

BROADWAY 101

A Comprehensive Study Guide
covering everything that is Broadway.

THEATER VOCABULARY

Now that you've explored: playwriting, theatrical design, directing, acting, specs and design details for a theater space as well as how to review live theater, you're more than ready to learn some jargon of the theater industry.

Below are some select terms and careers in the theater.

Ad lib: If you "go up," chances are someone else will "ad lib" -- improvise lines -- until you remember what it is you are supposed to say.

Artistic choices: Selections made by Theater artists about situation, action, direction, and design in order to convey meaning.

Black box theater: The interiors of most black box theaters are painted black. The absence of color gives the audience a sense of "any place" and allows flexibility from play to play / scene to scene. Since almost any open space in any building can be transformed into a black box, the popularity and appeal for theater companies to use this type of performance space is high.

Blocking: Where the actors move on stage. The Stage Manager writes the blocking notation into the Prompt Script.

Body mike: Portable microphones that actors wear hidden on their bodies to amplify their voices. You can usually see the tiny microphones somewhere around their hairline -- they are attached to battery packs, usually around the waist.

Bus and truck: A term for a smaller tour, when the actors travel by bus and the scenery goes in a truck.

Call: The time an actor is required to be in the theater before a show or for rehearsal. Once a performance schedule begins, the "call" is half an hour before curtain time.

Cattle call: An audition where hundreds of actors show up to get a five minute...or less...audition.

Central dramatic question: The line of action that drives a play.

Character: A person portrayed in a drama, novel, or other artistic piece.

Chewing the scenery: One step beyond mugging.

Costume: Anything that an actor wears on stage is referred to as a costume. The Wardrobe department (the department responsible for creating costumes) provides clothes, shoes, hats, and any personal accessories such as umbrellas, purses and eyeglasses.

Creative drama: Process-centered, non-exhibitional form of drama in which participants are guided by a leader to imagine, enact, and reflect upon human experiences.

Cues: If you're an actor, your cue is the line that comes before yours. To "pick up the cues" means to shorten the space between lines and quicken the pace of a scene.

Cyclorama: A curved wall or drop at the back of a stage, used for creating an illusion of unlimited space or distance in the background of exterior scenes or for obtaining lighting effects.

Dark: The nights when there is no performance in the theater, it is "dark." Broadway shows usually have only one "dark" day a week.

Designer: The people who work with the director to decide what the production will look like. Designers must choose the color, shape and texture of everything you see on the stage. There are several areas that need to have designers: costumes, set, lighting and sometimes sound. The designers work very closely with the director to create the environment in which the play will take place.

Director: The person who guides the actors during the rehearsal period as they stage the play. The director is responsible for presenting a unified vision of the play to the audience.

Drama: The art of composing, writing, acting, or producing plays; a literary composition intended to portray life character or tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions exhibited through action and dialogue, designed for theatrical performance.

Dramatic media: Means of telling stories by way of stage, film, television, radio, or computer discs.

Dramatic play: Spontaneous dramatic enactment often done by children pretending or imitating while playing.

Dramaturg: Literary advisor, supplier of information about past productions and interpretations of scripts and about the milieu out of which a play has come.

Drop: A drop is a large piece of painted canvas that is "flown in" by the flyman (see FLYMAN).

Electronic media: Means of communication characterized by the use of technology, radio, computers, etc. (e.g., virtual reality).

Emotional recall: Remembering specific emotions such as fear, joy, anger, etc.

Environment: Physical surroundings that establish place, time, and atmosphere/mood; the physical conditions that reflect and affect the emotions, thoughts, and actions of characters.

Flyman: The person responsible for the manipulation of the scenery, which is in the fly gallery (the space above the stage). The scenery is manipulated by ropes attached to a counterweight system.

Formal production: The staging of a dramatic work for presentation for an audience.

Go up: If you forget a line, you've "gone up."

Green room: The green room, usually near the entrance to the stage, is where the actors & crew sit while waiting for their turn to go on stage.

Ground plan: A floor plan for a scenic design as if seen from above.

Guided practice: A class or creative drama activity or dramatization prompted and/or facilitated by the teacher.

Gypsy: A chorus performer who moves from show to show.

Head of wardrobe: Responsible for the day-to-day running of the wardrobe department and for unifying all aspects of production. For example, the head of wardrobe oversees the budget, tailoring (including the cutters, first_hands, seamstresses, dyers, etc.), accessories, and millinery.

