UNIT 1

Getting Started in Theatre

CHAPTER 1  ◆ Welcome to Theatre! 4
CHAPTER 2  ◆ You and Theatre 28
CHAPTER 3  ◆ Developing Your Personal Resources 50
CHAPTER 4  ◆ Creative Drama 66
Welcome to Theatre!

Chapter Outline

LESSON 1  Getting to Know You  5
LESSON 2  An Introduction to Theatre  7

Spotlight on Terms

- acting
- actor
- characters
- dialogue
- drama
- dramatic structure
- filmed
- play
- player-audience relationship
- playwright
- ritual
- script
- stage directions
- theatre
- theatre arts
Welcome to theatre—one of the most exciting classes you will ever take. Why is theatre so exciting? Because it’s entertaining, obviously, but also because it is based on human experience. In a sense, theatre is a class about life. As Roy Scheider, the actor, once said, “Theatre doesn’t exist because it’s entertainment. It exists because it’s a part of the energy of living, of humankind.”

In some ways you might think of this class as preparation for living your life to the fullest. This class will provide opportunities for you to get to know yourself, to involve yourself with others, to take safe risks, and to actively participate in activities and projects—all of which will help you respond to the world around you with increased energy and sensitivity. You should begin this class with the eager anticipation of an explorer about to embark on a new adventure.

**Getting to Know You**

**LESSON OBJECTIVES**

◆ Meet the other members of the class.
◆ Develop a feeling of acceptance.
◆ Communicate with people your own age.

Seeing old friends and making new friends are important parts of the education process. Today you probably arrived at school hoping that some of your friends would be here waiting for you. That’s a feeling that everyone knows; everyone likes to connect with someone familiar. For that very reason, one of the first things you will do in this class is become better acquainted with your classmates.

Getting to know the people you will be working with can help you feel included. Psychologists tell us that feeling included is one of our most important social needs. We need this sense of belonging in order to work, play, and contribute effectively to society.

In theatre, special “getting-to-know-you” activities help students and teachers learn each other’s names and get to know each other in an enjoyable way. These activities will help your class learn to work as a group and will also help you respond to your teacher as the leader. These activities also help you learn to listen and pay attention. These two skills are important both in theatre and everyday life.

In our society, our names are an important part of our identities. One of the nicest sounds in the world is to hear someone call us by name in a pleasant way. It is meaningful to each of us that we be called by name rather than referred to as “her,” “him,” “the red-haired girl,” or “that tall boy.” Think of how good it makes you feel when someone you hardly know calls you by your given name. This courtesy is especially important in theatre class, since you and your classmates will be working together throughout the course.
In this lesson, you will learn the names of your classmates through fun, non-threatening games. Complete one or more of the following activities.

1. **Circle of Friends.** This is a game about meeting people. Make two circles, an outer circle and an inner circle, with participants facing each other. When your teacher gives you the signal or begins to play music, the inner circle will move with small steps to the right, and the outer circle will move to the left.

   When the music stops or when the teacher calls “Make a friend,” stop moving and introduce yourself to the person you are facing. Use the name you wish to be called. For example, if your name is Mary Ann Jones and you wish to be called Ann, introduce yourself as Ann.

   Continue for several rounds. Try to connect each person’s name with his or her face. After the game, decide how many new names you have learned.

2. **A-to-Z Name Game.** This game helps you recognize the names of others by putting them in alphabetical order. At your teacher’s signal, arrange yourselves in a circle or line from A to Z, using first names or the names you want to be called. Students having the same first names can use second names or birth dates to determine their rank order. When your teacher asks for a roll call, step forward and call out your name in a clear voice. Listen carefully to the names of all the other students.

3. **Right/Left.** The purpose of this game is to think quickly and correctly call out the name of the person to your right or left. Begin this game by standing in a circle. The game is easier if you are still in first-name alphabetical order.
The leader stands in the center of the circle and points to someone, calling “right 1 2 3 4 5” or “left 1 2 3 4 5.” Before the count is completed, the person to whom the leader is pointing must correctly call out the name of the person specified. The first person who hesitates to call out a name, forgets a name, or calls out the wrong name automatically becomes the next leader.

If, after several calls, the leader hasn’t been replaced, the teacher can call “Switch places,” and everyone, including the leader, must find a different place in the circle. The person who is left out of the circle becomes the new leader.

---

**An Introduction to Theatre**

**LESSON OBJECTIVES**
- Recognize a scene written in script format.
- Understand the player-audience relationship.
- Recognize the contribution of theatre to your life.

Drama, the dramatic tradition which began with primitive people nearly three thousand years ago, comes from a Greek word meaning “to act” or “to do.” We usually think of drama as a story written to be played out on the stage. Theatre arts is the term used to cover all parts of training or instruction in the field. This lesson is designed to help you understand what drama is, how it has changed through the ages, and how the study of theatre arts relates to your life.

The format of this lesson is unique because it is written as a script, a written copy of the conversation between characters. Characters are the personalities actors portray in a scene or a play, which are different from their own personalities. Like all scripts, this play is meant to be presented by actors, performers who play the roles or take the parts of specific characters, and who project the characters to the audience. Such presentation is called acting.

