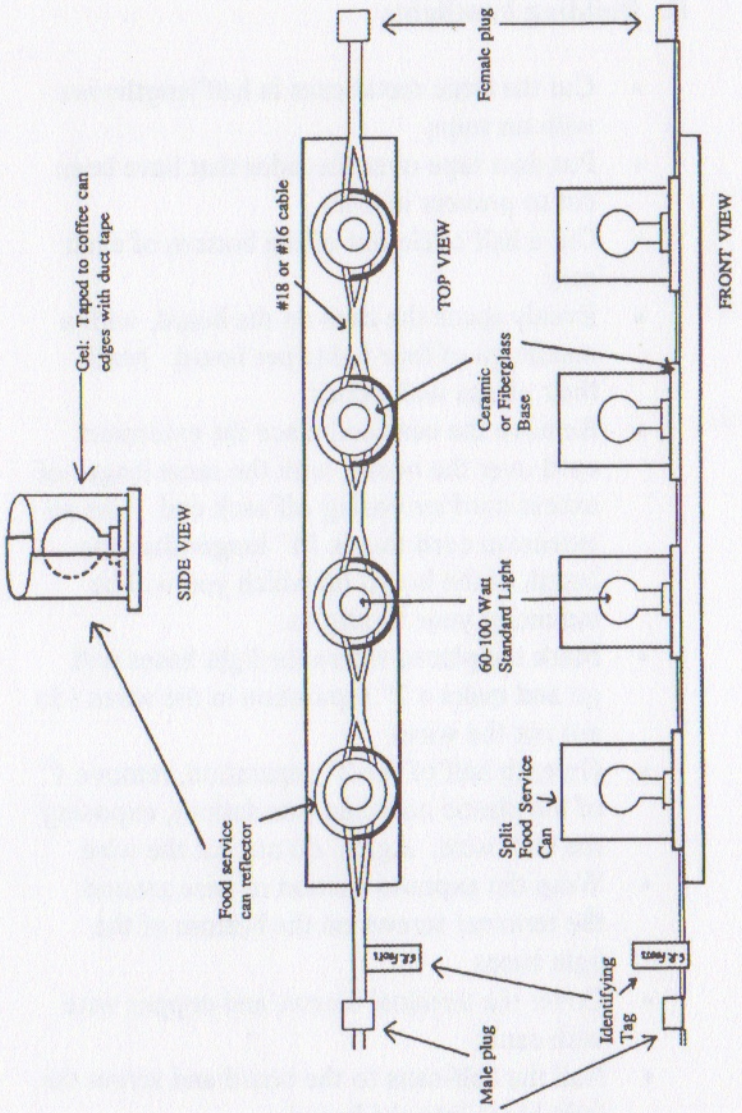
C. Building Dimmers

- Find the halfway mark on a short extension cord and make a 2" separation between the wires.
- Cut ONE SIDE of the wire. Strip off 1" of the insulation from each of the cut ends.
- Feed the wire through the bottom of the dimmer box.
- Connect the wires to the dimmer wires, cap and tape.
- Mount dimmer on box.
- Mount switch plate on dimmer.

DIMMER DETAIL, SIDE AND FRONT VIEW



Need to determine these levels with the instrument and then mark off the face plate with magic marker



3. Tools

Some of the tools you will be working with may be unfamiliar to you. It is important to learn what they are for and the appropriate way to use them. If you use a tool in the correct manner, it will help you get the job done; if you use a tool incorrectly, it will only lead to frustration and could be dangerous.

Always remember that tools are TOOLS. They are not playthings and should not be handled as such. Here are descriptions of the appropriate ways to use some common tools.

Folding Knife

Always cut with the blade facing away from you and others in the vicinity. Never use the knife in such a manner that the blade could close on your fingers. The correct way to use this tool will be demonstrated by your teacher or advisor. Listen and watch carefully and follow that person's instructions.

Hammer

When using a hammer, don't be delicate about it. Grip the handle halfway down, keep your wrist stiff, and move your arm at the elbow. Let the weight of the hammer's head do the work for you. When you are hammering, make sure you look at the nail, not at the head of the hammer!

Screwdriver
There are two types of screwdrivers: Phillips head, which looks like an "x" at the point, and a blade, or flat head, which has a flat tip. When using a screwdriver, make sure that your arm, wrist, hand and the screwdriver form a straight line through to the screw.

Tin Snips
Tin snips are like heavy duty scissors that can cut through metal. You will use them to cut large cans when building the footlights. Be very careful when using tin snips as the edges of the cut metal will be very sharp.

4. Lights, Dimmers and Plugs

Assignment #3
Go to the cafeteria and politely ask for a few of the largest metal cans. (These are number 10 food service size containers.) Wash the cans carefully (the top edge may be sharp) and remove any labels. Bring the cans to your next meeting. (Each can will make two footlights.)

B. Building Footlights

- Cut the large metal cans in half lengthwise with tin snips.
- Put duct tape over the sides that have been cut to prevent injuries.
- Cut a half circle out of the bottom of each can.
- Evenly space the cans on the board, with a maximum of four lights per board. Mark their places with pencil.
- Remove the cans and place the extension cord over the board, with the same length of excess cord extending off each end. Use an extension cord that is 15" longer than the length of the board on which you will be mounting your footlights.
- Mark the places where the light bases will go and make a 2" separation in the wires (do not cut the wire).
- On each half of the 2" separation, remove 1" of the plastic covering (insulation), exposing the bare wire. Again, do not cut the wire.
- Wrap the exposed section of wire around the terminal screws on the bottom of the light bases.
- Cover the terminal screws and copper wire with caulk
- Nail the half-cans to the board and screw the light bases into the board.

COSTUMES

The primary goal of the costume designer is to convey specific information about individual characters to the audience before the character says a word or a line. Since most, if not all, of the costumes will be found or borrowed, the designer will have to be imaginative, resourceful, and well-organized in order to assemble and manage costumes for the entire cast. The designer must also be self-assured, as measuring and preparing costumes for performance requires close contact with one's peers.

Taking measurements is one of the costume director's responsibilities. They will need to put the performer at ease while taking accurate measurements.

OBJECTIVES

- To identify and make use of clothing and other materials which reflect and enhance the specific qualities of characters.
- To understand the ways in which costumes express qualities of individual characters.
- To understand the components of costumes such as color, texture, fabric, cut, and style.
- To coordinate all costuming components into an overall design concept fitting with the scenic and lighting designs.
- To understand the difference between a character and a stereotype.
- To develop organizational skills.

MATERIALS

Drawing paper
Tape measure
Pencils
Crayons/colored pencils
Magic markers
Labels (can be made from construction paper)
Boxes, bags to store materials
Hangers (optional)

SEQUENCE

Students participating in this process must have a basic familiarity with measuring tools and tape, arithmetic (including fractions) and standard sizing for clothes (men's, women's and children's).

- Discuss the purposes and uses of (and distinctions between) clothing, fashion, and costume.

Clothes - Various kinds of fabric worn on the body to serve one of two functions:

1. Cover the body for modesty's sake
2. Protect the body from harmful effects (sun, heat, rain, cold, etc.)

Fashion - Various types of clothing that serve one or more of the following functions:

1. Identifies sex and age
2. Identifies social group
3. Expresses the preferences in clothing of people from certain historical times (called "period")
4. Expresses something about the person's attitude or taste as reflected in the choice of texture, color and cut

Costumes - Various kinds of clothing assembled to illustrate certain aspects of the character. Costumes function in several ways:

1. Identifies the period of history in which the character lives
2. Tells about the character's social group, age, sex
3. May tell the time of year and location of the play
4. Reflects the personality and/or state of mind of the character wearing the costume.

- Discuss the use of clothing to identify different characteristics and/or qualities such as age, sex, and status.
- Discuss the use of fashion and style in selecting costumes. To illustrate the point have students discuss the fashions worn by peers.

- As practise, ask the students to create a specific, individual character, avoiding stereotypes. (see Exercise A).

- Create a costume measurement chart for each performer (see 8 - 8 for sample), then meet individually with performers to complete this chart.
- Determine where the costume area will be located. Organize it and clean it up.
- Collect bags and/or boxes to be labelled with each of the performer's names and store them in the costume area.
- Once the script is completed, read through it and identify the main and supporting characters.
- Using information gathered from the script, complete a costume criteria reference sheet for each character (see Section 8 - 7 for sample). Keep in mind that a character's costume will be based on a combination of their internal and external traits.
- Make a chart for each costume the performer will wear listing each piece of visible clothing (see Section 8 - 10 for illustration).

ADVICE: Borrowing Costumes

Most, if not all of the costumes used in your production will be borrowed or found clothing. If more time or resources are available you may want to create costumes.

- Decide on the costume for each character. As you establish your criteria, justify your choice of the costume by seeing if it meets your stated goals (refer to 8 - 7, Costume Criteria Reference Sheet). The criteria are usually divided into two parts:

1. Choices

   a. Type of material (texture)
   b. Color
   c. Type of fit

2. Specifics

   a. How expensive is an item?
   b. How available is it?
   c. Will it be put to any special use?
   d. Is it versatile? (Can it be used for two or more different purposes?)

- Working with the Production Manager, organize a meeting with the performers and give them their costume assignment.

- At this time, establish whether the performer herself or the other members of the cast have the type of clothing required. Make a note of the person from whom the item is being borrowed on the Costume Procedure chart. Give performers a deadline by which they must bring the costumes to school.

- Evaluate whether you need to make any improvements on the costumes as you start to work with them. Review your options/alternatives in case things don't work out as originally planned.

- Once the costumes are obtained, the job is divided into two parts:

1. Preparing: Be sure to label every piece indicating which costume it belongs to and where you got it, so that the performer can always find it and you can return it after the production is over. Keep all the pieces of the same costume in the same box or bag with the character's name written on a large tag, so the performer can easily see it.

2. Running: Running is what happens to the costume during the course of a performance. You need to make a costume procedure chart which answers these questions:

   a. Where is the costume located at the beginning of the show?
   b. During which part of the show is the costume worn?
   c. Are there any quick changes? When and at what location of the stage do they take place?

- A costume parade will take place where final approval is made by the director. Evaluate the results and make sure that each costume fulfills the goals set for it by the costume designer and the director. Does the costume meet the criteria? Is it effective? Alterations for fit or special effects may be suggested at this time.

TERMINOLOGY

Costume: A style of dress worn by a performer in order to reveal some aspect of his or her character.

Costume Parade: All the performers stand in a line wearing their costumes so that the director and the designer can see what each costume looks like, what needs to be changed, and what is missing.

Costume Plot: A list of each character's costume and when they wear it.

Criteria: A requirement (e.g. size).

External factors: Conditions outside of the character's body such as social conditions, time of year, time of day, age of character, etc.

Internal factors: The characteristics that tell the audience about the uniqueness of a character including their attitudes, moods, thoughts, and feelings.

Measurements: The size and dimensions of the body.

Running: In this context, the term is used for what actually happens to a costume during rehearsals and actual performances, i.e. its location before and during the show, costume changes, the part of the show in which it is actually worn, etc.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

— Study environmental disciplines (Science).

— Do mathematical measurements.

— Do research in texture, design and color (Art).

— Distinguish the differences between colors, textures, fabrics.

— Distinguish the difference between ordinary clothing, fashion and costumes which are appropriate for the stage.

— Learn about different civilizations through costume (fabric, costume, etc. - Social Studies.)

— Develop organizational skills.

— Develop and reinforce communication skills

— Locate needed materials.

— Develop note-taking skills.

— Do problem-solving.

— Transform words into images.

— Refine gross and fine motor skills

— Develop respect for care of clothing, appropriate makeup and good personal hygiene.

COSTUME PROCEDURE CHART

Character	Basic Costume	From Where/Who	In Hand (Date)	Alterations	Alts. Done	Comments
Ex: Sammy	Blue Jeans	JoAnn Brings		Need to Rip L. rear Pocket	Yes	
	Leather Jacket	Mr. Goldstein		Put readable Michael Jackson decal on it		
	Blue Nikes	Actor Provides		Stain w/ Tempera paint	Yes	

CREATING Original OPERA

COSTUME MEASUREMENT CHART

PERFORMER'S NAME:_____ PRODUCTION:_____

Head:_____

Feet (shoe size):_____

Hands (small, medium, or large):_____

Arm/Sleeve:_____

Inseam/Leg:_____

Shirt/Blouse size:_____

Waist/Pant/Skirt size:_____

Suit/Dress size:_____

Any particular problems with clothing (i.e., allergies, bracelets)?

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COSTUME CRITERIA REFERENCE CHART

CHARACTER:_____ PRODUCTION:_____

Characteristics of Character:

1.

Internal Factors:
(mood, thought, feelings)

2.

3.

External Factors:

Location of play:_____

When does it take place:_____

Age of character:_____

Social status of character:_____

Time of year:_____

Time of day:_____

Criteria:

Are any fast changes required for this actor/character?

Are any special effects needed?

How much time until the costume is need by the actor?

Description of Basic Costume (specify color, type, and fabric):

Hat:_____ Shirt/Blouse:_____ Jacket:_____

Socks:_____ Pants/Skirt:_____ Coat:_____

Shoes:_____ Suit/Dress:_____ Accessories:_____

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COSTUME PROCEDURE CHART

Character	Basic Costume	From Where/Who	In Hand (Date)	Alterations	Alts. Done	Comments

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COSTUME CHECK LIST

CHARACTER:_____ PERFORMER:_____

Scenes When Used:_____

Costume Item	At close of production, item to be returned to:

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Costume Designer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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IMPORTANT

After each performance is over, collect all the costumes and accessories from the Performers and hang them up or fold them neatly in preparation for the next performance. Make sure all identification labels are still attached to the clothing and make any necessary repairs. Store the costumes in a locked room or other safe place so they cannot be lost. Do not leave until the last Performer has changed and their costume has been collected and stored away.

YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Collect all the costumes and accessories from the Performers and fold them neatly. Pack those that were borrowed in bags and return them to their rightful owners. Items that were not borrowed should be stored in a safe place.

Make sure the room(s) where costume changes were made is clean and in good order. Throw away any trash and pick up any hangers or other items left behind.

Do not leave until every costume item has been accounted for and returned.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Costume Designer for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as Costume Designer. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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- Where is each costume at the beginning of the performance?
- During which part of the performance is the costume worn?
- Are there any quick costume changes? When? Where?
- Does any Performer need assistance getting into or out of his/her costume?
- How will the costumes be collected at the end of the performance?

YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Immediately before each performance distribute the costumes to the Performers and assist with any last-minute adjustments. Make sure that any items needed for costume changes during the show are placed backstage in the proper location.

If a Performer needs help with a costume change during the performance, you must sit quietly in an out-of-the-way place until the Performer is ready make the costume change.

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

If you are not needed backstage during the performance, you should sit with the rest of the company in the audience until it is time for you to take your bow.

Sample Costume Chart

Character	Costume Item	Source
David	Hat	Juanita
Shaniqua	Leather coat	Gerry's brother

A. Taking Care of Costumes

Locate a safe place to keep the costumes until the performance. Fold them neatly or put them on hangers.

- Label each item with the owner's name.
- Keep each character's costume in a separate bag or on a hanger, with his or her name written on a tag.
- Have each Performer try on his or her costume.
- Make any adjustments or alterations necessary.
- Do not allow other members of the company to touch the costumes.
- Locate a place or places for the Performers to change into their costumes. Make sure the area is clean and that there are chairs available for the Performers to use.

B. Keeping Organized

With many Performers and many costumes, things can get pretty confusing. Make sure you know the answers to the following questions before the first performance; it will make your job much easier!

JOB TITLE: **COSTUME DESIGNER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To design clothing that conveys the character's personality onstage.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Costume Designer needs to be totally familiar with the script and characters. You will interpret each character through color, fabric, fashion and overall appearance. You will also be responsible for gathering, borrowing and building costumes as well as the care, organization and maintenance of all the costumes.

Costume Designers are responsible to the Director and to the Production Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Costumes are used to illustrate different aspects of a character. Therefore, it is important that a Costume Designer be imaginative and understand that even everyday clothing can tell us interesting things about a character.

Your work as a Costume Designer will be on view every time a Performer is onstage. You will need to do your best...and maybe even work harder than you ever have before.

You must be organized and very careful, especially when handling items that belong to another person. Costume Designers work with people, so you must be sensitive to others while still continuing to do your job. Occasionally you must solve problems quickly (for example, if there is a problem with a costume during a performance), and you must also be able to work silently if you are backstage.

B. Complete the Details

Once you have your list of items, you need to determine the specifics of your costume designs. The best way to do this is by drawing a sketch of each costume. This will help you determine things like length of sleeve/skirt, color, texture, accessories and how the costumes look as a group.

Use unlined paper and colored pencils, crayons, markers or watercolors. Fabric scraps may be helpful in determining texture. Do not be afraid to sketch the same character's costume many times but with slight variations. This is also a good time to discover how different costumes will look together onstage.

(Give all drafts and final versions of Costume Design sketches to the Documentation Team for their records.)

5. Assembling Costumes

Most of the costumes you have designed will be borrowed from members of the company, friends, family, neighbors or even businesses.

Keep track of borrowed items so that they are returned to their proper owners after the production is over. Make a chart for this purpose (like the one on the next page) and keep it safe in your folder.

(If you have decided to build or sew some of the costumes, make sure you give yourself enough time to do so. Also, if some items are going to be hard to find, be sure to list possible alternatives.)

4. Designing Costumes

Now that you are completely familiar with the script you can begin to design costumes.

Think carefully about the characters, but be imaginative! For each piece of clothing you choose, you should be able to justify the reason for its color, shape and design to the director. If there is not a valid reason for using it, then it does not belong. Remember, you need to represent the characters before they speak! At all times, the character traits should justify your costume decisions.

Assignment #3
Come up with a list of three possible costume items for each character in your opera. (Do not create the entire costume just yet.) Be specific about the color, texture and shape of each item, and state your reason for choosing it. Bring your list to the next meeting for discussion.

A. Complete Each Basic Costume

Using your work from Assignment #3 as a starting point, come up with a complete costume for each character that expresses that character's personal traits. Discuss your ideas with the other Costume Designers and the Director.

Some questions you should ask about each item are:

- How expensive is the item?
- Is it readily available?
- Will it be put to any special use?
- What is the basic color?
- What type of material is it?
- What should the fit be like?

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

CHARACTERISTIC An inner trait unique to one person.

COSTUME Clothing worn by a performer that reveals some aspect of his/her character.

COSTUME PARADE All Performers stand in a line wearing their costumes so the Director and designers can assess the design and make any necessary adjustments.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

EXTERNAL FACTORS Conditions other than a character's personality that will affect costume choices (time of year, time of day, age of character, etc.)

INSEAM The measurement of the inner seam of a pant leg, from the crotch to the ankle.

MEASUREMENTS Sizes and dimensions of the body.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

TAPE MEASURE A flexible strip printed with inches or centimeters, used for measuring.

TEXTURE The way a fabric or other substance feels to the touch (rough, smooth, etc.).

THEME The idea on which the opera is based.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Understanding Costumes

Clothing can function in the following ways:

Practical Uses
- covers the body
- protects from sun, cold, rain, etc.

Fashionable Uses
- identifies the age and gender of a character
- identifies the social status of a character
- expresses inner qualities of a character through texture and color
- attracts attention

Dramatic Uses
- identifies the historical period of play
- identifies the character's mood
- identifies the time of year and location
- reflects the character's personality

COSTUME CRITERIA REFERENCE CHART

Character Name_____

Characteristics of Character: Age_____

1._____ 2._____ 3._____

4._____ 5._____

Character's general mood or emotion_____

Where does the scene take place?_____
What time of year is it?_____
What time of day is it?_____

Basic Costume: (color, type, fabric)

Shirt/Blouse_____ Jacket/Coat_____

Pants_____ Dress/Skirt_____

Shoes_____ Hat_____

Other_____

Will the performer need to get used to working in this costume? ☐Yes ☐No
Are any fast changes required for this character? ☐Yes ☐No
Are any special effects needed? ☐Yes ☐No
Describe them_____

2nd Costume: (description)

Assignment #2
Watch a television show or movie and keep a list of the costumes worn by two separate characters. Answer the following questions for each character. Bring your answers to class for discussion.

- What color clothing does the person wear?
- What is the texture and shape of the clothing?
- Is the clothing a certain style?
- Does the clothing reflect his or her personality?
- If not, what traits does the clothing suggest?

3. Working with the Script

Read the script and become totally familiar with it. Each time you read it, underline any references to clothing or any dialogue that gives insight into what a character is like. You may wish to discuss the characteristics or external traits of each character with the Director or Writers. Fill out the top half of the chart on the following page for each character.

Assignment #1
Create a character that is your age. Make the person as interesting as possible from the choices below.

Rich	or	Poor
Likes art	or	Likes science
Large family	or	Only child
Summertime	or	Wintertime
Poor student	or	Good student
Lives in the city	or	Lives in the country

List the characteristics you chose here:

Character "A"

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Now, create a costume for Character A. List at least 6 items of clothing (or accessories) that would best reflect the characteristics you have listed above. Explain why you chose each item.

Characteristic	Costume Item	Why?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

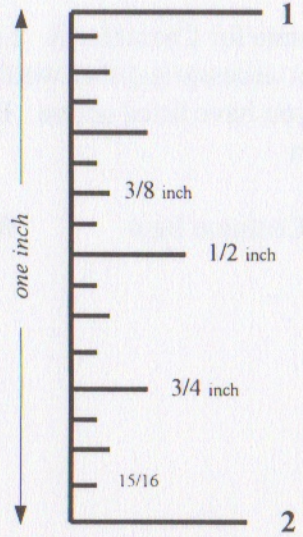
2. Measuring the Performers

For this job, you will need a tape measure, a pencil and the Costume Measurement Chart. Be careful, polite and gentle when taking measurements. Make sure to ask the Performers if they have any allergies to certain fabrics.

A. Tape Measure

The tape measure is made of plastic or cloth and is usually 60 inches long.

In measurements, a foot is divided into 12 inches and each inch is further divided into 16 equal units (known as 1/16th of an inch). Larger divisions within the inch are 1/8's, 1/4's, and 1/2's. These are clearly indicated by the length of the line on the tape measure. See if you can fill in the measurements that are not labeled in the following diagram. (The longest line is an inch, the next longest is 1/2 inch, the next is 1/4, then 1/8, then 1/16.)



COSTUME MEASUREMENT CHART

Performer's Name_____

Title of Production_____

Head:_____**inches**

Shoe Size:_____

Hand Size:_____**inches** Small Medium Large

Inseam/Leg: _____**inches**

Shirt/Blouse size:_____

Waist:_____**inches**

Pant/Skirt size:_____

Suit/Dress size:_____

Any allergies or other problems with clothing?

_____

_____

MAKEUP

The effective makeup artist is both creative and efficient. He or she must design makeup which reflects and enhances the individual traits of each character and be able to apply the makeup in the brief amount of time available before the performance.

The makeup artist should be confident about applying makeup and feel comfortable touching and working on performers' faces. S/he should also be able to put the performers at ease since this may be the first time many of them have had makeup applied to their face.

Most young people will assume that the makeup artists are female. Teachers should stress that many makeup artists are male and encourage both sexes to be involved.

Through constant practice, the makeup person applies the makeup in a confident and neat manner.

OBJECTIVES

- To realize that the most important single motivation for wearing makeup is to enable the audience—usually sitting at a distance—to see the performer's face and understand the individual's characteristics.
- To learn that performers' faces are their passports to the audience and that through makeup the attributes of characters can be enhanced.
- To know that makeup helps to bring out or emphasize the expressive parts of the face: the eyes, cheeks, mouth, nose and hair.

- To know that makeup restores and enhances the natural color of the face when theatrical lighting is used.
- To learn that there are different types of makeup used for different parts of the face.

MATERIALS

See 9 - 5 for types of makeup. We suggest that all makeup be kept in a kit.

SEQUENCE

I. Obtaining Permission

Written permission from parents regarding student's allergies to makeup should be obtained prior to applying makeup on any performer's face.

II. Preparation

The teacher should lead the student makeup artists through the following processes:

- During the first week, list each performer's name on an individual makeup form (see last page of Makeup section.) When the performers are assigned a character, list the color of their complexions. Indicate whether they are male or female and put the character's name next to each performer's name.

Organization is crucial for the makeup personnel during the preparation, execution, and clean-up.

- On the makeup form, write what type of hair they have (curly, straight), its color and how they wear it. Draw the shapes of their faces (square, oval, circular, etc.).

- Obtain materials: Check the list below to make sure everything is available; examine each article in the makeup kit and become familiar with its use:

  Makeup
  Makeup kit (lunch box, show box, or small tool box)
  Paper towels
  Bobby pins
  Rubber bands
  Barrettes
  Water (if there is no faucet in the room, get a container)
  Facial Tissues
  Cold cream or baby lotion
  Q-tips
  Several old towels (at least three)
  An old shirt or smock
  Facial soap
  Vinyl table cloth

- Prepare a makeup room: Determine where the makeup room will be for the performances. If the room chosen is dirty, clean it up and wash it down; make it neat and comfortable. If there are no mirrors, borrow several and put them in the room. Make sure that you confer with the costume designer about the use of this room, because both costumes and makeup may have to share the same space. If no room is available, any corner will do, but make sure you organize the space in which you will be working.

- Become familiar with handling the makeup by putting it on your colleague, preferably another makeup artist. If you are the only makeup artist, practice on the production or stage manager. Vary what you do with the makeup to achieve different "looks". Don't use a lot of makeup at one time; a little does go a long way. Once you become proficient in the process, begin working with the performers.

- Once the script is ready, meet with the director to discuss ideas about the characters. Specific decisions regarding each character should be written on characters' individual makeup forms.

- Consider the character that the performer is portraying and how to bring this character out through makeup. Write down on your makeup forms something about each of the characters. Also note your thoughts about the kind of makeup you may want each of them to wear. Answer the following questions for each character:

  How much makeup should be used?
  Any special colors?
  Any special effects?
  Does the performer sweat more than most? This may cause the makeup to run or smear.

III. Application

1) For practice sessions and before each performance, the student makeup artists should lay out materials neatly in place where they can be reached easily and quickly.

2) Wash hands thoroughly using soap and water.

3) Use the cold cream and kleenex to clean the performer's face (be careful of the eyes). Wipe the face clean, but leave a very thin film of cold cream on the face (this makes it easier to get the makeup off later). If an performer is allergic to cold cream, use baby lotion or oil as an alternative.

4) Put on the base. Spot the face using a sponge that has the base on it. Blend the base with a second damp sponge. Make sure that the base covers the ears and the neck. If the performer is wearing a short sleeved shirt, do the hands and arms as well. If the makeup artist misses the ears and the neck, it will look like the performer is wearing a mask.

5) Use white lines to enlarge the area around the eyes (optional for younger children because of the danger of working close to the eyes).

6) Apply brown or black eyeliner under the white lines (see Step 9).

7) If applicable, apply eye shadow to lids. Have the performer close his or her eyelids.

8) Dot the corners of the eyes with white dots (this defines where the eyes end).

9) Apply the mascara. When applying eyeliner and mascara, have the performer look up while the artist lines the lower lip and brushes on the mascara.

10) Color in the eyebrows with the eyebrow pencil. Make sure the the eyebrow pencil is not too sharp.

11) Highlight the cheeks, if necessary, and rouge.

