



THE **acceptd.** 
GUIDE TO DIGITAL
AUDITIONS

CONTRIBUTORS



Matthew Edwards is one of the leading voice teachers for Contemporary Commercial Music Styles (Musical Theatre, Pop, Rock, Country, R&B). He is currently an Assistant Professor of Musical Theatre Voice at Shenandoah Conservatory. His students have performed professionally throughout the world. He has received awards from the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, Southern-Tier Opportunity Coalition (Top 20 in their Twenties).



Rena Cook is Professor of Voice at the School of Drama, University of Oklahoma. She was also a high school drama teacher for 16 years. In her 30 year career, she has served as voice and dialect coach or director for over 200 shows including *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Great Expectations*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Sweeney Todd*. She is also a distinguished actress, presenter, voice over artist, and professional voice trainer.



Greg Kunesh is the former Director of Musical Theatre at University of Oklahoma. He served on the OU fine arts faculty from 1975 to 2005, when he retired as chairman and professor emeritus of the Weitzenhoffer Department of Musical Theatre.

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INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, students who wanted to study the performing arts had a rough road ahead of them. All the colleges and universities in the country were listed in one giant book. After narrowing down the colleges and universities that even offered performing arts programs, students would have to mail a letter to request basic information about requirements, guidelines, and audition schedules. Then they would wait.

Eventually they would hear back from the programs. With very little guidance other than from the high school guidance counselor and perhaps the choir teacher and/or theatre instructor, students had to choose where they wanted to apply and audition.

Preparing the audition materials was just as challenging. Getting a headshot meant finding a professional photographer who could handle black and white photographs. If students needed to submit an audition video or audio recording, they had to record it on a VHS or cassette tape and hope they got it right the first time. Editing was nearly impossible.

Fast forward twenty years and a lot has changed. Cassette tapes, VHS tapes, and black and white headshots are no longer acceptable. Students don't have to go to a professional photographer for headshots and don't need to flip through a massive book of college listings. In fact, they can find out nearly everything they want to know about a university and its program while sitting on their couches with an iPad or laptop.

Performing arts programs have changed as well. Twenty years ago, students who wanted to be on Broadway prepared themselves for shows like *Les Miserables*, *Phantom of the Opera*, and *Miss Saigon*. They studied vocal performance to learn solid classical techniques that prepared them to perform operetta-style musicals. Now, those shows are considered the classics.

It's more important in today's market for Broadway-hopefuls to be a triple threat, that is, proficient in vocals, dance, and acting. Popular shows are *American Idiot*, *Wicked*, and *Kinky Boots*. Students are served better by a degree in musical theatre rather than vocal performance, with which they can learn to belt rock/pop show-stoppers and handle the the extreme vocal demands of contemporary musical theatre.

Consequently, the market is growing more competitive. Many university programs have downsized in order to focus on the specific demands of today's market. Students of theatre and musical theatre now need to audition for 10-15 different programs to make sure they have a safety net in place. Twenty years ago, that would have cost a fortune. But with the advent of digital auditions, students can apply to 15 or more programs for less than a tank of gas.

The purpose of this guide is to help prepare students for this new application and audition process. Written in collaboration with audition coaches, college professors, and professionals in the arts industry, this guide was created so that students can be more confident going into the digital audition process. It discusses the expectations for monologues, song choices, resumes, and headshots as well as the technical aspects, such as recording devices, lighting, sound, and camera angles.

This guide will be a valuable resource as you instruct and prepare your students for pursuing a career in the arts. They will undoubtedly have questions, as the application and audition process has changed so much in the last few years, but with the up-to-date information in this guide, you will be equipped to answer their questions and guide them to success.

SECTION 1:

RESUMES

OVERVIEW

A resume is a 1-2 page summary of important contact information, brief physical descriptors of performance experience (for actors) or design/technical experience (for designers/technicians), training, special skills, and honors or awards. College representatives and casting directors use it to evaluate applicants in addition to their audition or interview.

Your students will want to start developing their resumes as soon as they start applying to colleges. By helping your students develop their resumes, you're giving them an easy way to impress college reps or casting teams before the audition or interview even begins.

In the digital age, resumes have become more interactive. Students can now hyperlink their email addresses or include their headshot in their resumes. It's easy to share digital resumes by converting them to PDF files or uploading them to applications. These interactive advancements can make students and their resumes more memorable.

The next section is designed to teach students how to apply analytical thinking skills to the process of resume creation. It will help students visualize how a digital resume is created.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To define what a digital resume is and what it can do for you
- To identify what should be included in your resume
- To learn how to format your resume
- To create your own resume that you can upload to your Acceptd profile

LESSON:

SCULPTING YOUR RESUME

Helping your students choose the correct layout for their resumes is almost as important as choosing what needs to be included. Even if they have all the right information, if the page isn't easy to read the message won't get across.

SUBHEADINGS

Subheadings can make info easier to digest. It is likely that "Performance Experience" is the most important part of your students' resumes. To make it readable, have them utilize subheadings. Students can keep the heading "Performance Experience" and place all performances in that section or it could be broken up into separate sections (Musical Theatre, Theatre, or Dance).

