



# CLASS SHOW GUIDE

# HUCK FINN



## Theater Etiquette

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 10-15 MINUTES

**Objective:** To actively explore proper theater behavior.

**Discussion:** “*Etiquette* is a word we use to describe the way people behave when they are in social situations with other people. What is the proper etiquette when you see a play? How should you behave during the show? Is it the same way you should act when watching a movie at home or playing outside? Is it okay to laugh during a play if you think it is funny? Is it okay to talk to your neighbor during the performance?”

**Brainstorming:** As a class, create a list of ways that audience members might behave, good and bad, while in the theater. Write these behaviors on the board in two different columns: one for “Good Theater Etiquette” and one for “Bad Theater Etiquette.”

**Modeling:** Pick two students to come and sit in chairs in front of the class. Ask them to act out one of the “Bad Theater Etiquette” behaviors (with the teacher if desired) for ten seconds. Then have the class discuss why the behaviors were inappropriate and how they could be fixed. Now have the two students act out one of the behaviors under “Good Theater Etiquette” and discuss why this behavior is better.

**Activity:** Give the entire class one of the scenarios from their list of bad behaviors, like talking to their neighbor or not paying attention. Have the class act out this behavior for ten seconds then ask the students how they think this behavior makes the actors or the other audience members feel. Have them fix the behavior and act out this new scenario for twenty seconds. Repeat with a few other bad behaviors from the list.

## Stepping Into History

OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will use pantomime and their knowledge of history to consider the differences in modern times and the setting of the story.

**Discussion:** “The play *Huck Finn* takes place in the 1800s. What do we know about this time in American History? What activities that we do today would not have been done in the 1800s? How would your life as a young person have been different in the 1800s? When actors have to bring characters from another time period to life on the stage, they sometimes have to do research to better understand life in another era. This may help them accurately depict activities on stage. Let’s try pantomiming, or silently acting out, some activities from the past and the present!”

**Research:** Ask students to use history books or the internet to research the life of children in the 1830s. Make a list on the board of their findings. Then ask them to make a list of activities children might do today. Try to encourage very physical activities. You might want to make a third column of activities that could occur in either time period.

**Modeling:** Without identifying which one, select an activity from the lists on the board. Using gestures (without props or sounds), act out the activity for about 10 seconds. Then ask the class to describe what you did and guess which activity it might be.

**Activity:** Ask pairs of students to partner and practice acting out an activity from a list (you can also assign them). Then have students share their pantomimes. Can the class guess the era and the activity?

**Extension:** Invite students to write a “diary entry” about a day in the life of a young person like Huck Finn. How would their days have differed in the 1800s? How would Huck Finn’s life be different if he had lived in our contemporary era?



# Where Do We Park?

**1.** When dropping off please wait until a Rose Staff member has greeted your bus. They will get your bus information, parking instructions and when to unload the students.

**2.** Follow the staff's direction on where to park. We have three locations:

- a. Farnam St. between 20th and 24th bagged meters north side (10-15 slots)
- b. 20th St. North of Farnam- do not block Wells Fargo drive thru exit (4 slots)
- c. 20th St. East of Rose building (5 slots)

**3.** Most performances have a run time of 55-65 minutes. We ask that you are back at your bus by 10:50am (if it's a 10am performance) or by 1:50pm (if it's a 1pm performance). If the performance is longer we will notify you at drop off.

**4.** After the performance is over we ask that the buses form a line behind the buses that are parked on 20th North of Farnam. Please do not double park.

**5.** Wait until all buses have pulled out away from our building before pulling up on the east side for pickup.(We load 5-6 buses at a time.)

**6.** After being loaded please keep in mind that other buses are waiting so please try and leave the loading area as soon as possible.

## Want to book a workshop?

### Workshops at Your School

The Rose offers several workshops that can take place AT YOUR SCHOOL. A professional Rose teaching artist can visit your classroom for one to five days in a one week time period to explore, through drama, a curriculum topic of your choice.

To register your class for a workshop that will take place at your school, please contact Lindy Glenn at (402) 502-4625 or [lindyglenn@rosetheater.org](mailto:lindyglenn@rosetheater.org).