12) Apply the lipstick and dot the corners of the mouth with rouge.

13) Once satisfied with the makeup job on the performer, apply powder to "set" the job.

ADVICE: Post-Performance Makeup Procedure

Make-up removal should be done immediately after performances. Paper towels and facial soap should be used by performers to gently cleanse the face and neck.
The makeup area must be cleaned throughly once finished. All sponges and applicators must be washed and dryed. (Do not store sponges when they are still wet.) All containers must be sealed. If this is done properly, your equipment will last much longer. Makeup can be ruined when not properly stored.

TERMINOLOGY

Base: Makeup for the face which is used to restore the natural color that is washed out by stage lights. You must match base to the complexion of the actor or actress.

Blush: Brings out the cheekbones.

Clown White: Used to define where the eyes end by dotting the corners of the eyes; also used for highlighting.

Eyeliner: Used to outline the eyelids and make them stand out. Eyeliner is divided into three categories: ivory to enlarge the whites of the eyes, dark brown for the bottom of the eye to line it, and light brown for the crease above the eye.

Eyebrow Pencil: Used to darken and bring out the eyebrows.

Eye Shadow: Used for character purposes and color.

Foundation: The initial makeup which is applied to a character's face and neck. The foundation color should match the actor's or actress' skin color.

Highlight: Applied directly to a character's cheekbones and down the middle of the nose.

Lipstick: Used to accent the mouth and make it stand out from the rest of the face.

Mascara: Makes the eyelashes thicker and more visible.

Powder: "Sets" the makeup job so it won't smear.

Rouge: Can be used instead of blush (but very lightly) to accentuate a character's cheeckbones or facial structure; apply to the cheekbones. You can also use a Q-tip dipped in rouge to put spots of red at the corner of the mouth to define where the mouth ends.

Shading: Used for contouring of a character's face. It is applied to the sides of the nose, under the cheekbones and under the jaw.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Reinforce skills and knowledge of geometric shapes.

— Reinforce skills and knowledge of texture, design and color.

— Learn about different civilizations and culture.

— Reinforce basic health and hygiene skills.

— Translate the written word to the visual expression.

— Enhance organizational skills.

— Develop and reinforce non-verbal communication skills.

— Work closely with others.

— Enhance research skills.

— Refine gross and fine motor skills.

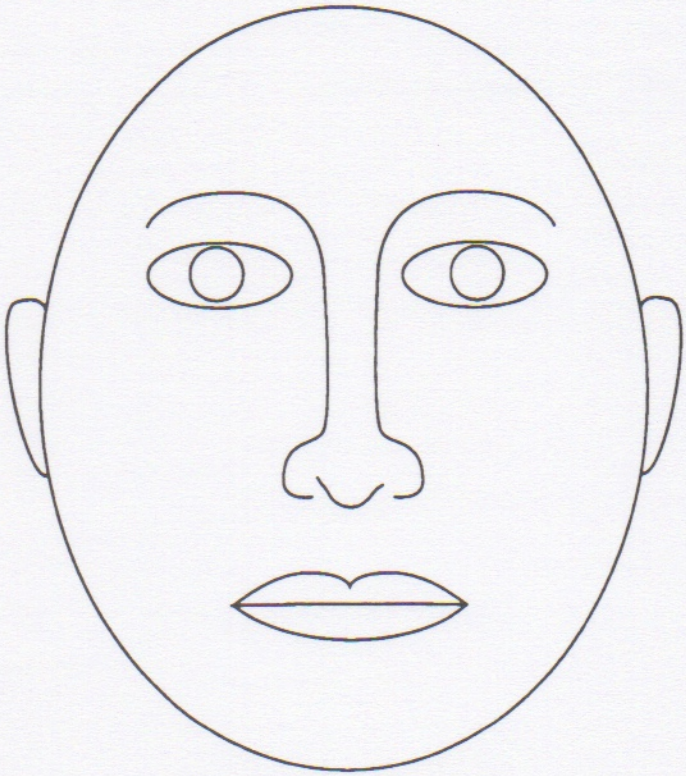
— Reinforce note-taking skills.

— Analyze and solve problems.

MAKEUP FORM

PERFORMER'S NAME:_____

NAME OF CHARACTER:_____



FACIAL DESCRIPTION

Shape of face:_____

Eye color:_____

Skin color:_____

Hair color:_____

Color of eyebrows:_____

FOR PRODUCTION

Hair style:_____

Base:_____

Eye liner:_____

Eyebrow pencil:_____

Eye shadow:_____

Lipstick:_____

Special effects:_____

CHARACTER DESCRIPTION:_____

COSTUME DESCRIPTION:_____

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Makeup Artist

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be a Makeup Artist for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as Makeup Artist. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Clean the makeup kit thoroughly! Wipe off each separate makeup item with a damp cloth (or baby wipe) and make sure the interior of the makeup kit is clean and free of powder or makeup.

Using the inventory form you filled out at your first meeting, take a final inventory of the makeup kit, being careful to note items that were used up and need to be replaced. Organize the makeup items and place them neatly in the kit. Give the finished inventory form to your Production Manager.

Make sure the room or area where the makeup was applied is clean and in good order. Throw away any trash and pick up any other items left behind.

Do not leave until every item of makeup has been accounted for and put away.

YOUR DUTIES
DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Immediately before each performance, you must apply the makeup for each character as quickly and as efficiently as possible. Take special care to cover up their clothing if the Performers are already in costume.

You may need to be on hand for touch-ups during the performance, or if new makeup or a special effect is required. If this is the case, you should sit quietly in an out-of-the-way place backstage until your services are needed.

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

If you are not needed backstage during the performance, you should sit with the rest of the company in the audience until it is time for you to take your bow.

After each performance you should remove the makeup from the Performers, collect all the makeup items and put them away neatly, and throw out any trash. Straighten the makeup room and prepare it for the next performance.

JOB TITLE: **MAKEUP ARTIST**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To design and apply makeup which reflects and enhances the individual traits of each character.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Makeup Artist needs to work quickly and carefully to apply makeup in the brief amount of time available before each performance. Makeup Artists work closely with Costume Designers. You are responsible for maintaining and taking care of your tools (makeup and accessories).

Makeup Artists are responsible to the Director and to the Production Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Stage makeup is different from "everyday" makeup. Makeup is used on stage so that a Performer can be seen in different lighting and from far away. Because of this, stage makeup may appear exaggerated.

Your work as a Makeup Artist will be on view every time a performer is onstage. You will need to do your best...and maybe even work harder than you ever have before.

You must be organized and very careful, especially when applying makeup on another person. Makeup Artists work with people, so you must be sensitive to others while still continuing to do your job. You must be able to work quickly and quietly — especially if there is a need for you to be backstage during a performance.

Bring a notebook, a pen or pencil and this booklet to each meeting. A folder will be helpful to organize your work.

4. General Preparation

Locate a safe place to keep the makeup and supplies when you are not using them. Do not allow other members of the company to touch or play with the makeup items.

You must keep track of what you use so items can be replaced before you've run out of them.

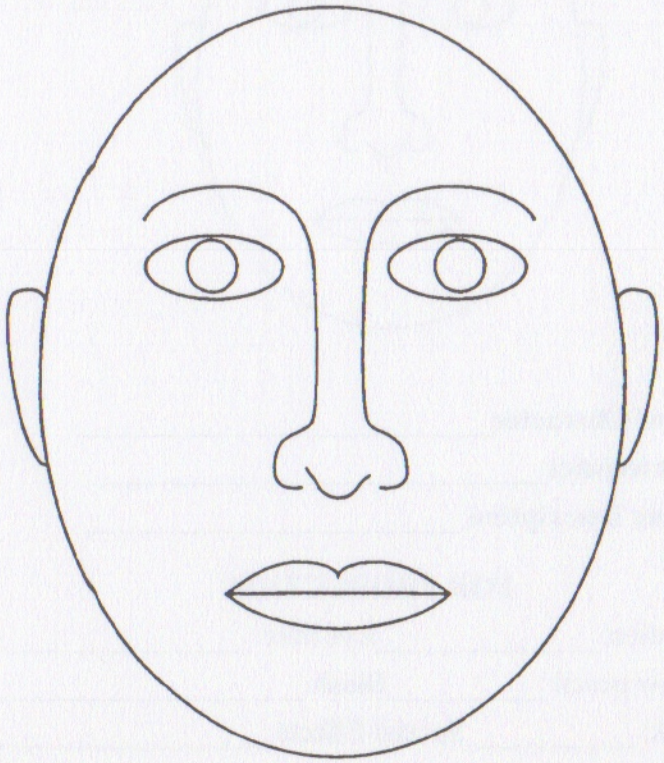
A. Find A Makeup Room or Corner

The makeup room or corner should be clean and well-lit. There should be a table on which to put the makeup, and twice as many chairs as there are Makeup Artists. A trash can is a necessity! You will also need mirrors. This room may also be used for costumes.

B. Sketch Makeup Designs

You may want to sketch your makeup designs, especially if there are special effects necessary in your opera. (Discuss special effects needs with the Director.) Makeup design sketches are helpful in determining how and where the colors should be applied. Use the "face" provided here or on the makeup form and color it with colored pencils, pastels or watercolors. Do not use markers, as makeup application is about blending, and markers cannot blend.

Give all makeup design sketches to the Documentation Team for their records.



IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

BLUSH A pressed powder in a red or pink color. Used to bring out a performer's cheekbones.

CHARACTERISTIC A trait unique to one person.

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the opening show, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

EYEBROW PENCIL Used to darken eyebrows.

EYELINER Used to outline the eyes.

EYE SHADOW Used to accent the eyes and make them appear larger. Usually only applied to female performers.

FOUNDATION The base or initial makeup which is applied to a character's face and neck.

LIPSTICK Used to accent the lips.

POWDER Used to set the makeup so it will not smear.

ROUGE A gel or liquid color for cheekbones. Can be used instead of blush, but very lightly.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

THEME The idea on which the opera is based.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Makeup and Supplies

A. Inventory

It is important to make a list of all your makeup so you know what is available and so items don't get lost. Put the inventory form in a safe place; you will need it again at strike.

B. Other Necessary Supplies

Aside from the basic makeup, there are certain other items you must have. They are listed below.

- paper towels
- bobby pins/barrettes/rubber bands
- tissues
- cold cream
- baby wipes
- facial soap
- cotton swabs
- several old towels
- old shirt or smock
- tablecloth
- table/chairs

MAKEUP FORM

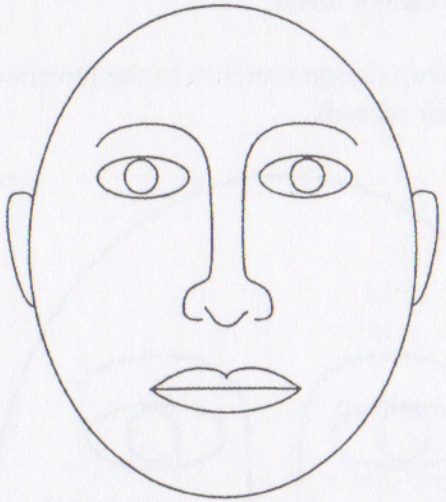
Performer's Name_____

Any Allergies? ☐Yes ☐No _____

Shape of face:_____ Eye color:_____

Skin color:_____ Hair color:_____

Eyebrow color:_____



Name of Character_____

Characteristics_____

Costume Description_____

FOR PRODUCTION

Foundation:_____ Eye liner:_____

Eyebrow pencil:_____ Blush:_____

Lipstick:_____ Special Effects:_____

3. Working with the Script

A. Getting Information from the Script

Read the script. Underline all references to facial features (if any) or any moments that you think will require special makeup effects (for instance, if a character had just been in a fight or an accident). Also, discuss the internal traits (characteristics) of each character with the Director.

Once you are familiar with the script, consider each character that is being portrayed and how makeup might enhance that character. Answer the following questions and fill out the form on the next page for each character. You may need to consult with the Costume Designers concerning costumes.

- What makeup should be used to help create the character?
- Are any special effects needed?
- Should any special colors be used?

Assignment #3
Watch a 1/2 hour television program. Follow one character carefully and take note of his or her makeup. How does the makeup change and in what way? What occurs in the story that requires this character to need alterations in their makeup? Bring your notes to the next meeting for discussion.

2. Getting Ready to Work

Assignment #1
From a magazine, select several pictures which clearly show people's faces. List the makeup they are wearing and describe it. Is there anything unusual about their makeup? What effect does their makeup convey? Bring your pictures and descriptions into class for discussion.

A. Working with Makeup

Be careful, considerate, polite and gentle when applying makeup on another person. Do not move quickly or suddenly, and make sure to tell the other person to "Close your eyes" or "Close your mouth" when working near those areas. Also, make sure to ask them *before you apply any makeup* if they have any allergies to it.

You will become familiar with handling the makeup by first putting it on your colleagues (other Makeup Artists). Vary what you do to achieve different "looks". Don't use a lot of makeup at one time; a little goes a long way.

B. Makeup Application

Follow these steps when applying stage makeup.

- Cover your work table with a table cloth.
- Lay out your materials neatly in a place where they can be reached quickly.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
- Pin back the Performer's hair with bobby pins.
- Cover the Performer's clothing with an old towel
- Dot the Performer's face with cold cream. (Do not go too near the eyes.) Spread the cold cream gently with your fingertips, then wipe it off with tissues, making sure to wipe the entire face (especially eyelids and around the nose and mouth). Leave a thin film of cold cream on the face (so it will be easier to clean the makeup off later).
- Select the appropriate color and apply the foundation. With a makeup sponge, put dots of foundation around the face, then spread it so the entire face is covered evenly. There should be no streaks or lighter/darker areas. This takes practice!
- Apply brown or black eyeliner under the eyes. Be very gentle and careful when working near the eyes!
- If applicable, apply eye shadow to the lids.
- Sketch the eyebrows with brown or black eyebrow pencil. Be careful not to make them too thick.
- Apply blush or rouge to the cheeks. The color should slant up from the cheek towards the tip of the ear.

Makeup Application, cont.

- Apply lipstick with a cotton swab.
- Apply powder to "set" the makeup.

C. Makeup Removal

Follow these steps when removing stage makeup.

- Wash your hands with soap and warm water.
- Pin back the Performer's hair with bobby pins.
- Cover the Performer's clothing with an old towel.
- Dot the Performer's face with cold cream. (Do not go too near the eyes.) Spread the cold cream gently with your fingertips — this will cause the foundation and other makeup to "melt". Wipe the makeup off with tissues.
- When you have removed as much of the makeup as possible, the Performer can remove the rest with a baby wipe or soap and warm water.

Assignment #2

Watch a science-fiction program on television. Choose two characters that are very different and describe what facial features were exaggerated to enhance that character's personality.

Create a character by coming up with five inner characteristics that describe him or her. Then create a design for makeup that emphasizes one of these traits. Share your design with your colleagues and see if they can guess which characteristic you have enhanced with makeup.

VOCAL PRODUCTION

The vocal production sequence is designed to help students understand, interpret and communicate ideas and emotions through musical performance. Using techniques which warm up the body and voice, develop breath control, and emphasize clarity of diction, the student learns to project his or her voice in an unforced, articulate, and pleasing manner.

Two components of vocal production are essential in this process; preparation (warm-up) of the body and vocal apparatus, and a sequential approach to learning the music. The text, rhythm, and melody are the three major characteristics of a song and should be taught independently before they are combined.

Students who are permitted to sing in any fashion or style during preparation cannot be expected to deliver an effective performance. A clear, consistent message concerning their breath, energy, intonation and diction must be made from start to finish.

OBJECTIVES

- To develop the confidence to speak or sing in public to the best of the performer's ability.
- To understand how the components of breathing (inhaling and exhaling) are important to vocal production.
- To realize that singing is an extension of speech.

- To be able to project a clear, well-produced vocal sound while delivering the dramatic message and inner feelings of the character.
- To understand how to use the entire body when projecting the voice.
- To speak and sing in a clear, audible manner while communicating feeling (projection).
- To develop the ability to pronounce consonants and vowels effectively (diction).
- To understand that there are musical pitches in the spoken word (inflection).
- To understand how to generate and use the energy, both physical and vocal, necessary for an effective performance (whether speaking, singing, moving, or dancing).

MATERIALS

A large, open room (auditorium, cleared classroom, gymnasium)

Piano

SEQUENCE: Warming Up

Teachers should be prepared to demonstrate the amount of physical and vocal energy necessary for performance effectiveness and should be familiar with musical elements such as rhythm, melody and harmony.

Prior to singing (or speaking) and as a daily routine, voices should be warmed up. All warm-ups should include four vital components: **Physical**, **Posture**, **Breathing**, and **Vocalizing.** As a general rule of thumb, in any given rehearsal a minimum of 10% of your time should be devoted to warming up.

I. Physical

Without a physical warm-up, the vocal exercises will not be successful. The energy and endurance needed for singing is far greater than the student realizes.

The following Body Warm-up Activities are also appropriate exercises for the entire company. Used on a regular basis, the exercises are a tool to unify the company while developing discipline and concentration. After an appropriate amount of time, students should be encouraged to lead these exercises.

All movement must be preceded by the instruction to breathe in unison.

Head Rolls: Gently roll the head from a relaxed downward position to the left and right—usually to a slow count of eight. Refrain from "snapping" the neck back and forth.

Purpose: To relax the head, neck and shoulders to allow for easier breathing.

Waist Bending: Slowly bend at the waist with the knees sligtly bent; slowly come up "one vertebrae at a time"; this can also be done while swinging the arms gently from left to right and slowly moving to the upright position.

Purpose: To relax the entire body.

Arm/Leg Shakes: Slowly shake, with a rippling sensation, from the shoulder or waist, each limb at a time.

Purpose: To relax the upper body.

Relaxation and Stretching: With the arms extended upwards, make a climbing motion with the hands.

Purpose: To stretch the upper body.

Shoulders: Roll the shoulders up, back, forwards, and around (in both directions). Each movement should be executed in groups of five.

Purpose: To relax and position the shoulders.

Jumping: Spring from the feet using the legs to jump.

Pupose: To properly prepare posture and a stance for breathing.

Body Yawns: (This exercise is not used daily but may be used periodically especially as a preparation before the performers go on stage). Students lie flat on their backs with arms and legs relaxed on the floor with ample room between them. Teacher instructs the students to "yawn" from various body parts (feet, ankles, knees, etc. up to their heads. An audible sigh should come from each student as s/he yawns.) As a culmination, the students "yawn" from their entire body.

Purpose: This exercise reinforces students' ability to focus/concentrate on relaxing isolated parts of the body.

ADVICE: Focus Position

The Focus Position is a useful exercise for concentration as well as for getting your students' attention throughout the vocal preparation and virtually all performance exercises. Whenever you say, "Focus!", the students should stand erect with neck and spine held upright and relaxed. Feet are slightly apart, arms at the sides, eyes straight ahead and focused on a point on the wall. In addition, students should be constantly reminded to "Breathe!" when speaking, singing or moving.

II. Posture

In order to properly align their vocal instruments, always check for the following in your students:

1. shoulders comfortably erect (raise the arms over the head and lower your arms leaving the chest in its upright position)
2. weight balanced equally on both feet
3. knees bent slightly
4. neck aligned with the spine (sense the neck sitting on top of the shoulders—not "in" the shoulders)
5. backside and pelvis aligned with the spine
6. rib cage lifted—not resting on the diaphragm

III. Breathing

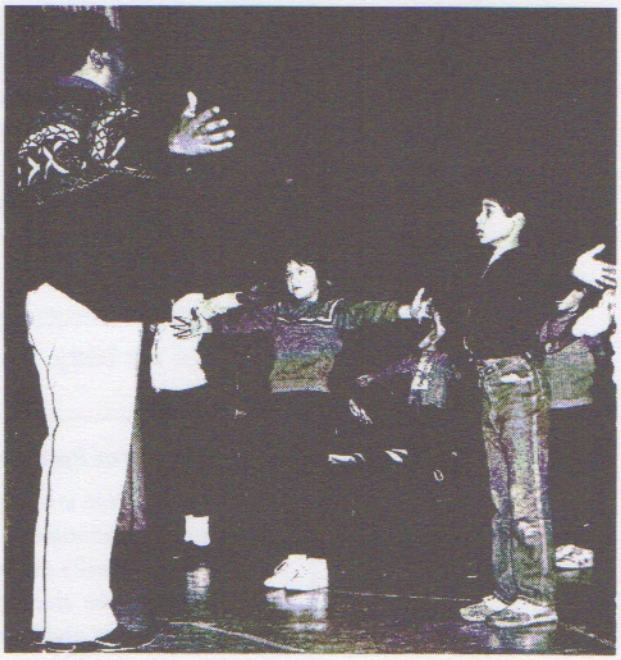
When one inhales, the diaphragm (the muscle which is directly below the rib cage) releases down, creating more space for air. The reverse of this is exhaling. Students should work towards using a "low breath" rather than a shallow one: the shoulders remain relaxed during inhalation, and expansion occurs just below the rib cage. As the air is released, the diaphragm moves up, helping the air flow out of the cavity. Do not collapse the chest cavity when exhaling and do not try to over expand.

Diaphragm/Circle Breath: Inhale, circling your arms in front of you and raising your arms above your head on four counts; Exhale, circling arms down to your sides on four counts. (During this exercise, the teacher can introduce vocal sounds - hissing "s", "ooh" and "ah" - during the exhalation.)

Purpose: To focus on the mechanism of breathing by understanding the role of the diaphragm.

Lying with backs on the floor: Relax on the floor with a book centered on the waist; check for breathing.

Purpose: Allows breathing to occur naturally.



The teacher participates with performers in the warming up process.

Bending: Bend over from the waist, letting arms and head hang. Breathe; gravity will allow the diaphragm to drop naturally.

Purpose: Frees tension in the neck, relaxes jaw, engages the diaphragm.

Exhaling through a small opening: Without puffing the cheeks, direct the air as fast as possible through a small opening (ideally, a hollow coffee stirrer)—this will give an example of how to exhale and use the breath to sustain a tone.

Purpose: Engages diaphragmatic muscle while exhaling.

Hissing: Using a "z" or "s" to exhale, sustain the sound as long as possible.

Purpose: Engages the abdominal region while exhaling.

Panting: Pant; watching for the correct movement in the abdominal region; take care not to dry out the voice with too much of this exercise.

Purpose: To strengthen and utilize the diaphragm.

Use of imagery in breathing:

1) Filling a glass with water—the water goes to the bottom of the glass, then fills to the top

2) Blowing up a balloon—the round space of the balloon fills evenly and in a controlled manner

Breathing Exercise: Have the students lie on the floor with ample space between them. Illustrate the use of the diaphragm by having the students breathe in and out. The diaphragm releases down when the air fills the abdominal cavity. The diaphragm releases up as the air leaves body (and supports the flow of sound.)

Purpose: To get a sense of the diaphragm and how it works.

4-count breathing: Breath in on four counts with lips puckered, and breath out on four counts. Hold your palm about six inches from your mouth, imagining that you're blowing on a small pin prick in your hand.

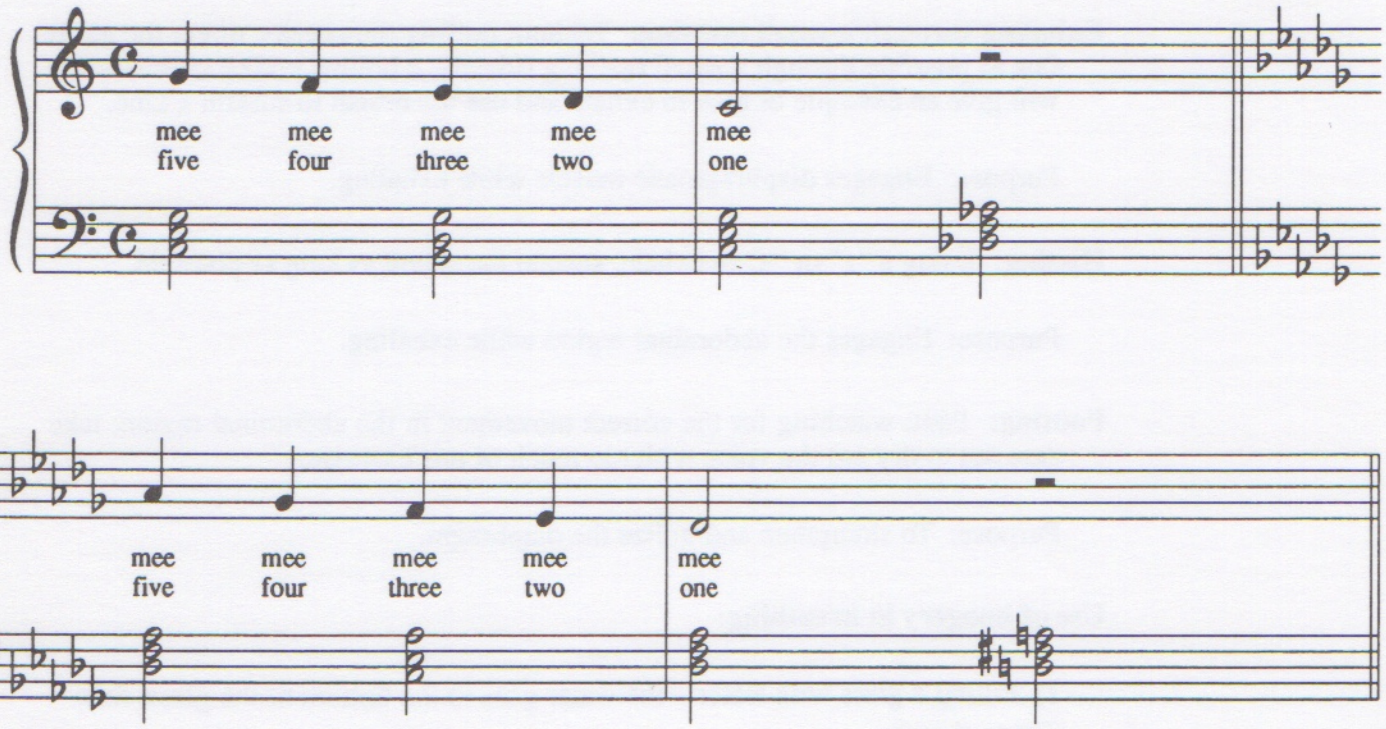
Purpose: To learn to sustain breath through the musical line.