Head of wigs: The person who makes, styles, applies and maintains all of the wigs and facials for production. They are responsible for implementing the designers' wishes and ensuring that continuity is maintained throughout the course of the run. The department is also responsible for setting, shaping and maintaining the acting company's own hair while on contract.

Imitate: To copy or mimic the actions, appearance, mannerisms, or speech of others.

Improvisation: The spontaneous use of body, voice and mind to explore, create or present Theater.

Independent practice: A group, partner or individual activity or dramatization developed and executed by the student or students.

Intrapersonal: Existing or occurring within the individual self or mind.

Kinesthetic: Resulting from the sensation of bodily position, presence, or movement.

Master teacher: Recognized authority in a specific discipline of Theater.

Milliner: The person who makes the hats, which the actors wear on stage.

Mood: The feeling a work of art gives.

Movement: An expression of ideas or thought through gesture or transfer of weight.

Mugging: Making faces and over exaggerating lines, trying too hard to get a laugh. "Boy, was Bob mugging tonight!"

New art forms: The novel combination of traditional arts and materials with emerging technology (such as performance art, videodisks, virtual reality).

Non-western Theater: Theater not originated in Europe or the United States such as Theater created and developed in Africa or Asia.

Objective: In Theater, the desired goal of a character that motivates action.

Orchestra pit: The orchestra pit is the place where the musicians perform during a musical. Usually the orchestra pit is between the front row of the audience & the stage.

Pantomime: A situation where a performer relies totally on gesture, facial expression, and movement, rather than speech, for enactment of his material.

Plot: In literature, is the action of the story; in Theater, is the action of the story presented on stage, which includes exposition, rising action, climax and falling action.

Portfolio: Collected evidence representative of a student's work to include journal entries, technical design work, programs, original scripts or critiques, performance videos, research papers, and other items related to Theater study.

Production organization chart: A written and/or pictorial representation that demonstrates the structure and flow necessary to the development and presentation of a theatrical production.

Prompt book: The stage manager's copy of the script in which are noted all the blocking and technical cues.

Props: A property or "prop" is anything that the audience sees that is not worn by an actor & is not a structural part of the set such as: food eaten during a play, dishes, briefcases, books, pens, telephones, curtains & anything else you can imagine.

Props master: The person who buys items that will be used or adapted to become props. Props masters also purchase the raw material used to build props.

Proscenium: A term describing the physical characteristics of a theater. A proscenium theater is one in which the audience & the actors are separated by a picture frame opening that the audience looks through to see the actors. Surrounding this opening is the PROSCENIUM ARCH. If there is an acting area on the audience side of the proscenium arch, it is referred to as the APRON.

Role: The characteristics and expected social behavior of an individual in a given position (e.g., mother, employer, etc.). Role portrayal is likely to be more predictable and one-dimensional than character portrayal.

Role-playing: Improvising movement and dialogue to put oneself in another's place in a particular situation and often to examine the person(s) and/or situation(s) being improvised.

Scenery: The scenery constructed for a theatrical performance.

Scenic artist: The people who are responsible for painting & decorating the surfaces of the set. Some of the techniques they use include: wood graining, stenciling, marbling & brickwork. They also paint the drops & scrims that are flown in.

Scrim: A scrim is a piece of gauze that is painted and used as part of the scenery. When a scrim is lit from in front it is opaque, you cannot see through it. When a scrim is lit from behind it is transparent, you can see through it. This allows for many different visual effects to be created by the lighting & set designers.

Script: The written dialogue, description, and directions provided by the playwright.

Senses: The means through which the body feels and perceives to include seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting.

Stage carpenter: The person who ensures that everything runs smoothly on stage during a performance. The stage carpenter and stage crew are responsible for changing the sets between scenes and acts.

Stage crew: The people who ensure that everything runs smoothly on stage during a performance. The stage crew is responsible for changing the sets between scenes & acts.

Stage manager: The person who makes sure that all rehearsals & performances run smoothly. During a performance the stage manager also makes sure that all of the technical elements (e.g., lights, sound, curtains flying in and out) happen at exactly the right time.

Setting: When and where a story or drama takes place.

Side-coaching: A technique used during dramatic activities or rehearsals, in which the teacher offers suggestions or comments from the side to heighten and advance the action.

