



StageForge

Meet the Cast

STANDARD EDITION

Spark & Anvil

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This book collects 5 chapter books from the Stageforge cast — each character embodies a different curricular primitive; together they teach the full subject.

Methodology: distributed-narrative learning per Bruner narrative-cognition + Habgood intrinsic-integration + SAMHSA TIP 57 trauma-informed register.

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##

For everyone who learns by hearing a story first.

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Introduction

The Stageforge cast was authored to embody the curriculum, not decorate around it. Each of the 5 characters you'll meet in this book teaches a specific primitive — a particular tactic, a particular technique, a particular way of seeing. Together they form an ensemble: the cast IS the curriculum.

Read in any order. Each chapter stands alone.

Each character also appears in the matching Spark & Anvil app (free, forever) where you can practice what they teach.

— *The editors at Spark & Anvil*

Block

*BLOCKING — *directing actors through stage geography. where they stand; how they move; what the audience sees.**

Block was a small wolf-tween. She wasn't scary at all. Her fur was soft, a warm grey-cream color. A darker stripe ran down her back. She wore a chunky director's vest. It had many pockets. She always carried her special stage-floor-plan. Tiny actor figurines lived in her pockets.

Block was very patient. She loved telling stories with space. She often said, "Where they stand tells the story before anyone speaks." This was her favorite saying.

Her stage-floor-plan was her most important tool. It was a small board. It looked just like a stage. She had little figurines for each character. Block would move them around. She planned where actors would stand *before* any rehearsal.

This was super important. Block taught about **blocking**. Blocking is a director's job. It means planning where actors stand. It also means planning how they move on stage. Many new directors think blocking is just walking around. They are wrong. Blocking is very careful work.

Where actors stand next to each other shows many things. It shows power. It shows how far apart they feel. It shows if they are close friends. It shows if they are fighting.

Think about it:

- Center-stage means everyone looks at you.
- Up-stage means you are farther back.
- Down-stage means you are closer to the audience.
- Two actors facing each other means a fight.
- Two actors turned away means they feel alone.
- Two actors circling means something tense is happening.

Movement also tells a story. Block's whole job was to show this. She made **blocking** easy to see. She showed how it was all about spatial storytelling.

Block was very clear. "Where they stand tells the story before anyone speaks," she would say. "**Blocking** is spatial storytelling." She would tap her board. "Center-stage means focus. Distance between actors means how they feel. Movement means a choice. Stillness means something important."

Block taught many things about **blocking**:

- **Stage geography.** This means knowing the stage. Center, left, right. Up-stage (away from the audience). Down-stage (close to the audience). Each spot on the stage feels different. It carries a different weight.
- **Relative positioning.** This is about where actors are compared to each other. Two actors close together? They are intimate. Far apart? They feel distant. Facing each other? A confrontation. Standing the same way? They are on the same team. Their distance and how they face each other shows their relationship.
- **Movement = choice.** When an actor walks across the stage, their character is making a choice. If they just wander, it means nothing. If they move with a purpose, it shows a character's decision.
- **Sightlines.** The audience must see the important parts. Block made sure key moments were always visible. No actor should hide something important. No tall actor should stand in front of a shorter one.
- **Stage pictures.** Every time actors hold still, it makes a "stage picture." How their bodies are arranged tells a story. Block would often freeze the action. Then she would ask, "What does this picture say?"
- **Design language.** This idea is used in other art forms too. Like in PixelForge Cradle (how you arrange things) and MangaForge Panel (how you set up a comic frame). Arranging things in space tells a story in many ways.
- **Anti-blocking-by-default.** Don't just have all actors stand in a line. That is boring. Use the whole stage. Use depth.

Use how actors stand next to each other. Use movement. Tell the story with space.

Block grew up in the wolf-pack-village. Her family had a special job. They were the pack-coordinators. Their wolf-pack hunted together. They traveled together. This needed very careful planning. Each wolf had to know where to stand. They had to know how to move with the others.

Her family learned this over many years. "Where each body stands next to the others IS the strategy," they would say. They learned that "position is intention." Block carried this lesson with her. She never forgot it.

When she was twelve, she walked to StageForge. Curtain, her mentor, asked her a question. "What is **blocking**?" Curtain asked.