IV. Vocalizing

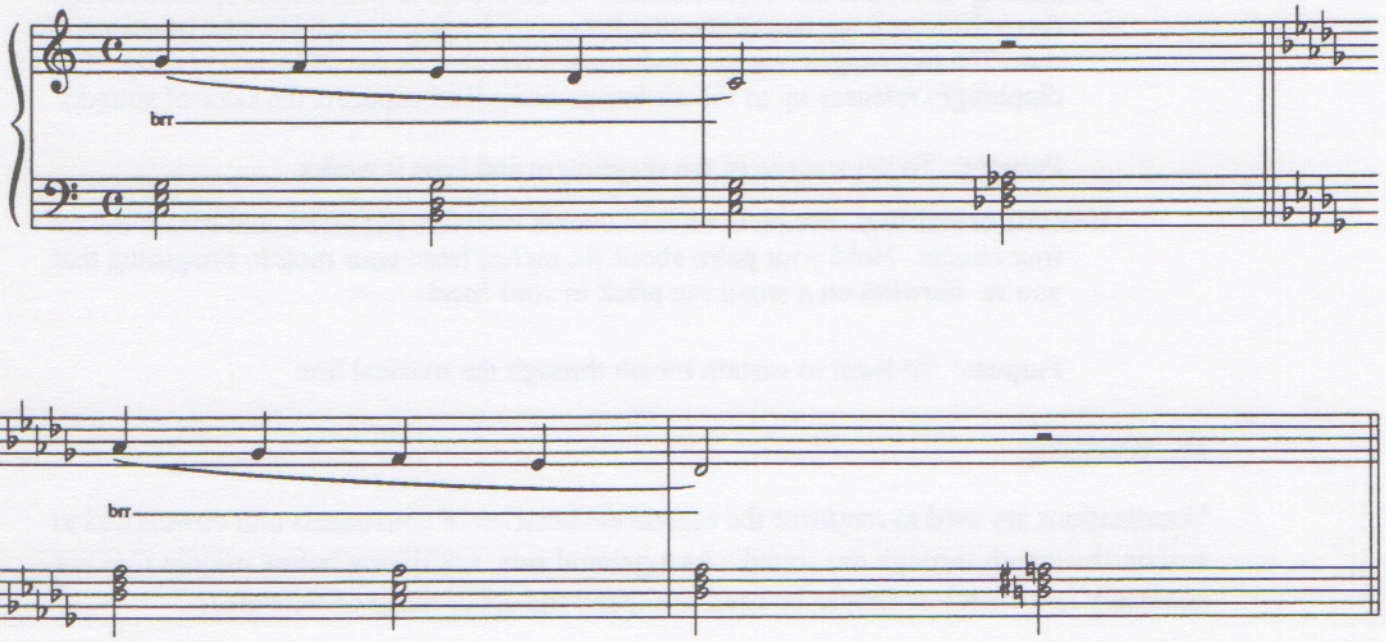
Vocalizations are used to reinforce the correct enunciation of consonants and vowels and to sustain the breath through the sound. As a general rule, vocalizing below middle C is not necessary and exercises should be used to expand the upper range of the voice.

Relaxed Vocal Exercises

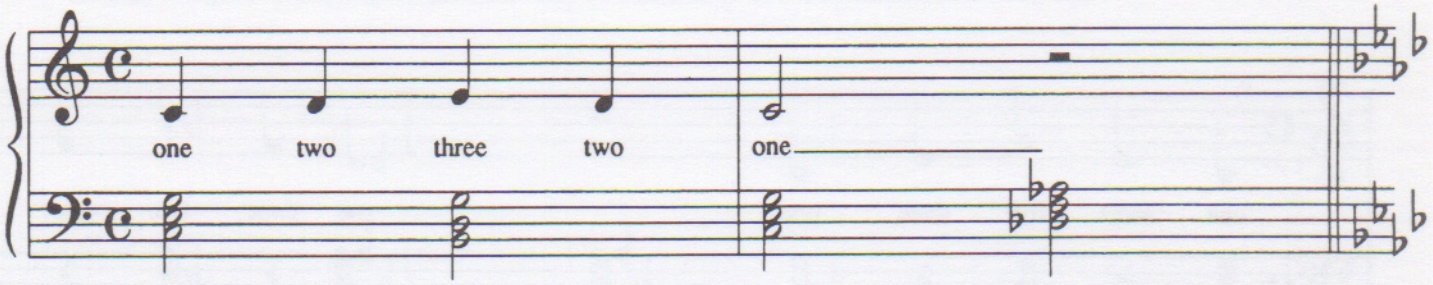
1. Five note descending scale
   - use warm consonants (m, n, ng)
   - use number for pitch matching

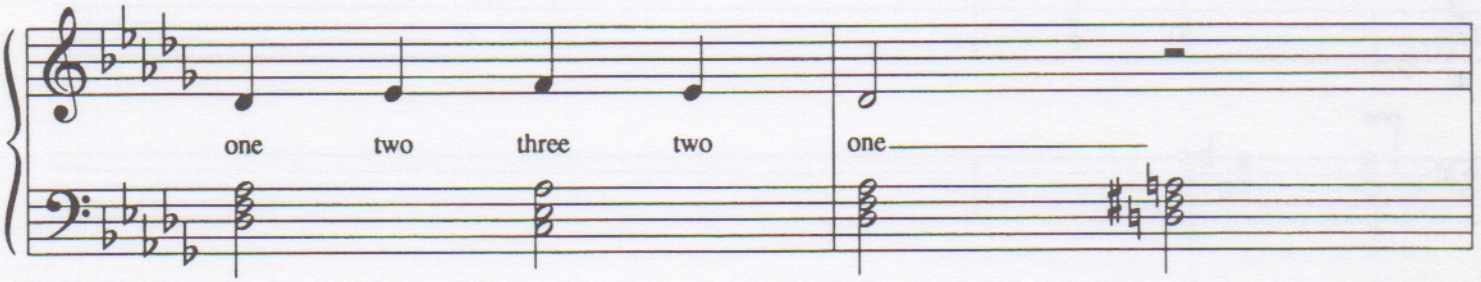


2. Lip trills
   - jaw must be relaxed and resonance set in the "eyes"

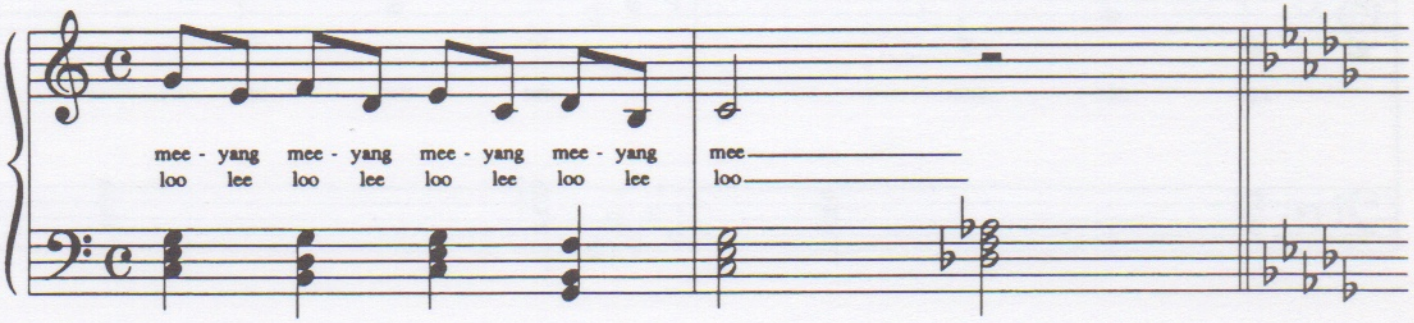


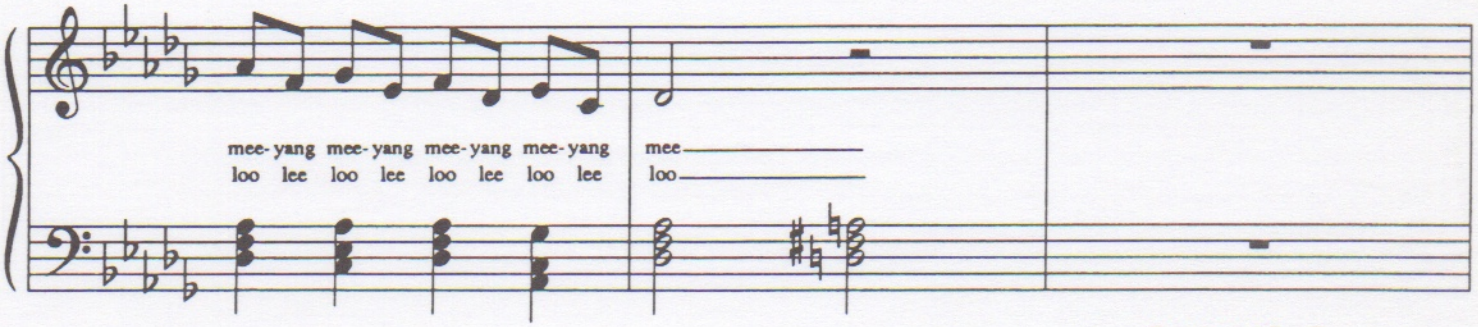
3. Three note ascending/descending scale
   - good for matching pitches (using numbers)





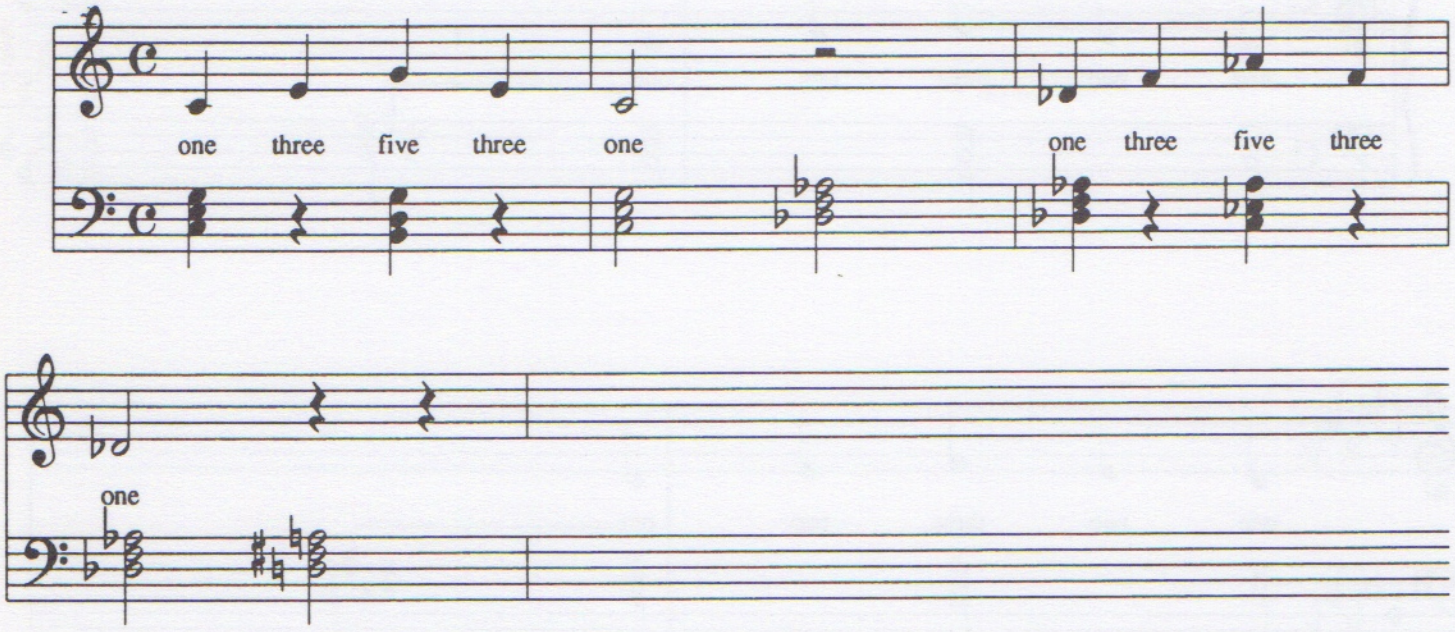
4. Loo-ee/mee-yang
   - emphasize the lips forward ("fishmouth") on the "oo" sound
   - emphasize "m" sound as well as relaxed jaw release on the "y"



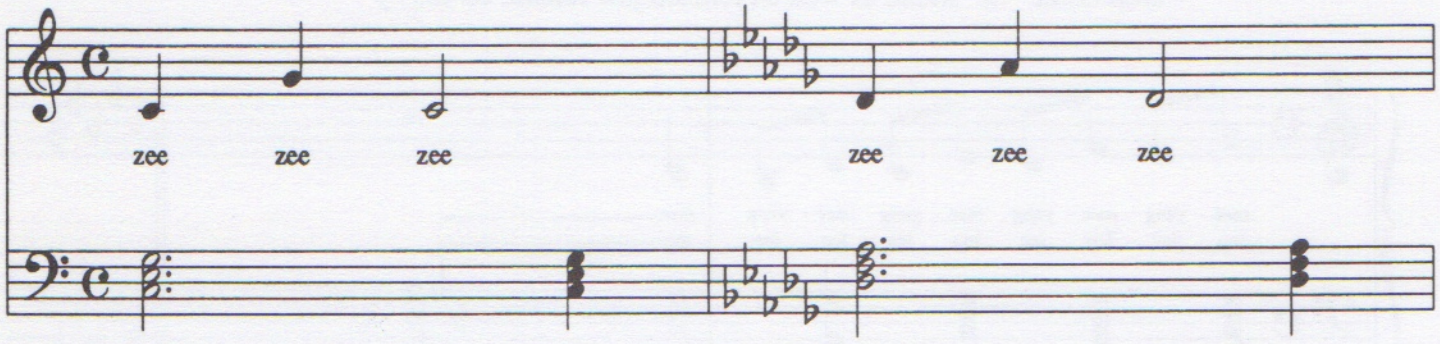


Agility

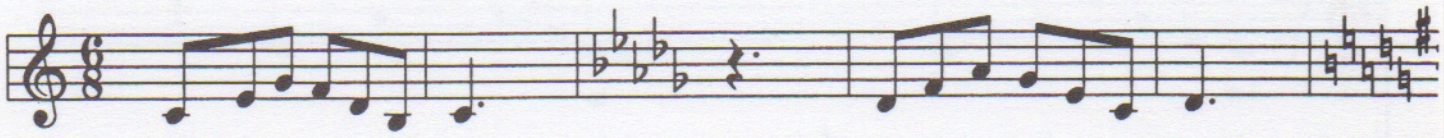
1. Ascending/descending triad
   - use active consonants (b, z, v) in order to activate diaphragm (bouncing the sound)



2. 1 - 5 - 1
   - good for accuracy and intonation

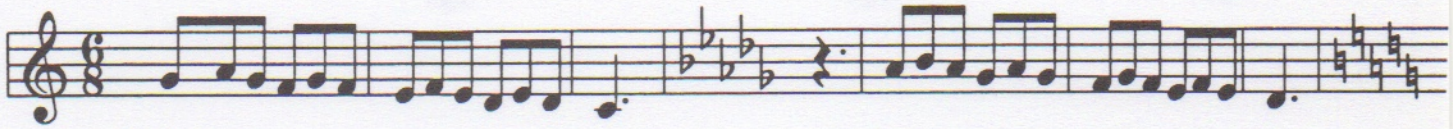


3. Melodic agility - triadic
   - "ng" supports lyric, legato sound
   - "y" releases back of tongue



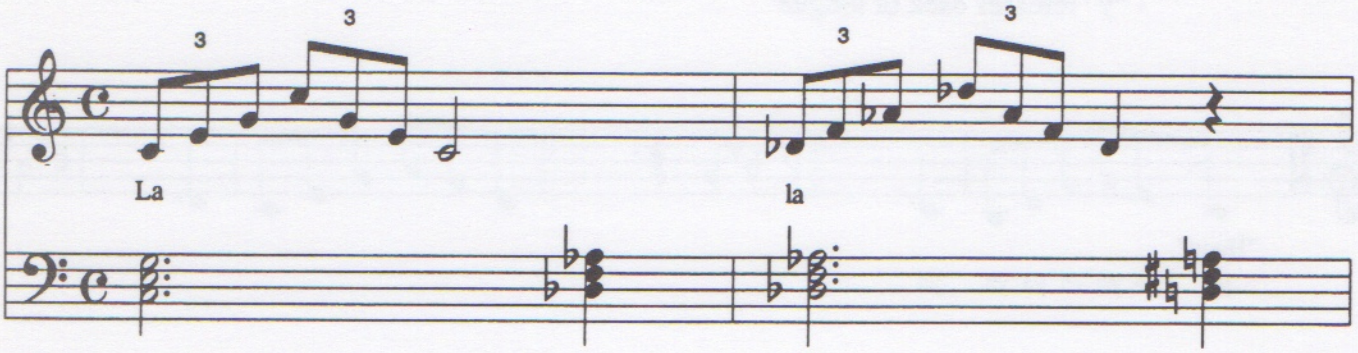
"Hung"
yo yo yo ya ya ya ya

4. Melodic agility - descending scale
   - emphasis on entire melodic line



"Hung"

