

## Choosing a Scene

- **Pick something that suits you – and be realistic about it.**
  - Know your age range. Again, be realistic about this and remember "age appropriate" is what you read as, not necessarily what you are.
  - What is your archetype? Are you the girl-next-door, the jock, the nerd?
  - Play to your strengths. Are you great at comedy? Can you cry on cue?
    - *But for this, it's great to experiment.*
- **Choose pieces that...**
  - have a clear arc. Don't choose pieces that are one note.
  - that are active. Casting Director Meryl Shaw says, "Look for pieces where the action is going on right now, right here, and where the character has something at stake. Pieces where your character wants something from the scene partner, or is having an in-the-moment discovery are the most dynamic."
  - shift in emotion. The most interesting scenes to watch are the ones with changes in emotion. This will make it more compelling to watch and will show more of what you are capable of as an actor.
  - stand on their own. The scene should essentially be a "mini-play." If the text is impossible to follow without having read the entire book, it won't make sense to the audience.
  - exist in the present. The most dynamic scenes are those where the character has a strong need for something right now, as opposed to reliving a memory.
  - has listening opportunities. Sometimes the most interesting moments are the ones where an actor won't speak at all; where they just react to what is happening and are genuinely connected.
- **Choose a strong character.** Choose feisty, strong roles. Survivors not victims – these are the characters people prefer to watch. People lose interest if the characters are just whining.
- **Keep it short.** People generally make their minds up in the first few seconds anyway. Keep them wanting more.
- **Avoid iconic scenes where possible.** They will have been seen a million times and people won't be able to help themselves but to compare you to the actor who performed the original.
- **No graphic violence, sex, or offensive language.** This is middle school.