Situation: A combination of circumstances at a given moment.

Special effects: Visual or sound effects used to enhance a theatrical performance.

Shtik: A surefire piece of "business" (stage action) that gets a laugh.

Subtext: Information that is implied but not stated by a character; thoughts or actions of a character that do not express the same meaning as the character's spoken words.

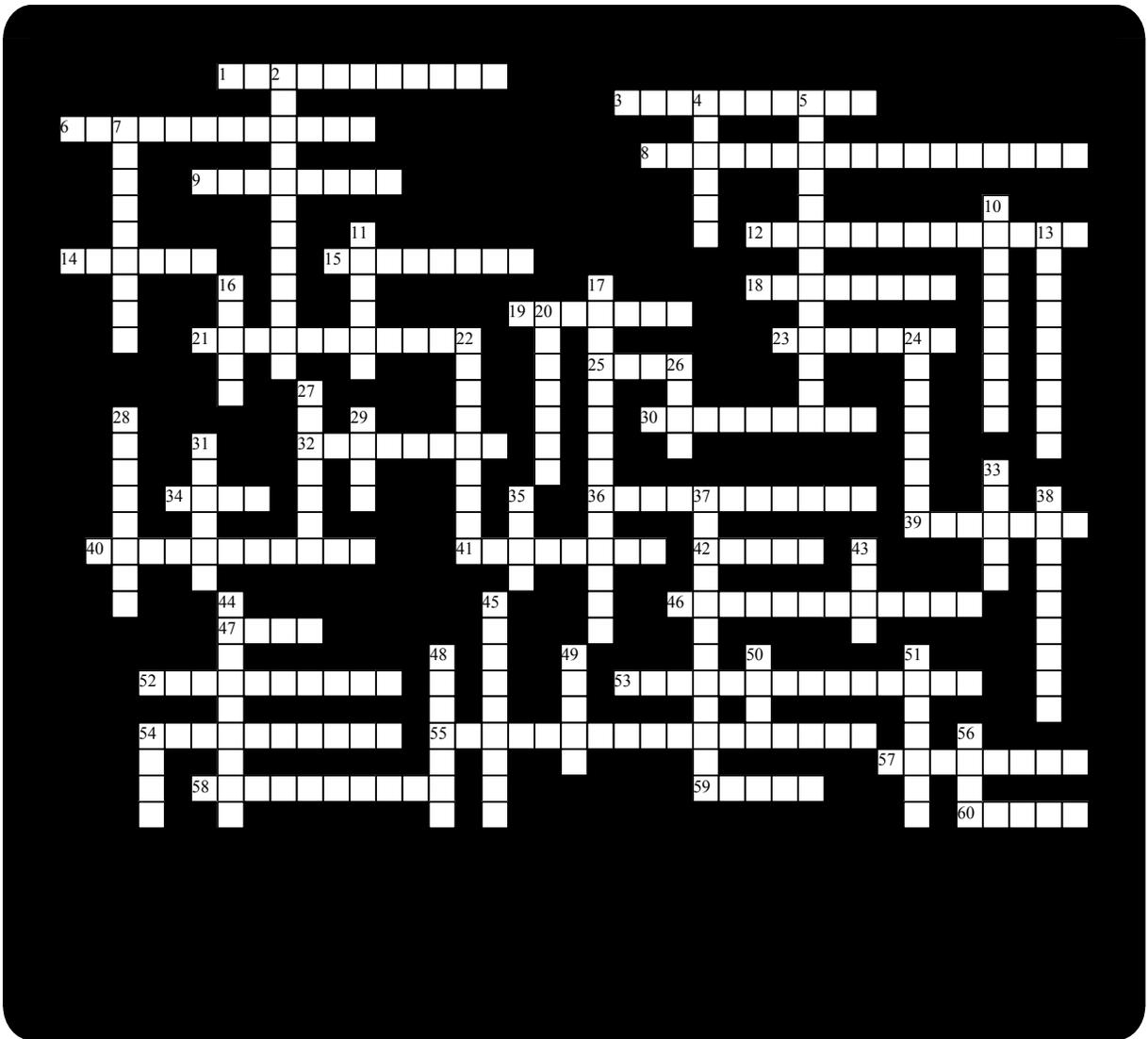
Take: An exaggerated reaction to a comic line. Sometimes it's big enough to be a "double take." Or, you might do a "take" to the audience -- look out at the audience and maybe lift an eyebrow.

