



Live Theater

STUDY GUIDE EXAMPLES

Theater brings stories to life on stage. Although the actors are the main focus of the how, there are many more aspects that go into creating a production. From auditions and rehearsals to the set, lighting, sound, music, costumes, and make-up, theater is a sensory and emotional experience. Instill the magic of the stage and bring the fun and adventure of theater into your classroom!

Reflection questions

- How did the set design, costumes, music, etc., enhance the story? (Example: How did the music help to set the mood?) Why are they important?
- What type of skills do you need to make costumes? Build a set? Manage the lighting? Direct a play?
- What did the actors do (change their voices and accents, or move differently) to make you think they were different people?
- What do you think were the strengths of the production? What were the weaknesses?
- How does seeing a play or musical on stage compare to watching a movie or reading a book?

Activities

This is not a...

- Players stand in circle as leader gives an object (prop) to a player who says, "This is not a (e.g., pencil). This is a..... and uses the object as if it were a different noun (e.g., flute). Students pass object around the circle without repeating a noun.

The Color Game

- You need a table, some colored lights, and plenty of M&Ms
 - Get a group of kids gathered around the table and they each get their own little pile of M&Ms (Make sure they have at least 2 of each color)
 - Tell them that they have to sort the M&Ms by color, but you will be turning the room red, green, and blue when they do the sorting. This is a test of color perception.
 - Have your colored lights go full red to turn the room red and then tell them to sort. Spoiler - All of the M&Ms essentially turn the same color and it makes it incredibly difficult to sort.
 - Once everyone has finished sorting, return the room to a normal color and everyone gets to see how they did.
 - Repeat steps 2-4 but swap out red for green and blue. .
- Talk about lighting and how humans perceive color



Donkey, Rabbit, Duck, Elephant

- Everyone stands in a circle with a leader in the center. The leader points at someone in the circle, calls out one of the figures described below, and counts out “1, 2, 3.” The player pointed at and the two persons on either side of the player get into the position of that figure. If they do it in a count of 3, the leader points to another player and calls out another figure. Any player who cannot get into the figure in time is out of the game. The game sounds like, “Elephant, one, two, three, horse, one, two, three,” etc. Players may make up gestures to represent other animals or characters.

FIGURE	MIDDLE PLAYER	SIDE PLAYERS
Elephant	Arms in front with hands together to form a trunk	Arms in a big “C” position to form ears on either side
Horse	Both fists in front of nose to form muzzle	Arm bent at 90 degrees with elbow on the middle person's shoulder and forearm straight up to form an ear
Rabbit	Both hands behind back to form a tail	Arm straight up to form an ear
Angel	Both hands together as in prayer, sing an angelic “ahhh” on 3	Both arms extended straight out at the side to form a wing, sing an angelic “ahhh” on 3
Donkey	No movement at all	No movement at all
Kitten	Fingers spread out in front of face to look like whiskers	Arms angled to represent kitten ears for middle player
Duck	Arms make a duck's bill in front of face	Outside arm extends to form wings

Theater Dictionary

ACTOR	A person, male or female, who performs a role in a play or an entertainment.
AUDITION	A trial performance to see if an actor would be good for a role in a play or musical
CHOREOGRAPHY	The art of creating and arranging dances and the steps which make up a dance movement in the show.
COSTUME	The carefully selected clothing worn by the actor.
CUE	The last words or action of one actor immediately preceding the lines or business of another actor. To "cue" someone is to let them know that their line, or perhaps their entrance, is next.
DIALOGUE	The stage conversation between characters.
FLATS	Canvas or wood-covered frames that are made to look like the walls of a stage setting.
"PLACES"	This is called by the STAGE MANAGER when it is time for the actors to be in their proper positions for the beginning of an act.
PLOT	That which happens in a story; the beginning, which involves the setting, the characters, and the problem they are facing; the middle, which tells how the characters work



	to solve the problem; and the ending, in which the problem is resolved.
PROJECT	To speak loudly so the entire audience can hear you.
PROPS	All the stage furnishings, including furniture, that are physically used by the actors.
REHEARSAL	Practice sessions in which the actors and technicians prepare for public performance through repetition.
SCRIPT	The text of the play. Although the script may contain all the words of a play, it is considered in many ways an outline, or a starting point, for each individual production of a given play.
SET	The scenery--the walls, platforms, doors, etc.--which make up the environment of the imaginary world of the play.
STAGE CREW	The backstage technical crew responsible for running the show. During performances, they change the scenery and handle the curtain.
STAGE MANAGER	The person who runs the show in production and calls the cues for the actors and the technicians.
TECHNICAL THEATRE	The physical aspects of a stage production such as lighting, sound effects, sets, props, costumes, makeup, etc.