If students have performed significant roles in musicals, making a separate category for musicals will help those stand out. If they had a lot of smaller roles or limited experience, clumping everything under theatre will make their list look fuller and more significant.

HOW TO LIST IT ALL

In general, students will list the show first, then the role, then the company. Like this:

Bye Bye Birdie, Rosie Alvarez, Dalton High School
Drama Club

There's also the option of a fourth column, which would either include the director of the performance or the year of the performance. If students are using the reverse chronological order, listing the year is a good option.

Also, make sure your students understand that when they choose to include the director, it implies that the audition panel will know who it is. They may ask your students about them or contact the person directly. Make sure that if students decide to list the names of people that they have worked with in the past, they will say something good about them.

TRAINING, SPECIAL TALENTS, AND AWARDS

This is the section where students list the private lessons, group classes, workshops, and summer camps they have taken in order to prepare for college. These subsections can be listed in any order. Often, it is best to begin with the strongest area and end with the weakest area.

This is also where your students should highlight any special talents that will make them stand out from the crowd. This can include foreign language experience, acrobat/gymnast type training, or other artistic talents. Be sure they know to include any awards or honors they received for these talents or performing experiences.

CONTACT INFO

When a reviewer looks at your students' resumes, it has to be clear how to contact them. Formatting basic contact information, such as name, phone, and email, has come a long way in the digital age. A digital resume affords the students more opportunities to be contacted directly by the program because they can include hyperlinks to emails or digital portfolios, such as ones they might create using Acceptd.

TIPS

- List the roles that fit your type, the strongest at the top of the list and your weakest at the bottom.
- List the leading roles first, followed by supporting roles, followed by ensemble.
- List the productions in reverse chronological order. This option is best for students who have progressively improved and have moved from the ensemble to supporting roles to leading roles.

ACTIVITY :

WHAT MAKES THE CUT

Before your students can begin writing their resumes, they need to understand what should and should not be included. Give your students 5-10 minutes to answer the following questions.

- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What are some of the things that make you special?
- What do you wish people knew about you?

Then, have your students make a list of all of their performances that occurred during their high school years. Once they've made the list, walk them through the following steps.

1. Have them look at their answers from the questions above, specifically what they identified as their biggest strength.
2. Now tell your students to put a 1 next to any of the performances that highlight that strength.
e.g., If their biggest strength is dance, they will put a 1 next to the shows that featured their dance ability.
3. Next have your students cross out any roles that show-off their weakness.
e.g., If a student is not a soprano, but was required to sing soprano because a music director needed an extra voice, cross it out. Including it may put the student in the position to be asked to sing soprano high notes during an audition.

NOTE

Stress to your students that if they lie, exaggerate, or stretch the truth on their resumes, someone will notice.

TIP

- Have your students list the roles that fit their type the best at the top of the list and then put those that don't fit their type at the bottom of the list.
- Have your students list the leading roles first, followed by supporting roles, followed by ensemble.
- Have your students list the productions in reverse chronological order. This option is best for students who have progressively improved and have moved from the ensemble to supporting roles to leading roles.
- Have your students look at the included resumes on pages 8 and 9.

-
4. Next, have students put another 1 next to any performances that showcase the things that they believe make them special.
e.g., If a student plays guitar and has performed in a musical that he played guitar and sang, he should put a 1 next to it. If he played guitar in the pit, put a 1 next that show as well.
 5. Finally, have your students put a 1 next to any performances that featured something the panel may want to know but won't see in the audition.
e.g., If a student likes Shakespeare but has only had an opportunity to perform it once, have her put a 1 next to it. It could be a good talking point.
 - 6 . Now tell your students to take a look at their list and the 1s they've marked. Those performances should form the bulk of your students' resumes.

CONCLUSION

Developing a resume should be a fun experience, not a tedious one. It is a living document that will need to be updated as students land new credits, age, and undergo type changes. As students' skill sets change, have them revisit the answers to the questions at the beginning of this packet and make changes as needed. After your students complete their resumes, be sure to have them share their resumes with others and ask for feedback from their peers. It is very easy for mistakes to go unnoticed and they will inevitably be noticed by those making the decisions.

TIPS

Once the resume is complete, students will want to save it as a PDF. A PDF is a file type that is easily readable on computers, tablets, and smart phones.

To save a document as a PDF in Microsoft Word®, click on "File" at the top of the page, and then select "Save As..." from the pop-up menu. Then select PDF from the drop-down menu.