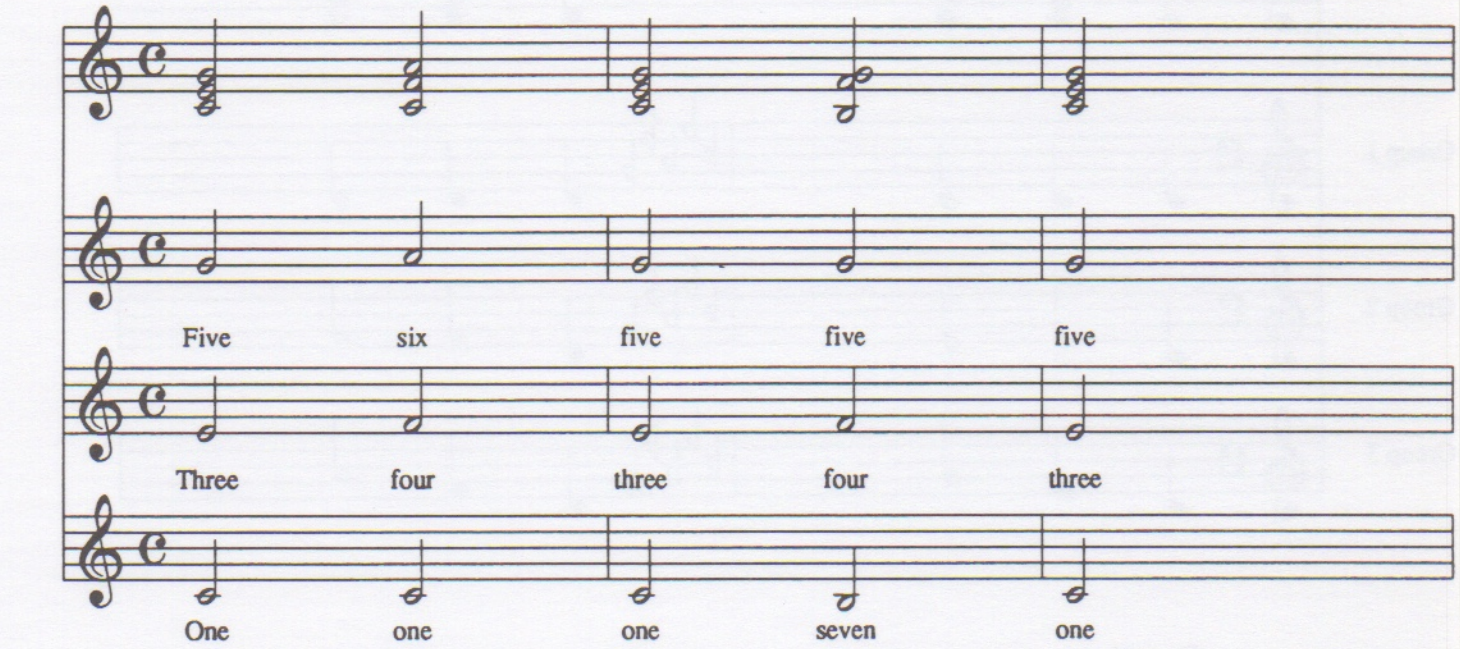
2. Arpeggios

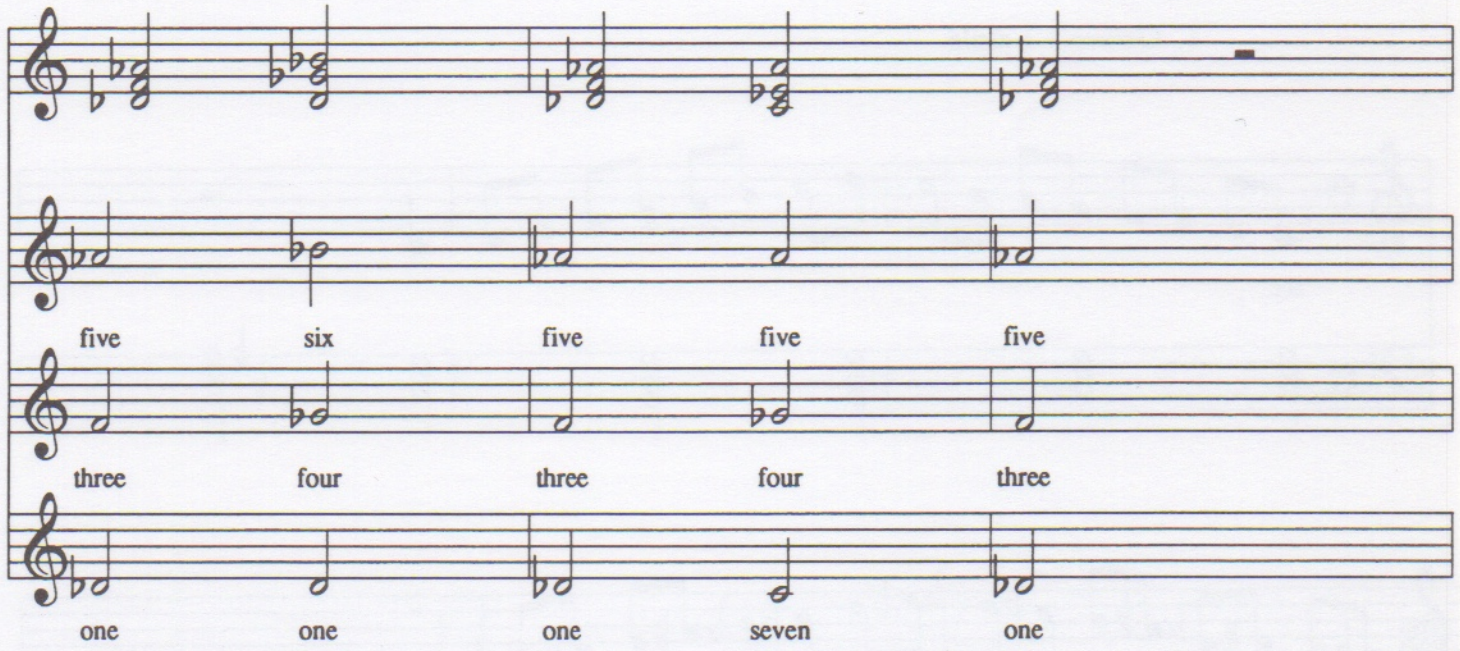


3. Sigh

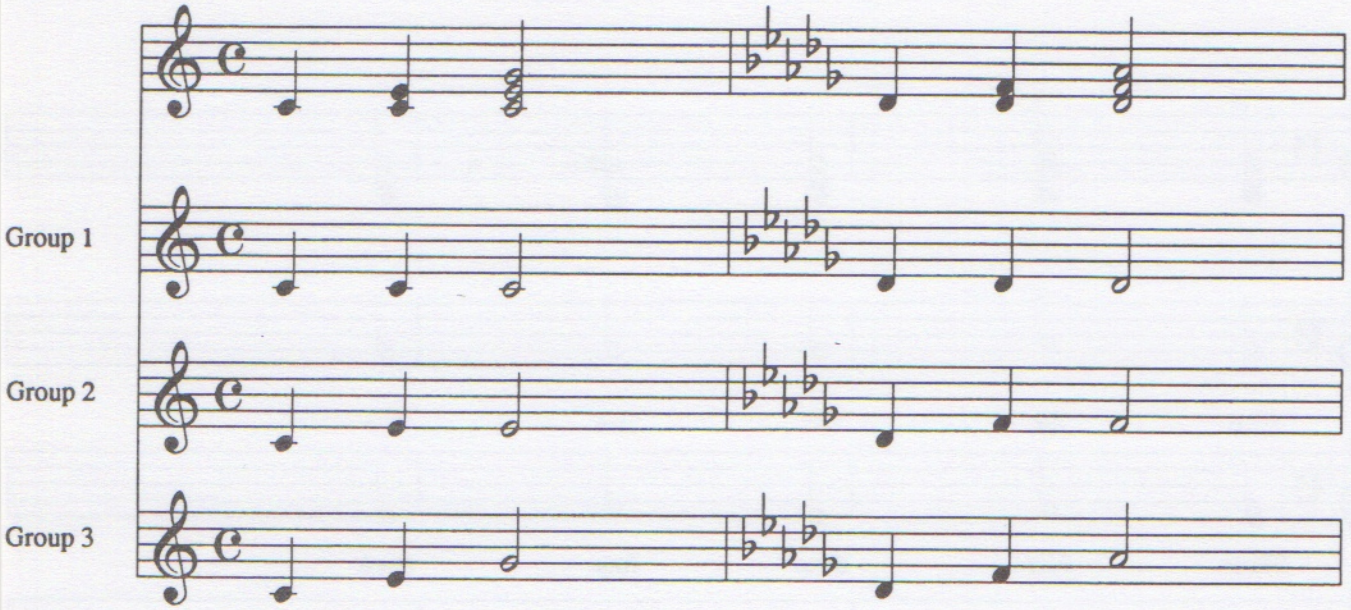
Harmonic Exercises

1. I IV I V I



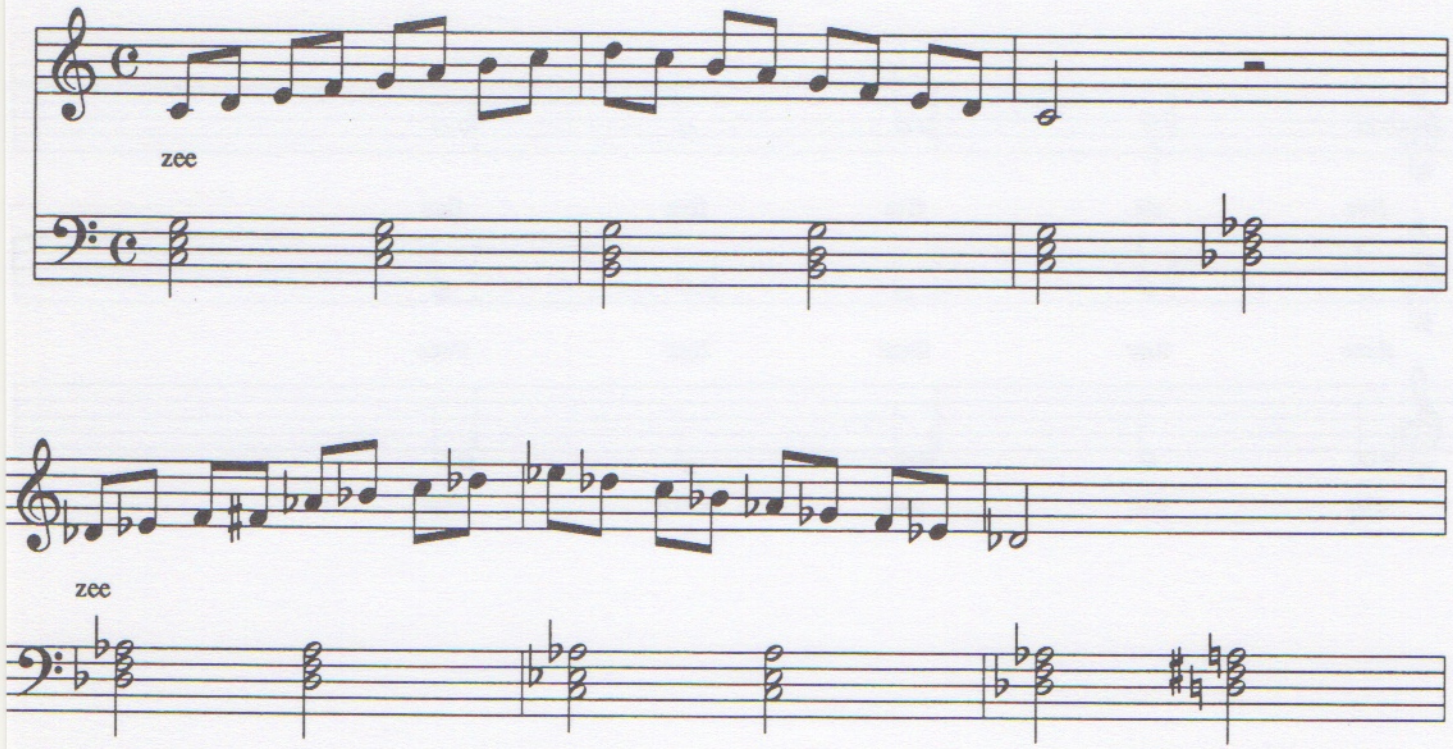


2. 1, 1/3, 1/3/5
   - to achieve balance in parts



Duration

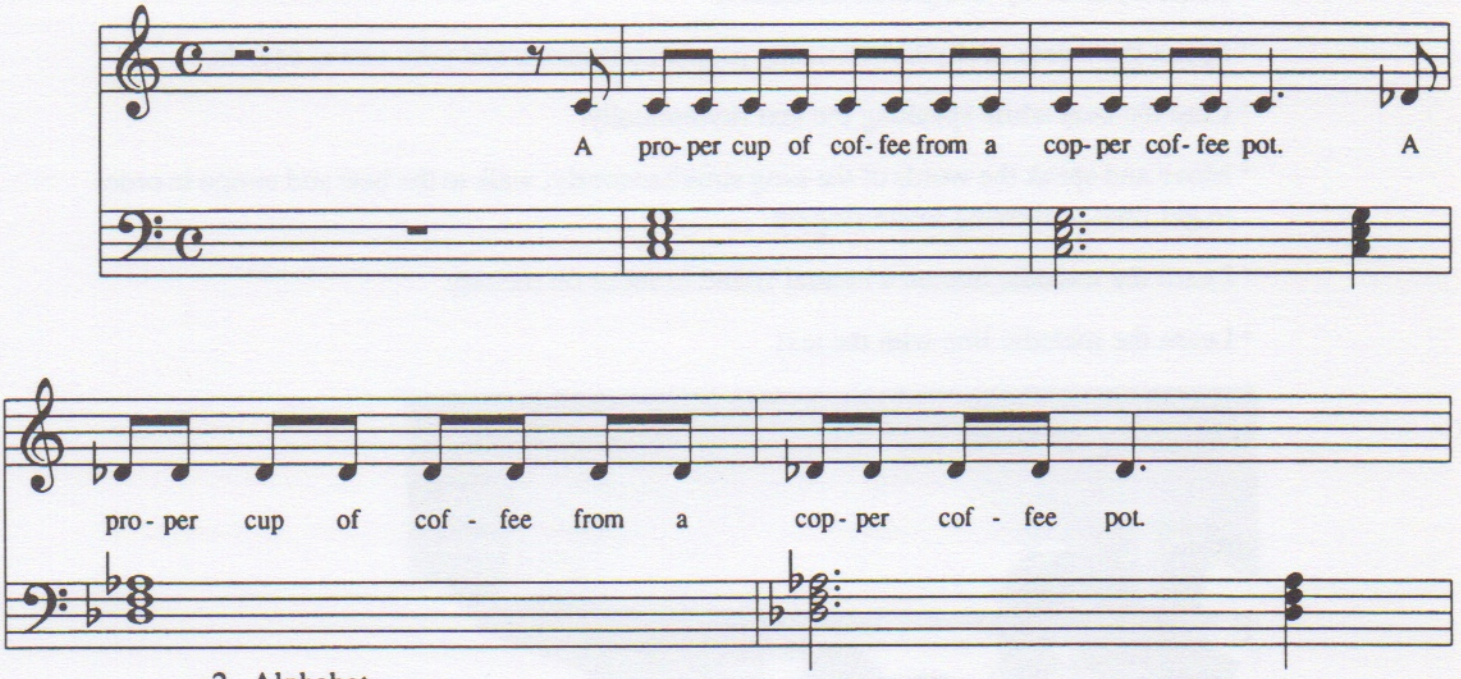
1. Octave + 1 scale



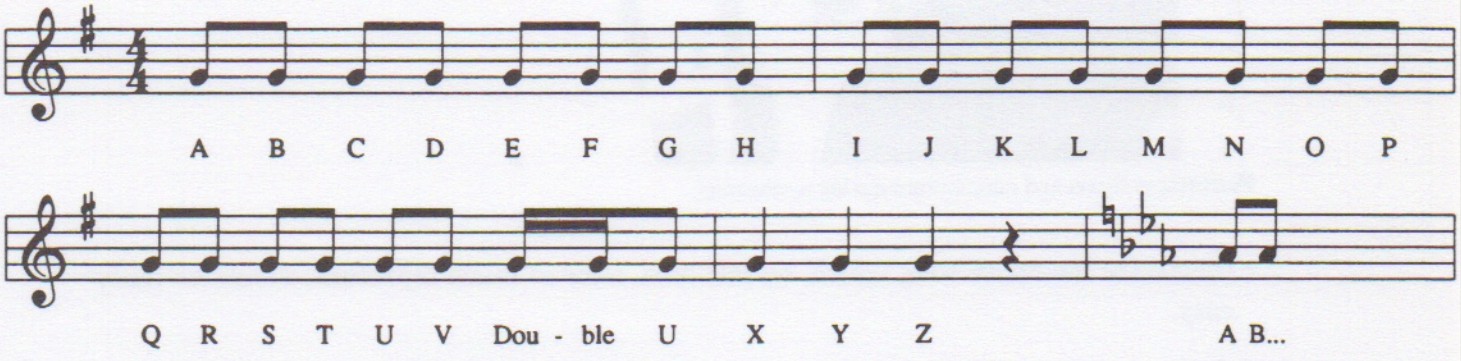
Diction

Often, the performer's response to "I can't understand you" is to chew the words. The jaw becomes overly involved and hinders the vocal line. The lips and tongue form the vowels and consonants.

1. Coffee Pot



2. Alphabet



SEQUENCE: Teaching the Song

- Develop other warm-up activities that relate to the music the students will eventually rehearse. This is a good way to learn tricky rhythms, and difficult melodic lines.
- Discuss the meaning of the song. Talk about how the song fits into the entire script, its purpose, and why it is placed where it is.
- Speak the words in rhythm, stressing proper consonants and pure vowel sounds.
- Clap the beat while speaking the text rhythmically.
- Move and speak the words of the song simultaneously; walk to the beat and tempo in order to get used to moving while singing.
- Learn the melodic line on a neutral sound to focus on melody.
- Learn the melodic line with the text.

Performers focus and concentrate during a rehearsal.

- Memorize the entire song which, by this time, after so much repetition, should be fairly easy.
- Through the above steps, move towards performance effectiveness, especially sub-text.
- Utilize what was learned in the warm-up projection activities when learning the lyrics and melody of a song. Reinforce how much energy is needed and volume necessary for the performers to be heard from the stage. Reinforce use of consonsants, breathing, and subtext.
- Students can benefit from using an audio cassette with the music recorded on it, accompanied by the sheet music (the text and the musical notation). The cassette should include (a) the melodic line only; (b) all the vocal parts; (c) the vocal parts with the accompaniment, and (d) the accompaniment only. It does not matter whether or not the students can read music; the sheet is an excellent visual aide when used with the cassette and will help the

performers learn more about the shape of a song. With these tools, students will be able to work on their own and supplement what they have learned in rehearsal.

- Be aware that too often students equate volume with energy. As a result, they may tend to scream or "belt" rather than sing with energy and focus.
- Use your hands in rehearsal to reinforce the rhythms and pitches; don't just conduct a beat.
- Always stop if the students haven't taken a preparatory breath. You, as teacher, must breathe with them constantly.
- Make sure that the students know their subtext when they are singing as well as when there are rests during the musical moments.
- As musical director, make sure that you comment on technique, rests, enunciation, etc. throughout the learning process. These techniques require constant reinforcement.

TERMINOLOGY

Aria: A song written for one voice.

Articulation: The speech, precision and force of action in forming consonants.

Belting: Chest resonance carried into the upper part of the voice; this is an unhealthy sound.

Chest Resonance: The deepest resonance; the chest cavity is activated in in singing. When this is carried too high it becomes belting.

Diaphragm: The muscular membrane that coordinates with the rib cage to create vocal sounds. Its action is believed to be the principal function in singing.

Diction: The proper enunciation of consonants and vowels.

Duet: Music written for two voices.

Ensemble: The name given to a musical group that sings or plays together.

Enunciation: To pronounce in an articulate manner.

Exhale: Breathing out; the diaphragm releases up because air leaves the body.

Focus Position: Student stands erect with neck and spine held upright and relaxed. Feet are slightly apart, arms at side, eyes straight ahead and focused on a point on the wall.

Harmony: The musical accompaniment to melody, conceived vertically.

Head Resonance: Highest resonance where most overtones are produced.

Inhale: Breathing in; the diaphragm releases down because of air flow into the body.

Interlude: Instrumental music heard within (or between) the acts or scenes of an opera.

Melody: A succession of musical tones having pitch and duration, usually conceived horizontally rather than vertically. Melody can be unaccompanied or accompanied.

Overture: The music heard before the performance begins.

Pitch: How high or low a note is.

Projection: To speak and sing in a clear and audible manner while communicating feeling.

Rhythm: The pattern of strong and weak accents and accent groupings in musical lines.

Vocal range: The distance between the lowest to highest notes comfortably sung by an individual.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Express themselves and communicate through music.

— Become aware of the effects and potential of voice and body.

— Practice enunciation, diction and articulation.

— Become aware of proper breathing.

— Understand the relationship between the voice and breathing.

— Develop their abilities for concentration and relaxation.

— Learn poetic speech.

— Analyze lyrical language.

— Integrate movement and speech.

— Gain self-confidence.

— Improve self-esteem.

STAGE DIRECTION

In the Met's approach to creating original music theater pieces in schools, stage and musical direction are generally the responsibility of a team of two people—a classroom teacher and a music teacher. While the two teachers collaborate on the musical aspects of the process, the stage director's role is to supervise and coordinate the various components of the project by working with writers, performers, set designers, electricians, and managers. In short, the director provides a unifying vision for the piece, a framework within which the action will take place. The chief responsibility of the stage director is to devise simple but interesting way to transform the students' script into a lively stage performance. The primary focus should be on the actors to insure that their performances are believable, and the director should keep in mind that no matter how effective the framework, when the performers are not convincing, the show will not work.

The single most important rule the director must convey to novice actors is to stay in character no matter what. Throughout the staging/blocking process, the teacher acts as an extremely critical audience for the students. While they are learning their lines, make sure it is possible to hear the characters in their voices and see the characters on their faces. If you encourage the performers to inhabit their roles and allow their characters to inhabit them, the students will invent and develop distinctive backgrounds and relationships to other characters that will help them maintain their stage presence.

The crossover allows for a scene change without interrupting the flow of the work.

When you are ready to stage the dialogue, the song, or the action in a particular scene, try to work out most of the moves in advance and keep the blocking to a minimum, avoiding elaborate or intricate patterns which will interfere with concentration on line delivery and character portrayal. Basically, you need to make sure that the actors do not run into each other and that they know the exact timing and location of their entrances and exits. As the students become more secure with the blocking, encourage them to "flesh out" their character portrayals by developing appropriate vocal and physical acting techniques.

It is important to remember that the students must stay in character whenever they are on stage, whether or not they are speaking a line, singing a song, or doing a dance. Their thoughts or emotional subtext should be seen in their eyes, which must not go blank, wander out into the audience or rivet on the director; their bodies should reflect their character's reaction to what is going on, and must be able to respond to the unexpected (missed cues, delayed entrances, missing props, dropped lines) the way the character would under the circumstances. During rehearsals there will be many occasions when things do not go as planned, and you will have ample opportunity to reinforce the "stay in character" lesson before the final performances. The director will work with a student stage manager, who will supervise the actors, organize props, and keep a detailed record of blocking, scene changes, and lighting cues. Strong collaboration with the stage manager is essential for an effective production.

OBJECTIVES: Director

- To understand the components basic to effective staging, singing, acting and dancing (e.g. subtext, blocking, etc.)
- To understand the director's contribution to the effective performance of a work.
- To communicate the information, skills and techniques necessary for effective staging, singing, acting and dancing.
- To make the necessary adjustments to the project in order to produce an effective performance of the work.
- To create a professional atmosphere and supportive environment so that a group of individuals becomes a performing ensemble.
- To communicate feeling and to inspire students to perform in ways they never could have imagined.
- To be objective about the believability of the work.
- To learn and use relevant stage terminology.

OBJECTIVES: Performers

- To understand the components basic to effective staging, singing, acting and dancing.
- To understand the director's contribution to the effective performance of a work.
- To have an understanding of character.
- To conduct oneself in a professional manner and work in an ensemble.
- To maintain character throughout the performance, dramatically and musically.
- To be able to make an effective and meaningful transition between dialogue and song.
- To develop skills for stage speech, singing, and movement.

- To learn to notate blocking.
- To become familiar with common stage terminology.

OBJECTIVES: Stage Managers

- To compile a complete record of the production method and sequence.
- To carry out unsupervised tasks (maintaining callboard, supervising performers, managing rehearsals, etc.).
- To learn to notate blocking.
- To learn to call cues.
- To become familiar with common stage terminology.
- To learn to supervise peers.
- To delegate responsibilities.
- To develop initiative.
- To improve organizational skills.

MATERIALS

3-ring binder
script
pens and pencils
notebook
watch

SEQUENCE: Performers

The role of the performer is to bring the script to life. Each performer's goal should be to integrate the elements of voice and stage into performance.

Since this opera is an original work, the characters are being created on the stage for the first time. This may be one of the biggest challenges facing the performers.

As the director, you should constantly ask yourself, "are the performers in character?"

Everything stems from that one question. Do the performers know who they are (background and relationships)? Do they know what their character is thinking (subtext)? Are they actually considering that subtext when they are acting—can you see it in their eyes? When singing, do they know to whom they are directing their attention? From the time they begin reading their script in a circle, do not allow the performers to drop out of character.

For the student performer, the goal will be to focus, concentrate, and project. They will realize that it takes hard work to develop and portray the qualities of a believable character and bring it to life; they will also reap the rewards of well-earned pride and satisfaction when they have performed successfully.

I. Warm-up and trust exercises

A) Relaxation

Description: Students lie on their backs on the floor with their eyes closed. They go through the exercise relaxing each part of their body from head to toe under the direction of the teacher. As part of this exercise, students try to estimate the length of a two-minute time lapse and raise their hands when they think two minutes have passed.

Purpose:

- To clear the students' minds and create a separation between school and rehearsal.
- To create an awareness of physical rest.

B) Eyes:

Description: Two people face each other, knees touching and holding hands, and look into each other's eyes (not staring). this exercise should last thirty seconds and grow to two minutes.

Purpose:

- To prepare students for looking at each other on stage.

C) Amoeba

Description: One person stands in the middle and everyone else stands closely around him so that their bodies touch. In order to do this exercise, arms must wrap around others' waists, necks, shoulders, etc. With everyone's eyes closed, the teacher touches the person in the center, who then moves in a direction that the whole amoeba must follow.

Purpose:

- To increase students' comfort with close physical contact on stage.

D) Lift

Description: The group lifts one person in a supine position into the air high above their heads. This exercise is repeated with each student lifted, one at a time. The teacher acts as the "safety person" and stands at and then under the lifted student's waist.

Purpose:

- To develop ensemble support and trust on stage.

II. "Talk about self" exercise

Description: Each student talks about her or himself in front of the rest of the group. The group may ask questions; two questions could be "what do you like about yourself?" of "what do you dislike about yourself?"

Purpose:

- To get students to reveal something about themselves and to develop a close-knit performing group.

III. Developing subtext

Come up with simple phrases, such as "oh, how are you", "where are you going?", or "I've never seen anything like this"; then provide a variety of settings and situations in which the line can be used.

IV. One line entrance exercises

Give each performer one or two lines that clearly express an emotion (e.g. "I'm so angry I could scream!") The performer should:

- Walk through blocking (off stage-on stage)
- Rehearse blocking with line
- Perform line with entrance

Look for:

- energy
- breathing
- physical believability

Ask performer:

- to whom is the character speaking
- from where is the character coming
- what is the key emotion (subtext)

V. Monologue acting exercise

Description: Create a one-minute scene for one speaking part. Develop the background of the character, determine the location of the scene, create the scene and write the words that the character speaks. Develop the subtext, memorize and include one vocal and one physical attribute for the character created. Continue to practice.

Purpose:

- To become acquainted with performance pressure.
- To understand the purpose of production.
- To understand the purpose of subtext and its relation to character.
- To integrate unfamiliar vocal and physical characteristics not normally associated with the individual.

> **ADVICE:**
> *Be sure the performers project their speaking and singing voices. Always make sure the students do not break character and do not proceed until they do it correctly. This may mean that you have to stop and start the same phrase a dozen times. The process gets easier as you go on and the students will come to understand your expectations and the performance standards you have set.*

VI. Develop clear diction

Place the performers around the perimeter of the performance hall and have them run through their lines. Students will quickly learn that slow, clear diction—not volume—will carry their lines across a room. (Hint: Bring in the writers to sit in the center of this exercise; get their opinion concerning clarity and believability.)

VII. Speed Blocking

Have performers walk through their blocking as fast as possible before a rehearsal with text. This will reinforce the blocking as well as focus their attentions on the rehearsal.

VIII. Dialogue Effectiveness

In a circle, have performers read through the script while throwing a ball to the person who speaks next. This will force performers to look at each other when speaking and will infuse the lines with energy.

IX. Enforcing Believability

When the dialogue is not believable, bring the students back to a sitting circle, making sure they emphasize their vocal and facial expressions.

SEQUENCE: Director

I. Read-through for actors

- Read the script and forget about your role as an editor: you are now the director, re-envisioning the story. Make essential interpretive notes about individual character traits, relationship, use of the voice and the basic moves (upstage, downstage, crosses, sitting, standing) the actors will possibly make on the stage.
- Cast the opera.
- Hand out scripts, assign parts.

- Read through with the actors. Check for diction, comprehension, breathing and energy.

- Assign "prep work" to the cast by having each actor invent a background or history of his own character and an explanation of his relationship to every other character. This information should first be written down and then shared verbally with the cast, who sit in a circle for this exercise. Interview them using the characters' names and "you"; encourage them to respond in the first person.

Before the performers rehearse on stage, it is essential that their background characterization and vocal inflections are fully developed here.

- Sitting in a circle again, have the cast read through the scene using facial and vocal expression. Ask the actors to share their interpretation and subtext while you ensure vocal believability. If you close your eyes and find that you don't believe what you're hearing, tell them and do not continue until you are satisfied. Check to make sure that the rest of the cast is reacting to whoever is speaking.

- Once the script is memorized, a third read-through from memory is advisable (try having the actors close their eyes).

- Once the dialogue is believable, then blocking can begin.

II. Blocking process

- Take each scene one at a time and not necessarily in order. Don't do more than one scene in any single session since the actors need time to digest and internalize what they have done.

- Read through the scene and try to visualize it.

Stage Manager Responsibilities:

- Schedule the necessary room(s) for daily rehearsals after meeting with the director.
- Prior to each rehearsal, ensure that the room is open, clean, and that the lights are working.
- Performers should arrive at rehearsals on time.

- Make a rough sketch which indicates the layout of the setting. Place the essential set pieces on the stage in such a way as to open up the scene and guide or delimit the action.

- Decide on the location of entrances and exits.

- When plotting the blocking, think of using all the dimensions of the stage, width as well as depth. Do not think in a linear fashion, and do not bother to deal with the details of every movement since they will emerge during rehearsal.

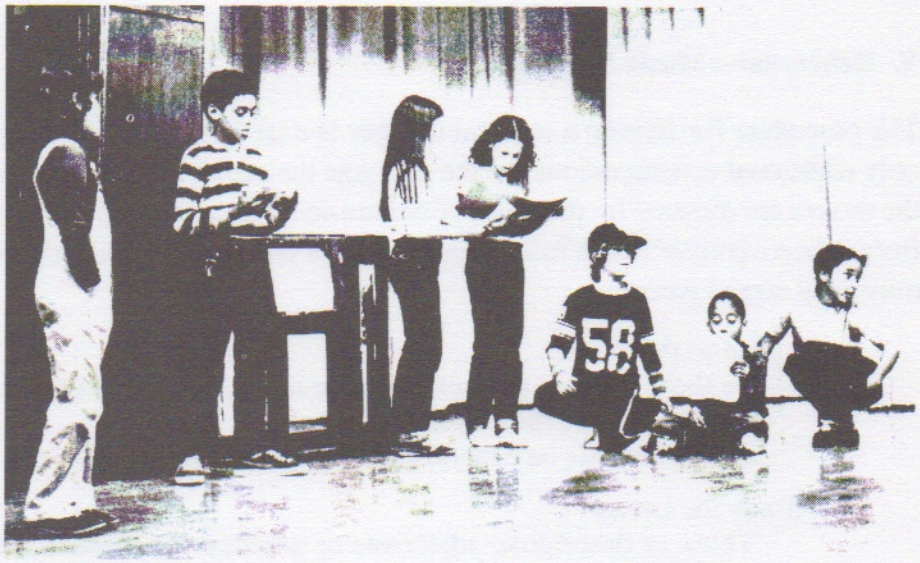
- What moves are inevitable or vital for each character? Remember, blocking is only a frame; it is not the substance of your staging. Impose no gestures on the actors; encourage them to come up with their own.

> **ADVICE: Planning Blocking**
>
> *As you work our your basic blocking, and later on during rehearsals, think about the "traffic patterns" or choreography of the stage movement you are designing. The moves should be simple, especially if a large number of people are on stage, and exits and entrances should be kept to their essential minimum.*

- As a rule of thumb, make sure there are at least three blocking moves per page.

- Make sure there are no perpendicular or parallel lines.

- In order to avoid the artificiality of a character who stands four-square facing the audience, ask the actor to "cheat"—stage (or sit) at an angle—so that it appears he is talking or singing to the appropriate person on stage, not directly to the audience. It is generally good staging practice to position the actor being spoken or sung to slightly downstage and to either side of the actor who is speaking or singing. In a duet, both actors can cheat. Cheating works for the audience both visually and acoustically.



- Do not have the actors face upstage or into the wings to deliver their lines unless the stage action specifically calls for it or the actor has a particularly strong and penetrating voice. Remember that one of the most frequent problems in student productions is the audience's inability to hear and understand the spoken or sung words, so monitor your staging accordingly.

- Decide on props and mark them on your sketch. What props are vital (mentioned in the text) and what additional props would help illuminate the character or scene? Again, don't overdo it. Props rarely solve staging or acting problems.

III. Rough blocking with cast

- Seat the cast in front of the performing area with pencils and script in hand. Show them the blocking by walking through it while each member copies his or her character's moves onto the script.
- Have the cast walk through the blocking with script in hand. Do not have them act. If something does not work, change it and write it down. At this point do not be concerned with the acting; have the actors go through their moves quickly.
- For this process to be effective, the cast must know their lines by heart and not be encumbered by the script.

IV. Rehearsal—Staging

- Start introducing props
- Encourage the actors to add to and "flesh out" their roles during rehearsal. Give the actors assignments to add a new element to their characterization.
- Come up with a question which motivates an actor's choice.

Stage Manager Responsibilities:

- Read and study the script.
- Put a prompt book (the master copy of the script with all notes, blocking and electrics cues in it) together and periodically update it (See Section 14-9).
- After studying the script and discussing it with the director, begin obtaining the props for the production (in conjuction with the assistant stage manager).

V. Rehearsal—Music Staging

The procedure for staging a musical number is exactly the same as staging dialogue. The only additional considerations are the message the actual music is communicating and that the moves are dictated by the pulse of the music. Music staging is a very different concept from "choreography". The following guidelines will benefit you in developing an effective musically staged piece.

- Listen to the Music
  - are there musical devices available to be used in the staging?
  - can the song be divided into sections?
  - make a cassette tape that contains the complete song as well as the solo melody.
- Study the Lyrics
  - Think of descriptive adjectives to describe the music's mood and emotional environment
- Note useful text that is descriptive and evocative

- Determine the setting and list elements that can be used in the song (props, scenery)
- Once you have determined the staging, ensure your ability to demonstrate your staging in an clear and precise manner
- Determine effective techniques that will allow a smooth transition between dialogue and singing

> **ADVICE:**
>
> *Very often, an introduction of a song can be extended in order to underscore the dialogue leading into a musical moment - this will alleviate the awkwardness of staging an introduction in which students concern themselves not with their character but rather their own preparation to sing.*

VI. Run-through

- Run through each scene at least once during a session. Do not attempt more than one scene during a session since the actors need time to absorb the shape of the scene.
- Do not allow the actors to break character during a run-through. If they do, start over again.
- Think about the nuts and bolts: Can everyone be heard? Do they look believable or awkward? Can you see everything? Are actors breaking character? Is there a teacher on stage?

> **Stage Manager Responsibilities:**
> - Make sure that the stage area is clean and sets/props are preset correctly for rehearsals and performances.
> - Ensure that the performers are in their proper places during rehearsals and performances.

- Distance yourself from the run-though to encourage independence.

Providing an example, the stage director helps the performers refine and flesh out their character.

VII. Production/Technical

- Make final decisions about the props. Make adjustments and replacements, or cut them as necessary. Develop a prop plot.
- Determine the lighting cues. First think about simple but adequate illumination, then think about color, and finally consider intensity.
- Work out the lighting cues with the stage manager and electricians.
- Do a cue-to-cue rehearsal of each scene and continue until the entire script has been run with lights.

VIII. Final Rehearsals

- Make sure you schedule a full technical rehearsal and two dress rehearsals, the last of which must be without any stops. Neither the stage director nor the actors may stop the final dress rehearsal for any reason whatsoever. This forces the entire company to realize the importance of concentration and prepares them for the reality of performance conditions. Do not allow the cast to "mark" or walk through the dress rehearsals. If they are not perspiring by the end of a rehearsal, you will know that they did not invest the energy and concentration necessary to produce a good performance.

IX. Staging Introductions and Final Bows

- It is the responsibility of the Production Manager to open the performance with a memorized speech to the audience. The Production Manager is responsible for starting the performance - **not anyone else.** Final bows are announced by the Production Manager and include bows for all company members. Students can be acknowledged by job category or by name—it must be consistent, however.

X. Director's Responsibilities During Performance

PRE-PERFORMANCE

- no audience in house until all cast members are backstage
- open house 20 minutes before curtain
- no crossing stage, peeking through curtains, offstage noise, entering on stage while house is open
- no running on stage or in house
- warm-up after makeup and costume (1/2 hour before curtain—not in front of audience)

The stage manager is in charge of the stage and calls the cues during the performance.

