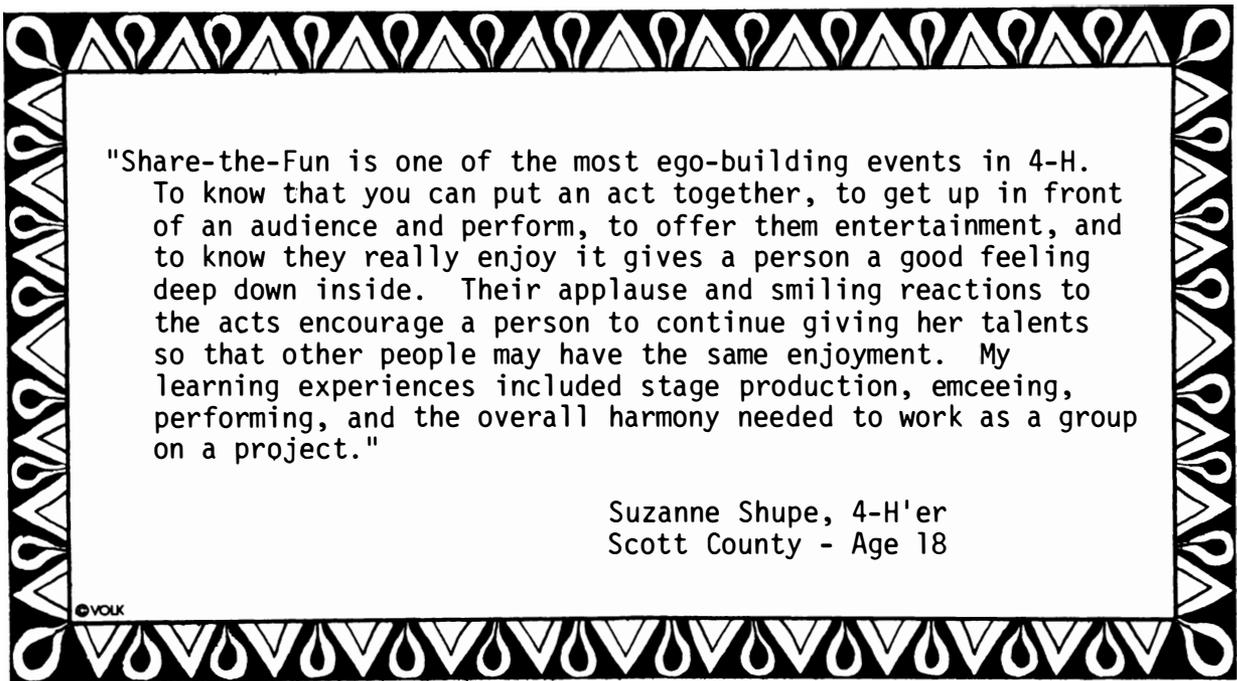


4-H SHARE THE FUN PROGRAM

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4-H SHARE-THE-FUN

*A Creative and Performing Arts, Leisure
Education, and Communications Project*

Objectives

- * To develop poise, confidence, and self-esteem through vocal, dance, instrumental, drama, and general presentations.
- * To develop career interests in the creative and performing arts.
- * To develop skills in show production, direction, presentation, and evaluation.
- * To provide constructive means for creative expression.

4-H Pledge

"I Pledge -
My Head to clearer
thinking
My Heart to greater
loyalty
My Hands to larger
service and
My Health to better
living, for my club,
my community, my
country and my
world."



4-H Motto

"To make the best
better."

4-H Emblem



- * A four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf.
- * The "H's" stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.
- * The 4-H colors are green and white. Green is a sign of springtime, life, and youth. White stands for purity and high ideals.

