

Concept Worksheet Questions

1. Play Title: *10 out of 12*, by Anne Washburn
2. Period and Place: This scene will be set in modern times in the Campus Black Box Theatre at Georgia College, during a technical rehearsal. This was the time chosen by the playwright: she chose this time and era so that the most modern technology can be used for the set design on stage, for example: the stage manager and lights/sound people having computers and headsets, actors being able to speak in plain English, etc. The playwright chose the time period with the intention of keeping the play as authentic as possible to the modern-day era so that those who have experienced a tech rehearsal in the past could find it more relatable.
 - a. The best videos/films that I can show my cast are professional interviews of directors, stage managers, actors, actresses, etc., and films of technical rehearsals so that they can understand and see the process. I also hope that they will draw on their own experience as a technician or an actor to help create this show. If needed and if available, I might have them try to sit in on a technical rehearsal for a production so that they can gain a better understanding of the environment and the intensity that goes on during a tech or dress for a big production.
 - b. “The most important tool for a technical director during tech is a clipboard and legal pad to take notes on. Unless it is a question of safety, notes need to be done at another time, normally during the actors' two-hour dinner break. With notes before, during and after rehearsal a 10 to 12 for actors normally turns into a 16 to 17 for "techies.”” - John Flores, sound designer, Kitchen Dog Theater and Dallas Theater Center
3. See preliminary concept board attached at the end of these questions. The first 3 images are from technical rehearsals for shows such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Othello*, and *Bash: the latter-day Plays*. All of these images are from the tech side, showing the technicians hard at work to create their art and get it set up for the performance. This is the level of seriousness I would like to convey in my performance, that each person is as dedicated to their work as possible, but that each character clearly has flaws that stops the tech rehearsal from going as smoothly as it could. The next image is from *Othello* again, but with the color of bastard amber lighting the actors. This is the type of color I would

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like to use for both the actress on stage and the technical people, suggesting that they are both on display and that all their work matters. The fourth image is a glowing EXIT sign, which refers to the sign in the play that is repeatedly referenced at by the director. The final image is a picture of how I would like the actress to be dressed for the scene, and to suggest that the play they are performing is actually quite a serious play (even though the scene itself is very funny).

- a. The colors that appeal to me most for this particular scene are black, bastard amber, red, and a soft light blue. These colors appeal to me because black is what all of the characters except for the director and the actress will be wearing – it is called “crew black” or “tech black” because the technical staff must match the darkness that they must hide in during a production so that the audience cannot see them or they won’t be noticed. I chose bastard amber because that is the most common color found in lighting, and the light that will probably be used to light the actress onstage. I chose the red because of the bright exit sign in the scene that will continue to bother the director throughout the tech rehearsal that she repeatedly brings up during the course of the scene, and I chose the soft blue color because it reminds me of the glow of a computer screen – something that nearly all the technical folks will be dealing with at some point or another during the scene itself.
4. I want the audience to leave the theatre feeling entertained (of course) but I also want them to understand how much goes into a technical rehearsal for a show and how hard everyone works to get it done. The title of the show, *10 Out Of 12*, represents the 10 out of 12 hours that a tech rehearsal can take and how some people, especially the technicians such as the light board operator, sound board operator, and stage manager never take breaks even when they’re scheduled to. I hope that this scene gives the audience a better appreciation of the arts and how much work goes into creating each and every performance that they see.
 - a. In this scene, the audience is secretly getting a sneak peek of a show that is set to open 3 days from the performance date. The audience would be sitting in the seats that the would-be audience would be sitting in for the opening of the show 3 days from then. The fourth wall is present – the actors and technicians do not know that

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the audience is there and they are getting a sneak peek of a show soon to come: but what the actors really don't know is that the best show is actually seeing the technicians work, not just the performance itself.

