

# CHAPTER 9

## Taking the Stage



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- ♦ proscenium stage
- ♦ stage
- ♦ stage picture
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ow it is time to think about taking your scene or play to the stage for rehearsal and production. In this chapter, you will be introduced to different types of stages and to the specialized language used in directing and staging a play. You will begin to see why acting requires a great deal of hard work, intense discipline, and years of training.

# LESSON 1

## Types of Stages

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Understand performance space.
- ◆ Recognize basic types of stages.

### Warm Up



**W**ith your acting company, discuss how the stages at your school differ from the stages illustrated in this textbook. Where are the stages located in your school? What other events take place in those spaces?

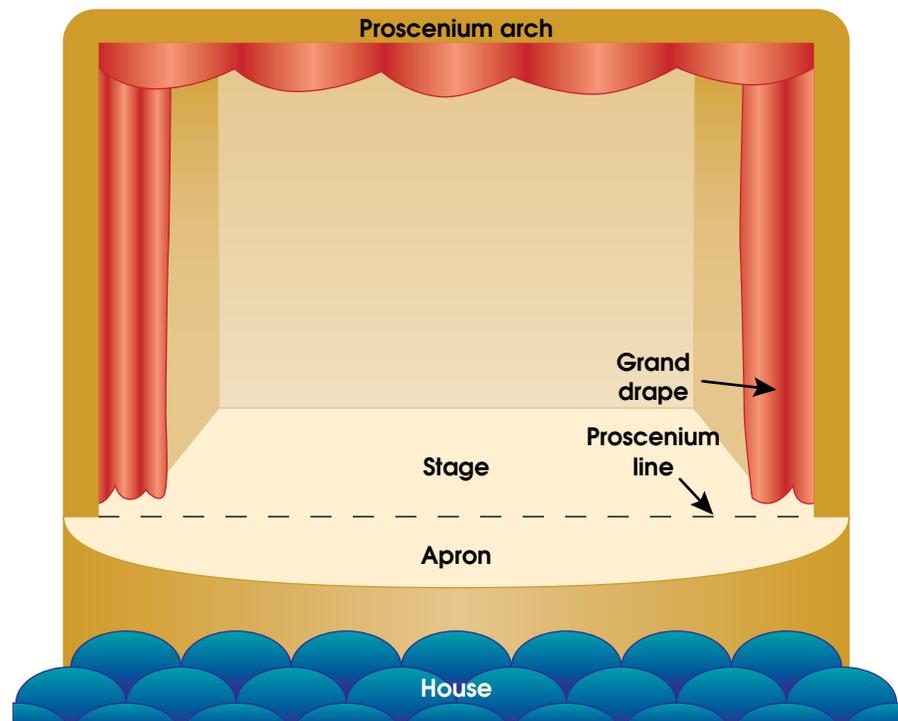
A play must have a performance space. This space should provide a **stage**, or area where the players perform, and a separate area where the audience watches. The stage in your school might be in a theatre or auditorium, or it might be part of the classroom. A performance space can be any area designated for acting that is set apart from the audience.

### The Proscenium Stage

The most common stage in educational theatre is the proscenium stage. A **proscenium stage** is usually a raised picture-frame stage, or box stage (see Figure 9–1).

Figure 9–1

The Proscenium Stage.



#### stage

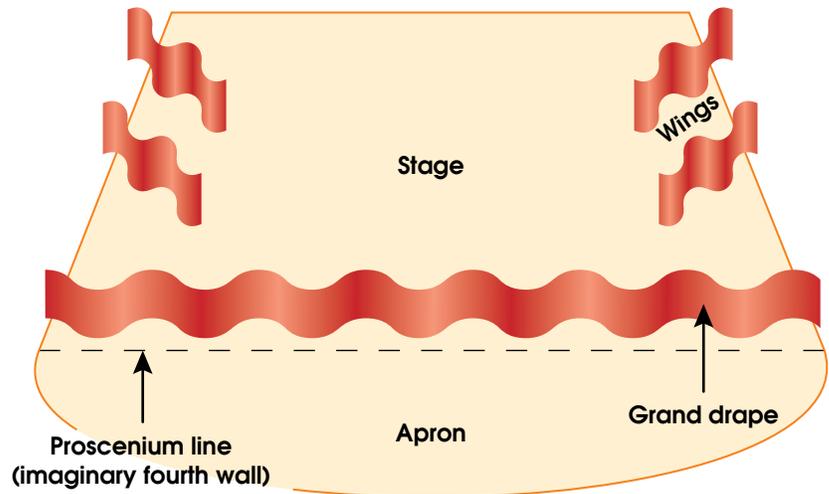
the area where the players perform; usually a raised platform.

#### proscenium stage

a four-sided stage built like a box with one side cut away, enabling the audience to view the play as if it were in a picture frame.

Figure 9-2

Overhead View of the Proscenium Stage.



**grand drape**

the draperies covering the proscenium opening (picture frame), separating the audience from the stage.

**wings**

offstage spaces to the sides of the acting area.

**apron**

the part of the stage extending past the proscenium arch toward the audience.

**arena stage**

a stage constructed so that the audience can sit on all sides; also known as “theatre-in-the-round.”

**thrust stage**

a stage that extends into the seating area. The audience sits on three sides of the stage.

A *proscenium arch*, or frame, surrounds the opening of the stage much like a giant three-sided picture frame. A **grand drape**, or curtain, hangs across the imaginary *proscenium line*, and can be opened to reveal the picture, or scene, to the audience.

Entrances onto the stage are made by the actors from offstage spaces to the right and left of the acting area called **wings** (see Figure 9-2). An actor making an entrance from the wings is hidden from the audience’s view by curtains or scenery.

Often in front of the grand drape is a portion of the stage extending past the proscenium arch toward the audience. This part of the stage is called the **apron** (see Figure 9-2). Scenes are sometimes played on the apron with the grand drape closed, often while scenery is being changed behind the curtain.

## The Arena Stage

The **arena stage** is a stage constructed so that the audience can sit on all sides of the production. Often this stage is lower than the audience. Notice in Figure 9-3 on the next page that entrances and exits must be made through the audience. Staging of this type is also known as “central staging” or “theatre-in-the-round.”

## The Thrust Stage

Another type of stage extends, or projects, into the seating area of the audience. This type of stage is called a **thrust stage** (see Figure 9-4). The audience sits on three sides of the stage. The thrust stage has qualities of both the proscenium stage and the arena stage.

Figure 9-3

The Arena Stage.

