

WORKING IN THEATRE: Casting Associate

Name: _____



A casting director helps a creative team decide which performers should be hired for a play or musical. They need to have broad knowledge of working actors in many different forms of media, from theatre and film to YouTube. The casting director selects performers who might be a good fit for a certain character, and then coordinates auditions to help the director, producer, and sometimes the playwright or composer decide who will be the best fit for each role. Casting directors can be freelancers, hired for one show or project by a producer, or part-time or full-time staff members at larger theatre companies. They often discover their passion for casting after starting out as actors, stage managers, or directors. They do not need a specific degree, and do not currently belong to a union.



UNFAMILIAR TERMS:

“SIDES”—short selections from a script that actors perform in an audition room.

“CASTING BREAKDOWN”—brief descriptions of characters used to help casting directors, actors, and agents determine if a particular person should audition for a role.

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 Andrew talks about being pleasantly surprised by an actor's choices in their audition. What kinds of acting “choices” do you think an actor needs to make (think about a character's emotions, etc.)?

2 Andrew has mainly cast live theatre productions, but he also mentions some film work. What do you think might be different about casting for live theatre vs. casting for film and TV?

3 Closing deals with actors and their managers and/or agents is part of Andrew's job. Besides salary, what other things might be part of an actor's deal (think about their working conditions, etc.)?

4 Andrew considers casting a research job. What types of things do you think he needs to research?

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

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

2 Andrew's job involves interacting with people in casting sessions and doing the administrative jobs of contracting, compiling cast contact information, etc. Which do you think you are better at: working with people or working independently? Explain or give examples.

3 Andrew says someone who goes to the theatre and is inspired and excited by what they see might make a good casting associate. What performances by individual actors have most inspired and excited you?

4 Creating casting breakdowns is part of Andrew's job. Based on the definition in the Unfamiliar Terms section above, write the casting breakdown for a character in a movie or play you have seen. If you were going to cast someone you know in real life to play that role, whom would you cast, and why?

FURTHER ACTIVITIES:

1 Take the Career Path Quiz. First, answer the questions for yourself, and then take it a second time as you think a casting associate might answer them. What conclusions can you draw about your interests?

2 The video shows Andrew looking at headshots/resumes of actors. Google "theatrical resume" and look at what information is included.

3 Google "professional acting contract" and read one or two examples. Is any of the language surprising? Would you feel comfortable signing one of these contracts? Why or why not?

Visit CTGLA.org/WorkingInTheatre and select "Casting Associate."