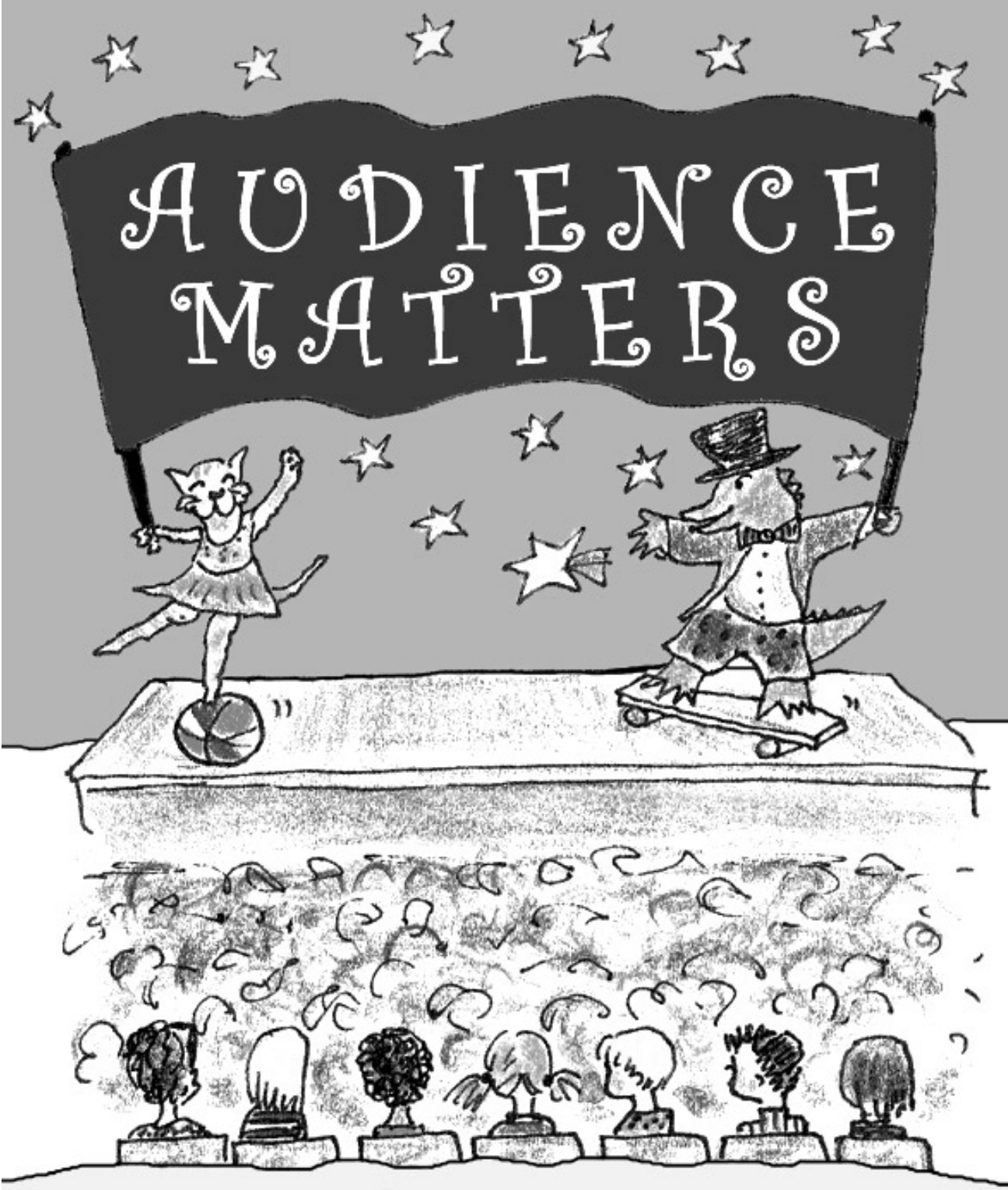
AUDIENCE MATTERS



by Leslie Hunt & Charlotte Agell

MAINE ARTS COMMISSION
40 years of building Maine communities through the arts

About this publication

Preliminary research for this booklet was conducted by the Arts in Education staff and interns at the Maine Arts Commission. Thanks to the following for sharing their experience and ideas on audience behavior: Portland Symphony Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Actors Theater of Maine, arts education professionals across the United States, and Maine artists.