Technical director: The person who is responsible for coordinating all of the technical elements of a production. Technical directors work with the people who build the sets, props, costumes, wigs & special effects to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

The road: Everything outside of New York. When a show tours, you "take it on the road."

Thrust stage: A thrust stage is a stage that is surrounded on three sides by the audience.

Theater Terms & Careers



Across:	Down:
<p>1 - A term for a smaller tour, when the actors travel by bus and the scenery goes in a truck.</p> <p>3 - A term describing the physical characteristics of a theater. A _____ theater is one in which the audience and the actors are separated by a picture-frame opening that the audience looks through to see the actors. Surrounding this opening is the _____ arch.</p> <p>6 - The place where the musicians perform during a musical; usually is between the front row of the audience & the stage.</p> <p>8 - Theatre not originated in Europe or the United States such as theatre created and developed in Africa or Asia.</p> <p>9 - The person who guides the actors during the rehearsal period as they stage the play. He/she is responsible for presenting a unified vision of the play to the audience.</p> <p>12 - The spontaneous use of body, voice and mind to explore, create or present theatre.</p> <p>14 - The written dialogue, description, and directions provided by the playwright.</p> <p>15 - A type of theatre with the interiors usually painted black. The absence of color gives the audience a sense of "any place" and allows flexibility from play to play / scene-to-scene.</p> <p>18 - Department responsible for the day-to-day running and for unifying all aspects of production as it relates to wardrobe such as tailoring (including the cutters, first?hands, seamstresses, dyers, etc.), accessories, and millinery.</p> <p>19 - To copy or mimic the actions, appearance, mannerisms, or speech of others.</p> <p>21 - Improvising movement and dialogue to put oneself in another's place in a particular situation and often to examine the person(s) and/or situation(s) being improvised.</p> <p>23 - Anything that an actor wears on stage. The Wardrobe department provides clothes, shoes, hats, and any personal accessories such as umbrellas, purses and eyeglasses.</p> <p>25 - If you forget a line, you've "gone up."</p> <p>30 - Collected evidence representative of a student's work to include journal entries,</p>	<p>2 - The person who makes sure that all rehearsals and performances run smoothly. During a performance this position also makes sure that all of the technical elements (e.g., lights, sound, curtains flying in and out) happen at exactly the right time.</p> <p>4 - The means through which the body feels and perceives to include seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting.</p> <p>5 - Existing within the individual self or mind.</p> <p>7 - A curved wall or drop at the back of a stage, used for creating an illusion of unlimited space or distance in the background of exterior scenes or for obtaining lighting effects.</p> <p>10 - People who ensure that everything runs smoothly on stage during a performance and are responsible for changing the sets.</p> <p>11 - The person responsible for the manipulation of the scenery, which is in the fly gallery (the space above the stage). The scenery is manipulated by ropes attached to a counterweight system.</p> <p>13 - In theatre, the desired goal of a character that motivates action.</p> <p>16 - Short for property; is anything that the audience sees that is not worn by an actor and is not a structural part of the set such as: food eaten during a play, dishes, briefcases, books, pens, telephones, curtains & anything else you can imagine.</p> <p>17 - The person who ensures that everything runs smoothly on stage during a performance. The position (along with the stage crew) are responsible for changing the sets between scenes and acts.</p> <p>20 - Making faces and over exaggerating lines, trying too hard to get a laugh. "Boy, was Bob _____ tonight!"</p> <p>22 - A space usually near the entrance to the stage, is where the actors & crew sit while waiting for their turn to go on stage.</p> <p>24 - An expression of ideas or thought through gesture or transfer of weight.</p> <p>26 - In literature, is the action of the story; in theatre, is the action of the story presented on stage, which includes exposition, rising action, climax and falling action.</p>

technical design work, programs, original scripts or critiques, performance videos, research papers, and other items related to theatre study.

32 - Where the actors move on stage. The Stage Manager writes the blocking notation into the Prompt Script.

34 - A drop is a large piece of painted canvas that is 'flown in' by the flyman (see FLYMAN).

36 - The person who buys items that will be used or adapted to become props. Props masters also purchase the raw material used to build props.

39 - Everything outside of New York. When a show tours, you "take it on the ____."