Suzy Triplethreat
Email@gmail.com
555-555-5555 Home
555-555-5556 Cell
SuzyTriplethreat.com

Musical Theatre

Show	Role	Company	Year
Show	Role	Company	Year

Theatre

Show	Role	Company	Year
Show	Role	Company	Year

Dance Experience

Show	Role	Company	Year
Show	Role	Company	Year

Choral Experience

Group	School	20XX-20XX
Group	School	20XX-20XX
State Honor Choir	Sponsoring Organization	20XX

Workshops and Camps

Camp Name	City, State	20XX
Camp Name	City, State	20XX

Training

Dance: Ballet (10 years), Jazz (5 years), Tap (3 years), Modern (1 year)
Voice: Chamber Choir (4 years), Barbara Smith (6 months)
Acting: Maple Hills Academy (2 years), Bob Jacobs (1 year)

Special Skills

Gymnast, guitar (7 years), piano (2 years), conversational Spanish

Kelcie E. M**

(***)***_****

*****@gmail.com

Height 5'3"
Dress Size: 8
Eyes: Blue-green
Hair: Brown

Theatre (selected Credits):

Lion in the streets	Sue, Joanne, Joan, Jill	University of *****
They Promised Her the Moon (World Premiere)	Jackie Cochran	University of *****
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	Launce	University of *****
The Odyssey	Arete, Siren, Others	University of *****
The Man Who Came to Dinner	Sarah	University of *****
Steel Magnolias	Annelle	University of *****
The Midnight Caller	Cutie Spencer	University of *****
Seussical, the Musical	Gertrude McFuzz	***** Theatre
The Homecoming	Becky Spencer	Theatre *****

Film/Industrials

Harley and Peyton	Lead	Virginai Commonwealth
Boys Scouts of America (Corporate Training Video)	Lead	Dallas, TX

Education

BFA Acting, School of Drama, University
 Audition for Fllm and Television - Chris *****
 Acting for the Camera - Darryl ****
 SAFD Certified Recommended Pass December
 2012 -
 SAFD Certified Basic Pass May 2012 - Single
 Sword
 SAFD Certified Basic Pass December 2012 - Knife

Special Skills

Conversational Spanish, Volleyball, Tennis,
 Softball, Manual driving skillls, Teleprompt-
 er proficient, Tap, Viola, Ukulele, Singing
 (Range - Ab 3- Bb 5_ Dialects: IPA, Cock-
 ney, Southern, General American, Irish

Voice Demo Reel available upon request



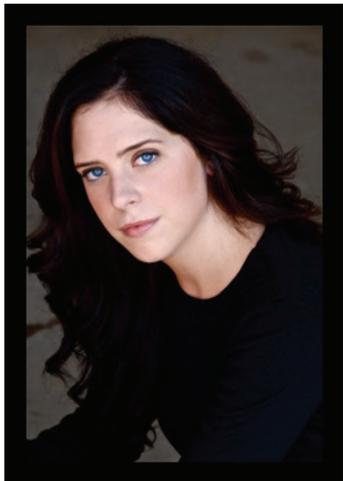
SECTION 2:

HEADSHOTS

OVERVIEW

An important part of your students' digital auditions is their headshots. The industry definition of a headshot has been changing as the audition process becomes more digital. In general, a headshot is a color photo, taken from the chest up, that accurately reflects what the subject looks like.

When headshots were sent in the mail with paper applications, they were typically 8X10 inch photographs that were difficult and expensive to have taken. Now, though, a well-done headshot can be taken using a basic point-and-shoot camera or even a smart phone. This section will explain different ways your students can achieve a professional headshot for the digital age.



ABOUT THESE HEADSHOTS

These headshots are both high quality and taken by a professional photographer, but it isn't necessary for them to pay \$300 for a professional photographer.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To define what a headshot is and how it should look
- To evaluate how a headshot can help you get an audition
- To identify what a headshot can say about you
- To understand industry standards regarding headshots

TIPS

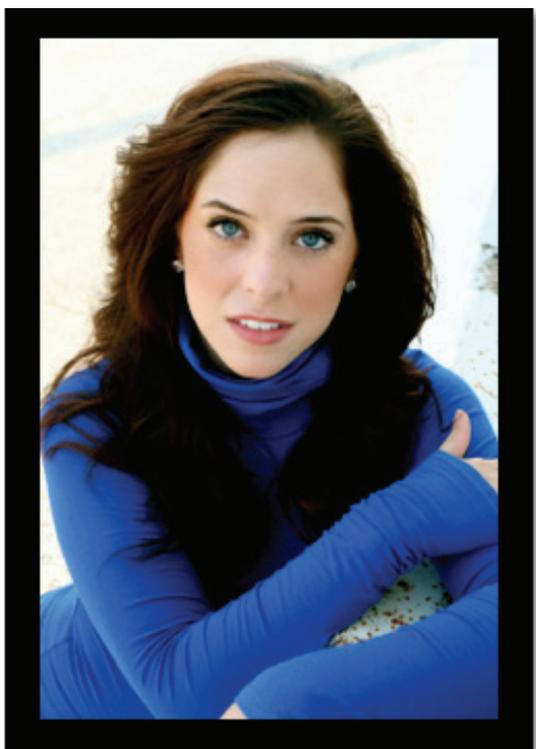
- Wear simple, bright clothing that doesn't distract from the face.
- Avoid over-sized jewelry, extreme hairstyles, and dramatic makeup.
- Project a friendly, open quality.

ACTIVITY:

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHY

This activity can be performed as an in-class activity.