The way plays are written is a special style of writing called dramatic structure. This style is different from the way a short story, novel, or poem is written. In a play, the talk, or conversation between two or more characters is called dialogue. Dialogue is not set in quotation marks. Instead, the character’s name appears before the spoken part. Plays are made up entirely of dialogue and stage directions, additional information provided by the playwright or author. Stage directions help the actors know how to feel or what to do when certain lines are spoken. Such directions are usually printed in italics and set apart from the dialogue by parentheses. You’ll learn more about the structure of plays in Chapter 8.
The Wonderful World of Theatre

Mrs. Logan’s Theatre Class

Characters

Mrs. Logan . . the teacher
Matt . . . . . . a football player taking the class because of his girlfriend, Sydney.
Sydney . . . . a good student; wants her boyfriend, Matt, to enjoy theatre.
Vanessa . . . a new student who hopes to find friends in theatre class.
José . . . . . an extremely intelligent student who enjoys studying history.
Thomas . . . someone who thinks about food and fun all the time.
Holly . . . . . a good-natured person, but not a good student.
Rosa . . . . . someone who enjoys attending plays with her family.
Kristen . . . an insecure classmate with serious family problems.
Katie . . . . . a student who loves to perform and wants to be a ballerina.
Lo . . . . . . Matt’s best friend, a good-natured tease.

Scene: A theatre arts classroom in any school. As the play begins, class has just begun. The students are seated and are talking quietly to each other as the teacher finishes checking roll.

Mrs. Logan: (After putting away the roll, moves to the front of the classroom.) Welcome to the wonderful world of theatre! (She smiles, and there is excitement in her voice.) This class is going to be fun as we explore theatre together. Theatre requires active participation. Each one of you will have many opportunities to perform, observe, organize, create, and evaluate. You may not be aware of this, but your background in theatre began long before today. Think back on some of your past experiences. When you were little children, did any of you ever like to pretend? (Students respond by nodding their heads and smiling.) What were some of the things you pretended? (Class responds simultaneously with different answers—superhero, cop, doctor, fireman, nurse, etc.)
Everyone likes to pretend. When we’re young, it’s called dramatic play. When we’re older, it’s called acting!

The most basic definition of theatre is someone performing something for someone else.

Oscar Brockett

Sydney: (Laughing as she speaks.) I was always a popular movie star.

Lo: Every Monday, I always pretended I was sick, so I wouldn’t have to go to school. (Class laughs.)

Mrs. Logan: Most children just naturally pretend as they play. Pretending, or acting out, is an important part of growing up. Through these play experiences, young children learn to use dialogue, act out different characters, and create and solve problems. Acting out, or pretending, is considered dramatic play. (Students nod and respond.) Have any of you ever been in a play?

Rosa: I love being in plays. My first starring role was as Cinderella when I was in the fourth grade. That was the year I tripped over a pumpkin.

Thomas: (Reacting with humor.) Oh, I remember that! Because I was the pumpkin!

Lo: (Boasting.) When I was about seven, I played a dairy product in a play about food groups.

Matt: Wow! Big deal! Did you “butter up” the teacher to get the part? (Class makes faces at the pun.) I bet you really “milked” that part for all it was worth. (Group responds with such comments as Ugh! Great! Way to go, Matt! Real funny!)

Holly: Ugh, Matt! That was bad!

Thomas: (Rubbing his stomach.) Speaking of milk, I’m hungry! (Class groans.)

Mrs. Logan: Has anyone else been in a play?

Katie: Last year, I was a dancer in Oklahoma! at the community theatre. We had a full house at every performance. It was great!

Kristen: In kindergarten, I was a partridge in our Christmas play. I was so nervous, I ran off the stage to my mom. She was so embarrassed that she never let me be in a play again. (Class laughs.)
Over the past 2000 years, the theatres, the costumes, and even the audiences have changed a great deal. What has not changed is the human need to act out life’s situations and to enjoy and learn from those performances.
Mrs. Logan: (Smiling at the class.) Well, I can certainly see that many of you have had stage experience. But perhaps some of you have never been in a play before. (Several students begin to nod their heads.)

Matt: (Leaning over to Sydney.) I can’t believe you talked me into taking this class! All she’s talking about is being in a play. I’d rather be in some other class. I think I better go get my schedule changed before they close out all the other classes.

Sydney: (Whispering.) Shhh! Be quiet, that’s not all it’s about. Just wait, you’ll see. Besides, you promised that if I would go to your ball-games, you’d be in this class. (Matt slumps down in his chair disgusted.)

Mrs. Logan: (Looking at Matt and smiling.) I can see that some of you are a little worried about what we’re going to be doing. I promise I’ll talk about that soon. (Class settles down to listen.) But first I’d like you to answer a question! Just what is theatre? Does anyone know?

Vanessa: A place to see plays.

Rosa: (Excited.) Live performances like the ones my family and I have seen on Broadway.

Kristen: Entertainment.

Lo: This class! (Everybody laughs.)

Mrs. Logan: You’re all right! Today, theatre has many different meanings. In this class, theatre refers to the writing or performing of plays, to the buildings where those plays are performed, and to your activities and experiences in this class.

Thomas: (Raises hand proudly.) Wait! I know something else that theatre is! It’s a place to watch movies and eat popcorn!

Mrs. Logan: That’s true, Thomas. Both movies and television are forms of entertainment featuring actors in a filmed or photographed presentation. We will discuss some of the ways in which
movies, television, and live performances are alike as well as different. But for now, let’s think back to the beginning of theatre. When do you think theatre first began? (Students shrug their shoulders and give each other puzzled looks.) Suppose I gave you the assignment to look up the word theatre in your dictionary.

