

ENRICHING YOUR ACTING PRACTICE

CHAPTER REVIEW

“Go to places where there are people that aren’t like you specifically, so that you can see who those people are. Look at how they dress. Look at how they carry themselves. Look at how they interact with each other. It’s a life of observance, so that you can pull something from somewhere.”

—Samuel L. Jackson

Nurturing a keen sense of curiosity about worlds and customs different from his own is a key component of Sam’s mastery of character.

Push yourself to explore cultures and customs that are different from your own. It will help you build a library of experiences to draw from and bring interesting characteristics into your performance. Read fiction and watch foreign films. Exploring stories set in worlds that you are unfamiliar with will enable you to expand your acting choices when the time comes to craft a new character. Go to the theater and watch how other actors perform.

Endeavor to learn from the best actors—what qualities make their performances great? Watch yourself onscreen, even if it makes you uncomfortable. Being an honest critic of your own work is a cornerstone of becoming an exceptional actor.

SUBCHAPTERS

- Actively Observe the World Around You
- Read Novels
- Learn From Doing Theater
- Analyze the Work of Other Actors
- Watch Yourself On-Screen

ASSIGNMENTS

- Find a place where you can observe people who have a different cultural background than your own. What physical and verbal qualities can you adapt for your character? Add these to your notebook of character references.
- Deepen your understanding of your character by finding and reading a novel that features a character similar to them in some way. Jot down biographical details in your reference notebook that you can use to strengthen your character.

