girl scouts of northern california

cadette Grades 6-8 senior Grades 9-10 ambassador Grades 11-12

Program Toolkit

# All the World's a Stage

All the world's a stage, and all the Girl Scouts, merely players! Join us to exercise your creative muscles and spend a day at the theater.

Please note: no prior theater experience is necessary for Girl Scouts or leaders of this event! This could be a wonderful opportunity to partner with a local community theater or youth theater company, but is designed to be lead by anyone.

Time: 3.5-4 hours (flexible)

Steps Overview:

- Warm up games
- Learn stage directions
- Creating a character
- Creating a story
- Create a performance!



## Materials Needed:

- Projector & screen (optional)
  - There can be quite a lot of information to remember to say; put all the info on a slideshow so you and the Girl Scouts can remember it all if it is helpful!
- Large open space for performance

**Activity #1: Warm Up Games**

- Large open space

**Activity #2: Stage Directions**

- Large open space
- Stage direction labels (attached)
- Diagram of stage directions (attached)

**Activity #3: Creating a character**

- Pens or pencils
- Blank notebooks, 1 per Girl Scout
- Pictures of paintings or famous photographs (attached)
- Character worksheets (attached)

**Activity #4: Creating a story**

- Pens or pencils
- Notebooks
- Plot diagram
- Brown paper lunch bags
- Variety of random objects
  - rock, rubber duck, carabiner, old book, picture frame, ticket stub, etc. Use whatever you have!

**Activity #5: Create & perform your performance**

- Pens or pencils & notebooks
- Large open space
- Materials to create costumes, props, and set pieces
  - Cardboard boxes, tubes, etc.
  - Masking tape
  - construction paper
  - ribbon
  - straws
  - markers
  - yarn, etc.

(last updated: April 2025)

## Introduction

**Say:** Welcome to All the World's a Stage and the world of the theatre! Who here has been to *see* a play before? Who here has been *in* a play before? We are going to learn about different aspects of a theater and create a character, a story, and a mini-show of your own!

*Here is a good place to also provide info about where the bathrooms are, where the First Aider will be, and how the event will run.*



## Activity #1: Warm Up Games

**Say**: Before any performance or practice, it is important to warm up your body, voice, and mind! We will play some games to help us do that.

Part 1: Stretch

- Have the Girl Scouts spread out in the space so they have room to move.
- Lead the kids in a 5-10 minute stretch routine. If you need some ideas of how to do so, there are a few video tutorials in the resources section of this packet.

Part 2: Games

- Before the program begins, be sure to select your games you would like to play!
- Select a game that will wake up their minds, one that will wake up their creativity, and one to help them work together as a team.
- There is a list of games with instructions in the resources section of this packet.

## Activity #2: Stage Directions

Before the program print out the stage direction labels at the end of the packet and post the labels in the corresponding places in your space. Use the attached diagram to do so. Remember, stage directions are always oriented according to the actor's perspective, NOT the audience's.

**"Four Corners" Game**

- Ask the kids if they are familiar with stage directions. If so, ask them to describe.
- **Say:** The key stage directions for us to know are Upstage, Downstage, Stage Right, Stage Left, and Center Stage. We can also combine these directions to fill in the gaps (such as Downstage Center, Upstage Left, etc.).
  - Fun fact: we get the terms "down" stage and "up" stage from the ancient Greek theaters, when stages were built on hills and the audience was flat. When actors would go "up" stage, they would literally be walking **up**hill!
- Have the kids practice walking through each of the spaces to familiarize themselves with it. Be sure that they are always facing the audience to ensure they know that these directions are from the audience perspective.
- Once they have a handle on things, have them play Four Corners, but with stage directions!
  - One person is in the middle with their eyes closed. They count down from 10. During this time everyone else will choose a "corner" (stage direction) to go stand at. Give precise boundaries so it is clear who is standing where.
  - Once they get to 0, the person in the middle will say one of the stage directions ("Center stage", "stage right," etc.). Everyone who is in that area of the stage is out!
  - Play until you have one person remaining, and they will become the next person in the middle.