40 - Resulting from the sensation of bodily position, presence, or movement.

41 - The person who makes the hats, which the actors wear on stage.

42 - The art of composing, writing, acting, or producing plays; a literary composition intended to portray life character or tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions exhibited through action and dialogue, designed for theatrical performance.

46 - The people who are responsible for painting and decorating the surfaces of the set. Some of the techniques they use include: wood graining, stenciling, marbling and brickwork. They also paint the drops & scrims that are flown in.

47 - The characteristics and expected social behavior of an individual in a given position (e.g., mother, employer, etc.).

52 - The stage manager's copy of the script in which are noted all the blocking and technical cues.

53 - Visual or sound effects used to enhance a theatrical performance.

54 - An audition where hundreds of actors show up to get a five minute or less audition.

55 - The person who is responsible for coordinating all of the technical elements of a production. This position works with the people who build the sets, props, costumes, wigs and special effects to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

57 - The people who work with the director to decide what the production will look like;

27 - Information that is implied but not stated by a character; thoughts or actions of a character that do not express the same meaning as the character's spoken words.

28 - Portable microphones that actors wear hidden on their bodies to amplify their voices. You can usually see the tiny microphones somewhere around their hairline -- they are attached to battery packs, usually around the waist.

29 - The feeling a work of art gives.

31 - A type of stage that is surrounded on three sides by the audience.

33 - A piece of gauze that is painted and used as part of the scenery. When a ____ is lit from in front it is opaque, you cannot see through it. When a ____ is lit from behind it is transparent, you can see through it. This allows for many different visual effects to be created by the lighting & set designers.

35 - The time an actor is required to be in the theater before a show or for rehearsal. Once a performance schedule begins, the "____" is half an hour before curtain time.

37 - A technique used during dramatic activities or rehearsals, in which the teacher offers suggestions or comments from the side to heighten and advance the action.

38 - A situation where a performer relies totally on gesture, facial expression, and movement, rather than speech, for enactment of his material.

43 - The nights when there is no performance in the theater, it is "dark." Broadway shows usually have only one "dark" day a week.

44 - Literary advisor, supplier of information about past productions and interpretations of scripts and about the milieu out of which a play has come.

45 - A person portrayed in a drama, novel, or other artistic piece.

48 - When and where a story or drama takes place.

49 - If you "go up," chances are someone else will "____" -- improvise lines -- until you remember what it is you are supposed to say.

50 - An exaggerated reaction to a comic line. Sometimes it's big enough to be a "double ____." Or, you might do a "____" to the audience -- look out at the audience and

<p>they must choose the color, shape and texture of everything you see on the stage such as costumes, set, lighting and sometimes sound.</p> <p>58 - A floor plan for a scenic design as if seen from above.</p> <p>59 - A chorus performer who moves from show to show.</p> <p>60 - A surefire piece of "business" (stage action) that gets a laugh.</p>	<p>maybe lift an eyebrow.</p> <p>51 - The scenery constructed for a theatrical performance.</p> <p>54 - If you're an actor, this is the line that comes before yours. To "pick up the ____" means to shorten the space between lines and quicken the pace of a scene.</p> <p>56 - Department that creates, styles, applies and maintains all of the wigs and facials for production. Responsible for implementing the designers' wishes and ensuring that continuity is maintained throughout the course of the run. The department is also responsible for setting, shaping and maintaining the acting company's own hair while on contract.</p>
<p>Possible Answers:</p> <p>Ad lib, Black Box, Blocking, Body Mike, Bus and Truck, Call, Cattle Call, Character, Costume, Cues, Cyclorama, Dark, Designer, Director, Drama, Dramaturg, Drop, Flyman, Go Up, Green Room, Ground Plan, Gypsy, Imitate, Improvisation, Intrapersonal, Kinesthetic, Milliner, Mood, Movement, Mugging, Non-western Theatre, Objective, Orchestra Pit, Pantomime, Plot, Portfolio, Prompt Book, Props, Props Master, Proscenium, Role, Role Playing, Scenery, Scenic Artist, Scrim, Script, Senses, Setting, Shtik, Side-coaching, Special Effects, Stage Carpenter, Stage Crew, Stage Manager, Subtext, Take, Technical Director, The Road, Thrust, Wardrobe, Wigs</p>	

Theater Terms & Careers

