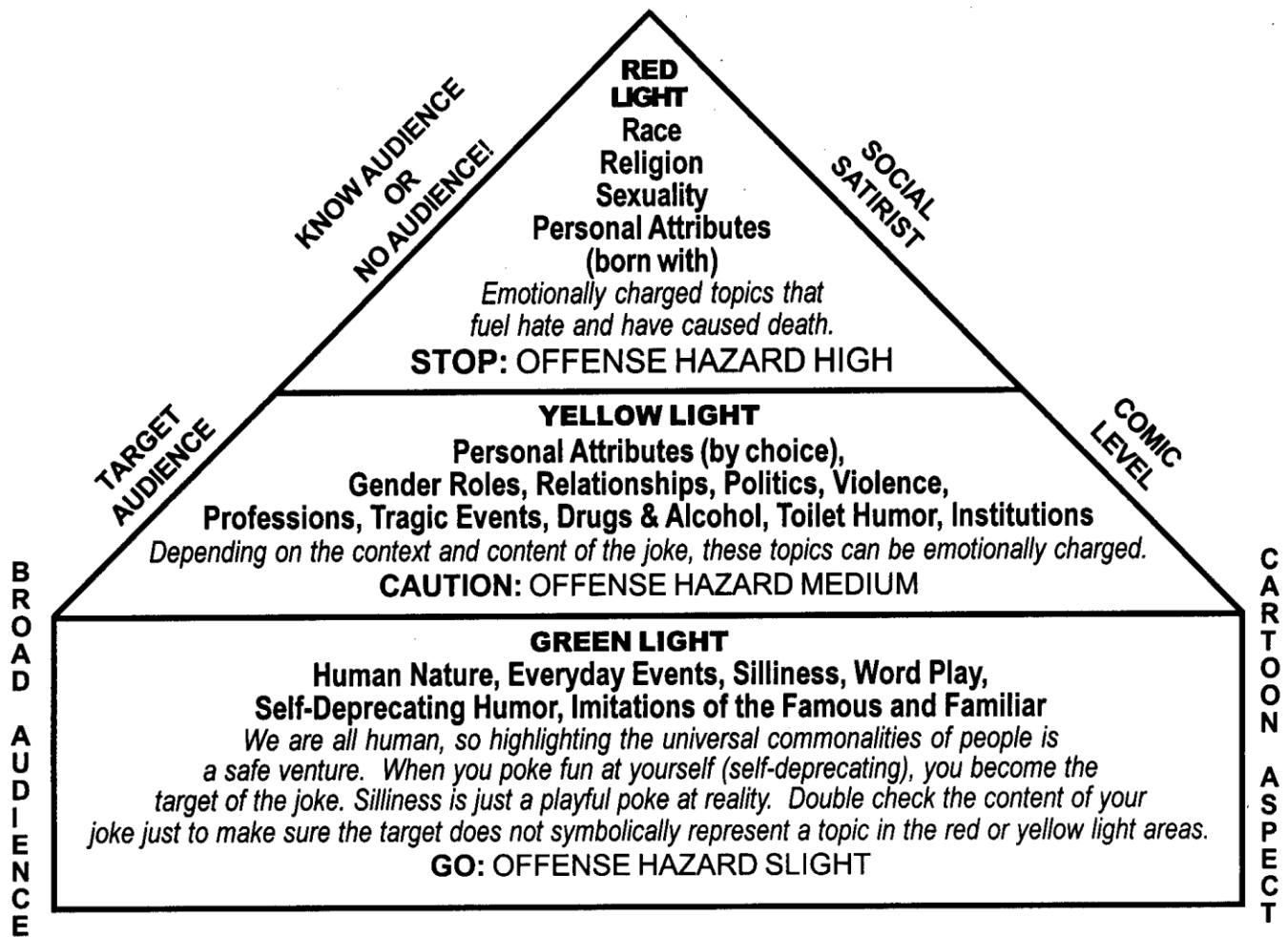


HUMOR AWARENESS

When telling a joke, consider two things: your **audience** and your **comic ability**. If your comic sophistication is that of a social satirist—utilizing humor for edification—you probably can joke about topics at the top of the triangle and not offend. You might even be able to change a person’s attitude by showing them the irony of a point of view. Most of us fall well short of being a professional humorist; so sticking to jokes in the “green light” area of the triangle is the best bet. When attempting jokes for a diverse school audience, staying in the lower part of the triangle is especially important because of the broad nature of a school population. All ages, ethnic groups, races, religious affiliations, and personal attributes are represented. It is impossible to truly “know” this group of people like you would your family members. A school audience expects to be informed or entertained, but not offended. In the middle of the triangle are topics in the “yellow light” area. It is possible with some thought at the comic level to present a joke to a target audience—a small, specific group of people with a common interest or bond—without offending.



Pre-Performance Humor Checklist

- ✓ Identify the actual or symbolic targets ("the butts") of your jokes. Are these truly things to laugh at in your setting?
- ✓ What are the ratings of your jokes? (G--PG--PG-13--R--X)
- ✓ Is the rating appropriate for the setting and audience?
- ✓ Review your skits (characters, props, dialogue) to make sure they do not perpetuate hurtful stereotypes regarding race, ethnicity, gender, age religion, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic condition, etc.?