5. This play is about a reliable, strong, determined stage manager who attempts to put together a smooth sailing tech rehearsal, thereby getting stopped by the directors, actors, and design team to alter things. The basic plot of the show is the actors and the technicians learning how their two aspects of life mesh together and create a wonderful performance – they have done it so many times before with so many different performances, but now they must learn to do it again.
6. A good show takes time, collaboration, and the ability to work with people. The only way a show will work effectively is if everyone does their part and stays focused and attentive, especially during the tech process. Emotions can run high and things can get tough but the best way to handle it all is to stay calm, cool, and collected during the entire process.
7. There are 8 characters total in this scene: the stage manager, director, lights, sound, costume, ASM, Ben (actor) and Eva (actress). I have cut it down to 6 by combining the characters of Ben and Eva together and combining costume with the lights person (since their role in this scene is not incredibly notable). All of the actors will be onstage at some point during the duration of the show, and, as part of my revision to the text, all the actors will be women. The ASM, however, is a non-speaking role.
8. The protagonist of this scene is going to be the stage manager. The stage manager is patient – she never raises her voice, she is very professional always, and she knows what she's about. Her super-objective is to pursue, pursue the rehearsal and pursue until the end of the day when the show is done justice. I want her to be strong, attentive, polite, patient, and understanding. I want to cast someone who is an all-around people person. I want them to be generally well-liked by me and have an understanding of what a stage manager has to go through during the process of creating a show. I want them to be someone who really pays attention and is focused during an audition or a callback. My antagonist for this show is going to be the director – not because they're mean or hindering the process of a tech rehearsal in any way, just because they fight (her super-objective is to fight or to defend) for their creative vision to be displayed in their

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performance and that takes time, which can slow things down. I want to cast someone who is very outspoken and clearly stands out from the crowd, someone who appears to be passionate about their work and takes a lot of value from their art.

9. To start, I will have all 6 of my actresses be women, so no men will be considered in the creation of my scene. I would also like to cast actresses who have had experience in technical theatre, since 5 out of the 6 characters are technicians or part of the backstage process of the show. Comic timing will matter a lot to me when choosing actors for this scene, and improvisational ability since I want this scene to take on such a Georgia College-like feel. There will be no need for physical agility for this scene, but vocal ability will be needed for the stage manager because she will yell a lot throughout the scene.

- a. For my callbacks, I would like to prepare one-page readings from the script, specifically for the director and the stage manager. The relationship between the two are essential for this script, and I want that to be apparent in my show. I would also like to do partner improv games because those will also help develop the relationship between the cast – I would like to do mime games or repetition games. I will be looking for how well they interact with each other but also how much fun they have during the games themselves, and how well they click as people.
10. The set, lighting, costume design, and sound design for my scene is all pretty simple – the biggest challenge with it is that there's so many cues in a short period. My scene is 12 pages in length, and in that short period I had to struggle to get it down to 15 cues so that I am not overwhelming my light/sound designers and board operators. I couldn't possibly imagine how many cues the entire show would take.
11. I think that overall my scene is very realistic and symbolic. The playwright created this play using her 20+ years of knowledge participating in technical rehearsals. This was her "ode to theatre", a way of reflecting, symbolizing, and even making fun of everything that happens during a tech rehearsal. I would like to help continue her vision of making it an ode but take that further by making it an actual musical piece. I have included dancing, movement, singing, and even a bit of improvisation to help create the "live music" feel of this piece.