### Workshops at The Rose

A workshop AT THE ROSE is the perfect way to explore themes from a school field trip show or learn about the profession of theater. A professional teaching artist with a college degree in dramatic arts education will lead your class. To register your class for a Workshop at The Rose, please contact Lindy Glenn at (402) 502-4625 or [lindyglenn@rosetheater.org](mailto:lindyglenn@rosetheater.org).

**Visit [www.rosetheater.org](http://www.rosetheater.org) for more information!**



**Free Funding Is Available for Field Trips!** We understand that budgets are tight. That's why we're offering two great solutions to help pay for your school's field trip expenses. Both Nebraska Arts Council and Target Stores are offering financial assistance to help underwrite the cost of providing your students with experiences such as those provided by The Rose Theater. For more information, please visit [www.nebraskaartscouncil.org](http://www.nebraskaartscouncil.org) (click "Grants" to see all categories) or [www.target.com/fieldtrips](http://www.target.com/fieldtrips).

### Write To Us!

Letters may be written to:  
Michael Miller, Literary Manager  
2001 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68102

Emails may be sent to:  
Michael Miller at  
[michaelm@rosetheater.org](mailto:michaelm@rosetheater.org)

Facebook: Rose Theater – Omaha  
Twitter: @RoseTheaterCo



**Performing Arts**  
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

# HUCK FINN



## Monologues Along the Mississippi

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will use their imagination and writing skills to create a monologue (a speech presented by one character) as one of the secondary characters from **Huck Finn**

**Discussion:** "In the play **Huck Finn**, Huck and Jim encounter many characters during the course of their journey. Some are helpful, and some do not have their best interests in mind. Who are some helpful characters? Who could be harmful? Imagine yourself as a character that Huck encounters. How would this character describe the experience of meeting **Huck Finn**? How might their account be different than the way Huck tells his story? What do they want from Huck and Jim? Let's imagine ourselves as these characters and share more of their stories."

**Brainstorming:** Make a list of secondary characters on the board. You might also want to use a few words to describe who each character is and what happens when Huck and Jim meet them.

**Modeling:** Select a character and generate a list of a few details about them. Use the list and imagination to give a short speech or "interview" about this character's meeting with Huck and/or Jim. What does this character think about the travelers? Did the meeting go well or poorly? Did they get what they wanted?

**Activity:** Ask students to select (or they can be assigned) a character and create a list of details. Then ask students to use the details to write a short monologue about their meeting with Jim & Huck. Encourage students to really think about how their character would talk and what vocabulary they might use. When the monologues are done, ask for volunteers to try out their acting skills by using their body, voice, and imagination to bring the character to life "on stage" in front of the class.

**Extension:** What might happen if two characters met after their encounter with Huck and Jim and compared notes on the experience? Pair up students and ask them to write out a short scene about such a meeting. Do they share the same opinions about the two travelers they met?

## Narrow Escapes

OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will use their imaginations to create an alternate version of the events of **Huck Finn**

**Discussion:** "Jim and Huck know they could be in danger because Jim is running away from enslavement and Huck could be seen as helping him. What are some events of the story that could have gone differently and changed the ending of the play? How would a change in an event change the outcome for Jim or for Huck? Let's use our imaginations and acting skills to imagine some different twists in the key moments of the story!"

**Brainstorming:** As a class, create an outline or list of the basic events of Huck and Jim's journey. Try to recall how each story event leads to the next moment.

**Modeling:** Select an event that seems very important. Ask the class to imagine a change that might have altered this event. Would it still lead to the next event, or would something different have occurred? Ask for a couple of volunteers to bring the characters to life in a "stop & start" fashion--you can "freeze" the action any time to let the audience contribute ideas about what each character might say or do next. Continue until the scene is complete. Ask the students to describe how this new scene might change the story.

**Activity:** Arrange students in small teams to select one of the story events and improvise a scene of what might have happened if Huck and Jim had made a different decision and gotten caught or ended up in different circumstances. How would this turn of events have affected Huck and Jim and their relationships to each other or the characters they met? Would other events change or be eliminated all together? Would the outcome of the story change? How would Huck have been changed?

**Extension:** Invite students to outline a different version of **Huck Finn**. Does it change the meaning of the story? In small groups, students can work together to turn this new version into an illustrated story.

## Liars Contest: Two Lies and a Truth

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will use their acting skills to commit to telling an untrue fact in front of their peers.

