

LESSON 1

Imagination

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Identify imagination.
- ◆ Understand the importance of imagination in theatre.
- ◆ Participate in imagination activities.
- ◆ Perform with feeling, thought, imagination, and creativity.

Warm Up



While sitting at your desk, imagine you are with your friends at your favorite place to hang out. Who are you with? What are you doing?

visualizing

the act of imagining and seeing pictures in the mind.

Putting imagination and action together is an excellent way to learn, solve problems, and create. Imagination permits us to remember and to dream. Our imaginations allow us to go anywhere and do anything—the sky's the limit!

As an actor, you must use your imagination to make what happens onstage look real. Your imagination is essential in acting. The process of **visualizing**, or imagining, is important if your theatre experience is to have the greatest possible impact on an audience.

Your world of imagination is enhanced by your everyday life experiences. The more you become aware of the world around you, the easier it will be to act believably on stage. It is believability before an audience that makes actors successful.

The activities that follow are not meant to be performed before an audience. Their purpose is to exercise and stretch your imagination. They are pre-acting exercises designed to warm up your mind.

ACTION



Artist Joan Miró is known throughout the world for his imaginative works of art that appeal to many of our senses. This fanciful fountain is in Paris.

- 1. Imaginary Snake.** Imagine that a snake crawls into the classroom from the science lab. All the other students are reading an assignment and you notice the snake. What color is it? How long is it? What kind of snake is it? What do you do when the other students see it? What happens in the classroom?
- 2. Let's Play Ball!** Imagine that all your classmates are standing in a circle in the classroom. Your teacher tosses an imaginary beach ball to you. How big is it? What color is it? Take your hands and move them about the ball. Now toss the ball to one of your classmates. The ball is tossed back to you, and it becomes a football. How do you catch it differently? What is its shape? Again the ball comes back after being tossed around, and it becomes a tennis ball. Look at your hands. How differently are you holding the ball now? How does it feel? Try the same activity with an imaginary basketball, soccer ball, golf ball, and baseball.
- 3. What Is It?** As the class stands in a circle, your teacher tosses a scarf into the middle of the circle. Your teacher then suggests an environment for you to imagine. For example, she might say, "beach." In that case, the first student must pick up the scarf and use it as an object you would

find at the beach. The other students must guess what it is. The students take turns using the scarf as a different beach object until the teacher suggests a new environment.

- 4. Musical Scenes.** Listen to some music with your eyes closed. What imaginary action is inspired by this music? Imagine a scene that might take place, or focus on a character and imagine what is happening in his or her life. Discuss these possibilities with the class.
 - 5. Mental Visual Art.** Your teacher will show the class some visual artwork—perhaps examples of the baroque, Christian, Gothic, naturalistic, realistic, rococo, romantic, and surrealistic styles. Imagine what might have been happening in the picture when the artist painted it. Discuss the painting with the class.
 - 6. Imaginary Objects.** Your teacher will call out the names of objects that he or she will pretend to give each student while the class is sitting or standing in a circle. For example, the first object may be a coin, the next one a rose, then a cup of hot chocolate, a small puppy, a bag of popcorn, a plate of liver, and so on. How do you react to each imaginary object? How do your classmates react to the objects? Think about why different people react in different ways.
 - 7. Why Are You Frightened?** Can you remember a situation when you were frightened? Discuss what was happening. Is a feeling easier to imagine than people or objects? Why? If different members of your class react differently, discuss why this range of reactions is normal.
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