

Live Performance: Viewing and Reviewing

Some purposes of viewing live performances for students are to acquaint them with final productions, to familiarize them with different genres, to expose them to what is possible and to heighten their skills of analysis. At a play, you want to watch, among other things:

- the actors
- the staging
- the audience

Assess the actors:

- Are they believable? Why or why not?
- Can you hear them?
- Does it seem like the characters are listening to each other and responding as people?
- Are the actors' movements distracting or a part of the character?
- Was there any energy?
- Which characters were most memorable? Why?

The staging includes sets, lights, sound effects, makeup/costumes, props, and overall blocking (movement around the stage).

- Describe and evaluate the sets, the lights, and the sound. Did these elements seem unified? Did they help the overall meaning of the play? How? Or how not?
- Was the stage balanced? Did the movements of the characters seem random? Purposeful?
- Were there any dominant or symbolic uses of color or other elements?

Audiences play a large role in the total theatre experience. Size and responsiveness are key elements to the actors' performances.

- Did the audience laugh appropriately?
- Was there applause?
- Did the audience talk about the performance during or after the show? What did they say? Why?

The following table describes the criteria on which your performance reviews will be evaluated.

	ACTING	STAGING	AUDIENCE	QUALITY OF WRITING
5	Adds more depth to actor evaluation. Adds valid areas for judgement and supports all opinions.	Adds more depth. Adds valid areas for judgement and supports all opinions.	Really looks at the audience and gives specifics of reactions. Explains the reactions.	Smooth prose, few errors. Does not read like a worksheet.
4	Addresses all of the questions above.	Addresses all of the questions above	Addresses all of the questions above	Clear, though brief. No more than asked for.
3	May leave out some details and one of the questions. Doesn't support judgement with specifics.	May leave out some details and one of the questions. Doesn't support judgement with specifics.	May leave out some details and one of the questions. Doesn't support judgement with specifics.	Errors. Some factual or writing problems. May be sloppy and hard to read.
2	Very brief. No/few details.	Very brief. No/few details.	Leaves this one out or too vague.	Many writing errors and too brief. Could also just be a weak paper.
1	Can barely tell if show was seen. Leaves out one of these three sections or more.	Can barely tell if show was seen. Leaves out one of these three sections or more.	Can barely tell if show was seen. Leaves out one of these three sections or more.	Many writing errors and too brief
0	Nothing	Nothing	Nothing	Nothing