**Discussion:** "Huck ends up surviving by his wits and has to tell an untruth or two in order to get out of more than a few close scrapes. In the end he has to decide whether telling the truth is the right thing to do."

**Brainstorming:** Ask students to brainstorm and write down a few of their proudest accomplishments.

**Modeling:** In front of the room, share two truthful things and one untrue thing from your own history. Invite students to choose which is true and which is not.

**Activity:** One by one, invite students to come to the front of the room and share two truthful things and one untrue thing (from their own history). Ask the class to determine which is the truth and which is not. Start with short sentences and perhaps progress to students telling longer stories with additional detail. Does it get harder or easier to tell what's the truth and what the lie is? Can you detect any signs that tell you when someone is telling the truth or not? How could a skill like this help you as an actor in a show like *Huck Finn*? How could this "talent" cause you problems? Who is the "Best Liar" in the class?

**Extension:** Invite students to create more detailed true and untrue stories. Guide the class in a vote to see who is sharing a true story and who story is made up.

## The Adventures of Jim

OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 30-40 MINUTES

**Objective:** Students will explore the story from a different point of view and think critically about the time period of *Huck Finn*.

**Discussion:** "The story of *Huck Finn* is told through the eyes of a young white boy. How would this story have been different if it was Jim's recollections instead of Huck's? What if Jim were a young boy on an adventurous journey instead of Huck? What if Huck was an adult running away from something when he meets a young Jim?"

**Brainstorming:** As a class, discuss how people of different colors, classes, and genders were treated during the 1800s. How was life different in the 1800s than it is today?

**Modeling:** On the board, list scenes from the play between Jim and Huck and discuss how they may have been portrayed differently had Jim been the play's narrator. As a class, still seated, work together to verbally improvise how one scene could be different. Once spoken aloud, invite a few volunteers to act out the scene in front of the class.

**Activity:** In small groups, invite students to choose a scene from the play to rewrite from Jim's point of view. Next, invite groups to act out their scenes in front of the class. Discourage students from using accents to try to mimic any of Mark Twain's characters and their styles, instead encouraging them to put themselves in Jim's position and imagine how Jim might feel about the events that unfold.

**Extension:** What might happen if this story took place today? In small groups, invite students to brainstorm a present day equivalent to a runaway floating down the Mississippi River. What sort of story would we see? What would happen to Huck or Jim if they were caught? How are things different now versus the 1800s? In their groups, students can write short scenes set in the 21st century.



# Behind the Scenes Spotlight: The Lighting Designer

## Meet the Artist, Laura Renae Hensley!

Laura Renae Hensley is the resident lighting and sound designer at The Rose Theater. She began her career at our theater company as a lighting apprentice with The Rose Theater's excellent production team. Laura has created spectacular lighting designs for recent Rose Theater productions such as **Goodnight Moon**, **The Jungle Book**, and she will be designing lights for The Rose's upcoming production of **Stellaluna & Other Tales**. We asked Laura to tell us about her work as a Lighting Designer and her lighting design for **Huck Finn**.



### **Q: What is the job of a Lighting Designer? What can a lighting design add to a production?**

A: The job of the lighting designer is to provide light for the stage so that the audience can see the actors and the set. Lighting is a great way to tell the audience about what is happening on stage. As a designer, I can decide what mood is depicted on stage, or I can even show what time of day it is.

### **Q: What are some of the tools that you use to create your lighting for the stage? What are some of the daily tasks that you do to create the lighting for a show like *Huck Finn*?**

A: Some of the most important tools used to create lighting include the lighting instruments themselves, because without them we wouldn't have a way to shine light onstage. The lighting console, a fancy board that allows the designer tell the lights what to do (like a TV remote control!), is also very important.

Some of my daily tasks include research, like reading the script, and finding pictures online that represent what I hope the stage to look like. Other tasks include communicating with the director and design team, planning where the lights need to be hung in the theater, and deciding which colors and gobos (a metal stencil that projects shapes onto the stage) will work best with everyone's ideas.

### **Q: Are there particular moments in the lighting design for *Huck Finn* that you are excited for audiences to experience? Did any parts of the story present big lighting challenges?**

A: I'm excited about the first transition from land to water. A lot can change visually in that moment and I hope that it translates effectively! I'm also excited about "when the fog rolls in." It should be interesting!

