

PERFORMING ARTS

3RD
Grade



William Shakespeare



Alvin Ailey



Lucille Ball

Table of Contents

Performing Arts

History of Theatre
Make a Mask
Shakespeare Biography
History of Dance
Alvin Ailey Biography
Rodgers & Hammerstein
Vaudeville
Easy Magic Tricks for Kids
History of Comedy
Stand-Up Comedy
Slapstick
Lucille Ball Biography
Pantomime
Circus Arts
Lou Jacobs
Stage Makeup
Stage Diorama
Lorraine Hansberry

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The History of Theatre



People have been acting out stories since ancient times. The first recorded theatrical performances were in Ancient Greece, during a festival that honored the god Dionysus. It is said that a man named Thespis won a competition at the festival, which is why actors are sometimes called thespians.

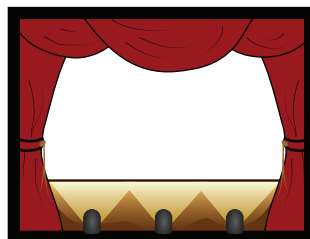
By 300 BC, Rome was full of artists. Romans began writing their own versions of Greek plays. While tragedies had been popular in Greece, Romans loved comedies. Roman citizens loved seeing plays, and soon theaters were being built all over Rome.

During Medieval times, religion ruled Europe. People lived their lives according to religion, and thought that entertainment was a sin. Those that did not approve of theatre started putting on their own plays that were about religion, so that they could be performed in church. These plays became so popular that they had to move them out of churches and into the cities.

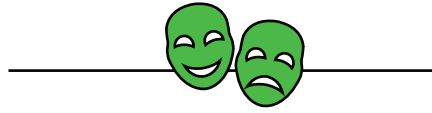
During the Renaissance, people became interested in art. Italy started *commedia dell'arte*, the first improv troupes. These kinds of performances were done on the fly, using whatever props the actors had with them.

Though art was accepted during this time, theatre was still thought of as lowly. However, Queen Elizabeth was a big fan of theatre, which helped it become popular. It was during this time period that Shakespeare became famous, and wrote the poems and plays we still read and perform today.

For many years, theatre was a form of entertainment for the upper classes, but in the later part of the 1800s, a new style of theatre called vaudeville became popular. Vaudeville shows contained many types of performances, from singing to acting to juggling to magic, in just one show. From this style of theatre came musical theatre, a type of play that uses acting, singing, and dancing to tell a story.



Make a Mask!



When we think of masks, we usually think of Halloween, but they have so many other uses—as props in dramatic productions, as decorative objects, or simply as a fun prop for dress-up. This papier-mâché mask is the perfect project for your budding artist. As you form your masterpiece, you will immerse yourself in the creative process and develop your aesthetic eye.

A cautionary note: this project spans several days and can be quite messy, so make sure you read through the steps and understand the time required before you begin. But don't let this warning scare you away! Making art takes time, and this project is no different. In the end your efforts will be richly rewarded: You will have a stunning piece of art, made by your own hands, that you can truly be proud of.

What You Need:

- Aluminum foil
- Cotton swab
- White flour
- Water
- Newspaper, torn (not cut) into strips about 2" x 6" each
- Paint
- Thick string

What You Do:

1. Tear off a sheet of aluminum foil that is a little more than twice as long as your face. If you want to make a half mask, measure the foil from your hairline to your upper lip and double that length.
2. Fold the foil in half to create a double layer. Center the foil over your face and, starting with your nose, gently press the foil in so it takes the form of your face. Once the nose is formed, pause a moment and very carefully poke holes in the foil over your nostrils with the cotton swab so you can breathe while you finish forming the foil mold. Make sure all of your facial features are impressed into the foil, including your eyes, lips, jaw line, chin, etc.

Make a Mask!