# Activity #3: Creating a Character

Part 1: Character Types

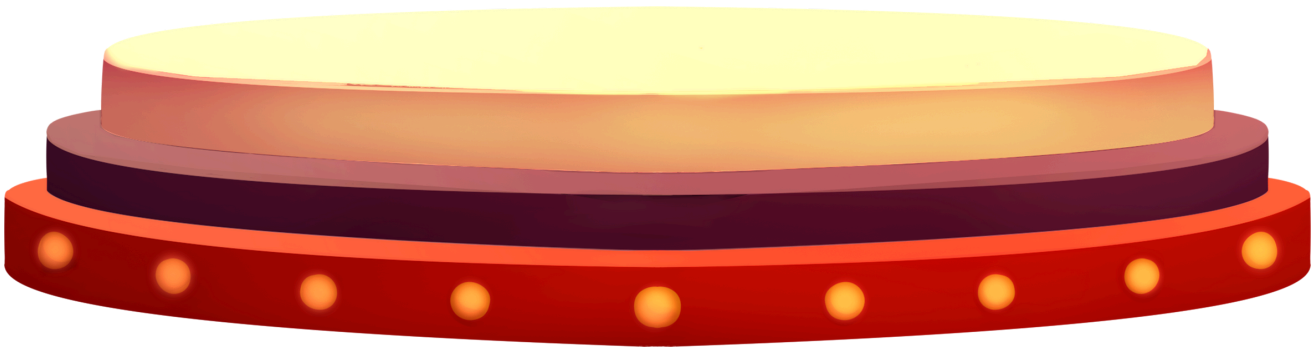
- **Say:** There are a few different character types that we see in all kinds of stories. A few we may see are:
  - The **Hero**
  - The **Friend**
  - The **Stranger**
  - The **Opponent**
- **Ask:** What are some hero characters you know from any story? Friend characters? Strangers? Opponents?
  - How do we know they belong in each of those categories? In your notebooks, jot down some of the qualities each of these character types may have.
    - Ex: are they loyal? Are they goofy? Are they stubborn? Mysterious?

Part 2: Finding Characters

- Before the program begins, hang up the paintings around the room.
- To start, have the kids wander around for about 5-10 minutes **just observing** the paintings.
- Once that time is up, have them go get their notebooks and return to one of the paintings and specifically a person in the painting.
- **Say:** Spend some time observing this character in the painting you selected. Who do you think they are? What is their story? What character type would you say they are? And most importantly, **what is it about them that makes you say so?**
  - Give them another 5-10 minutes to answer these questions and write as much as they can about the character they selected.

Part 3: Creating a New Character

- Hand out the Creating a Character worksheet to each Girl Scout.
- **Say:** Based on the character types we looked at, the painting you observed, or something entirely new, create a character!



## Activity #4: Creating a Story

Part 1: Plot Diagram

- The Girl Scouts are likely already familiar with this, but review it anyways! Place on a poster or projector or whiteboard an example of a plot diagram.
- Go through each of the plot points with their explanations on the diagram (attached)
  - **Say:** Another way to think of things: every plot has a "problem" (a conflict) they are faced with, or trying to solve. The climax is when the problem is finally being faced or resolved!

Part 2: Making Connections

- Note: before getting to this stage in the program, decide how you will **break the Girl Scouts up into groups.** You can do this by letting them decide, by making the groups yourselves, or randomly picking! It is up to you to decide based on what you think will work for your group.
- Also beforehand, place all of the random objects in a paper bag.
- Divide the Girl Scouts into groups of 3-4 and have them spread out around the room.
- Give each group three of the bags with objects in them.
- **Say:** Your challenge is to **write a brief story that connects your three objects**. These can be in the story as much or as little as you'd like, but they must all 3 be there!
- Once they have each written their short story, have them read it aloud to one another.




## Activity #5: Creating Your Performance!

Part 1: Creating the plot

- **Say:** You will be creating your performance in the groups you are in! Everyone must have a role in what you create.
  - You will also decide in your group if you will make your skit based on your characters you made earlier today, the plot based on the objects you all made, or something entirely new!
  - We will perform these at the end of the day for one another.
  - Your final performance should be **no more than 5 minutes long.**
    - Note: do time checks with them throughout their practice time or they will be likely to create one that is much too long!
- Have the groups spread out around the room as they begin to work! Encourage them to have the story worked out before getting up on their feet.

