



CLASS SHOW GUIDE



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.

Relationship Statues

OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 10-20 MINUTES

Objective: To have students use their bodies to create statues that reflect different kinds of relationships.

Discussion: “*Prancer* is all about a little girl named Jessica and how she takes care of an injured reindeer that she thinks might be Santa’s lost reindeer, Prancer. Jessica has lots of friends, family members, and neighbors in the story – and she has different kinds of relationships with all of them. What is a relationship? Who are some of the people in your life with whom you have relationships? How do those relationships affect who you are and what you do?”

Brainstorming: Work together to brainstorm a list of different kinds of relationships that a person can have (father/daughter, best friends, brother/sister, teacher/student, etc). Make a list of those relationships on the board.

Modeling: Ask for a volunteer to help you create a statue that depicts one of those relationships listed on the board. “I bet that we can show a statue that explains our relationship without using any words. Let’s make statues of teacher and a student – except I will be the student, and you will be the teacher. How can you use your body to show you are a teacher?” If the student needs help modeling, you may give suggestions (for example, the “Teacher” might be standing at a chalkboard while the “Student” is sitting at a desk).

Activity: Ask students to get into pairs and spread around the room. Give the students a number of relationships to create statues of (some brainstormed). Add specific details to certain relationships, for example, a brother and sister arguing, two best friends telling a secret, enemies glaring at each other, and so forth. Then, ask pairs to choose a relationship to depict and share their statue with the classroom – have the audience try to guess what the relationship might be.

Side Coaching: Encourage students to think about how different levels in the frozen statue (for example, one person standing while someone else is sitting) might convey power, authority, or age differences in the relationship. “Does changing the arrangement convey a different relationship? Why do you think this is so?”

Extension: Students can create short scenes exploring these relationships. After seeing *Prancer*, do the activity again using specific characters from the play.



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 busses 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.

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.

Visit 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 (click "Grants" to see all categories) or www.target.com/fieldtrips.

Write To Us!

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Performing Arts
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



Best Christmas Present Ever

IN OR OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 15 MINUTES

Objective: To have students use their imagination to create interesting objects to “gift” each other.

Discussion: “When we think about Christmas, we often think about presents! We are going to use our imaginations to give each other all wonderful gifts!”

Modeling: Pantomime an ordinary object in your hands, for example, a mug. “Here I am holding a plain, empty mug. I think it’s a really nice Christmas present to give someone! What is one way we could make this present better? Maybe we could make the mug full of candy! Or maybe we can tie a bow around it! Who has an idea of how we could make the mug better?” Take a few suggestions.

Activity: Have the students sit in a circle. One person in the circle starts by choosing an ordinary object, then pantomiming it in their hands and describing it verbally. The student will then pass the object onto their neighbor, who will then add something to the object to make it even better. You may allow the object to go all the way around the circle, or just a few students, depending on the size of the group.

Side Coaching: Encourage students to not cancel out someone else’s idea. If someone has made an object orange, it is important that the object stay orange. And, remember that the changes don’t have to make complete “sense” – if a mug suddenly has wheels and can also drive, that is absolutely fine.

Extension: In small groups, have students create short scenes that are commercials for the presents they imagined during the exercise. Share these scenes with the entire class. Can your students come up with the “perfect presents” for the characters of the story?

Letters to Santa

IN-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

Objective: To have students explore the objectives of different characters in *Prancer*.

Materials: Lined paper, pencils

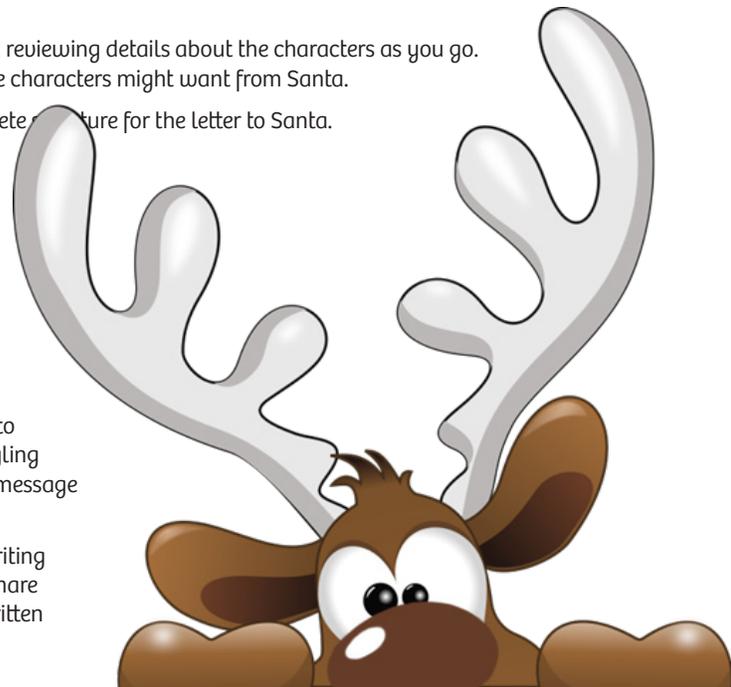
Discussion: “Jessica Riggs writes a letter to Santa asking him to pick up Prancer on Christmas Eve. Taking care of Prancer was Jessica’s goal throughout the play. We are going to pretend to be characters from the play and write our own letters to Santa, asking for the things we want the most! Just like Jessica, we are not going to worry about what presents we want – we are going to worry about other things that are important to us.”