It is always a fun challenge to decide which moments are most important in a story. As the lighting designer, I have to choose which elements of the play I really want to accentuate, and that can be pretty hard. For **Huck Finn**, my biggest challenge has been figuring out how I want to light the stage in a new and visually pleasing way when the characters are on land.

### **Q: What is your favorite part of your job? What is the most difficult part?**

A: My favorite part of my job is when I get to sit in the theater and program my lights. It's as if I am painting pictures with light. It's awesome! The most difficult part of my job is making definite choices about gel colors and gobos. If you have a lot of ideas, like me, this can be really challenging!

### **Q: When did you decide you wanted to be a Lighting Designer? Was there a moment you had as an audience member that made you go, "I want to do that!"?**

A: I was actually an actor at first! However, I didn't get cast in any shows during the Fall semester of my sophomore year of college. I had been the light board operator for a show the semester before, so I decided to help out one of my lighting designer friends with her design for an adaptation of *Jekyll & Hyde*. I loved every minute of it. She encouraged me to make a couple of choices for the show and asked me for my opinions. It was then that I realized how much more gratifying it was for me to work on the technical side of theater. After all, you wouldn't be able to see the show if there weren't lights!

### **Q: Do you have any advice for a young artist who thinks she might want to be a light designer when she grows up?**

A: Don't forget to be open to doing other things. For the longest time I thought I wanted to be a professional actress and that was all I focused on. It wasn't until I gave something else a chance that I discovered what I really wanted to do. Henry David Thoreau wrote one of my favorite quotes: "Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you've imagined." That's what I do daily and it's what you have to do. And of course, get some training in your chosen area of theater (like volunteering or interning at a local theater!). That helps, too.

**Thank you for ENLIGHTENING us about your work, Laura Renae Hensley!**

# Explore More!

If you enjoyed **Huck Finn**, be sure to check out these other great resources!

## Books and Movies You Might Enjoy!

1) *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

Read the story that inspired the play! Follow Huck and Jim's adventures down the Mississippi River in this novel, first published in 1884.

2) *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain

Published in 1876, the story follows Tom Sawyer as he grows up along the Mississippi River.

3) *The Actual and Truthful Adventures of Becky Thatcher* by Jessica Lawson

A new twist on Tom and Huck's legendary adventures from a new point of view – tall tales not included!

4) *The Adventures of Huck Finn* written and directed by Stephen Sommers

Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures and Buena Vista Pictures present this 1993 movie adaptation starring Elijah Wood (from Lord of the Rings) as Huck!

## Websites or Apps

1) **Old Muddy Webcam**

Yearning for a glimpse of the Mississippi River? Check out this website for webcam links for a real-time view of Old Muddy and the beautiful Mississippi River Country landscapes. <https://experiencemississippiriver.com/interactive-tools/webcams/>

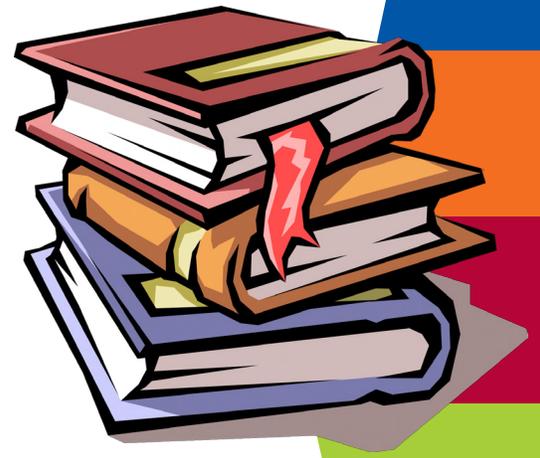
2) **U.S. Geography by Brainscope** (for the iPad and iPhone)

Huck and Jim explored the Mississippi River on their own, but since that's mighty dangerous, use this fun app to learn all about United States geography!

## Sites to See

1) **The Mark Twain Birthplace State Historic Site** in Florida, Missouri.

To learn more about the author of the original story, visit this publicly owned property in Missouri, where Samuel Langhorne Clemens was born in 1835. Only 5 hours from The Rose Theater!



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