Part 2: Designing costumes and props!

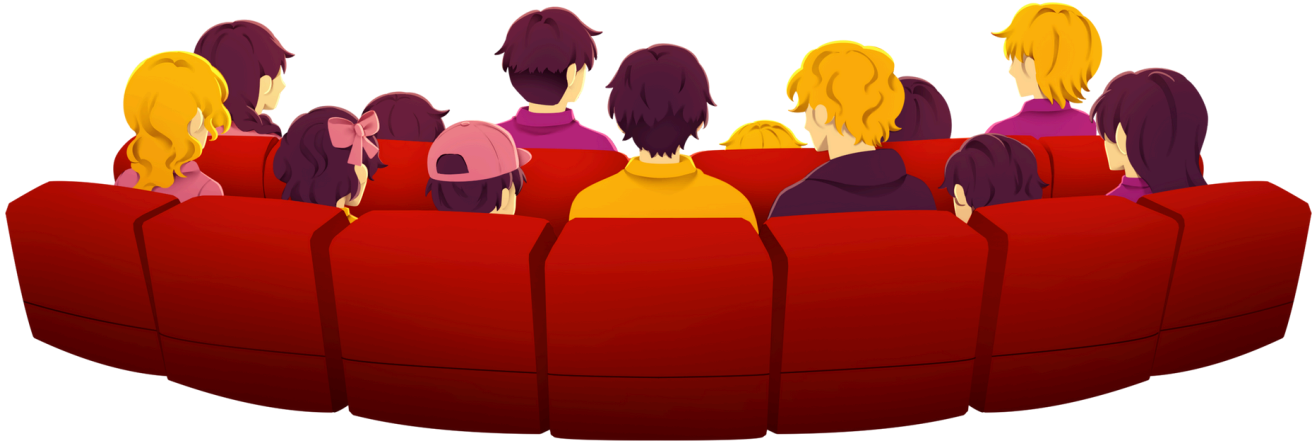
- Once the Girl Scouts are a good way into planning their skits, gather them all together again.
- Have out all of the craft supplies you would like to offer up to the Girl Scouts. Give them a tour of everything they have available to them to use to create costume pieces, props, and set pieces!

Have them use the rest of the time to complete their performance.

Leave the last 20 minutes or so for a performance! You may do this for just each other, or invite families to come and watch!

## Closing

**Say:** We hope you all had a great time today. We loved seeing you engage in all the activities and hope you learned something new while having fun! Take a bow, and give each other a round of applause!



## Supporting Materials on following pages

# Warm Up Tutorials

Whatever you do for a physical warm up, keep it between 5-10 minutes, put on some fun music, and be sure to give alternate options for those of different physical abilities.

# Game Ideas

These games are awesome ideas to get the group warmed up and more comfortable with one another! Feel free to use any other games you know as well, and poke around online to see if there are others that may work better for your group.

**One-Word Story**

Storytelling exercises are great games for small -medium sized groups. The game involves each player volunteering a word to form a meaningful story.

1. Have the players sit or stand in a circle.
2. There will be a coordinator who will start the game. The game begins with the coordinator saying “Once upon a time,” and the first player says a random word.
3. The next player in the circle follows that up with another word.
4. The third, fourth, fifth, etc., player will then follow to form a meaningful sentence.
5. The players keep going until one player (or the coordinator) feels that they have made a complete story and will choose to say “The End”

**Count to 21**

This is a focus game that can be played with any number of players. The kids will practice listening to one another and working as a team.

1. Have the players sit or lay down around the space and close their eyes.
2. Explain the following:
    a. Their goal is to count to 21 as a group.
    b. Only **one person** can say a number at a time.
    c. You must go in correct numerical order.
    d. No person can say 2 numbers in a row.
    e. You may not decide on an order ahead of time.
3. Have everyone take a deep breath together before they begin. The first few times, the leader of the game can start by saying “one,” and letting the kids pick up from there.
4. If they break any of the rules above, they must start back at 1. Have them take a deep breath all together before starting a new round.

