

PEARLS

A pearl (adopted from the term, “pearl of wisdom”) is a succinct, yet insightful, idea, exploration, or question. You’ll be writing pearls throughout the year on a variety of topics and/or productions.

Each pearl should be:

- A paragraph in length, OR approximately 200 – 300 words per pearl.
- Labeled w/ a number if multiple pearls are assigned. I.e. 1) 2) or 3)
- Single-spaced w/ ONE double space in between paragraphs.
- Times New Roman, 12 pt. font
- 1 inch margins on either side of the text

There are **THREE** types of pearls:

1) The A-HA!

A lightning bolt strikes and you realize something about theatre or art that you didn’t know before this moment! Awesome! You are finally able to articulate an idea, thought, or notion about your craft. Something now makes sense that perhaps didn’t before OR something strikes you that you hadn’t even considered before. This is where you can flesh it out, so it really sticks and makes a permanent impact. Describe this new light bulb idea in great detail. Take time with it. Make an initial a-ha statement and then dig deeper. Ask yourself why you were so struck and be specific! Keep digging deeper, asking why, and not settling for generalizations; rather, genuinely flesh out or unpack your original A-HA! Keep making personal connections. If you keep digging, you’ll eventually strike gold. Also, don’t do it for me, do it for you. Figure out what makes you go “wow, ooh, ahh!” Figure out what makes you feel excited about art and lucky to be able to do it. These are your a-ha moments. I also want to point out that this paragraph is approximately 200 words long which is the minimum length a good, juicy pearl needs to be. So, use this as a guide. Can you write more than this? Sure, but just a little bit more. It’s important to learn how to be succinct and direct and to really say what you want to say vs. just rambling aimlessly. Get to the point and do it intelligently and articulately!

2) The HMMM...

Something piques your interest or stops you in your tracks. Maybe you squint your eyes or tilt your head. You may be hit with a germ of an idea but still feel fuzzy on the details. You need to think more on the matter. Perhaps, you are drawn to something but not totally sure why. You may have questions or reservations about what you saw or read, or have contradictory thoughts or feelings. Some things are clear, but other things may not be. This is where you can really explore your thoughts and feelings. Ask a question and try to come up with the answer. If it doesn’t come immediately (which is normal), keep digging; keep asking, “why?” This is a space to live in the questions. You don’t necessarily have to come to any sort of conclusion – you can leave the answer open-ended—but you should be further along in your understanding of the concept after this exploratory pearl.

3) The HUH?!

You completely disagree with this artistic choice! How could this possibly be right, okay, or artful?! You are supremely bothered, outraged even, by what you have seen or read, and you need to vent. Here is the place to do it BUT to do so productively! Be honest about what you didn't like, but be SPECIFIC. What exactly didn't you like, and why? It's not enough just to say, "I didn't get it," or "I hated it." Get specific about your confusion or hatred. What exactly rubbed you the wrong way? Was it this, that, or the other thing? We can learn as much from seeing the flaws as we can by seeing the triumphs – sometimes, even more. Generalizations are generally unproductive. Ask why, and then keep asking why. You'll likely learn something new about yourself as an artist and your own point of view. You'll also become clearer about the artistic choices you're critiquing and why these choices were made.