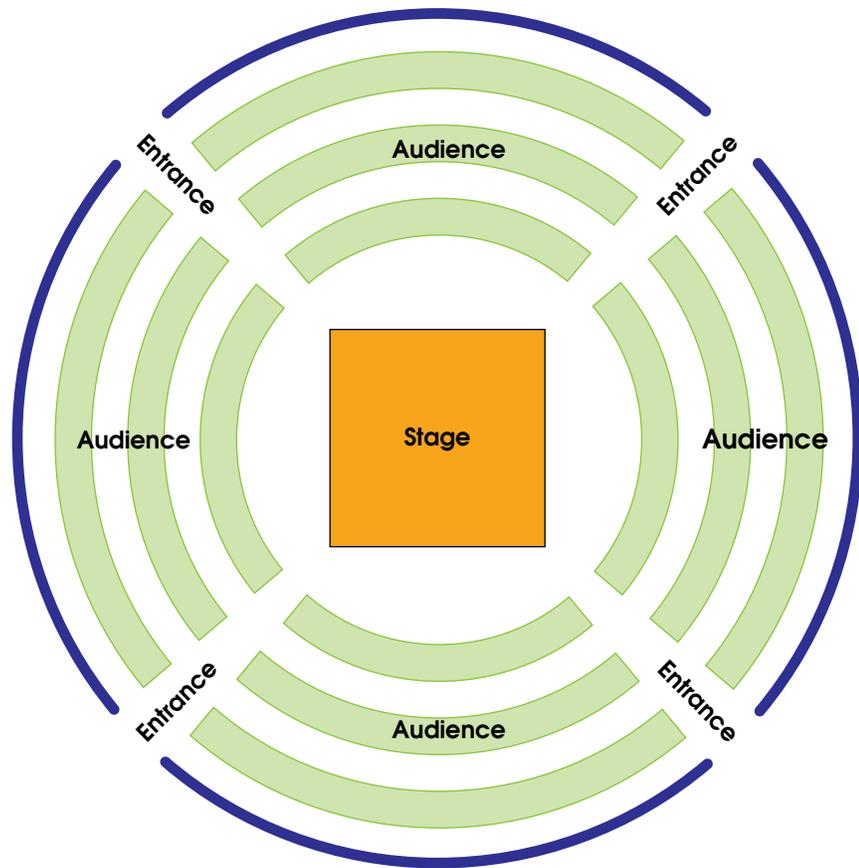
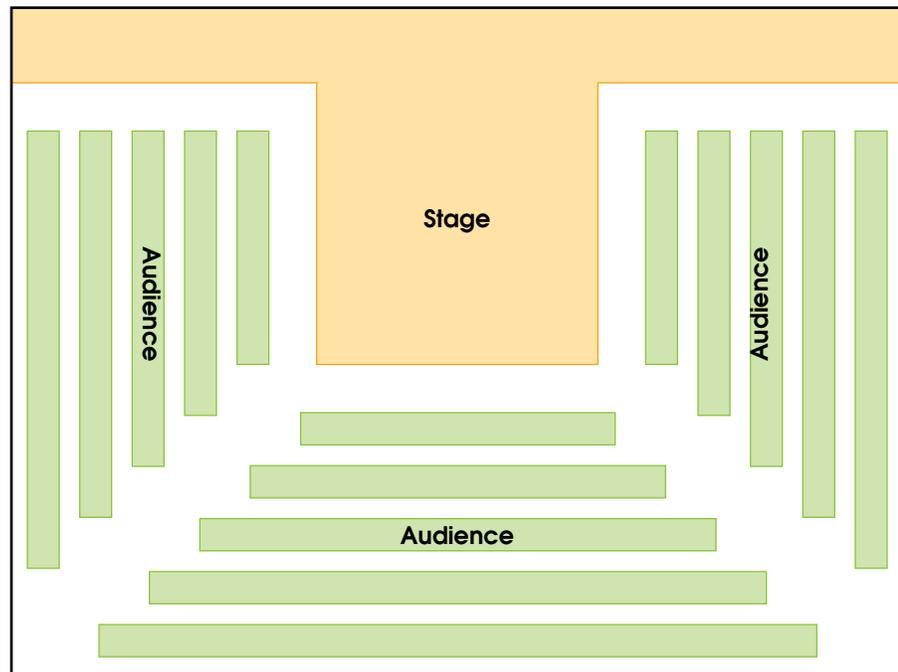


Figure 9-4

The Thrust Stage.



## Flexible Staging

### flexible staging

any stage not classified as proscenium, arena, or thrust.

When a performance space does not fit into one of the three basic shapes or categories, it is usually called **flexible staging** (see Figure 9–5). A current trend is to stage plays in spaces other than actual theatres. If your school does not have an auditorium or theatre with a stage, flexible staging might be used in a classroom, cafeteria, gymnasium, corridor, or band or choir room. Through the use of flexible staging, performances are often staged inside empty commercial buildings, libraries, shopping centers, and malls, as well as outside in parks and recreation areas. The many ways and places in which plays can be staged remind us of William Shakespeare’s words over 400 years ago—“All the world’s a stage.”

Figure 9–5

An example of flexible staging.



## ACTION

- 1. Theatre Tour.** If your school has a theatre or auditorium, tour the facility. Based on the information in this lesson, determine the type of stage at your school.
- 2. Finding Flexible Staging.** Brainstorm with a partner or your acting company to think of other areas in your school or community that could be used as flexible staging for a play.
- 3. Creating Performance Spaces.** As a class, plan as many ways as possible to create a performance space in your classroom.

# LESSON 2

## Stage Terminology

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Identify the different parts of the performance space.
- ◆ Identify the proscenium stage acting areas.
- ◆ Follow basic stage directions using the acting areas.

### Warm Up



**S**tage Terms Relay. As directed by your teacher, match your assigned theatre term with the corresponding part of the proscenium stage or performance space.

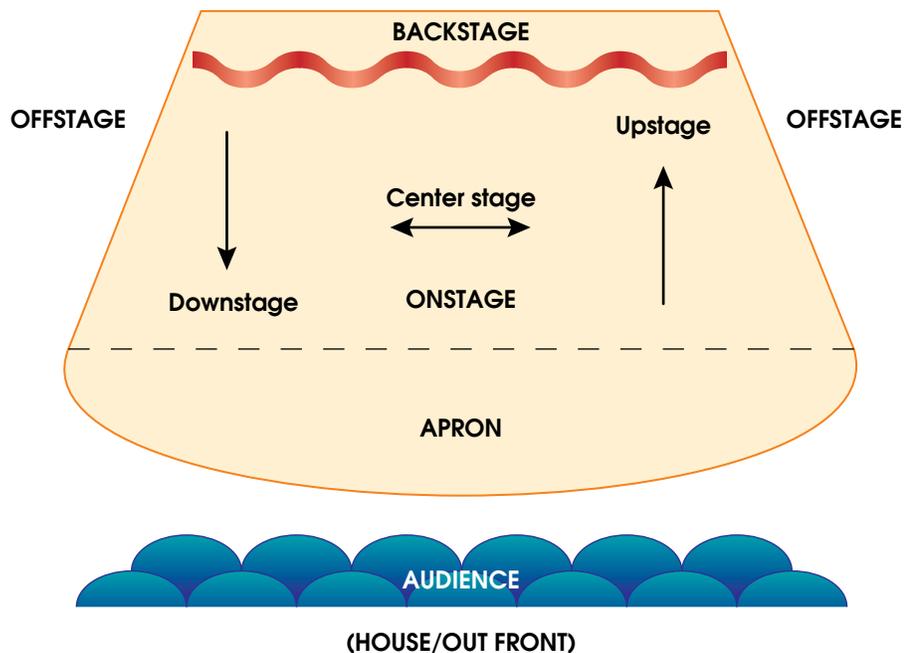
As you take your place onstage, you will discover that the theatre has a language all its own. This language has evolved over many years, reflecting the techniques commonly practiced by actors and directors. Knowledge of this basic theatre language is as important to the actor as knowledge of the alphabet is to the child learning to read. Once you have learned to use this language, you will be able to effectively communicate onstage with your director and the other actors.