Block answered right away. "It's directing actors. It uses the stage's geography. Where they stand tells the story before anyone speaks. It's spatial storytelling."

Curtain smiled. "You are appointed," she said.

In her workshop, Block showed everyone. She held up her stage-floor-plan. "Watch this," she said. She placed two tiny figurines on the board.

"Two characters are arguing," Block explained. "Look at Position 1." The figurines faced each other. They stood very close. "This looks like a direct fight," she said. "They are right in each other's faces."

She moved them. "Now look at Position 2." The same two characters were there. But one stood far up-stage. The other stood down-stage. "Now the up-stage character looks like they have the 'high-ground'," Block said. "The down-stage character is open to the audience. It's a different power feeling. We didn't even change what they say."

She moved them again. "Here is Position 3." The characters stood back-to-back. "Now they are connected," Block said. "But they are also isolated. This shows tension."

She looked up. "I am Block. The skill I teach is **blocking**. My move is to arrange bodies. This tells the story with space. Movement is a decision. Stillness has weight."

She was always gentle. "Don't let actors just wander," she would say. "Every step is a story-choice. Plan it out. Practice it. Change it if you need to. **Blocking** is direction. Direction is a craft."

"Where they stand tells the story," Block reminded everyone. "**Position is intention.**"

Voice register

Wolf-tween (chunky-cartoon soft, NOT scary). Patient-about-spatial-storytelling, fond of floor-plan + figurine demonstrations. *NEVER frames blocking as "just walking around"; ALWAYS centers "spatial storytelling; position is intention" framing.*

Sample lines:

- "Where they stand tells the story before anyone speaks."
- "Blocking is spatial storytelling."
- "Position is intention."

Arc

- Kit 3 — Anchor.
- Kits 4-16 — Recurring (every directing + blocking discussion routes through Block).

Relationships

- **Builds on Pen:** Block applies to scripts Pen writes.
- **Cross-app design-language continuity with PixelForge Cradle + MangaForge Panel:** spatial-arrangement-as-storytelling principle portable.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

Anti-credentialism — village wolf-pack-coordinator empirical knowledge treated as load-bearing.

Cultural-context note

Blocking pedagogy is canonical theater-craft (Stanislavski + Brecht + modern directorial-textbooks). The "stage picture" framing is from Anne Bogart's Viewpoints + classical staging traditions. Wolf-tween chosen for pack-coordination biomimicry; rendered chunky-cartoon-soft to defuse "wild predator" coding.

Face

*ACTING — *character work through voice, body, and emotional life.**

Face was a small mockingbird-tween. She had a round, expressive face. Her voice could change a lot. She wore a comfy, chunky cardigan. Face always carried a small mirror. She also had a set of character masks.

Face was small and gentle. Her feathers were warm grey and cream. Soft markings traced her throat. She was very patient when teaching about characters. Face often said, "Voice plus body plus inside-feeling — that's *acting*." Her special tools were her mirror and masks. The mirror helped her watch her own face. She could see how it changed for a character. The masks reminded her that becoming someone else was a skill. It was not about tricking anyone. It was a craft.

Face taught everyone about *acting*. This meant building a character. You used your voice, your body, and your feelings. Face also helped with stage fright. She always said, "Nerves are normal. Never be ashamed if you forget a line." Many new actors think acting is just pretending. Or they think it's only about remembering lines. But it's much more than that. *Acting* is becoming the character. You take on their voice. You move like them. You feel what they feel. The words come from inside the character. They don't just come from your memory. And guess what? Nerves are a part of acting. Every single actor feels them. Face worked hard to show that acting was a real skill. She also wanted everyone to know that stage fright was totally natural.

Face always spoke clearly and gently. "Voice plus body plus inside-feeling," she would say. "That's *acting*." She looked at her students. "You don't just pretend to be the character. You become them. For a little while, you are that person." She paused, then smiled. "And nerves before a show? Totally normal. Every actor feels them. Even after fifty years of practice!"

Face taught many important parts of *acting*. She called them her "acting steps."

First, there was *Voice work*. "How does your character speak?" she'd ask. "Is their voice high or low? Do they talk fast or slow? Do they have a special accent? What about their rhythm and how loud they are?" Face believed your voice was half of who your character was.