- no audience member should see a performer in makeup and costume prior to performance
- monitor performance energy level — "cool down" hyper group with 3 minute guessing game, breathing and physical exercises, disciplined warmups (behind curtain or other room)
- backstage pep talk: choose 3 keywords to emphasize
- give company show
- "break a leg"—places quietly
- alert PM to your location, but stay out of sight
- give PM ok to go for opening speech
- if no curtain, performers enter in blackout or in character (after PM speech)

PERFORMANCE

- sit; stage manager is now in charge

POST- PERFORMANCE

- give notes on the believability, effectiveness, and energy level of the performance; balance positive with critical suggestions, and remember that no performance will be perfect.
- ask them what they think
- immediately afterwards or next day, run parts if necessary
- performers may not leave until out of makeup and costume and excused by the SM
- production crew may not leave until they have been excused by the PM (anything that can not be left on stage or can walk need to be secured; power cables unplugged, makeup area cleaned, costumes reorganized)

Stage Manager Responsibilities:

- Call electrical cues to the electricians and curtain cues for rehearsals and performances.
- Release the performance cast after the performance, making sure that their constumes are put away properly.
- Make sure that the sets and props are put away and that the stage area is clean after performances.

XI. Suggested Rehearsal sequence for week prior to performance:

- First Run Through
- Run with props and crucial costume pieces
- Dry Tech - lights and scene changes, no cast
- Tech with cast - include costumes
- Tech run
- Dress and Tech Rehearsal - include makeup and final bows
- Final Run
- Open Dress Rehearsal - for very young audience
- Opening Performance

TERMINOLOGY

Blocking: A rough plan of each character's position and movement on stage.

Callboard: An announcement board, centrally located, used by company members to check the times and locations of meetings and rehearsals. Can include any other information related to the production.

Cue sequence: A series of verbal signals which serve as warnings to performers or technicians that certain events are about to occur. A cue sequence for lights, curtain, entrances, etc. is called in the following order:

"Warning": Usually issued a couple of minutes before the action will occur.

"Standby": Called about 30 seconds before the final cue; tells the person(s) to get ready.

"Go": Means "start" and is called about one second before the action or event called for is actually seen or heard. (Example: "warning" electrics cue 2 "standby" electrics cue 2 Electrics cue 2 "go".)

Diction: Pronunciation and enunciation which allow speech to be clearly heard and understood.

Layout: Where the set pieces and props are located on the stage.

Preset: The location of the props, actor and set before the curtain goes up or the action begins.

Prop: any item used by an actor.

Prop plot: A diagram or scheme consisting of two parts: 1) A listing of all of the props used in the show, their point of origin, and who uses them. 2) A notation of the location of every prop at the beginning of the performance, and addition diagrams which show the prop's location in each scene.

Script: The written text of a dramatic work.

Spiking: Marking of all prop locations on the stage floor.

Stage right/left: Stage location from the actor's perspective when facing the audience. "Stage right" is to the actor's right and "stage left" is to his left.

Subtext: the unspoken thoughts or feeling of the character portrayed by the actor.

Tech rehearsal: The rehearsal in which the technical elements are first introduced (lights, sets, etc.) and all the appropriate members of the technical crew are present. If the actors are on hand, it is generally only to deliver key lines and mark the blocking so that the technicians can learn their cues.

Upstage/Downstage: Stage locations from the actor's perspective when facing the audience. Walking or facing away from the audience is "upstage"; the opposite is "downstage".

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Take and follow directions.

— Understand sequence.

— Realize the relationship between cause and effect.

— Develop focus and concentration and lengthen their attention span.

— Develop memorization skills.

— Practice self-discipline.

— Learn specialized vocabulary.

— Increase listening skills.

— Develop note-taking skills.

— Function as part of a group.

— Analyze written material.

— Repeat, revise and strengthen an activity.

— Apply criteria and develop a standard of excellence.

— Become aware of the capabilities of their bodies.

— Develop presence and self-confidence.

— Develop precision in speech and diction and understand the value of being articulate.

— Use language to empower themselves by playing with and exploring the color range of vocal sounds.

— Understand how sounds are made, what different parts of the body create sound, and how to use the body as an instrument (science).

— To be comfortable with, have control over, and be sensitive to their own bodies (health, nutrition).

— Appreciate the power of the written, spoken and sung word.

— Realize that one word or line may be delivered in many ways to convey different meanings.

— Develop the ability to speak and sing in public.

— Develop analytical skills and be able to integrate the voice with stage movement.

— Develop interpretive skills.

— Judge continuity and consistency through reading and writing (inference skills).

— Understand that the way one speaks is a reflection of one's thoughts and feelings.

— Understand that language has many communicative purposes.

— Realize the interrelationship between thinking, writing and speaking.

— Understand the emotional and intellectual ramifications of the physical acts of touching and being touched.

— Understand the value of cooperation and team effort.Develop self-confidence.

— Internalize and take responsibility for performance standards.

— Understand the value of reflection and introspection.

— Cope with stress.

SAMPLE: SUBTEXT

(Key: Text in normal type, *subtext in italics*)

Huey: Because our parents want us to be like Tracy. They want a
(I'm frustrated. Can't wait to get away from my parents
xerox copy family. Dad's in black and white, Mom's in black
they hassle me all the time about Tracy)
and white, so is Tracy.

Irene: But we're colorful and color don't come out on no xerox
(I want her to leave with me)
machines!

Huey: This is what she says, "Children, you dress in those
(Maybe I can encourage her to go)
outrageous clothes. Why must you wear those jeans. Or,

"Irene, why not wear a dress and brush your hair?"

Irene: I want to have my hair, my way. I want to be appreciated for

me.
(Maybe she might. God! That would be great)
Karen: So why do you hide behind rapping and showing off?
(What?!)
(Pause)
(Should I tell her the truth)
Huey: I try so hard to be like her. But I don't have her talent
(I give up)
Karen: But there are other talents. You have your own
(What is she talking about)
Huey: Yeah? Like what?

Karen: You have personality, character...in general, a nice person
(Is that so important)
(Jen enters)
(Uh-oh, here comes Jen)
David: Hi Jen

(No reply) *(You know, I'm fed up with Jen)*

Chris: Don't bother!

Irene: Feel a sudden chill here

Huey: Yeah, it seems to come from that general direction

Gina: Knock it off, can't you see she's upset?
(Where' she coming from)
(I wonder what she thinks)

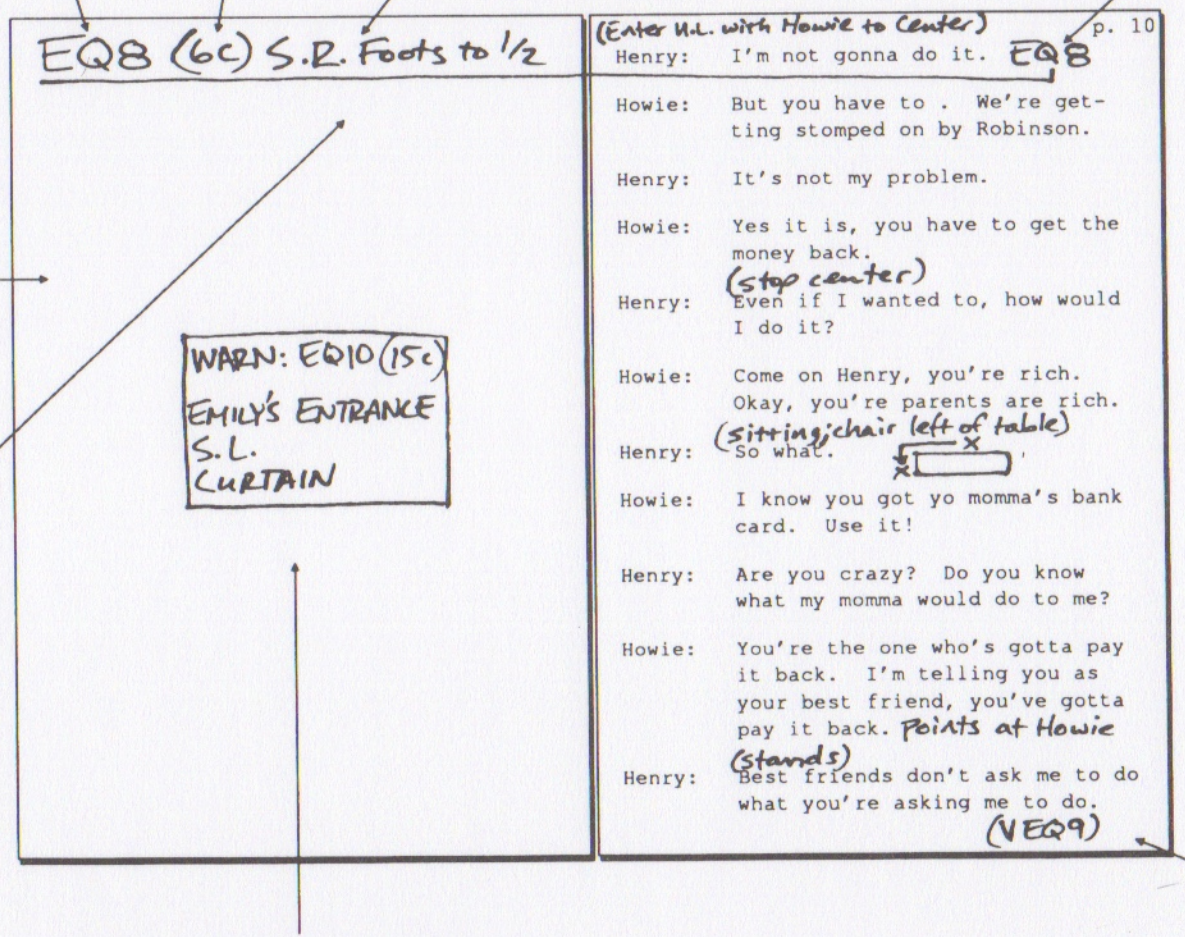
PROMPT BOOK LAYOUT FOR CUES

Electrics Cue Number (Note: If you add out of sequence, then add a letter, e.g. "EQ8A")

How long it takes to complete the cue (6 "counts" or seconds)

What happens in the cue

Exact Placement of cue in script



Blank facing page of script

Drawn line to connect information with exact placement

Written-out warning of what is coming up. In this case, an electrics cue, an entrance, and a curtain. The square around it is to tell you it's a warning at an glance

A note that as soon as the page is turned the cue will happen. "Stand by" would be given here. The "v" indicates that it coincides with action, not text.

EXAMPLE: PROP PLOT

The first page of your prop plot should be a complete list of every prop used in the show, giving its description, where it is located at the beginnig of the show (its "preset"), and who uses it suring the performance.

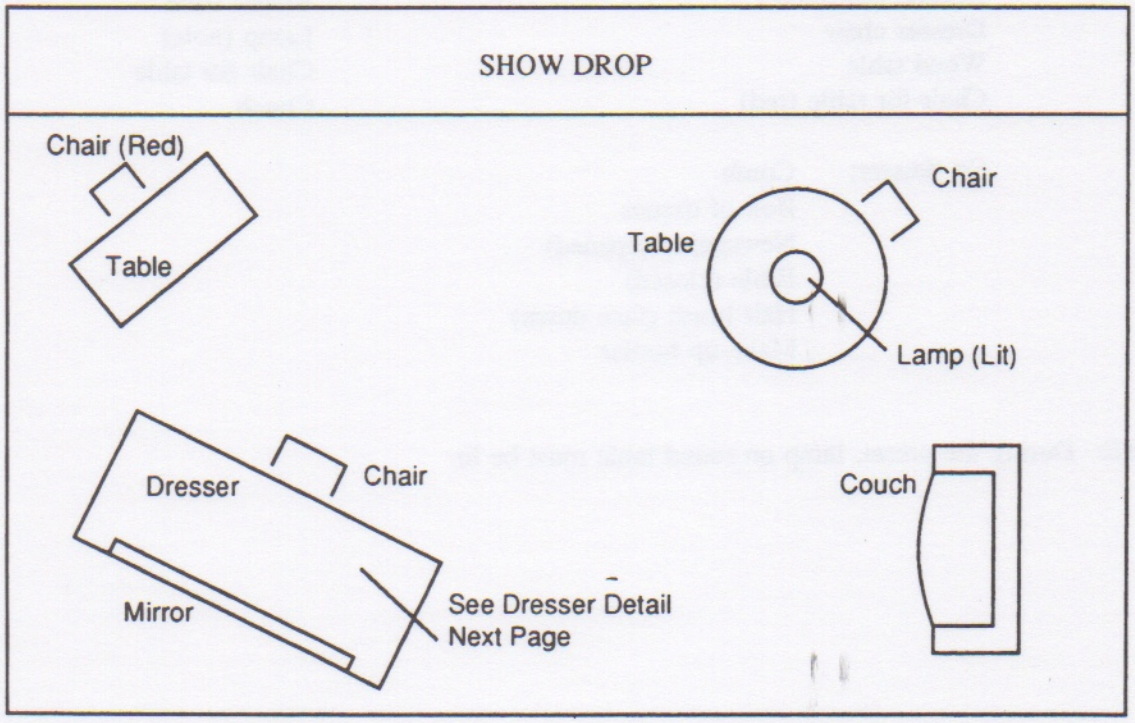
Prop	Where	Who	Return to
Pistol	Off right	Adrian	Becky's Dad
Chair (red)	Preset on stage	Stage	Bloomie's
Candle	Preset on s.l. table	Adrian lites	Ms. Hawkins

You should also list where to return the prop after the production is over.

The next page should have a preset diagram (each act should have its own diagram).

NOT TO SCALE

PRESET

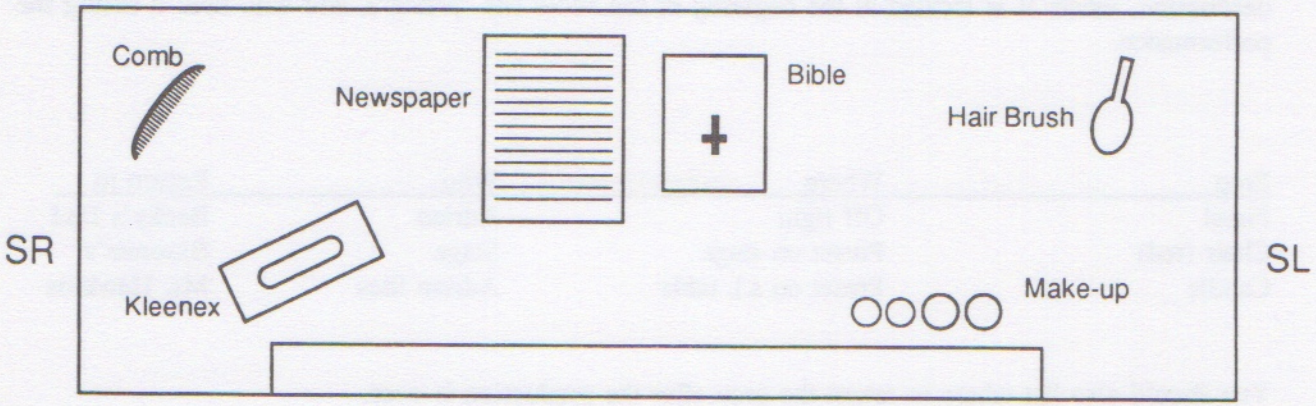


AUDIENCE

EXAMPLE: PROP PLOT (Contd.)

PRESET

DRESSER DETAIL



ATTACHED MIRROR

PRESET PLOT:

SR	SL
Dresser (w/mirror)	Round table
Dresser chair	Lamp (note)
Wood table	Chair for table
Chair for table (red)	Couch

On dresser:
- Comb
- Box of tissues
- Newspaper (opened)
- Bible (closed)
- Hair brush (face down)
- Make-up bottles

NOTE: During the preset, lamp on round table must be lit.

Stage Manager

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be the Stage Manager for your opera company.

As Stage Manager your role is to provide leadership, organization and supervision. The Stage Manager and the Production Manager have a common responsibility: the management of people, events and details.

To be successful in this job, you will have to be responsible and think creatively, in order to solve the problems you will encounter.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Oversee all groups and give assistance where needed. Help the Carpenters, Electricians and Set Designers put away all tools and store the set elements. Make sure they complete a final inventory and give the form to the Production Manager.

Do not let anyone leave until the stage and all rooms used by opera company members are clean and neat and everything has been put away.

YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Before each performance, make sure the stage area is clean and the sets and props are preset correctly. Ensure that the Performers and stage crew are in their places and ready to conduct themselves in a professional manner.

Do NOT, under *any* circumstances:

- peek around the curtain at the audience
- move the curtain
- talk backstage

Take your place near the Electricians and call the lighting, set change and curtain cues from your prompt book.

After each performance is over, make sure the stage area is clean and neat. Check that all electrical power sources have been disconnected and that all props have been stored in a safe place.

JOB TITLE: **STAGE MANAGER**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To manage the stage during the performance.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Stage Manager acts as a link between the Performers and the Director. You will keep a script marked with blocking and cues, and during the performance you will call cues for the people working backstage. You will help the Performers learn their lines and should be prepared to step into any role in a Performer's absence.

As a manager, you should always, in all ways, set an example of how a company member should work and behave.

The Stage Manager is responsible to the Director and to the production company as a whole. You will be working closely with the Production Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

The Stage Manager must be self-reliant, self-motivated and well-organized. You will learn that respect for your peers, tact, consideration and understanding are the skills needed to work effectively with and motivate most people.

You should make a point of checking in with the Production Manager and Director every day, so you can keep up with changes in the schedule or any other important things.

Carry with you at all times:

- notebook
- folder
- pen or pencil
- calendar
- daily schedule for the opera meetings

This will save you a great deal of time and effort!

Sometimes it can be difficult being in charge. There are occasions when it will not be fun, but it is your job as Stage Manager to do what needs to be done to assure a successful production.

This way, when you call "Places!" you will know exactly where everyone should be. Use this diagram to choreograph all backstage activity (curtain cues, set changes etc.) and then teach this backstage "dance" to everyone working on the stage.

Remember that the movements of everyone working backstage should not be hurried or frantic. They should be focused, professional and done in complete silence.

B. The Sound of Silence

Often Performers and stage crew members feel that when they are offstage, the audience cannot hear them. Nothing could be further from the truth!

In fact, the audience will naturally look at or listen to any distraction as if it were part of the show. Talking, playing with the curtain or moving chairs or scenery while Performers are onstage can ruin the concentration of the audience. Make sure that the Performers, Electricians, Carpenters and anyone else working backstage is aware of this. Help them practice moving from scene to scene and making set changes in complete silence.

6. Preparing for the Performance

A. The Backstage Dance

As the rehearsals progress you should take the time to "choreograph" the changes that take place during a performance. This involves ALL movement back-stage, and it is a very important job.

Assignment #3
Make a diagram of your performance space including all backstage areas available (there is an example on page 10). Copy this diagram three times.

Use these copies to create a "backstage places" dia-gram for the beginning of each scene. Keep these diagrams in your prompt book.

Be sure to include :

- a place for each offstage Performer to stand or sit
- a place for each stage crew member
- places for the Electricians at the dimmer board and other locations, if necessary
- places for the props at the preset of each scene
- places for all set elements (including those not used in the current scene)

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

CALLBOARD An announcement board specifically located so company members can find daily information about meetings, rehearsals and special announcements.

CROSSOVER A transitional scene, usually performed in front of the curtain. (This allows a scene change to happen behind the curtain, thus "crossing over" from scene to scene.)

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

FOCUS POSITION The "ready to work" position.

OFFSTAGE Out of view of the audience.

ONSTAGE In view of the audience.

PRESET The placement of the set elements needed onstage before a scene takes place.

SCRIPT The written text of the dramatic work.

SPIKE Marking the stage floor with tape to show where pieces of scenery should be positioned.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

TECH REHEARSAL A rehearsal that emphasizes all the technical aspects of the production, specifically the lighting cues and scenery changes.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Callboard

The opera company callboard is an essential method of communication between company members. It must be placed centrally (in a hallway or classroom common to all) so it can be visited every day by everyone in the opera company.

Assignment #1
For your Stage Manager audition, you created a company callboard. Now make an official version. Be sure to leave space for the company name and logo. Make a sign-in sheet so company members can check in each day. Create a space for the production calendar, a weekly schedule, and a place for special announcements in case of schedule changes or other important news.

A. Performer Contact Sheet

Contact information for every Performer is important in case of last-minute changes in schedule. Make a list of every Performer. Include:

- correct spelling of first and last name
- phone number
- address

The Production Manager will be collecting the contact information for the rest of the company, so be sure to exchange lists.

5. Working with the Script

When the Writers have completed the script and the Composers have completed the music, the major responsibility for the success of the opera shifts to the other departments.

Read and study the script. Fill out your prop sheet. Take special note when characters enter and exit the stage.

Assignment #2
A responsible Stage Manager is never seen without his or her "prompt book". Create your prompt book by placing the script in a 3-ring binder and adding a few blank pages for notes. Collect copies of the music from the Composers and include these as well. Put your prop sheet in the back of this book.

You will use this prompt book to record all blocking and lighting cues created by the Director during the rehearsal process. You will also use it to mark curtain cues and to help the Performers learn their lines. Keep the prompt book up-to-date by recording any changes of dialogue or lyrics that occur in rehearsal.

The prompt book is an important document in the process of creating original opera. When the last performance is over, give it to the Documentation Team for the company archive.

C. Lighting

The Electricians will build footlights and dimmers, and they will need to establish a dimmer board location backstage. Choose the side of the stage that has existing light switches and outlets, and position it out of the way of the Performers, but close enough to see the stage (see example on page 10).

During the opera there will be changes in the lighting to dramatize changes in the action onstage. A signal to change a light is called a "cue." The Director will help the Electricians establish a set of cues for the opera.

It is your job as Stage Manager to "call" the cues in the right order. The Electricians will follow your instruction. For example, the first two cues will often be:

E*lectrical* **Q***ue*. #1 – HOUSE LIGHTS OFF
E. Q. #2 – Footlights 1 - 4 on FULL

To call a cue is to say the following:

- "WARNING" - (a cue is coming!)
- "STANDBY" - (Electrician's hand should be on the dimmer or switch)
- "GO" - (execute the cue required)

Practice the lighting cues with the Electricians until they run smoothly and without mistakes.

2. Working With Performers

One of your primary responsibilities is to work with the Performers. You should attend all Performer meetings and rehearsals in order to gain a working knowledge of the craft of the Performer. Be prepared to perform any role in the script in the event of an illness or unforeseen emergency.

These are words you will need to understand:

PROJECTION To speak and sing clearly and audibly.

ENUNCIATE To pronounce words with deliberate precision.

SUBTEXT The unspoken thoughts of characters.

BLOCKING The plan of each character's position and movement on stage.

A. Schedule

It is important that all Performers arrive on time for each meeting or rehearsal, so make sure they have an accurate schedule to refer to. Post the schedule on the callboard each week and carry another copy with you at all times.

If the performance or rehearsal dates change, make sure the Performers know! Post all changes on the callboard in the "Announcements" section so that other company members will take note of it and mark their own calendars at home.

3. The Stage

You must think of the stage (or the performance space) as your place of work. This is the place where the work of all the departments of your opera company will be presented and you are responsible for this presentation.

Cleanliness is very important. Order is very important. Conduct is especially important. You are responsible for all conduct here, whether it is onstage or offstage.

The need for proper stage protocol cannot be overstressed. The stage is not a playground. The space should be respected by all those working there and proper stage protocol should be followed at all times.

A. Protocol

These are the rules given to all Performers:

Whenever you are on or near the stage, conduct yourself like a professional Performer. This means:

- be on time and prepared for every meeting
- respect your fellow Performers and the Director
- do not speak if another person is speaking
- do not talk while other Performers are working
- use the stairs to approach the stage (if applicable)

Once the props are collected, you will need to put a table backstage on which to place them during performances. It is your job to make sure the props are in preset position before each performance, and collected and stored in a safe place after each performance.

Create a prop sheet like this one and list all the props you need for your opera. This list will also help you when it comes time to return the props that were borrowed to their rightful owners.

Prop Sheet

Prop	Character (scene)	Location at preset	Source
Cell phone	Eva (scene 2 & crossover)	Stage left on prop table	Vianilda's Mother
Gold Pen	Joaquin (scene 1) Kiko (scene 3)	Joaquin's pocket	Joelle
Comic Books	Kiko (scene 1)	Stage Left on prop table	Kiko
Bag of groceries	Eva (scene 3)	Stage Left On prop table	Mrs. Kim

Flats may need to be changed for each scene. They are difficult to move and two or more Carpenters (or other stage crew members) will need to practice in order to move them quickly and silently.

Once the elements of the set design have been constructed, you will need to determine their PRESET placement on the stage. (This is done in conjunction with the Director and Carpenters.) When the preset has been decided, supervise the stage crew as they SPIKE the stage with tape.

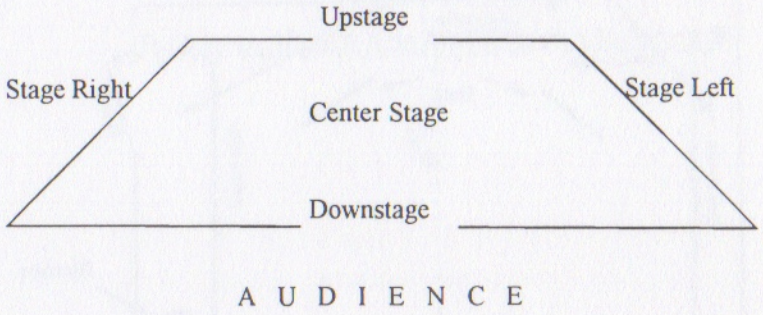
B. Props

A prop is something that a Performer holds during any moment of the opera. It can be something practical like a radio or purse, or it can be something abstract like a sculpture designed to represent "betrayal" or "a secret."

The props are suggested by the script. When you read the script, make a list of the props needed and collect or build them. As Stage Manager, you can assign someone to be a "prop person" to do this for you. If there is an Assistant Stage Manager this is traditionally his or her responsibility.

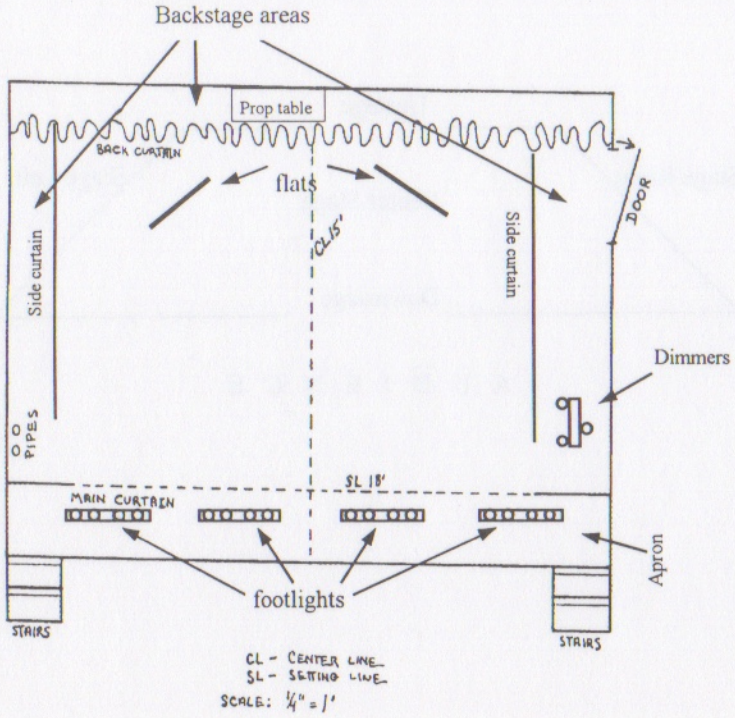
B. Areas of the Stage

Historically, the audience was located all on one level and the stage was angled ("raked") away from the audience, to allow them to see the action. Therefore the term UPSTAGE literally meant up and the term DOWNSTAGE meant down. STAGE RIGHT and STAGE LEFT indicate the Performers' right and left, as they face the audience.



