BLOCK A SCENE CHALLENGE

In this challenge you will create the theatrical "blocking" for a short scene from The Jungle Book *and shoot a short video explaining how you chose to block the scene.*

1. Check out "What is Blocking" and "Tips for Blocking" below. This will help you get started.

2. You'll be blocking the same "Kaa and Mowgli" scene that you defined the beats for in last week's challenge. Refer back to the beats you marked in your copy of that script (or, if you need it again, it's posted on the ACT Spotlight page). Your beats will give you a great idea of when/where your stage movement should be.

3. You'll be blocking the scene on the SLO REP stage. Check out the floorplan of the stage I've provided that labels all the components (entrances, curtains, stage directions, post, etc.) This will show you what you're working with. To keep things on the simpler side for this exercise, I've left the stage completely empty except for a log placed at center stage. This is the "set" you'll be working with.

4. Using your script and a blank copy of the stage floorplan side by side, think about where you want your actors to start and move as they deliver their dialogue. Feel free to use some kind of marker to represent your actors (a gameboard piece would work well) so that you can physically see them moving around the stage. *Remember, movement that happens with your beat shifts will make much more sense because it is motivated by something.*

5. As you find movement and placing that you like, record it in your script, just as you would as an actor (example: Mowgli X to DL corner).

6. When you've got all your blocking completed, run though it a couple times with your markers and your blank floorplan. Then try doing it in time with the voice recording of the scene (on the ACT Spotlight page).

7. Shoot a short video introducing yourself.

8. When you're ready, film a second short video of yourself doing your blocking (with the voice recording), using the markers and blank floorplan. You may want to have someone else hold the camera so that you can focus on your movement. Make sure that your camera operator is positioned so that viewers can see what you're doing on the page. Upload both videos via the ACT Spotlight page.

WHAT IS BLOCKING?

Blocking is the positioning and movement of actors onstage. Blocking can be more than an excuse to move actors around. If used correctly, it can be a powerful tool that defines character relationships and communicates key story details.

The key to this is to use the beat shifts in the scene to guide where your stage movement happens. Remember, movement that happens with your beat shifts will make much more sense because it is motivated by something.

TIPS FOR BLOCKING

Here are a few other things to keep in mind when you are creating blocking:

1. Decide which parts of the stage you will use for what moment. The most powerful part of the stage is downstage center. Pretty obvious, right? But you don't want to put every scene or every beat there. Try to find ways to use the whole stage. Upstage center is the second strongest area followed by left and right downstage.

2. Know where you want the audience to focus. Use strategic blocking to ensure they're looking where you want them to. The audience will pay more attention to someone standing than someone sitting. A character moving draws focus, as does one on a higher level.

3. Consider the overall effect. Think about the "stage picture," or how the stage looks as a whole. Is the overall positioning of the actors pleasing to the eye? Do you even *want* the stage picture to be pleasing to the eye?

4. Variety is important. You can have actors sit without moving for an important conversation, but just make sure it's not so long that the audience will get bored. Find movement that is motivated (happening when a new beat happens).

5. Pay attention to entrances and exits. You want to avoid logjams at the doors and the audience can clearly see who is coming and going. Don't put important scenes behind big pieces of furniture. Even if the audience can see what they need to see, they'll feel they're missing something. Watch the play from every area of the house and keep in mind the audience's sight lines when the house is full

6. Above all, feel free to play around. That's what this process (and the rehearsal process) is for. If something doesn't feel right, you are absolutely allowed to change it!

If you'd like a more in-depth look at considerations for blocking,

[this is a great article.](#)