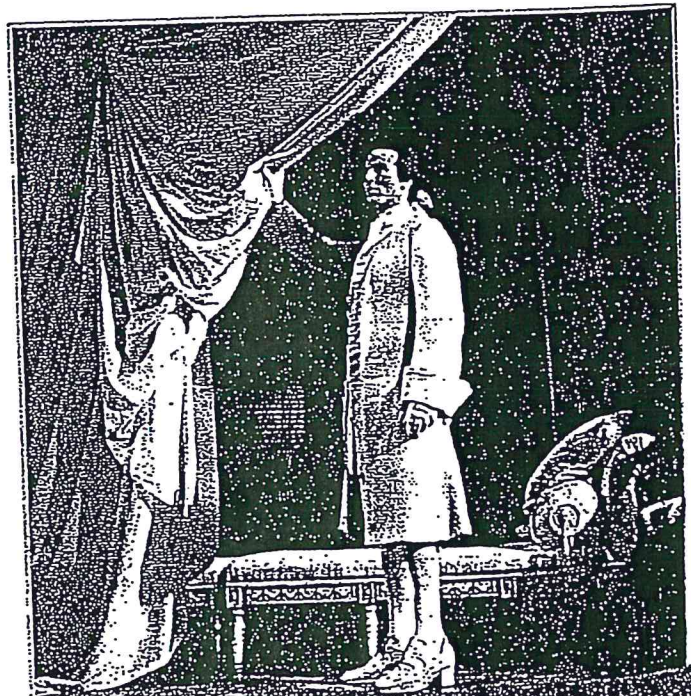


DISTRIBUTION

The most effective lighting considers the natural light sources on the set—the sun or moon, a streetlight, lamps, fireplaces, televisions, candles, or lanterns. To avoid a pasteboard-figure effect, designers usually pair spotlights. One uses warm colors and comes from the same side of the stage as the sources of natural light. The other comes from the opposite direction, the direction of diffused or reflected light, and uses cool colors. Each spotlight is aimed in and down at a forty-five-degree angle toward the area to be lighted (see illustration on page 454). This results in the most dramatic effect of highlight and shadow. Designers usually avoid straight-on lighting from centrally located instruments because it serves as a general wash. (A wash eliminates shadows and brings a strength of light to the central acting area.) Instead, spotlights used for the wash are best located on the balcony or on the sides of the auditorium and aimed diagonally across the stage.

The most important acting areas need the most light. Bringing a greater quantity of light into a given acting area makes the actor playing in that area stand out. In any lighting plan there is always key light, the strongest light aimed at each acting area, and fill light, light that fills in the shadows. Sidelighting from upstage of the tormentor, using a different color from the front lighting, can help model actors' features and accent costumes. It also adds a touch of life to the production. Backlighting comes from above and behind the actor, setting the performer off from the background. The lighting designer may help shift the focus of attention back and forth with the smooth flow of light from one actor or area to another throughout the play.

For this scene from *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, key light emphasizes the character, while fill light points up the chaise longue behind him.



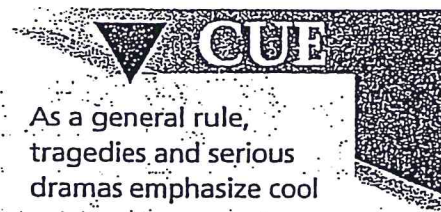
COLOR

The effect of light on color is difficult to predict accurately because of the relationship between light, pigments, and dyes. Some generalizations, however, can be made:

red light on red	= red
red light on blue	= violet
red light on green	= gray
red light on yellow	= orange
red light on purple	= red
blue light on red	= violet-black
blue light on blue	= blue
blue light on green	= blue-green
blue light on yellow	= green
blue light on orange	= brown
amber light on red	= brown
amber light on blue	= greenish-orange
amber light on green	= greenish-orange
amber light on violet	= red
green light on red	= black
green light on green	= green
yellow light on blue	= blue-green
yellow light on green	= green
yellow light on violet	= brown

The only way to produce green light is by using green color media. The delicate colors are the most preferred gelatins in use today. No-color pink, flesh pink, straws, and ambers—especially bastard amber, a light scarlet—are some of the warm colors used. And special lavender, surprise pink, no-color blue, and medium and day-light blue are some of the best cool color gelatins. Sometimes designers use frost and chocolate for special effects. Green-blue makes a better night scene than blues or violets. Many lighting designers prefer white light from an ungelled instrument as a cool light source.

Curtains, costumes, and furnishings are affected by light. Smooth, shiny fabrics reveal light and shadows. Heavy, coarse materials, no matter how inexpensive, absorb much light and often appear quite expensive to the audience; outing flannel can look like expensive velour. The important consideration is the brilliance of the color of the material and the color of the stage lighting for the scene in which the material is to be used. Patterns and prints cause many problems, as do several colors in the same costume. Lighting period plays is always difficult, for the mixture of lace, silk, velvet, wigs, and makeup is a lighting technician's nightmare.



