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Name _____

Period _____

Expectations

Like any other class, having clearly defined rules and expectations and ensuring that they are followed and enforced makes for a well-organized class. Even though theatre is very different from math, science, language, and social studies, the expectations are basically the same: complete the work when, where, and how the teacher instructs. Likewise, rehearsals and performances have the same basic standards, as do most professions outside of the theatre.

The first rule for most theatre classes and for rehearsals is to bring your script and a pencil each day. You should not use ink in your script, because your stage directions will likely change prior to your performance. You never want to be late to class or rehearsal because you forgot your script, and you should never make the rest of the cast wait while you search for a pencil. If needed, keep one on a string attached to your script.

The second rule of theatre is to stay on task and with your group. In the competitive world of professional acting, there are many who want to be cast in plays, movies, and commercials. When working on a tight schedule or within a budget, time becomes very valuable. Actors who waste time are considered liabilities and will not be cast. In your theatre class, time is valuable and you are also sharing a small space with a large number of other students. Each student must be conscious of those who are trying to work and be a reliable partner to those in his or her own group. In the event that you find yourself without a partner for a day, work quietly on your own or assist others with their scenes.

Finally, while ironing out the wrinkles in your scene, find ways to improve the performance without being negative or hurtful. Rather than saying, "That looks stupid," you might say, "That's one way of doing it, but we can also try..." If you cannot think of a positive way to give criticism, then it probably does not need to be said. Use tact when offering advice, and remember that there is more than one correct way of doing things.

During class performances, students should get out everything they will need prior to the first actor taking the stage. If you are evaluating, you will need your worksheet, a pen, and your

script if you are performing that day. In a busy classroom, the sound of a zipper on a backpack or the crackle of a piece of paper is hardly noticeable. However, when everyone is quiet and focused on an actor on stage, every little noise is magnified and can become a terrible distraction. Likewise, having everyone wait on you while you dig for your script prior to your own performance can seem like an eternity. Do you want your audience to resent having to wait for you before evaluating your performance?

While others are performing, be supportive and courteous. Do not make noises, faces, or quick movements that might be construed as an attempt to distract them. After their performances, if the teacher allows, clap heartily to show your appreciation.

Finally, during and between performances, each student should stay in his or her seat to avoid distracting the actors and audience. Both you and the teacher will need the time between each group to fill out the evaluation worksheet. The next group may use this time to set the stage for their scene, and if others are moving about, they will be in the way. Once a scene has begun, the students sitting closest to the door will need to gesture to visitors to wait until it ends before entering the room. It will also be helpful to have a sign laminated and ready to post on the door prior to each performance.

You will soon discover that having a positive and supportive environment creates a performance climate that makes everyone more confident and comfortable.