

“How To” packet
on
AUDITIONING
for

***MUSICAL
THEATRE***

Parkway Central High School

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AUDITIONING FOR MUSICALS

FACTS

1. Auditions last an average of 55 seconds
2. Everyone listening to your audition WANTS to like you
3. Everyone is there for 1 reason: to cast a musical interestingly, and successfully
4. 1-sided interview: auditors may ask anything of you, but you are not allowed the same privilege.

PROBLEM

How do you slow down 55 seconds to appear talented, lovable, articulate, handsome, etc???

SOLUTION

1. It is hard to appear talented if you are not.
2. Easy to appear confident = which is a factor of being talented.
3. If you appear confident, and appear talented, = then you will be beautiful!!

CONFIDENCE

- “well-groomed”
- speak or sing to someone as if they are intelligent and perceptive
- know what you are doing
- music written out correctly for pianist
- song deeply committed to memory

NON-SINGING ACTORS...

1. Find a good voice teacher
build a robust singing voice that is an extension of the actor’s speaking voice
2. Find a good vocal coach
teach the actor how to sing the English Language
3. Rehearse
perform in front of a class or others

TYPES OF AUDITIONS

COLD READINGS

You will be given a scene or monologue from the actual show to briefly prepare and then perform. It may be an open or closed audition room.

MONOLOGUE (prepared)

Generally in Musical Theatre, you are not asked to have a monologue prepared.... but it never hurts to be ready to do one... especially when it comes down to you and one other person.

SONG (prepared)

The majority of the time this is your choice of songs, but sometimes it is to be chosen from a song list or is a song from the show. Be sure to check what the format will be.

DANCE

One or two short combination will be taught to you in a large room. Usually there will be a different combination for men and women. You will be put into smaller groups to perform together and given time to rehearse with that group.

AUDITION PROCEDURE

ushered into studio, theater, sound stage, office, storefront, living room or back hall at the exact time of the audition

give auditors your resume and picture

stand and announce:

1. your name
2. name of piece (if monologue)
3. name of character from piece
4. title of song
5. name of character from song

do not "set up the scene"

when finished, allow 5 sec. pause, break and give a courteous "thank you"

don't apologize for anything

REMEMBER....

- wear appropriate clothing (see handout)
- be courteous to auditors, pianists, etc... during and before
- don't be nervous... the auditioners WANT you to be good
- take water with you
- be kind, courteous and positive AT ALL TIMES.. you never know where you might see these folks again, and networking is an important part of this business
- don't be surprised if the auditioners stop you in the middle or before you finish your song, dance or acting piece... it simply means they have heard what they need to hear

DANCE AUDITION

One or two short combination will be taught to you in a large room. Usually there will be a different combination for men and women. You will be put into smaller groups to perform together and given time to rehearse with that group.

HOW TO PREPARE.....

- bring comfortable clothing
- wear appropriate footwear

WHEN PERFORMING...

- smile... when in doubt, smile
- sell the song even if you can't dance... use your facial expressions!!!

HOW TO ACT A SONG

- Singing your way through a song is BORING!!
- Can tell within 4 measures if you can sing or not
- Takes longer to tell if you can ACT.
- 90% actors, who audition regularly - stand stiff through entire song with arms to side
- 10% actors - use their arms wildly or nod their head to the downbeat
- What's missing? TIMING

SONG LYRIC

1 person (unless duet)

Speak in 3/4 or 4/4 time

Speak on pitch

Lyric (poetic)

Must act several beats in advance of what's said

Must also be clear with subtext (song in show)

BALLADS

*song moves very slow

*so lyric falls behind the rhythm of speech

*actor must create subtext (thoughts, feelings, emotions and dialogue)

THE MONOLOGUE TECHNIQUE

WHAT ARE LYRICS?

spaces between words

spaces between complete thoughts empty intervals of time..... must fill dramatically

spaces between sentences

STEP ONE: ANALYZE THE LYRICS AND CHARACTER

- Emotions must be strong
- character must be interesting
- Look to the lyrics within the script to define the song and character
 - ❖ why the character says what he says
 - ❖ what is the motivation of the character within the scene
 - ❖ what is the dramatic element of the scene
 - ❖ where does the action take place
 - ❖ when is it happening (usually now)
 - ❖ to whom is it being played to

If performed well = actor's individual introspect

If not performed well = based on what others have done (heard and seen)

STEP TWO: WRITE THE MONOLOGUE

Once you have determined the emotions of the lyrics and the character's wants and needs, write a monologue.