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- a. The main research that I have used in creating this vision was doing research on the actual playwright herself, Anne Washburn. I read her personal notes provided online as well as her general info pages, I had spent hours looking up the playwright herself because her personality shines through her work like a blacklight with invisible ink. All of her past experience throughout the world highlights her experience with theatre and helps create the world behind her play.
12. This play is compelling to me because of my personal life experience of working nearly every single role possible in a theatrical production and experiencing all that can be experienced. I have been a director, a stage manager, an actor, a light designer, a sound board operator, a light board operator, a stage hand, a props master, and a sound assistant. I have seen a tech rehearsal from every single possible angle and I know the process like the back of my hand. I have grown up in theatre, with my mother being an actress and my grandmother being a performer for the Sweet Adaline's. This play is a dedication to my mother, my grandmother, and those who have experienced these productions and seen theatre from every lens possible.
13. *10 OUT OF 12* is like a tight rope walk, miles high, between two buildings on a windy day. This metaphor is shown throughoconcept ut the entire play, as each character struggles with being on each other's nerves but also keeping the peace of the play.
 - a. What does it mean to collaborate? Can people come past their own creative differences to create something wonderful? How has this process (a technical rehearsal) created our society and changed the way that we act as people? What's theatre's significance in society?
 - b. Velvety, fluid, silky, colorful, magical, sophisticated, outside-the-box, musical
14. I envision the music of this play to be live, but instead of actual music with instruments, it is the music of the voices of the characters and actors of the play. The creation of the art itself is the music of this play. The music that the scene has in it, however, will be on tape. When I think of music for this show, I imagine music by Queen or by the Lumineers, somehow mashed together. Two completely different types of sound brought together into one.
15. There are no scene transitions in this scene! There is, however, times where two actors are having a conversation but nobody else hears them. Those types of conversations will

happen in different areas of the stage, with other characters clearly being in their own worlds and not listening to what the others are saying.

16. I intend on telling my design and production team that this show is an ode to theatre, theatre people, and specifically women in theatre. It's an ode to the power that theatre has over our lives. It's an ode to lighting, sound, the black we all wear, an ode to how much we love the art we do by doing the one thing we hardly do in theatre – making fun of it in every way possible. I want this show to display the process of theatre while creating it – adding elements of a light design, a dress rehearsal, a read-through, an off-book date – I want the show to look like a rehearsal process.
17. I'm hoping that my concept will help influence the design team to create this show almost like a piece of music in its creation. Sometimes it's rough, sometimes it's patchy, and sometimes it's glorious and beautiful. In the end, it creates something wonderful and magical despite how much work it took to get there.
 - a. I need inside a theatre and that is all.
 - b. I need 4 entrances – all just different entrances into the theatre and onto the stage.
 - c. Mostly washes! However, some area lighting for the stage will be needed.
18. My show is a lighting show, without a doubt.
19. The following is a review from the *Chicago Tribune*, by Chris Jones: "If you're a theater person, much of "10 Out of 12" (which has been slightly adapted for the Chicago theater scene) will feel like the catnip of truth. If you're a civilian — well, who does not love a glimpse behind the music? This is savvy, closely observed piece of writing that is at once critically satirical of all the delicate egos you can find doing a play, and deeply in love with every one of them. I only wish this were a better production. The central problem with Theater Wit's "10 Out of 12" is that it is boring. Very. And this is a show with a running time of 2 hours and 40 minutes. That works some of the time — technical rehearsals often are excruciatingly boring for all concerned. They can involve hours of standing around or staring at the ceiling as some minor and likely pointless adjustment is made. That truth of the art, director Jeremy Wechsler production has down cold. But what it misses, for the most part, are the tensions that nonetheless underpin that apparent boredom, the sense of the clock ticking down, the opportunities for change diminishing with every second, the lashing out that often results. To put it another way, the stakes are

far too low in this production. Nobody picks up their cues, especially not Shane Kenyon who plays the on-stage director and really needs to amp things up. You could push a cherry picker through all the dead air — and who has time for dead air at a tech?”

This review, while I completely understand where the critic is coming from, is why I chose this play. To some, it will appear boring and dull if it was just the script written by Washburn. This is why I decided to make it about Georgia College, so that it’s not only relatable, it has been experienced by some of the audience members. It also makes all of the characters college students, something else that the audience can relate to themselves. The improvisation also helps support all the humor in the scene that might have been missed by those audience members who aren’t actively involved in theatre.

20. One of the most difficult things about my playwright is that she’s very hard to find.

Outside of this play, not a lot is really known about her – she doesn’t have an official website, or page, or anything of the sort. Through my hours of research, I have been able to determine the following: She graduated from Reed College and then New York University with an MFA, her plays being produced internationally at very well-known theatres. She has written over 20 plays, one of her most well-known ones being *Mr. Burns, a post electric play* which received a Drama League Award. Washburn is a member of 13P, an associated artist with The Civilians and New Georges, and an alumna of New Dramatists. Her work has been published in American Theatre magazine. *10 out of 12* is written as a result of her experiences in tech rehearsals, some of the words being direct quotes or paraphrased experiences.



