

lifeline



T H E A T R E

Big Stories, Up Close

Spring 2013

Dear Educators,

Thank you for bringing your students to our final KidSeries production of 2012-13, *The Emperor's New Threads: A Fashion Statement*. We are delighted you have chosen Lifeline Theatre, and we hope your experience here will be fun, entertaining, and educationally rewarding.

Enclosed is our study guide for the play. The guide includes a thorough play synopsis, writing and drama activities, discussion topics to prepare your class for the field trip, and a number of easy-to-copy worksheets for your class, which are best used after your field trip as a way to bring the learning back to the classroom. We hope you will find the packet beneficial towards enhancing your Lifeline experience and allow you to integrate the play's themes with your classroom teaching.

Towards the back there is a teacher comment form and student review sheet, ready for copying. Your feedback is invaluable to helping improve our materials. If you would like to receive the form electronically, just email me at lea@lifelinetheatre.com and I'll send it to you. We'd also love to receive your student reviews, as we take to heart their response to the show.

Right beside the study guide, we have enclosed a few materials about other education programs we offer here. If you are interested in learning more about these programs, do not hesitate to call me at 773-761-4477 x707 or send an email. We aim to meet your goals.

Thank you again for your support of Lifeline Theatre, and we'll see you at the show!

Sincerely,

Lea Pinsky, *Education Director*



KidSeries 2012-13



EDUCATOR STUDY GUIDE

Our season is...

Fall 2012: DUCK FOR PRESIDENT

Winter 2013: THE MYSTERY OF PIRATE GHOST

Spring 2013: THE EMPEROR'S GROOVY NEW CLOTHES

Lifeline Theatre * 6912 North Glenwood * Chicago, Illinois 60626 * 773-761-4477

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ABOUT LIFELINE KIDSERIES PRODUCTIONS

Lifeline Theatre's KidSeries is committed to bringing children's literature to the stage to entertain, educate and empower both kids and adults. Our goal is to help students develop greater appreciation of literature and theatre as art forms, to excite kids about reading, as well as to teach them about various subjects within each individual show. We encourage you to use this study guide to enrich your students' experience of Lifeline's KidSeries, and to enhance the educational value of the performance you attend.

HOW TO BE PREPARED AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Before the Play: Discuss Appropriate Behavior

Have a discuss with your students about proper theatre etiquette. For example, it's okay to clap and laugh, but it's not okay to talk to your neighbor. Have students compare and contrast the difference between watching a movie and watching a play. Ask if students have been to a play before. If so, what play? What was the experience like? What do they think this particular experience will be like? If the students have not been to Lifeline before, have them think about what they might expect: a big theatre or a small one, many seats or only a few, young actors or older ones, etc.

After the Play: Reflect on the Experience

Ask students if they enjoyed the play. Based on this experience, would they like to see other plays? If they've seen plays before, how did this play compare? Was it better? Funnier? More enjoyable? What happened that they were expecting to happen? What happened that they weren't expecting? How was seeing a play a different experience than seeing a movie?

Have the students write a review of the play. Use the attached form or have them write a paragraph or two on their own. Encourage the students to be specific about why they enjoyed a certain part of the play. If they liked a scene because it was funny, have them explain *why* it was funny to them, what the characters *did* or *said* that was funny, etc. Have the students draw a picture or make a collage of their favorite scene or character. Have them show their picture to the class and explain why that scene or character was their favorite. We invite you to send the reviews and pictures to Lifeline – we enjoy reading them and learn from student feedback.

TRADITIONAL PLAYS VS LITERARY ADAPTATIONS

Lifeline Theatre's KidSeries productions are often musical adaptations of picture books and short stories for children. We encourage you to discuss the elements of each version and compare/contrast the two both before and after you see the play.