**Tongue Twisters**

To play this game, prepare the Tongue Twisters for the game. All the participants can play individually. Participants who successfully articulate the tongue twister will proceed to the next round. In the next round, give the participants a different tongue twister. The game will continue in rounds until there is a winner.

Here are some tongue twister ideas you can use for the game:

- She sells seashells by the seashore
- You know New York, you need New York, you know you need unique New York
- The great Greek grape growers grow great Greek grapes
- I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream
- If you notice this notice, then you will notice that this notice is not worth noticing
- Any noise annoys an oyster, but a noisy noise annoys an oyster more
- Rubber baby buggy bumpers

You can have the participants say the Tongue Twisters just once or repeat several times.

**Stop & Walk**

Stop And Walk is one of the most high energy theater games for big groups. You can use this game to warm up a large group in a fun way.

1. First, tell participants the “walk” and “stop” commands. When you say “walk,” participants must walk around. When you say “stop,” the participants must stop
2. Repeat the two commands several times until participants get used to the game
3. Next, switch the commands and announce this change. For example, when you say “walk,” participants will have to stop instead. When you say “stop,” participants will have to walk instead
4. After repeating the reverse commands, you can add other commands like jump or dance. Let the participants know that “walk” means stop, “Stop” means walk, “Jump” means jump, and “Dance” means dance
5. Say any of the commands randomly while participants try to carry them out without mistakes
6. You can switch other commands too, like “jump” for “dance” and “dance” for “jump”

Although there is no winner in the Stop and Walk game, the game will keep your group active and engaged. The game is also good for laughs, as the struggle to remember and follow commands can be quite funny to behold.