21. In our rehearsals, we have done multiple different techniques to help the actors create the world of the play. While the actors have literally lived in the world of the play, I wanted them to create characters outside of themselves, and use their own experiences to inform the life of the characters. To start, I let each actor create a name for their character, birthday, and how they ended up at Georgia College. This was incredibly helpful for them to help create the full background of their characters and immediately changed their interpretation of them. We also staged short scenes of how the characters met, and how

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they ended up together working on this project. Also, before each rehearsal, we have every actor go down the line and update us on the “lives” of their character. At the beginning of each rehearsal, we also play team-building games because theatre is meant to be collaborative, and they are a team.

22. For those who are unclear on terminology

Blackout: All the lights out on the stage, no light.

The House: Where the audience sits.

“Edgar Allan Poe Story”: A reference to the story *The Pit and the Pendulum*, about the torments endured by a prisoner of the Spanish Inquisition, though Poe skews historical facts. The narrator of the story describes his experience of being tortured.

ASM: Assistant stage manager, a person who helps assist backstage and is in constant contact with the stage manager.

Steampunk: a genre of science fiction that has a historical setting and typically features steam-powered machinery rather than advanced technology.

“Eat your Carrots”: Get it done, get in position, etc.

Line notes: Notes with regard to line errors said by the actors during the performance, so that they may study and fix them.

23. See the blocking script at the end of these questions.

24. See the sample rehearsal schedule at the end of these questions.

25. There are no scenes like that in this play.

26. If I had unlimited human labor and unlimited financial resources, I would probably build a platform on the “stage side” of the set to further differentiate the stage and the audience. I would also put multiple chairs to symbolize that the tech table is in the audience of the show. If I had only \$100 and one person to implement my concept, I would be keeping the setting the same way it would be now (because I had less than that amount of money for the show), and the only actress I would have would be the stage manager as she is the catalyst of the show.

27. One of the most evocative moments in my scene is the moment at the very beginning, where everyone is arriving for a day of tech rehearsals and everyone is setting up. The stage manager comes out first, getting ready for the day, followed by everyone else who arrives once she’s set up. I’ve had all the actors create improv conversations while

they're setting up together, to create the energy and vibrance of the scene and pull everyone into the moment. While there isn't much use of the lights, the set is being physically created by the actors when they're bringing in the props and setting up – they're taking something bare and adding decoration and making it their own. It really draws the audience into the world of the play.

28. This scene is about an all-female cast and tech team at Georgia College trying to put together a show as a capstone project. They are dealing with an overwhelming director and unprepared actors, and it is their job to create something marvelous out of this semi-terrible play: *Iphigenia in San Francisco, or How I Lost Everything in Three Hours*. This scene gives us an in-depth look on how theatre works, what we love about it, and how it forms and deforms us. My metaphor is that this scene is a love letter and an ode to the theatre, reminding all those who do it why we love it and showing those who have never seen it a glimpse into the world of the backstage. My personal connection to this play is that I have worked nearly every show in some position: whether it was light design, sound design, stage manager, props, director, actor, board operator, and so on. I have been in all of the positions that these characters have been in and after all my experience in those areas, I want to show off to the world the significance of theatre. My other metaphor was the idea of a tightrope: that the stage manager is walking the fine line of dealing with actors, tech, and a director – but also making sure that the scene runs smoothly. She must balance a lot to get the job done, even herself. I would like the lights and sound to be bold, bright, and almost out of place. We want to see the “ugly lights” while they're in the tech process before they become beautiful. I want the set to also look raw – still in the process of being created, but also a dedication to the technical directors' hard work. The props should be many and all variations between – with the exception of the headsets, which all must be uniform. The costumes should almost look un-costumed: the actress still in her rehearsal garb and the cast just barely fitting into all of their blacks.
29. After completing the process of creating this scene, I have learned a great deal of things about myself as a director. In the past, I have never worked with a show that was based this heavily on improvisation. While I have a background in improv, having been in multiple troupes in the past, this is the first time I have ever had to implement those skills into something I directed. I had to create and craft the improvisation, so it was new and