3. Gently remove the foil from your face, taking care not to disturb the facial impression, and lay it on your workspace. Place some crumpled newspaper under the foil mold to give it support.
4. Create the paste by mixing three parts water to one part flour in a large bowl. You can experiment with the thickness of the paste by adding more or less water. The more flour you add, the stronger the paste will be.
5. Dip a strip of newspaper into the paste so that it is completely coated, then run it between two fingers to remove excess paste.
6. Place the strip on the forehead of the foil mold so that it is smooth, taking care not to disturb the mold.
7. Continue adding strips to the mold until it is completely covered with a single layer of newspaper, making sure the strips overlap slightly. Allow the mask to dry completely, at least 24 hours.
8. Repeat steps 5-7 until the mask has 4-5 layers, making sure each layer dries completely before adding the next one.
9. Once the final layer of papier-mâché is dry, carefully cut holes in the mask for the eyes. If you're making a full mask, poke holes for the nostrils. If you're making a half mask, cut away any parts that cover your nose. A half mask should rest on the bridge of your nose.
10. Use paint to decorate your mask in however you'd like. You can also add hair, eyelashes, or other three-dimensional features.
11. If desired, poke a small hole in each side of the mask at the temples and thread a piece of ribbon or elastic through. The ends can then be tied together to hold the mask on your child's face.

Use the mask to put on a play, and hang it as art when you're done!





William Shakespeare

You can't talk about theatre without talking about **William Shakespeare**. Shakespeare was a playwright who lived and worked in England in the 1500s and 1600s, and he's considered to be one of the greatest writers who ever lived.

No one knows exactly when Shakespeare was born, but most people think it was in April of 1564 in a small town in England called Stratford-Upon-Avon. Not much is known about his childhood or early life. By 1592, he was an up-and-coming actor and playwright in London's theatre world. Shakespeare was well-loved in his time, and by the end of the 1500s, he was rich and famous. He was not just known for being a playwright, but for being a talented actor and the leader of a respected acting company, Lord Chamberlain's Men. Lord Chamberlain's Men started out performing at a theatre called The Theatre, but when they built their own theater called The Globe in the middle of London, they really took off. They changed their name to The King's Men after England's newest king, King James I.

Shakespeare's early plays had stories that were not much different from the popular styles of the time, but it was his words that made him stand out. He invented many new phrases and words we still use today, and he made sure to write lines in a rhythm that sounded nice when spoken; almost like poetry. Though Shakespeare's words were what made him different, his stories were great as well. People liked the plots of his plays because they focused on things like love, jealousy, confusion, and happiness – things that practically everyone can relate to.

Shakespeare died in 1616. Though he lived more than 400 years ago, people still love his plays. Entire festivals based on his work are put on all over the world every year, and they are often some of the first plays actors study when learning about acting. His plays have held up so well because he wrote about things that every human can relate to, and wrote them beautifully.

Dance



Since ancient times, people have danced. Cave and rock paintings from as far back as 3300 B.C. show people dancing. People have danced for ritual, for celebration, and also just for fun!

Every culture has its own dance styles, and its own reasons for dancing. In ancient Greece, citizens would dance to honor gods and celebrate events. Ancient Egyptian women danced at funerals to express sadness. It was around Renaissance times that dance became something that people did for enjoyment.

In the 1600s, King Louis XIV of France enjoyed ballet, which helped make it popular with the public. Pretty soon, people were going to the theater to watch people dance, and it became into a true performing art. Now, there are all different styles of dance, from jazz to tap to hip-hop to salsa...and that's just in the Western world. All over the globe, there are countless styles of dancing, and countless reasons for it.

Make up a dance to a favorite song. Draw each step in the boxes below.

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Now make up a dance that tells a story. Pick a favorite book or a famous fairy tale.

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Alvin Ailey

Alvin Ailey was a dancer and choreographer who revolutionized modern dance, paved the way for African-Americans in the arts, and created one of the most famous dance companies in the world.

Alvin was born in Texas in 1931. When Alvin was 11, he and his mother moved to Los Angeles so she could find work and leave the South, which was segregated at the time. In Los Angeles, he became interested in dance after a friend introduced him to a dance teacher named Lester Horton. He took classes with Lester, but wasn't sure if he wanted to pursue dance or go on to college. He moved to San Francisco in 1951, where he met a woman named Marguerite Johnson, who later changed her name to Maya Angelou and became a famous writer. Marguerite was a dancer, and the two performed around town. He soon moved back to Los Angeles to study dance full-time.

In 1953, he began performing with his friend Lester's dance company and danced in many Hollywood movies. However, later that year, Lester died suddenly. Alvin became the new director of the company and dedicated their first piece to his friend and teacher.

