



NEW TRIER PERFORMING ARTS

How to Prepare for Your Audition

1. Gather your audition materials. Audition information for Performing Arts Division productions is usually available three weeks before auditions. They can be downloaded from the Performing Arts page on the school website, www.newtrier.k12.il.us, and should include
 - a. Audition Information (description of the play and characters, an initial rehearsal schedule, and monologues)
 - b. Audition Form (to be completed by you and usually signed by a parent or guardian prior to your auditions)
2. Prepare for the audition.
 - a. Review the rehearsal schedule with your folks to make sure that you can be at all of the required auditions and rehearsals.
 - b. Choose a monologue from the audition materials that you think best shows off your strengths as a performer. Do not choose a particular piece because you think you want a specific role; pick something that you know you can do well. Leave the casting to the director.
 - c. Reread the audition information again to get a better idea of the play's style and characters. Your audition should show that you have thought about and made choices about your performance. Whenever possible, read the play before your audition.
 - d. Memorize and practice your monologue. Ask others to watch you perform and to tell you what they notice about your posture, your voice, and the story you're trying to tell in the performance. Ask yourself if their responses match up with your intentions. Make changes as needed.
 - e. Ask the director and/or your theatre teacher if you have specific questions about the monologues, the style of the play, or the characters. Most teachers are usually willing, with enough notice, to watch your monologue a few days before the audition. Contact her or him as early as possible to make an appointment or ask if you can perform for the class for additional feedback. If there is workshop or information session scheduled to help students prepare for the audition, plan to attend.
3. Check to see if you need to sign up for an audition time. The signups are usually posted on the callboard outside E122 at the Northfield Campus and outside M183 at the Winnetka Campus.
 - a. An open audition (public audition) requires that all the actors sit in one room for the entire session and watch one another audition. Generally, you will not need to sign up for a specific time but you will be expected to audition on a specific day that corresponds with the first letter of your last name and stay to watch everyone perform on that day.
 - b. A closed audition (private audition) requires the actors to come in to the room with the directors and sometimes the student directors one at a time.
 - c. Either way, you should know that you are auditioning from the moment you enter the audition area. In an open audition, the director will note if you are being a supportive and enthusiastic audience member while others are performing. In a closed audition,

the director is will note your behavior in the hallway with your fellow actors as you wait for your turn to perform.

4. On the day of your audition, make sure you have all of your completed forms with you. Also, wear something that shows the director that you have thought about the impression you want to make as you audition. That does not mean wear a costume. It does mean that girls should wear a skirt and boys should tuck in their shirts if the play takes place before 1950 and your shoes should allow you to move easily without shuffling or tottering. Generally flip-flops, boots (UGGS) and sneakers are not the best choices. You should wear something that makes you feel attractive and that you can move in.
 - a. At the beginning of your audition, the director will ask you for your materials and might ask some general questions about the information on the forms.
 - b. The director will tell you that you may begin whenever you are ready. An extra chair is usually in the room. You may use it if you like. If you choose not to use it, just move it to the side. Take a deep breath, introduce yourself, and introduce the monologue or song you will be performing.
 - c. Take one more deep breath and begin your monologue or song. Make sure you're facing the audience for most of your monologue. Once you are done, pause a moment, smile, and thank the director. If you are singing, make sure to gesture to your accompanist after you're done singing.
 - d. If you forget a line or some other part of your performance, don't worry. If you need to stop and start again, that's OK. Remember that all of the directors are also teachers. They want you to feel good about the work that you show them and are willing to give you a moment or two to regroup before you try again.
 - e. The director may ask you repeat the monologue with a specific adjustment. If this happens it does not mean that you did something wrong. It does mean that the director wants to see another aspect of your performance ability and how well you can take and apply specific direction.
5. After all the general auditions have been completed, the director will post a callback list on the call boards at both campuses or on the audition hotline. Read the callback information carefully. It will tell you when and where you should go for the callback audition. The director will usually indicate whether or not she or he plans to cast students even if they weren't called back.
 - a. Being called back for a show does not mean that you are automatically cast in the production. It means that you did something in the general audition that caught the attention of the director and he or she wants to see more of your work.
 - b. Callbacks can run late because the director is trying to see so many people at the same time. It's a good idea to bring some water and a snack. Also, check the audition materials for an indication of the director's schedule for the audition. If you know that you will need to leave early, tell the director at the beginning of the callback so that your needs can be taken into consideration as the scenes are performed.
 - c. If you know that you may be late to the callback, tell the director about the conflict as soon as possible. A well informed director is the most flexible director.
6. At the callback the director will explain the procedure for this part of the audition. Usually the director will give some additional information about what she or he is hoping to see in that day's performances. If the director doesn't do this, you should ask.
 - a. The director will usually assign you a partner or two, give you a scene to practice, and send you into another area to work with your partner on the scene. You are not expected to memorize the scene. However, you are expected to show the director that you understand the characters and their objectives within the scene. You will need to

make sure that you can be heard, that your physicality matches the character you are playing, and that you are listening and responding to the other characters in the scene. After you've had some time to rehearse, the director will call you back in to show your work.

- b. Callbacks are usually open auditions in that other actors may watch you perform your scenes. However, some of the actors will be in other areas rehearsing, so it's a little less structured than a general audition. Sometimes you will see someone who has prepared the same scene you have prepared do something that you think is interesting. Avoid the temptation to copy the choices of a fellow actor. Be confident that your work will stand on its own. Sometimes you will see someone who has prepared the same scene you have prepared do something that you recognize as something you had planned to do. Don't worry about it, just do what you had planned to do and fully commit to your choice. You should feel more confident knowing that another actor making a similar choice has validated your interpretation.
 - c. At some point, the director may send you home before other actors. That doesn't mean anything except that he or she has seen what they needed to see from you and doesn't want to waste your time by making you wait around while others perform. Conversely, you may only be asked to read once. While this can be frustrating, it is a normal part of the casting process.
7. The cast list will usually be available on the Audition Hotline within two days of the callbacks. The cast is generally listed in alphabetical order and the date, time, and location of the first rehearsal is included as well.
- a. The hotline number is 847/446-7000 x5053.
 - b. Whether or not you are cast, you are welcome to contact the director for feedback about your performance and get some advice about preparing for future auditions. Directors will often have specific times set aside to meet with students to discuss auditions a few days after the cast list is posted. Listen to the hotline carefully and check the call board for more information about that meeting schedule. Directors will always expect to meet with students before speaking with parents about casting decisions.
 - c. Please note that students who audition for Lagniappe-Potpourri should meet with the sponsors, not the student director or other board members, for feedback regarding their audition or the casting process.
 - d. If you are not cast, consider getting involved in other ways like enrolling in a theatre class, joining stage crew, or assistant directing. Remember that audition statistics prove that those students who audition multiple times over the school year and are in a theatre class are much more likely to be cast than those students who only do one or neither of those things.

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