Overview of the Share-the-Fun Project

Share-the-Fun is one project in the 4-H Creative & Performing Arts, Leisure Education, and Communications component area. All youth 9-19 years of age may enroll in this 4-H project. The five categories of participation are:

1. Vocal (Any act which contains singing)
2. Instrumental (Totally instrumental presentation)
3. Dance
 - a) Tap
 - b) Ballet
 - c) Modern
 - d) Jazz
 - e) Acrobatic
 - f) Folk
4. Drama
 - a) Play or scene from a play
 - b) Monologues
 - c) Mime
5. General
 - a) Magic acts
 - b) Puppetry
 - c) Ventriloquism
 - d) Juggling
 - e) Tumbling/Gymnastics
 - f) Stand-up Comics
 - g) Impressionists
 - h) Clowning
 - i) Circus Acts

Four-H'ers may also participate as technical staff members, show helpers, emcees, and in any other related tasks. Share-the-Fun is an educational and enjoyable project. It complements all other 4-H programs.



General Information On Performance

The success of your performance depends upon many factors, all of which are under your control. If you plan your program carefully and rehearse all aspects of the performance thoroughly, your Share-the-Fun presentation will be an enjoyable experience for you and for your audience.

What follows are some key elements which you should consider in preparing your act. Although each performance category has different demands and requirements, these general performance techniques should be considered in all cases.

Material Selection - This is perhaps the most important element of any successful program. The material that you choose to perform will dictate the nature of your performance. This is true for dancers, comedians, or whatever.



It is important that you select material that you personally enjoy performing and that you are confident that you can perform well. Be realistic about your own talent and capabilities. It is better to perform simple material well than to perform difficult material poorly.

Also, examine your material carefully to be sure that it is appropriate to the occasion. Avoid material that might be offensive to your audience or that is in any way racist or sexist in nature.

Remember, if you are confident that you can perform your material well, and if you genuinely enjoy the material you are presenting, your ease and enthusiasm will carry over to your audience.

Preparing Your Act - The first step you should take in preparing your act is to seek guidance from trained professionals in the area of your presentation. For example, singers can consult with such people as your high school music teachers or your church choir directors. People such as these can also be helpful with material selection and program design.

In addition, you should search for books and pamphlets that explain performance techniques in your area. A list of suggested resource books covering all performance areas is on page 5. Your school or community librarian may have additional suggestions.

After you have read as much material as you can and have consulted with experts in the field, you will be ready to plan your act. The primary consideration to remember is that all aspects of your performance should be planned and rehearsed carefully. Consider such things as:



--Plan a dynamic, attention-getting beginning for your act; include sufficient variety (in voice, movement, or whatever) to sustain audience interest; and design a strong and definite ending for your program. Consider saving some of your best material for last so that your program ends on an "up" beat. In all cases, be conscious of the overall rhythm of your presentation, and how that rhythm relates to the response that you want from your audience. Plan that rhythm. Do not leave it to chance.

--Carefully plan out every minute of your act. You should always know what you are to do at any given moment during your performance.

--When appropriate, integrate the use of small properties into your act.

The use of such items as a telephone, a book, or a cane can give you something to do while you are performing. A performer who has something "to do" on stage -- something to concentrate on -- is less likely to be distracted and intimidated by the audience.

--Rehearse!!! Rehearse!!! Rehearse!!!

If you can convince yourself that you know what you are doing (through careful planning and rehearsal) and that you are good at what you are doing (through selection of appropriate material), you will "sell" your act to your audience. Work hard, and then relax and enjoy yourself.

Scenery -- The use of scenery is not advised for these projects. Restrict such elements to the properties that are actually needed and used in your act. For example, a scene from a play may require a table and a chair, but not the creation of an entire room. The focus should be on your performance, not on objects that might clutter the stage while you are performing.

Costumes -- A well-planned, appropriate, and comfortable costume can be an asset to your performance. In developing your costume, consider the mood that you want to convey and the extent and nature of movement during your act. Obviously, an acrobat would not want to wear a hat. Avoid costumes that are too gaudy or loud.



Make-up -- Except for activities such as Mime or Clown Acts, make-up need not be a major consideration for your act. In all cases, simply plan to be as neat and well-groomed as possible.