This publication is funded, in part, through the Maine Arts Commission with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Maine State Legislature. *Audience Matters* was originally published by Arts are Elementary and now reformatted and available on MaineArts.*com*, where it can be viewed, downloaded and printed.

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Available in large print. Large Print

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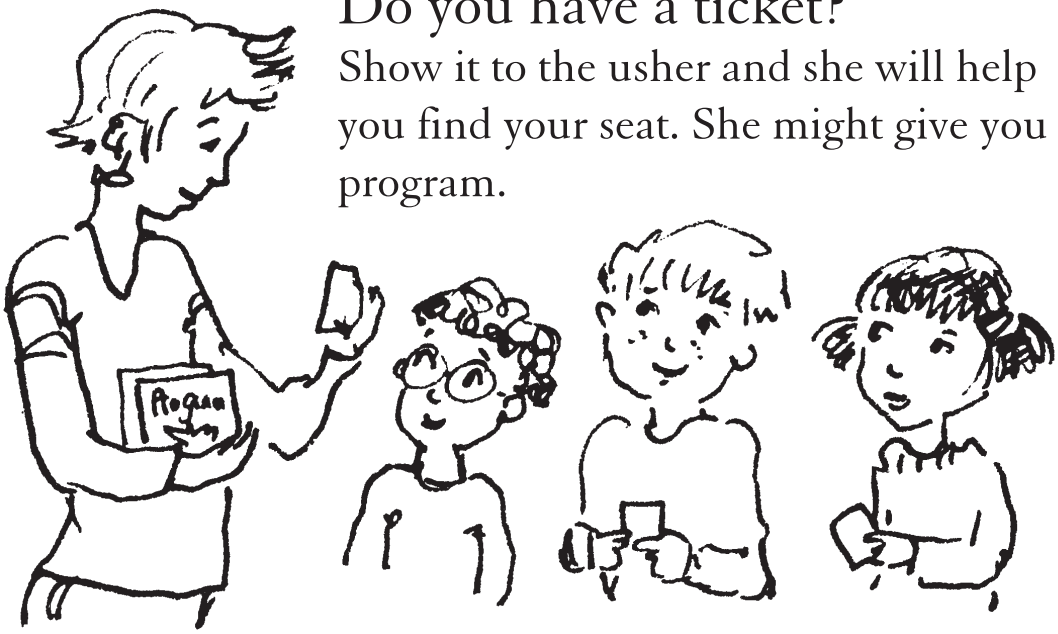
Donna McNeal, Robin Mello and Dean Stein.

Thank you.

Welcome to the show!

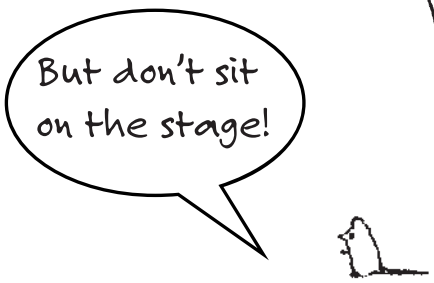
Do you have a ticket?

Show it to the usher and she will help you find your seat. She might give you a program.