The next year, he was invited to New York to perform in a Broadway show. There, he found the dance world strange and constricting. He felt it lacked the passion and freedom that he loved so much about dance. He started his own dance company, the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. The dances he choreographed for the company were modern, but also used typical African-American dance styles like jazz and blues, and traditional African dancing as well. Drawing on his experiences growing up in the South, his dances often evoked African-American struggles. For the first few years, the company was made up of African-Americans, and as time went on it began to include people from all different backgrounds. Alvin prided himself on hiring dancers based on their talent, and not the color of their skin.

Alvin continued his work with his dance company, and also opened schools and started programs that offered dance and arts classes to people from all backgrounds. He was awarded the Kennedy Center Honors in 1988. The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater continues to entertain people all around the world to this day.

RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN



Before becoming a famous American songwriting team, **Richard Rodgers** and **Oscar Hammerstein** had had successful composing careers on their own, writing music for theater and film. After ending his songwriting relationship with fellow songwriter Lorenz Hart in the 1940s, Rodgers partnered with Hammerstein and they began working together on musicals for the Broadway stage. Together, they wrote the scores to some of the most famous American musicals, including *Oklahoma!*, *The Sound of Music*, *South Pacific* and *The King and I*. Their work ushered in what is now thought of as “the Golden Age of Broadway” and brought legitimacy to musical theatre, an artform that is now thought of as distinctly American in nature.

WORD SCRAMBLE!

Rodgers and Hammerstein produced some of the most famous songs in American history, and they’ve been passed down from generation to generation. See if you can unscramble the titles of some of your favorite showtunes below!

1. NETTIGG OT WKNO OYU (*The King and I*)
2. DWEISELES (*The Sound of Music*)
3. YM FTARVOIE TNGHIS (*The Sound of Music*)
4. MOSE NCEATENHD VNEIENG (*South Pacific*)
5. LSAHL EW DC?NAE (*The King and I*)



Answers:

1. GETTING TO KNOW YOU

2. EDELWEISS

3. MY FAVORITE THINGS

5. SHALL WE DANCE?

4. SOME ENCHANTED EVENING

Vaudeville



Vaudeville, or the variety show, was the most popular form of stage entertainment at the end of the 19th century. Vaudeville was a lot like English music hall shows, which featured song and dance numbers and an emcee that lead the audience through the entire show. Variety shows featured music and dance, but also feature acts like plate-spinning, ventriloquism, magic, and even dog tricks. There were usually 12 or more acts in one show, and one show could last for hours! Though variety shows featured all kinds of acts, the big draw was comedy. People would go to vaudeville shows to see the latest comedians, and many vaudeville comedians became big celebrities.

However, in the early 1900s, movies became popular, and people began buying radios for their homes. Once movies with sound were invented, vaudeville slowly disappeared. After all, listening to the radio was free, and movies were much cheaper than a night at the theatre.

Vaudeville-style comedy is seen most in the movies today. The most famous vaudeville performers were able to find work in movies, bringing their silly faces and sight gags to the big screen. Variety shows acted as a proving ground for tons of types of performers, and you can see similar vaudeville styles on late-night talk shows and in sketch comedy shows. While it only lasted for a few decades, the variety show left a lasting impact on the performing arts.

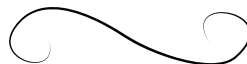
Often times, a vaudeville act was made up of brothers and sisters, or sometimes an entire family. What sort of act could you and your family do together? Draw a poster for it in the box below.

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a poster.

Vaudeville



When vaudeville was popular, immigration was at an all-time high. Many immigrants found work performing in vaudeville shows, or started their own shows that appealed to people from the same country as them. How do you think this helped them fit into American society?



Put on your own variety show! Gather up some friends and see what special talents each of you has. Make sure no two acts are the same, even if two or more people have the same talent: Sure, you and your friends might all be great singers, but how is each person unique? You can also have friends team up and do a group performance, or have one performer go twice.

Magic



Magic, illusion, and sleight of hand is a great way to get comfortable onstage! Learn some simple magic tricks, then wow your friends with a performance!