Sound -- Many acts benefit from appropriate background music. Selection should be determined by the nature of the act itself, considering such things as how the mood and rhythm of the music relate to the activity. If you plan to use recorded sound, it should be recorded on a cassette or reel-to-reel tape at 7.5 speed. Your school audio-visual technician or people from a local radio station might be a source of information about the recording process.

Resource Materials

General Production

Play Production by Henning Nelms. New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc.

An Introduction to the Theatre by Frank M. Whiting. New York: Harper and Row.

Scene Design and Stage Lighting by W. Oren Parker and Harvey K. Smith. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Stage Make-up by Richard Corson. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Stage Costume Design by Douglas A. Russell. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Stage Costume Handbook by Berneice Prisk. New York: Harper and Row.

Production Supplies

Catalogs of Plays--Dramatists Play Service, Inc., 440 Park Ave. S
New York, NY 10016

Samual French, Inc., 25 West 45th St., New York,
New York 10036

The Dramatic Publishing Co., 4150 N Milwaukee Ave.,
Chicago, Illinois 60641

General Supplies--Norcostco, 2089 Monroe Dr., NE, Atlanta, GA 30324

Paramount Theatrical Supplies, 575 8th Ave.,
New York, NY 10018

Theatre House, Inc., P.O. Box 2090, 400 W Third St.,
Covington, Kentucky 41012

SHARE-THE-FUN PERFORMANCE CATEGORIES

Vocal



Any performance that contains singing (solo or group) is included in this category. Even if there is some form of instrumental performance (for example, a piano accompaniment or a backup band), the presence of singing automatically identifies the performance as "vocal."

About the only conceivable exception to this extremely firm definition might be the singing of a random line of music called for in a dramatic script or a General act.

Selection of material is most important. Obviously, pick a piece of music that is within your vocal range--nothing sounds worse than a singer attempting to reach a note that is above or below his or her range.

Similarly, in selecting pieces for duos, small groups, or choruses, be aware of the voices at your disposal--their ranges, how they blend, and the like.

Finally, try to select vocal numbers that fit with your temperament and your style of delivery. For instance, if your voice is relatively mellow and gentle, a piece such as "I'm Getting Married in the Morning" might really be difficult for you to sell to your audience.

In selecting your piece and in your rehearsing, seek the advice and help of persons trained in music. Particularly if you have not had extensive, formal vocal training, these individuals can be of tremendous help to you in such areas as: articulation; tone; resonance; pitch; voice production; and showmanship.

Make an early determination about the use of some sort of sound support system (this may be determined by the physical facility in which you will be performing). If you are unfamiliar with mike techniques, seek the advice of someone at your local radio station. If possible, test your voice and technique with the actual system to be used in performance--the difference between singing into a uni-directional and a multi-directional mike is staggering.

Consider how best to sell your vocal number. With even the finest of singers/performers, there is always some element of "staging." As well, determine what kind of dress or costume would aid in supporting the mood of the song (or songs)

you have chosen to perform. Again, seek the help of someone familiar with simple staging (the high school drama coach, for instance) to work with you in costuming and setting movements and gestures.

Resource Materials

On Singing Onstage by David Craig. New York: Schirmer Books.

Performing for Others by Elva Davids. New York: Center for Applied Research in Education.

Instrumental

This category includes solo or group performances utilizing musical instruments as the only performance medium. Please remember that the presence of a singer with an instrumental group will automatically cause the act to be classified as a Vocal performance.

In selecting the musical piece (or pieces) you wish to perform, attempt to make selections that are within your musical capabilities and your level of training. It is far better, if you are a pianist, to play a Broadway showtune well than a Rachmaninov piece poorly. Also, it might be well to avoid programming a piece of music that has been made very popular by a well-known commercial group that possesses a distinct musical style-- you will usually come off as a "second-best" imitator with your audience.



