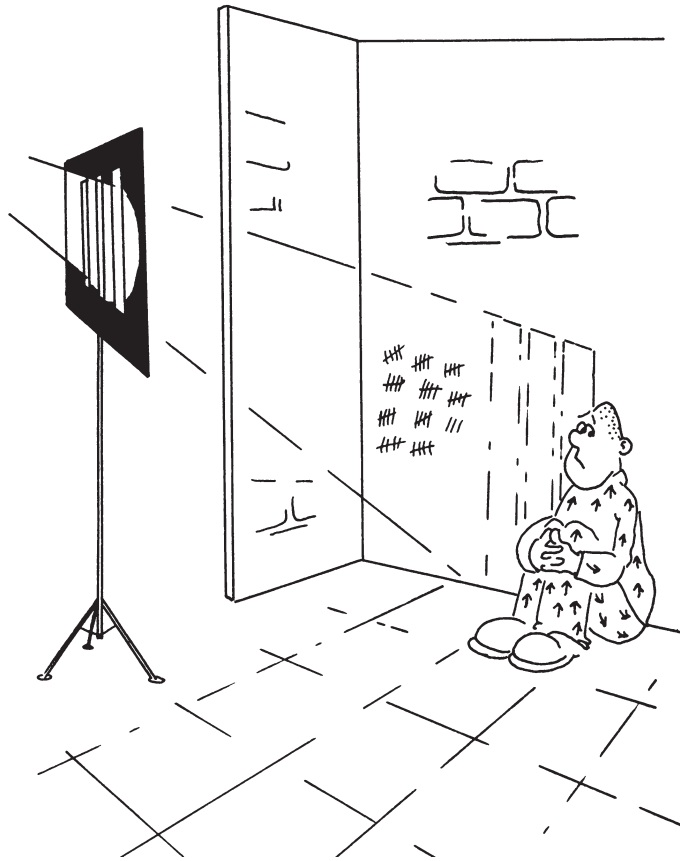


Gobos

Gobos are metal cut-outs which can be placed at the front of the spotlight. They are used to create effects. For example, the cut-out can be in the shape of a star. Cut-out lines can create the effect of prison. This is an effective and cheap way of creating a set.

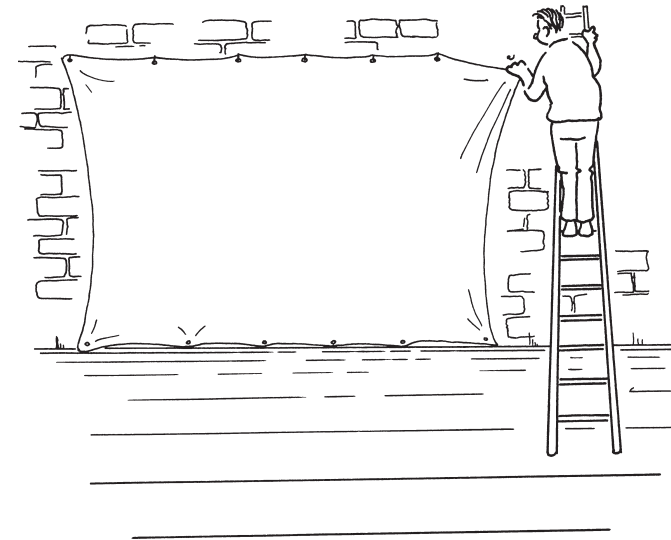


Strobe lighting

Strobe lighting gives the effect of slowing down the action. It can be very effective in fight scenes, scenes of disasters or frantic action. However, if ever strobe lighting is used, the audience should be informed beforehand. The information should be in the programme and advertised in the auditorium. Strobe lighting can induce epileptic fits so it should be used sparingly.

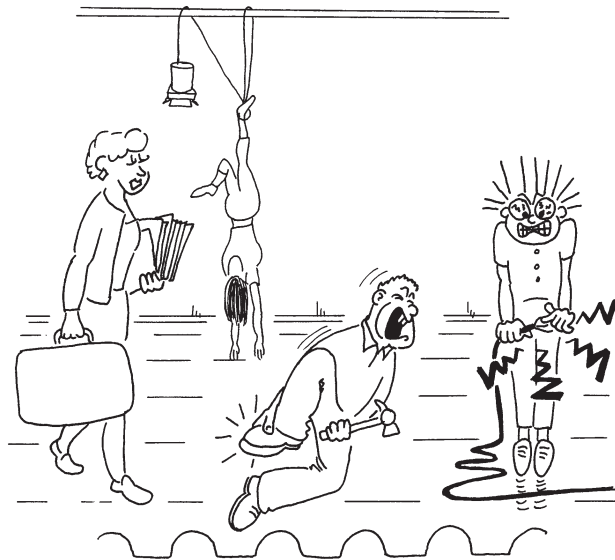
Cyclorama

The cyclorama is the large screen upstage onto which images or the lanterns can be projected. At a simple level, colour can be projected through the lanterns and used to represent place, for example, red for one place and green for another. If the set is the seaside, then a light blue can be projected onto the cyclorama as a complimentary colour to the staging area which may be painted yellow.