The Disappearing Toy

What You Need:

- A paper cup
- Two small beads, balls, toys, or other identical objects

What You Do:

1. Take your cup and cut a small hole in the bottom. Make sure the hole is big enough for your item to easily fit through, but not any bigger than it needs to be. Place one of your items in your pocket and use one for your performance.
2. Hold the cup from the bottom, with your hand covering the hole.
3. Put your item in the cup. The item should fall through the hole so that it ends up in your hand.
4. Put your cup on the table. The item has vanished!
5. For the big finish, take the other item out of your pocket. Look surprised – the audience thinks the item in the cup magically made its way to your pocket!

Easy Card Trick

What You Need:

- A deck of cards

What You Do:

1. Before the show, divide the deck of cards into two stacks: one of red cards and one of black cards. Place one stack on top of the other. Remember which one you put on top! Have a friend pick one card from the top. Then have her put the card near the bottom of the deck.
2. Split the deck in the middle (it doesn't have to be the exact middle) and move the bottom half onto the top of your deck.
3. Look through the deck to find your friend's card. The color of the card that he chose should be the only one between the other colored cards.

Magic



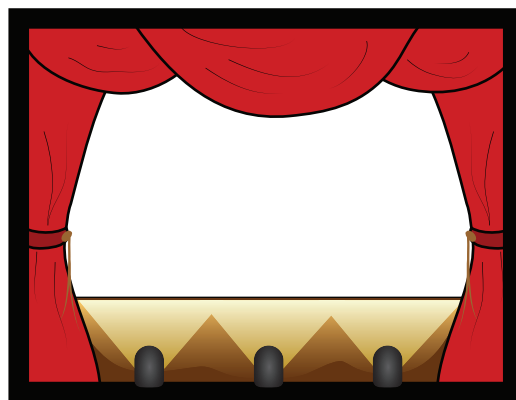
Clear "Juice"!

What You Need:

- Two empty cups
- Red food coloring
- Water
- Bleach

What You Do:

1. Get an adult to help you set up this trick. Whatever you do, **DON'T DRINK ANY LIQUID USED IN THIS TRICK.** You will be using bleach, which is poisonous when swallowed!
2. Before you perform, have an adult put tiny bit of bleach in an empty cup. Fill the other cup with water and a few drops of food coloring.
3. Tell your audience you will turn a cup of juice clear. Depending on the color you've chosen, pick a type of juice. If it's red, tell your audience it's cranberry juice. If it's purple, grape juice. Orange, orange soda, etc.
4. Pour the colored water into the "empty" glass. Wow! The secret ingredient (bleach) turned your "juice" clear.



Comedy



What makes you laugh? What makes your friends laugh? How about your parents, or your grandparents? Your answer may be different for each of these questions. No matter the sense of humor, any performance that's made to be funny falls into the category of comedy.

Read about the history of comedy. Then, answer the question below.



From the Three Stooges whacking each other with fake, oversized hammers to the simple observations of stand-up comedians, comedy has always had one goal: to make people laugh. People who perform comedy, called comedians, usually do this in two different ways: physical comedy, which involves making funny gestures or silly faces, or by telling jokes.

Ancient Romans loved comedy, and Shakespeare was as famous for his comedies as he was for his tragedies. Vaudeville popularized slapstick and physical comedy, and stand-up comedians became stars in the mid-20th century. Comedy is always evolving, but it never stops cracking people up!

Do you have a favorite joke? How about a favorite funny movie? Write down one thing that makes you laugh, and why you find it funny.



Stand-Up



Stand-up is a kind of comedy where a person gets up on stage and tells jokes straight to an audience. Stand-up comedy started in the music halls of Britain and on the vaudeville stages of America. Comedy acts were by far the most popular kinds of acts in those shows, and the emcee, or host, would tell jokes to warm up the audience.

Stand-up comedy was at its peak in the '60s, '70s, and '80s. Some of the most famous actors and comedians of all time, like Bill Cosby, Woody Allen, and Jerry Seinfeld, got their start in stand-up.

Stand-up comedy can be performed anywhere, for anyone – from paying ticketholders in a theater to guests in a coffee shop to soldiers overseas. The jokes in stand-up can be told in many different ways, but they almost always poke fun at everyday life.

There are many different ways to tell a joke in stand-up. Try coming up with a joke for each of the joke types below. Then perform it them for your friends and family!