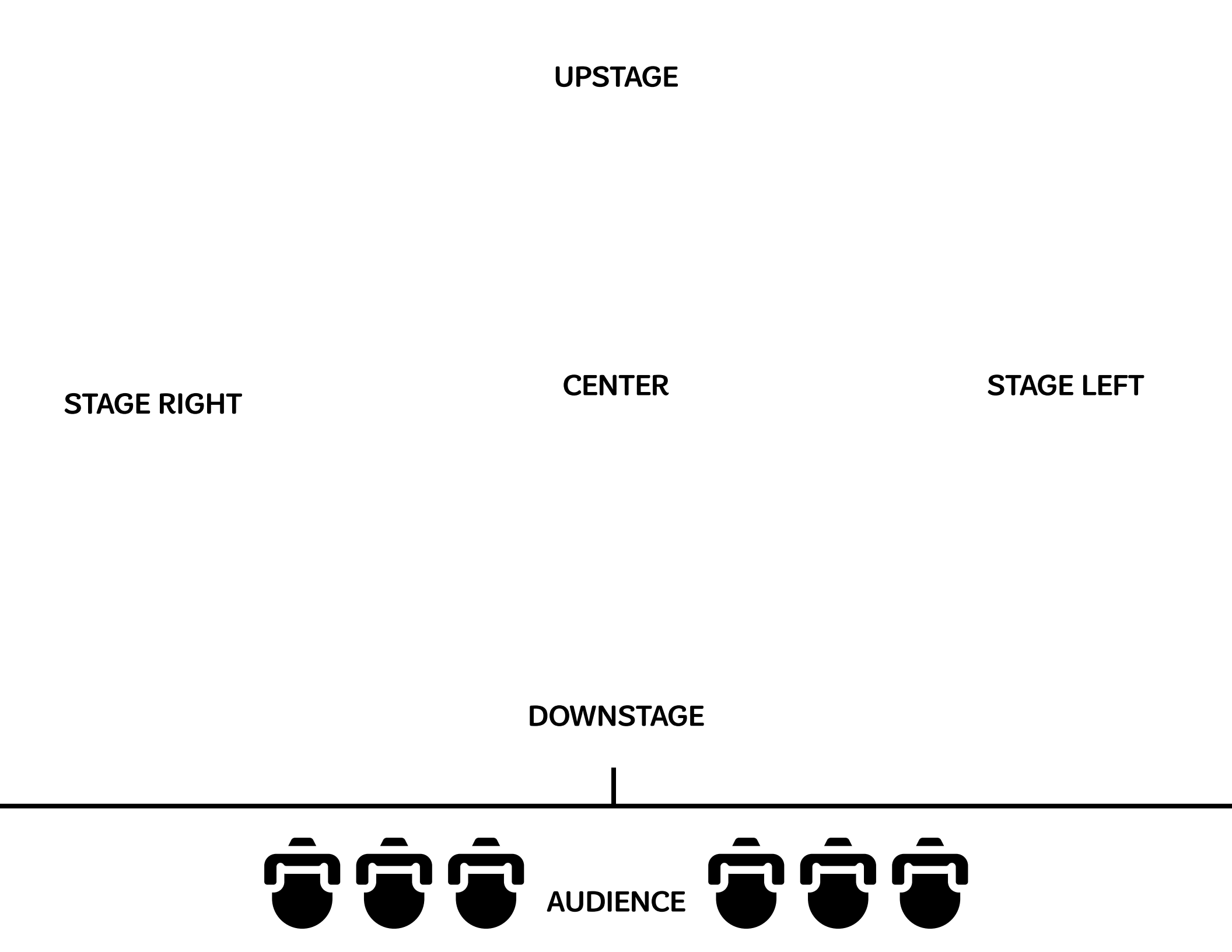
**Take Some Direction**

This game is a fun one to get the group thinking quickly and to make one another laugh! It requires a bit of prep ahead of time, but is so worth it.

1. Ahead of time:
    a. Select 1-2 famous movie lines to use for the game.
        i. "I don't think we're in Kansas anymore."
        ii. "Luke, I am your father."
        iii. "With great power comes great responsibility"
        iv. "I've got a bad feeling about this"
        v. Or another one! Keep it a little big vague and, obviously, Girl Scout appropriate 🙂
    b. Come up with a series of prompts/directions/nudges for the kids to add to the line. A list to use is below, but feel free to make up your own!
2. Have the kids sit in a circle, and have one volunteer start. The first person stands up and with **no direction,** says the line you give them. They quickly sit down and the next person pops up, you give them their direction, and it moves to the next person
    a. Note: you do not have to have them sit down/stand up, but it can help them remember whose turn it is
    b. Example:
        i. You: Monika, stand up, you are beginning! Your line is: "I've got a bad feeling about this." To start, no direction. Begin!
        ii. Monika: *however she chooses,* "I've got a bad feeling about this!"
        iii. You: Kristi, your turn! *Monika sits, and Kristi stands.* Kristi, give me a little bit more!
        iv. Kristi: *with a little more energy,* I've got a bad feeling about this!
        v. You: Winnie! *Kristi sits, and Winnie stands.* Winnie, as if you're falling down the stairs!
        vi. etc.

Prompts:

As loud as possible, like you're whisper-shouting, like you're driving a racecar, as if you are falling down the stairs, like you're speaking to your beloved dog, like you are a dog, as if you're on a rollercoaster, like you're playing peek-a-boo with a baby, like you're ordering at a drivethrough, like a sports announcer, like a FaceTime call with bad Wifi, like every word is a question, like you're transforming into a werewolf, like a trick-or-treater, like the GPS giving directions, etc.