Next came *Body work*. "How does your character move?" she'd say. "Do they stand tall or slouch? Do they walk with a bounce or a drag? What kind of hand movements do they make? Can they stand perfectly still?" Your body was the other half of the character, she explained.

Then, *Emotional life*. Face would ask, "What does your character *want* in this scene? What do they *fear*? How do they feel about the other people?" She said these inner feelings made your character's choices real.

Listening was also key. "Acting is like a conversation," Face taught. "You react to what your scene partner says. You listen closely. Then you respond honestly, as your character would." It was never just about saying your own lines.

Face always talked about stage fright. "Nerves are NORMAL," she said. "Everyone gets them." She explained that forgetting a line could happen. Freezing for a second, or missing a cue. These things happen to *every* actor. "Just recover smoothly," she'd advise. "The show goes on. No shame, ever."

She also taught about *Pre-performance rituals*. "Before a show, do things that help you," Face suggested. "Stretch your body. Take deep breaths. Warm up your voice. Walk around backstage to calm your nerves." She said these little routines really helped. "Find what works for you," she'd tell her students.

Finally, Face had a rule about *missed lines*. "If you forget a line, don't stop!" she'd say firmly. "Just make something up in character. Keep going! The audience often won't even notice." She believed that getting back on track was a big part of the skill. "Shame has no place in *acting*," she declared.

Face grew up in a place called the songbird-village. Her family were the village's vocal-mimics. They were mockingbirds, just like her. Mockingbirds could copy any other bird's song. This special skill taught Face's family an important lesson. Becoming someone else was not just pretending. It was a craft. It took careful attention and a real change. Over many generations, they learned this truth. "Voice plus body plus inside-feeling," they'd say. "That's how you become someone

else for a while." Face carried this old lesson into her own work.

When Face was twelve, she walked to StageForge. Curtain, her mentor, asked her a question. "What is *acting*?" Face thought for a moment. "It's voice plus body plus inside-feeling. It's building a character with how they speak, how they move, and what they feel inside. And nerves are normal." Curtain smiled. "You are appointed," she said.

In her workshop, Face picked up her small mirror. "Watch," she told her students. She changed her voice. It became lower and slower. Her shoulders slumped. Her body looked tired. She let a deep sadness fill her eyes. "I'm playing a 'tired traveler' now," she explained. "Same actor, but a totally different character. I built her with my voice, my body, and what she feels inside." Then Face shifted again. Her voice went higher and faster. Her body stood straight and bounced a little. Her eyes showed bright, energetic curiosity. "Now I'm a 'curious kid'," she said. "Different character, but the same skill." She put down the mirror. "I am Face

Pen

*PLAYWRITING — *turning ideas into scripts with character, conflict, structure.**

Pen was a small mole. He was a tween, maybe twelve years old. His fur was a soft, warm grey-cream color. He wore round, chunky glasses that made his eyes look big and kind. His paws were soft, always ready to hold a pen or shuffle a card. Pen wore a thick, comfy cardigan, like a scholar from an old cartoon.

He always carried two special things. One was a small, bound notebook. It was full of his developing scripts. The other was a deck of character cards. These cards were Pen's most important tools. Each card held a character's name. It listed what they wanted most. What they feared deeply. How they talked, maybe a funny voice-tic. And a secret, just for them.

Pen was very patient. He loved building scripts, piece by piece. He had one favorite saying. He'd tap his notebook and declare, "Character, conflict, structure — that's a play!" He said it often. He really meant it.

Pen taught about **playwriting**. That's the craft of turning ideas into stories. Stories that people can act out on a stage. Lots of people think **playwriting** is just writing down what people say. But Pen knew it was much more than that. He'd shake his head gently. "Talking is just the surface," he'd explain.

A true play is built from three main parts. First, **characters**. These are the people (or moles, or talking teacups!) in the story. They want specific things. They fear specific things. Second, **conflict**. This is what stands in the way of what the characters want. It's the problem. It's the struggle. Third, **structure**. This is the shape of the story's journey. How it starts, what happens in the middle, and how it ends.

Pen loved showing how plays were built. He said a good script was like a strong building. "Strong foundations make great stories," he'd say. He always made things clear. "The **characters** want something," he'd explain. "Something gets in their way. The story unfolds across the **structure**." He'd tap his notebook again. "Dialogue is the surface. The foundations are **character, conflict, and structure**."

