

## Theatre Etiquette

Visiting the theatre is very exciting, but it is the workplace of the performers on stage and the audience has a role in ensuring a memorable experience both for themselves and the performers.

Prior to the visit to the theatre, ask students what they are expecting from their in-theatre experience and what are their roles and responsibilities as audience. The following are some prompt questions you might like to use.

Where can you sit?

- An usher (front of house – FOH) will help you find your seat so you need to follow their directions. The manner of this direction will depend on whether it is general admission (i.e. non seat allocation) or ticketed to a specific row/seat. NOTE TO TEACHER: For efficient entry into the theatre it helps FOH if you have students lined up as you would like them to sit and if required a teacher seated between large numbers to assist any behaviour issues.

How do you know when the performance begins?

- The lights will dim and/or you might hear a voice-over or sound. That's your cue that it has begun and it is time to settle and be quiet.

How is going to the theatre different to going to the movies or watching television in your lounge room?

- Something unique to theatre is that it is 'live' and the actors are real. You can hear and see the actors, and they can hear and see you. NOTE TO TEACHER: For a performer to see a sea of heads as student's record their responses it is very distracting – why not allow time in the foyer post show for students to reflect and record their overall experience.

What is the relationship between the audience and the performers?

- As the actors can see and hear you, your responses to the performance show your appreciation to the actors. So, show your enjoyment!

Final points to remember:

- Turn off your mobile phone and do not turn on again until end of the performance (even the vibration of a phone or lit screen is distracting to both performer and others in the audience);
- It is not permitted to eat in the theatre (if cough lozenges are required be careful not to rustle paper);
- Cover coughs and sneezes;
- Do not use your phone/camera to record or photograph the performance this is a breach of intellectual ownership of both the performer and the company presenting the performance. It is also an annoying distraction to the performer.