

Name: _____

Introduction to Stage Management

This worksheet was created to accompany Episode 3 of Ovation Academy: Classes with Katy, and is designed to guide you through an activity where you will have the chance to try calling cues yourself.

INSTRUCTIONS

There are lots of different responsibilities that a stage manager has, but one of the most fun parts of stage managing is **calling cues**! During a performance, every light, sound, projection, and fly cue happens when the stage manager says “GO,” so it is really important that the stage manager stays focused and calls the cue the same way every time. Your challenge is to practice calling cues on your own for a short segment of a performance!

EXAMPLE

Take a look at the sample script page from *Lizzie: The Musical* on the next page, with cues written on the right-hand side of the page. Note the differences between the different types of cues. Light cues are notated with “LQ,” sound and projection cues with “SQ,” fly cues with “FLY IN/OUT,” and fog cues with “SMOKE ON.” Once you have looked over the cues, watch the video at this link (<https://youtu.be/ONSKMopPSuA>) of Katy calling this page of the script to see an example of how cues are called in performance. Notice that the cues that are bracketed together are called at the same time - for example, "Smoke on, portraits in, scrim out, and sound 43...GO."

TRY IT YOURSELF

Now it's your turn! First, watch this clip of the cast of *Dear Evan Hansen* performing at the Tony Awards: <https://youtu.be/h9rf5wFq3zk?t=156> Then, take a look at the sample cue sheet on the third page of this document. (This is just an example of what a script page **might** look like from this show. It was created for the purpose of this cue-calling exercise) On the cue sheet, be sure to identify which cues are standbys (notated as “SB”), which ones are visual cues called on an action, which ones are verbal cues called on a word, and which ones are musical cues called on a specific beat in the song. Then, watch the performance again with the cue sheet in front of you and practice calling the cue at the correct time. Remember that the cue should be called slightly before you see the lights change, so ideally you want to see the lights change right after you say “GO.” **Don't be discouraged** if it takes you a few tries to get it right! Also, if the light and

sound/projection cues combined are too tricky, it is totally okay to just try the light cues and ignore everything marked "SQ."

box set USC GO [SQ 41
LQ 226

This is a **visual cue**. It is called when the box has been set upstage center.

15: SOMEBODY WILL DO SOMETHING

SUDDEN LIGHT SHIFT. MORNING IN THE BORDEN HOUSE. PORTRAITS OF ANDREW AND ABBY ILLUMINATED. THE MURDERS. VICTORIAN SHADOW PLAY MEETS PSYCHO SHOWER SCENE. RED LIGHTS FOR THE FIRST TIME. THE MURDERS BECOME A FRENZIED CATHARSIS. BLOOD.

This is a **standby**. It is a warning of cues coming called about 30 seconds before the first cue in the sequence.

Video starts here

BRIDGET
① Miss Lizzie, what do you want for breakfast?

LIZZIE
I don't know as I want any breakfast. But I guess I'll have some coffee and cookies ...

Maggie are you going out to wash the windows?

BRIDGET
Yes. I done 'em inside already, but Mrs. Borden wants 'em done inside and out.

⑦ Your Father's gone to town. Your stepmother is cleaning the guest room upstairs.

(into mic) All by herself.

⑧ And I'll be out around here, so you needn't lock the door. Or you can lock it if you want to. I can get the water in the barn.

BRIDGET
⑧.5 234 X Somebody will do something
Somebody will take something
Somebody will strike something
Somebody will die

LIZZIE
Axe Fall River Runs Red

1 1 2 3 4 5 2 X Maggie's washing windows
-8 -8 -8 -8
Father takes a walk
Mrs. Borden goes upstairs
And I can hardly talk

I'm so afraid

⑫ I went down to the cellar
And searched behind some sacks
My eyes they never saw it
But my hands they found the ax

Bridget hands Lizzie the ax.

I'm so afraid

SB [LQ 227-244
SQ 43-49
SMOKE on
FLY IN portraits
FLY OUT scrim

This is a **verbal cue**. It is called on the word "windows."

GO [SMOKE on
FLY IN portraits
FLY OUT scrim
SQ 43 GO LQ 230

This is a **musical cue**. It is called on the first beat of the measure (or the fifth beat of the 8-count).

GO LQ 232
GO LQ 234

GO LQ 236

SAMPLE - from "Waving Through a Window," by Benj Pasek and Justin Paul

On the outside, always looking in
 Will I ever be more than I've always been? SB [LQ 58-80
 'Cause I'm tap, tap, tapping on the glass SQ 37-43
 Waving through a window
 I try to speak, but nobody can hear
 So I wait around for an answer to appear
 While I'm watch, watch, watching people pass
 Waving through a window, oh
 Can anybody see, is anybody waving? GO [LQ 58
2-3-4-5-X SQ 37