A **monologue** (mon-o-log) is basically a funny story. A comedian will spend a minute or two talking about something funny that happened to him or her. (Psst...it doesn't have to be true!)

A **one-liner** is a short joke that is one or two sentences long.

Physical comedy (fizz-ick-al com-eh-dee) is acted out instead of told.

Prop comedy uses props, or items, in a funny way.

Write a monologue about...*dealing with your brother, sister or other family member.*

Write a one-liner about...*something you don't like.*

Do a physical joke about...*eating a school lunch.*

Do a prop joke about...*going to the dentist.*



Slapstick



Slapstick is physical comedy, or comedy that relies on movements of the body and not on spoken jokes. Slapstick is often seen in cartoons and kids' movies.

Physical comedy dates all the way back to ancient Greece, when performers called buffoons toured the land, telling silly stories and doing tricks for villagers. Court jesters did similar acts during Medieval and Renaissance times, only they performed for nobles. Before sound was invented for movies, actors used physical comedy to make their audience laugh!

The name slapstick comes from the instrument that Renaissance clowns would use in their acts. Clowns would use it during routines, and it made a loud slapping noise to accent the physical comedy. Many slapstick jokes show people hurting themselves or someone else: no one is ever injured, but the reactions are always over-the-top.

Slapstick is often used when something in a plot goes wrong. Grab a friend (or even a parent!) and write a slapstick routine about an everyday situation taking a turn for the worst!

Here are some classic slapstick "moves" to work into your scene:

- Pie in the face
- Slipping on or tripping over something (like a banana peel, for instance...)
- Accidentally walking into a wall
- Prtfall (that means falling and landing on your bottom!)





Lucille Ball

Lucille Ball was a comedian, known for her physical comedy and production work on the hit TV show *I Love Lucy*. She became the first woman to run a major television studio when she started Desilu Studios with her husband, Desi Arnaz. Lucille, also called “Lucy,” was one of the biggest female comedians of the 20th century.

Lucy was born in 1911 in Jamestown, New York. As a teenager, she worked as a model, and from there started taking parts in Broadway plays. Shortly thereafter she transitioned to the movie business, and took many small roles in movies in the 1930s and 1940s.

In 1948, she was cast in a comedic role on a radio show. The show was such a success that CBS asked her to help rewrite it for television, which was a very new invention at the time. She agreed, but insisted on working with her husband Desi Arnaz, a Cuban musician she had met on the set of a movie. The producers were hesitant at first, thinking the public wouldn’t like a story that showed a Cuban man married to a Caucasian woman, but allowed them to make a pilot episode*. CBS still didn’t like it, so Lucy and Desi began performing it live in theatres. Their live show was a smash hit, and CBS changed their mind. The show was called *I Love Lucy* and aired from 1951 to 1957.

Though she entered show business as a glamorous model and chorus girl, *I Love Lucy* allowed Lucille Ball to show the world that she was a talented comedian. *I Love Lucy* became famous for Lucy’s wacky antics that annoyed her husband Ricky, played by Desi. People couldn’t get enough of it: *I Love Lucy* was the number-one TV show for four out of its six seasons on the air. Many moments from the show, such as her “Vitameatavegamin” sales pitch, and Lucy and her friend Ethel struggling to keep up on the fast-moving production line at a candy factory, are now classic comedy bits.

Lucille Ball was a huge influence behind the scenes as well: Together with Desi, she ran Desilu Studios, becoming the first woman to run a major television studio. Several popular TV shows were filmed on Desilu’s stage, from *The Dick Van Dyke Show* to *Star Trek*!

***Pilot Episode:** A first episode of a TV show that the creators use to sell the show to networks.

Pantomime



Pantomime, also called mime, is acting without using your voice. You may have seen the kind of mimes who paint their faces white and pretend to be trapped in boxes, but pantomime can be so much more.

With mime, you use movements to describe a situation or tell a story. To make up for the missing dialogue, you'll want to make your movements large and bold! Don't forget that you can use facial expressions, too.

Good pantomime is an important part of many kinds of performance, like acting, clowning and even dance. Use the exercises below to practice your miming skills!

Exercises for one person:

- Pretend you're driving a car down the street. Oh, no—you have a flat tire! Pull over to the side of the road and change the tire.
- A friend just gave you very sad news. What facial expressions can you do to show your sadness? Now, try it again, this time with happy news. Try news that makes you angry, scared or nervous.