### The Performance Space

First, you need to become acquainted with the parts of the performance space. As you study the new terms, be sure to look at the diagrams that have all the parts labeled (see Figure 9–6). Anything within the stage setting and visible to the audience is considered *onstage*. Anything beyond the stage setting and not visible to the audience is considered *offstage*.

Figure 9–6

The Basic Parts of the Stage.



**house**

the section of the theatre where the audience sits; also called “out front.”

The area of the performance space where the audience sits is often called *out front*, or the **house**. The areas behind the stage and not seen by the audience are usually called *backstage*. In your school, backstage could be just a small area behind the back curtain, or it could be large enough to include storage rooms, rehearsal rooms, and dressing rooms.

### Stage Positions

Directors use a set of standard terms to guide the actors on the stage. On the proscenium stage, the directions *downstage* and *upstage* date back to the days when stages were built with the rear of the stage slanting upward away from the audience. Downstage (D) was the area closest to the audience, and upstage (U) was away from the audience. Although all stage floors no longer slant, the names for these areas have remained. Other directions, such as *stage right* (R), *center stage* (C), and *stage left* (L), are always given as if the actor were standing on the stage, facing the audience. When you are onstage, stage right and stage left will always be *your* right and left as you face the audience.

**acting areas**

nine to fifteen divisions of the stage floor, used by directors when moving actors or placing furniture or scenery.

**blocking**

planning and working out the movements and stage grouping for a play.

### Acting Areas

The proscenium stage floor is divided into imaginary blocks called **acting areas**, in which the director can move people or place furniture and scenery. Small proscenium stages are usually divided into nine acting areas (see Figure 9–7) and large stages (see Figure 9–8) into fifteen. Planning the movement for the play is **blocking** the play.

Figure 9–7

Proscenium Stage with Nine Acting Areas.

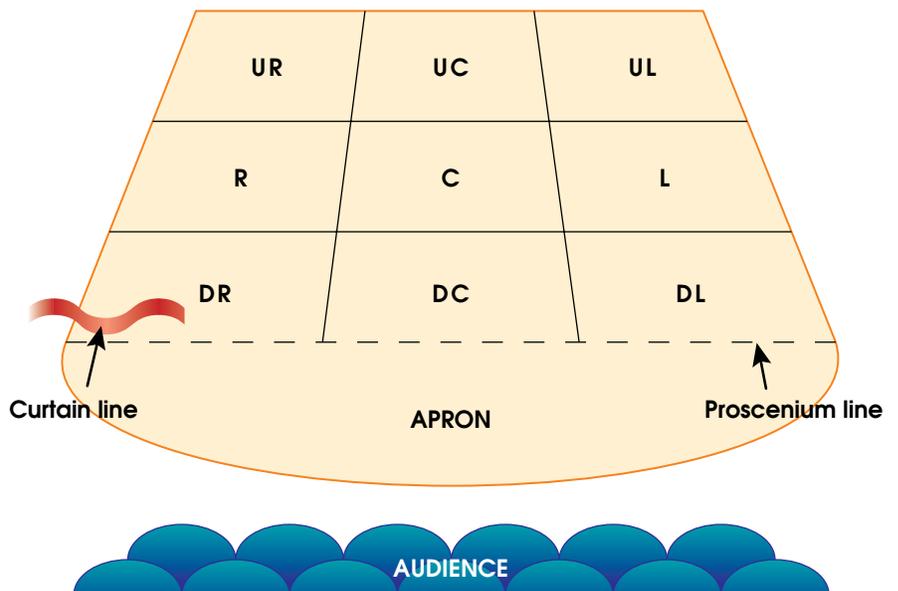
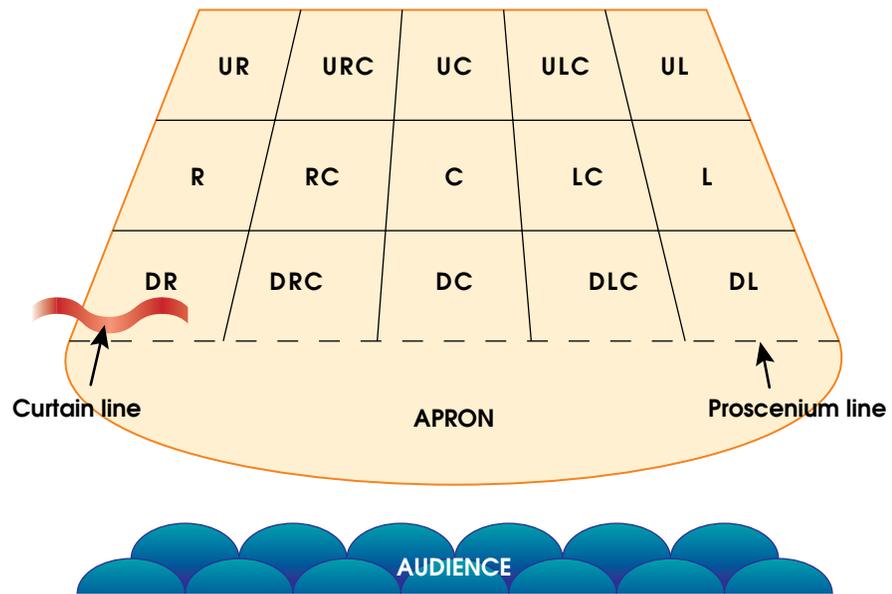


Figure 9–8

Proscenium Stage with Fifteen Acting Areas.



Dividing the stage helps the director to block the play and provides a guide, or road map, for the actors and technicians.

