

Audition & Scene Study Class

Instructors: Caulene Hudson & Sarah Bodle

Class ages: 10-15 years old

Lesson time: ~1 ½ hours

Location: The Rose West studio

Class size: 18

Date: 2nd day of a week-long class

Class Description: Are you an aspiring actor? Then you will have to master the art of auditioning, cold reading, and scene work! In this week-long class we will use scenes from the upcoming season to prep and improve our audition techniques and confidence. This class is great for beginners who want to learn more about performing, as well as experienced actors looking to improve their acting technique.

Lesson Objectives:

1. To generate a safe and respectful environment for students to express themselves and experiment with singing together.
 2. To introduce singing in theatre in a non-intimidating way that is approachable for every student in class, no matter their previous experience.
 3. To gain a better understanding of how to use their VOICE as one of their acting tools in a unique and stimulating way to better stand out at an audition.
 4. To offer practical and applicable tips to auditioning for a musical and to provide students with a selection that can be used at a future audition.
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Day 2: Musical Theater!

5 min **Intro:** First sit the students in a circle on the floor. Explain why we are learning about musical auditions in particular for students who may not be fond of singing.

Some of you may be passionate about doing musicals while others of you feel like you don't want to touch them with an 8 foot pole. I hope to at least get you all comfortable with the idea of singing for theater so it's not some daunting, unknown thing. Your voice, after all, is just another one of your ACTING TOOLS so you ought to feel comfortable using it.

10-15 min **Question of the day:** What is the part of a musical audition that makes you most nervous?

- Have students go around the circle introducing themselves and then answering the question. Example: "Hi, my name is ____." and then the rest of the class should respond, "Hi, ____." And then the student can provide their answer to the question. Give every student an opportunity to answer.

5 min **Discussion:** If many of them expressed apprehension with singing for auditions, explain this is something we want to lessen. Give examples of music/ singing in theater, especially straight plays that utilize music, as an example of how beneficial it is to know and be comfortable with.

- Play that utilizes singing: A Christmas Carol, *ask class for other suggestions*

- Remind of class of community agreement (made on Day 1) - don't make fun of your fellow actors if they don't sound a certain way! Everyone has a unique voice and how they choose to make character choices with that is just another interpretation.

Transition: We'll go ahead and get a little more vocally warmed up and can begin to think about ways to integrate character choices with singing.

15-20 min Warm Ups: Maa game and Many Mumbling Mice

- Maa Game: Students will mirror leader with hands and voice by saying Maa in many different ways, exploring various emotions, attitudes, and environments (such as crying, laughing, being chased by a bull, talking on the phone, etc.). After the teacher leads, they may choose students to lead a few by having them raise their hand.
- Many Mumbling Mice- Prepare this singing warm up by writing out the lyrics on a white board: *Many mumbling mice/ are making midnight music in the moonlight./ Mighty nice.* Sing through with them a few times (stepping up a note each time) and then have them sing it on the same pitch but with different character voices.
 - tiny mouse, old person, crying, dictator, 'ditz' teenager, nerdy, cowboy, etc.

Transition: So for those of you who have auditioned for musicals or choir or show choir before- what did you audition with? Did you come prepared with something or did they just give you a song?

15 min Auditions: how to prepare!

- Hand out 'Musical Audition Tips' sheet for everyone and review main points together
 - This gets pretty thorough but don't be intimidated- some of you will already know some of these while it will be brand new to others
 - Audition with a MUSICAL THEATRE selection! – It is important that if you are auditioning for a musical, to choose a selection from a musical for your audition. They don't want to hear you sing pop or rock.
 - Yes, you want to be memorized, but it's more important to show your character than to execute your selection with perfection

Transition: We've talked about how to audition and what to audition with, now we will do an activity that will help us start to think about how we can audition with interesting characters that will make the focus be on the character and less on the quality of our singing voice.

15-20 min Improv Character Singing Game: Pair up class and have each pair find their own space in the room. This game is to get them using their character choices to tell a story with very limited lines and no actual words. Emphasize strong character choices and quick decision making! Don't give pairs long enough to discuss and plan out their "scene," just tell them what it is and have them GO.

- Explain that they will sing the ABCs on “doo doo doo.” Each partner gets three “lines” - alternate back and forth so it is like a dialogue.
 - Act out the following scenes; you have to tell the story with your voice, your body, and your imagination- don’t rely on the words! Here are some good scenes the teacher can call out to have them do:
 - Thriller/ horror scene
 - Couple bickering
 - Best friends chatting
 - Annoying younger sibling, bossy older sibling
 - ‘Popular’ kid vs. nerdy kid
 - Love scene alà Frozen or Aladdin or other cheesy Disney movie
 - Walk around while they practice to ensure they are doing the scene and not trying to plan it out. Give encouragement and give suggestions on how to make bolder selections to bring out their character.

10 min **Share:** Tell pairs to decide on one of their “scenes” to share with the class. Have students sit on one side of the room like an audience and have each pair present their scene without telling which one they did. Have the students raise their hand to guess which one it was.

5 min **Reflection/ Hook:** *Today we practiced using character choices to make singing less about how flawless we sound and more about our acting ability and showing our characters. With some tips and tricks, we can start to think about going into an audition room with confidence and to have fun! Tomorrow we will work on an audition piece- learning it together, experimenting with characters on it, and possibly doing a mock audition with it!*

****Back-Pocket Activity if there is extra time to fill****

5-10 min **Introduce song: “We Go Together”:** Hand out copies of “We Go Together” from *Grease*, explain setting of the song within the show and, if time allows, begin teaching it.

Materials -

1. 20 ‘Musical Audition Tips’ handouts (enough for all students and teachers)
2. White board & dry erase marker (or large paper and marker)
3. keyboard or piano to teach song
4. 20 copies of “We Go Together”