**Basics of Theatre**

**Parts of the Theatre**

**Theatre:** The building where acting takes place  
**Deck:** The stage area  
**Proscenium:** The boundary between the stage and the audience in a conventional theatre; it appears to form an arch over the stage from the audience's point of view  
**Apron:** The stage area in front of the proscenium arch  
**Wings**: The "backstage" or parts of a stage off to the left and right not seen by the audience  
**Tabs**: Curtains separating the stage from the audience  
**Orchestra Pit:** Where the musicians play, usually directly in front of the stage, often sunken below the seating sections  
**House:** The seating section of the theatre, the people in the theatre and/or the audience  
**Greenroom:** The area backstage where actors rest before, during and after a show

**Rehearsal Vocabulary**

**Rehearsal:** Practice of the play  
**Script:** The text of the dialogue and stage directions of a play  
**Blocking:** An actor's movement around a set  
**Stage Direction:** Any instruction for the actors in the script of a play  
**Stage Left:** The side of the stage on the left when facing the audience  
**Stage Right:** The side of the stage on the right when facing the audience  
**Downstage:** The front of the stage; in the direction of the audience  
**Upstage:** Towards the back of the stage; the half of the stage that is farthest from the audience  
**Crossing:** Moving from one point on the stage to another  
**Exit:** A stage direction which specifies which person goes off stage  
**Beat:** The smallest division of action in a play or a very short pause  
**Read Through:** A reading of the entire play or act without blocking  
**Monologue:** An extended set of lines spoken by one person either directly addressing the audience or another character  
**Motivation:** A character's individual desires or goals which propel them into action; the driving force of an inciting event that starts a story's progression  
**Cheating:** The practice of turning one's body towards the audience even while keeping the head facing one's scene partner  
**Prompt:** To give an actor his/her next line when he/she has forgotten it  
**Ad Libbing:** Acting without having planned what to do or say  
**Fourth Wall:** An imaginary surface at the edge of the stage through which the audience watches a performance (If a character speaks directly to the audience or walks on/off the stage, this is known as “Breaking the Fourth Wall”)

**Additional Terminology**

**Cast:** The actors in a play  
**Understudy:** An actor familiar with another actor's role so that he or she can substitute in an emergency  
**Call Time:** The time at which each individual actor is expected to be at the theater  
**Run or Run Through:** A practice of an entire play or act  
**Intermission:** A break between acts  
**Load In:** The process of setting up the theatre for the show  
**Technical Rehearsal or Tech:** A rehearsal primarily for the purpose of practicing the technical elements of a play, such as lights and sound  
**Dress Rehearsal or Dress:** A practice of the play with all actors wearing full costumes  
**Sold Out:** When the number of tickets sold for a performance is equal to or greater than the number of available seats  
**Standing Room Only (SRO):** Admittance to a performance after all of the seats are filled which requires people to stand to watch  
**Break a Leg:** A saying for actors before they go out on stage, meaning "good luck"  
**Curtain Call:** when the actors come to the front of the stage to bow at the end of a performance  
**Standing Ovation:** When the audience stands and claps at the end of a performance, a higher form of praise than normal applause  
**Strike:** To remove a set piece or from the stage ("Strike that chair") To "strike the show" is to disassemble the entirety of the set, return all equipment to storage and leave the venue as it was before the show was set up