UPSTAGE
STAGE RIGHT
CENTER
STAGE LEFT
DOWNSTAGE
AUDIENCE

CENTER

UPSTAGE

DOWNSTAGE

STAGE

RIGHT

# STAGE

# LEFT

# Creating a Character

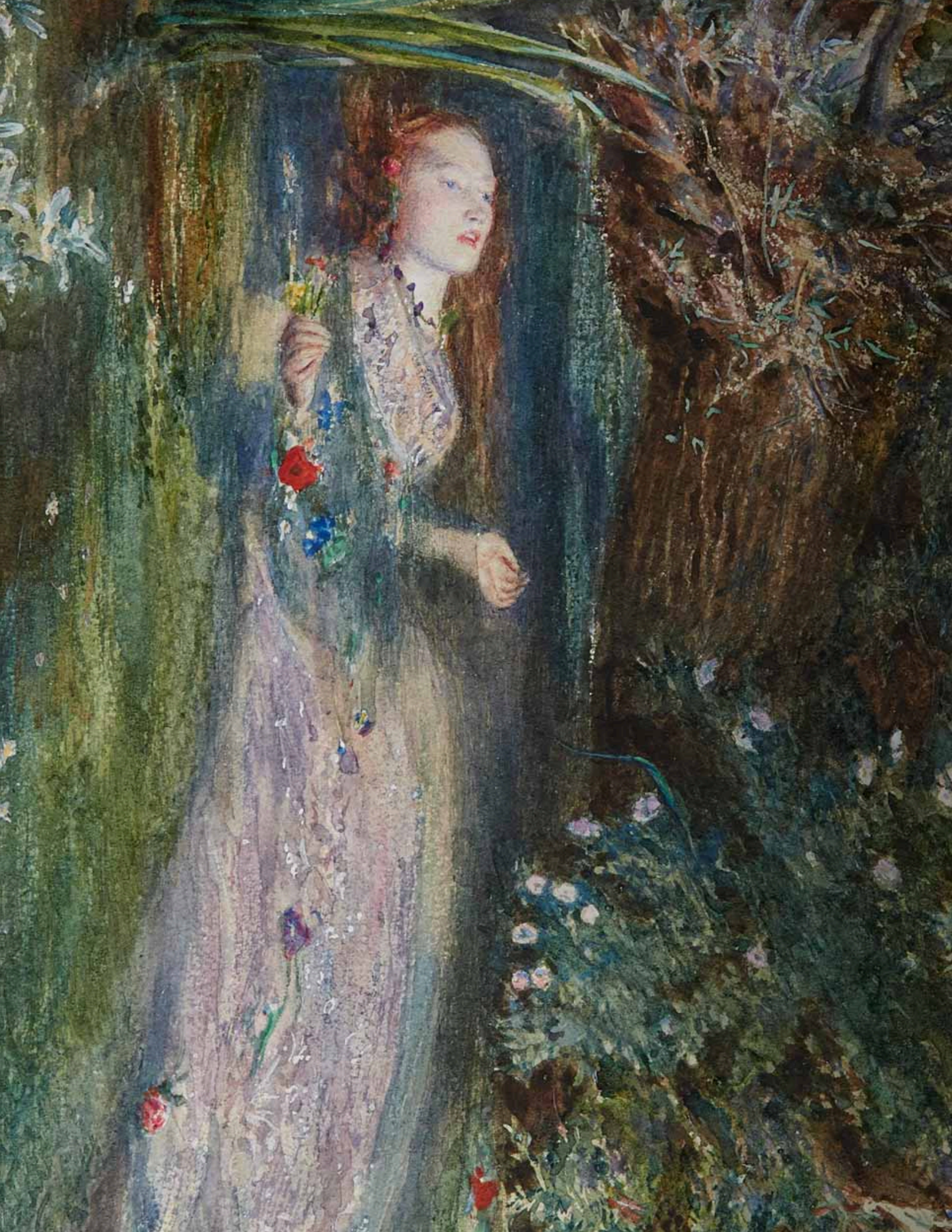
Your Character's Name:

| | |
|---|---|
| Their Age: | What do they spend their days doing? |
| Their Job/Occupation: | What do they **want** to do in their life? What are their dreams? |
| Where do they live? | Are they happy? Why or why not? |
| What kind of animal are they (or are they human)? | What do they look like? |

Circle up to 4 adjectives from the list below that would describe them:

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| adventurous | charming | clever | indecisive | curious | gentle |
| shy | studious | gloomy | stubborn | hard-working | lazy |
| friendly | goofy | cheerful | brave | bossy | kind |
| musical | intelligent | mysterious | nervous | generous | nosy |
| calm | busy | foolish | serious | loyal | mean |

On the back of this page, draw a picture of the character you've created!