When you're falling in a forest and there's nobody around
 Do you ever really crash, or even make a sound?
 When you're falling in a forest and there's nobody around
 Do you ever really crash, or even make a sound? GO LQ 60
 When you're falling in a forest and there's nobody around *Zoe enters* GO SQ 39
 Do you ever really crash, or even make a sound?
 When you're falling in a forest and there's nobody around GO LQ 62
 Do you ever really crash, or even make a sound?
 Did I even make a sound?
 Did I even make a sound?
 It's like I never made a sound GO LQ 64
 Will I ever make a sound? ~~X~~ GO [LQ 66
SQ 41

On the outside, always looking in
 Will I ever be more than I've always been?
 'Cause I'm tap, tap, tapping on the glass *Ensemble moves from circle* GO LQ 68
 Waving through a window *Even runs towards cast* GO LQ 70
 I try to speak, but nobody can hear
 So I wait around for an answer to appear
 While I'm watch, watch, watching people pass GO LQ 72
 Waving through a window oh GO [LQ 74
SQ 43
 Can anybody see, is anybody waving back at me? (oh)
 Is anybody waving? *Ensemble breaks from circle* GO LQ 76
 Waving, waving, whoa-oh, whoa oh GO LQ 78
GO LQ 80

(BUTTON)



last hear of the song

I hope you had fun learning a bit about stage management and getting to call your own cues! I can't wait to see all your awesome work. Don't forget to **share your videos with us** so we can see what you've been working on!

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out at OvationTC@gmail.com, and I will get back to you as soon as I can.

Happy calling!
Katy

If you loved this activity...

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Grab someone else and teach them what you've learned about stage management. After all, the best way to show you know a topic is by teaching someone else! Without having them watch the video, see if you can explain to them what a stage manager is, what some of their most important responsibilities are, and how to call cues. Then, try teaching them to call the cues from the sample script page and see how they do!

KEEP ON LEARNING

As mentioned in the video, there is so much more that goes into stage management before you get to calling cues. On the following pages, there are two extension activities - one where you can try creating a production analysis, and one where you can practice recording blocking. Have fun!

CREATING A PRODUCTION ANALYSIS

After a stage manager has read the script once, the next time through should be focused on combing the script for **any details the playwright includes** that would be important to know going into rehearsals. These might include specific requirements of the set, lighting, props, sound effects, costumes, or any other special effects or staging needs that it would be important to keep track of. Creating this document will be very helpful later on, because it can be used to create props lists, costume plots, and more. Take a look at the example below of the first page of the script for *When We Were Young and Unafraid* by Sarah Treem, and of what the first row of the production analysis might look like.

ACT ONE

Scene 1

A farmhouse kitchen. Spacious and cluttered. A large, rustic wooden table in the center. A wooden countertop, stools in front. Behind, a refrigerator, oven, stove-top — nothing is new. All old, practically vintage-looking. And hardy. Cast-iron pots hang from the ceiling. Stacks and stacks of cookbooks. A well-used, well-loved space.

A narrow staircase, upstage, leads into the upper regions of the house.

A sliding door, downstage, leads to the dining room and front entrance.

Penny sits at the kitchen table, reading by candlelight. Footsteps down the stairs. Agnes appears. Sleepy. She looks at Penny, confused. Penny looks up and smiles briefly, then goes back to her book. Agnes turns on the lights.

PENNY. Hey!

AGNES. You'll ruin your eyes.

PENNY. I don't care.

AGNES. Why are you up? It's 5:30.

PENNY. I need to finish this before English.

7

Act/ Scene	Page	Cast/Cost.	Set	Lights	Props	Sound	Notes
1.1	7	Penny, Agnes	A bed and breakfast on Whidbey Island, off the coast of Washington State. Farmhouse kitchen with old furnishings - large, rustic wooden table, wooden countertop w/stools, refrigerator, oven, stove-top, cast-iron pots hanging from ceiling, stacks of cookbooks. Narrow staircase upstage, sliding door	Early morning - Candlelight, lightswitch for Agnes to flip	Candles, <i>Mrs. Dalloway</i> book	Footsteps on stairs	

RECORDING BLOCKING

One of the stage manager's most important responsibilities during staging rehearsals (when the director is deciding where people will move onstage and how each scene will look) is to write down all of the **blocking**, or all of the movements and actions that the actors do in a scene.

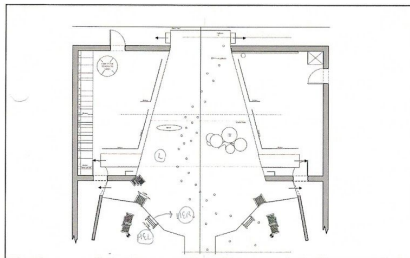
Here are a few examples of **notation** for blocking that stage managers might use in a script and what each one means, as well as a diagram detailing the locations of each section of the stage:

USR	USC	USL
CSR	CS	CSL
DSR	DSC	DSL

Audience

- CS - Center stage
 - US - Upstage
 - DS - Downstage
 - SL - Stage left
 - SR - Stage right
 - USC - Upstage center
 - USL - Upstage left
 - USR - Upstage right
 - CSL - Center stage left
 - CSR - Center stage right
 - DSC - Downstage center
 - DSL - Downstage left
 - DSR - Downstage right
- ENT - Enter
 - EX - Exit
 - X - Cross (or move)
 - ↓ - Stand
 - ⌋ - Sit
 - - Circle
 - - To
 - h - Chair

There are many different ways to record blocking, but one way is by using a separate sheet of paper right next to the page in the script. Take a look at the example below from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Each numbered action on the page on the left below happens at the point in the script where the number is written. Also, each character is notated with the first initial(s) of the character surrounded by a circle. For example, on the word "fair," Lysander crosses upstage right to lean on the ladder (number 5).