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fresh every time while still holding some semblance of idea that we have worked on. We spent a lot of time in the rehearsal space working the improv, doing parts of the scene over and over again and deciding what worked and what didn't, and it really helped create something beautiful. Adding the Georgia College twist also added more to the improv, as well as interjecting additional words into the already written lines of the playwright. Some things I wish I had done better were that I wish I had done a stronger job of drawing the audience's attention to specific improv conversations, as I thought some carried more weight than others. I also wish that I had kept the entire backstage curtain open so the audience could get a glimpse into the real backstage, since this scene is truly a love letter to the theatre. Overall, I was very happy with the growth and progress of this scene.

10 OUT OF 12 REHEARSAL SCHEDULE 3/29/2019

Overall point in rehearsal: Cleaning/polishing, shaping, full runs

Goal: Solidify lines, work a few small moments



(IMAGE NOT MINE)

Attendance:

Actor 1 – present
Actor 2 – present
Actor 3 – present
Actor 4 – present
Actor 5 – present
Actor 6 – present

Absent:

N/A

Guests:

Person 1
Person 2
Person 3

Schedule:

2:00-2:05pm: Arrival and opening notes
2:05-2:10pm: Opening warm-up (zip-zap zop)
2:10-2:20pm: Line through
2:20-2:35pm: Timed run through
2:35-2:40pm: Notes from director and comments from guests
2:40-3:15pm: Work specific moments (specifically, Actor 1 and 3's dance movements, opening improvisation, Actor 5/6 interaction)
3:05-3:15: Final line through
3:15-3:20: Final notes (specifically, tech notes and dress rehearsal)
3:20-3:30: Clean-up and dismissal

REHEARSAL BREAKDOWN

Tuesday, February 19th from 9-10pm: Read-through with all actors, go over expectations for the scene and rehearsal attendance.

Saturday, February 23rd from 2-3pm: Blocking Day 1/tablework, block scene with everyone who is present.

Saturday, March 2nd from 2-3pm: Blocking Day 2/tablework, blocking scene with everyone who is present.

Monday, March 4th from 10-11pm: Blocking Day 3/tablework, blocking scene with everyone who is present.

Tuesday, March 5th from 9-10pm: Working Day 1, trying the whole scene together and starting to get off-book.

Wednesday, March 6th from 4-4:30pm: Working scene with just Frankie (director), working on stylized movement and dancing.

Friday, March 8th from 2-3pm: Working Day 2, incorporating music and more movement, working on getting off book.

Sunday, March 10th from 6-7pm: Working Day 3, adding all sound tech elements, fixing big errors, last day on-book.

Friday March 15th from 2-3pm: SOFT OFF BOOK DATE, calling line, did multiple line-throughs with entire cast.

Wednesday, March 27th from 5-6pm: HARD OFF BOOK DATE, first rehearsal in space, doing a brush-up line through from coming back from Spring break, doing clean-ups.

Friday, March 29th from 2-3pm: Line through with calling line, running scene multiple times for polishing/clean-up.

Saturday, March 30th from 1-3pm: Line through, running multiple times and doing final clean-ups, polishing.

Sunday, March 31st from 11am-1pm: Cast bonding morning before dress/tech, getting breakfast.

Sunday, March 31st from 1-3pm: Dress Rehearsal 1, running multiple times in costume.

Monday, April 1st from 5-6:30pm: Dress Rehearsal 2, running multiple times in costume.

Wednesday, April 3rd from 5-6pm: Tech Rehearsal in Black Box.

Total Rehearsal time: 19 hours for 12-minute scene, 1 ½ hours per minute of scene.