In arena theatre, because the audience is seated on all sides, the terms *upstage* and *downstage* cannot be used. Instead, the arena stage is usually viewed as either a map (north, south, east, west) or a clock (see Figure 9–9). During a performance, some actors will naturally have their backs to the audience, while others will be facing the audience. The director’s challenge is to position the actors so that they can be seen by the greatest number of viewers.

The thrust stage can be thought of as a combination of a proscenium stage and an arena stage. The upper part of the stage, away from the audience, is usually treated like a proscenium stage. The part of the stage closest to the audience is treated like an arena stage.

Because of the vast differences in flexible staging, no one set of practices exists. Directions in flexible staging would depend on the shapes of the acting areas and audience areas. Directors often use a combination of techniques from both proscenium staging and arena staging.

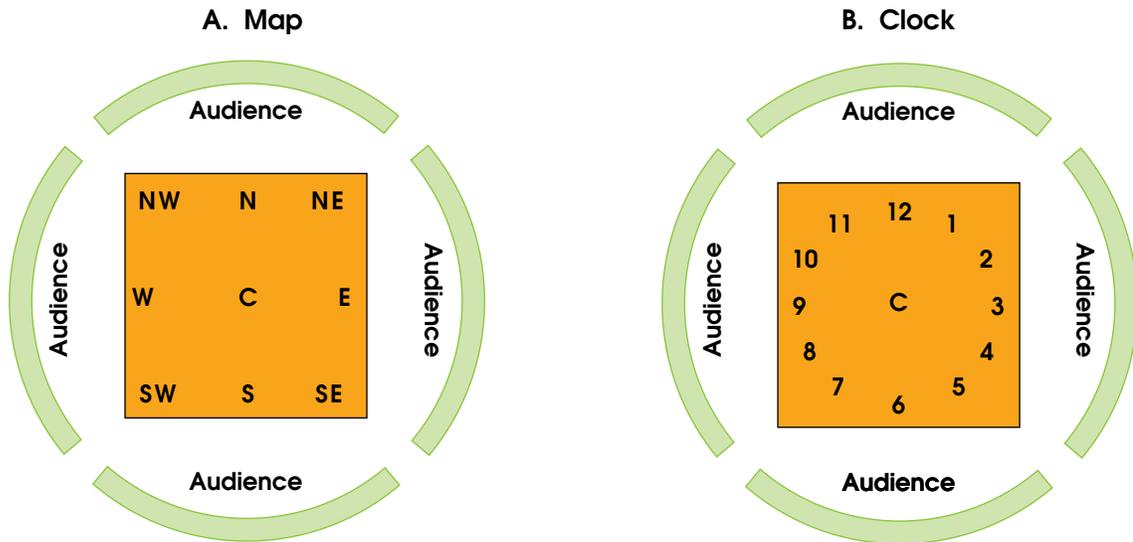
## ACTION

**1. Labeling a Proscenium Stage.** Do the following activities to make sure you know the areas of a proscenium stage.

- Draw an outline of the proscenium stage. Label these areas: on-stage; offstage L and R; wings; backstage; proscenium line; proscenium arch; apron; house.
- Draw an outline of the proscenium stage. Label nine acting areas: DR, DC, DL, R, C, L, UR, UC, UL.

Figure 9–9

Dividing the Arena Stage.



2. **Arena Floor Plans.** Draw two floor plans illustrating how movement might be directed on an arena stage.



## Acting Technique

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Understand and use basic body positions.
- ◆ Use basic stage movement and composition to create meaning.

### Warm Up



**P**lay the game Stage Terms. One member of the class is selected as the stage manager. The stage manager calls out a letter of the alphabet. The first acting company to call out a theatre word beginning with that letter wins a point for his or her acting company. Defining the word doubles the point value.

Every day we receive over 90 percent of our communication without the use of words, through nonverbal messages—facial expressions, gestures, or body language. In a play, much of the meaning comes nonverbally—from the way the actors relate onstage to the audience and to each other, as well as from basic stage movement and composition. It is important to understand the acting techniques involved in such communication.

### Body Positions

The actor's position onstage in relation to the audience can be described by five different angles, called **body positions** (see Figure 9–10 on page 160). Each position makes a different emotional contact

# OUR THEATRE HERITAGE



## Seventeenth-Century French Theatre

France was greatly influenced by the changes taking place in the Italian theatre during the Italian Renaissance, but the French Renaissance did not reach its peak until the seventeenth century. It was the French, not the Italians, however, who built the first permanent theatre buildings after the fall of the Roman Empire. This first permanent theatre was the Hôtel de Bourgogne, built in 1548 for the purpose of doing religious plays. The Hôtel de Bourgogne remained the only permanent indoor theatre building in Paris for almost a hundred years. Originally, the Bourgogne was a long, narrow building with a platform stage at one end. Staging was basically medieval, with several settings appearing on the stage at the same time. The audience knew that the play's location changed as the actors moved from setting to setting. Most of the audience stood and watched the performances from the open floor space in front of the stage. The side and back walls of the theatre were lined with enclosed boxes and gallery seating for wealthy audience members who could pay for a seat. The theatre was owned and strictly controlled by the crown, who had the final say in all matters concerning appropriate stage practices and dramatic content.

It was not until the Palais-Cardinal theatre was built in Paris in 1641 that the French had a proscenium arch stage with Italian-style machinery for shifting set pieces. After this theatre was built, the Hôtel de Bourgogne was remodeled, with a proscenium arch added to the stage. As the French became more and more fascinated with changing the spectacular sets, they began to utilize painted perspective scenery in the same sort of sliding wing and shutter system that had become so popular in Italy. The newer French theatre buildings provided more and more backstage space to store scenery waiting to be shifted into the view of the audience. An example of this increasing depth in stage space is found in the Hall of Machines, a theatre built in 1660. Although the stage was only 52 feet wide, it was 140 feet deep from the front of the stage to the back wall behind the backdrop. This practice of creating such deep stage spaces made it possible for some audience members to sit on stage in the wing spaces on benches to watch the action! By the close of the seventeenth century, members of the French upper class were often seated on stage for performances. One of the theatres built with this practice in mind was the Comedie Française, which was built in 1689 and served as the home of the French national theatre company for over eighty-one years.

It is important to remember that these huge indoor theatres had no electric lighting and were very dim places. Lighting was provided by huge chandeliers equipped with candles that were lighted by lowering the chandelier with a pulley system. These chandeliers provided a dim and smokey light, which kept both the audience space and the stage lighted throughout the performance. Designers in this period also used oil lamps with open flames on stage, mounted near the scenery to light the stage. These open flames offered very little or no means of modifying the intensity of lighting during the performance and made theatre fires a very real danger.