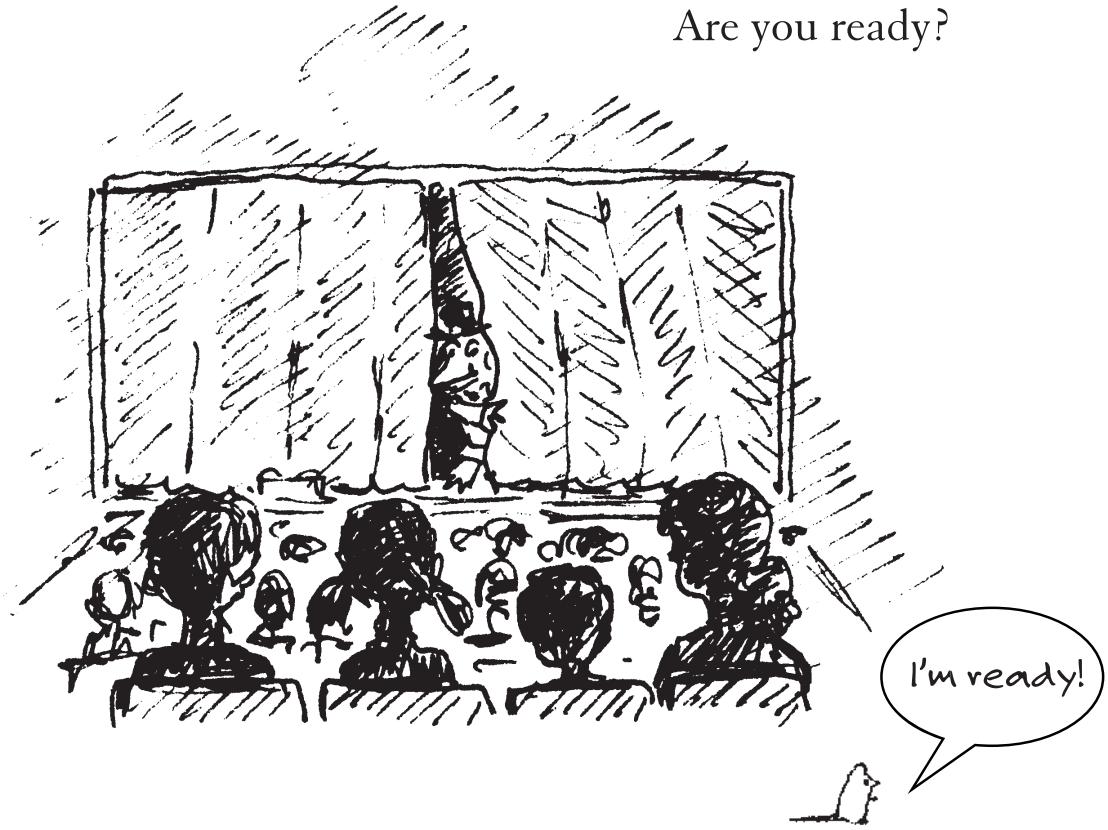


Sometimes, there are no tickets and you can sit anywhere.

(Almost.)



When the room gets darker, the show is about to begin.
Are you ready?

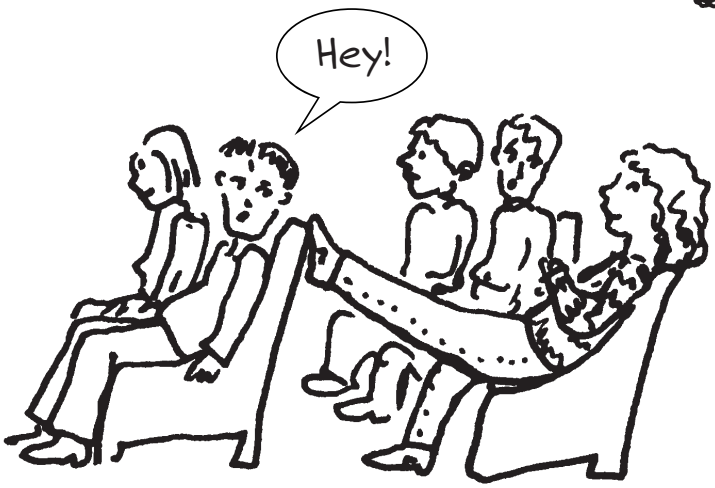


Sometimes, the audience will be **BIG** and the space you have to yourself is . . .