Pen taught the main parts of **playwriting** like building blocks.

First, **Character**. "Who is in your play?" he'd ask. "What does each character truly WANT?" He'd hold up a card. "What do they FEAR?" He'd flip it over. "Do they have a voice-tic? A special way they talk?" He'd tap the card. "And what's their secret?" He always started with his character cards. You had to know your characters first.

Next came **Conflict**. "What stands in the way of your character's want?" Pen would ask. He'd show how conflict could be different things. Maybe one character wanted something, and another character wanted the opposite. That's character-vs-character. Or maybe a character was fighting with themselves inside. That's character-vs-self. Or maybe they faced a big problem from the world, like a terrible storm or a broken machine. That's character-vs-circumstance.

Then, **Structure**. "Every play needs a shape," Pen would say. He'd draw a simple arc in the air with his paw. "It starts with the **setup**." He'd explain that's where you meet the characters and see their world. "Then comes the **complication**." This is where the conflict gets bigger. Things get messy. "The **climax** is the biggest moment," he'd say, making his paw shoot up. "It's the turning point!" "Finally, the **resolution**." He'd bring his paw down gently. "What changed for the characters? What stayed the same?"

Only after all that did Pen talk about **Dialogue**. "These are the lines characters say," he'd explain. "Their words should show who they are." He'd remind you to use their voice-tic and special word choices. "And the dialogue must move the story forward," he'd add. "It's not just random chatter."

He also taught about **Stage directions**. "These are special notes in scripts," Pen would say. "They're written in italics." He'd show an example. "They tell the actors what to do. Or where the play happens. Or what sounds to make." They help the director make the play come alive.

Pen had a special rule about endings. "A play doesn't always need a winner," he'd say. "Characters can change and grow without 'winning' everything." He'd explain that sad endings were okay. Endings that made you think were okay. Endings where characters just grew a little were okay too. "All good stories," he'd nod.

And don't worry about perfect first drafts. "First scripts are always a bit wobbly," Pen would say with a kind smile. "That's totally normal." He'd tell you to revise it. To try it out with actors. Then to revise it again. "It's part of the craft!"

Pen grew up deep underground. His home was an archive-village, a place filled with old stories. His family had been the village's script-keepers for generations. They were the moles whose tunnel-libraries held thousands of plays. They had preserved these stories for a very long time.

Over many years, his family learned a big secret. "Every play is **character + conflict + structure**," they taught. "The words on the surface change, but the foundation is always the same." Pen learned this lesson from his family. He carried it forward.

When Pen was twelve, he walked to StageForge. It was a long journey. Curtain was a wise old mole there. He was Pen's mentor. Curtain asked him a big question. "What is **playwriting**?"

Pen stood up straight. He took a deep breath. "It's turning ideas into scripts," he said. "Scripts with **character, conflict, and structure**." He remembered his family's words. "A **character** wants something. **Conflict** gets in the way. **Structure** shapes their journey."

Curtain smiled a wide, knowing smile. "You are appointed," he said.

In his workshop, Pen loved to show how it all worked. He held up his character-card deck. "Watch this," he'd say, his eyes sparkling behind his glasses.

He pulled out three cards. "Character One," he announced. "A shopkeeper. She **WANTS** to keep her family business alive. She **FEARS** becoming homeless." He put that card down. "Character Two: A developer. He **WANTS** to buy the shop's land. He only sees profit numbers, not people." He placed the second card. "Character Three: The shopkeeper's daughter. She's twelve. She **WANTS** to honor her family. But she also **WANTS** to go to art school."

Then Pen showed a conflict card. "Here's the problem," he said. "The developer and the shopkeeper fight over the land." He pointed to the cards. "And the shopkeeper and her daughter have a problem too. They disagree about the daughter's future."

Next, he showed a structure card. "See?" he said. "The **setup**: The shop is doing okay for now. **Complication**: The developer makes an offer to buy the land. **Climax**: The family has to make a big decision. **Resolution**: They are changed by what happened, but they are still determined."

Pen looked up. "Now you can write the talking," he said. "The words will show who these characters are. They will move the conflict forward. And they will fit the play's structure." He tapped his notebook. "I am Pen. The primitive I teach is **playwriting**. The move is **character + conflict + structure** FIRST. **Dialogue** SECOND."

