

**Today's Activities**

**November 6, 2006**

**“Stage Geography” and “Blocking”**

from *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Amateur Theatricals* by John Kenrick [15 points possible]

*Objective:* Learn about basic stagecraft and stage direction. NOTE: this text is written with the director in mind, but is especially useful to actors.

*Method:* Read the handout. Consider how you would use this information and advice. Answer the questions below. You may quote the text.

*Vocabulary:*

Downstage – at or toward the front of the stage.

Upstage – on or toward the back of the stage; to overshadow (another performer) by moving upstage and forcing the performer to turn away from the audience.

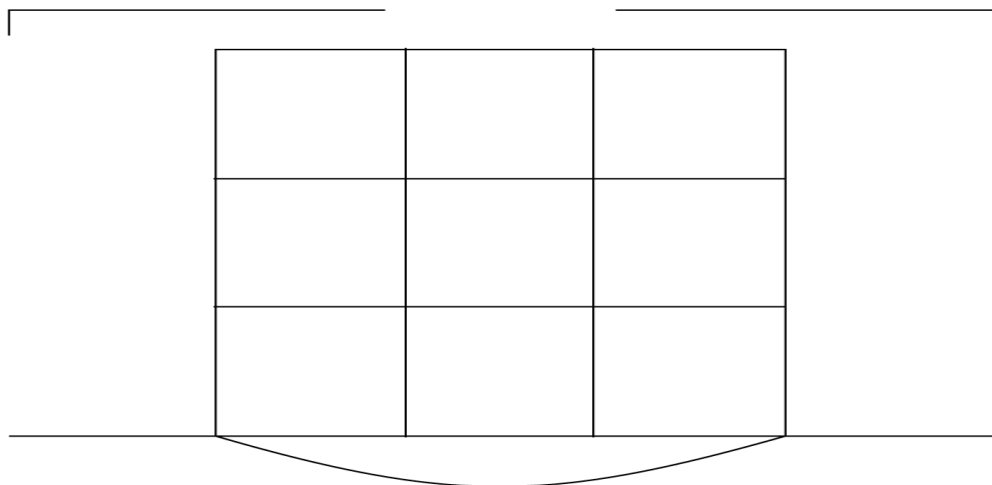
Proscenium – the arch or apron that separates a stage from the auditorium.

Soliloquy – an utterance or discourse by a person who is talking to himself or herself or is disregarding or oblivious to any hearers present (often used as a device in drama to disclose a character's innermost thoughts).

*Supplemental information:*

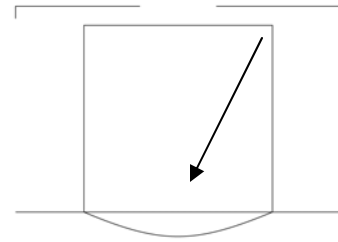
Stages in ancient outdoor theaters were tilted so that the edge closest to the audience was lower. In this way, the action at the back of the stage could be seen more easily. This is why we use the terms *downstage* and *upstage*.

1. All stage regions are defined from the \_\_\_\_\_ perspective; in other words, as they relate to an \_\_\_\_\_ facing the \_\_\_\_\_. (1 point)
2. In the diagram below, label the stage geography (write the words). (3 points)

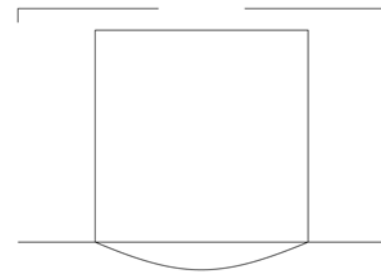


*Supplemental information:*

In stage directions, the locations are often written in abbreviations: U for up, D for down, C for center, L for left and R for right. U.R. would be up right. "Moves a step D.L." would be stepping toward the down left corner of the stage. "Exits R.C." would be an actor leaving the stage through the right center exit. In the diagram on the right, you see an arrow showing an actor moving from U.L. to D.C.



3. In the diagram on the right, draw a circle in R.C. Draw an X in U.L. Then draw an arrow from U.C. to D.L. (2 points)



4. Where did we probably get the term "blocking"? (1 point)

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5. What three considerations should we keep in mind when designing stage blocking? ( 1 point) \_\_\_\_\_

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6. What is  *Dressing the stage*? (1 point) \_\_\_\_\_

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7. What is  *cheating*? (1 point) \_\_\_\_\_

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8. Why is simplicity okay when it comes to your audience? (2 points) \_\_\_\_\_

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9. What are the three basic steps of creating blocking? (3 points)

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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