**Matt:** (Leaning over to Sydney and whispering loudly.) Thanks a lot, Sydney! You didn’t say anything about homework! (Mutters to himself while Sydney ignores him and continues to listen to Mrs. Logan.) Now I know I’m changing classes! (Slouches down low in his chair.)

**Mrs. Logan:** (Continuing.) You would find that the word **theatre** comes from the ancient Greek word *theatron*, meaning “a place for seeing.” But we think that theatre actually began long before the Greeks gave it a name. (Looking directly at Matt.) Matt, when you and your friends get together, how do you tell your friends what happened in a football game?

**Matt:** (Sits up and speaks hesitantly.) Well, most of the time I just say, “Hey, man, guess what happened to me?” and then I tell it.

**Mrs. Logan:** (Dramatically.) Well, what if you saw someone make a great catch in a football game on television and you wanted to share it with the team at practice? What would you do?

**Matt:** (Beginning to get interested.) I’d probably grab a ball and show everyone. (He demonstrates catching the ball, then acts out passing to Lo, who catches it. The class laughs.)

**Mrs. Logan:** You know, Matt, you are exactly right. People have always shown, or “acted out,” things they thought were important. Historians think that even primitive people may have acted out certain events.

**Holly:** (Looking puzzled.) You mean the caveman did Shakespeare?

**Mrs. Logan:** No, Holly, the first theatre wasn’t exactly the way you and I think of it. Primitive people told about things that happened to them. One of them might have discovered, just as Matt has, that
Although every culture on earth celebrates some form of performance, no one really knows for sure where or how theatre began. Most experts believe that today’s theatre began with the myths and rituals of ancient people. Artifacts (hand-made objects such as tools and ornaments) from the Ice Ages have shown that humans may have been performing rituals of various types as many as 30,000 years ago. From 10,000 to 30,000 years ago, tribes of humans also left records of what seem to be rituals in the wall paintings found in caves in Africa, France, and Spain. All drawings of people performing ritual ceremonies seem to involve man’s need to hunt for food.

Anthropologists believe that early in human history, societies became aware of forces that seemed to influence their climate and food supply. With little or no scientific knowledge, these early people believed that good and bad occurrences were due to magical, unexplainable, supernatural forces. To ensure their well-being, societies tried to find ways to win the favor of these unknown forces. In their ignorance of how nature works, an ancient society might have perceived a connection between some of their activities, such as dancing or chanting, and the desired results in nature. The society would then begin to repeat and refine those actions. Over time, these actions would become formal, fixed rituals or ceremonies enacted for the sole purpose of ensuring the tribe’s safety and prosperity.

These early rituals have several elements in common with theatre. For example, certain movements in the rituals were performed by a person, possibly a shaman (priest), who wore symbolic clothing and used symbolic items. These priests are in some ways like actors who perform scripted movements while wearing costumes designed specifically for their characters.

Rituals were performed in a space set apart from the other tribal members so that the actions performed by the priest or shaman could be watched by members of the tribe. It is easy to see how this spatial arrangement might reflect the stage area and the audience area found in theatres today.

Still another similarity between ancient rituals and today’s theatre is based on the fact that ancient rituals had a set order of events. Participants in ancient rituals probably repeated certain actions many times in a predetermined order to win the favor of the supernatural spirit they were trying to please. This ritual order is roughly equal to the plot of events found in modern plays.

Other theatre historians believe that what we call theatre today grew out of early dances humans may have developed after observing animals in their environments. Still others believe that theatre grew out of storytelling. If hunters returned to their tribes with exciting stories to tell about their day of work, they may have demonstrated some of their adventures to those who were not along to see the excitement for themselves.

We may never know exactly how or why theatre as an art form was invented. However, similarities between ancient myths, rituals, dance, and storytelling, and the structure of theatrical performance today, seem to indicate a close connection. They may have been the beginning of today’s theatrical performance.
stories really come alive when they are acted out. We also think that primitive people believed that acting out something would make it happen. Their actions were repeated over and over until a pattern, or ritual, developed.

Matt: *(Now very interested.)* What did they use for a stage?
Mrs. Logan: That’s a good question, Matt. What do some of you think?
José: Didn’t they act out and dance around the campfire?
Mrs. Logan: Very good, José. So the campfire would be considered the first stage, and the first audience would have been the other tribe members. What do you suppose were some of the things they acted out?
Vanessa: How about trying to survive a big storm without any shelter or friends? *(Whispers.)* Like me.
Holly: Maybe struggling with a big animal, like a bear.
Rosa: What about things they considered sacred? Did they have some sort of religious customs?
Thomas: Maybe they acted out how hungry they were. I know that’s what I’d act out. *(Class groans, some rolling their eyes, as they look at Thomas.)*
Matt: Oh! *(Getting involved.)* Oh, I know! They probably acted out one tribe defeating another tribe.
Lo: *(Smiling.)* That sounds like our football team. *(The class laughs.)*
Mrs. Logan: All of you are right. From the time humans were civilized enough to have some sort of community, their lives and rituals focused on their attempts to survive, to please the gods, to understand life, to learn about other people, and to be successful despite the problems facing them. At first, no records were kept. But from the time recorded history began, we believe that these rituals included some of the very things that we see in performances today. Historians think that people dressed in masks and animal skins and pretended to hunt while others gathered around to watch the action.

**ritual**

repeated action that becomes a custom or ceremony.

---

These tribesmen in the Sudan are celebrating the completion of the king’s hut, a community activity where they recognize their accomplishments.
Theatre, as you and I know it, may have its roots in such primitive events.

