



10 Tips for a Successful Assembly

You should get the best results for the money and class time you spend for a professional assembly presentation. Based on over 2000 performances that [Shows That Teach](#) has done at schools since 1999, we respectfully offer the following suggestions to attain the best assembly experience for your students and teachers.

1. **CONFIRMATION:** Our company has a policy to call either the school office or the assembly coordinator to confirm the date, time, etc. Since not all companies may do this, we recommend that if you don't hear from the assembly presenters a few days before the assembly date, that you call them to confirm the time and date. Additionally, immediately after you schedule an assembly verify that it is indeed correctly listed on your school calendar.
2. **STAGE:** Often the custodian does not get the memo about the upcoming assembly performance. It is not uncommon for performers to arrive to find the stage or performing area is being used as a storage area. Find out if the performers need a stage and what the minimum performing space required. Please contact your custodian for verification. Our performers always bring their own sound system (for quality and dependability reasons) but for other companies ask if they need a P.A.
3. **LIGHTING:** The importance of properly lighting assembly performers is often overlooked. Surprisingly, the stage is occasionally the darkest spot in the auditorium or MPR. Because assembly performers are so visual (at least ours are) we have observed a noticeably better response from the audience at schools where the stage or performing area is well lit. There are often two problems: 1. Existing lights are not actually pointed in the direction of where the performers will stand (sometimes at their feet) and/or; 2. Bulbs are burnt out. We recommend that you ask your custodian to aim lights and replace bulbs as needed.
4. **AUDIENCE PROXIMITY:** An assembly performance – just as talking with an individual – is communication. And just as communication with an individual works best when you are in close physical proximity to the other person, similarly, assembly performers should be near an audience. Unfortunately, some schools seat the front row of students 25 feet or more away the front of the stage, which doesn't make for good communication. We recommend that your students be seated as near to the performers as safely and comfortably as possible.
5. **SEATING GRADES:** We understand that schools typically prefer to seat the students, youngest nearest to the stage and the oldest the furthest from the stage. We challenge you to try something a little different. Since Kindergarten students are new at being an audience and may not know how to react, and in some cases may even become a bit overwhelmed by some assemblies (not ours); and since the older grades (especially sixth grade) may tend to be emotionally detached from an assembly (because they are "too cool"), try seating the older grades in the front rows on one side of the center aisle

and the Kinder students in the front rows on the other side of the aisle, and the middle grades in the back of them. Or alternatively, place the kindergarten in the entire second row. This may seem counterintuitive, but we suggest that you try it. Be sure to tell the older grades that the kinder kids are watching them to see how they are supposed to react with audience manners such as attention, applause and so forth.

6. **INTRODUCTION:** We find that when a principal introduces the assembly, it bestows a level of respect to the assembly program, of which the students, teachers and the performers notice. To create a sense of community for an all-school-event such as this, we recommend that the principal introduce each performance. If the principal is not available ask a teacher to introduce the assembly.
7. **AUDIENCE MANNERS:** We notice that usually a principal will remind their students about appropriate audience behavior. Audience behavior is actually part of the Calif. Dept. of Ed. Curriculum Standards. That speech can be as simple as, “I want to remind you to be a good audience for our guests. A good audience gives the performers their complete attention. The performers also appreciate it when you applaud. Speaking of which, let’s welcome them now with a big round of applause!” Experienced assembly performers will know how to manage an audience from that point.
8. **TEACHERS’ ATTENTION:** The following is a sensitive subject to some teachers and assembly performers alike. Often teachers choose to use assembly time to grade papers. We understand it. Their free time is limited. However, teachers who chat with other teachers during a performance send the signal to the students and the performers that, “This presentation is not worth my attention.” Regardless, our performers consider it a challenge to humbly earn the teachers’ attention with an engaging assembly. But we thought you may want to know that some assembly presenters find teacher inattention offensive.
9. **TIME & MONEY SPENT:** How does an assembly coordinator select a program that is worthy of the expenditure of money and the time away from the classroom? Most assembly companies say (and believe) that their presentation is interesting and curriculum based. However, we suggest that you ask for references and/or contact various principals and teachers you know to get their recommendations. Likewise, you will be doing a good service to other schools if *you* recommend outstanding assembly programs.
10. **DISCOUNTS:** Like most quality assembly companies, we do not discount our prices. We are priced fairly for the talent and experience of our performers. However, we sometimes do make a discount exception if your school is willing to be flexible with your date and time. For example, if our performers are in your town at another school in the morning, we would love to save travel time by performing at your school on that same day in the afternoon.

Our mission is to inspire students and teachers. We appreciate your help in achieving this goal.