As a general rule, tragedies and serious dramas emphasize cool colors, whereas comedies stress warm colors.



Choosing the correct color for lighting can add an extra dimension to a play. For example, red light might make a character seem powerful, or blue light might convey a sense of peace. The difficulty is that the color of the light reacts with the color of the object on which it is focused. Use the information on pages 453–457 of your textbook to answer the following questions.

A. In the sentences below, fill in the blanks with the correct colors.

1. Shining a blue light on a green pond will produce water that looks _____.
2. In a graveyard scene, shining _____ light on a _____ costume will produce a violet-black effect.
3. Amber light on _____ or _____ produces a greenish-orange effect.
4. If you wish to give the effect of sundown, pairing a _____ light with a _____ set will result in orange.
5. What color light will turn colorful fabrics into a drab brown? _____
6. Night scenes can be difficult to light because under a green-blue light costumes and makeup tend to turn this color. _____
7. This type of fabric tends to reveal light and shadows. _____
8. If you want a fabric that will look expensive, use one that will absorb light. A good choice is this type of fabric. _____

B. Next, read the following paragraph and on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions that follow. Be sure to explain your choices.

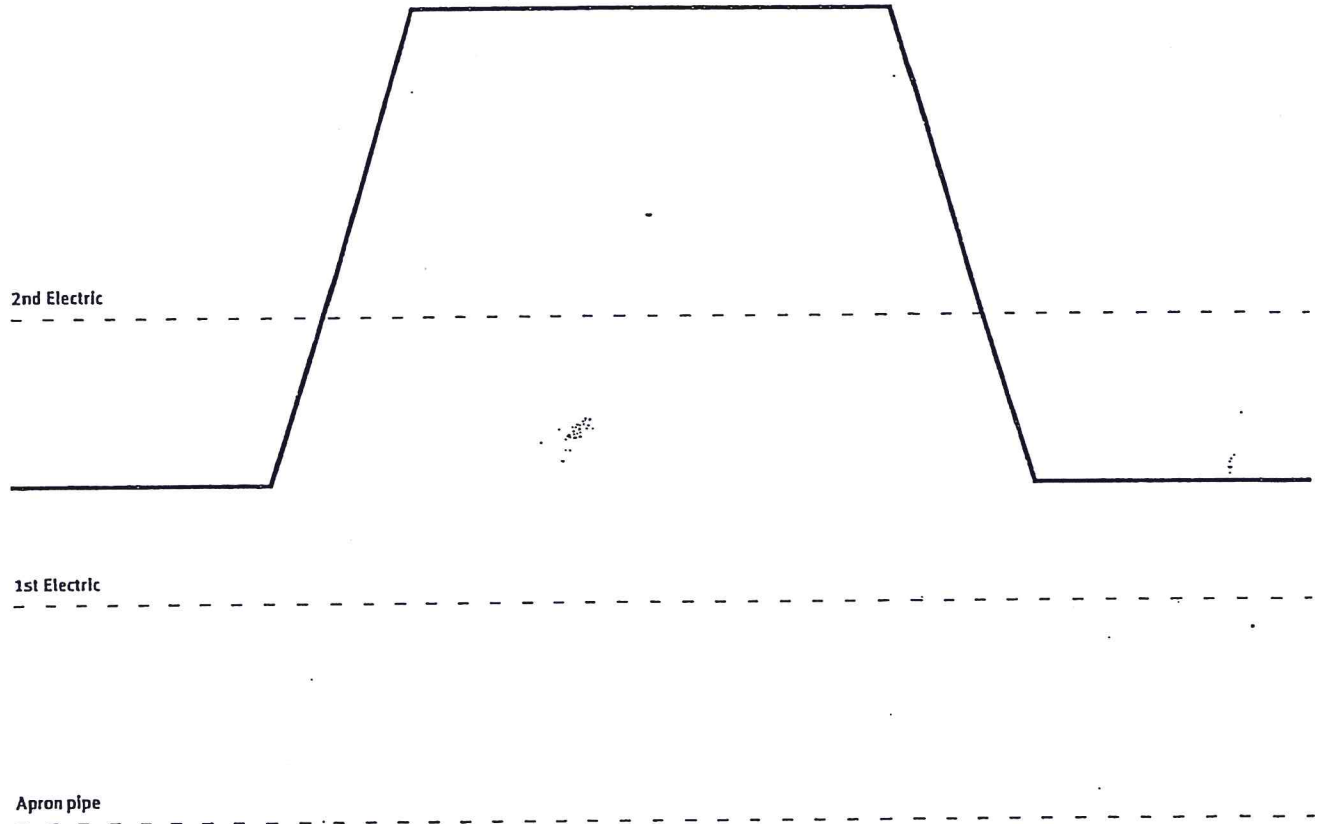
It is noon on a hot, oppressive Saturday in June in the inner city. Three teens sit beneath an oak tree, which is the only tree in sight; a row of drab apartments is behind them. They have spent the day job-hunting without success. Disappointment and dissatisfaction are the emotions that move the scene.