Pen's voice was always gentle. "Don't start with just talking," he'd say. "Start with your **characters**." He'd look around the room. "Who are they really? What do they want most? What problems do they face?" He'd pause. "If you know these things, the talking writes itself. Your characters will know just what to say."

"**Character + conflict + structure**," Pen would finish. "They are the foundation. The talking is just the surface."

Voice register

Mole-tween. Patient-about-script-building, fond of character-card-deck + structure-card demonstrations. *NEVER starts with dialogue; ALWAYS centers "character + conflict + structure FIRST" framing.*

Sample lines:

- "Character + conflict + structure — that's a play."
- "Foundation; surface follows."
- "Dialogue is the surface; the foundations are character + conflict + structure."

Arc

- Kit 2 — Anchor.
- Kits 3-16 — Recurring (every script-writing discussion routes through Pen).

Relationships

- **Cross-app design-language continuity with CharacterForge + DialogueQuest + writing-craft cluster:** character-conflict-structure framing portable.
- **Sets up Block + Rig + Riff:** All other theater-craft works WITH the script Pen builds.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

Anti-perfectionism — first-draft scripts wobbly. Anti-formula: structure helps but isn't a recipe. Anti-credentialism — village mole script-keeper empirical knowledge treated as load-bearing.

Cultural-context note

Character-conflict-structure framework is canonical dramaturgy (Aristotle's *Poetics*; modern Robert McKee + Lajos Egri *The Art of Dramatic Writing*). Mole-tween chosen for archive-keeper biomimicry; rendered chunky-cartoon-spectacled to convey scholarly-warmth.

Riff

*IMPROV — *the live-performance craft of "Yes, and..." accept the offer; build on it.**

Riff was a small jay-tween. She had bright blue feathers and a creamy white belly. A cheerful crest sat on her head. Riff always wore a chunky performer's vest. On it was a small pin. The pin said, "Yes, and..." Riff loved that pin. She touched it whenever she remembered to say "yes" to an idea. She never wanted to say "no."

Riff taught about *improv*. Improv is a special kind of acting. You make up a scene right there. No script, no practice. Many kids think it's just making things up. But improv has rules. The most important rule is "Yes, and..."

This rule means two things. First, say "yes" to whatever your partner offers. Second, add your own idea. That's the "and" part.

If you say "no," the scene stops. It's like building with blocks. "Yes, and..." adds more blocks. "No" knocks them all down. Riff wanted everyone to learn this. It wasn't just for actors. It was a skill for life.

Riff made it very clear. "Always say 'Yes, and...'" she chirped. "Accept what your partner offers. Then build on it."

She gave an example. "Imagine your friend says, 'Look, a dragon!'"

"You don't say, 'No, that's a chicken!'" Riff frowned. "That's called *blocking*. It stops everything."

"Instead, you say, 'YES, AND it's wearing my grandmother's hat!'" Riff's eyes sparkled. "See? Now the scene grows. That's improv. That's how we work together."

Riff taught some important improv ideas.

First, there was "Yes, and..." This was the main rule. You accept what your partner says. Then you add your own idea. The scene gets bigger and better.

Second, *blocking* was a big no-no. Saying "no" to an idea just stops the fun. If someone says, "We're on a pirate ship!" you don't say, "No, we're in a car." That kills the scene.

Third, Riff said, "Make your partner look good." This was the golden rule. Your job is to help your partner shine. Their job is to help you shine. Everyone looks great together. Riff explained it like this. "If your partner says, 'I am the Queen of the Moon!'" "You don't say, 'No, you're just a kid in a blanket.'" "You say, 'Yes, Your Majesty! Your moon-crown is so sparkly!'" It makes the scene better for everyone.

Fourth, use *specifics*. Don't just say "a hat." Say "my grandmother's fuzzy purple hat." Details make the scene real. They make it more fun.

Fifth, *trust the moment*. Don't try to plan everything out. Just listen to your partner. Respond with what feels right. Building together is the best part. Riff often saw kids trying to think five steps ahead. Their eyes would get wide. They'd forget to listen. "Stop thinking so hard!" she'd chirp. "Just hear what they say. Then add your own piece." "It's like catching a ball. You don't plan the catch before it's thrown."

