

THE FOUR AUDIENCE PERSPECTIVES

DIRECTIONS PART 1 - For 50 points: highlight words in each section that stand out to you as useful for remembering these topics.

You are a critic. In fact, all audiences are critics by virtue of seeing a play performed and expressing our own opinions on it. We may like the play and not the performance; or like the performance and not the play; or like neither or both. We may even praise certain strong scenes or single out powerful performances by certain actors. Audiences bring at least four viewpoints to their theatre-going experience: We relate to a play's human significance, its social significance, its artistic qualities, and its entertainment value, but not necessarily in any particular order.

Human Perspective - People who watch plays from this perspective connect with the emotions of the play: hope, courage, despair, compassion, violence, love, hate, exploitation, and generosity experienced by mankind. To these persons, the best plays focus on what it means to be human. These audiences connect with characters on a deeper level, and they become reflections of ourselves, or what we could potentially become. In this way, these shows reflect our own personalities, circumstances, desires, choices, and anxieties.

Social Perspective - People that watch plays from this perspective generally connect with the play's relationship to society. In other words, audiences will look at how the themes and plots of the play connect to local, national or international politics and events. They will relate the meanings in the play to the people, relationship, and world around them. The best plays, to these people, will explore social issues, and will not present them as propaganda, but as fuel for thought.

Artistic (Aesthetic) Perspective - Each of us has artistic standards: we know what we like and what we don't like. People who watch plays from this perspective look to the artistic qualities within the performance. Did something surprise, excite, meet their expectations, surpass them, or worse? Does it stimulate them creatively? Audiences from this perspective will look at how the show was made. From the writing to the costumes to the set design, they will look at everything. They will look at the colors, sights, sounds, and anything used to make the show. They appreciate balance and harmony, and innovative beginnings, middles, and ends to the plots.

Entertainment Perspective - Great theatre is always amusing and diverting in one or more ways. Both tragedy and comedy are entertaining in different ways. While comedy allows us to learn from the foolish behavior of eccentric characters, tragedy delights us by showing us the misfortunes of the heroes. Tragedy liberates us from despair as we watch characters that despair over the senselessness of human deeds. In short, people who watch from this perspective generally focus on collective response - they want theatre that makes them laugh, cry, or applaud out loud together. What are the moments that made you laugh, cry, or applaud?

PART 2: Watch the video of Broadway's opening of "The Lion King" directed by Julie Taymor, the director we studied early this semester.

You will need to watch the video from 4 different perspectives. Go back and look at the definition of this viewpoint and rewatch the Lion King clip only focusing on those things in the definition. What stands out to you in this clip as you focus on in each individual perspective? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MoeqlU-kzBg>

1. Complete the thinking map explaining how each audience perspective would react to this production. Then answer the question at the bottom. (32 points)

<u>Each Different Audience Perspective</u>	<u>What would the audience focus on in this clip of the Lion King if they watched it through this perspective?</u>
Human Perspective	
Social Perspective	
Aesthetic Perspective	
Entertainment Perspective	

1. Describe why some people might enjoy something artistic, but others do not? (9 pts)

2. Describe how 4 individuals with different perspectives might disagree on what they enjoyed about the opening of The Lion King? (9 pts)