Exercise for two people:

- Stand face to face with your partner. Pretend you're looking in a mirror while getting ready for school. Pantomime washing your face, combing your hair, and putting on your jacket. Have your friend imitate your movements as closely as possible. Move slowly to give your friend the best possible chance to keep up! Next, switch places and try to imitate your friend's movements.

Exercise for a group of people:

- Get a group of friends together and stand in a circle. Take turns choosing what the ground is made of, for example, hot lava, a lush lawn, or the sand on a beach. Have everyone take a turn walking across the circle as if they were walking on that surface. Don't forget about facial expressions! What face would you make while walking on something as hot as lava? What if you were walking barefoot in soft grass?

The Circus



Have you ever wanted to run away and join the circus, to become a trapeze artist or walk the high wire? Generations of kids have felt the same way. You may not be able to join the circus just yet, but you can learn all about it! Read about some of the main circus arts. Then, try out the activity below.

Clowning is one of the best-known parts of the circus, but there's more to clowns than big shoes and white makeup. Though they're there to make you laugh, clowning is actually serious business! A clown is an actor, a comedian, a mime and an acrobat all rolled into one.

Acrobats perform all kinds of gymnastic feats, such as tumbling, tightrope walking, and even equestrian vaulting! An equestrian is a person who performs on horseback, and equestrian vaulting is like a combination of dance and gymnastics, all done while riding a horse. Acrobatics also includes aerials.

Aerials are acrobatic feats that are performed in midair. Trapeze falls into this category, but there are many other kinds of aerials, too. Silks are huge strips of fabric that hang from the ceiling. The acrobat climbs the strips, wraps him or herself up, and then spins all the way down to the floor!

There are many other kinds of circus acts as well. You may have seen contortionists, who can bend themselves into all kinds of shapes, or unicyclists, who ride on a kind of bike with one wheel, or jugglers, who juggle everything from hats, to fruits, to rubber chickens!

Learn to Juggle!

What You Need:

- Two balls of the same size and weight

What You Do:

Hold your hands out in front of you, palms up, with one ball in your right hand. Toss the ball up in an arc, about as high as the top of your head, and catch it in the palm of your left hand. Then throw it back. Practice this until you can catch the ball easily each time you toss it. Next, start with a ball in each palm. Toss the first ball up in an arc and, as soon as it starts to fall, toss the other. Once you've caught each ball, repeat. It takes practice, but once you get it, juggling can be a lot of fun!



Lou Jacobs

Lou Jacobs was a master clown whose career spanned 62 years. For 60 of those years, he performed with Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey, one of the best-known circuses in the world.

Lou was born Johann Ludwig Jacob in Germany in 1903. His mother and father were performers who created their own song-and-dance routine for the local variety show theaters. Ludwig, as he was known, had a talent for gymnastics and contortionism. His father began training him in basic acrobatics when he was very young. At age 10, he appeared on stage for the first time. He wore the back end of an alligator costume, while his older brother, Karl, wore the front.

In 1923, Ludwig joined Karl in the United States, where he found work as an acrobat. In 1925, Lou, as he was then called, made his debut with Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey. It was there that he began his career as a clown. His unique makeup soon made his face a famous symbol of the Ringling Brothers circus, and he even appeared on a postage stamp!

Unlike most clowns of the time, Lou created his own routines. He used his pet Chihuahua in some of his acts, and was known for the tiny car he built especially for his performances. He made the car himself, using the motor from a washing machine to power it. The sight of Lou, who was 6'1" tall, stuffed inside the tiny two-foot wide car brought many laughs.

In 1953, Lou married Jean Rockwell, a circus aerialist. They had two daughters, Dolly and Lou Ann, who became well-known circus performers themselves.

Lou retired from performance in 1985, but he continued on as a teacher for the Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Clown College until 1991, a year before his death. Many of the techniques and contraptions Lou pioneered are still used in circus performance today.