1. Display this headshot on your screen for your students to see. (This is a relatively successful amateur headshot.)



2. Let your students look at the headshot for a few minutes and write down what they see. Discuss what works and what doesn't work.

NOTES

This was shot with a DSLR camera, but basic point-and-shoot cameras, including smartphone cameras, will work. This was also shot outside, giving the student the advantage of natural light.

Shooting outside provides the best light quality, as long as the sun isn't casting shadows on the face.

SAMPLE OF HEADSHOT EVALUATION

PROS

- It is a high-quality image.
- Her face is well lit.
- Her choice of clothing is appropriate.
- She is free from distracting jewelry.

CONS

- Her arms are positioned awkwardly.
- She should be smiling.
- The shot is too wide and should be cropped from the chest up.



3. Let your students look at this headshot for a few minutes and write down what they see that works and what doesn't work. Things to be sure they notice are the lighting, background clutter, and incorrect name placement.

NOTES

- Shooting inside with the camera flash washed out her face, and all of the things in the background are really distracting.
- Incorrect name placement – your name should appear in a corner of the border, not on the picture itself.

TIPS

- Add a border to a photo before putting the name in.
- Take the photo in color.
- Don't crop too close to the face.
- Err on the side of dull lighting. It's easier to brighten a photo later.

ACTIVITY:

SELF-EVALUATION

Have your students bring in their headshots. If they don't yet have headshots, have them bring in a photo where they are the only subject (this could be a school photo or a senior picture).

Have them answer the following questions:

1. Where do your eyes go when you first look at the headshot?
2. What qualities does the headshot communicate?
3. Does it look professional? Why or why not?
4. Does it represent how you want the reviewers to see you? Why or why not?

CONCLUSION

A student's headshot isn't the most important part of their digital audition, but it is probably the first thing the reviewers will see. They don't necessarily need to hire a professional photographer, but it's important that your students create professional, high quality headshots that follow the basic rules outlined in this section.

SECTION 3:

AUDITION PREP

OVERVIEW

There is nothing worse than going into an audition unprepared, even a digital one. Although the beauty of a digital audition is that your students can record as many times as they need, they will still need to be prepared. In this chapter, you will learn how to ease your students into the audition process.

This section will cover how to help your students select an audition monologue, song, and dance that can be used for their digital auditions or their live auditions. You may choose to focus on any of the three disciplines individually or as a whole if your student is considering a musical theatre audition. Below, you will learn how to help your students select those components, so that they are set up for success.

Also, we will refer to a musical theatre audition. By that we mean a straight drama audition, which is two contrasting monologues, one minute each. Contrast can be contemporary/classical or drama/comedy.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To understand how to select an audition monologue, dance, and song(s)
- To prepare your selections for a digital audition
- To synthesize how to self-evaluate your performances

LESSON:

PREP WORK

This section is to challenge your students. When they go into an audition, whether it's in person or in a prescreening audition, they need to be the expert on their audition material. Below are questions you can either use as a hand out or as discussion material. The goal is to better equip your students to accurately critique themselves and give them the proper vocabulary to talk about their performances.

- **Who is the other?** The other is the person or character you are singing or talking to in your song(s) and monologue. Know everything you can about your other: what she looks like, what she is wearing, her physical reactions to different points in the piece. Picture others slightly above the heads of the audition panel or slightly to the side of the camera.
- **What is the objective?** Your objective is what you want from or what you want to do to your "other." Put this in a statement for both your song and monologue. Use strong verbs and a first-person point of view.
- **What is the obstacle?** The obstacle is defined as that which stands in the way of your character completing his/her objective. It can be the resistance of the "other," your character's own hubris, or an outside factor in the greater work. Be sure you can identify this as it will give your material more direction.

NOTE

For a digital audition, it's especially important for your students to have a thorough understanding of their material because they have to reach their audience through the recording. This can be an extra obstacle if your students are used to playing off an audience's energy.

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- **What are the stakes?** The stakes refer to how badly you want or need your objective. Drama is built on high stakes, so it's important to truly understand your objective and your level of need.
 - **What is the moment before?** The moment before, sometimes called the pre-beat, is the action that took place right before you began your monologue or song. Identify exactly what that moment is, and get yourself into that place right before you begin your audition.
 - **What is the arc?** The arc, or your character's journey, has to do with how he/she is different at the end of the song or monologue. Essentially, how has your character changed? There are many kinds of arcs, and it is important that you can identify your character's arc exactly. Look for the specific moment when this change occurs: this is your golden moment.
 - **What is the button?** The button is the final moment of your song or monologue. Let that moment linger. It could either be a triumphant moment, and your character needs time to celebrate, or it could be a tragic moment, and your character needs time for the loss to settle.

ACTIVITY:

MAKING THE SELECTIONS

Musical theatre students typically need to be considered a “triple threat.” That means that they should be proficient if not advanced in music, acting, and dance. Helping your students select their audition songs, monologues, and dance routines can make or break their audition.

CHOOSING THE MONOLOGUE

To help your students choose which monologue will best showcase their acting talents, have them answer these simple questions:

1. What type of character do you perform best? (comedic, dramatic, sarcastic, etc.)
2. What age range can you (realistically) portray? (Remind your students that they will not be using character makeup.)
3. What life experiences have you had that can translate to a monologue?

