

**Stage Terminology Reading Prompt**  
**15 pts.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I went to this play last night—it was in what they call a “black box theatre—I guess because if you took everything out of it, there would be just this, square, black room. Anyway, this play I went to, *Same Time Next Year*, was set up really differently. See, last time I saw a play there, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, it was set up like a proscenium stage—you know with the audience on one side and the act curtain separating the acting area from the house where the audience sat. Oh, and the seats were really neat, too. They were called telescopic seats and pulled out of the wall sort of like bleachers in a gym only the seats had backs to the, and were padded and stuff. But like I said, this play I went to last night, the stage was set up in a whole different way. It was an arena stage—some people call it theatre in the round. First of all, they had pushed the telescope seats back up against the wall. Then they brought in a bunch of risers. Each riser was a little higher than the one in front of it so everyone could see, and there were risers on all four sides. It was really cool. The actors had four different places they could enter and exit from. This particular play just used three of them—one for the exit to the outside, one to a bedroom and another to a kitchen. The only area you actually saw that the actors performed on was the living room. Another thing I noticed was that there weren’t any really tall set pieces like bookcases or dressers because you couldn’t really have them, you know because some people wouldn’t be able to see the actors. And, sometimes the actors had their backs to you but not all that often. They found reasons to keep changing positions so that everyone in the audience could see their faces most of the time. The thing I liked the best about it, was that it was really intimate—I mean, the actors were so close. It was like there were four imaginary fourth walls. You know, I just realized that the play must look different from each side. I guess I’ll have to go back three more times to get the full experience.

Another name for theatre in the round is:

- A. Proscenium Stage    B. Black Box Theatre    C. Fourth Wall Theatre    D. Arena Stage

The area of the theatre where the audience sits is called the:

- A. Arena    B. House    C. Telescope Seats    D. Risers

The proscenium stage has the audience on this many sides:

- A. One    B. Two    C. Three    D. Four

Another example of a set piece would be:

- A. Clock    B. Door    C. Couch    D. Purse

Which of the following is **not** a characteristic of an arena stage

- A. At times actors may have their backs to the audience
- B. Entrances and exits are between sections of the risers
- C. Large set pieces are frequently used
- D. The audience sits on all four sides

Write a short paragraph in which you discuss at least **three** differences between a proscenium and an arena theatre. (Please write on back of this page.)