Before the Play: Get to Know the Original Story

Read the story to your students, or have them read the book themselves, before the production. After reading the book, discuss it with your students, using these questions as launch pads:

- Who are the characters in the story?
- What happens in the beginning of the story? The middle? The end?
- What is your favorite part of the story? Why?
- Who is your favorite character? Why?
- Is there a character in the story you don't like? What makes you dislike this character?

- What do you think you will see on stage as the actors tell this story?
- How might the play be different from the story? How might it be the same?

Beginning, Middle and End

To encourage sequential thinking, have students act out the beginning, middle and end of the story. Split the students into three groups (or more, depending on the number of students in your class) and have one group enact the beginning, have the next group enact the middle, and the final group the end. Have the students watching the performances help the group to remember any parts they may have left out. Give the groups the chance to redo their performances, including any elements suggested by their classmates.

After the Play: Compare/Contrast the Story to the Play

- How were the book and the play different?
- How were the book and the play the same?
- What elements of the play surprised you, based on your knowledge of the book?
- Which did you enjoy more, reading the book or watching the play?
- What was your favorite part of the play? Was that your favorite part of the book too?
- Were there any characters in the book that were not in the play?
- Were there any characters in the play that were not in the book?
- Some parts of the play are different from the book. Why do you think the playwright added or subtracted certain parts?

JOBS IN THE THEATRE: BEHIND THE SCENES

Before the Play: Prepare Your Students to Observe All the Roles

When we create a play at Lifeline, we have a community of artists working together to make a complete production. Ask students to be particularly observant during the performance for the parts of the show that are done by the various people listed below:

Playwright/Adaptor/Author - writes the play

Composer - writes the music for the show

Lyricist - writes the words (or "lyrics") for the songs in the play

Director - directs the play: makes decisions about costumes, lights, sets, etc.

Choreographer - creates and teaches the actors the dances in the show

Lighting Designer - designs and hangs the lights for the show; designs lighting changes

Set Designer - designs and builds the scenery and props for the show

Sound Designer - designs and records the sound effects for the show

Costume Designer - designs and makes the costumes for the show

Stage Manager - helps the director during rehearsals; sets props and scenery before each performance; runs the sound and lights during the performance

Actors - perform the play

After the Play: Discuss the Students' Observations

Ask the students about what they noticed about the "behind-the-scenes" jobs:

- How did the costume designer make the actors look like the characters they were playing?
- What about their costumes helped you to know what kind of people or animals they were?
- Did you have a favorite costume in the show? Which one? Why was it your favorite?

- If there were animal costumes, how did the costume designer create them so that they would look more like animals than people?
- What are some of the locations the play took place in?
- How did the set designer make the settings look realistic?
- What sound effects did you hear in the play? How did those sound effects help you to know what was happening in the play?
- Why do you think the composer chose the styles of music he did? What sorts of music would not make sense with the story?

ABOUT THE ACTIVITY ENCLOSURES

The enclosed educational activity sheets are beneficial to deepening your field trip experience at Lifeline Theatre. Please let us know what parts are helpful to you and where you would like additional materials. There is a teacher feedback form and student survey to copy for your class, and we hope you will take the time to let us know what you thought of both the show and the study guide. We do this work for you and your students, and we want to make it work!



DUCK FOR PRESIDENT
October 20- November 25, 2012



**THE MYSTERY OF
PIRATE GHOST**
January 12- February 17, 2013



**THE EMPEROR'S NEW
THREADS**
March 23 – April 28, 2013

KIDSERIES SEASON 2012-13

Lifeline Theatre's programs are partially supported by Alphawood Foundation; The Arts Work Fund; Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation; CityArts grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events; Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation; The Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust; Illinois Arts Council, a state agency; MacArthur Fund for Arts and Culture at Prince; The Rhoades Foundation; The Polk Bros. Foundation; S&C Foundation; The Saints; The Service Club of Chicago; and the annual support of businesses and individuals.

a closer look at.