Seek help with your performance from trained professionals (at your school or church, or from a private instructor). These individuals can be of great benefit to you in such areas as: technique; tone; blend (if a group); phrasing; and selection of material.

If sound amplification is to be used, check out your levels in the facility where you will be performing. Also, attempt to judge who your audience will be, since tolerance of sound levels will vary from audience to audience. If you are not familiar with sound support or amplification, seek help from your local radio station.

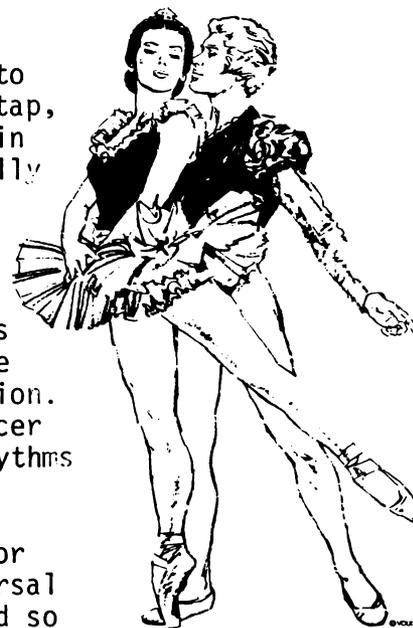
Finally, consider what costumes will help to sell your performance. Too often musicians rely solely on their music and are unaware that how they look and how they present themselves will have a strong impact on their audience.

Resource Materials

Specific publications for all instruments and all forms of instrumental performance may be obtained from Mel Bay Publications, Pacific, Missouri (800) 325-9518.

Dance

This category is designed to provide the opportunity to present talent in the basic forms of dance: ballet, tap, modern, jazz, acrobatic, and folk. Those interested in participating in this category should consider carefully the fact that most dance ability is the result of several years of training. An individual desiring to perform a dance should begin by selecting music which is appropriate to the style of the presentation. Instructors of local dance schools are obvious sources for music ideas. Also, it may be helpful to check the record collection in your local library or radio station. In general, the music selected should provide the dancer with the opportunity to exhibit a variety of dance rhythms and techniques appropriate to the dance form.



Once selected, the music should be put on a cassette or reel-to-reel tape (at 7.5 speed) to be used for rehearsal and performance. Be sure to have the tape well-marked so the person in charge of running the sound during the performance will be able to cue the tape easily.

As the dance develops through the rehearsal process, begin to consider an appropriate costume and, if necessary, props. Both should be available as early as possible in the rehearsal process. Capes, hats, canes, flowers, scarves, skirts, etc. can become important parts of the performance and need to be used skillfully and confidently by the dancer.

It is desirable to know in advance where the performance will be held. The kind of floor, its surface and condition, and its size are all factors which become important to the design of the performance.

Be sure to consider and rehearse the opening of the dance. Will the dancer be "in place" as the curtain opens, walk to place with the curtain open, or begin dancing in the wings and dance into the open space on the stage? The opening of the presentation must be considered as part of the dance, not something that just happens separately from the performance. The same can obviously be said for the ending; it must also be rehearsed as an integral part of the performance. Will the dancer hold the final position until the lights go off or the curtain closes? Will the dancer exit in view of the audience? Are bows taken? If so, how? Consider that the performance begins as soon as the audience sees you and is not over until you are out of the audience's sight.

Resource Materials

Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet by Gail Grant.
New York: Dover Publications, Inc.

Dance Production Handbook by Lois Ellfeldt and Edwin Carnes. Palo Alto, California: National Press Books.

The Art of Making Dances by Doris Humphrey. New York: Grove Press, Inc.

Drama



The category of drama includes three distinct types of theatrical presentations: a short play or a scene from a longer play; a monologue; or a mime presentation. Although the three are grounded in the same performance experience--the communication between performers and audience through body and/or voice--each dramatic medium does have specific characteristics that must be approached and discussed individually.