. . . very **small.**

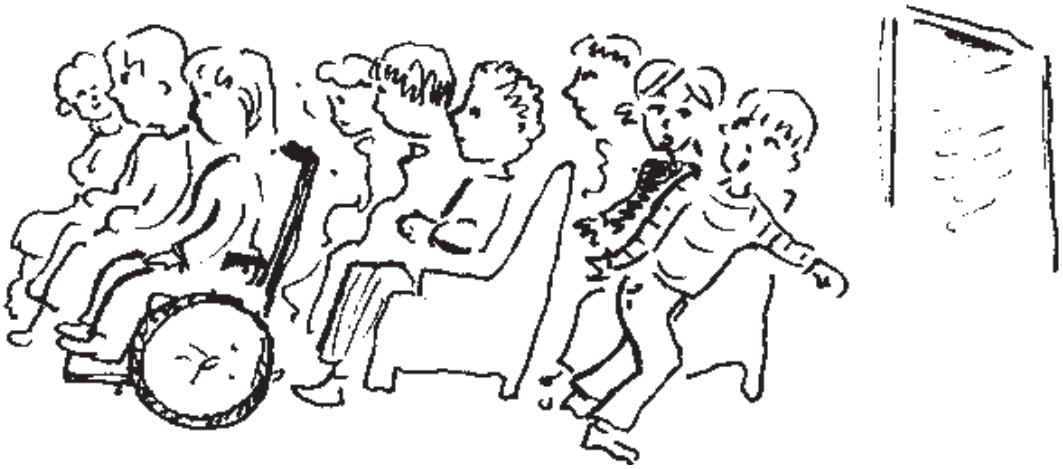
Then, it is a good idea not to move or talk much at all.

Try to keep your **Wiggles** to yourself.