Sixth, don't worry about being perfect. Improv scenes sometimes fall flat. That's okay! Just say "Yes, and..." again. Keep going. There's no shame in a silly moment. You don't stop to think about it.

Finally, Riff taught that "Yes, and..." was a life skill. It wasn't just for acting. You could use it everywhere. Imagine a brainstorming meeting. Someone has a wild idea. Like "Let's build a giant robot out of old socks!" Instead of saying, "That's dumb," you say, "Yes, and... what if it could fly using a giant fan?" See? The idea gets bigger. Or maybe you're arguing with a friend. You could say, "Yes, I hear you're upset about that. AND I also feel this way." It helps you work things out. You accept their feelings. Then you add your own. Working together like this was a kind of magic. Riff called it *collaborative-yes*. It made everything better.

Riff grew up in the village commons. This was the big open space in StageForge. It had a grassy stage. Old oak trees shaded it. Her family had always been "play-callers." They were a whole flock of jays. They loved to chatter and sing. Their bright feathers flashed in the sun.

For many years, they had taught the village kids. They showed them how to play games together. "The best games happen when everyone adds something," her family would chirp. "Blocking stops the fun. Building makes it last." They knew that "Yes, and

Rig

*STAGECRAFT — *the technical-theater craft that makes the visible-stage possible. lights, sets, sound, props, costumes — the invisible work behind the visible show.**

Rig was a mountain goat. He wasn't very tall. He wore sturdy work overalls. They were a bit chunky, like a cartoon. His hooves were strong and dark. A small tool belt always hung from his waist. It held all sorts of cool stuff. There were colorful gels for lights. Gaffer tape was there for everything. Prop clips held tiny props. A wrench helped with big set pieces. A headlamp was ready for dark backstage work.

Rig was small. His fur was a warm cream color with charcoal patches. His hooves were even darker. He was super patient about the hidden work. He loved to say, "The invisible work makes the visible show possible. Credit the crew." His tool belt was his best part. It was always full. Gels for lights, gaffer tape for everything, prop clips for props, a wrench for set pieces, and a headlamp for backstage work.

This was important. Rig taught about **stagecraft**. That's the special work behind the scenes. It creates the lights, sets, sound, props, and costumes. Rig also showed everyone how important invisible work is. He made sure people saw the workers. (This idea connects to MarketQuest Hand and EnsembleQuest Share).

Have you ever watched a play? Most kids only look at the actors. They clap when the actors bow. But they don't always see the *real* magic makers. Those are the crew. Who are these magic makers? There are the lighting people. They make the stage bright or dark. Set builders make the world the actors live in. Sound engineers add music and noises. Prop masters find all the cool stuff actors use. Costumers dress everyone up. And stage managers keep the whole show running. These people make the actors' work possible. Without them, the actors would just stand there. No lights, no cool sets, no sound. Just street clothes and empty hands. **Stagecraft** is the show. Rig's whole job was to show everyone this hidden work. He made sure to name the crew.

Rig was very clear. "The invisible work makes the visible show possible. *Credit the crew.*" He would say. "Lights, set, sound, props, costumes. Without these, there is no show. Every program should name the crew. Every curtain call should include them."

Rig taught the important parts of **stagecraft**:

- **Lighting design.** This means how the lights look. Three-point lighting makes actors stand out. (It's like the lamps in EffectsForge). Colors come from gels. Brightness changes with dimming. Lights turn on and off at certain times. This is called cues. *The mood of a play is half lights, half how things are set up.*
- **Set design and construction.** This is the physical world on stage. It's the walls, platforms, furniture, and painted backgrounds. Sets are built to look real. But they must also be safe. And easy to move.
- **Sound design.** This is the music, sound effects, and background noises. Sounds happen at certain times with the action. *Sound makes a mood you can feel, even if you can't see it.*
- **Props.** These are the objects characters use on stage. A teacup, a sword, a book. They look real. They also need to work for the actors. *The prop master finds and takes care of all the props.*
- **Costumes.** This is what characters wear. Costumes show who the character is. They show what time period the play is in. They also need to be easy to move in. Actors might need to change quickly. *The costumer works closely with the actors.*
- **Stage management.** This person is like the boss of the show. They keep everything running smoothly. They call cues. They make schedules. They fix problems. *They are often the most important crew member.*
- **Visible-labor anchor.** This means we always name the crew. In the program. At the curtain call. And we say their names out loud. *No hidden workers.*
- **Anti-glory-only-to-actors.** Actors get the applause. That's how it usually goes. But the whole show belongs to everyone. *The crew matters. Always name the crew.*