**Sydney:** That was all so long ago. How did theatre change? When did it become more of a performance or production?

**José:** I know! As civilizations progressed, so did theatre.

**Mrs. Logan:** (Smiling approvingly at José.) José’s interest in history is really beginning to pay off. As humans progressed, so did their rituals. Much of what we experience in today’s theatre we owe to the early Greeks, who participated in dramatic ceremonies and celebrations at great public festivals honoring the god Dionysus. We will follow the progression of theatre through special features in your textbook called *Our Theatre Heritages*. These features will help you see how theatre has evolved since the days when the ancient Greeks began performing for each other.

**Katie:** But what about entertainment? I thought that’s what theatre was. I like to watch a play just to escape my own world for a couple of hours. I don’t think of theatre as a ritual.

**Vanessa:** Yeah! I like to be in plays to escape my boring life. I don’t act in plays to put food on the table. My mom takes care of that.

**Mrs. Logan:** Whether we are performing or watching, Vanessa, most of us do consider theatre to be entertainment and also a pleasant escape from reality. But we can also see from our study of theatre history that the theatre of a period reflects the people of that period as well as their behavior. Over 400 years ago, William Shakespeare, a famous English playwright, felt that theatre was such a true reflection of human behavior that it was “to hold as t’wer a mirror up to nature.” In other words, theatre reflects life as if it were a mirror.

**Rosa:** I guess you’re right. And some human behavior is pretty funny. (She glances toward Lo and Matt, who are making faces.)

**Mrs. Logan:** Theatre also gives us the opportunity to explore humanity. We are able to try on different roles and view life from different perspectives.

**Matt:** I really don’t see what good theatre will do me. I don’t plan to be an actor. I plan to be in politics.

**Lo:** Yeah, right!

**Sydney:** Well, then, you’ll really have to be a good actor!

**Mrs. Logan:** (Continuing.) Matt, whether you are a politician, a teacher, or a football player, your theatre experiences will help you become more self-confident as you talk to others. You’ll learn to speak clearly, to think quickly, and to use expression in your presentations. Those skills are important in whatever job or career you choose.

**Sydney:** See, Matt! (Class laughs.)

**Mrs. Logan:** (Voice building in enthusiasm.) Theatre students also learn to make good decisions, form sensible judgments, take safe risks, and develop self-discipline. And those are just a few of the many ways that theatre helps prepare you for life.

**Katie:** I want to be a ballet dancer, not an actress. What can theatre do for me?

**Mrs. Logan:** Well, Katie, you will learn to enhance your creativity through self-expression—showing your true thoughts and feelings, just as you do through ballet. Theatre is so diverse that each of you
will have many opportunities to discover talents and develop skills that will transfer into your other interests.

**Lo:** Hey, I’m just an ordinary guy. I don’t know what I want to do other than just get out of school. What’s this theatre stuff supposed to do for me? It’s not like I’m going to open my own theatre or anything! (Holly giggles.)

**Mrs. Logan:** Lo, think of this class as an adventure! You will have the chance to try different experiences, and you may even find a new interest. Theatre has something for everyone. Some students enjoy acting on the stage or performing with puppets. Others enjoy working backstage building sets, running lights, or videotaping the performances. Many just appreciate knowing what it takes to produce a play. Developing such interests in theatre enriches your life.

**Sydney:** (Turning and looking at Matt.) See, Matt, that’s what I told you! (Matt grins.)

**Thomas:** (Thinking aloud.) How can theatre enrich our lives? Only the stars get rich!

**Mrs. Logan:** (Smiling at Thomas.) Well, that’s a good point, Thomas, but that’s not the type of “rich” I mean. Enrichment means improving or adding to your life. Theatre not only will give you new interests, but will also give you a different perspective on others. Whether you are playing a role or watching a performance, you will be able to see how others work and live differently from you.

**Vanessa:** I took theatre at my old school, and the thing I liked best was working with other people.

**Mrs. Logan:** Yes, Vanessa, and since theatre is a group effort, you do learn to work as a team. (Looking at Matt.) Much like a football team.

---

At this point you are probably not aware of the many tasks involved in producing a play. The good news is that whatever your skills happen to be, there will be a valuable role for you in each and every production.
You will use the teamwork skills you develop in theatre in other classes and organizations. Later, when you have a job, you will realize that teamwork is one of the most important life skills we can learn. Does anyone else have something they would like to add?

**Katie:** Every time I’ve been in a play, that special feeling I get performing before the audience is what I remember most. I may forget the songs and the lines from the show, but I always remember that feeling of excitement about performing.

**Vanessa:** That’s why they say “there’s no business like show business.” *(Starts humming the song.)*

**Rosa:** I love going to the theatre! There is something really exciting about seeing a live performance. I like it better than going to a movie.

**Kristen:** Even when I’m just watching, I always feel I’m a part of the play.

**Mrs. Logan:** What you are talking about is a special “live” connection, or bond, that develops between the audience and the actors. The audience becomes part of the team. In theatre, we call this the **player-audience relationship**. The actors respond to the audience, and the audience responds to the actors. Attending a “live” performance is a once-in-history event. Even though the play may have been performed many times before, it will be different on the night you attend because you are there. Your personality and your interaction with the actors will be part of the energy and excitement. They will respond to you, as you will respond to them.

**Matt:** I can relate to that! When I’m on the football field, even though the coach says not to pay attention to the crowd, I can feel them. I
can hear them yelling, and it makes me feel like I’ve got to do my best.