Brainstorming: Brainstorm a list of characters from the play, reviewing details about the characters as you go. If available, take notes on the board. Ask students what these characters might want from Santa.

Modeling/Activity: Help students by showing them a complete sentence structure for the letter to Santa. It should start with a salutation, and include an introduction (who I am), body (what I want and why), and conclusion (some kind of thank you). Give the students options for their greeting and sign off (Dear, to my dear friend, sincerely yours, best wishes, etc). Have students select a character from *Prancer* to pretend to be, and begin their letters. At the end, have students share letters with the class.

Side Coaching: Encourage students to think about how the character they choose might feel about writing to Santa. For example, John (Jessica’s dad) might feel a little silly writing to Santa, but could be willing to try it out. If students are struggling with writing, they may also use drawings to help send their message to Santa.

Extension: A variation on this activity could be characters writing letters to other characters in the story. Students could also share their letters out loud in front of the class like monologues written in the voice of their character.



Scenes Not Seen

IN OR OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

Objective: To have students use their imagination to create additional scenes for *Prancer*

Materials: Paper (if scenes are written)

Discussion: “Through most of *Prancer*, we follow the story of Jessica – but there are lots of characters in the play who also have interesting stories. We are going to use our imaginations to write/improvise new short scenes for the characters that are not always on stage during the play.”

Brainstorming: As a group, brainstorm different moments you might like to see that were not included in *Prancer*. These can range from silly to serious (Santa trying to find Prancer, the other reindeer reaction to Prancer missing, Aunt Sarah and John talking about Jessica moving in, Steve at school with his friends, Officer Benedetti having a conversation with the Preacher, etc.)

Modeling: Pick one of the moments on the board. Ask for a couple of volunteers to come up and, with input from the class, improvise a short scene that might happen between two of the characters in the story. For example, it could be a scene with Mrs. MacFarland doing her holiday shopping in the town. “What would the clerk say to Mrs. MacFarland when she entered the store? (Have the student act out the suggested line.) What would the clerk say back to Mrs. MacFarland? (Student acts out line.) For whom might Mrs. MacFarland be buying a gift? What would she ask the clerk to help her find? How would she ask for it? What would the clerk’s response be?” Continue until a short scene is concluded.

Activity: Have students work in pairs or small groups to write or improvise or write out one of the scenes brainstormed. Share these scenes with the class. If writing, assist students with playwriting structure. If improvising, allow students to practice the scene a few times before sharing with the group.

Exploring the Job of a PUPPET DESIGNER: Found Object Puppetry

IN OR OUT-OF-CHAIR ACTIVITY • 20-30 MINUTES

Objective: To have students explore expressing character and story through the use of simple puppets

Materials: Several found objects (cans, box, cup, pool noodle, bottle, etc – anything you can manipulate)

Discussion: “The reindeer Prancer is controlled by puppeteers. A puppeteer is someone who controls a puppet to make it come to life. They make the puppet move, and can even make the puppet seem like it is feeling different emotions. We are going to use everyday objects as puppets to create our own stories and characters.”

Brainstorming: Brainstorm a list of puppets students have seen before besides Prancer. Ask students how the puppeteer moves each of these puppets so that they appear to be living characters (if they know). If a puppet is relatively well-known (say, “Kermit the Frog”) students could even do some research on the internet or in the media center about how the puppet is manipulated and report their findings.

Modeling: Start by asking students to use their body to act out different emotions, for example, for angry you might stomp your feet or cross your arms. For fear, you might cower or shake. Ask students what kind of motions depict different emotions. “Now, we will try to become puppeteers by moving objects to show the same kinds of emotions and actions.”

Activity: Have each student select one found object and select 3 movements for their object. In pairs, students create scenes using their selected movements to create a story (wanting a hug, walking a dog, running a race, etc). Ask for volunteers to share their scenes. Be sure to discuss with the audience and performers how the motions told the story.

Extension: Have students add facial features to their objects (eyes, mouth, etc) and repeat the scenes. Discuss the differences between the first and second version of the scenes.



Behind the Scenes Spotlight: Puppet Designer

Meet the Artist, Eric Novak!

Eric Novak is a professional puppetry artist and puppeteer who designed and built the reindeer puppet used to portray the character of "Prancer" in the Rose Theater world premiere production of *Prancer*. Eric has designed amazing puppets and directed the New York Spring Spectacular at Radio City Music Hall in New York City, performed in *The Pee-Wee Herman Show* on Broadway, and created puppets and costumes for the Omaha Symphony Christmas Celebration. Eric even consulted on the puppetry design elements for The Rose Theater Production of *The Grocer's Goblin* and *The Little Mermaid* in 2014. He owns his own puppetry arts company, Eric Novak Puppets (check out his amazing creations at EricNovakPuppets.com!). We asked him to tell us more about his work and his Prancer puppet!