Short Plays or Scenes from Longer Plays--Short plays or cuttings from longer plays involve a minimum of two people (although only one may have actual lines). There is no limit to the number of characters a play may contain; but, the larger the cast, the more problems you create for blocking, rehearsing, costuming, and the like.

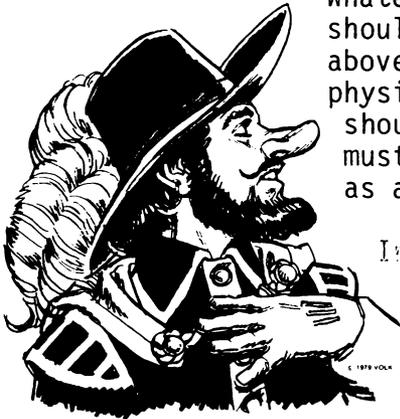
The most important consideration in doing a dramatic piece is the selection of material. Your success will ultimately depend on the script you have chosen and not on such factors as blocking (movement patterns), make-up, costumes, and special effects. Pick a script that is within the capacities (vocal, physical, and mental/emotional) of your actors. If you are doing a cutting from a longer script, you must also be concerned that the scene or cutting has those three components that are necessary for any good script--a beginning, a middle, and an end (that is to say, that it starts well, that it contains an interesting plot or character development or conflict, and that it ends logically).

Rehearsal of your script should begin with analyzing several important factors. What is the play about? What is the playwright trying to communicate to the audience? In what time period and in what locale is the play set? What is its mood? What are the characters' actions (that is to say, what do they want--both for themselves and from the other characters)? Proper answers to these questions should help you determine the blocking (movement patterns), the setting (the scenic pieces and properties), the costumes, and the general pace and rhythm of your production.

Wherever possible, choose the simplest and most direct means of performing your script. Nothing should be included unless it is appropriate to the characters or their actions. For example, movements or gestures should be made only if there is a reason for the characters to do them. Only those scenic pieces or properties that are actually used should be included in your setting; and the performers should "act" and "react" only to the limits of who their characters are and what those characters want.

As you plan your performance, you must always be concerned with the physical theatre or auditorium in which it is to be produced. Is there a curtain; and, if so, do you want to use it? What kind of lighting will you have available to you? Should the performance end with a blackout or with a fade-out or with a curtain? In other words, as you begin to develop your production concept, be aware of the physical and technical capacities and limitations of the space in which you will be performing.

Monologues--A monologue is a solo performance of a speech (or a series of interrelated speeches) from a script, a speech from the writings of famous individuals in history, a story, or an extended anecdote.



Whatever its format, the script for your monologues should conform to the same general principles listed above for playscripts. It should be within your physical, vocal, and mental/emotional capacities. It should have a beginning, middle, and end. And, it must be put through the same processes of analysis as any playscript.

In performance, opt (as with a short play) for the simplest and most direct methods of communication.

A certain amount of blocking may be desirable to enhance your performance, but be sure to avoid random rambling about the stage. Don't make a movement or use a gesture unless it arises from the "persona" of your character and will aid in

communicating the action or thought. Also, select scenic pieces and properties with an eye to including only those items that are absolutely essential. Minimal costuming may aid, but most monologues are performed in "street dress"--that is to say, informal coat and tie for men and informal dress for women.

Although some gesture and movement may aid in performance, the primary medium of expression in a monologue is obviously the voice. Words, in general, have universally accepted meanings. It is the monologist who adds the feeling quality through "how" he or she says those words. As a consequence, you will need to be aware of what your voice can do in terms of: range (the ability to move your voice up and down in pitch); resonance (the fullness or thinness of your voice); and tone (the emotional shadings that you can infuse into the words). Working with a tape recorder can often help you to criticize and improve your performance prior to presentation to the public.

Finally, check out the physical facility in which you are to perform. In particular, test out exactly how much projection you will need to have your voice reach all parts of the auditorium. Nothing can destroy a monologue performance so quickly as having the monologists's voice over-power the audience or, conversely, be so weak as to be inaudible.