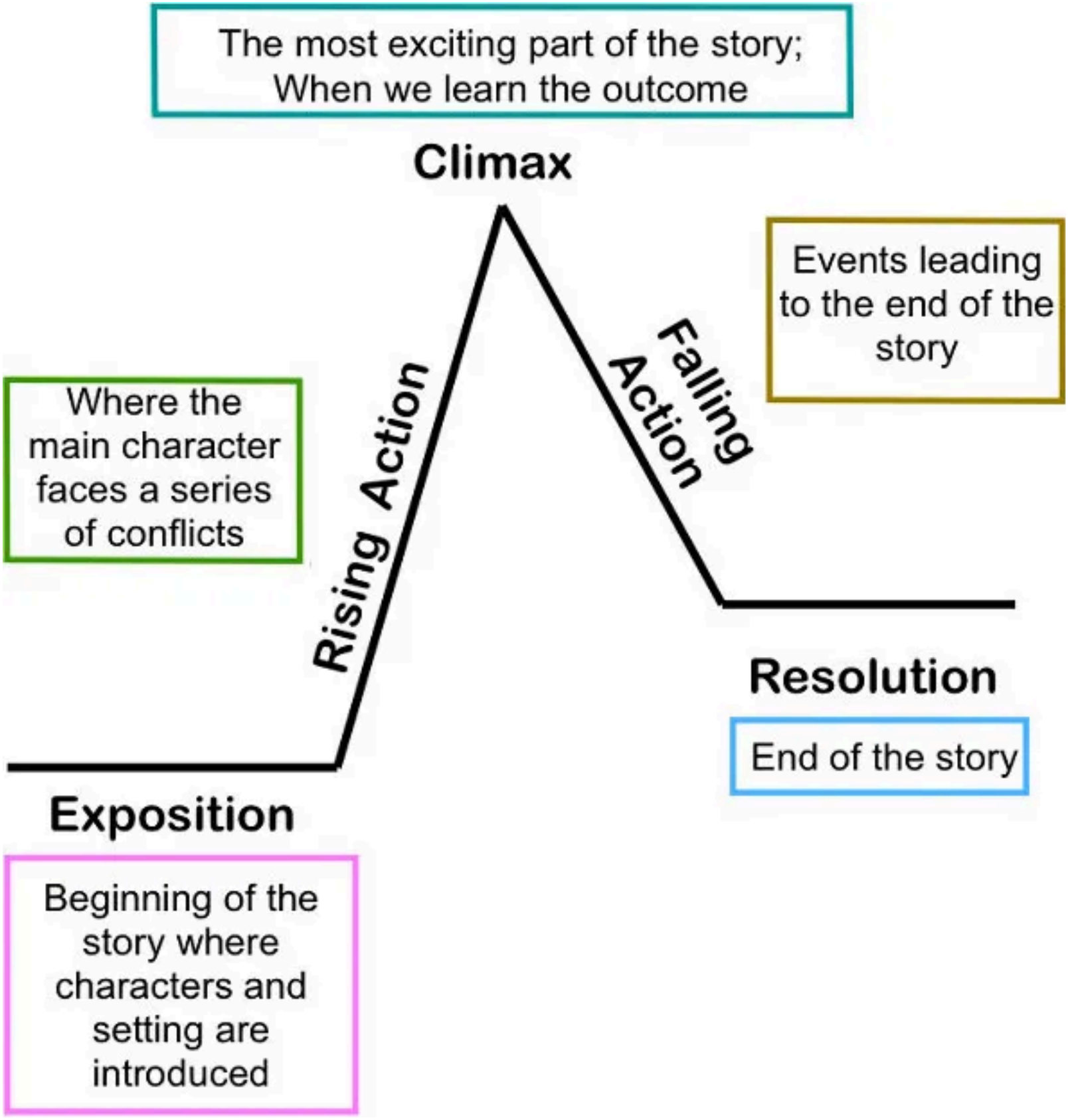



F 12.








The most exciting part of the story; When we learn the outcome
Climax
Events leading to the end of the story
Where the main character faces a series of conflicts
Rising Action
Falling Action
Resolution
End of the story
Exposition
Beginning of the story where characters and setting are introduced