Of the playwrights of this period, easily the most famous is Jean-Baptiste Poquelin (1622–1673), who took the stage name of Molière. His plays, like the plays of Shakespeare, are still being produced around the world today. Molière was the son of the



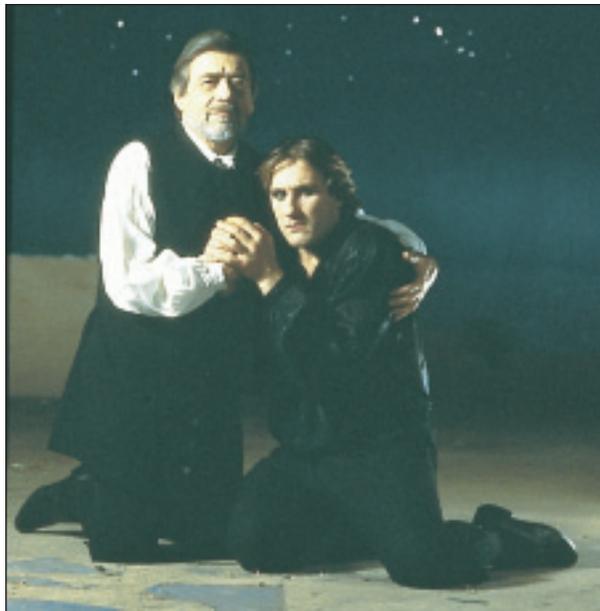
Given his own theatre and troupe of players by King Louis XIV, Molière wrote, directed, and starred in one hit play after another in the 1660s and early 1670s.

## Historical and Cultural Perspectives



upholsterer to the royal family and was expected to follow in his father's footsteps. Instead, he developed an interest in theatre. But his first attempts at theatre in Paris were failures. He left the city and traveled with an acting company for many years. These years were important in his artistic development as he became a much more experienced actor and began to write plays. When he returned to Paris, he established himself as the country's leading actor-manager and playwright with his own company performing his plays.

Molière specialized in creating comedies with a central comic character who had extreme mannerisms and character flaws. He created exaggerated character types, like those he saw in commedia dell'arte troupes during his years of touring, and put them in plots that made fun of their eccentricities. Molière also utilized a great deal of the slapstick comic gags just like those he saw in commedia. He blended these characters with the French appetite for spectacle and special effects. He frequently employed a plot development called a "deus ex machina" which means "the god of the machine." This was a theatrical practice from ancient Greece of bringing in a god on a spectacular flying machine. The god solved the problems for the characters and ended the play. In most of Molière's plays, deus ex machina meant a god or higher authority (a king or ruler) appeared at the last minute to save the protagonist from disaster. Although there were seldom plot elements supporting these miracle endings, the French audience's love for special effects made these endings very popular.



Molière's *Tartuffe* is frequently produced today, but even though the King liked the play when he first saw it at a festival in 1664, he did not allow it to be shown publicly until 1669 because of protests from the Church.

But being popular with the French audiences did not keep Molière out of trouble. Some of his plays made fun of people in power, suggesting that they were not reasonable, good people. For example, his play *Tartuffe* (1664) was not allowed to play in France when it was first written because its main character, Tartuffe, was very pious and wore a religious outfit. This was a problem because the action of the play

showed that Tartuffe was actually a greedy womanizer. The play makes fun of his hypocrisy and the gullibility of those around him, who do not see through his religious act. Although the play is a comedy, many church leaders believed that it was an attempt to make fun of the church. Therefore, they would not allow the play to be performed. Eventually, *Tartuffe* was performed in Paris and was a raging success. It remains a standard comedy performed by many theatre companies today. Some other very popular Molière plays include *The Misanthrope* (1666), *The Miser* (1668), *The Learned Ladies* (1672), and *The Tricks of Scapin* (1671).

Important writers of tragedy in this period include Pierre Corneille, Thomas Corneille, and Jean Racine. The most important of these is by far Jean Racine (1639–1699), whose most famous plays was *Phedre* (1677). Racine is remembered for his ability to create interesting plot developments based upon the internal conflicts of his characters. These characters are usually torn between their sense of duty and responsibility and their strong, uncontrollable desires. ■

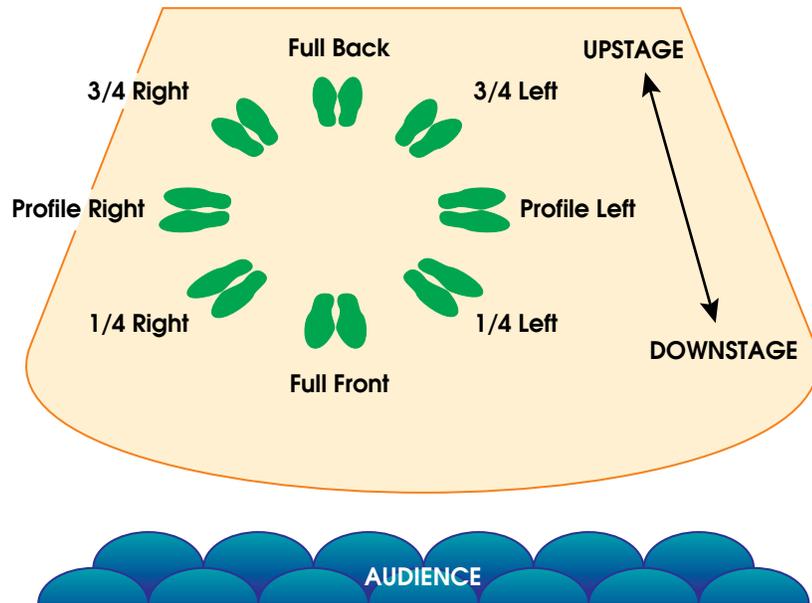
Figure 9–10

Actors' Basic Body Positions in Relation to the Audience.



The technique of acting can never be properly understood without practicing it.

Michael Chekhov



with the audience. On the proscenium stage, *full front position* means directly facing the audience. *One-quarter position* ( $\frac{1}{4}$  right or  $\frac{1}{4}$  left) means turning slightly, about 45 degrees, away from the audience. *Profile position* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  right or  $\frac{1}{2}$  left) means turning to face the side of the stage, 90 degrees away from the audience. *Three-quarter position* ( $\frac{3}{4}$  right or  $\frac{3}{4}$  left) means turning about 135 degrees away from the audience. *Full back position* means turning completely away from the audience and facing the rear of the stage.

In order to be seen by everyone in the audience, the actor is often given special instructions. To *open* or *open up*, means to position or turn the body more toward the audience. When an actor is told to *turn in*, turning should be toward the center of the stage. The direction *turn out* means to turn more to the side of the stage.