**Mrs. Logan:** It is a similar feeling, Matt. This interaction with the audience can’t occur in movies or television, because the relationship between the performers and the audience is not there. In live theatre, the audience is the essential ingredient. Without the audience, there is no theatre.

**Holly:** *(Pointing to the wall clock.)* Hey, look! The bell’s about to ring. This class really went fast.

**Mrs. Logan:** That was because you were all so involved in our discussion. That’s another good point for theatre. There is opportunity for active involvement. Tomorrow, we will continue to see how the study of theatre can enhance your life. I hope I’ll see all of you then.

*(Looks at Matt and smiles.)*

*(The bell rings. Students gather their books, chatting as they exit.)*

---

**ACTION**

Complete one or more of the following activities.

1. **What is Theatre?** Ask five people to answer the question, *What is theatre?* Record their answers. As a class, compile a list of the many different perceptions of theatre.

2. **Your Impressions.** Working in small groups, write your own scene, sharing your impressions of theatre. Read your scene aloud or act it out in front of the class.

3. **Videotape Your Play.** Develop and videotape a scene similar to the one you read in Lesson 2.
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. Name one of our most important social needs.
2. Why is it important that we call each other by our given names in theatre?
3. Why is pretending an important part of growing up?
4. Give a theory for the beginning of theatre.
5. What were some of the basic needs that primitive people might have enacted?
6. Where did the name theatre come from, and what was the early meaning?
7. How will the term theatre be used in this class?
8. What are some of the life skills that are used in theatre?
9. What did William Shakespeare mean when he said theatre was a true reflection of human behavior?
10. What is meant by the player-audience relationship?
11. What is an essential ingredient in live theatre?

REFLECTIONS

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

1. Discuss the ways in which you have seen an audience become part of a team in a live performance. Think about plays, musical concerts, and other live events that require a player-audience relationship.

THEATRE IN YOUR LIFE

Make a list of your personal goals for this class.

ENCORE

Complete one or more of the following activities.

1. Conduct a survey, interviewing twenty people of various ages, to discover how often each attends the theatre. Report your results to the class. Construct a class graph showing attendance by age-group. Which age-group attends most often?
2. As a class, prepare a questionnaire to determine the most frequently attended entertainment event in your community.
3. Work with a new friend to establish what you believe to be the advantages of live theatre over the movies or television.
4. Choose an idea or an emotion. Compare and contrast its presentation in live theatre with its presentation in one or all of the following: art, dance, music, and musical theatre.
5. Create a collage of advertisements for live theatre events in your community or surrounding communities. Mount your collection on a poster to share with the class.
6. Interview an adult who has taken a theatre course to find out how this person has been able to use what he or she learned in his or her job or life experiences. Share your information with the class in an oral report.
Today's theatre is the product of many changes. Thousands of years ago, before books, T.V., movies, or computers, human beings felt a need in their lives for art and culture. One of the many ways in which people participated in the arts was to present theatrical productions and dramatic contests. As civilizations progressed, special places were built for these performances. As customs, beliefs, and technology changed, so did theatre. All the playwrights, directors, actors, and technicians who have participated in theatre for thousands of years contributed to the development of theatre into the art form we know today.

This time line is a road map for your journey through theatre history. As you read through the text, you will want to refer back to the time line frequently. Seeing where a particular playwright or new theatre design occurred in relation to other people and events will help you understand and remember the new information.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 B.C.</td>
<td>Comedy competition begins in Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>475 B.C.</td>
<td>Aeschylus adds a second actor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>472 B.C.</td>
<td>Aeschylus writes <em>The Persians</em>, earliest surviving Greek play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>471 B.C.</td>
<td>Sophocles introduces a third actor in tragedy and makes less use of the chorus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>465 B.C.</td>
<td>A skene (wooden hut or tent) is added to the theatre for use as a dressing room for actors and chorus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>458 B.C.</td>
<td>Painted stage scenery and stage machinery are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>449 B.C.</td>
<td>First acting competition for tragic actors at City Dionysia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>435 B.C.</td>
<td>Pericles builds theatre honoring Dionysus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442–441 B.C.</td>
<td>Sophocles writes <em>Antigone</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>431 B.C.</td>
<td>Euripides writes plays with parts for up to 11 actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>423 B.C.</td>
<td>Production of Aristophanes' <em>The Clouds</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365 B.C.</td>
<td>First Roman theatrical performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365 B.C.</td>
<td>Many Greek theatres are built throughout the Mediterranean area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 B.C.</td>
<td>Comedies of Livius Andronicus performed in Rome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 B.C.</td>
<td>First Roman amphitheatre built at Pompeii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 B.C.</td>
<td>First permanent Roman theatre built of stone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CLASSICAL PERIOD (500 B.C.–500 A.D.)**

- **500 B.C.–486 B.C.** Comedy competition begins in Greece.
- **475 B.C.** Aeschylus adds a second actor.
- **472 B.C.** Aeschylus writes *The Persians*, earliest surviving Greek play.
- **471 B.C.** Sophocles introduces a third actor in tragedy and makes less use of the chorus.
- **465 B.C.** A skene (wooden hut or tent) is added to the theatre for use as a dressing room for actors and chorus.
- **458 B.C.** Painted stage scenery and stage machinery are used.
- **449 B.C.** First acting competition for tragic actors at City Dionysia.
- **435 B.C.** Pericles builds theatre honoring Dionysus.
- **442–441 B.C.** Sophocles writes *Antigone*.
- **431 B.C.** Euripides writes plays with parts for up to 11 actors.
- **423 B.C.** Production of Aristophanes’ *The Clouds*.
- **365 B.C.** First Roman theatrical performance.
- **365 B.C.** Many Greek theatres are built throughout the Mediterranean area.
- **240 B.C.** Comedies of Livius Andronicus performed in Rome.
- **80 B.C.** First Roman amphitheatre built at Pompeii.
- **55 B.C.** First permanent Roman theatre built of stone.