DIRECTING NOTES:

BLOCKING:

TECH/CUES:

QCS/COSTUMES:

PROPS:

1. (HER) enters PL, (HER) x DSR
2. (HER) x DSC
3. (HER) steps on SNUG/USC
4. (HER) runs to face SNUG
5. (L) x USR to lean on ladder
6. (HER) climbs ladder to USR
7. (HER) x SL (HER) leans on
8. (HER) steps
9. (HER) x SL to (HER) x DSC
10. (HER) enters back, (HER) x USL
11. (HER) enters (HER) x DSR
12. (HER) x DSC, (HER) follows
13. (HER) x DSR, (HER) follows

14. (HER) x DSR, (HER) follows
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.
- 21.
- 22.
- 23.
- 24.
- 25.

ONSTAGE:

- LYSANDER/Caledonia
- DEMETRIUS/Amy
- HERMIA/Julia
- HELENA/Clemence
- QUINCE/Abby
- SNUG/Rosie
- BOTTOM/Dale
- FLUTE/Regina
- SNOUT/Shanté
- STARVELING/Rebekah
- THESEUS/OBERON/Nikki
- HIPPOLYTA/TITANIA/Grace
- PUCK/Martha
- PEASEBLOSSOM/Grace
- EGEUS/COBWEB/Kyle
- PHILOSTRATE/MOTH/Jesie
- MUSTARDEED/Pearl

When the false Trojan under sail was seen,
 By all the vows that ever men have broke,
 In number more than ever women spoke,
 In that same place thou hast appointed me,
 To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

LYSANDER
 Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter HELENA

SCENE I.i.c

HERMIA
 God speed fair Helena! whither away?

HELENA
 Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
 Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
 Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air
 More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
 When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
 Sickness is catching: O, were favour so,
 Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go;
 My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
 My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
 Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
 The rest I'd give to be to you translated.
 O, teach me how you look, and with what art
 You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

HERMIA
 I frown upon him, yet he loves me still!

HELENA
 O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

HERMIA
 I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

HELENA
 O that my prayers could such affection move!

HERMIA
 The more I hate, the more he follows me.

HELENA
 The more I love, the more he hateth me.

HERMIA
 His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

HELENA
 None, but your beauty: would that fault were mine!

TRY IT YOURSELF

First, watch the video clip of this scene from Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* at this link: <https://youtu.be/KkmSly8PayY>. Now it's your turn to try out recording blocking for yourself! Refer back to the blocking notation and the example above if you get stuck, and do your best to write down **everything the actors do** using the dialogue below and the blocking sheet on the next page. You can also pause the video or go back if you miss something or need extra time to write it down. It's important to have a detailed record just in case the director or the actors need to be reminded later on. Also, feel free to use the empty space in the box to draw out diagrams or use arrows to help illustrate any of the movements if that is helpful to you!

ACT 2, SCENE 3

BENEDICK

When I said I would die a bachelor, I did not think I should live till I were married. Here comes Beatrice. By this day! she's a fair lady: I do spy some marks of love in her.

BEATRICE

Against my will I am sent to bid you come in to dinner.

BENEDICK

Fair Beatrice, I thank you for your pains.

BEATRICE

I took no more pains for those thanks than you take pains to thank me: if it had been painful, I would not have come.

BENEDICK

You take pleasure then in the message?

BEATRICE

Yea, just so much as you may take upon a knife's point and choke a daw withal. You have no stomach, signior: fare you well.

Exit

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14 _____

15. _____

16. _____

17. _____

18. _____

19. _____

20. _____

21. _____

DIRECTING NOTES:

BLOCKING:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

11. _____

12 _____

13 _____

22. _____

23. _____

24. _____

25. _____

26. _____

27. _____

28. _____

29. _____

30. _____

TECH/CUES:

QCs/COSTUMES:

PROPS:

ONSTAGE:

- BEATRICE / Eve
- BENEDICT / Charles

I hope you enjoyed exploring even more in the world of stage management.

It's a difficult job, but very important and also a lot of fun! If you want to watch professional stage managers call cues or hear Broadway stage managers talk about their jobs, check out the videos at the links below:

Watch a stage manager call "Mama I'm a Big Girl Now" from ***Hairspray***:

<https://youtu.be/5TXBqdDAXgE>

Watch a stage manager call "Confrontation" from ***Jekyll and Hyde***:

<https://youtu.be/SISJQFHAWHE>

Hear ***Hamilton***'s stage manager discuss what it's like to be the one running the ship:

<https://youtu.be/P3sUsS-BGzE>

Listen to ***Wicked***'s stage manager talk about maintaining the artistic integrity of the show:

<https://youtu.be/4dU3RIYQIVM>