Other directions frequently given to actors relate to the actor's position in relation to other actors onstage. To give the audience a better view of the body and face, actors *cheat out* during conversations, turning more toward the audience than they would in normal conversation. This is called cheating because the audience isn't aware of the action. Frequently, actors are told to *share*. This means that they are to assume positions of equal strength by opening up to the audience equally, thus sharing the scene equally. If an actor is told to *give* or *give stage*, then that actor moves to a different part of the stage to allow another actor more emphasis or attention. The actor receiving more emphasis *takes* the scene. (See Figure 9–11.)

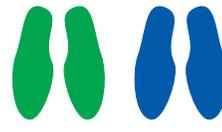
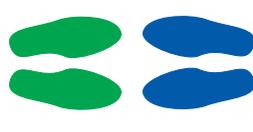
## Movement and Composition

Movement is an exciting part of the actor's role onstage. Actors enter, exit, cross, sit, and rise based on motivation. Motivation is the

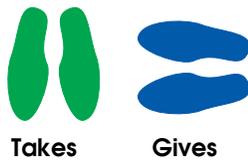
**Figure 9-11**

Ways for Two Actors to Share a Scene.

**A. Four shared positions for two actors**



**B. Three give and take positions for two actors**



**“**Acting isn't really a creative profession. It's an interpretive one.  
*Paul Newman*  
**”**

purpose for or reason behind the move. When a character moves across the stage, it could be to answer the phone, open a door, or write a letter—but the move must have a reason and serve a purpose. Directors plan stage movements to emphasize the meaning in the playwright's work. All stage movement is planned and rehearsed, giving the director the opportunity to guide the actors. Actors will find many helpful suggestions in the “Guide for Basic Stage Movement and Business” featured in this chapter (see page 162).

As you know, planning the movement for a scene or play is called blocking. Some directors invite improvisational movement during rehearsals, thus working out the blocking with the actors. All entrances,

# Guide for Basic Stage Movement and Business

## Entrances

Get into character before the entrance. Begin your entrance in the wings, at least 5 to 6 feet away, in order to take on the physical attributes of the character. Go over in your mind the reason you are entering the scene and what you are going to do onstage. If two characters share an entrance, the speaking character should enter last.

## Exits

Remain in character until you are 5 to 6 feet into the offstage area. If the exit requires a long cross, make sure the last few lines are spoken near the exit. When several characters exit at the same time, the character with lines should exit last.

## Professionalism Onstage

Remember to avoid turning your back to the audience unless so directed. Avoid standing in front of another actor or upstaging an actor by forcing that actor to turn his or her back to the audience in order to talk to you.

## Crosses

Take “strong” crosses downstage (below) other actors, “weak” crosses upstage (above). Most crosses are made downstage (below) of the standing character and upstage (above) of the seated characters. “Strong” and “weak” crosses are determined by the purpose of the movement and the lines spoken. The shortest distance between two points is usually the best guide for a cross. A cross can be softened by moving in a curved pattern. Curved crosses can be used to convey a casual approach, hesitation, or doubt.

## Gestures

Avoid covering the face with a gesture. When handling stage props such as a telephone or making large gestures, use the upstage hand.

## Walking

Carry your weight in the chest rather than the feet. Head and shoulders should be up. Steps should be even and not too long. When moving, step off with the foot closest to your destination.

## Backing Up

This is a weak move and should be avoided unless the move backward makes a dramatic point.

## Walking Up and Down Stairs

Practice leading with the toes and coming down on the heel without looking down at the steps. Avoid bouncing up and down the stairs. Before descending a flight of steps, pause slightly, drawing attention to the movement.

## Sitting

Approach the piece of furniture without staring at it. Secure your position of the furniture with the back of your upstage leg. Keep the weight of your body on the upstage leg as you lower

## Guide for Basic Stage Movement and Business

yourself onto the seat by bending your legs. Avoid plopping or slumping into an easy chair or sofa. Sit near the front edge of the chair to make rising easier. Unless told to do so, avoid crossing your legs onstage. Females usually sit with ankles crossed or one foot slightly in front of the other; males sit with legs slightly apart.

### Rising

Keeping the back straight, push up with the upstage leg. Next, shift your weight to the downstage leg, allowing you to move forward with the upstage foot.

### Kneeling

The downstage knee should touch the floor, helping to keep an “open” position. When kneeling on both knees, the downstage knee should be lowered first; then the upstage leg can be lowered into position.

### Turning

Always turn toward the audience unless your director tells you otherwise.

### Stage Slaps

Using a cupped hand, strike the receiver on the chin or jawbone, away from the ear. Be especially careful not to hurt the receiver when administering a stage slap.

### Falls

To prevent injury, all stage falls should be planned and rehearsed. Place your body weight on the leg opposite from the direction you will fall. As the fall begins, the knee (on the side that is falling) relaxes and bends. The fall is broken as the knee, hip, and shoulder hit the floor (in that order). The head can be supported by the outstretched arm on the floor.

### Eating

Eating while talking always poses problems, especially onstage. Avoid foods that get stuck in the throat or foods such as crackers which dry out the mouth and make talking more difficult. Also avoid carbonated beverages to prevent unwanted burps or belches onstage. Weak tea and fruit juices such as lemon and grape are easy to drink. Use tea and lemon for light-colored drinks and grape juice for dark drinks such as coffee.

### Movement

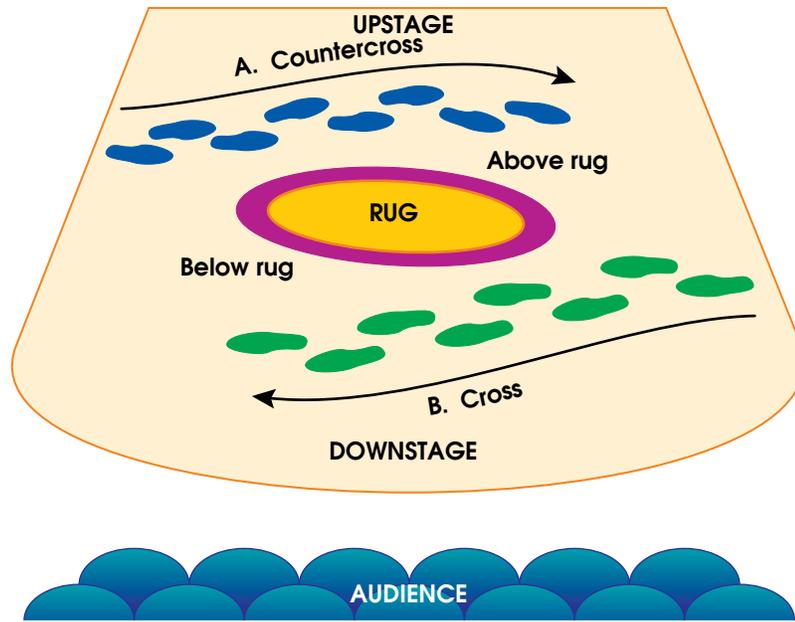
Visible movements, such as entrances, exits, crosses, sitting, and rising, draw focus (the attention of the audience). Always move or gesture on your own lines, so as not to steal the audience’s attention during another actor’s lines. All movement should be in character. All movement should be motivated. Make every movement count.

