

**Oregon Shakespeare Festival
School Visit Program**

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR LIVE THEATRE

Please distribute to all teachers who will be bringing their classes to performances.

Dear Teacher:

Thank you for hosting the OSF actors at your school. For over 40 years visiting schools, we have found that the students who are prepared for a live theatre experience make the most engaged audience members.

We have included some discussion material below on the role the audience plays in theatre. We hope you will review this information with your students so that the actors' visit will be a positive experience for all. Thank you for your help.

1. What is the difference between theatre and television or movies?

- Theatre is performed by live actors in front of a live audience.
- Each theatre performance is unique.
- In the theatre the audience is essential. The actors can create theatre without costumes, lights, scenery, even a stage, but if there is no audience, there can be no theatre.

2. What are acoustics (the total effect of sound in an enclosed space)? Why do acoustics matter in the theatre?

- Everyone in the audience can hear every sound the actors make.
- Everyone in the audience can hear every sound everyone in the audience makes (including gum chewing, bag rattling, whispering, watches beeping, cell phones, candy wrappers, etc.).
- The actors hear every sound everyone in the audience makes.

3. What can you do to support the performance?

- Think, listen, laugh, cry, applaud.
- Any reaction that comes from your experience of the play supports the performance. Reactions that are meant to take attention away from the play do not support the performance.
- Enter the performance space quietly and orderly.
- Pay attention to the language, movement, story, etc. Sit up (i.e. no lying down).
- Remove your hats and sunglasses and dispose of gum, food and drinks before entering the performance space.
- Turn off cell phones, watch alarms and other electronic devices. Students should not attend a performance with an mp3 player or other music playback device.