Stage manager's job

In the professional theatre, the director of the performance will consult with a designer (or designers) about the set, lighting and sound. Once the process of constructing the set has begun, the stage manager oversees the progress, reporting to the director and designer as necessary. The stage manager is very much hands-on, with responsibility for carpenters, electricians, painters, etc.



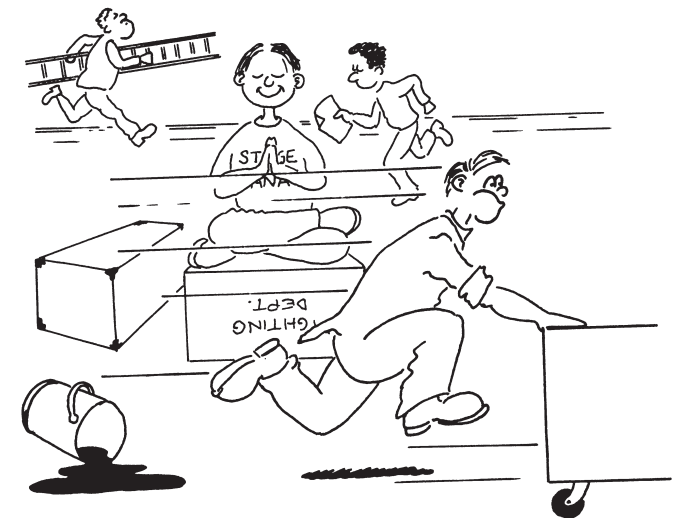
"Has anyone seen the stage manager?"

However, the stage manager's job is bigger than this. As well as preparing for the show, he/she is very much the main person during the running of the show. The director decides how the show will be presented but the stage manager makes sure the mechanics of the production happen.

The stage manager oversees:

- set construction/striking the set
- costumes and properties
- communication
- organising play copies
- assistant stage manager/crew/runners
- the prompter.

As it is impossible to be in more than one place at once, fortunately most stage managers have one or more assistants (assistant stage managers, or ASMs) and hopefully a stage crew to help with the night-to-night running of a production. The most important personality trait is to be able to remain calm under stress. If anything goes wrong – and it often does – panic will only make things worse. No matter who is frantic around him or her, the stage manager must remain calm.



Writing a script

The way a script is set out is important. If you look at scripts in different books you will see that they can vary a little bit but they all more or less follow the same format:

- 1 The character's name is written first. It is followed by a colon (:).

Peter:

- 2 The character's name is followed by the words he/she speaks.

Peter: I'm going to buy that dog.

- 3 The next speaker begins on a new line.

Peter: I'm going to buy that dog.

Anne: Which one?

Don't forget question marks or exclamation marks when necessary.

- 4 Stage directions indicate a reaction, movement or how something should be said. Put stage directions in brackets.

Peter: (whispering) I'm going to buy that dog.

Anne: (putting down the newspaper) Which one?

If the stage directions are one word (whispering) or not a complete sentence (putting down the newspaper), you do not need to begin with a capital letter or finish with a full stop.

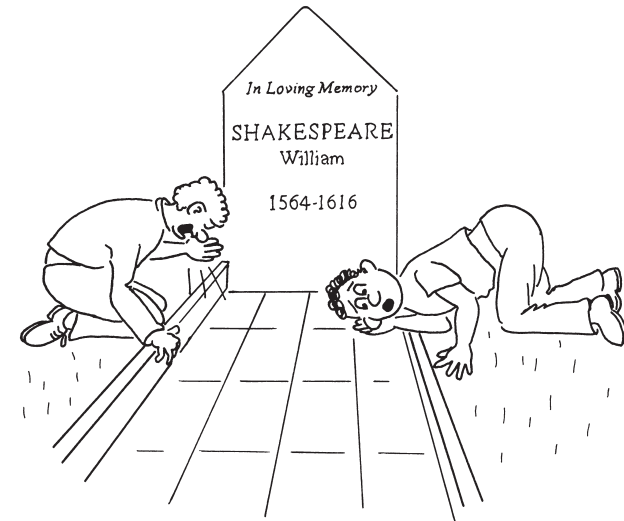
- 5 If the stage directions are a complete sentence, then a capital letter at the beginning and full stop at the end are necessary.

Peter: (whispering) I'm going to buy that dog.

Anne: Be careful, he might hear you. (She walks to the lounge door and looks into the hall.) He's coming!

Performing rights

Plays and musicals are protected by copyright. If a play is to be performed in public, then performance rights must be paid. This means that you pay the author and/or publisher a fee for each performance. Plays will have the details of the author and publisher in the front of the book. Performance rights should be obtained before you begin rehearsals.



"I said, CAN WE USE YOUR PLAY?"

A public performance becomes a public performance when at least one member of the public attends. Usually for performances in assemblies, lessons and examinations, it is not necessary to pay performing rights, however, it is always advisable to check. The cost of performing rights for a school performance is generally cheaper than for amateur or professional performances. The copyright owners may request that certain information is included in a certain size type on all posters and programmes. At the end of the production run, the box office will complete a form with similar information on it to the one on page 112.