

CHILD'S PLAY TOURING THEATRE

Animal Tales and Dinosaur Scales Study Guide for Teachers

Local sponsors have scheduled Child's Play Touring Theatre to perform for your students in a few months, and we thought you might like to know more about us and what we do. To help make this a fun and motivational experience, we have provided materials to assist you and your students in the preparation and follow up of the show.

What is Child's Play Touring Theatre?

Child's Play Touring Theatre is a professional traveling theatre for young audiences that performs stories and poems written by children, transforming young writers' manuscripts into plays, songs, and dances. Every year, the company performs the works of hundreds of young poets, essayists, playwrights and short story writers from classrooms just like yours.

Child's Play combines the imagination of children and the craftsmanship of professional theatre artists. Using characters, narration and dialogue created by young authors, the actors of Child's Play Touring Theatre add songs, mime, music, sound effects, props and costumes to fashion a complete show. A lively pace, energetic performances, and lots of audience participation keep the children involved throughout the presentation.

A Child's Play performance can spark the writing program in your classroom, as well as open doors to discussion, writing, and theatre activities. As children watch our actors performing literature written by other children, they become very excited about their own potential as writers. They say, "I can do that too!"

What can I do to prepare for the show...

- The best way for you to prepare your students for a Child's Play performance is to let them know that this is a show written by kids - kids just like them!
- Talk about the vocabulary of the theatre. Discuss the roles of the actors, a musical director, the set, a script, etc.
- Ask how many students have seen a play. Have them share their experiences.
- Let the children know that they should feel free to clap if they like the actors or something that happens on the stage. At this performance, they will be asked to sing along, make movements, or even come on stage to help the actors.

After the performance...

Following you will find a few suggestions for follow-up activities in your classroom.

THE LION AND THE CLOUD

By: Ms. Ceneri's 3rd Grade Class

Brooklyn, NY

One day a lion and a cloud battle to see who can be louder and therefore, more deserving of the title King of the Jungle. They make so much noise and commotion that all the animals run away, leaving the lion and the cloud all alone. The two learn to quell their out-of-control competition with a little compromise.

Discussion and Activities for Everyone

- Have the students discuss what is wrong with a competition like this - when competition becomes unruly or harmful. What could the animals have done instead of just leaving the jungle?
- Have each student pick a jungle animal and research it - how big, small, where does it live and what does it eat? They could write a story or essay about the animal or perhaps draw a picture of it.

Discussion and Activities for Younger Students

- Have the students talk about other sounds that occur in nature. What "roars", "cries", and "whistles"? What other "songs" are sung in nature? Don't forget insects, streams, birds, etc?
- Discuss the ways in which we can save the animals and the jungles of the world.
- Discuss with the children a time when they might have felt lonely, like the lion, and what they did or could have done to alleviate this feeling.

Discussion and Activities for Older Students

- Discuss the nature of storms and explain what causes lightning and thunder.
- Discuss what materials we use from the jungle and why preserving the jungle is so important. Talk about the important issues concerning the jungles and rain forests.

THE WHALE SONG

By: Ellen, 4th Grade

Huntington, NY

This snappy sing-a-long is highly entertaining, yet very educational at the same time. Children will learn some interesting facts about the great mammals of the sea.

Discussion and Activities for Everyone

- Have a detailed discussion of whales - what oceans they live in, why they migrate, why they are considered mammals and not fish, how many different kinds of whales exist, etc.
- Discuss the ocean and the other creatures that live in the sea, including plant-life.
- Ask the students if they have ever been to the ocean and tell what it was like. They could also write about their experience.
- Discuss water safety and what to do if an emergency occurs.

Discussion and Activities for Younger Students

- The students could pick their favorite sea creature, write about it and draw pictures. The students could create a story involving this particular sea creature.
- The students could pretend to be a certain sea creature and tell the class what its day to day routine is like.
- Discuss the importance of the ocean in regard to the rest of the world. Why do we need the oceans?

Discussion and Activities for Older Students

- Discuss with the students why our oceans are threatened by industry, man, etc.
- Talk about the creatures that are threatened by human consumption, encroachment, pollution, etc.
- Write a classroom letter to your congressman asking for support in protecting an endangered creature of the sea.

TAP DANCING DINOSAUR

**By: Jennifer, Grade 2
Florissant, MO**

Why did the dinosaurs become extinct? This is a question that has fascinated both children and adults for years. Enjoy this dancing musical look at the question of dinosaur extinction. Delight in the unique and entertaining answer provided by the creativity and imagination of a child.

Discussion Topics for Younger Students

- Most children seem to have a love and wonder for dinosaurs. Have the students talk and write about their favorite dinosaurs. They could draw pictures as well. Why do they like reading and learning about dinosaurs?
- Have your students come up with their own creative reasons for the extinction of the dinosaur. Students could write about the reasons behind all sorts of natural occurrences. (i.e. How the elephant got its trunk. Why there is lightning and thunder. How the zebra got its stripes, etc.) These explanations can be fictitious.

Discussion Topics for Older Students

- There is much controversy about the reasons for dinosaur extinction. Many scholars and scientists have argued over a variety of reasons for years. Hold a class discussion about the different possibilities. What does the class generally think may be the cause of dinosaur extinction?
- Have students invent ideas about why some animals become extinct. These ideas can be derived from fantasy. Stage a classroom debate allowing students to voice their opinions on animal extinction. What other animals or species are extinct? What animals are in danger of becoming extinct? Why are some animals becoming endangered? What can we do to prevent animals from becoming extinct?

Critiques and Reviews

Encourage your students to become theatre critics. They can write reviews of our show for an assignment or just for fun. Think about publishing opposing viewpoints in a school newsletter. And of course, we're always thrilled to receive constructive criticism from our toughest audience! Send stories, drawings, letters, and reviews to:

CHILD'S PLAY TOURING THEATRE

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www.cptt.org

For more information contact Child's Play at (773) 235-8911

Study Guides are subject to change without prior notice.

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Write a Review

Today we went to a show by Child's Play Touring Theatre. Fill in the blanks to tell all about the show. Draw pictures in the boxes to show what you saw and did.

Today we went to a _____

One thing I saw was _____

We also saw _____

My favorite person was _____

The part I didn't like was _____

My favorite part was _____

Written and drawn by _____