4. Offstage / Backstage

The Electricians and Carpenters will be backstage during performances, remaining out of view of the audience. The Electricians will be at the dimmer board controlling the lights, and the Carpenters will be waiting for set change cues. Also waiting backstage will be Performers who are not performing for the audience. Many times there will be more people backstage than onstage! You will need to designate places for these people to wait and instruct them in proper stage protocol. Remember that distractions from backstage like talking or noise can ruin a performance.



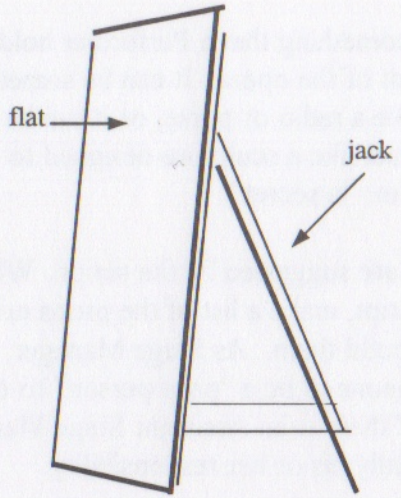
A. Stage Set Elements

BACKDROP A painted cloth hung at the back of a scene or at the rear of the stage.

FREE-STANDING ELEMENT A three-dimensional set piece that stands on its own such as a table or tree.

PLATFORM A piece of scenery constructed for the Performers to stand on.

FLAT A two-dimensional piece of scenery that provides a background. A flat is usually 4 x 8' and is held vertically on the stage by a support called a jack.



The Carpenters will be constructing flats, in addition to any other set elements required.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The role of the public relations staff is to create an identity for the company and, acting as a liaison, to project that image to the community. By representing, advertising and marketing the production, the staff's goal is to inform the entire school and community of the company's existence and to provide details about the production and the schedule of performances. While other members of the company are busy creating their original opera, public relations makes sure there will be an audience (including media representatives and elected officials) to see it.

Word of mouth reaches only a limited number of people; television, radio and newspapers greatly extend a company's outreach. A successful public relations team learns how the print and electronic media operate; the challenge is to get their attention and to present information in interesting and usable ways. Since newspapers receive literally hundreds of news items, the students need to present their information in an interesting and timely way to an editor or reporter who will encourage the media to publicize it.

In addition to dealing with the news media, public relations is also responsible for designing a logo, developing a news release, writing letters of invitation, designing the performance program and making posters and flyers.

The core public relations staff usually consists of many students, in order to facilitate making and distributing posters and flyers. Students involved in this particular area will utilize and develop written, verbal and visual communications skills.

When reaching out to the community, the public relations person makes sure the materials are clear and legible.

OBJECTIVES

- To gain a basic knowledge of the meaning and responsibilities of public relations.
- To communicate information about the opera through the various communications media (flyers, press releases, posters, programs).
- To understand the significance of a logo and to be able to design one that will reflect the company.
- To write a news release.
- To learn to compile and use a media/press list.
- To develop oral communications skills and basic etiquette when dealing with the public by telephone and in person.
- To learn to proofread.

MATERIALS

Box to hold the following items:

- Writing paper
- Envelopes
- Stamps
- Scissors
- Pens/Pencils
- Colored Markers
- Glue
- Stapler
- Scotch tape
- Masking tape

Poster paper

One ream of blank paper

Duplicating masters

Note pads

Various magazines

Dictionary

Thesaurus

Ruler

Index cards

Phone book

Access to phone

SEQUENCE

I. Logo

- Discuss and define the characteristics of a logo. Emphasize that such characteristics as color, shape, texture and typeface should be considered when designing a logo.
- Have students look through magazines and newspapers to select effective logos. Students should analyze and discuss their choices with each other, commenting on the ways in which these logos reflect the products they symbolize. Have them make a display of the logos with an explanation of why they feel they are effective.

- Have students sketch several logo ideas that could reflect the company name. Explain that this logo will be on all publicity (posters, news releases, etc.) and will represent the company. Emphasize that they should take time to sketch several ideas and that their first idea may not be their best. Stress that an effective logo is not necessarily complicated but is, in fact, simple. Compare the visual impact of logo sketches when drawn on a small and then larger scale.

- Ask the public relations group to decide upon the most effective logo. The final decision may be based on a combination of several students' ideas. Rework the logo until all feel it is the group's best effort. Produce the final design.

II. Media List

Explain that a media list is a compilation of newspapers, magazines, radio stations and television stations that you want to notify about the production.

- Have the students determine which members of the media they want to reach and why. Emphasize that it is important to target the ones most likely to be interested in the activity. Not all news media will be interested.

- Determine whom to contact, when, where, how and under what circumstances. The easiest way to begin is by using the yellow pages of the local phone book.

- List organizations, their addresses and telephone numbers. Call these places and ask for the name and title of the person to whom you should speak or send information.

ADVICE: Customizing P.R. Sources

Purchase local papers and list writers who might be interested in your students' production.

Before students telephone, have them practice what they are going to say. Set up a role-playing situation where you are the recipient of their phone call.

- The format of a media list should be as follows: name of person and title; name of organization; address; city, state, zip code; type of media (magazine, newspaper, etc.), and telephone number.
- Address envelopes in preparation for sending the news releases.

III. Press Release

- A news release is a powerful vehicle for informing newspapers, magazines, radio and TV stations about the program at a relatively small cost.
- A news release should be written according to the following guidelines:
  - First paragraph tells reader all major facts by answering Who, What, Where, When, Why, How;
  - News writing follows the "inverted pyramid" style in which every paragraph is considered more important than those which follow;
  - Sentences and paragraphs should be short;
  - Everyday words should be used, not technical jargon.

- Explain the proper format of the news release. Refer to the sample news release.
- Write the news release. Remember that facts to be included in the release must be evaluated in terms of their news worthiness and importance, then assembled in a story sequence.
- Proofread the release and send it out at the appropriate time as indicated by conversations with the news people (see media list). In general, send them about two weeks prior to the first performance.
- Follow-up each release with a phone call.
- Distribute news releases to school faculty.

IV. Public Service Announcements (PSA's)

- In mailings to radio or television stations, include a statement that will take 10 seconds to read, and another that will take 30 seconds to read; these are PSA's. Include as much as possible in the clearest language possible.

V. Letters

- In special cases, invitations should be sent to important individuals. Have the students make up a list of those individuals' names and addresses. Use the same format as the media list. (Refer to the Public Relations Contact Sheet.)
- Review the form of a business letter, noting the placement of the address, date and correct salutations.
- Draft the letter and make sure the essential information is included. Proofread.
- Address envelopes and send out invitations one month before the performances. In some cases you might want to attach a news release.

VI. Performance Program

- Get a final list of all the members of the company. Have each company member put their initials next to their name to confirm that the spelling is correct.
- Design the cover of the performance program. The performance program cover should include the company logo, the name of the production company, the name of the show, the dates of the performances and the location of the performances.
- Type the inside of the program, including the names and jobs of all people in the company. List writers and composers first.
- The back page of the performance program should include acknowledgements of all the people and organizations who cooperated on or provided funding for the project.

ADVICE: Developing Resources

Selling ad space: Your production has a potential audience of hundreds of people; local businesses will be interested in reaching this audience with advertising. Sell ad space in performance programs and perhaps offer to make an announcement concerning the business' support at the opening of the show.

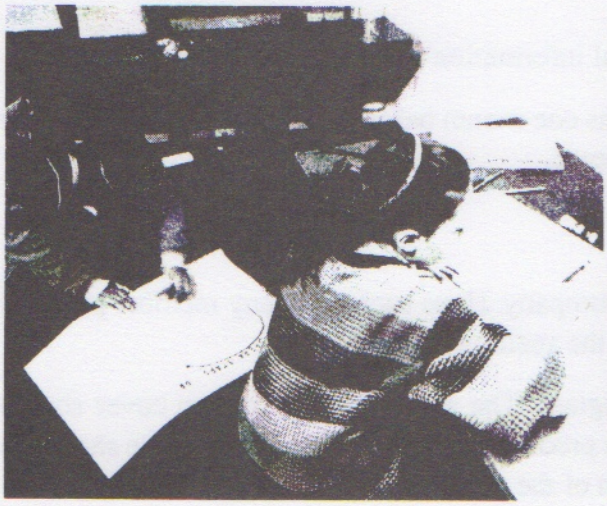
Obtaining Materials: Local theaters are a good source for used gels, black curtains or other fabric, and old lighting equipment. Local businesses may be willing to donate makeup, hardware, and other building supplies.

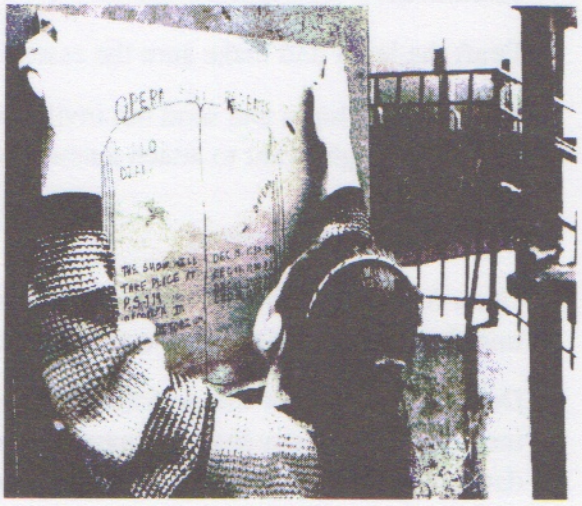
VII. Flyers/Posters

- Design and distribute the flyers to students.
- Design posters and place them around the school and the community. In determining the placement of posters, find out which areas have the most traffic and where people are most likely to congregate.

VIII. Additional Ideas

- Tickets: determine amount, # of performances
- Newsletter





Posters can inform many people about your performances. They need to attract attention as well as provide necessary information.

> **ADVICE: Flyers and Posters**
>
> *Emphasize that the flyers and posters must attract people's attention and that a consistent design is important. Have the students write down the essential information to be included on the flyers and posters: Name of Company, name of show, company logo, dates and times, place, pertinent information (e.g. "an original opera").*

IX. Greeting the Public

- See that the performing space is presentable to the public (properly swept, curtain drawn, etc.).
- Discuss the proper ways to greet the public and to seat them in an orderly fashion; reserve and rope off VIP seating.
- Have the Public Relations staff distribute the programs at the performance(s).
- Monitor audience behavior (entrance/exit of audience members, etc.).

TERMINOLOGY

Advertising: The act of producing or placing information which will attract public notice and create interest or induce purchase.

Flyers/Posters: Printed announcements which are somewhat less detailed than press releases. They still give the necessary amount of information and are either handed out or posted on bulletin boards or other high-traffic areas.

Logo: A symbol or design which is used to represent a product, business, company, group, etc. Logos also illustrate ideas such as strength, dependability, commitment, concern, warmth, wisdom, or stability.

Magazine: A publication frequently specializing in a particular subject area that is issued periodically, usually bound in a paper cover, and typically contains stories, articles, essays, poems, etc. by many writers. Many magazines also contain photographs and illustrations.

Marketing: All of the activities which move goods and services from seller to buyer. This includes research as to who the potential market consists of; advertising and promoting the goods or service and completing the sale.

Media: The means of communication, such as radio and television, newspapers, magazines, etc. that reaches large numbers of people.

Media List: A selection of print and broadcast organizations which might find the information you have to offer of interest to their audience.

Newspaper: A publication printed on newsprint, usually issued daily or weekly, and commonly containing news, commentary, features, photographs and advertisements.

News release: A description of an upcoming event which contains all the information necessary for successful publicity, such as date, time, location, cost, performers' names, restrictions (if any), duration, plot synopsis, etc.

Performance program: A booklet which gives the audience general background information on a specific production including all artistic talent, (actors, actresses, director, production personnel) and lists credits for assistance and sponsorship. It also enumerates the acts, scenes of a show and intermissions, if any. Some programs give biographies of the key performers.

Proofread: To edit material by checking for mistakes of grammar, syntax, punctuation, spelling and content.

Public Relations: All the activities involved in informing the general public about who you are and what you do, whether you're a major corporation, small company or free-lance photographer.

Public Service Announcement: An effective way to spread the word without paying for advertising space or airtime on radio or T.V. PSA's generally refer to those messages that offer a service to the public.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn to:

— Increase vocabulary.

— Develop oral communication skills.

— Use telephone skills.

— Develop listening skills.

— Practice the art of tactful verbal persuasion.

— Develop writing and editing skills.

— Develop outlining skills.

— Improve grammatical skills.

— Develop administrative skills.

— Develop decision-making and judgement skills.

— Develop organizational skills.

— Practice etiquette.

— Work on a team.

— Be a leader.

— Take on responsibility.

— Build self-confidence and self-esteem.

— Transform ideas and concepts into simple visual images.

— Distill elements of design into a meaningful symbol.

— Understand and practice marketing techniques.

— Understand the relationship between business and economics.

— Practice money management.

— Use design principles and geometric figures (on logo, posters, etc.).

— Use measurement skills (posters, program cover, etc.).

— Reinforce the concept of scale.

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE--

For further information contact:
Shannon Broce
Creative To The Core
Margaret Beeks Elementary School
709 Airport Rd.
Blacksburg, VA 24060
(703) 552-4541

FOURTH GRADERS PRODUCE OPERA

Twenty-six fourth graders at Margaret Beeks Elementary School in Blacksburg, VA have formed a production company called *Creative To The Core*. The company has written and is producing and performing an original opera called *That's What Friends Are For*. The thirty minute opera will be presented March 11 - 15 in the school auditorium. On Thursday, March 14, 1991 there will be a performance open to the public at 7:30 P.M. Admission is free.

Our opera production company was formed by auditioning for various jobs. These jobs include costumes, makeup, lighting, set design, carpenters, writers, composers, performers, stage manager, production manager, and public relations.

Margaret Beeks Elementary School was selected by the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department to participate in the Creating Original Opera Program. We are extremely proud to have been chosen for this project, and feel that our hard work has given us stronger skills for the future.

This Creating Original Opera Project is made possible by the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department and the Montgomery County Schools.

# # #

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT 30 seconds

Title: **Fourth Graders Produce Opera**
P.S. 261

Run Date: February 10 - March 11, 1992

Twenty-six fourth graders at P.S. 261 in Brooklyn, NY have formed a production company called *Too Hot to Handle*. The company has written and is producing and performing an original opera called *Camp Mars*. The thirty minute opera will be presented March 10 - 12 in the school auditorium.

Our opera production company was formed by auditioning for various jobs. These jobs include costumes, makeup, lighting, set design, carpenters, writers, composers, performers, stage manager, production manager, and public relations.

P.S. 261 was selected by the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department to participate in the Creating Original Opera Program. We are extremely proud to have been chosen for this project, and feel that our hard work has given us stronger skills for the future.

This Creating Original Opera Project is made possible by the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department and the New York State Council on the Arts.

Public Relations Contact Sheet

TITLE	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Elected Officials			
State Assemblyman			
State Senator			
U.S. Congress: House			
U.S. Congress: Senate			
Mayor			
City Council			
City Council Representative			
Police Precinct Community Affairs Officer			
Community Board Members			
School _____			
Principal			
Assistant Principal			
Parents Assoc. President			

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TITLE	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
District Officials			
Superintendent			
Deputy Superindendent			
Arts Coordinator			
Gifted & Talented Coord.			
Community Sch.Bd. Members			
Board of Education			
Chancellor			
Deputy Chancellor			
Dir. of Cultural Affairs			
Director of Music			
Bd. of Ed. President			
Bd. of Ed. Members			

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TITLE	CONTACT PERSON	COMPANY	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Newspapers				
Radio Stations				
Television Stations				

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TITLE	CONTACT PERSON	NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
School Publications				
Creating Original Opera Program Supporters				
Miscellaneous				

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Public Relations Officer

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to do the Public Relations for your opera company.

The purpose of this booklet is to aid you in your role as a Public Relations officer. This book offers suggestions on how to do your job. You will be the person who can best judge whether you are doing that job.

To be successful in this job, you will need to think for yourself and create solutions to the problems you will encounter. Don't accept the first solution to each problem...search for the best solution.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING THE PERFORMANCE

During the performance, you are in charge of the "house" (where the audience sits). You will need to:

- know who is coming to each performance and how many will be there
- make sure the house is presentable and clean
- reserve seats for special guests
- distribute programs and/or tickets

If a media contact arrives, introduce him or her to some of your company members. You will need to be organized and articulate.

YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

You are in charge of cleaning up after the audience. Collect any trash or stray programs and dispose of it all properly.

Go around the school and remove all posters and flyers advertising your opera. Make sure the Documentation Team has a poster for the company archive.

Take a final inventory of your toolbox. Give the inventory form to your Production Manager.

H. Program

The program tells the audience who is participating in your production, including those who made the production possible.

Your program must include:

COVER: Production Company Name
Title of show
Dates, Time, Location

INSIDE: Title of show
Names of company members by department: Writers, Composers, Performers, Production Manager, Stage Manager, Costume Designers, Electricians, Makeup Artists, Carpenters, Set Designers, Asst. Stage Manager, Documentation Team, Public Relations Officers

BACK COVER: Directors, School Officials
People who have helped you
Program Acknowledgements

Make sure to include this credit:
"Creating Original Opera"
is a program of the Metropolitan Opera Guild

Be sure to give all drafts and a final version of the program to the Documentation Team for their records.

JOB TITLE: **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To create an identity for the opera company and generate interest in attending the performance.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

Public Relations officers will develop a logo, inform the public through press releases, flyers and posters, and create the program for the production. They are the public representatives of the opera company.

Public Relations officers are responsible to the Director as well as the Production Manager.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Your work in Public Relations will represent your opera company before it is seen on stage by an audience. People will judge your work as a reflection of what your performance has to offer.

In this respect, your work will need to be your best...maybe even better than you think possible.

Needless to say, everything you do must be neat and correct. There are no excuses for misspelled words or work that appears sloppy. "Let's do it over again" has special meaning to the Public Relations officers.

G. Posters/Flyers

Assignment #3
Observe posters that you see on the street or in school. Choose one poster and write down your responses to the following questions.

- Why did this poster grab your attention?
- What colors were used?
- What line? What texture? What shape?
- How is the information positioned on the paper?
- What type of lettering was used?

Create an abstract design using the color, texture shape and line that best represents the theme of your opera.

Using your abstract design as a starting point, create some posters and flyers to inform your school and community about your performances. The following guidelines will be helpful:

- include necessary information (who, what, where, when)
- display the logo clearly
- make it exciting (colorful, attention grabbing)
- be simple, clear and neat

Your poster/flyer must attract, inform and stimulate curiosity. In many cases, the flyer can also be an invitation reminding those people you have informed by press release of your upcoming performance.

Be sure to give all sketches of the posters and flyers to the Documentation Team for their records.

E. Formal Letter

The formal letter is an invitation to attend your opera. It contains the same information as the press release but is written in letter form. The letter may be more personal than the press release and can include more details about the company or production. The letter should begin with "Dear _____" and end with one or more signatures of Public Relations officers.

F. Follow-Up

Each press release and formal letter should be followed up by a phone call. This call should happen one week after the press release was mailed. Ask the contact person at each organization the following questions:

- Was the press release received?
- Are they interested in doing a story about your company or production?
- Will they be attending the performance? If so, when?

Be sure to note the information on your media contact form.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

DRESS REHEARSAL The final rehearsal before the first performance, with costumes, makeup, scenery, lights and music.

FLYER A single page announcement about an event that is distributed to the public.

FUNDING CREDIT Acknowledgment in the program and press release of the persons or organizations who donated funds in support of the Creating Original Opera Program.

INVENTORY A list of available tools and supplies.

LOGO A symbol that identifies your company.

MEDIA Newspapers and broadcasting by which information is relayed to the general public.

PRESS RELEASE Written information that is given to newspapers and magazines for publication.

PROGRAM CREDIT Acknowledgement of all persons or organizations who helped the opera company.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT A statement that is read on the radio or television that gives the essential information about an event.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

THEME The idea on which the opera is based.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Inventory

Make sure you have a toolbox that contains a variety of art and office supplies. You will need these tools to do your job. Some of the items you will want to have are:

- pens, pencils, markers
- paper, posterboard
- writing paper, envelopes, index cards
- glue, tape, scissors

It is important to make a list of all your tools and supplies so you know what is available and so they don't get lost. Put the inventory forms in a safe place; you will need them again at strike.

2. Creating An Identity For Your Company

A. Learning About Logos

Assignment #1
Look through newspapers and magazines and cut out 5-10 logos. Paste them onto a piece of paper and bring them to your next meeting for group discussion.

- Which logos do you like or dislike? Why?
- Is the logo made up of words, images or both?
- How does the image (picture) on the logo relate to the company's name?
- What does the logo make you think of? (use adjectives)

To create an interesting press release, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is unique about your company?
- What is interesting about your production? (What is the theme?)
- What kind of show is it?

Press releases take many hours to perfect. You may need to make several revisions before you reach a final version.

Be sure to write the date you mailed the press release on your media contact forms.

Give all drafts and a final version of the press release to the Documentation Team for their records.

D. Public Service Announcement

Create a public service announcement that will take 30 seconds to read and includes all the important information about your company and production. Use the clearest language possible.

Now create a statement that takes 10 seconds to read, but still includes all the important information.

Send these public service announcements, along with a press release, to the radio and television stations on your media list.

C. Press Release

The press release is a powerful vehicle for informing newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations. It follows a format that is clean and easily readable. Sentences and paragraphs should be short and clear. Each paragraph should be more important than the one that follows. Be sure to include at least one Public Relations officer's name and a contact phone number in case anyone has questions.

The press release is usually four paragraphs long and contains the following information, in this order:

- title
- who you are, what you're doing, where it will happen, when it will happen
- anything special you would like to say about your company or production
- any additional essential details
- acknowledgements
  Make sure to include this statement: "Creating Original Opera" is a program of the Metropolitan Opera Guild
- ### - this symbol is centered at the bottom of the page and signals the end of the press release

A logo should:

- be unique to your company
- be simple
- attract the public's attention
- be easy to duplicate or copy

B. Create a Logo for Your Company

The company logo will be used on everything you produce for the public: press releases, flyers, posters, programs and invitations.

What makes your company special?

- Is there anything unusual about it?
- Can you create interest about a special aspect of the company?
- What might catch the audience's attention?
- It might help to create a list of adjectives that describe your company.

The logos that you found for Assignment #1 took many hours to perfect. You may need to make many revisions before you reach a final version of your logo.

Be sure to give all sketches and a final version of the logo to the Documentation Team for the company archive.

3. Attracting an Audience

You will want to invite members of your community to your opera. One way to do this is with a flyer. Another way is to contact the local media (television and radio stations, newspapers and other local publications). You can also invite school officials, representatives in public office and other VIPs (Very Important Persons).

Each audience group is contacted in a different way. The media receives a press release. (Radio and TV stations receive a press release and a public service announcement). VIPs receive formal letters. Friends, family and other community members receive a flyer.

A. Media List

To get an audience you will first need to make a list of the people you plan to invite.

Assignment #2
Collect a variety of local newspapers that contain articles covering children's events, arts education, music, opera or theater. Also, make a list of local radio and TV stations. Bring these items to your next meeting.

- Which departments and reporters might have an interest in your company and production?
- How would you contact them?

Call each of them and ask for the appropriate department. Write down the department and name of the person you talked to. Include the time and date of your call.

CONTACT FORM

Organization_____

Date (1st call)_____ Date (2nd call)_____
Contact Person_____
Department_____
Address_____
_____
Phone Number_____
PR mailed (date)_____ Invitation mailed_____
Attending Performance? Y N

This form will be very helpful in keeping track of your media contacts. Reproduce it as many times as necessary. It will also be helpful during follow-up.

B. List of People/Organizations

Make a list of people and organizations that might be interested in your activities. This list can include local businesses, school officials (other teachers, school board representatives, superintendents, curriculum coordinators, principals) and local, state, and federally elected officials (senators, members of congress, mayor, governor, etc.) Use the contact form to keep track of your communications with these people.

HISTORIAN / DOCUMENTATION TEAM

Creating Original Opera company members are taught to appreciate that the process is even more important than the product. The role of the Historian or Documentation Team is to make the processes of conception, development and execution visible to all. This is accomplished by individual job interviews, photography, and the collection of the drafts and revisions of each departments work. These materials are later displayed in an exhibit, and finally archived to represent the complete process and product of the opera company. As such, the work of the Historian/Documentation Team provides a window into the company. This window presents a view of how a company operates and provides an opportunity for educators to evaluate student work.

The Historian stimulates reflection on the company experience not only by displaying examples of process in the exhibit and archive, but also by encouraging company members to explore their experiences in writing. Formalized prompts such as the Initial Interview and the Exit Interview, as well as the Weekly Log, help the company members to consider what they are learning in different contexts: the individual, the job or department and also their context as members of a larger organization. Creative suggestions by the Historian on how each person can use his or her opera company journal promotes more inclusive journal entries which can then be used to further display the positive effects of process.

The exhibit, the archive, and the personal writings produced or stimulated by the Historians provide a springboard for an assessment of individual learning at stages during the process, while helping to deflect the natural emphasis that a theater production places on the performance as a main event.

OBJECTIVES

- To understand the interrelationships of an organization of many parts.
- To increase awareness of process and its importance in a company geared to a specific goal.
- To develop organizational skills.
- To understand the difference between oral and written history
- To become aware of the interpretive role of an historian.
- To learn the basics of exhibit design and layout
- To learn that language stimulates thought
- To create questions that will be thought provoking
- To understand that materials and sketches not considered the finished product are educationally valuable
- To learn the basic elements of a successful interview
- To learn the basics of photography
- To understand the necessity of scheduling and planning to achieve results

MATERIALS

Manila Folders (at least 9)
Camera and film
(digital, camera if available)
Video camera and video tape
Mat board
Pens, pencils
Markers
Portfolio
Composition books
Paper, pencils
Calendar
Tape, scissors
Glue, stapler
Construction paper
Tape recorder
Access to photocopy machine

SEQUENCE

I. Obtaining Photograph Permissions

Written permission from parents should be obtained from all company members before photography can begin. The Photo Release Form (enclosed) should be given out at the initial company meeting. The teacher should keep these forms.

II. The Journal

A standard composition book should be given to each student when the company is announced. Consider using a composition book without lines to encourage students to draw as well as write.

III. The Booklet

The sequence indicated by the Historian/Documentation Team booklet will provide a clear structure for teaching this job. The forms for Initial and Exit Interview, as well as the Weekly Department Log are provided here for your distribution. Note that space has been provided on the Weekly Log for the company's logo once it is created.

