

WORKING IN THEATRE: Box Office

Name: _____



If you like working with the public, have great organizational skills, and consider yourself a good troubleshooter, consider working with theatre patrons in the **box office**. The box office is responsible for calculating ticket sales to balance out the books after each performance, reserving “house seats” set aside for use by cast members, producers, the creative team, and others involved in the production, and helping patrons have a great theatre experience. At a large theatre, these positions are part-time or full-time staff members. At smaller theatres, they may be hired as contractors for a single season or show. Some box office staff are members of a union, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE).



UNFAMILIAR TERMS: “HOUSE SEATS”

Seats reserved by the management for a special guest, often used by friends or relatives of company members.

“ADA SEATING”:

“ADA” stands for the Americans with Disabilities Act. “ADA seats” are accessible seats reserved for guests with mobility issues.

Note to students: You'll get the most out of this video if you watch it twice. Watch it once, and then read the questions below before the second viewing.

REVIEW QUESTIONS:

1 Kishisa talks about being promoted several times during her time at Center Theatre Group. What qualities in an employee do you think merit promotion?

2 Kishisa mentions she needs patience and a love for theatre when she works with patrons. What other skills are important when you work with customers, in any profession?

3 Many careers allow you to work traditional 9am – 5pm hours. However, that isn't true for many jobs in theatre. List other careers where you might work unusual schedules or evening hours, and explain why that schedule would be necessary.

4 As Center Theatre Group Treasurer, Kishisa needs strong math skills to be able to keep track of ticket sales. List other careers in the arts where math and/or science skills are useful, and explain why.

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1 What can you identify with or what speaks strongly to you in the video?

2 Kishisa says she needs great organizational skills. Do you see yourself as an organized person? Why or why not?

3 Kishisa talks about being able to make a nice living working in the box office of a large theatre company. How important is salary to you as you think about a career? What other aspects of a job are important to you?

4 Center Theatre Group shows change about every six weeks, so the work is always changing (Kishisa compares it to the quarter system in college). Does that appeal to you, or would you prefer your job to be more consistent? What might that tell you about careers you might pursue?

FURTHER ACTIVITIES:

1 Take the Center Theatre Group Career Path Quiz. First, answer the questions for yourself, and then take it a second time as you think a box office staff member might answer them. What conclusions can you draw about your interests?

2 From Kishisa's description, working in a box office requires diverse skills, including organization, theatre knowledge, math, computer skills, and patience. Kishisa doesn't mention what her college major was. Think about what college majors might teach those skills. What are you considering majoring in? What job skills do you think that major might teach you?

3 Using a website like Glassdoor.com, research typical salaries in a career that interests you. Were you surprised by how high or low those salaries are? How much would you like to be earning by age 30, 40, or 50?

Visit CTGLA.org/WorkingInTheatre and select "Box Office."

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