Once your students have selected monologues that match the answers to the above questions, have each student do a read through in class. Make sure they understand what their character wants and what active action they’re taking to get it.

CHOOSING A SONG

When your students sit down to select a song (or songs, depending on the audition requirements) make sure they’re choosing based on what they already love to sing. This will translate as confidence and expertise in an audition setting

TIPS

- Your students need to select monologues from plays, not movies or books. And make sure your student has read the entire play from which they selected their monologue.
- See the additional hand-out on topics to avoid as well as over-done material (see page 21).

If your students have the chance to sing two songs, help them select contrasting pieces. Each should show off different skills. Talk with your students about the below tips for choosing an effective audition song:

1. Choose a song you're comfortable singing.
2. Choose a song with a broad range.
3. Choose a song that is not overdone.
4. If choosing two songs, choose contrasting but complementary pieces.
e.g., Pair a classical vaudeville piece with a contemporary Broadway smash. Choose an up-tempo character song with a dramatic ballad.
5. Make sure your song choice(s) meets the audition requirements in length and style.

TIP

Staging should be simple as your student will be performing on camera. Practice a few meaningful gestures with them and help them identify where and when to use those.

CHOOSING A DANCE DEMONSTRATION

For a musical theatre audition, a dance demonstration will be short. It is only to show the reviewers a brief sample of the dance training your student has. Typically this will be a short combination of tap and jazz.

It is important for your student to film their dance combos in a studio or on stage. During the audition, they should wear appropriate dance attire for the genre. Live accompaniment is desirable but not necessary, and the camera should be placed such that it will capture a wide shot of the performance space.

ACTIVITY:

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

NOTE

Shakespeare and dialects are generally discouraged unless your student is an expert or the program requires it.

The key to a successful audition, digital or in-person, is practice. This activity is to get your students more familiar with their material and to be more comfortable performing it.

There are three parts to this activity: helping your students learn more about their selected material, helping your students get comfortable warming-up before performing their selected material, and helping your students get used to performing their selected material for an audience.

GETTING TO KNOW THE MATERIAL

Once your students have selected their monologues and songs, have them sit down and analyze the scenes. Make sure they can answer these questions about all the material they will be performing for their audition.

Who is the other?
What is the objective?
What is the scene?
What is the arc?

WARMING UP

Before your students begin performing their pieces, their voices and bodies need to be warmed-up. If your students have performance experience, they will already be familiar with some theatre warm-ups. Take suggestions from the class about which warm-up to use, or select one yourself.

Example vocal warm up: Repeat “Let me take you to my cave where I will play sail boats on your face” with stretched, exaggerated facial expressions.

Example movement warm up: The Machine: Select one student to make a noise and simple repeatable gesture. Have students add one at a time with different noises and gestures until a kind of machine is created.

PERFORMING

Students should break up into groups of two or three and practice performing their monologue(s). These other students will be the “audience.” Have the “audience” answer the questions from earlier in this activity (*on page 19*) about the monologues they watch.

This kind of feedback is important for students to hear as they rehearse their audition pieces. If the “audience” comes up with different answers encourage discussion. Make sure your student understands exactly why the difference occurred.

CONCLUSION

One of the most important parts of guiding students into the audition process is making sure they are prepared. Selecting appropriate materials and rehearsing those are the building blocks of a successful audition.

TIP

Do not under any circumstances allow your students to sing acapella for their digital auditions. Singing with accompaniment with greatly improve tuning.

TOPICS TO AVOID AND OVERDONE MONOLOGUES

Below is a list of plays that aren't appropriate for college auditions as they have been done and done and done again.

Also try to avoid more disturbing monologues. No rape, excessive swearing, excessive talk about sex, monologues that ask rhetorical questions about sex, no portraying of mentally challenged people, no extreme dramatic shifts, no memory monologues, no monologues about killing someone, and no monologues about dead parents or dead animals.

'dentity Crisis	Neverland 911
'Night Mother	Nuts
A Chorus Line	Odd Couple
A Girl's Guide to Chaos	Oleanna
A...My Name is Alice	Our Town
An Actor's Nightmare	Pillow Man
An Ideal Husband	Shivaree
Assassins	Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All to You
Baby with the Bathwater	Spell #7
Bad Habits	Star Spangled Girl
Beau Jest	Steel Magnolias
Brighton Beach Memoir ("Nora")	Talking With
Crimes of the Heart	The Foreigner
Fantasticks	The Line That Picked Up a Thousand
Frankie and Johnny	Babes
(Johnny's fart monologue)	The Marriage of Bette and Boo
Getting Out	The Nerd
Glass Menagerie	The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in
Hamlet	the Universe
House of Blue Leaves ("Ronnie")	The Vagina Monologues
Is There Life After High School	The Woolgatherer
Laughing Wild	You're a Good Man Charlie Brown
Marco Polo Sings a Solo	
Motherf**ker with the Hat	

SECTION 4:

DIGITAL AUDITION

OVERVIEW

In the last lesson, your students learned how to select proper audition material. Now, let's apply that knowledge to their digital audition. A digital audition is a video file your students will submit along with their college application. Programs use this video to evaluate your students' talents before inviting them to an in-person audition.