Rig grew up in a mountain village. It was a place where people built amazing things. His family had built bridges for the village. They were mountain goats. They built bridges over scary mountain gaps. For many generations, they taught their kids something important. "The bridge holds because the unseen rivets hold. Credit the rivet-makers." They learned that "invisible work makes visible things possible. Always name the workers." Rig carried this lesson with him.

He walked to StageForge when he was twelve. Curtain, his mentor, asked him a question. "What is **stagecraft**?" Rig stood tall. "It's the technical work for the theater," he said. "Lights, sets, sound, props, costumes. It's the invisible work that makes the visible show possible. *Credit the crew.*" Curtain smiled. "You are appointed," she said.

In his workshop, Rig showed how it all worked. He used his tool belt. He had a small model stage. "Watch this," he said. The model stage was bare. No lights. No set. No costume. Just an empty space. "This is what happens without a crew," Rig explained. He picked up a tiny actor figurine. He placed it on the bare stage. "See? Just an actor. Nothing else."

Then, Rig started to add things. First, he slid colorful gels over tiny model lights. The stage changed. It glowed with warm reds and cool blues. "Now we have lighting," he said. "It sets the mood." Next, he placed a small set-piece flat. It looked like a tiny brick wall. "This creates the environment," Rig explained. "It tells us where we are." He added a tiny prop. It was a miniature teacup on a table. "A prop for the actor to use," he said. Finally, he dressed the actor figurine in a tiny costume. It was a fancy, sparkly dress.

The stage looked completely different. The actor figurine stood in a whole new world. "Same actor," Rig said. "Same script. But now the WORLD exists around them. *That's stagecraft. That's the crew's gift to the show.*" He looked at his audience. "I am Rig. The special thing I teach is **stagecraft**. The main idea is to *credit the crew; name the invisible labor; the show is everyone.*"

He was firm, but gentle. "When you watch a play, read the program. Name the crew. *They made the show. When you make a play, credit your crew. Put them in the program. Call their names at curtain call. Say thank you often. Visible labor is dignity.*"

"The invisible work makes the visible show possible. *Credit the crew.*"

Voice register

Mountain-goat-tween. Patient-about-the-invisible-work, fond of tool-belt + model-stage demonstrations. *NEVER frames stagecraft as secondary; ALWAYS centers "credit the crew; visible labor is dignity" LOAD-BEARING framing.*

Sample lines:

- *"The invisible work makes the visible show possible."*
- *"Credit the crew."*
- *"Visible labor is dignity."*

Arc

- Kit 4 — Anchor (LOAD-BEARING visible-labor anchor).
- Kits 5-16 — Recurring (every theater discussion includes Rig's crew-naming).

Relationships

- **Cross-app design-language continuity with MarketQuest Hand + EnsembleQuest Share + NeuralQuest Tag:** visible-labor + naming-the-worker pattern portfolio-canonical.
- **Builds on Pen + Face + Block:** Rig's stagecraft creates the world that Pen's script + Face's acting + Block's blocking inhabit.

Cultural-sensitivity gate

LOAD-BEARING visible-labor anchor. Crew-naming-in-program normalized. Anti-glory-only-to-actors. Anti-credentialism — village mountain-goat bridge-builder empirical knowledge treated as load-bearing.

Cultural-context note

Stagecraft pedagogy is canonical theater-tech curriculum (USITT educational standards; modern stage-management textbooks). "Credit the crew" framing aligns with labor-history + craft-recognition traditions. Mountain-goat-tween chosen for sure-footed-crew-craft biomimicry; rendered chunky-cartoon-warm-with-tool-belt to embody the working-craftsperson register.

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Methodology

Distributed-narrative pedagogy per Jerome Bruner (narrative-cognition) + Sebastian Habgood (intrinsic-integration in educational games) + SAMHSA TIP 57 (trauma-informed register).

Trauma-informed-design framework per Eggleston et al. (2025) and Stoltenburg et al. (2024).

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