Name: _____ Date: _____

Zendaya and the Rules for Kids on Set

Reading level 8 (4th grade) · 666 words

On Sunday, November 7, 2010, a new show began on Disney Channel. It was called Shake It Up. Two best friends were its stars. Bella Thorne, who was 13, played one. Zendaya, who was 14, played the other. Here is a question to follow. In California, who makes sure a young actor still gets school and rest on a set?

In the show, Zendaya played Rocky Blue. Rocky and her friend get jobs as dancers on a teen dance show in Chicago. The show ran for three years, from November 2010 to November 2013. New scenes had to be filmed again and again. The actors had to be ready each time.

California has a rulebook for kids who work in TV and movies. Other states have their own rules, so this book tells only California's. First, a child needs a work permit. That is a paper that says yes. The child's side asks for one. So does the company that hires the child.

The rulebook also says a teacher must be on the set. This person is called a studio teacher. It is not just any grown-up. In California, it must be a real teacher with the right papers. A state office must approve the teacher, too. So a child actor's school comes with a real teacher.

How long can a kid work in one day? The rule depends on age. Take a child from age 9 up to 16. Zendaya was 14 when Shake It Up began. For a child from 9 up to 16, the most time at the place of work is nine hours. That counts it all: acting, waiting, lunch and school.

Inside those nine hours, the acting itself has a limit. The rule says no more than five hours of work. Five is less than nine. So the rest of the stay is for other things, such as school, waiting and rest.

One of those other things is school. On days when school is in session, the rule says at least three hours of school must happen at work. So a child actor does lessons and homework on the set, between scenes. That is why a set may have a desk and books.

The rulebook also adds a break. For this age, a child must get at least one hour of rest and recreation. Rest and recreation means time to eat, move and play. Older kids get a bit more room. A teen from 16 up to 18 may stay ten hours.

On May 8, 2014, Disney Channel ordered a second show with Zendaya. It was called K.C. Undercover. She would play K.C. Cooper, a math whiz who is training to be a spy. She would also be a co-producer. That means she helped make the show. The first episode aired on January 18, 2015.

The show was set to start work in Los Angeles in the summer of 2014. It used more than one camera at a time. Several cameras film a scene together, from different spots. One may show the wide view while another shows a face up close.

Then came the big screen. Zendaya played MJ in three Spider-Man films, in 2017, 2019 and 2021. Those films were shot in places such as Atlanta, London, Prague and New York. She played Chani in Dune in 2021. A tennis film called Challengers came out on April 26, 2024.

For Challengers, Zendaya was also one of four credited producers. The others were Amy Pascal, Luca Guadagnino and Rachel O'Connor. A producer is part of the team that makes a film happen. Reports said she trained for three months with a tennis coach before filming.

So a 14-year-old on a Disney Channel show grew up to star in big movies. On a set, a sheet called a call sheet is handed out to the cast and crew. It is the day's plan, and it lists when each person must arrive. In California, the rules for young actors sit behind that time.

Questions

1. What must a studio teacher in California be?

A. A famous actor
B. A real teacher with the right papers
C. A movie director

2. For a child from age 9 up to 16, what is the most time at the place of work in one day?

A. Five hours
B. Three hours
C. Nine hours

3. Why might there be a desk and books on a set?

A. The rule asks for school time on school days
B. Directors like quiet corners
C. Cameras need desks

4. In "one hour of rest and play," what does rest mean?

A. The leftover part
B. A break
C. A long sleep

5. What does a call sheet list for each person?

A. Who won an award
B. The funniest scene
C. When to arrive

Words to know

permit: written permission
crew: set workers
rulebook: set of rules
producer: film team member

Answer key: Zendaya and the Rules for Kids on Set

1. B. A real teacher with the right papers
2. C. Nine hours
3. A. The rule asks for school time on school days
4. B. A break
5. C. When to arrive