### Personal Business

This consists of small actions that a character performs without moving from place to place. An actor enhances characterization with appropriate personal business, such as handling a cup, straightening clothing, reading the newspaper, fanning with a fan, or writing a letter.

Figure 9-12

Cross and Countercross.



**stage picture**

an appealing and meaningful arrangement of performers on the stage; the picture that the audience sees onstage.

**level**

the actual head height of the actor as determined by his or her body position (sitting, lying, standing, or elevated by an artificial means such as a step unit or platform). Meaning is created in stage pictures by placing actors at different levels.

exits, crosses, and stage groupings are planned. After blocking, the actors add the plans to their scripts in pencil, in case changes occur as rehearsals progress.

Moving from one point to another onstage is called a *cross*. Indicate a cross in your script with an X. You should begin crosses with your upstage foot, which helps keep your body open to the audience. To complete a cross, the director may ask an actor to cross above or below a piece of furniture or an actor. *Above* means upstage, or behind the object or person; *below* means downstage, or in front.

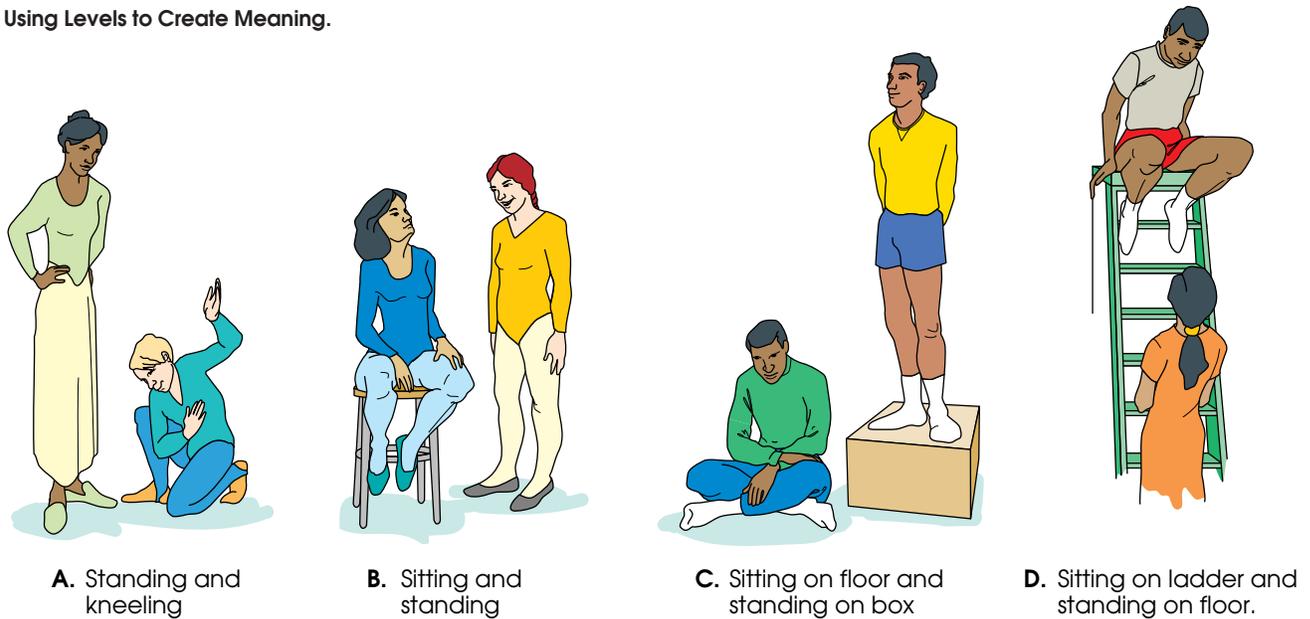
After one actor has moved, often another actor will need to move in the opposite direction, or *countercross* (see Figure 9-12). A countercross is sometimes needed so that the audience can see all the actors. A countercross might also be needed to call attention to a new focal point, or center of interest.

Inexperienced actors tend to line up onstage or clump together in a bunch. When this happens, the director may tell the actors to *dress stage*. This means that the actors need to look at the *composition*, the way they are grouped on the stage, and adjust their positions to balance or improve the stage picture. A **stage picture** is an appealing arrangement or grouping formed onstage by the performers. The director creates stage groupings to present a picture for the audience in much the same way that a photographer arranges people for a magazine layout.

Important considerations in planning a stage picture are levels and planes. The term **level** refers to an actor's actual head height. An actor is at his or her highest level when standing or when elevated in some way, as by a platform or set of steps. Different meanings can be created in the stage picture by placing characters at various levels to each other (see Figure 9-13).

Figure 9-13

Using Levels to Create Meaning.



**planes**

imaginary divisions giving depth to the proscenium stage. An actor moves through the stage planes as he or she moves downstage toward the audience or upstage away from the audience.

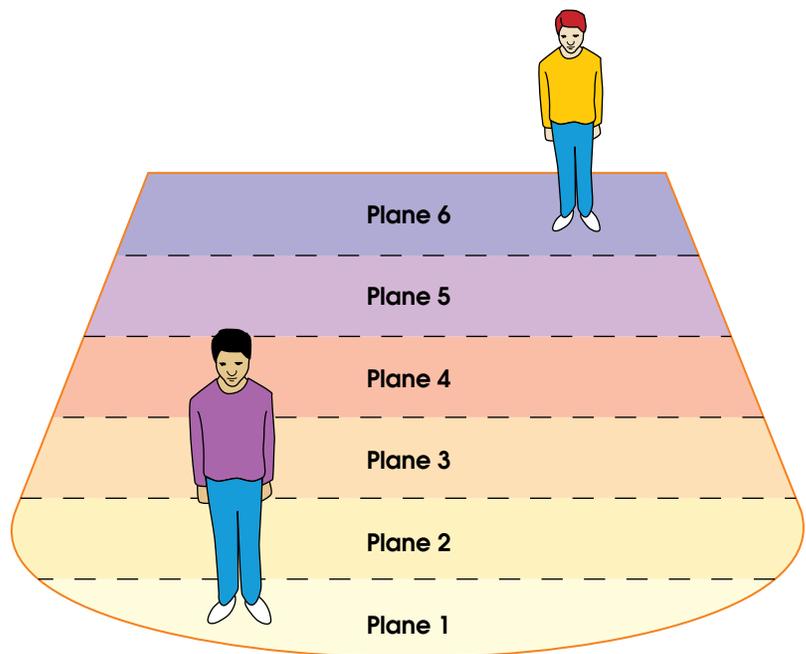
**Planes**

are imaginary divisions giving depth to the proscenium stage. An actor moves through the stage planes as he or she moves downstage toward the audience or upstage away from the audience. Each imaginary plane is about 2 feet deep. An actor in plane 1 would seem more important to the audience than an actor in plane 6 (see Figure 9-14). When one actor causes another actor to turn his back to the audience, it is called *upstaging*. This can be avoided by actors playing in the same plane.

