

ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE *for* ACTORS

A Practical Course

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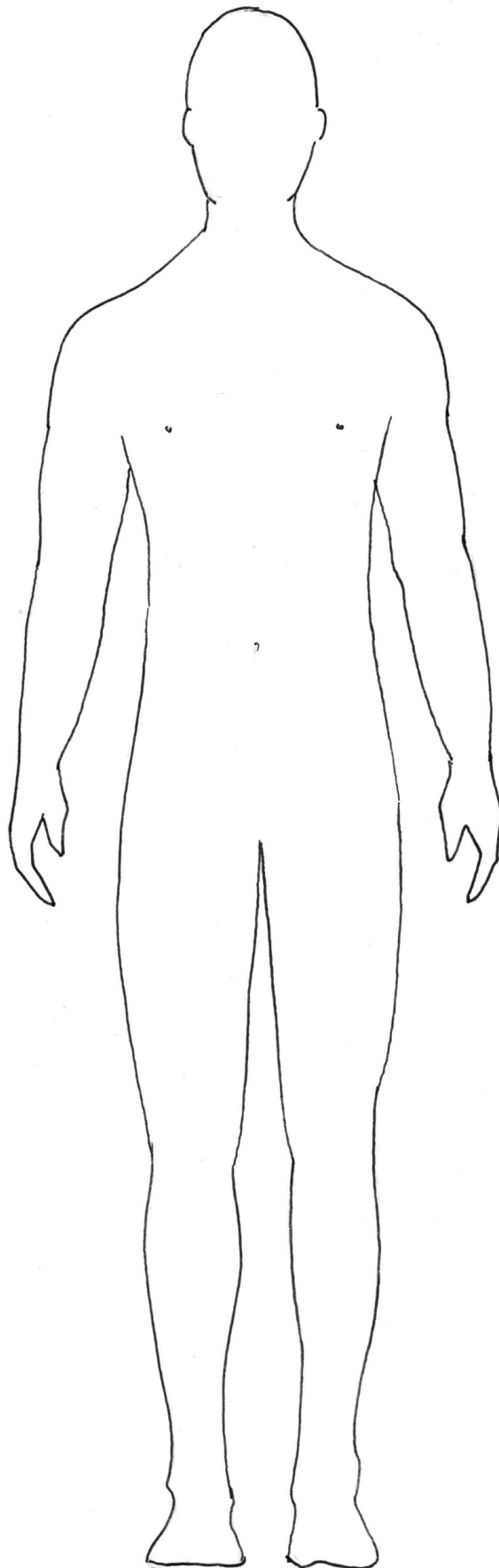
Alexander Technique for Actors: A Practical Course first published in 2021 by Nick Hern Books Limited, The Glasshouse, 49a Goldhawk Road, London W12 8QP

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Where are the Lungs, Trachea and Diaphragm?

See page 192.



The Quiz

See pages 257–8.

1. The head weighs three, five or eight kilos?
2. The atlanto-occipital joint is where the skull meets the spine: true or false?
3. Is the greatest rotation of the spine at the lumbar, thoracic or cervical area?
4. Is the supporting area in the spine at the front or the back?
5. The spine meets the pelvis at the sacroiliac joint: true or false?
6. We sit better on a chair when using the pelvis or the coccyx?
7. If the first joints of the upper limb are in the fingers, where is the last joint?
8. If the fingers are the beginning of the upper limb, where is the end?
9. If you are six feet tall, what is your wingspan?
10. Do the collarbones sit higher or lower than the shoulder blades?
11. Is the shoulder joint at the back and side of the top of the upper arm, or somewhere near the front of the armpit?
12. How many bones are there in the foot?
13. Are the hip joints where the legs meet the pelvis in the groin area, or at the top of the pelvis?
14. The waist joint is between the ribs and the pelvis: true or false?
15. Do the lungs start above or below the collarbones?
16. The diaphragm is attached to the ribs, the tip of the breastbone and the _ P _ _ _ .
17. The ribs are jointed to the spine and hang downwards from there: true or false?
18. Does the heart rise or fall as we sing?

Look up the answers in Appendix D on page 283 – and award yourself eighteen out of eighteen!

The Moon Like a Bone in the Sky: A Happening

See pages 279–82.

The following instructions are for twelve people but the piece can be adapted for five or fewer. The first five instructions are the most important. I suggest you print these instructions, cut them up and dish out one instruction per person. It is like receiving a secret message! It is more exciting and in the moment if the actors don't compare notes or know who else is saying what or when. This exercise takes five minutes.

1. Stand in the centre of the space, looking at the clock or your watch. Look occasionally at the action going on around you. Call out the minutes, one to five, as the time goes by.
2. Sit on a chair looking at the sky. Every time the minutes are called out, stand up and point to the sky and exclaim: 'The Moon!' Hear the response: 'Like a bone in the sky', and look to and reply to that person: 'You're shivering'. When someone stops sobbing, sit down again. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Do as before but this time, when someone stops sobbing, keep standing instead of sitting.
3. Lie down. Whenever you hear the line 'You're shivering', wait for a beat, then turn over into a foetal shape and sob so that all can hear for a count of five. Then stop and turn back.
4. Stand shivering, occasionally rubbing your arms, waiting for someone to find you. Sometimes you can hum. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone stops sobbing, then move to another space and continue shivering. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and, when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.
5. Place a chair and sit on it, looking slightly down at the floor. Every time you hear the minutes called out, look up. When someone says: 'The Moon', run to them, look where they are pointing and exclaim with wonder: 'Like a bone in the sky.' After their response, turn and kiss them on the forehead. When someone stops sobbing, run back and sit down as before. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then as before, but instead of running back to your chair, stay where you are.
6. Skip five steps. Stop: consider. Skip another five steps, perhaps in a different direction. From time to time you can sing 'Girls and Boys Come Out to Play' quietly. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone stops sobbing, then continue as before. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.

7. Choose someone to look at with malice. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone stops sobbing, then move to another space and choose another person to look at maliciously. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and, when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.
8. Choose someone to shadow, thinking of how much you love them. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone stops sobbing, then choose a different person to shadow. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.
9. Walk slowly round the perimeter of the space, taking everything in. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone finishes sobbing, then continue walking but round the other way. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and, when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.
10. Notice someone walking round the perimeter of the space. Walk the perimeter too, but in the opposite direction, head down. But when you pass each other, touch her/his arm and look longingly after her/him for a moment before returning to your own walking. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone finishes sobbing, then continue walking but round the other way. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and, when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.
11. Kneel on the floor. Slowly turn your head from side to side. Five times in the whole piece randomly make a high-pitched 'oooo' sound, lasting five seconds. Every time you hear the minutes called out, stop turning your head or making a sound. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone stops sobbing, then move to another space and continue. Repeat until the five minutes is called. Then stop and when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.
12. During the five minutes, whisper in the ear of each person: 'I love you.' Only once to each person. When someone says: 'The Moon', look up at the sky with wonder. Wait until someone stops sobbing, then move again. Stop when the five minutes is called and, when someone says: 'The Moon', keep looking up at the sky with wonder.