TERMINOLOGY

Archive: The records or historical documents of an institution or community, or the place where such records or documents are kept.

Autobiography: The story of a person's life as told by that person.

Exhibit : A display which educates viewers about a topic.

Strike: The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

Weekly Schedule: The schedule of company events that will take place during a given week.

Head Shot: A photographic close-up of a person's face.

Interview: A formal conversation conducted specifically to obtain information.

Journal: A daily record of events or personal reflections.

Portfolio: A large case or folder for holding loose sheets of paper or drawings, etc. or a collection of drawings, papers, etc.

Production Schedule: A timeline of the stages and goals of the individual parts of the company that will add up to the final production

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Increase vocabulary
- Increase oral communication skills
- Understand that language can stimulate thought
- Develop listening skills
- Understand the difference between written and oral history
- Develop scheduling skills
- Work both independently and cooperatively
- Understand the structure and operation of an opera or music theater company, including the roles, functions and responsibilities of each member
- Take on responsibility
- Understand basics of photographic composition
- Understand the basic concepts of organizing information
- Comprehend the basics of exhibit design
- Develop editing skills
- Develop organizational skills
- Build self confidence and self esteem
- Understand the whole (company) effort is larger than the sum of its individual parts

Initial Interview

Name_____

Date_____

Company Name_____

Job Title_____

1. What is an opera?

2. What were your thoughts when you first heard you would be creating an opera?

3. What do you want to learn from your job?

On a separate piece of paper, write a short autobiography. Tell about where you were born, your family, the places to which you have traveled and anything else that would be of interest to someone wanting to know all about you. Put your full name and job title at the top and write neatly, as this autobiography will be displayed with your head shot.

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Weekly Log

[Your company logo here]

Department_____

Company Name_____

Week of_____

This week's activities:

Next step:

One thing especially interesting was:

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Exit Interview

Name_____

Date_____

Company Name_____

Job Title_____

This time next year another student will apply for this job. What are the three most important things you would tell them about this job?

1.

2.

3.

What did you learn about Creating Original Opera from other members of your company?

1.

2.

3.

What was the hardest decision that you had to make while doing your job?

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I, _____, give permission to _____
(Parent/Guardian) (School Name)
to use photographs taken of my child, _____, demonstrating
(please print name)
his/her participation in the Creating Original Opera Program.

I give my permission and understand that the photos of his/her likeness, taken on _____,
(Date)
will be used for Public Relations and/or publicity, that these photographs will not be used for profit and that I will receive no compensation for said pictures.

_____
Signature

_____
Date

LA CLEVIQUE KIDS OPERA COMPANY
WRITTEN BY THE DOCUMENTATION TEAM
WINTER, 2000

ON THE ROAD WITH LA CLEVIQUE KIDS OPERA COMPANY

The first field trip the La Clevique Kids Opera Company took was to see the opera *Rigoletto* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, DC. The fourth and fifth grade classes, which are involved in the opera company, enjoyed the event.

Since the setting of the opera is Mars, the second field trip was to the Maryland Science Center. Mrs. Fisher's class attended a speech about Mars. The students got an opportunity to make their own Mars colony. When Mrs. Fisher's class finished, Mrs. Hartsfield's class attended the the same workshop.

During this time, Mrs. Fisher's students got the chance to visit the exhibits. Some of the students went to the Space Exhibit. They liked the space exhibits because there was information about Mars, and there were hands on activities, and mini exhibits. Other kids went to an insect exhibit. They liked the exhibit because there were different kinds of insects.

These were the first two field trips for the students of the La Clevique Opera Company. The Composers went to the Kennedy Center. Prior to the trip, they had to make musical piece of music called *Kitchen Koncherto* from instruments they found in their kitchens. They finished the piece and went to the Kennedy Center to meet Mr. Floyd. The composers got there and saw all the neat stuff in the "Staff Only" rooms.

They sat down in a room with a piano and after a while Mr.Floyd came in to see them. The composers were very excited. Mr. Floyd talked to the composers about what it is like to compose and write the opera *Susana*. Then Mr. Floyd heard what the other schools had done. Then the composers played their *Kitchen Koncherto* for Mr.Floyd. After that, some of the composers went back to school while some went out for pizza.

ARE YOU AN OPERA WHIZ?
IF SO, TAKE OUR QUIZ!

1) Name the first four operas that La Clevique Kids Opera Company created.
2) In the opera *Chat Room Virus,* what was the theme?
3) Is soprano the highest female voice or male voice?
4) What was the first year that Farmland started doing operas?
5) What new job is in this year's opera company?
6) What is a theme?
7) Unscramble these letters to form the name of a job: ublipc tsnreliona.
8) Who's job is it to write the words for the songs?
9) Who wrote ***Rigoletto***?
10) Name three of the characters from last year's opera.

La Clevique Kids Opera Company participates in the Creating Original Opera Program which is sponsored by the New York Metropolitan Opera Guild.

A SNEAK PEAK AT . . .
. . .THE COMPOSERS

Why did you want to be a composer?

Adam: "I was just good at music so I decided that I want to be a composer."
Aki: "I wanted to be a composer because I like music and I studied and I know notes."
Takashi: "I wanted to be a composer because I like music and because I wanted to learn more about it."
Jonathan: "I wanted to be a composer because I just like writing and playing music."
Tyler: "I wanted to be a composer because a year ago I started to play piano and I liked it and I was good at it. So I thought I would be a good composer."

What do you think the music is going to be like?

Adam: "I think the music is going to be spooky."
Tyler: " I think the music is going to be high pitched."

What have you done so far as a composer?

Adam: "Writing and playing music."
Tyler: "We wrote and played music."

WORKING AS A TEAM TO PERFORM THE DREAM

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The PR Team is writing our VIP database. So they will know all the addreses of people that they are going to invite to our Opera. The other group of PR are getting more addreses for the first group to put in the VIP database.

THE SET DESIGNERS

The Set Designers are drawing (designing) scenes from Harry Potter; like Hagrid's house. They are also designing the inside of the pods that the characters on Mars live in.

THE WRITERS

The writers are working on the story for our Opera. When they are finished with writing the story, they are going to be working together with the Composers to write the lyrics. When they are done with that, they will change to whatever job needs them.

"A BLAST FROM THE PAST"

INTERVIEW WITH AMANDA LINDSAY "BRITTAINY" *THE TRANSLATION TRAP*

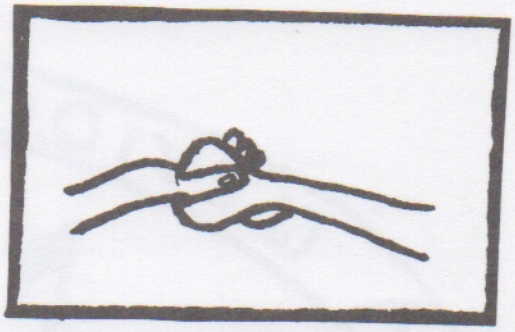
Amanda Lindsay played "Brittainy" in *The Translation Trap*. She learned that performing in an opera is harder than she thought. Though Amanda found performing in the opera hard work, she also enjoyed it,"Opera was fun, and it was a special opportunity."

INTERVIEW WITH HUNNY JEONG "CHARLIE" *THE TRANSLATION TRAP*

Hunny Jeong played "Charlie" in the opera, *The Translation Trap.* As a result of his participation in the opera, he learned how to work with a large group of people. He states, "The opera taught me a lot." Hunny also learned that working with other people is more fun than he thought.

Answers to Opera Quiz

1) *Chat Room Virus, Lie to the Eye, Fire, Fire Who's the Liar,* and *The Translation Trap*
2) curiosity that leads to addiction
3) female
4) 1995-1996
5) Documentation
6) A main idea
7) public relations
8) composers
9) Verdi
10) Fanache/Elete/Charlie



"LEND A HAND"

We, La Clevique Kids Opera Company, need parents and volunteers to "lend a hand" to help make this year's opera performance a success. A few hours each week will help us tremendously. We need parents who can help with transportation to and from performances, shopping trips, and to help supervise the groups during opera time. We also appreciate donations of make-up and costumes.

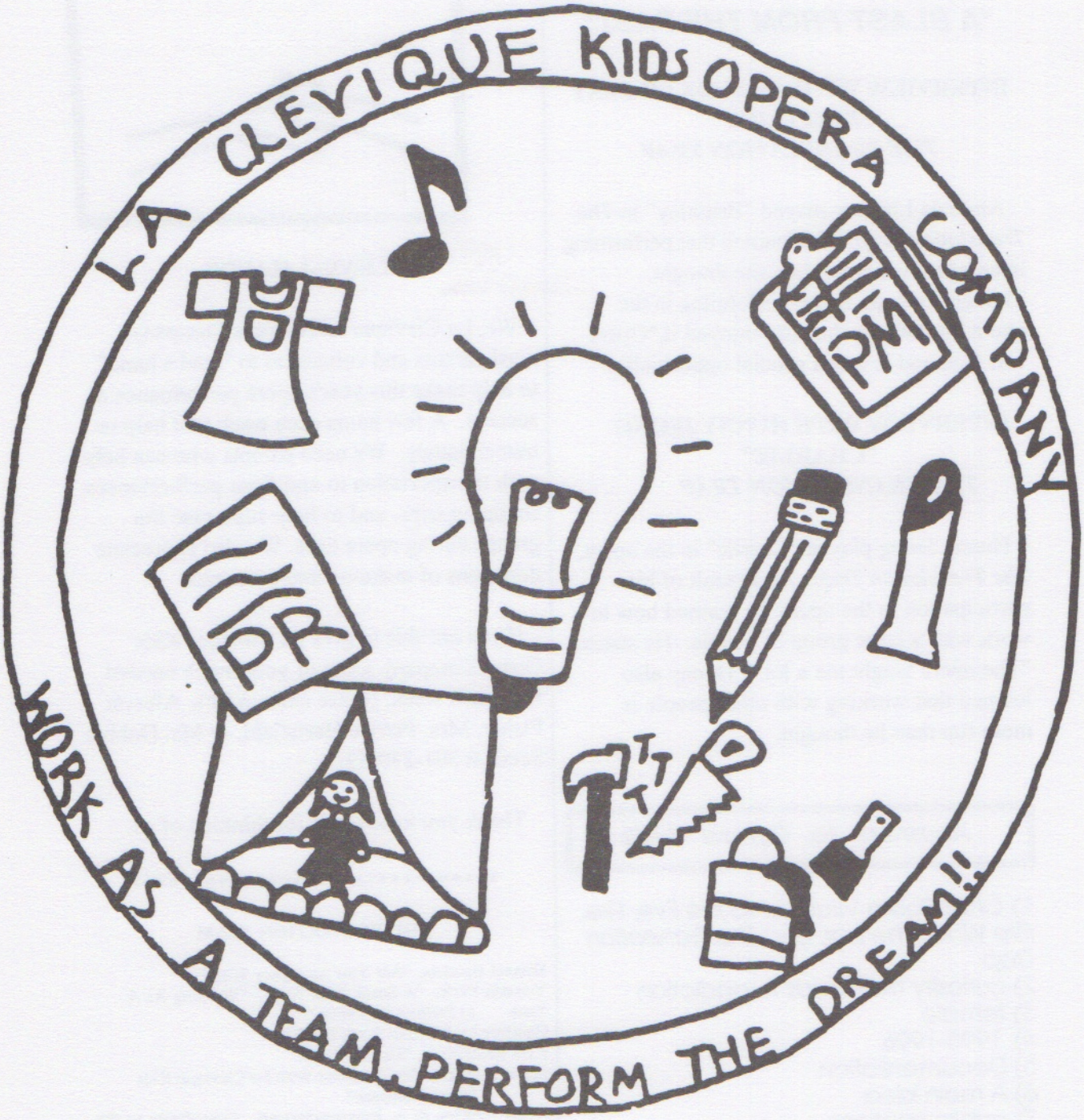
If you are able to give La Clevique Kids Opera Company some of your much needed time each week, please contact Mrs. Alberta Fisher, Mrs. Patrice Hartsfield, or Ms. Debbie Scesa at 301-230-5919.

Thank you in advance for thinking of us.

****

DOCUMENTATION TEAM

Manuel Bautista, "Are You An Opera Whiz?"
Yonatan Fuchs, "A Sneak Peak At...", "Working As A Team to Perform the Dream"
Geoffrey Li, "A Blast From The Past"
Kara Richardson, "Lend A Hand"
Leslie Zelenko, "On The Road With La Clevique Kids Opera Company"
Emily Johnson & A. Johnson-Stewart, Consultants to the Documentation Team


LA CLEVIQUE KIDS OPERA COMPANY
PR
PM
WORK AS A TEAM. PERFORM THE DREAM!!

Historian

Name _____

Company _____

Production _____

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to performers

WRITERS
Create scripts and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER
Publicize production

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NOTES

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been hired to be an Historian on the Documentation Team of your opera company.

It's a great responsibility to document history *as it happens* and it is an acknowledgement of your abilities to be focused and organized.

The Documentation Team must be self-motivated, self-reliant and well-organized. In addition, you must respect your company and the parts that make it work.

To be successful in this job, you will have to be responsible and think creatively to solve the problems you will encounter.

Good luck!

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YOUR DUTIES DURING STRIKE

Transform the exhibit into an archive. Make sure to label and date both this book and the video tape and donate it to your class or school library.

YOUR DUTIES
DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Put the Guest Book in a prominent place and provide a pen attached with a string.

Videotape the performance if possible. If you can videotape the very first performance, it can then be shown to the Performers as an aid to their improvement. If you are unable to make a video, write a journal entry comparing the performance to the rehearsal or preceding performance. Describe in your journal the moments that the audience seemed to especially enjoy.

JOB TITLE:
HISTORIAN / DOCUMENTATION TEAM

JOB OBJECTIVE:

To record the history of your opera company.

JOB DESCRIPTION:

The Historians on the Documentation Team will follow the progress of every department of the opera company. You will collect information from and conduct interviews with the members of each department. You will make an exhibit that shows how the opera was made and produced, and an archive that will represent the company for years to come.

Historians are responsible to the Production Manager and the Director.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU BEGIN

On opening night many audience members will see the Performers onstage but they might not think about the steps involved in the creation of original characters, songs, sets, lights and costumes, etc.

It will be your job to use photographs and interviews along with the materials you collect from company members to develop an exhibit that the audience can appreciate in addition to the performance.

This exhibit will tell the story of the company – its beginning ideas, drafts, edits and revisions before the final assembly and culmination. It will enhance the appreciation and awareness of everything that went into Creating Original Opera.

In addition to educating those who see the opera, your work will also help others appreciate your company's achievements. In this way the work you produce will be your opera company's link to the future!

Check in with the Production Manager on a daily basis so that you can keep up with any changes in the production schedule or the weekly schedule of department meetings.

8. Archive

Your exhibit will become an archive that contains the best examples of the work done while creating an original opera.

The archive should include:

- an interview with a member from each department
- a journal entry from a member of each department
- press release
- logo (final version)
- prompt book (which includes script)
- music
- selected photographs, clearly labeled
- program
- poster or flyer
- head shots & bios of company members
- production Manager's speech
- exit interview from a member of each department
- set design sketches (final version)
- anything else you want to include

This archive will be well protected if you organize it in a portfolio or scrapbook. Label the outside of the archive clearly with the dates of the performances, the company name and logo.

On the wall behind the table, hang the two-dimensional sketches and early drafts etc. Again, make sure they are clearly labeled with the name and job title of the student who created each piece.

Consider mounting two-dimensional work on free-standing display boards. These can be set up at the back of the table.

Try to think of a creative way to display your exhibit! A colorful and eye-catching exhibit will draw the attention and appreciation of all who view it.

D. Guest Book

Make a guest book for all visitors to write their names, addresses and comments. This will document who attended your performance and their responses to the show. Create a sign that requests visitors to sign the book.

IMPORTANT WORDS TO KNOW

ARCHIVE The records or historical documents of an institution or community, or the place where such records or documents are kept.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY The story of a person's life as told by that person.

EXHIBIT A display which educates viewers about a topic.

HEAD SHOT A photographic close-up of a person's face.

INTERVIEW A formal conversation conducted specifically to obtain information.

JOURNAL A daily record of events or personal reflections.

PORTFOLIO A large case or folder for holding loose sheets of paper or drawings. The name for a collection of drawings or papers.

PRODUCTION SCHEDULE A timeline of the stages and goals of the individual parts of the company that will add up to the final production.

STRIKE The cleanup and organization of items and places after the final performance of the opera.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE The schedule of company events that will take place during a given week.

YOUR DUTIES
BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

1. Inventory

It is important to make an inventory (a list) of all your supplies so you know what is available. You will need:

- pens, pencils and markers
- paper, construction paper
- large manila envelopes (at least 9)
- camera & film
- video camera & videotape (if available)
- folders
- calendar
- a place to store all materials

Locate as many of these items as you can and arrange to borrow those (like a video camera) that you may not own. Keep the inventory in a safe place. Be sure to include the ownership information for the items you are borrowing.

2. What is History?

History is a record of events. The word "history" includes the word STORY. In documenting the history of Creating Original Opera, you will be telling the story of what happened.

Imagine that it's just before bedtime and you are going to tell someone the story of your day. All stories have a beginning, middle and end. How would you begin your story?

C. Creating the Exhibit

Discuss these questions with the other members of the Documentation Team:

- What pieces will you include in the exhibit?
- How will it be organized? (By job or chronologically?)
- How will you tell the story?

In order to make it clear, neat and easy to read, you should consider the following display ideas:

- labels for every item
- different sizes, colors and styles of type
- frames, borders, or mats for drawings
- banner with opera company name and logo

Cover the table with paper or a table cloth and place the three-dimensional items on it with labels and descriptions (if necessary). Be sure to include the name and job title of the student who created each piece. Make sure the name of your opera company and its logo are prominently displayed, along with the callboard.

B. Exhibit Content

Use the following check-list to determine what documentation you have collected for each department. Make sure you also have the audition forms, the reports from each company meeting and the weekly logs from each department. Make sure the company head shots and bios are included in your exhibit and archive.

Job	Documents (circle)	Journal Entries	Photos/ Video	Interviews
Writers	Character traits, rough drafts, scenario, arc, lyrics, script			
Composers	Theme & character motifs, songs, musical sketches, underscoring			
Set Designers	Abstract designs, concept boxes, sketches, scale drawings, models			
Carpenters	Cutting diagrams, scale models, set placement diagram, audition toolboxes			
Electricians	Diagram of electricity in the performance space, light cues, sample footlight or dimmer			
Makeup Artists	Design sketches, makeup forms, assignments			
Costume Designers	Design sketches, measurement charts, costume charts, assignments			
Performers	Character biographies, monologues and subtext			
Public Relations Officers	Logo (three drafts), media list, press release, formal letter, flyers, poster, program			
Stage Manager	Prompt book			
Production Manager	Production calendar, speech			

What you tell the listener will create an impression of your experience. This is an oral (spoken) history of your day.

Now, imagine you were followed throughout the day by a videographer, photographer and journalist. Imagine that they documented everything you did, on paper and with photographs and video, and collected everything you created (tests, drawings, notes, etc.). At bedtime, you would be able to tell the story of your day in much more detail. You would be able to provide a written history of your day and the things that were collected (videotapes, photos, drawings etc.) would become the documents of your day.

3. Begin Your Story

The story of your opera has already begun!

Now that the jobs have been assigned, collect the audition forms from your teacher and store them in a safe place. You may want to include them in your exhibit and archive.

The Production and Stage Managers are required to compile a list of all the company members and to create a production schedule and calendar. Get a copy of these items, as you will need them to do your job.

A. Head Shots and Initial Interviews

Assignment #1
Attend an early meeting for each department and distribute to everyone the form on page 9. Photograph each member of the company (head and neck only) in front of the same background. This is called a "head shot." Tell all members that you will be collecting the forms and biographies at the next company meeting.

7. The Exhibit

The Documentation Team will design an exhibit that tells the story of creating an original opera. This must be completed before the first performance so that visitors can understand and appreciate all that has occurred in the company leading up to the performance.

Assignment #3
Visit a local museum or exhibit of any kind. Answer the following questions concerning the exhibit you saw.

- What was the subject of the exhibit?
- Was the exhibit easy to understand?
- How much time did it cover?
- What was the beginning, middle and end of the story?
- How many images were used?
- How were words displayed?
- What colors were used?

A. Exhibit Location

Decide where your exhibit will be located. Remember that the audience will want to view the exhibit prior to the performance, so it should not be located in the performance space. Consider displaying it in a lobby or in a separate room.

The size of the space available will have an effect on the size of your exhibit. A basic exhibit should consist of a wall and a table.

F. Company Meeting Report

As Historian, it is your job to produce a written document that includes the company name, date, meeting number (1st, 2nd etc.) and what happened at the company meeting.

Assignment #2

After your company has had a few meetings, visit each department and conduct interviews. Be sure to bring the list of questions you created and try to make them specific to the department you are visiting. Speak clearly if you are being videotaped and be sure the subject is in full view.

After the interview, make some suggestions of interesting things the company members might incorporate in their journals. For example:

- Can you draw a picture of how each part of the company fits together?
- How has keeping the journal affected your experience of the opera company?
- How has the job you're doing affected your perception of the people you know and the jobs they hold?
- How do you build a set?
  - -create a logo?
  - -write a lyric?
  - -compose a song?

Initial Interview

Name_____

Date_____

Company Name_____

Job Title _____

1. What is an opera?

2. What were your thoughts when you first heard you would be creating an opera?

3. What do you want to learn from your job?

On a separate piece of paper, write a short autobiography. Tell about where you were born, your family, the places to which you have traveled and anything else that would be of interest to someone wanting to know all about you. Put your full name and job title at the top and write neatly, as this autobiography will be displayed with your head shot.

4. Understanding the Parts of the Company

There are 12 different jobs in the opera company, including the Documentation Team. Two are management positions (Stage and Production Managers) and ten are departments. Each department of the opera company has a specific responsibility. The success of the whole company depends upon the members of each department doing their job.

Here is a list of the departments of the company and the responsibilities of each.

Job	Responsibility
Writers	Create script and lyrics
Composers	Create music
Set Designers	Design the location of the opera
Carpenters	Build sets, work backstage
Electricians	Build and operate lights
Makeup Artists	Enhance facial expressions
Costume Designers	Enhance personalities of characters
Performers	Present the opera
Public Relations Officers	Create company identity, bring audience
Historians	Create company exhibit and archive
Production Manager	Oversee entire company, post schedules
Stage Manager	Manage the stage

NOTE: Distribute a Photo Permission Release to all members of your company. (Your teacher will provide you with this form.) It should be signed by parents or guardians.

E. Weekly Log

Your teacher will distribute this form to each department. It will be used to describe the department's progress for that week. Collect these forms at the end of each company meeting. Keep them for your exhibit and archive.

Weekly Log

Department_____

Company Name_____

Week of_____

This week's activities:

Next step:

One thing especially interesting was:

B. Journals

To help document the process of Creating Original Opera, company members should keep a journal on a daily basis. (A composition notebook is best for this purpose.) These journals will be used to record the personal reflections and responses of company members. Let company members know that the Documentation Team will be reading these journals and may perhaps photocopy excerpts from them for the opera exhibit or archive.

C. Videotape

Before videotaping, create a set (for example, a few chairs in a row or half-circle) and position the camera on a tripod so that all present are visible in the viewfinder. Make sure the room is well-lit and the subjects are not standing in front of a bright light or window.

D. Photographs

You may want to take still photos of different departments as they are working. Again, make sure the subjects are well-lit and are not standing in front of a bright light or window. Try to create a photo that shows what they're doing or creating at that moment.

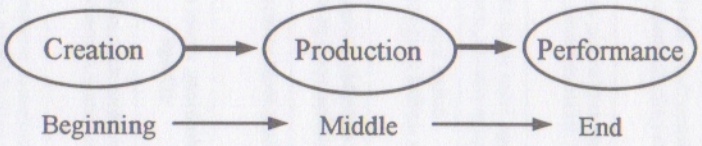
If a digital camera is available, you will be able to critique your photos as you take them.

5. What Comes First ?

In any company, things must happen in a certain order or sequence for everything to get done. If your company were a restaurant, you would first have to have the idea, and then you'd develop a concept for what type of restaurant it will be. You would need to find a location, decide what food would be served, hire and train staff, advertise for customers, and finally open the restaurant and prepare and serve the food to your customers.

Likewise, in Creating Original Opera, there is an overall order for the company as it progresses toward its goal. The basic sequence of events is:

CREATION – *inventing*
(all departments generate ideas and develop skills)
PRODUCTION – *building/assembling the pieces*
(all departments develop these ideas)
PERFORMANCE – *presenting*
(all departments present the completed work to an audience)



A. The Story Inside Each Department

Just like the opera company as a whole, each job has a beginning, middle and end.

This chart will help you see the beginning, middle and end of each job.

Job	Beginning	Middle	End
Writers	decide on theme/thesis, create characters, write lyrics for theme song	determine character relationships, develop conflict, scenario, narrative	create dialogue and lyrics
Composers	learn elements of music, create theme motif, create character motifs	compose music for songs, compose underscoring	practice accompaniments, perform music during show
Set Designers	measure stage, learn about elements of set, unified design concept, concept boxes	create design sketches and models	paint sets
Public Relations Officers	design logo, create unified design concept	write press release, public service announcement, VIP letters, mail press release	design posters, flyers, program, make follow-up calls greet the audience
Performers	learn about ensemble, energy, projection, enunciation, vocal production	develop character bio, monologues, reading script, subtext	memorize lines and songs, blocking, staging, rehearsals, performance
Carpenters	learn about tools, measure stage	build flat and other scenery, scale models	rehearse set changes, act as stage crew during performance
Electricians	learn about electricity, create electrical plan of stage	build lights and dimmers	lay out the cable and lights, create light cues, run lights during performance
Makeup Artists	learn about stage makeup Performer interviews	practice on each other, practice on performers, create makeup designs	apply makeup before every performance and remove makeup after performance
Costume Designers	learn about costumes, measure performers create unified design concept	create costume design sketches, assemble costumes	coordinate costume parade, assist performers before & during production

6. Capture the Process

You should try to document at least one moment in each phase for each job. You can do this by using the tools of the historian described below.

A. Personal Interviews

Interviews can help you collect information about your opera company and its members. You may interview individuals or groups. You may create written or videotaped interviews, or both.

What is a question?

A question is a sentence that requests information. Who, what, when, where, why and how are words that commonly begin questions. In order to generate interesting responses from the person you are interviewing, you must begin by asking interesting and well thought-out questions. Avoid questions that require a simple yes or no answer. Be sure to begin each interview by stating the name and job title of the person you are interviewing.

Create a list of questions to have on hand when you are conducting interviews with company members. Here are a few to help you get started:

- What does the theme mean to you?
- Can you recall a story from your own life that relates to the theme?

SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION

Schools are selected to participate in the Creating Original Opera program in agreement with the program's guidelines and criteria. This commitment is not taken lightly, and the application process is directed towards the school administrator who can insure that the time is available to implement this program.

The implementation of the program takes 100 to 125 hours of in-school time—regardless of the number of teachers involved. It is the responsibility of each school to determine how this time is divided between the time spent in general class, time spent in music class, and special time set aside in the schedule. Since the Creating Original Opera program is interdisciplinary, it should be integrated into the existing curriculum. Teachers should be using the various processes in each area as a teaching vehicle in order to achieve not only the goals of the Creating Original Opera program but their own educational goals as well.

