

Uta Hagen's: "9 Questions Every Actor Should Ask Themselves"

From the Actors Training Center

Don't have time to read the book? (You should.) We made a list for you!

Uta Hagen is one of theatre's most renowned theatre instructors. Her books *Respect for Acting* (1973) and *A Challenge for the Actor* (1991) have been used as textbook staples in theatre schools, universities, and conservatories across the world.

In her book, *Respect for Acting*, Hagen outlines 9 Questions Actors Need to Ask Themselves when preparing for a role. Don't have time to read the book? (You should.)

We compiled them for you. Here they are:

1. Who Am I?

Who is your character? Identify all the details: name, age, physical traits, education, personal opinions, likes, dislikes, fears, ethics, beliefs, etc.

2. What time is it?

The year, the season, the day, the minute. What is the significance of that time?

3. Where am I?

Identify the country, the city or town, the neighborhood, building, room, or where in that room are you?

4. What surrounds me?

What is happening in the environment surrounding you? What's the weather? Landscape? People? Objects?

5. What are the given circumstances?

Identify events in the past, present, and future: What has happened? What is happening? What is going to happen?

6. What are my relationships?

More than just your relationship with and to other people, it's your relationship to objects, characters, events, etc.

7. What do I want?

What do you want right here, right now? What does your character want overall: an ultimate want?

8. What is in my way?

What obstacles keep you from getting or achieving what you want?

9. What do I do to get what I want?

What actions do you take - verbally, physically, both? What tactics do you implement?

Asking yourself these 9 questions helps focus on the details of the scene, your character, and the show as a whole. Use these questions beyond the stage: prepare your next on camera audition using these questions and you won't be struggling to understand your character. You'll know them better than anyone and will help you stand out in your audition.

Then, read the book. Check it out from the Library.