Mime--There are probably as many definitions of mime as there are persons who practice this art form, and the same could probably be said for that variant of mime--pantomime.

In the main, however, both mime and pantomime are art forms that are performed primarily without the use of words. Instead, bodily movements and gestures are the media for communication.

As to the difference between mime and pantomime, again there are many opinions. In general, pantomime is regarded as a more "literal" art form, and mime as somewhat more abstract. Whereas a mime performance may depict such abstracts as an idea or a mood, a pantomime performance is more likely to depict the imitation of persons in actual, real-life situations. Although both may center on the creation and communication of characters, the pantomime is usually structured around a definable storyline or plot (not unlike a dramatic script, but without words). Both may often be performed to a musical background.

Both mime and pantomime contain aspects of all the performing arts of music, theatre, and dance.

Mimes and pantomimes may be performed solo or in groups, depending on the specific purpose of the performance. Make-up and costumes may be utilized or not, depending on the purpose of the performance. The same can be said for the use of music and other special sound effects.

To perform a mime or pantomime, your body must be much more highly expressive than it is in everyday life. Actually, most of us rarely utilize more than a minimal amount of "body language" in our daily activities. Many hours of training and practice (in front of a mirror or a friend) are required before you try to undertake the creation of a mime or pantomime performance. For instance, it is not enough simply to mime the opening of a door; before you can do this relatively simple physical action, you must define the door itself--its size, its weight, its construction, and the like. Only when these are defined and are used to give definition to the actual opening process will an audience understand and accept the mimetic action.

Any mime or pantomime you create must have a definite purpose and point of view. Like a script with words, a mime or pantomime scenario must have a beginning, middle, and end. And like any dramatic presentation, the use of the stage space and lighting must be considered in the development of the performance concept.



Resource Materials

Drama

Modern American Scenes for Student Actors, edited by Wynn Handman.
New York: Bantam Books.

Scenes for Actors by Stan Fedyszyn. Belmont, California: Wadsworth.

Scenes to Perform by Peter Kline. New York: Richards Rosen Press.

Mime

Telling Stories Through Movement by Margery Dorian and Frances Gullard.
Belmont, California: Fearon-Pittman.

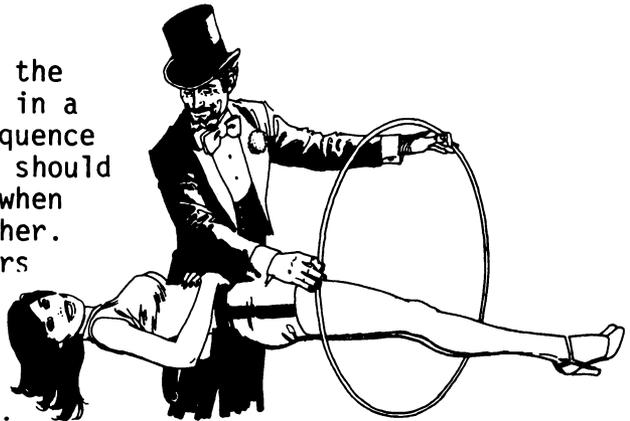
Mime: A Playbook of Silent Fantasy by Kay Hamblin. New York: Doubleday.

Mime: The Technique of Silence by Richmond Shepard. New York: Drama Books.

General

This category is designed to include variety acts which do not logically fit into the other four classifications. The following list is provided to give some idea of the kinds of acts that would be appropriate for inclusion in this category and in no way suggests that only those listed should be considered.

Magic Acts--The execution of illusions is the most important, but not the only, concern in a magic act. Of equal importance is the sequence and presentation of the illusions. There should be a flow from one trick to another and, when possible, something that links them together. Perhaps a series of tricks that use flowers or birds could provide a continuity. If dialogue or humor is used, it must receive as much attention as the tricks. Don't assume that it is possible to improvise dialogue during the performance; it must be well-planned and rehearsed.