**Outstanding Playwrights**

**500 B.C.–500 A.D.**

**Greece:**
- Aristophanes
- Aeschylus
- Euripides
- Menander
- Sophocles
- Thespis

**Rome (Italy):**
- Plautus
- Seneca
- Terence

**India:**
- Kalidasa

**CLASSICAL PERIOD (500 B.C.–500 A.D.)**

- **500 B.C.–486 B.C.** Comedy competition begins in Greece.
- **475 B.C.** Aeschylus adds a second actor.
- **472 B.C.** Aeschylus writes *The Persians*, earliest surviving Greek play.
- **471 B.C.** Sophocles introduces a third actor in tragedy and makes less use of the chorus.
- **465 B.C.** A skene (wooden hut or tent) is added to the theatre for use as a dressing room for actors and chorus.
- **458 B.C.** Painted stage scenery and stage machinery are used.
- **449 B.C.** First acting competition for tragic actors at City Dionysia.
- **435 B.C.** Pericles builds theatre honoring Dionysus.
- **442–441 B.C.** Sophocles writes *Antigone*.
- **431 B.C.** Euripides writes plays with parts for up to 11 actors.
- **423 B.C.** Production of Aristophanes’ *The Clouds*.
- **365 B.C.** First Roman theatrical performance.
- **365 B.C.** Many Greek theatres are built throughout the Mediterranean area.
- **240 B.C.** Comedies of Livius Andronicus performed in Rome.
- **80 B.C.** First Roman amphitheatre built at Pompeii.
- **55 B.C.** First permanent Roman theatre built of stone.

**500 B.C.–500 A.D.**

**Greece:**
- Aristophanes
- Aeschylus
- Euripides
- Menander
- Sophocles
- Thespis

**Rome (Italy):**
- Plautus
- Seneca
- Terence

**India:**
- Kalidasa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 B.C.–486 B.C.</td>
<td>Comedy competition begins in Greece.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>475 B.C.</td>
<td>Aeschylus adds a second actor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>472 B.C.</td>
<td>Aeschylus writes <em>The Persians</em>, earliest surviving Greek play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>471 B.C.</td>
<td>Sophocles introduces a third actor in tragedy and makes less use of the chorus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>465 B.C.</td>
<td>A skene (wooden hut or tent) is added to the theatre for use as a dressing room for actors and chorus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>458 B.C.</td>
<td>Painted stage scenery and stage machinery are used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>449 B.C.</td>
<td>First acting competition for tragic actors at City Dionysia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>435 B.C.</td>
<td>Pericles builds theatre honoring Dionysus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442–441 B.C.</td>
<td>Sophocles writes <em>Antigone</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>431 B.C.</td>
<td>Euripides writes plays with parts for up to 11 actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>423 B.C.</td>
<td>Production of Aristophanes’ <em>The Clouds</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365 B.C.</td>
<td>First Roman theatrical performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>365 B.C.</td>
<td>Many Greek theatres are built throughout the Mediterranean area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 B.C.</td>
<td>Comedies of Livius Andronicus performed in Rome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 B.C.</td>
<td>First Roman amphitheatre built at Pompeii.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 B.C.</td>
<td>First permanent Roman theatre built of stone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Classical Period (To 500 A.D.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 A.D.</td>
<td>Wandering troupes of performers, usually the troupe owner’s slaves,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>entertain in Britain and on the European continent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>600 A.D.</td>
<td>Wandering troupes of performers, usually the troupe owner’s slaves,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>entertain in Britain and on the European continent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>712 A.D.</td>
<td>Dance-dramas are performed in Chinese court.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 A.D.</td>
<td>Earliest recorded religious plays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304 A.D.</td>
<td>Christians against theatre becomes widespread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 A.D.</td>
<td>Earliest recorded religious plays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 A.D.</td>
<td>Earliest recorded religious plays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304 A.D.</td>
<td>Genesius, an actor, dies a martyr’s death during a performance in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>700 A.D.</td>
<td>Acrobats, minstrels, puppeteers, and jugglers entertain at weddings,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>banquets, and festivals helping to keep performing alive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 A.D.</td>
<td>The Colosseum in Rome is built. Roman gladiatorial contests become</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>more popular than theatre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 A.D.</td>
<td>Actors, called mimes, dress in ordinary clothes without wigs and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>masks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 A.D.</td>
<td>Most actors are slaves, or low-ranking members of society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197–202 A.D.</td>
<td>Christians forbidden to attend theatre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197–202 A.D.</td>
<td>Christians forbidden to attend theatre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197–202 A.D.</td>
<td>Christians forbidden to attend theatre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>175 A.D.</td>
<td>Roman theatre consists of mimicry, mime, pantomime, and spectacle.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>197–201 A.D.</td>
<td>The Roman Catholic Church excommunicates actors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304 A.D.</td>
<td>Christians against theatre becomes widespread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400 A.D.</td>
<td>Indian classic, <em>Shakuntala</em>, by Kalidasa is written in Sanskrit.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>426 A.D.</td>
<td>(approx.) Saint Augustine opposes theatre in <em>The City of God</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>568 A.D.</td>
<td>Roman spectacles are stopped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 A.D.</td>
<td>Earliest recorded religious plays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Examining**
925 A.D.
Earliest known Easter tropes, Quem Quaeritis—dialogue of The Three Marys and the Angels.