The Emperor's New Threads: a fashion statement

Based on the story by Hans Christen Anderson
Adapted by Frances Limoncelli
Music by George Howe
Directed by Frances Limoncelli



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Synopsis of the Play

Activity: Similarities and Difference (a Venn Diagram exercise)

Activity: The Leader in Me (a writing exercise)

Activity: Find and Design the Emperor's Clothes (an art exercise)

Further Classroom Adventures: Drama Games relating to *The Emperor's New Threads*

Student Review Sheet

Teacher Comment Form

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

Kid, a young girl, tells us the story of a vain and foolish Emperor whose only care in the world is fashion. Following his behavior, his whole country only cares about what outfit the Emperor will change into next, and how they dress themselves. Kid is concerned that no one cares about learning or each other. She tries talking to her parents about this but even they are too wrapped up in their appearances and how Kid doesn't seem to care as much about her own. Only wanting to get more time with them, Kid's parents ground her for calling them and the Emperor *silly!*

She realizes the silliness must be put to an end and that it will take a hero to accomplish such a mission. Kid realizes that she has the knowledge and the courage to BE that hero herself, and that she can change the behavior of the Emperor. So she packs her bags and sets out on her journey. Scared, Kid starts to doubt herself. That is, until she meets Huck. Huck tells Kid that he too does not think fashion is important and wants to join her on her journey. However, Huck decides that he can't go, and we hear him say that the authorities might be looking for him... but Kid didn't hear this! They go their separate ways in hopes of seeing each other at the palace.

Kid arrives at the palace and runs into June and Marissa, a TV mother-daughter duo. They are airing a segment, telling everyone that the Emperor is currently rehearsing for his Big Birthday Bash! Kid is trying to find a way inside of the palace so she can speak to the Emperor, but June tells her she can't possibly go inside; that is, until Kid offers to go inside to get a beverage for Marissa.

When Kid enters the palace the whole place is getting ready for the rehearsal while the Emperor's assistants Primp and Preen is telling everyone to get to their seats as they wait for the Emperor to enter! The Emperor enters, wearing an extraordinary outfit and everyone sings about being a slave to fashion while the Emperor soaks in the love that he receives from his audience. With a whiny attitude, the Emperor begins to throw a fit because he doesn't like the outfit he has on.

Huck enters, requesting an audience with the Emperor and claims that he is a Fashion Designer that has arrived to give the Emperor the most amazing garment. Kid goes along with this scheme because she believes Huck to be her friend. The Emperor agrees to allow Huck to make him a garment out of special fabric that only those with wisdom and exquisite taste can see.

The Emperor, in a bad mood, fires his royal page and Kid gets the job in a hurry as Primp and Preen are too focused on the fact that they have gone to inspect the Emperor's new clothes and they have not been able to see them... which must mean that either they are not wise, or worse, they don't have good taste in fashion! Instead of revealing this, they both decide to lie, telling everyone that the garment is magnificent.

Kid finally gets her chance to speak with the Emperor and they quickly find out that to their surprise, they have a TON in common. They become great friends and the Emperor admits to Kid that he too wants to be a hero, but people only like him for his clothes. Kid tries to convince him that he can be a great emperor, but he just doesn't see how. Before they know it, it's time for the show and the Emperor leaves to go put on his magic outfit that even he can't see.

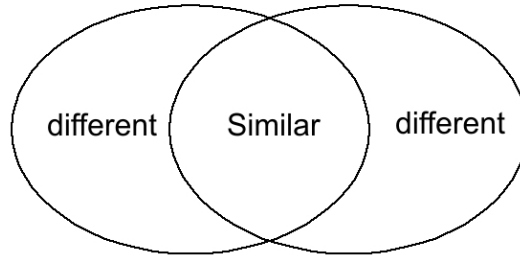
At the Birthday Bash, the Emperor shows off the garment that doesn't exist and everyone makes up what they say they can see until Kid runs in and exclaims that he isn't wearing any clothes! And the Emperor finally realizes that he is naked. Kid reveals Huck to be an imposter, and she apologizes for lying about it. The Emperor decides that he is going to be a better Emperor from now on and Kid goes home to spend time with her family.

