

WHAT TEENAGERS WANT FROM THEATRE

A GUIDE

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*A Guide by Teenagers
for Creative Professionals & Artists*

WHAT ARE TEEN KITCHEN TABLE MEETINGS?

This guide has been created using inspirational, unscripted quotations that teenagers spoke aloud during international TEEN Kitchen Table Meetings.



The 'TEEN Kitchen Table' format was developed as part of 'TEEN Ambassadors Across Europe', a project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union that aims to establish best practice audience development strategies in order to meaningfully engage with teenage audiences. The TEEN Kitchen Table Methodology is a reflection tool which is able to simultaneously engage Teenagers, Creative Professionals & Artists and Teachers in a unique and innovative way that stimulates a dialogue about Theatre and Culture. The TEEN Kitchen Table events see Teenagers, Programme Managers, and Creative Professionals & Artists coming together around a food-laden 'Kitchen Table' to debate. Indeed, during the project, diverse groups of Teenagers coming from across Europe moderated and lead

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discussions, related to Theatre, that they felt were particularly poignant. These TEEN Kitchen Table Meetings provided an opportunity for the Teenagers to share their thoughts and ideas on both national and international levels. For example, in one international session in Kristiansand (Norway), Teenagers discussed what it means for Teenage audiences to “Confront the Unknown” when they attend the theatre. You can find out more information about this methodology through our ‘TEEN Kitchen Table Methodology Toolkit’ which is available on the TEEN website.

N.B. An extended version of this document (titled “Quotes from the TEEN Kitchen Tables”) is available on the TEEN website.



„WHAT IS IMPORTANT

- **“Kids? They’re full humans!** They’re not soon-to-be-adults. They’re fully kids and we don’t have to push them to be great adults because they’re great as they are. They can make their own stuff that other kids will like [...] No one knows what kids will like but kids, youth and **teens have to make theatre or at least be a part of the process.**”
- **“The visual presentation** for me is one of the most important things of the show.”
- **“The topic and the name of the performance** is something I look for [when choosing a production to go and see].”



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- "The thing with theatre is you can't see into the future like you can with Netflix or the movies. You can't watch a trailer and know what it will be like. Or give up watching it five minutes in."
- "There's so much passion in the Performing Arts that's just going to waste because our state, our society just looks down on it."



- "There has to be **something between the Artists on stage and the public** not on stage, there has to be some spark between them, otherwise it's just looking, **there has to be feeling while looking.**"
- "Theatre is **all about emotions** and how to communicate emotions to the audience."
- "**Feeling Theatre together with the actors** and that's really cool and completely different to the movies."
- "Theatre gives you a **new perspective.**"
- "If you don't have the **energy** with the text, with the speech, then you lose the audience who doesn't speak that language."
- "We need Theatre as young adults all over the world. It's so important to have Arts and Culture brought to us and it makes things **easier to learn and to transform ourselves.**"



- "The main purpose of our life is to **discover new things.**"
- "I think the text is not so fundamental for a play."

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- “Theatre really shows the artist’s passion and soul. That’s what I look for in Theatre - something that is truly created with a vision and a soul.”
- “Some of the best Theatre has themes for children and adults and teens all at the same time.”
- “I think simple performances are the best performances. It all depends on how adults transmit emotions.”
- “Theatre is something that’s meant to leave an impression on you - you want to try and share that.”
- “Teenagers, we’re curious.”



TO UNDERSTAND

- “When we want Youth around the world to have an interest and participate in the Theatre, we need to give them these **little tools to make that world a little bit less scary.**”
- “It’s always interesting for young people to **get to know the actors after the performance.**”
- “We need **to preserve the unknown.**”
- “**We need it to be accessible** for everyone, not making something that’s ‘up-high’ – for the elite only or only for those who have been taken to the theatre as kids.”



TO AVOID

- “The worst type of Theatre is **pointless Theatre.**”
- “Pointless Theatre isn’t necessarily Theatre without a point, but pointless Theatre is when that passion or thought doesn’t reach the audience.”

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- "A lot of my friends have a **bad sense of Theatre because of their experiences of Theatre in schools.**"

FINAL THOUGHTS

- "The gap between children's Theatre and grownup's Theatre is hard because I think sometimes the **grownup can be confused about what is relevant for children to see.**"
- "A lot of **teenagers don't go to Theatre because they think they need to understand everything** about Theatre and they are nervous they don't know enough."
- "Providing accessible tickets allows us as teenagers to take a risk on going to see a show. You then get more into the Theatre world so you then become more willing to take risks. It's a fantastic gateway for young people."

