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undercut -- to speak with a softer tone and lower pitch than the previous line

underplay -- to use a softer tone, less energy, and a more casual manner than previously

understudy -- performer in the show who studies another role and is prepared to substitute in case of emergency

unities -- restrictions set by Aristotle that a play should take place in one day, at one place and with a single plot line

unit set -- uses flats, screens, curtains, platforms, and stairs that can be rearranged to change locales

universal theme -- a theme or message in a play understood by all men at all times

up-left center -- that part of the playing area farthest from the audience and just left of center as you face the audience (the actor's left)

uplight -- light that comes from underneath a performer, either from footlights or through a grated or Plexiglas stage floor

upstage -- area on the stage area farthest away from the audience. The term dates back to the days when the stage was raked away from the audience so that actors had to literally walk upstage

upstaging -- to cross deliberately to a place upstage of another actor and assume a full front or one-quarter position, thereby forcing the other performer to turn to a three-quarter position in order to talk with them; also an actor or character who deliberately tries take the audience's attention away from the main action onstage