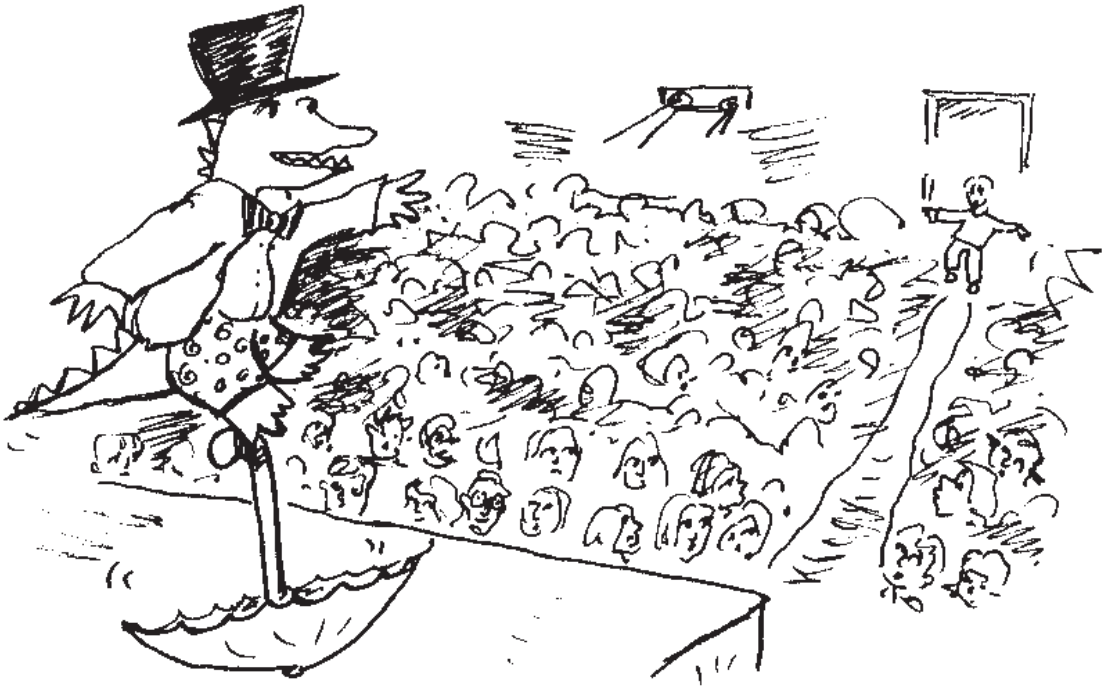


Don't put your feet or knees on the seat in front of you.

It's okay if you're sitting on the edge of your seat – just don't bounce it!



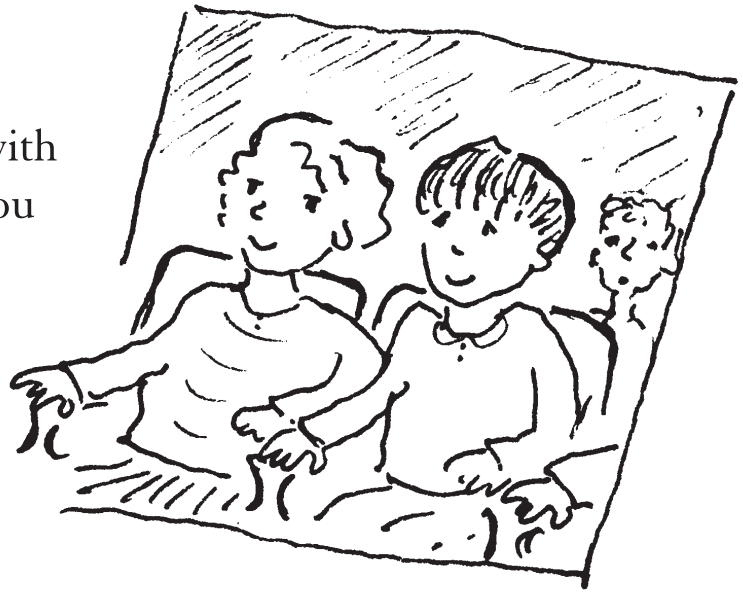
If you have to leave your seat, pass quietly.



Remember to close doors and move seats quietly too.

Take off your hat so
the person behind you
can see you!

Share the armrest with
the person beside you
(please).



If you need to talk,
you can *whisper*.
Shhh... quietly please.

What does an audience do?
An audience is there to have fun.

And to listen.

You can talk back to the TV, but **not** to the people on a stage!

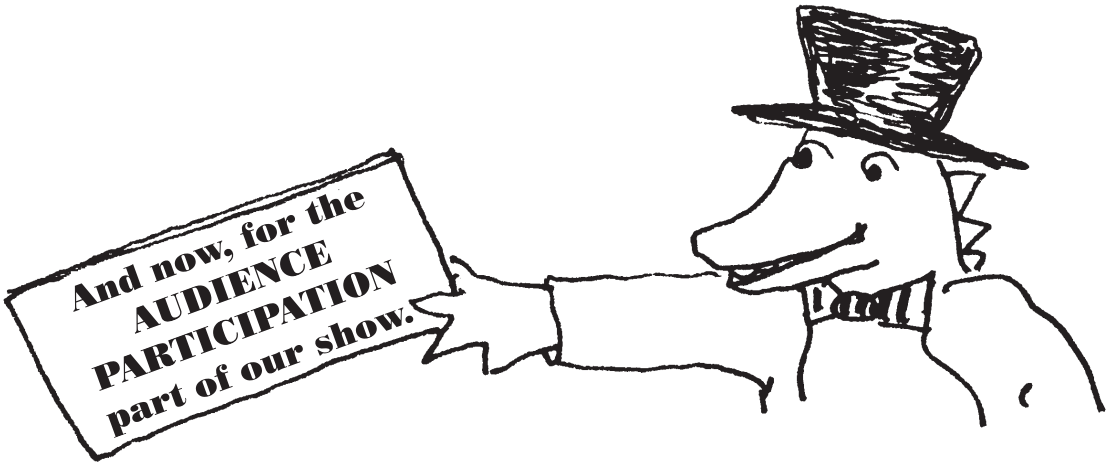
UNLESS, they ask you a question. If you can hear the performers they can hear you!