DIVIDING RESPONSIBILITIES

Teachers should not share all production company responsibilities, but should rather divide the work according to the schedule and their abilities and desires. The following models are examples of typical curriculum implementation schemes. In all cases, management is a shared responsibility.

MUSIC TEACHER	CLASSROOM TEACHER
Production & Stage Managers	
Performers	
Composition	Writing
Music Direction	Stage Direction
Public Relations	Set Design
Costume	Carpenters
Makeup Artists	Electricians
Documentation	

MUSIC TEACHER	CLASSROOM TEACHER
Production and Stage Managers	
Composition	Writing
Music Direction	Set Design
Stage Direction	Carpenters
Public Relations	Electricians
Documentation	Costume
	Makeup

ROLE OF MANAGEMENT

The production and stage managers act as the lines of communication between the company and the teachers. Schedule a daily meeting time with your managers in order to coordinate the day's activities and set long term strategies and goals (these daily meetings can be as short as one minute). The production manager and stage manager will do their job if they feel responsible and accountable for doing so; the production manager or stage manager can also act as contacts for each other when school scheduling does not allow for common time.

> **ADVICE:**
> *When possible, a common prep time among the teachers is ideal.*

SCHEDULING

The Creating Original Opera Program is a cooperative learning strategy that has students working simultaneously on different projects. It is the responsibility of the production and stage managers to see that the students are doing the work; it is the responsibility of the director to have work for them to do.

As students work, the director should move around the room, adding concentrated "bursts" that are thought provoking in nature—or many times, just listening to and evaluating what the students are saying and doing. This working atmosphere can also include other work unrelated to the Creating Original Opera program; it is your decision as to how to balance the needs of your students.

INDEPENDENT WORK

Most work for the members of your company is self-generating once the script is written. Design concepts and the needs of the script lead to a list of things to be done. Prior to the script being written, the student handbooks provide exercises and projects that begin to develop the skills needed to mount a performance. Keep the work evenly paced within each job category. At the beginning, some groups may only need a small amount of time each week; at this point the writers will have the heaviest work load. Towards the end of the project, your time with the writers becomes minimal as your emphasis naturally shifts to production and performing.

> **ADVICE:**
>
> *It is sometimes beneficial to begin the writing process with the entire company. Developing a theme, thesis, and some characters as a full company will interest those students who were not initially involved, and will give all common knowledge and experience. Once you decide that the writing has become too difficult with such a large group, then begin the audition process.*

ISOLATED TIME

Your work, on a few rare occasions, will need to be conducted in a small group that excludes other members of the company. Ideally, this isolated time will occur during the Performer Auditions, Performer Callbacks, First Read-Through, and the First Technical Rehearsal. At other times, it may seem chaotic to have so much going on at once, but the activity provides energy as well as motivation.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

You are encouraged to make full use of the resources available in your school community (e.g. college/university theater programs, state arts agencies, etc.) to enhance the Creating Original Opera program. As the facilitator of the program, you must determine the effectiveness of such inclusions and determine their benefits to the goals and objectives of the program. Regardless of an artist or technician's knowledge and expertise in areas such as performing or building, you are the authority and can dictate how things should be done.

PRODUCTION COMPANY

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Supervise production company and organize schedule

COSTUME DESIGNERS
Design and locate all costumes

MAKEUP ARTISTS
Apply theatrical makeup to Performers

STAGE MANAGER
Supervise Performers and stage crew

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Gather all props and assist Stage Manager

WRITERS
Create script and lyrics

COMPOSERS
Compose music and accompany performance

SET DESIGNERS
Design and paint sets

CARPENTERS
Build and paint sets

PERFORMERS
Learn assigned roles and perform onstage

HISTORIANS (DOCUMENTATION TEAM)
Record the history of the opera company

ELECTRICIANS
Build and run lights

PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS
Publicize production

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PRODUCTION COMPANY DUTIES

ANNOUNCE AND HOLD AUDITIONS
SELECT/ANNOUNCE COMPANY
HOLD FIRST COMPANY MEETING

[PRODUCTION MANAGER: scheduling and room assignments, gathering supplies, keeping log, see that people work together productively]

WRITERS	COMPOSERS	SET DESIGN/CARPENTERS	ELECTRICIANS	PUBLIC RELATIONS	COSTUME	MAKEUP	STAGE MANAGER PERFORMERS	ASM
PRIOR TO DIALOGUE BEING WRITTEN								
Theme		measure classroom/draw to scale	understand elex defs.	explore and create logo	observe what people wear	collect supplies	trust exercises	
Thesis		measure stage/draw to scale	explain waterwheel	develop press release	performer measurements	know names, uses, etc.	vocalizing	
Characters	develop character motifs	create model of stage	understand watt/amp conversion	create media list		practice applying makeup	1 min. monologue	
Needs/Relationships		design/draw tool box	wire a plug	create VIP list		develop product list and sequence		
Conflicts		build toolbox	begin footlights	# of seats available			cast performers	
Scenario								
Music Placement			attach/paint footlights	select performance dates				
ensemble lyrics about theme	generate ensemble song		build dimmers					
Narrative			attach/number dimmers					
Lyrics	complete music		find power sources/breaker panel				begin learning ensemble music	
Dialogue								
READ-THRU SCRIPT →								
Title opera								
	rehearse music	sketch set elements	chart/diagram light placement	finalize press release	determine number of costumes	practice application of performers	read-thru process	prop list
	compose transitional music	draw to scale set elements	chart/diagram power hookups	mail press release	begin sketches	check makeup with lights	develop subtext	
		select colors	build cable	follow up phone calls	collect/borrow/build costumes		learn/memorize music	
		build flats	lay cable	create flyers/posters/invitations	organize costume collection		learn/memorize blocking	
		grid flats	attach/gel equipment	create programs	fittings/adjustments		music with blocking	
		sketch/paint flats	cue scripts	OK names			prepare/rehearse PM speech	
		build/find other scenery		thank you list				
				distribute flyers/posters/invits.				
TECHNICAL REHEARSAL								
		[STAGE MANAGER: in charge of stage/call lighting, curtain, set cues; in charge of performers]						
	rehearse for scene changes	place sets on stage	cue by cue	final phone calls	organize spaces for changes	organize space for makeup		gather
		rehearse moving sets	adjust lighting levels	reserve seating				props
				finalize media coverage				
FIRST DRESS REHEARSAL								
		run	run	pictures for lobby display	costume parade	apply makeup to performers	makeup	
						check with lighting	costume	
							warm ups	
REHEARSE FINAL BOWS WITH ENTIRE COMPANY →								
PERFORMANCE RUN: Production Manager Opening Speech								
watch	perform	crew for scene changes	run lights	manage the house	wardrobe	apply makeup	perform	prop table
			unplug all power at end	programs/seating	on hand for quick-changes	touch-ups during performance		
				monitor audience behavior	collect costumes at end	cleanup		
CLOSING BOWS →								
		store sets	pack and store lighting equipment	letters of appreciation	return borrowed clothing	clean/store makeup kits		return
								props

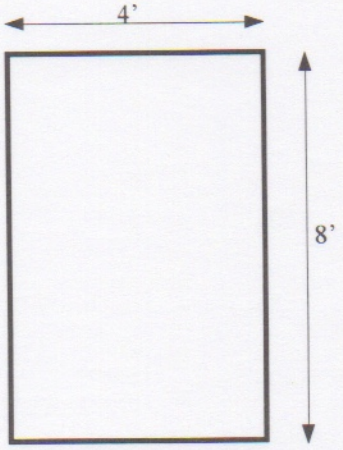
CARPENTER'S ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Choose a piece of furniture in your home. Draw a picture of it. Measure it for width, length and height. Create another drawing of all the pieces that were used to assemble this piece of furniture. Bring your work to your next meeting.

Assignment #2
Try to figure out the most economical way of using a larger piece of wood! If you have a sheet of plywood that is 4 x 8 feet, how would you lay out the following pieces so you have as big a piece as possible left over?

- one piece 2 feet square
- one piece 3 feet long by 1 foot wide
- one piece 6 feet long by 1 foot wide

Reproduce this diagram and your solution on a separate sheet of paper. Make sure the diagram is 4 x 8" (1" = 1' scale).



Assignment # 3
Make a miniature flat and jack out of paper or cardboard that is 4 x 8 inches. (This model has the same proportions as your actual flat and jack but is in the scale of 1 inch = 1 foot.) Now, measure a piece of furniture in your school (bench, desk, locker, etc.) and create a model of it from any material available. But make this model at the scale of 2 inches = 1 foot!

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COMPOSER'S ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Using objects you can find at home (not traditional musical instruments), create a musical composition with a beginning, middle and end. Incorporate what you just learned about the elements of music. Perform the composition for your fellow Composers at the next meeting.

Assignment #2
Develop musical ideas based on your ordinary daily routine (brushing your teeth, riding a bus, eating lunch, etc.)

Now, alter the music to express the same action with a different subtext. (Brushing your teeth when you're angry, riding a school bus by yourself, eating lunch when you are excited.) Bring this music to share with the group.

Assignment #3
Observe two 1/2 hour television programs. For each, take special note of when music is used. Answer the following questions for each occurrence.

- What was the action (if any) during the music?
- Were characters speaking while the music played?
- How did the music make you feel?
- Did the music lead you to expect something would happen? What?

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COSTUME ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Create a character that is your age. Make the person as interesting as possible from the choices below.

Rich	or	Poor
Likes art	or	Likes science
Large family	or	Only child
Summertime	or	Wintertime
Poor student	or	Good student
Lives in the city	or	Lives in the country

List the characteristics you chose here:

Character "A"

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Now, create a costume for Character A. List at least 6 items of clothing (or accessories) that would best reflect the characteristics you have listed above. Explain why you chose each item.

Characteristic	Costume Item	Why?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

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COSTUME ASSIGNMENTS cont.

Assignment #2
Watch a television show or movie and keep a list of the costumes worn by two separate characters. Answer the following questions for each character. Bring your answers to class for discussion.

- What color clothing does the person wear?
- What is the texture and shape of the clothing?
- Is the clothing a certain style?
- Does the clothing reflect his or her personality?
- If not, what traits does the clothing suggest?

Assignment #3
Come up with a list of three possible costume items for each character in your opera. (Do not create the entire costume just yet.) Be specific about the color, texture and shape of each item, and state your reason for choosing it. Bring your list to the next meeting for discussion

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DOCUMENTATION TEAM'S ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Attend an early meeting for each department and distribute to everyone the Initial Interview form. Photograph each member of the company (head and neck only) in front of the same background. This is called a "head shot." Tell all members that you will be collecting the forms and biographies at the next company meeting.

Assignment #2
Now that your company has had a few meetings, visit each department and conduct interviews. Be sure to bring the list of questions you created and try to make them specific to the department you are visiting. Speak clearly if you are being videotaped and be sure the subject is in full view.

After the interview, make some suggestions of interesting things the company members might incorporate in their journals. For example:

- Can you draw a picture of how each part of the company fits together?
- How has keeping the journal affected your experience of the opera?
- How has the job you are doing affected your perception of the people you know and the jobs they hold?

Assignment #3
Visit a local museum or exhibit of any kind. Answer the following questions concerning the exhibit you saw.

- What was the subject of the exhibit?
- Was the exhibit easy to understand?
- How much time did it cover?
- What was the beginning, middle and end of the story?
- How many images were used?
- How were words displayed?
- What colors were used?

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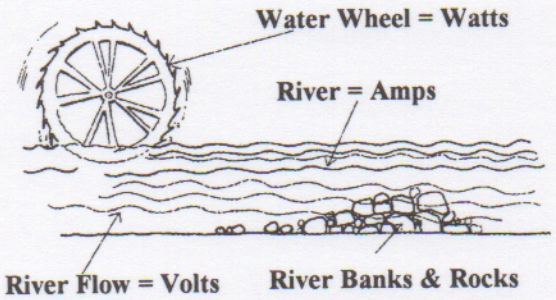
ELECTRICIAN ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Study these terms and the diagram on page 9. You will be tested on this information at your next meeting.

VOLT	The speed or the amount of the water/electricity's current
AMP	The amount of water/electricity available for use
WATT	The amount of water/electricity needed to run something
OHMS	The resistance to the flow of water/electricity



Assignment #2
Convert the following to watts or amps.

WATTS		AMPS
100	=	
_____	=	2.5
5000	=	_____
_____	=	3.0
1000	=	_____
_____	=	4.25
2650	=	_____

Assignment #3
Go to the cafeteria and politely ask for a few of the largest metal cans. (These are number 10 food service size containers.) Wash the cans carefully (the top edge may be sharp) and remove any labels. Bring the cans to your next meeting. (Each can will make two footlights.)

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MAKEUP ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
From a magazine, select several pictures which clearly show people's faces. List the makeup they are wearing and describe it. Is there anything unusual about their makeup? What effect does their makeup convey? Bring your pictures and descriptions into class for discussion.

Assignment #2
Watch a science-fiction program on television. Choose two characters that are very different and describe what facial features were exaggerated to enhance that character's personality.

Create a character by coming up with five inner characteristics that describe him or her. Then create a design for makeup that emphasizes one of these traits. Share your design with your colleagues and see if they can guess which characteristic you have enhanced with makeup.

Assignment #3
Watch a 1/2 hour television program. Follow one character carefully and take note of his or her makeup. How does the makeup change and in what way? What occurs in the story that requires this character to need alterations in their makeup? Bring your notes to the next meeting for discussion.

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PERFORMER ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1 — Biography
Create a character who is very different from you. Give this character a name, a stance (way of standing) or gesture, and a past. Write a biography of this character which covers their family (number of siblings, names, birth order, family problems), any important occurrences in their life, and at least one major event that helped make them who they are.

Write this biography and bring it to your next meeting.

Assignment #2 — Monologue
Prepare a monologue to be spoken by the character you created in Assignment #1. Pay special attention to the way your character uses speech and body language. This monologue will be performed at your next meeting in front of the Director and other Performers.

Assignment #3 — Subtext
Beneath every line your character says in the script, write a subtext appropriate both to the scene and to your character's biography. Also take into account your relationship with the other characters. Write it in pencil, as it may change. Be prepared to read a scene using subtext only.

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PRODUCTION MANAGER ASSIGNMENTS

Contact Sheet
It is important for you to have the contact information for every member of your company so that you can contact them if there is a last-minute schedule change. Make a list of every member of your company. Include:

- job title
- correct spelling of first and last name
- phone number
- address

Available Working Space Chart
Research and make a list of every room that is available for use by the opera company. Plot these rooms and the hours they are available on a weekly schedule.

Auditorium Schedule
Find out who is responsible for scheduling events in the auditorium or performance space. Contact that person and get a current copy of the schedule. Make sure your opera company's performance dates are on the schedule, as well as times for dress rehearsal and tech rehearsals.

Create a Master Calendar
Make a calendar that incorporates all the months during which the opera company will work. (This might be three months or the whole school year.) List all possible conflicts with your production schedule. Conflicts might be weekends, national holidays, test days, planned trips, school vacations, etc. You will refer to this master calendar to create a production schedule/ calendar.

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PRODUCTION MANAGER ASSIGNMENTS cont.

Production Schedule

Create a production schedule that spans from the first meeting to the final performance. On this schedule, indicate all conflicts simply by drawing an x through the day or half day. Everything you write should pertain only to opera activities.

Confirm the dates of your performance(s) and enter them on the appropriate day. Enter "Strike" one or one-half day after the final performance. Move backward in time and mark as many of the "products" of the various departments as you can on the calendar. Try to see if you can predict when the company should move from creation to production. Use a pencil. Your Director or teacher will help you complete this production schedule.

Write Your Speech

It is your job to deliver the welcoming speech to the audience before each performance. You will be the first person the audience sees. The speech should include the company name, the title of the show and what the show is about. Then talk about the company and how the show was created. Make sure to thank everyone who has provided support and contributed materials, services or money to your production

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PUBLIC RELATIONS ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Look through newspapers and magazines and cut out 5-10 logos. Paste them onto a piece of paper and bring them to your next meeting for group discussion.

Assignment #2
Collect a variety of local newspapers that contain articles covering children's events, arts education, music, opera or theater. Also, make a list of local radio and TV stations. Bring these items to your next meeting.

Assignment #3
Observe posters that you see on the street or in school. Choose one poster and write down your responses to the following questions.

- Why did this poster grab your attention?
- What colors were used?
- What line? What texture? What shape?
- How is the information positioned on the paper?
- What type of lettering was used?

Create an abstract design using the color, texture, shape and line that best represents the theme of your opera.

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SET DESIGNER ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Use your sketch with measurements to create a scale drawing of the stage. You may use any scale you wish (1 foot =1/2", 1 foot = 1/4", 1 foot =1") although the size of the available paper may determine which scale you use.

Assignment #2
1. Create an abstract design that uses the line, shape, color(s) and texture you decided upon for your theme. Bring this design to your next meeting.

2. Concept box
Use a shoe box in any way you like to make a three dimensional "environment" that uses the color, line, texture and shape of your theme. Remember, this is still an *abstract* design. There should not be any recognizable items (figures, furniture, etc.) in your concept box. Concentrate on trying to express your feelings about the theme using the visual vocabulary of color, line, shape and texture.

Assignment #3
Create a model to scale of the stage and set. This is a three-dimensional version of your original scale drawing of the stage. Include all set design elements. You can even make scale models of your Performers!

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STAGE MANAGER ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
For your Stage Manager audition, you created a company callboard. Now make an official version. Be sure to leave space for the company name and logo. Make a sign-in sheet so company members can check in each day. Create a space for the production calendar, a weekly schedule, and a place for special announcements in case of schedule changes or other important news.

Assignment #2
A responsible Stage Manager is never seen without his or her "prompt book". Create your prompt book by placing the script in a 3-ring binder and adding a few blank pages for notes. Collect copies of the music from the Composers and include these as well. Put your prop sheet in the back of this book.

Assignment #3
Make a diagram of your performance space including all backstage areas available (there is an example on page 10). Copy this diagram three times.

Use these copies to create a "backstage places" diagram for the beginning of each scene. Keep these diagrams in your prompt book.

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WRITER'S ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment #1
Create a list of 20 or more adjectives that could describe a person on the inside. Make sure to include both "positive" and "negative" characteristics. Be specific and imaginative. Do not use adjectives that describe physical appearance (tall, curly hair). Bring this list to class for discussion. You will build characters together from your lists.

Assignment #2
Observe a 1/2 hour TV show or select a book that you have read. Determine what the main conflict is and who is involved. Write down this information and bring your work to the next meeting.

Assignment #3
Take a story that you know and simplify it to fit this format. Bring your work to the next meeting.

Section	Example	Your Story
Beginning "Exposition" (Main characters & relationships introduced. Problem presented.)	*"A" yearns for a place where dreams come true. Twister carries A to faraway land.*	
LOCATION	*A Farm*	
Middle "Development" (All characters introduced. Problem evolves.)	*A meets B, C & D. They try to help A get home. "E" tries to prevent this in order to get A's magic shoes.*	
LOCATION	*A Fantasy World*	
End "Resolution" (Problem resolved, character has changed.)	*"A" succeeds in returning home. Realizes "there's no place like home."*	
LOCATION	*A Farm*	

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Tool Box Inventory Sheet

		Start	Finish			
Item	Comment	#	#			
Hammers		4				
Saws		3				
Screwdrivers						
Phillips		4				
Flathead		4				
Tape Measures		2				
Tin Snips		2				
Knives		4				
Staple Gun		1				
Chalk Line		1				
Glue Gun		1				
Ruler		1				
PAINT SUPPLIES:						
Dropcloths		2				
Roller		1				
Roller Pan		1				
Roller Covers		2				
Large Brushes		2				
Small Brushes		2				
Foam Brushes		3				
Stirring Stick		1				

Cable Box Inventory

		Start	Finish			
ITEM	COMMENT	#	#			
Power Cords		2				
Long Ext. Cords		4				
6' Ext. Cords		10				
Lamp Bases		16				
Dimmers		5				
Dimmer Boxes		5				
Switchplates		5				
Special Light		1				
100w Bulbs		16				
Special 150w Bulb		1				
Rubber Mat		1				
Multi-Plugs		3				
Flashlights		3				
Batteries		6				
Piano Light		1				
Electrical Tape		1 roll				
Black Spray Paint		1 can				
Amber Gel		1 sheet				
Blue Gel		1 sheet				
Red Gel		1 sheet				

Supply Inventory

		Start	Finish			
ITEM	COMMENT	#	#			
Duct Tape		2 rolls				
Sharpies		2				
Caulk		1 tube				
Staples		2				
3/4" Carpet Tacks		2 pkgs				
1" Wood Screws		2 pkgs				
Electrical Caps		18				
3/4" Brads		2 pkgs				
7/8" Roofing Nails		1pkgs				
2 1/2" Hinges		5				
Hot Glue		1 Pkg				
Wood Glue		2 tubes				
Chalk		1				
PAINT:						
White Base		1 gal.				
Black		1 qt.				
Colors (asst.) R,B,G,Y		4 qt.				

Make-Up Box Inventory Sheet

		Start	Finish			
ITEM	COMMENT	#	#			
Sharpeners		2				
Brown Eye Pencils		6				
Black Eye Pencils		6				
White Eye Pencils		2				
Foundations						
Dark		4				
Medium		4				
Light		4				
Powder						
Dark		1				
Light		1				
Highlighter		1				
Cotton Balls		1 pkg				
Brushes		6				
Hand Mirror		1				
Stand Mirror		1				
Paper Towels		1 roll				
Tissues		1 lrg bx				
Hair Pins		1 pkg				
Baby Wipes		1 lrg bx				
Blending Sponges		2 pkgs				
Lipsticks		10 ast.				
Lipliner Pencils		8 ast.				
Eyeshadows		5 ast.				
Blushes		5 ast.				
Q-tips		1 lrg bx				
Cold Cream		2 lrg				

Public Relations Box Inventory Sheet

		Start	Finish			
ITEM	COMMENT	#	#			
3x5 Index Cards		1 pkg				
MOG Envelopes		80				
Scissors		2				
Sharpeners		2				
Black Magic Markers		2				
Multi-Colored Markers		2 pkgs				
Rulers		2				
Pens						
Blue		4				
Black		4				
Red		4				
Pencils		6				
Post-it Pads		2				
Paper Clips		2 bx				
Masking Tape		2 rolls				
Clear Tape		1 rolls				
Glue Stick		2				
Small Paper Roll		1				

Instrument Box Inventory Sheet

		Start	Finish			
Item	Comment	#	#			
Soprano Xylophone						
Alto Xylophone						
Alto Metallophone						
Keyboard						
MIDI Keyboard						
PERCUSSION:						
Guiro						
Guiro Sticks						
Sand Blocks						
Smooth Blocks						
Castanets						
Maracas						
Shakers						
Cymbal						
Jingle Bells						
Triangle						
Tambourine						
Drum/Bongos						
Wood Blocks						

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David Dik is the Program Director for the Met's school residency and teacher training programs. He also served as a Resident Artist in both of these programs. Mr. Dik was involved in the overall development and production of the Curriculum Resource Guide and served as the editor for the revision process. He served as the Director of Choral Activities in New York's Calhoun School for four years and Associate Director of the New York State Music Camp and Institute at Hartwick College for four years. Mr. Dik holds a B.M. in Music Education from SUNY-Potsdam, a M.M. in Choral Conducting from Westminster Choir College, and a M.Ed. in Administration and Supervision from Brooklyn College. He has held various positions with NYSSMA (New York State School Music Association) and COMTEP (Council on Music Teacher Education Programs.)

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Lilian Fleshman is a composer, singer, storyteller and music and arts specialist in the New York City public school system. She is involved in curriculum writing and staff development and is currently a Master Teacher in the Education at the Met training program. She serves as the Executive Vice President of the Board for the Mind Builders Creative Arts Center and an arts volunteer in a nursing home for the elderly. Ms. Fleshman received her master's degree from Manhattan School of Music.

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Jonathan Levi is a co-founder of *Granta*, the British literary magazine. He has written and directed for the stage and is the author of a novel, *A Guide for the Perplexed.* He is also a jazz violinist and currently performs in New York with the Savannah Sheiks. Mr. Levi is one of the resident artists in the Met's "Creating Original Opera" program and teaches writing and other workshops in the teacher training series in New York and around the country. He has a B.A. in Comparative Literature from Yale University and an M.A. in English from Cambridge University.

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Greg Pliska has been an Artist in Residence with the Metropolitan Opera Education Department since 1986. His latest composition, an operatic adaptation of *The Secret Garden* was commissioned by the Pennsylvania Opera Theater and premiered in 1991. He is composer, lyricist, and writer of many music-theater pieces, including *If The Shoe Fits*, a fabulist allegory of the Marcos regime, developed with Lake George Opera and shown on Albany television. Greg serves as Faculty Composer and Resident Musical Director for the Musical Theatre Program at New York University, and has been Music Director of the Berkshire Ensemble for Theater Arts in Williamstown, Mass., for three years.

Jane Remer is a free-lance editor, writer and program and evaluation consultant in education, the arts, and the arts in education. She served as the evaluator/program consultant during the original Curriculum Resource Guide developmental stages. She has worked for over twenty-five years with public and private arts and education agencies at the Federal, state and local levels and served as Associate Director of the John D. Rockefeller 3rd Fund's Arts in Education Program. She is also the Grants and Program Director for the Ballet Makers Dance Foundation. Ms. Remer is the author of CHANGING SCHOOLS THROUGH THE ARTS (McGraw-Hill, 1991) and holds a B.A. from Oberlin College and an M.A. in Teaching from Yale University.

Bruce Taylor is a co-originator of the Met's school residency model and teacher workshop model and was key in laying the foundation for the Curriculum Resource Guide. He has worked with the Met Opera Guild Education Department since 1980 and is an artist-teacher in the residency and teacher workshop program. He has worked for twenty years in the fields of theater, dance and opera and has professional

Credits as stage director, production and stage manager, technical director. Mr. Taylor has worked for such companies as the Pennsylvania Opera Theater, Opera Company of Philadelphia, Seattle Opera Association and Opera Metropolitan in Caracas, Venezuela, the Pacific Northwest Ballet and London Dance Theater. He has also served as a consultant to other opera companies. Mr. Taylor is a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, England.

Peter Hoyle has been an Artist in-Residence with the Metropolitan Opera Education Department since 1999. He is a visual artist as well as a composer and writer. His visual art is included in the collections of Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the Fogg Museum of Art and other public and private collections in the United States and Europe. Peter has written and illustrated a number of children's books including *The Riddle of Grandfather's Song* which he is currently adapting as a full length operetta for children.

Judith Lane has been an Artist-in-Residence with the Metropolitan Opera Guild Education Department since 1994. She is also a composer/librettist and has written a variety of music-theatre pieces ranging from children's musicals to large-scale music-theatre pieces and operas. She was recently commissioned by the Children's Opera Company of Ossining to write an opera for young performers; this will be her second in this genre. Her works have been performed in New York, Vermont, California and Washington, D.C. She has received an ASCAP Award for her work in the Creating Original Opera Program, as well as the BRIO Award for Playwriting. In 1998 her first children's book "Buster, Where Are You?" was published. She is a member of ASCAP, the American Composer's Forum, the Dramatist's Guild and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators.

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