



PARENT GUIDE: MONTAUCIEL TAKES FLIGHT

We are excited for your upcoming visit to Lifeline Theatre and *Montauciel Takes Flight*. This guide will help you prepare your family for the theatre experience and any moments that might be overwhelming.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Montauciel Takes Flight is based on the true story of the first hot air balloon that included live creatures: a sheep, a duck and a rooster. The play is set in France in 1783 and we center on Montauciel, or Mae as she prefers to be called, a sheep who loves science and learning new things. Mae is very curious about booms that she hears from the nearby town of Annonay. Her Maman encourages her to go see what it is and follow her passions, no matter what anyone else says.

The booms are coming from the Montgolfier Paper Mill, owned by brothers Joseph and Étienne. Joseph loves to experiment and create explosions in his science lab, leaving the paper mill work to his brother and their two employees: Bessie (a duck) and Rooster (a chicken). When Mae arrives, they gladly accept her help in the mill and show her the ropes of making paper.

Armed with her *Six Simple Machines* book, Mae teaches Joseph, Bessie & Rooster ways to use simple machines to make their work load easier. This intrigues Joseph into learning more about science beyond creating explosions. One night around the fire, Mae teaches the others about the scientific method and they hypothesize that smoke is what lifts embers out of the fire. This leads them to creating a model of a hot air balloon which they decide to name a Montgolfière.

After the success of their model, the team decides to build a larger Montgolfière. When King Louis and Marie Antoinette hear about the Montgolfière, they summon the team to Versailles and demand a presentation of an even larger Montgolfière. They must work quickly to build the new one and include a basket to lift boxes of paper. When Louis sees the basket, he asks who is going to fly in it. Mae volunteers and persuades Bessie and Duck to go with her. The ride is a success and they make more discoveries about the science of the hot air balloon (and themselves).

The Running Time of the show is 60 minutes with no intermission.

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ACTORS/COMMUNICATION

There are five actors in the play, with only a few double cast. The characters are a mix of humans and animals. Occasionally the animal characters will mimic their animal during dialogue (adding a “quack” or a “bawk” here and there). All of the characters use French words occasionally with an accent.

One actor plays Mae, one plays Rooster. One actor plays Bessie and Maman. One plays Étienne and Monsieur L’Homme. Our last actor plays Joseph and the King and Queen. All of the actors except Mae play various townspeople.

The King and Queen are represented by a painting with mouths cut out that the actor speaks through.

SCENERY & PROPS

The set for the play is made up of various oversized crates, boxes, ropes, pulleys, etc. The pieces are set at the top of the play to represent the paper mill. The actors will use the ropes and pulleys when explaining the six simple machines and working in the paper mill. Three boxes hanging from the ceiling will drop banners down when they arrive in Versailles and the oversized crates will be put together with the banners to create the final hot-air balloon.

There are various hand props used during the show such as brushes, baskets of fabric, and beakers and other equipment in Joseph’s lab.

LIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Montauciel Takes Flight is a musical with various other sound effects throughout to underscore different moments and to punctuate the sillier moments. The house lights will be left up during the show and the sound will be reduced by approximately 20%.

A fake fire will glow and flicker a little bit and is used for the first experiment with the model hot air balloon.

THEATRE LAYOUT

When you enter the theatre, you will walk across the stage floor and up two steps to the first row of seats. The seating is eight rows total, and all stadium style so you have a good view of the stage from anywhere.

There is a second entrance into the theatre in the middle of the seating bank. This has stairs and a small hallway that leads back out to our lobby. The main entrance to the theatre will be left open during the performance so if anyone needs to take a break it will be easy to enter/exit.

There will be a yellow line on the stage floor indicating the path to come in/out of the theatre so that the pathway is safe during the show.

MOTAUCIEL TAKES FLIGHT

PARENT CUE SHEET

Action on Stage	Sensory Sensitivities & Difficult Concepts
House Manager will give a curtain speech	Stage lights will dim.
Montauciel appears	Music starts as the stage goes dark. Lights up on Montauciel on the aisle stairs.
Opening number	Musical Number: "Have You Heard?" The setting and characters of the play are introduced during the song. Joseph does a science experiment onstage to invent exploding ink and there is small popping noise with a flame contained in a glass. Various other booms are heard as if they are off in the distance.
At the paper mill	Joseph will enter the scene through the aisle stairs.
At Monsieur L'Homme's store	Mae will enter through the aisle stairs. Various booms from Joseph's lab will be heard off in the distance. Musical Number: "Have You Heard - Reprise".
Maman & Mae at home	Musical Number: "There Must Be More". This number includes a dance section ending with another explosion from Joseph's lab in the distance. Mae decides to go see why the explosions are coming from the Montgolfier paper mill. She exits through the aisle stairs.
Mae goes to the paper mill	Joseph will enter through the aisle stairs. Bessie and Rooster will use the springs and wheels on the set as they make paper. Mae enters from the aisle stairs. More booms are heard from the lab, this time a little closer. Musical Number: "Feet on the Ground".
Working at the paper mill	Joseph will enter from the aisle stairs. One of the boxes will fall off the large crate. Mae teaches the others how to use a pulley to lift the boxes. Musical Number: "Six Simple Machines". Bessie, Rooster and Joseph will sit on the first step during the beginning of the song. The song will repeat many times and speed up each time. The lights will change colors during the song.
Relaxing by the fire	The fire will glow and flicker.
At Joseph's science lab	Joseph will wheel out a table covered in beakers and other scientific equipment.
The first experiment	Mae and Joseph take the model to the camp fire and test it over the fire. The model will rise above the fire.

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At the science lab	Musical Number: "Montgolfier Gas". The lights will change colors during the song.
Building a larger Montgolfière	Musical Number: "Have you Heard - Reprise". The King and Queen are introduced.
Going to Versailles	Musical Number: "Versailles". The banners will drop from the boxes in the air as they approach Versailles. The lights will change colors and a mirror ball will be used.
Building an even larger Montgolfière	The cast will use the large crates and banners to create the Montgolfière. Rooster will enter through the aisle stairs with the basket for the hot air balloon. The lights will change colors during the transformation. The cast will pretend to build a large fire with lots of smoke by coughing.
Flying the Montgolfière	A cannon will fire at lift-off and Mae, Bessie, and Rooster "fly" in the Montgolfière. The backdrop will billow back and forth to give the illusion of going up in the air. Musical Number: "In the Basket". At various points during the song, the animals will shriek as they climb higher and are scared.
The Montgolfière lands	Mae, Rooster, and Bessie will scream and shriek as the Montgolfière comes back down. There will be a crash when the Montgolfière lands.
Finale	Musical Number: "There's Always More". The lights will go dark at the end of the song.
Bows	Musical Number: "Six Simple Machines - Reprise". The cast will encourage the audience to clap and sing along. The lights change colors during the song.