Differences and Similarities

A Lesson in Comparing and Contrasting

In *The Emperor's New Threads*, Kid and the Emperor discover that they have more in common than they it seems, and that they are actually more alike than they are different.

If you were to write those differences and similarities into two overlapping circles, it would look like this, which is called a Venn Diagram:



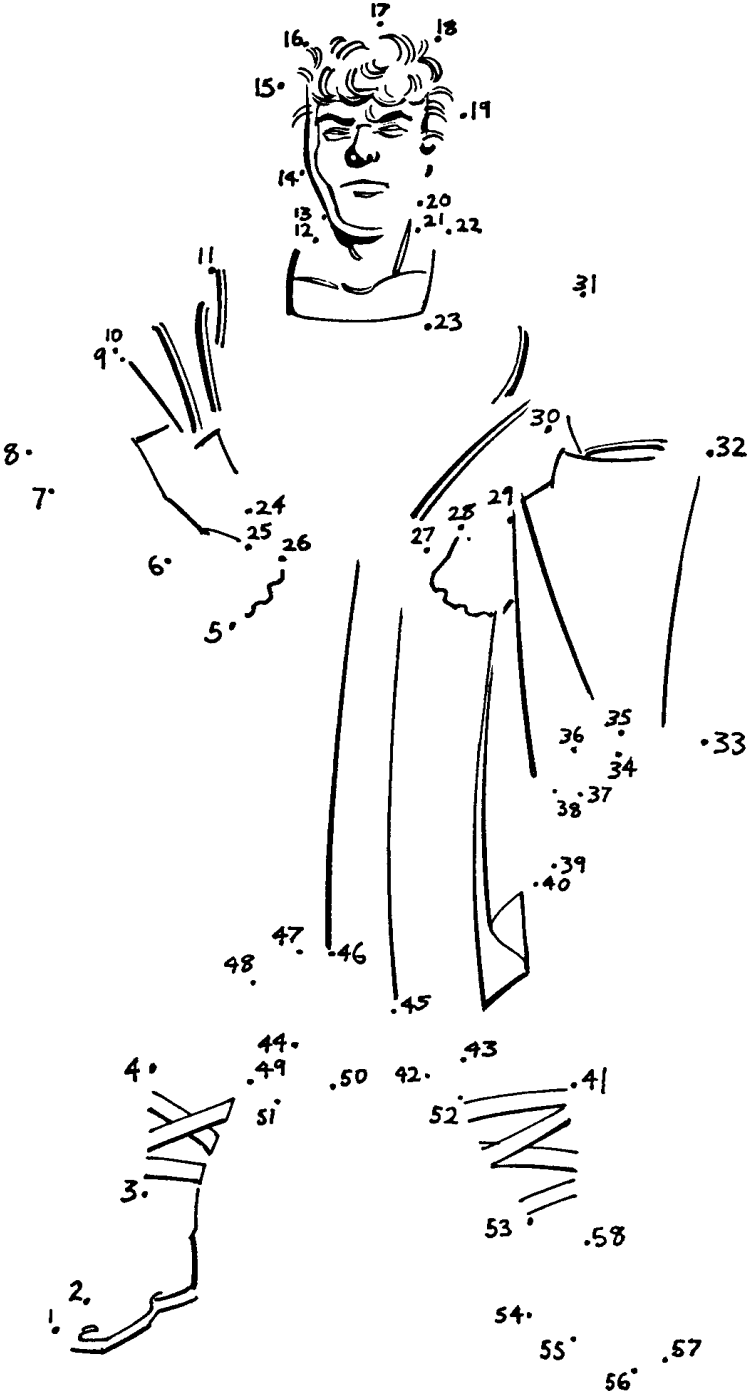
After you have seen the play, can you write down all the things that make them different and similar in your own Venn Diagram?