Puppetry--Puppets can be of various types, the most common being hand puppets, marionettes, rod puppets, and muppet type puppets. When used in a show, it is important that the size of the puppet be considered in relation to the size of the auditorium. Each puppet should have a unique personality that is identified in its design and construction. That personality, then, dictates how the puppet will act and react to the situations you create in your puppet show. To be effective, a puppet presentation often requires the use of a special stage.

Ventriloquism--The comments concerning puppets are equally valid here concerning the ventriloquist dummy. Although it is possible to construct a dummy, commercially-produced ones are available. In addition to learning the techniques of talking without moving the mouth, the ventriloquist must be able to create two characters on the stage at the same time--a special character for himself and one for the dummy. The act is primarily one of telling or setting up jokes and requires a well-written script and considerable rehearsal.

Juggling--The techniques of juggling can be mastered by almost anyone with normal coordination. They do, however, require a great deal of practice. Once the ability has been developed, it is desirable to experiment with juggling different objects to provide a variety to the presentation. Additionally, recorded music should be used as "background" to the act. This music will also establish a rhythm for the performance and should be selected with great care.

Stand-up Comics--To stand in front of a group and tell stories and jokes must rank as one of the most difficult tasks an individual could ever attempt. Not only must there be a solid script to work from, but techniques of delivery and timing must be developed. The stand-up comic must also develop a rapport with the audience and be flexible enough to alter the performance in response to the reactions from the audience.

Impressionists--Many of the concerns of the stand-up comic are the same as those of the impressionist. A complete routine, including the transitions and some thread to hold the impressions together as a unit, must be considered and fully rehearsed. Since most impressions are presented in the form of a monologue, a script must be developed, refined, and rehearsed. If the impression is of only one individual, then a costume can be developed to convey as accurately as possible the person being presented.

Clowning--There are several different types of clowns and anyone interested in clowning should be familiar with at least the tramp, character, August, and white face clown types. Each has its own background, character, traits, and traditional routines. A clown creation must have a specific character; as well, this character must be presented in a routine that is scripted and that evolves from some story or situation.

Circus Acts--Any act that would be included in a circus performance and that might not fit into any of the categories already listed should be entered in this area. Tumbling, gymnastics, animal acts, trampoline, balancing acts, and the like would be possible acts to consider. If special equipment is used, be sure to have it set up far in advance so it can be quickly moved into place for the performance. It may be desirable to consider the use of music as a background to the performance. If, during rehearsal, people are used to catch, spot, or guide, they should also be included in the performance.



Resource Materials

Magic

One-Hundred Easy-to-Learn Classic Magic Tricks by Bill Tarr. New York: Random.

Bill Severn's Book of Magic by Bill Severn. New York: McKay.

A Beginner's Book of Magic by Francis J. Rigney. Berkeley, California: Devon Press.

Magic and Showmanship: A Handbook for Conjurers by Henning Nelms. New York: Dover Press.

Entertaining With Magic by Ormond McGill. Cranbury, New Jersey: A.S. Barnes, Inc.

Resource MaterialsPuppetry

The Art of the Puppet by Bill Baird. Boston: Plays, Inc.

Puppet Theatre Handbook by Marjorie Batchelder. New York: Harper-Row, Inc.

Puppet Theatre in Performance: Everything You Need to Know About How to Put On Puppet Plays by Nancy H. Cole. New York: Morrow, Inc.

Ventriloquism

Ventriloquism in a Nutshell by Clinton Detweiller. Littleton, Colorado: Maher Ventril Studios.

Ventriloquism for Beginners by Douglas Houlden. Cranbury, New Jersey: A.S. Barnes, Inc.

Fun With Ventriloquism by Alexander Van Rensselaar. New York: Doubleday.

Clowning

How to be a Clown by Charles R. Meyer. New York: McKay.

How to be a Complete Clown by Toby Sanders. Briarcliff Manor, New York: Stein & Day.

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