Lyric Copy

Copy the lyric from the music into your own composition type notebook

Leave 2 blank lines before each line, sentence or complete thought

Subtext

- Fill in the additional dialogue and subtext in the 2 spaces provided in step two.
- Allows actor to play song more realistically
- playing himself (acting and moving in real life situation)
- Gives the actor originality..... it's his thoughts
 - ❖ When writing... do not write a monologue that sounds like it is a letter being read.
 - ❖ It must be a dramatic creation that causes physical and emotional responses that are visible on the actor.
 - ❖ Make it alive and vibrant.

After you have finished the lyric copy and the subtext, rewrite the subtext into a monologue, separate of the lyrics.

STEP THREE: ACT THE MONOLOGUE

- Take the subtext you have written and perform only those lines. DO NOT SPEAK THE LYRIC.
- So, you should “indicate” while you are acting the lines of the monologue. Act it out. Use gestures and movt.
- Do not be afraid to actually play the lines your are speaking.

HINT: remember that the text of the monologue is going to disappear and you will be left only with the emotional and physical life of the monologue. SO SHOW IT, DON'T JUST SPEAK IT.

STEP FOUR: COMBINE THE LYRICS WITH THE MONOLOGUE

Now go back to STEP TWO, in which you originally wrote the monologue as the subtext between the lyrics.

Act out the monologue the same way, with the same actions, but this time when you come to a lyric, you have to “freeze” and just say the lyric without acting it. The monologue has already provide you with the subtext that is to be acted.

STEP FIVE: ACT THE SONG

Now remove the monologue.

Remembering the emotional intensity you created at each lyric, act the lyric.... act the song.....act the character

PERFORMING THE SONG

1. MAKE AN ENTRANCE

- must rehearse entrance because fear will cause you to act abnormally, not relaxed
- enter a room with a smile, project warmth
- enter a room showing authority and power

2. FOCUS AUDIENCE'S ATTENTION

- give a nod to the pianist to start playing

3. PHYSICAL TRANSITION

- make eyes zero in on acting partner
- change stance relaxed to “pulled-up”

4. MOVEMENT WITH IN A SONG

- cross = downstage during a verse
- cross = left or right of center, side to side
- cross = from upstage to center

EYES

- ❖ most expressive, hypnotic, compelling and captivating part of the body
- ❖ wrong use = actor sings to no one in particular.... eyes roll and look away or actor looks directly at auditioners
- ❖ correct use = actor focuses on the acting partner
- ❖ Spotting: put acting partner on back wall, at eye level and center, playing 5"-6" above the audience's heads.....play towards audience, not to them
- ❖ NEVER close eyes = shut audience out

HANDS / ARMS

- ❖ wrong use = limp at side.....lifeless and dull
- ❖ correct use = when not illustrating, then hold them lightly together in front of you, below your waist..... neutral position
- ❖ hands on hip = hostile
- ❖ arms folded = defensive

5. EXIT GRACEFULLY

- immediately upon finishing = stand there for a 5 count
- then say "Thank You" and leave

CALL BACKS

1. Sing same song
2. Wear same outfit / same hair
3. If request another, remind them of original; perform preference
4. Keep a journal (who, what, where)

REMEMBER....

- wear appropriate clothing (see handout)
- be courteous to auditors, pianists, etc... during and before
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AUDITION ATTIRE

1. AVOID CASUAL

- dress as if an interview; unless you are dancing obviously!

2. ENHANCE YOUR PERSONALITY

choose colors appropriately

red: energy / aggressiveness

yellow: sunny

blue: honest

checks/plaids: outdoorsy

primary: bold

pastel: dreamy

brown: trust

dark blue: sophisticated

pink/lavender: refined

3. SHOES

- men: dress oxfords or dress loafers w/ leather or rubber soles
- women: heels with flexibility

4. FLATTER YOUR BODY

- weight problem: no knits
- skinny legs: flare pants (men), light hose (women)
- ugly legs: pants / pant suits
- good legs: show off... short shirt

5. MAKEUP

- fluorescent lights = glare..... base and powder will soften light
- eye makeup = important

6. BACKDROPS

if black, don't wear dark colors

7. DRESS AS YOU

- dress as you, not someone else
- dressing as a character or to suggest a time period = NO

8. CONFIDENCE

- dressing up = gives you confidence
- feel successful = may be successful

9. WELL GROOMED

- enough said