Stage Makeup

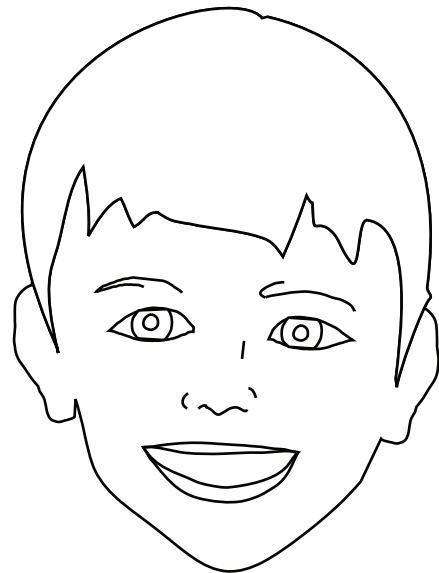


Stage makeup is an important part of any performance. Whether you use it to create a character, or just to make your own features stand out, makeup is what makes you visible to the people all the way into the back row of the audience.

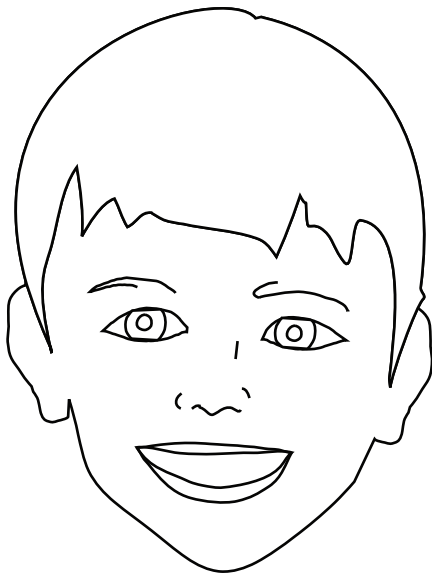
Use the faces below to practice your stage makeup skills! Grab your pens, pencils, or paints and make up each face according to the caption.



A ballerina



An old man



A rock star



A cat

Make a Set Diorama



There's something for everyone to do in theatre! If you'd rather not get up on stage, you can also work tons of different behind-the-scenes jobs: You can control the lighting, make the costumes, manage the props, or paint the sets. You can even write the act or the play itself.

Try learning about set design and theatre tech in this diorama activity.

What You Need:

- Shoebox
- Small objects like buttons, toothpicks, paper clips, craft sticks, etc.
- Miniature furniture and items, like ones that come in doll play sets
- Glue
- Scraps of fabric or colored construction paper
- Colored pencils or markers

What You Do:

1. Cut out one of the long sides of the shoebox. If the lid is attached, cut that off, too.
2. Go to town creating your set! Use your imagination. You can use doll furniture to show where real furniture should go, or you can make a model of furniture out of cotton balls, clay or anything else you have on hand. A circle of construction paper could represent a rug, or a large button could show where a table is supposed to go.
3. Think about where the actors might stand on stage during a scene or where the lighting should fall on the stage. Use color-coded marks on the “floor” of the shoebox to show where they stand and walk to; use other colors to show where the lights will be.
4. If you're working with a group, have other members make their own dioramas, too. Hold a meeting later to compare your designs. You can either choose the best design of the group, or use a combination of ideas from all the projects!

Lorraine Hansberry

Playwright
and author



Lorraine Hansberry was born in Chicago, Illinois in 1930. When she was still a small child, Hansberry's family moved to a restricted neighborhood for white residents, which was against the law at the time. Hansberry's father took the family's case all the way to the Supreme Court, and her mother stayed to guard the home, ready to defend her children if necessary. The family won their case, but the experience affected Hansberry deeply. Her best-known work, a dramatic play called A Raisin in the Sun, was inspired by these events. It was the first play written by an African-American to be produced on Broadway. At the age of 29, Hansberry became the youngest American playwright to receive the prestigious New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play. Hansberry's promising career was cut short by her death from pancreatic cancer at the age of 34.

Word Scramble!

Unscramble the letters to form the word that completes the sentence.

1. A Raisin in the Sun was also the first play on Broadway with an African-American _____, Lloyd Richards. TORREDIC
2. The 1961 film version of A Raisin in the Sun starred legendary African-American actor Sidney _____. OIIETPR
3. A 2004 Broadway revival of A Raisin in the Sun, starring Sean "_____" Combs, received a Tony Award nomination for Best Revival of a Play. YIDDD

3. DIDDY

2. POTTER

1. DIRECTOR

Answers:

Great job!

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