Q: Designing and working with puppets sounds like a really unique and interesting job. How did you become a puppet designer?

A: I got my degree in Set Design in 1989, and designed a lot of Off Off Broadway shows in NY in the early 1990s. I became interested in stop motion animation and puppetry, and worked at the Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta to learn about mold making and puppet design. A puppet is a fancy prop in some ways, but it's more than that: it's imbuing an inanimate object with life and personality. I think it's this complexity that drew me to puppetry. After making puppets for 20 years, I can build anything I can dream up.

Q: What special skills did you have to develop to be a puppetry artist? Did you take any classes in school that help you in your puppetry work?

A: I've always done a lot of different things artistically, and all of them are involved in puppetry: Drawing, painting, sculpture, carpentry, welding, mechanics, dramaturgy, etc. Mold making and sewing were the two skills that I learned to become a puppet maker.

Q: How did you approach creating a large puppet for the character of Prancer? What were the big steps in your process?

A: I developed the technique of using rattan while designing and building puppets and costumes for the Omaha Symphony. The large Prancer puppet is the culmination of this work, as it is much more complicated, and has many more moving parts. Researching reindeer and how they move is a big part of it. To form the rattan, I soak it in water for two days, then tie it to a wooden form in the shape of a reindeer. After it dries, it retains the shape of the form and is very light weight. I take it off of the form, and lash it to an aluminum structure which contains the mechanisms for movement.

Q: You have your own puppetry company, Eric Novak Puppets. What other puppets have you created recently that you're excited about? Are they different from *Prancer*?

A: Every puppet project is different, and that is one of the things I love about puppetry. I've recently made two backpack skeleton puppets that are 15 feet tall and made of milk jugs. Check out my website or Facebook page for images. I've also been doing sculpture work for District Vision sunglasses company, and the band Major Lazer.

Q: What is your favorite part of being a puppet designer and puppeteer? Are there parts of your job that are challenging or even frustrating?

A: Each project is different and a challenge. What I love about puppetry is the problem solving. You are using techniques that you have developed, but adapting them to new situations. What I love best is that I can build anything I can dream up, and I'm only limited by my imagination. I may not always have the answers, but through experimentation, I can figure it out.

Q: What advice do you have for any young artists out there who would like to be puppeteers?

A: Young artists interested in puppetry should collect as many different experiences as possible. People come to puppetry from many different backgrounds: dancers, actors, visual artists, or set design, like I did. Puppetry is a type of art form that you can really make your own, bring your own experience to, and make something unique.

Thanks for sharing your work with us, Eric!

Explore More!

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

Some Other Great Stories About Animal Friends

1) *Protecting Marie* by Kevin Henkes

Best suited for 5th grade and up, this book follows the story of 12 year old Fanny as she works through her tumultuous relationship with her father with help of a new dog companion.

2) *Olive, the Other Reindeer* by Vivian Walsh

Find out what happens when a sweet dog named Olive mishears the lyrics to "Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer!"

3) *Because of Winn-Dixie* by Kate DiCamillo

If you were touched by the story of Mrs. McFarland in **Prancer**, you will surely appreciate reading about 10-year-old India's discovery of her neighbor's lives and stories.

Great Non-Fiction Books to Explore More About Topics in the Production

1) *Puppet Planet: The Most Amazing Puppet-Making Book in the Universe* by John Kennedy

A how-to book about puppet construction.

2) *Reindeer (A Day in the Life: Polar Animals)* by Katie Marsico

Follow a reindeer through its day as it eats, sleeps, and cares for its young.

3) *The Grief Bubble: Helping Kids Explore and Understand Grief* by Kerry Debay

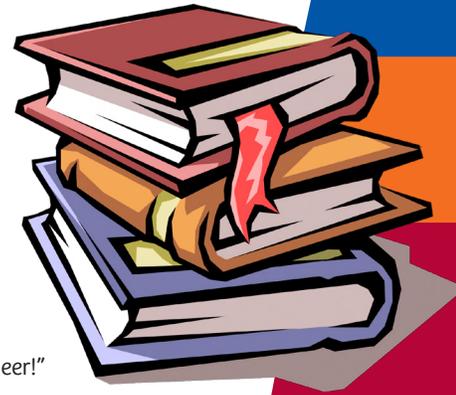
The Grief Bubble is a special workbook for children ages 6 and older who have experienced the death of someone special. The interactive format invites them to find expression for their thoughts and feelings, encouraging the exploration of their grief.

DVDs Your Students Might Enjoy

1) **Prancer** (1989) - The original movie of Prancer!

2) **A Charlie Brown Christmas** (1965) - Another classic Christmas story featuring the beloved Peanuts gang.

3) **Labyrinth** (1986) - Jim Henson's brilliant puppets are featured in this story of a selfish 16-year old girl who is given 13 hours to solve a labyrinth and rescue her baby brother when her wish for him to be taken away is granted by the Goblin King.



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