KID

EMPEROR

A large Venn diagram for student use, consisting of two overlapping circles. The left circle is labeled "KID" and the right circle is labeled "EMPEROR". The overlapping area is in the center. Each circle contains several horizontal lines for writing.

FIND AND DESIGN THE EMPEROR'S CLOTHES!



First, connect the dots to find the Emperor's clothes.

Then color it in to give him some fashion sense!

FURTHER CLASSROOM ADVENTURES

Drama Games relating to *The Emperor's New Threads*

Once back in the classroom, we encourage you to maximize your students' experience at Lifeline by using drama to teach drama! In our residency program, we use theatre games to not only teach the basics of performance, but also to explore themes in the student matinees. Below are some games you can play with your class that touch upon some of the concepts conveyed in the story.

Who Started the Motion? (for following the crowd)

Number of Players: Full Group

Objectives: Focus, Physicality, Ensemble

How to Play: The class stands in a circle. One student is chosen as the leader of the movement, with the rest of the class mirroring the movement. The motions should be slow and easy to follow and primarily using the upper body. Then one student is chosen to leave the room. In their absence, a new leader is chosen and the movement begins again. The student in the hall returns to the room and must guess who is starting (or leading) the motion. Encourage the students to look at the student opposite them, NOT at the leader. The idea is that everyone is doing the same thing so precisely that it is impossible to tell the leader from the group.

Goo (for making up imaginary objects)

Number of Players: Full Group

Objectives: Imagination, Pantomime, Focus

How to Play: This is an imagination exercise. Student A comes to the center of the circle and shapes an object with his or her imaginary Goo (clay). Once the object is formed, Student A then uses the object to pantomime an action that can be repeated. A second student comes to the center of the circle and tries to guess what the object is by taking the Goo creation and using it in the same way as Student A. If the student is correct he or she will then get the opportunity to sculpt a new Goo creation. The steps repeat. There is no talking in this game. This game then can be used to create group environments. Teacher assigns environment to create on stage (i.e., jungle), and each student then creates an element of the jungle out of Goo and it remains on stage. At the end the students can call out what is in their jungle.

Flocking (for following others)

Number of Players: anywhere from 4-12

Objectives: Physicality, Ensemble, Reflexes

How to Play: Organize students in a diamond pattern evenly spaced with enough room to move their arms freely, all facing in the one direction. Allow several students to stand out to observe. Using slow music, ask students to follow the student at the leading point, students should be instructed to keep the movement even and slow (similar to *tai chi*) as it is not a race nor is this exercise to trick others. Encourage students to use different levels and backward movements. The leader changes as, for example, the person facing front pivots to the left, then a new person is in front and begins leading. The goal is to follow and change leaders with as little disruption as possible to the group movement.

Student Review of *The Emperor's New Threads*

By: _____

I give this play a (circle the number of stars): ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

My favorite part of the play was _____

because _____

_____ .

My favorite character was _____

because _____

_____ .

If I had choose what I liked best, I would choose (circle one)

the story the songs the characters sang the costumes the scenery

because _____

_____ .

KidSeries Teacher Comment Form

Please fill out as much of this comment form. Then either: 1) mail it to Lea Pinsky, Education Director, Lifeline Theatre, 6912 North Glenwood Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60626; or 2) fax it to 773-761-4582. If your students have completed review sheets, please mail them or drop them off with this form. Thank you.

School: _____ Grade Level: _____ Number of Students: _____

Show your class saw: _____

Have you attended a Lifeline KidSeries show before? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, which one(s) have you seen?

Did you read your class the book before coming to see the show? ___ Yes ___ No

What was the strongest part of the show for you, or what did you like best?

What was the weakest part of the show for you, or what did you like least?

Would you bring your students to another performance at Lifeline? __ Yes __ No

Why or why not? _____

Which activities in the study guide were most beneficial to your students, and how did they benefit from those activities? (If possible, please give specific examples.)

Are there any other books you would like to see Lifeline adapt? Which books?

(optional) Name _____ Email _____