

DIGITAL THEATRE+

MASTER CAST Extension Exercises and Questions



EPISODE THREE: Reading Between the Lines – Simon Stephens with Miranda Cromwell and Marianne Elliott

EXERCISE ONE:

GOAL: Encourage active listening with this practical exercise.

SUPPLIES: A script of your choice and two (or more) actors.

EXERCISE: Select a passage from the script. One actor reads his/her line. The other actor repeats the end of the previous line, absorbs it, and then responds with his/her line. Repeat for the remaining lines.

MIRANDA SAYS: We all get caught up in our own thinking, what we are doing, and sometimes we forget to listen. This exercise generates a connection between the actors and helps the director to guarantee the company has a shared understanding of the text.

**EXERCISE TWO:**

GOAL: Chart the conflict of a scene with this practical exercise.

SUPPLIES: Post-it notes, two actors, and a two-hander scene of your choice.

EXERCISE: Equip each actor with Post-it notes. Allow them to run the scene, asking them to stick a Post-it note on their scene partner each time they feel they have scored a 'goal' – whether that means landing an attack or achieving their objective.

MARIANNE SAYS: Most scenes are anchored in conflict. Characters having opposing motives and agendas is what drives the action forward. This exercise helps you, as a director, see where 'goals' are scored in a scene, and empowers actors to use their lines to affect change.



**EXTENSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What character traits do Marianne Elliott and Miranda Cromwell feel are vital to carry out their role as theatre directors and manage the creative team well?
 2. Elliott and Cromwell describe striking a balance between being a therapist and a visual artist to help performers in what way?
 3. Describe the value of reading a script multiple times.
 4. How does Elliott describe what she thinks a script is like?
 5. What does “hearing each voice” enable the director to engage with? Why might this be important?
 6. What can storyboarding add to the creative process?
 7. What vital element of a theatre production does the creation of a model box help to illuminate?
 8. List what Elliott and Cromwell feel are the key contributors in the creation of a good rehearsal room and process.
 9. Describe what a director looks for during the casting process.
 10. How does Elliott describe her role in the rehearsal room?
 11. What does a carefully planned time frame offer a director?
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