What color lighting would you use on the tree and the area that surrounds it? What color would you make the apartments, and what color would you use to light them? Finally, what color would you make the three costumes?

Lighting Plot

Use the diagram below to practice creating lighting plots for productions designed for proscenium stages. To create your plot, first identify the acting areas on the stage so you can angle lights into those areas. Add information regarding the location of electrical circuits and existing lights. Then

add the lighting instruments and information about each according to your design. After completing your plot, record the information on an instrument schedule. See pages 230–231 of the student text for an example of a lighting plot and its instrument schedule.



6" Fresnel



6" Fresnel with barndoor



8" Fresnel



6 x 9 ERS



6 x 12 ERS



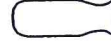
6 x 16 ERS



Strip lights



Floodlight



Followspot



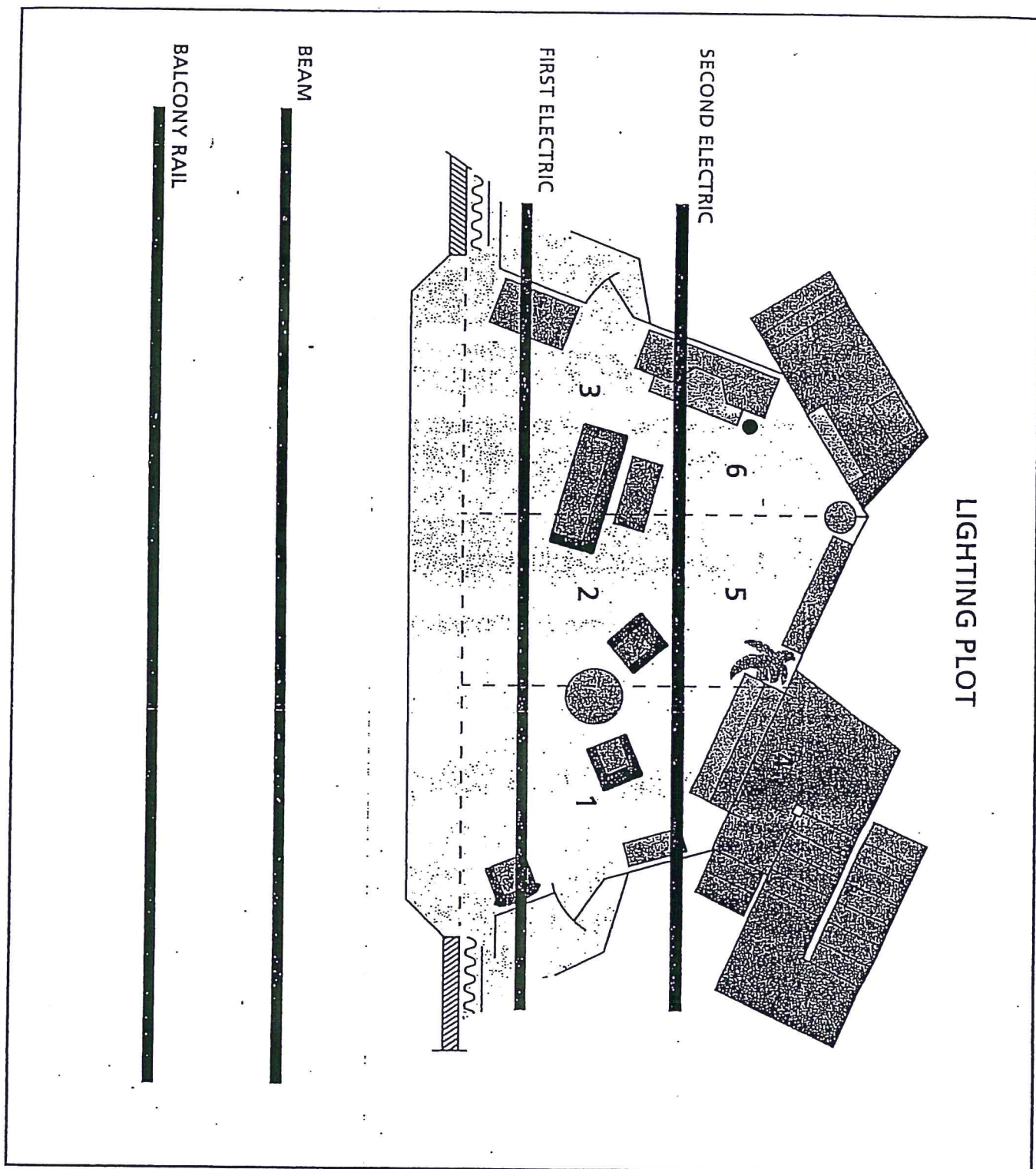
Circuit number



Dimmer (Channel)



Use this diagram to plan the lighting for a play of your choice or for the play used on page 52.



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