This offers a new way of looking at the audition process as a whole. Many students experience anxiety during in-person auditions and this can negatively affect their performances. The digital audition allows for students to more accurately display their talents. Audition videos are about capturing natural, honest performances free from the impact of nerves.

To better assist your students, we've broken down the process for creating that digital audition: preparation, a recording device, and a computer. Along the way, we'll provide supplemental tips and tricks your students can use if they want more control over the quality of their video.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To apply audition etiquette to a digital audition
- To understand the preparation that goes into creating a digital audition
- To recognize the importance of location, appearance, and the recording device
- To synthesize how to critique your own digital audition video

LESSON 1:

PREP WORK

MEMORIZE MATERIAL

Your students must prepare for their digital audition. Even though they can have as many takes as they need to get the video perfect, reviewers will be able to tell if the material isn't memorized. It should not appear to be thrown together at the last minute. They need to rehearse. Family and friends can offer constructive criticism, but you, as their teacher and professional in the discipline, can provide the best feedback.

SELECT A LOCATION

When they (and you) feel confident that their performance is ready, they need to select a location to film their digital audition. A quiet place works best, free from distractions and outside noise. The area should be clean so that no clutter appears in the background of the video.

Lighting is also important. The area should be well-lit so as to minimize shadows on the student's face. Tell students to experiment with household lighting until they find something sufficient. It is important that the face is clearly visible so the reviewers can see emotion and expression.

NOTE

Advise that often a stage works the best if your student has access to it, but a bedroom or living room will do just fine as long as care is taken to remove distractions and optimize lighting and sound.

TIPS: LIGHTING

Don't mix lighting sources: If your student is recording in a room with a lot of natural light, make sure she doesn't add too many lamps, otherwise the picture quality may suffer.

Move the light around: Often two lights in front of the performer will do just fine. Have your students do a few test runs to make sure they're lit correctly. If they are too bright, move the light away. If they are too dark, bring it closer.

LOOKING GOOD

Appearance is almost as important to your students' digital auditions as choosing a good location. Review these basic dos and don'ts with your students before they film.

- **DO** have your hair out of your face for the audition. The reviewers need to see your face.
- **DO** wear simple, bright, clean clothing.
- **DO** highlight your eyes, cheekbones, and lips with blush, liner, or lipstick.
- **DON'T** have any extreme hairstyles.
- **DON'T** wear anything too short or tight.
- **DON'T** apply stage makeup.

FIND A RECORDING DEVICE

With the advent of technology, there's no need to rush out and buy a high quality camera to record a successful digital audition. Students can achieve great results with a smartphone or a point-and-shoot digital camera.

No matter what kind of recording device the students use, it is imperative that it is not handheld. See what resources students have available for them. Does your school have an AV department? If so, see if you can rent out a tripod. If not, make sure students have help from either a family member or friend positioning the camera on a level, sturdy surface.

The audio quality of the digital audition can greatly affect the success of the digital audition. There should not be outside or excess noise. Often times, smaller devices have smaller microphones and will need to be moved closer to the student for optimal sound. Have your students experiment with distances to determine the best point for audio and visual.

NOTE

Your students could buy a cheap tripod for \$10-\$20.

TIP

Luckily, most students are familiar with transferring files to computers. Most devices make it simple. Check the manual for the device your student used if they have any problems uploading their digital audition file.

ACTIVITY:

REVIEWING THE VIDEO

Before your students upload their digital auditions, they need to have it reviewed by someone else. If your students are comfortable, you could review them all in class. They will get a chance to learn from other students' videos as well as get more opinions on their own. Encourage an open environment for students to record and practice.

To help your students have a more objective critique of their digital audition videos, ask them to answer these five questions:

- Does the student introduce herself and her material?
- Is the video steady and centered?
- Is it bright enough to see facial expressions clearly?
- Is it loud enough to hear understand every word?
- What are the strongest and weakest parts of the performance?

Give these questions to your students to hand out to anyone (parents, friends, etc.) who watches their video. This will help them cultivate more useful feedback, especially from people who might not have the knowledge to review videos.

LESSON:

FOR DESIGN/ TECH STUDENTS

If you have students in your class interested in pursuing the technical side of the performing arts, they have a separate kind of “digital audition.” Below are some typical requirements you can pass along. Make sure they understand that each program is different, however, and that they need to meet the specific requirements of their schools in the application.

PERSONAL VIDEO

Design/tech students will most likely need to submit a personal video with their applications. This video needs to fulfill three objectives: introduce the student, explain why he wants to pursue design/tech, and highlight design/tech portfolio.

INTRO

The intro should be brief. It should include the his name and basic information.

EXPLANATION

This is where he needs to explain why he want to pursue design/tech. Try to have them answer these questions:

- What am I looking for in future training?

-
- Why do I want to pursue design tech?
 - When did I first want to pursue design tech?
Make sure they give specific examples.