1110

1200
Bards, professional storytellers, popular in Ireland.

1204
Religious drama performed outside the church.

1250
Beginning of German drama

1320
Ordinary people participate in performances as the medieval trade unions or guilds take over presentations of religious pageants. Rolling stages or pageant wagons used.

1325
Noh plays developed in Japan.

1375
English plays begin to be written in everyday language.

1375
Noh plays developed in Japan.

1402
First European acting company is given permission by Charles VI to occupy a permanent playhouse in the Hôpital de la Trinité in Paris.

1425
Outdoor staging directions given in The Castle of Perseverance.

1469
Mumming and masquerades become popular.

1490
Development of Spanish drama.

800 A.D.
Traveling circuses provide live entertainment.

800 A.D.
Traveling circuses provide live entertainment.
1450–1700

England:
- Jonson
- Kyd
- Marlowe
- Shakespeare
- Webster

Spain:
- Calderón
- Cervantes
- Lope de Rueda
- Lope de Vega

Italy:
- Ariosto
- Goldoni
- Machiavelli
- Tasso

France:
- Corneille
- Molière
- Racine

1500
Anonymous morality play, *Everyman*, personifies virtues and vices struggling for the soul of man.

1558
Elizabeth I forbids writing of religious drama.

1599
Globe Theatre built.

1599
Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*.

1600

1613
The Globe Theatre is destroyed by fire.

1616
Shakespeare’s death.

1633
First performance of *Oberammergau Passion Play* in Germany

1642
Theatres are closed in England.

1650

1674
Drury Lane Theatre opens in England.

MEDIEVAL PERIOD (to 1550)

1500

1512
The word “masque” first used to denote poetic drama.

1548
Hôtel de Bourgogne, first roofed theatre and first public theatre in Europe since classical times, opens in Paris.

1540
*Ralph Roister Doister*, English “school play.”

1548
Classical drama begins in schools and universities in England.

1548
Religious drama banned in Paris.

1558–1584
Mature plays performed for the English court by companies of young boy actors.

1600

1618
Teatro Farnese, first Renaissance proscenium arch theatre, is built in Italy.

1634
Théâtre du Marais opens in Paris.

1642
Theatres are closed in England.

1650

1671
Paris Opera opens.

1675–1750
Kabuki Theatre and puppet theatre begin in Japan

1660
London theatres are reopened.

1660
Actresses play female roles.

RENAISSANCE, ELIZABETHAN, RESTORATION, GOLDEN AGE, NEOCLASSIC (1550–1700)

1500

1512
The word “masque” first used to denote poetic drama.

1548
Hôtel de Bourgogne, first roofed theatre and first public theatre in Europe since classical times, opens in Paris.

1540
*Ralph Roister Doister*, English “school play.”

1548
Classical drama begins in schools and universities in England.

1548
Religious drama banned in Paris.

1558–1584
Mature plays performed for the English court by companies of young boy actors.

1599
Globe Theatre built.

1599
Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*.

1613
The Globe Theatre is destroyed by fire.

1616
Shakespeare’s death.

1633
First performance of *Oberammergau Passion Play* in Germany

1642
Theatres are closed in England.

1650

1674
Drury Lane Theatre opens in England.

1671
Paris Opera opens.

1675–1750
Kabuki Theatre and puppet theatre begin in Japan

1660
London theatres are reopened.

1660
Actresses play female roles.
1700

1700–1800

1700–1900

Great Britain:
Congreve
Garrick
Gay
Goldsmith
Gregory
O’Casey
Robinson
Sheridan
Syne
Wilde
Yeats

Germany:
Goethe
Gottsched
Lessing

Russia:
Chekhov
Gorky
Pushkin
Tolstoy

Norway:
Ibsen

Spain:
Benavente
Echegaray
Quintero
Sierra

Sweden:
Strindberg

USA:
Bother
Fitch
Henne
Howard
MacKay
Moody
Mowatt
Payne

Outstanding Playwrights

1700

1750

1800

1850

1716
A theatre opens in Williamsburg, Virginia.

1732
First record of a play in New York: Farquhar’s The Recruiting Officer.

1737
Licensing Act, London, submits all plays to censorship.

1741–1742
David Garrick begins his career.

1750
First playhouse opens in New York.

1790s
More realism in scenery and costumes.

1790s
Actors’ salaries range from $4 to $50 a week.

1800
Gas lighting introduced at the Paris Opera.

1822
Arrival of the "well-made" play.

1840
The Savoy in London is first theatre to be lighted throughout with electricity.

1846
Electric arc lighting used at the Paris Opera.

1852
First production of Uncle Tom’s Cabin, the most popular American play of the century.

1864
Edwin Booth (1833–1893) plays Hamlet for 100 nights in New York. Long runs of plays become common.

1866
Duke of Saxe-Meiningen (1826–1914) begins reform in staging. Role of modern director begins in Germany.

1878
H.M.S. Pinafore, operetta by Gilbert and Sullivan, is presented.

1881
Madison Square Theatre opens in New York City.

1883
Metropolitan Opera founded.

1889
Edison develops the motion picture camera.

1895
Oscar Wilde writes The Importance of Being Earnest.
### Outstanding Playwrights

**Great Britain:**
- Barrie
- Coward
- Pinter
- Shaw
- Synge
- Thomas
- Williams

**Germany:**
- Brecht

**Russia:**
- Chekhov

**France:**
- Anouilh
- Cocteau
- Feydeau
- Giraudoux
- Sartre

**Italy:**
- D’Annunzio
- Pirandello

**Belgium:**
- Crommelinck

**USA:**
- Hellman
- O’Neill
- Rice
- Van Druten
- Wilder

---

**1900–1945**

- **1900**

- **1903**
  - George Pierce Baker (1866–1935) begins to teach playwriting at Radcliffe College.