Raise your hand. Don't yell (you're not at a soccer game, you know!)

Does the music make you feel like dancing?

The musician might invite you to!

Even if she doesn't,
maybe you can still
move around a little.



AND

If you are asked to CLAP or SHOUT or SING ALONG...
don't just sit there...

CLAP!

SHOUT!

SING!

Remember, musicians need to be able to hear each other, too!

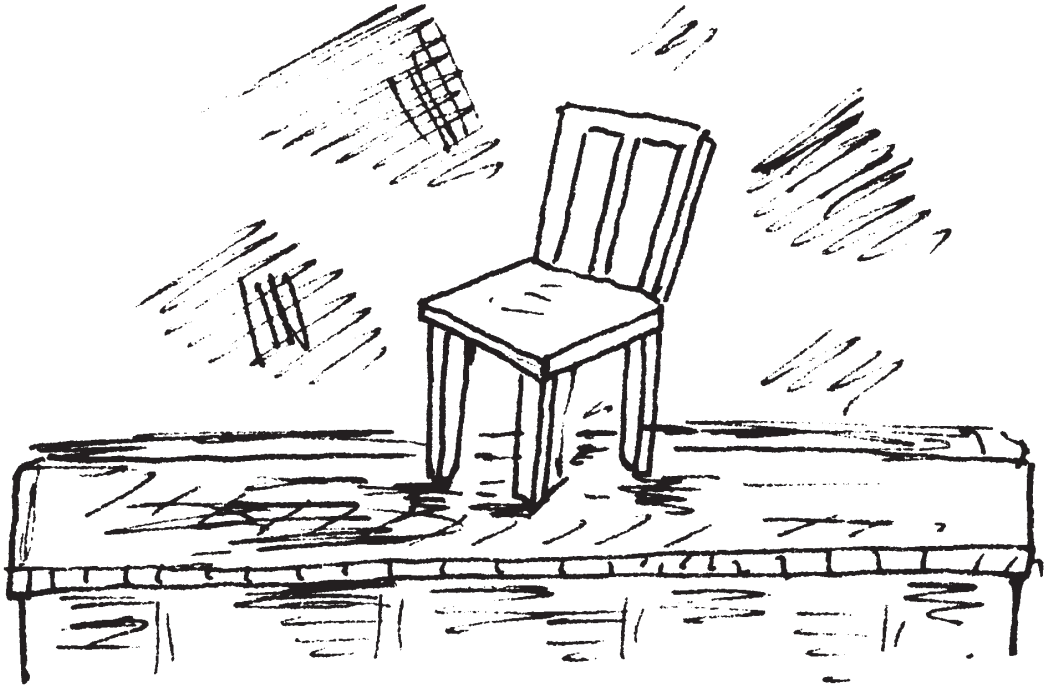
Clap only at the end of a song, even if its music without words.

The person on the stage will let you know when you can stop.

Sometimes, the performers will need your help.
They might even ask you to come up to the stage.

