

# The Stage

Grades 8-12

**Educational Objective:** The students will demonstrate their ability to distinguish the parts of the stage and stage directions by having a stage competition.

**Materials Needed:** Masking Tape

**Hook:** Play “Three-four rhythm.” Everyone stands in a circle. Everyone takes their right hand and holds it to their side at about shoulder level palm down. Then they hold their left hand at their side at waist level, palm up. On the first beat, everyone will bring their right hand down and their left hand up so that they clap hands with the people to either side of them. On the second beat, everyone will hold their hands at their sides palms facing away from them and again clapping hands (high five) with those to either side. On the third beat clap your own hands. “Down, out, clap” Get everyone in synch. While keeping it going have everyone hum “The Loveliest Night of the Year.” Speed it up. Good focus.

**Step 1:** Give everyone a strip of masking tape about one foot long. And assign them to make a letter, R, L, U, D, or C and have them put it on them somewhere. Make sure you have an approximate even amount of each letter.

**Step 2:** Take the class to the theatre and ask “where is Stage Right? Explain the sections of the stage. Explain that years ago stadium seating did not exist and that instead they built the stages on a slant, rising up in the back and down in the front. Right and Left are according to the actor’s perspective so that directors can yell out commands to them. Tell them that their letter represents a stage direction.

**Step 3:** Have them go to the section on the stage according to the letter they wear.

**Step 4:** Now have them team up with another player to make two directions. DR, or LU. The only ones that can’t go together are LR and UD, since they are opposites. Two R’s could go together as being RR (extreme right).

**Step 5:** Have them sit in the audience and call two players to the stage. From the audience, call out a stage direction by letters and have them race to that area. Have them race to at least three areas. Give the winner a candy (optional). Have everyone do it. It’s fun to watch them. If you have a large class you could have three racers at a time.

**Step 4:** Explain and demonstrate with volunteers how to cross Down of another actor. Show how to open up, cheat, take focus, give focus, turn so your back is not to audience, etc.

**Step 5:** Now teach them some of the parts of the stage. Proscenium Arch, Apron, Grand Curtain, Pit, Cyc, Fly System, Legs, Teasers. After explaining have several students create the parts of the stage by using their bodies as the parts.