- **1904**
  - Thomas Edison produces the first sound motion picture.

- **1905**
  - Gordon Craig writes *The Art of the Theatre*.

- **1906**
  - Electra Perry (Tony) Awards first presented for excellence in Broadway theatre.

- **1910**
  - Television is invented.

- **1912**
  - Non-professional acting companies—“little theatres”—appear in the U.S.

- **1914**
  - U.S.’s first degree program is established in theatre at Carnegie Institute of Technology.

- **1920**
  - Plays are written for and presented by black actors.

- **1924**
  - Stanislavsky’s *My Life in Art* begins revolution in actor training.

- **1927**
  - Audiences are lured from theatre to the “talking pictures.”

- **1929**
  - First Academy Awards (Oscars) presented for the 1927–1928 year by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

- **1930**
  - Group Theatre, modeled after Moscow Art Theatre, is founded by Lee Strasberg, Harold Clurman, and Cheryl Crawford.

- **1934**
  - Lillian Hellman writes *The Children’s Hour*.

- **1935**
  - Depression motivates founding of Federal Theatre Project. 10,000 employed in 40 states.

- **1938**
  - Thornton Wilder writes *Our Town*.

- **1940**
  - Tennessee Williams writes *The Glass Menagerie*.

- **1943**
  - Rogers and Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!* integrates music, story, dance, and setting.

- **1945**
  - Antoinette Perry (Tony) Awards first presented for excellence in television.

- **1946**
  - Electronic computer invented.

- **1947**
  - Actors’ Studio, founded in New York City, emphasizing Stanislavsky’s “Method”.

- **1948**
  - Theatre threatened by rapid development of TV.

---

**1900–1945**

- **1900**
  - Great Britain: Barrie, Coward, Pinter, Shaw, Synge, Thomas, Williams

- **1904**
  - Thomas Edison produces the first sound motion picture.

- **1905**
  - Gordon Craig writes *The Art of the Theatre*.

- **1912**
  - Non-professional acting companies—“little theatres”—appear in the U.S.

- **1914**
  - U.S.’s first degree program is established in theatre at Carnegie Institute of Technology.

- **1920**
  - Television is invented.

- **1924**
  - Stanislavsky’s *My Life in Art* begins revolution in actor training.

- **1927**
  - Audiences are lured from theatre to the “talking pictures.”

- **1929**
  - First Academy Awards (Oscars) presented for the 1927–1928 year by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

- **1930**
  - Group Theatre, modeled after Moscow Art Theatre, is founded by Lee Strasberg, Harold Clurman, and Cheryl Crawford.

- **1934**
  - Lillian Hellman writes *The Children’s Hour*.

- **1935**
  - Depression motivates founding of Federal Theatre Project. 10,000 employed in 40 states.

- **1938**
  - Thornton Wilder writes *Our Town*.

- **1940**
  - Tennessee Williams writes *The Glass Menagerie*.

- **1943**
  - Rogers and Hammerstein’s *Oklahoma!* integrates music, story, dance, and setting.

- **1945**
  - Antoinette Perry (Tony) Awards first presented for excellence in television.

- **1946**
  - Electronic computer invented.

- **1947**
  - Actors’ Studio, founded in New York City, emphasizing Stanislavsky’s “Method”.

- **1948**
  - Theatre threatened by rapid development of TV.
1950
Joseph Papp establishes the New York Shakespeare Festival. Moves to Central Park in 1957 as free theatre.

1955
Jim Henson’s Muppets star in the television show Sam and Friends.

1959
First play on Broadway written by an African American woman—A Raisin in the Sun—by Lorraine Hansberry.

1960
1962 Theatres introduce subscription tickets to finance productions.

1965 National Endowment for the Arts established.

1966 Movie studios contract movies made for television.


1970
1971 John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts opens in Washington, D.C.

1975 Michael Bennett’s A Chorus Line opens.

1980
1982 Annie closes after 2,377 performances.

1980s Broadway productions use spectacular high-tech special effects.


1990s Over 200 non-profit theatres exist in U.S., mounting over 3,000 productions.

1990s Escalating production costs force price increases of Broadway tickets.

1993 A spoken drama on Broadway costs over $1.2 million to produce. A musical costs $12 to $13 million.

1993 Broadway meets MTV in the telecasted rock opera The Who’s Tommy.

1995 14 fall “openings” occur on Broadway.

Outstanding Playwrights

1945–Present

Great Britain: Henley, Hwang, Mamet, Miller, Rabe, Saroyan, Shepard, Simon, Williams, A. Wilson, L. Wilson, Zeder

France: Beckett, Fauquez, Ionesco

USA: Albee, Conley, Hansberry

Canada: Beissel, Campbell, Deverell, Foon, Ryga

Australia: Buzo, Davis, De Groen, Holman, Williamson

Africa: Clarke, Fugard

China: Yu

1945–Present

L I N E