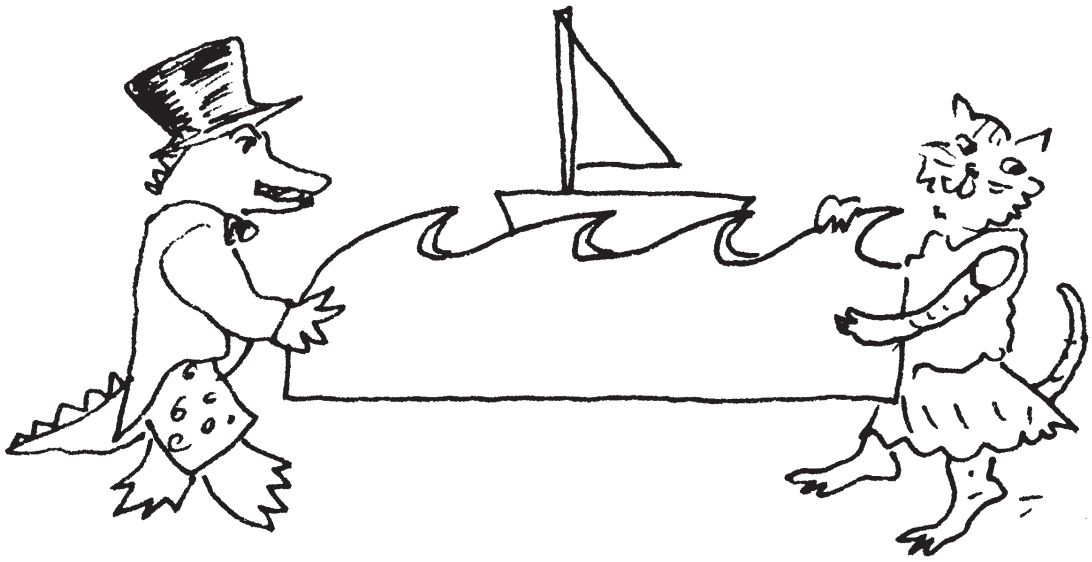
HOLD ON!
Only go up on stage if you are invited.

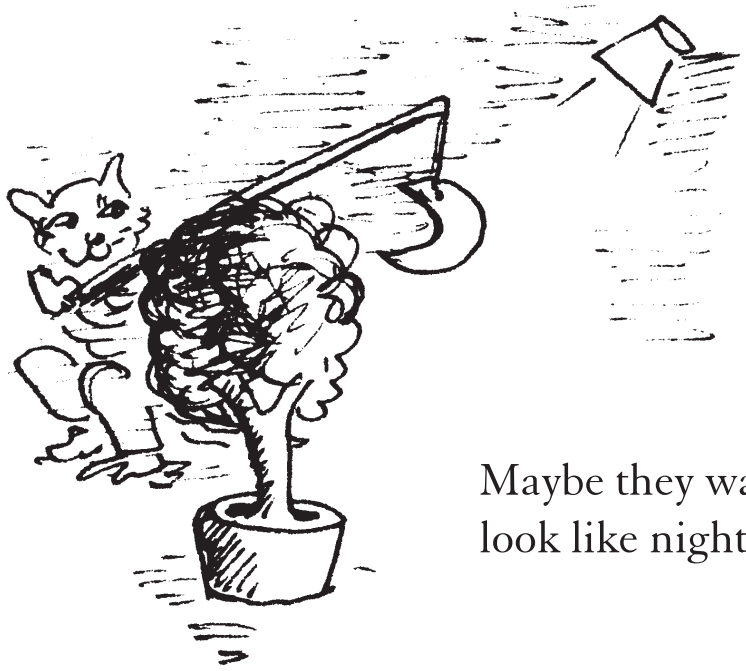
What if the stage suddenly gets **DARK**? or *quiet*?