It is important that the student has rehearsed the answers. He needs to be comfortable and confident on camera. This section should be one minute at maximum.

PORTFOLIO

In this section, the student should present drawings, sketches, photographs, or other artwork in the form of slides. With each slide, the student should explain why he chose that specific image, how it demonstrates his specific skill set, and what he learned from his experience.

In short, a narrated slide show with occasional glimpses of the student discussing his work may be the most effective approach.

CONCLUSION

The digital audition is the first step in the audition process. Many students may not be comfortable with this process, so take the time to walk them through each step and make sure they understand the importance of their digital audition.

NOTES

For more resources about digital auditions and how to upload or create a successful video, please see any of the below sites:

www.wistia.com/learning

www.lynda.com

www.collegeauditioncoach.com

SECTION 5:

ACCEPTD

OVERVIEW

Below, we'll discuss Acceptd's platform. Your students will understand how to sign up for an account, upload and label their media, apply for programs, create a discoverable portfolio, and manage their dashboard. Ultimately, your students will be more prepared for the college audition process and have more confidence in themselves to succeed.

WHAT IS IT?

Acceptd is a powerful screening network for students to see and be seen by performing arts colleges, festivals, summer programs, and scholarships. It's simple for students to upload audition materials and media on the Acceptd platform. Later, they can use these materials to apply for performing arts colleges, festivals, summer programs, and scholarships.

If your students are serious about pursuing the performing arts, they should become familiar with Acceptd. It will make their application process smooth and stress free and connect them with opportunities they didn't even know about.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To define what Acceptd is and what it does
- To demonstrate how to upload media to an Acceptd profile
- To practice using Acceptd's platform by applying with the demo application
- To create an Acceptd profile and be discoverable

TIP

When using Acceptd to apply to college programs, students also must apply to the school through their general application. Be sure your students understand that an Acceptd application should be used in addition to an application for general admittance to the college.

LESSON:

GETTING STARTED

NOTE

Once your students upload media to the Private Media Library, such as a headshot or a sample video, they will need to add this to their profile.

SIGNING UP

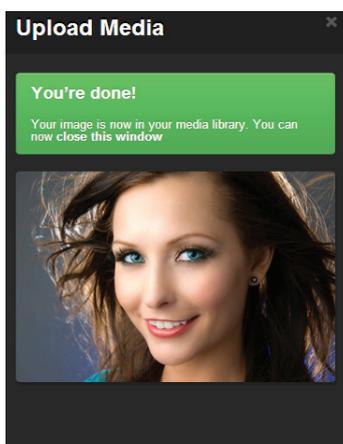
Signing up to use Acceptd is free and easy. Take your students to www.getacceptd.com and have them click on SIGN UP in the upper right hand corner. It looks like this:



From there, they simply enter their name, email address, and create a password as well.

BUILDING A PROFILE

Once they've officially signed up, they will be directed back to the home screen. Here, they can add their headshot and personalized information. **Be sure they understand that in order to use their profile to its full potential, they need to fill out as much criteria as possible.**



ACTIVITY:

UPLOADING MEDIA

Your students need to understand how to upload their media in order to successfully use Acceptd and apply to programs. Your students have most likely had experience uploading images and other media to social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram, so this should not be too difficult for them. All the same, they should practice.

THE BASICS

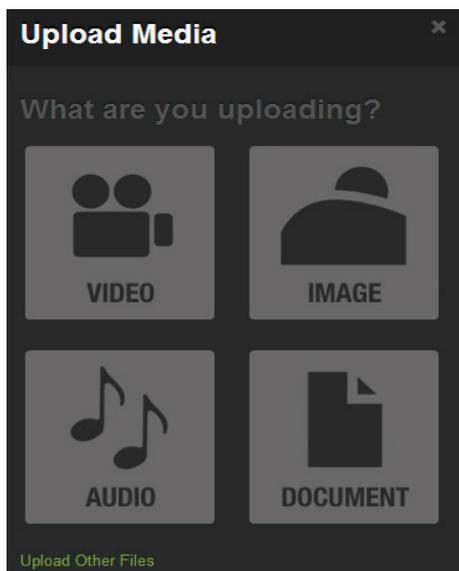
Once they're logged into their Acceptd account, have them select **My Media**. There is an **Upload Media** button in the upper right of the page. Once your students click, they can select media from the library on their computer. See our FAQ page for a list of the file types we support.

THE UPLOADS

To start, have them upload an image, like a headshot or other relevant material. Not all programs require this type of supplemental material, but it doesn't hurt to have it just in case.

TIPS

- You can hand out the "How To: Upload Media to Acceptd" worksheet to your students so they have a step-by-step guide (see page 35).
- We recommend converting your video files to MP4. If you have any problems, contact Acceptd support.



Once they've all successfully uploaded an image, try to upload a video, like their digital audition videos. If they haven't completed their digital audition videos yet, there should be stock videos saved in the computer's library.

If your student has problems uploading his file/s, send them to support.getacceptd.com for more information.