Using their knowledge of body positions, levels, and planes, directors can create a composition, or stage picture, to establish the mood of a scene, help create emphasis, and show character relationships.

Figure 9-14

Imaginary Planes Showing Depth of Proscenium Stage.



# ACTION

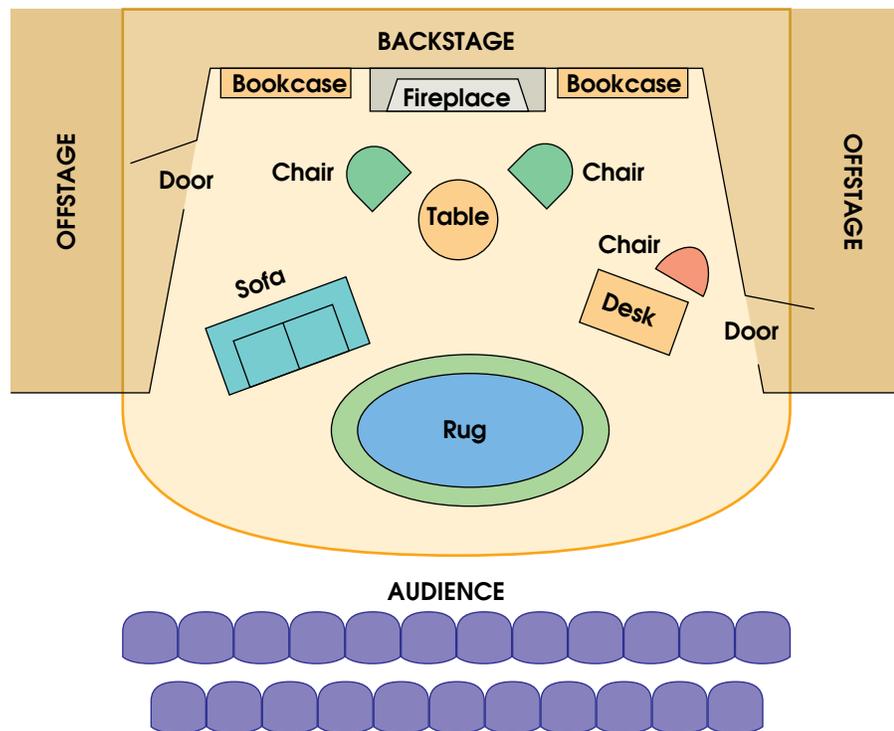


- 1. Creating an Acting Area.** Working with your acting group, use masking tape to mark off nine or fifteen acting areas on the floor of your classroom.
  - a. Make a set of stage directions, including entrances, exits, and crosses, using the areas on the floor (for example: Enter UR; X to DL; X UC; exit UL).
  - b. Take turns instructing your group in stage direction and movement.
  - c. Create a motivation for each set of movements you design. For example, motivation for the stage directions suggested in part (a) (Enter UR; X to DL; X UC; exit UL) could be: enter UR from the upstairs in response to phone ringing; X to DL to answer phone; X UC to sofa to pick up car keys; exit UL through kitchen door to get to car.
  - d. Repeat the stage directions using the motivated movements.
  - e. Discuss your observations.
- 2. Meaningful Stage Pictures.** Work with a small group, using body positions, levels, and planes, to create a stage picture reflecting one of the following themes:

loss	triumph	separation	revenge
distrust	peace	celebration	hope
power	shame	grandeur	jealousy
grace	relief	gratitude	unhappiness
- 3. Dramatize a Photograph.** Using body positions, levels, and planes, bring to life a still photograph (use an art print or magazine photograph). Work with the same number of actors as people shown in the picture. Plan the movements that you imagine occurred prior to the “picture,” ending with the frozen image captured by the photographer.

Figure 9-15

Stage Picture.



### ■ ■ SPOTLIGHT ON TERMS ■ ■

An important part of theatre is understanding the terminology, or vocabulary, used. Add the new terms and definitions to the vocabulary section of your theatre notebook or folder.

### ■ ■ FOCUS ON FACTS ■ ■

1. Describe the basic types of staging defined in this chapter.
2. List several places where flexible staging might be used.
3. What is the primary difference between a proscenium stage and an arena stage?
4. Draw and label the nine acting areas of a small proscenium stage.
5. Illustrate the two methods of giving directions on an arena stage.
6. What is the difference between onstage and off-stage?
7. Explain what is meant by stage right and stage left.
8. How do body positions change the actor's relationship to the audience?
9. What is the purpose of blocking a play?
10. What does "give" or "give stage" mean?
11. What is meant by the term *dress stage*?
12. How does an actor avoid upstaging another actor?

### ■ ■ REFLECTIONS ■ ■

Discuss the following questions with your class or answer them on paper as instructed by your teacher.

1. If you were the director, on which type of stage would you prefer to direct? Why?
2. Assume that you have all the money that you need to build a new theatre space. How would you design your stage?
3. Which activity in this chapter did you really enjoy? Why?

4. What new ensemble work did you experience in this chapter?
5. How will your knowledge of stage terminology help you in acting?

### ■ ■ THEATRE IN YOUR LIFE ■ ■

Discuss, through a short journal entry, something new that you learned from this chapter.

### ■ ■ ENCORE ■ ■

1. Working with a partner, or group, plan the blocking for one of the duet scenes included in this textbook. Develop the characters and prepare the scene for performance. When your scene is ready, share it with the class.
2. Plan the blocking for a scene from a play you have recently read. Direct a member of your group in the movement for the scene.
3. In the drawing on the opposite page, notice placement of the doors and furniture. Using basic classroom furniture, follow the drawing to arrange the stage, then rehearse the movements. Make additional directions so each member of the class can have one or more turns.
  - a. Enter UR door, X DL above desk, sit in chair.
  - b. Enter DL, X above sofa, straighten cushions, exit UR.
  - c. Enter DL, X UR, stand full back, remove book from bookcase, X UR to exit.
  - d. Enter DL, X below desk, sit on rug profile R.
  - e. Enter UR, X below table UL, sit in chair R, X DR to exit.
  - f. Enter UR, X DR below sofa, sit downstage,  $\frac{1}{4}$  R.
  - g. Enter DL, X UC, pause, pick up table, X DR, place table below sofa.
  - h. Enter UR, X UC, sit full front.
  - i. Enter DL, X UC, stand full front below fire-place.