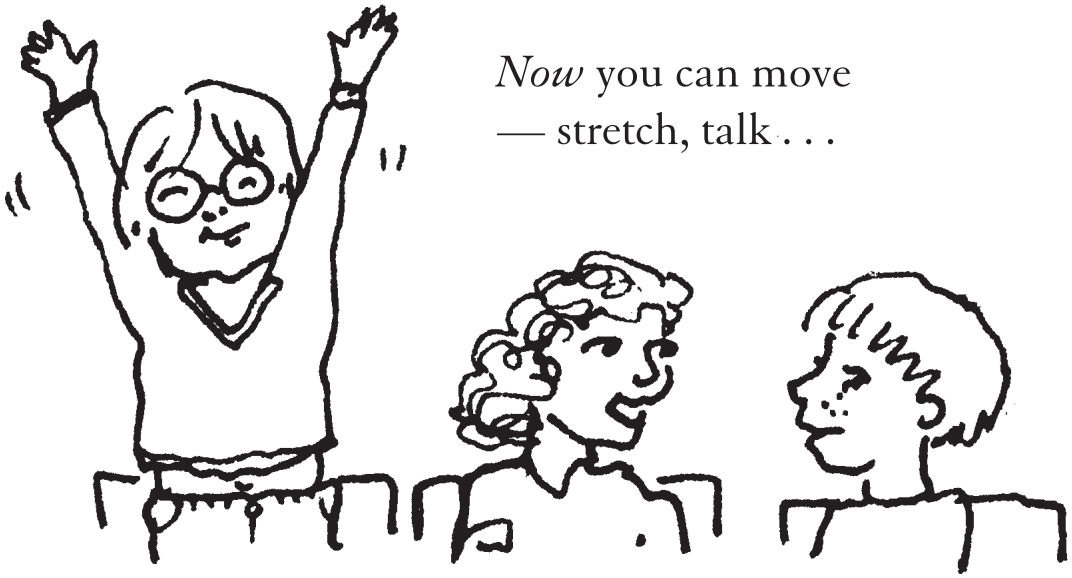
This is a part of the show . . .
watch and wait to see what happens next.

They might be changing a scene.



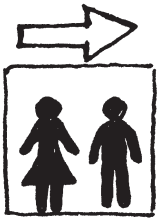


Maybe they want it to look like night.



Now you can move
— stretch, talk . . .

Get refreshments . . .



Find the bathroom.

BUT running,
pushing and talking
loudly is NEVER
allowed!

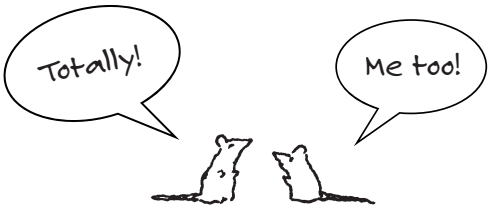
At the end of intermission,
the lights blink.

This is a special signal.

Quick! Finish that cookie
and find your seat!

When the show is all over, the lights go back on.
Everyone is clapping. Sometimes they stand up to clap.
This is a signal to the performers.
It means that the audience REALLY liked coming.

Did you?



Thank you!

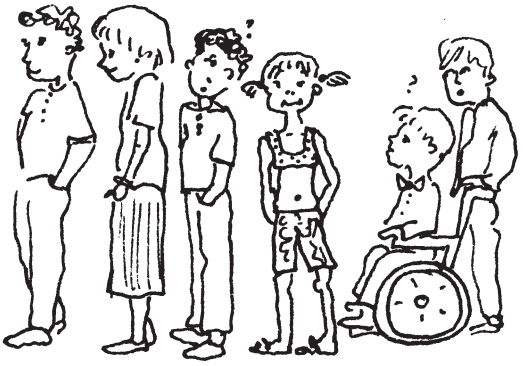
THE END.

Arrive early and find a seat before the event begins.

No food or drinks are allowed in theatres and concert halls. Not even in the cafeteria when a show is going on!

Cameras are not allowed either, most of the time. You can ask to take a picture of one of the performers after the show is over.

If the music or play will be performed in a formal concert hall or stage, formal dress is best! "Formal" means "fancy." Maybe you shouldn't wear those old sneakers. And no bathing suits at the ballet.



When you leave the event, use the same manners you did when you were sitting down. Watch out for other people, keep your voice down, and don't go running out the door.