LABELING MEDIA

Admissions counselors recommend that students label their uploaded media in a specific way. In the **Name** field, the students should put the title of the piece they are performing. In the **Description** field, the students should put any additional information about the performance they think the programs should know. For example, if the piece is not well-known, enter more description information here. It is really important for the those reviewing these videos to remember which ones they've watched.

NOTE

Make sure they delete the uploaded files that aren't relevant to their applications.

ACTIVITY:

STARTING AN APPLICATION

Many students like to practice submitting an application before actually submitting one. That's where our demo comes in. To find the demo, have your students select the **Start an Application** button in the left column of their profile. This will prompt them to two drop down menus: **Where are you applying?** and **Which program are you applying to?** The demo program is called Performing Arts University.

Once they agree to the terms and conditions of the demo, they will be sent to the test application. This application is similar to that of our partners, so make sure your students understand how to navigate it. Much of the basic information needed for the test application is pulled directly from the students' profiles, so it's important that they have that filled out first.

If you find your students are having problems with the test application, have them contact Acceptd's support by clicking the **Help** tab on the left side of their screen. Our support staff will be happy to answer any questions they have about the test application or program applications.

LESSON:

DEVELOPING A PORTFOLIO

BEING DISCOVERABLE



The image shows a vertical form with a light gray background. At the top is a green button labeled "Discover Me". Below it are three text input fields: "My School Info", "Area of Study", and "Area of Study". The "Area of Study" field has a green question mark icon to its right. Below these fields is a checkbox labeled "Discoverable" which is checked, with a green question mark icon to its right. At the bottom is a large green button labeled "Save".

One of the functions Acceptd offers that no other platform has is the ability to be discoverable. Once your students have filled out as much of their profile as possible, show them where they can click to **Be Discoverable** along the left side of their profile. This is a free part of their profiles, and allows students to be searchable by programs all over the world. It can connect your students to programs they didn't even know about. It is important that your students select discoverable.

Students can go in and update their portfolio at any time. Their resumes may change from August to November depending on the performances they've been in or skills they've learned. To manage which applications they've started and finished, they can go into the **Applications** tab of their dashboard. This keeps a record of their completed applications as well as in-progress applications.

During the fall application season, students should be logging into their Acceptd account at least twice a week. They should be updating their profiles often, reviewing or uploading new media, completing applications, or checking their messages to see if a program has contacted them. In some cases, programs will request additional information from a candidate. This varies with the discipline, but for theatre specifically, they may request a different kind of monologue or to redo a section in a different way. If your students aren't routinely checking their Acceptd profile, they could miss important information.

CONCLUSION

When your students are acquainted with Acceptd and the platform, they will be on the right track for the audition process. Acceptd also has an excellent support staff, so if you or your students run into any problems, you can always reach out.

The future of performing arts auditions will be increasingly focused around a digital platform. Helping your students upload their media, build their portfolio, and apply to schools will set them up for success.

HOW TO UPLOAD MEDIA TO YOUR ACCEPTD PROFILE

The whole purpose of your profile is so that programs and festivals can see your talent. In order to showcase that talent, you need to understand how to successfully upload that media.

1. Log in to your Acceptd profile.
2. Click on Dashboard.
3. Click on My Media
 - a. This will take you to a page labeled “Private Media Library.” Any media that you upload here can be added to an application or your discoverable profile.
4. Select Upload Media on the right side of the page.
5. A small box will pop up that says “What are you uploading?” It has four options: video, image, audio, and document.
6. Depending on what kind of media you’re upload, select one.
7. The box will change. Click the big green button that says Upload File.
8. This will open up the files on your computer. Select whichever media you want on your profile.
9. Once your file has been uploaded it will say “Upload complete!” across the top of the Upload Media box.
10. Name and describe your media.
 - a. The name of your media will be what you want that media to be, for example: head shot, digital audition, recital, etc.
 - b. The description will be what you’re performing and who wrote it. Be sure to give the author/composer/choreographer credit. Also, you can include the date you performed.
11. Once you’re satisfied, click Save Details. You will receive a message confirming your media has been uploaded successfully to your media library.
12. Close the box and return to your Private Media Library. Your newly uploaded media should be visible.

NOTE: The media you upload to your Private Media Library will only be visible by you. When you select to Be Discoverable, you can upload two pieces of media: a headshot and a sample of work. These must be hosted in your Private Media Library.

CONCLUSION

There's no doubt that the audition process is changing. Methods from only five years ago are now considered extremely outdated. DVDs, VHSs, YouTube links, and emailed video files are no longer viable options for submitting digital audition videos. More and more, colleges, universities, and festivals are relying on digital audition hosting platforms like Acceptd to view and review their applicants.

Competition is tough in the world of performing arts and, just like you, we want students to start out on the right foot. This guide serves as a good learning tool to walk your students through this new process. Written in collaboration with experts who work in higher education themselves, the Acceptd Guide will help your students gain an edge. Even if they still have questions, there are plenty of resources cited throughout that can help.

Although the digital auditions, from pre-screening to headshots to live auditions, can be nerve wracking to say the least, this guide will help you and your students navigate it with confidence.