

# BROADWAY 101

A Comprehensive Study Guide  
covering everything that is Broadway.

## Directing

### Directing Activity #1

In groups of 5

#### *Stage Pictures*

Take the script of the one-minute play (or any well-known story, folktale or fairy tale). Choose members of the group to play the various characters.

Select one moment from the script or story - an "action moment" is best. Arrange the actors on stage to illustrate this moment, as though it was a tableau or freeze-frame. Think about the following:

#### *Levels*

The most interesting pictures have actors at different levels - standing, sitting, kneeling, down on the floor, up on a chair.

#### *Body position*

Are the characters facing each other? Facing away? Facing the audience? Turning their backs?

#### *Gesture*

In the tableau, are the characters gesturing? Reaching out? Remember that you can gesture with your whole body, not just hands and arms.

#### *Facial Expression*

Give the actors an idea of what expressions should be on their faces to complete the picture.

Show the completed tableau to the group. See how much of the story they can get just from the stage picture you have created.

Directing Activity #2

In two large groups

Using the stage directions below, from the musical *Wonderful Town* (book by Joseph Fields and Jerome Chodorov, music by Leonard Bernstein, and lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green), create a sequence of actions using mime and creative movement (dance pantomime).

Divide class into two large groups:

- Assign one person in each group the role of director.
- Assign the following roles: 1) Passers-by; 2) Ruth; 3) secretary; 4) writer #1; 5) writer #2; 6) men on subway; 7) Eileen; 8) producer; 9) line up of female actresses; 10) producer's assistant.
- *Note:* Group members can play more than one role.
- The beginning of the pantomime should start with determined optimism as the characters, Ruth and Eileen, struggle to get ahead in the "Big City."
- The middle of the pantomime should communicate a sense of confusion as the sisters encounter multiple characters and situations.
- The end of the pantomime should conclude with utter exhaustion and defeat.
- When all elements are in place, rehearse the beginning, middle, and end three times.
- Group 1 performs dance pantomime for group 2.
- Group 2 performs dance pantomime for group 1.
- *Optional:* Add music or sound effects during the presentations for added effect (e.g., "Conquering New York"- track 4, from the new Broadway Cast recording of *Wonderful Town*).

*Through numerous PASSERS-BY, RUTH appears, approaching a SECRETARY seated at a typewriter. The SECRETARY turns RUTH down. A WRITER arrives and the SECRETARY allows him to pass through. RUTH tries again and is denied entrance. ANOTHER WRITER appears, kisses the SECRETARY, and is passed through. RUTH tries once more, but to no avail. WRITER carries SECRETARY off in his arms. More PASSERS-BY appear, turning the scene into a subway. MEN grab all the seats in the subway car. RUTH and other WOMEN are left standing. EILEEN arrives and enters subway as RUTH departs. They wave. MEN fight to give EILEEN their seats. The subway halts, EILEEN gets out, followed by MEN. More PASSERS-BY through which EILEEN arrives at a PRODUCER'S office. EILEEN takes her place in a line-up of girls. The PRODUCER looks over the girls' legs, picks EILEEN from group, and ushers her into HIS office. EILEEN auditions lines as the PRODUCER makes passes. He chases her around his desk. A PRODUCER'S ASSISTANT joins in the chase. EILEEN escapes; the PRODUCER leaps into his ASSISTANT'S arms by mistake. More PASSERS-BY. RUTH and EILEEN enter separately and meet facing the CROWD. Wave after wave of PEOPLE march toward them, shouting "NO!" As the number comes to a finish, the TWO SISTERS join each other sadly, collapsing glumly on each other's shoulders amidst the hostile city crowds.*