



PARENT GUIDE: WE FOUND A HAT

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

ABOUT THE PLAY

Our play takes place in the desert out west and is the story of 2 tortoises (Kai & Sizi) and how their friendship is challenged when they find a hat during their migration to their winter burrow. The play is narrated by Sun/Moon and Cactus who get the action started by placing a bet for 'braggin' rights forever' whether Kai & Sizi really are the best friends in the desert. As Kai & Sizi set out on their journey from their summer burrow to their winter burrow, they first stumble upon the Hat and declare it 'mighty fine'. They encounter obstacles along their route: a river to cross, a snake to outsmart, and a cactus grove to navigate. They overcome these hardships with the courage and cleverness they think the hat is giving them. Ultimately, the obstacle of having to share the hat is too much and they decide to leave the hat behind. Kai is very upset by this, but during a dream with both tortoises wearing a hat, he comes around. As the 2 tortoises face a mountain to climb in the final leg of their journey, a storm comes along. They work together, helping each other bring out the courage and cleverness they found when wearing the hat, to get up the mountain and into the safety of their winter home.

ACTORS

There are 4 actors in the play: Kai & Sizi (our 2 tortoises). Sun/Moon is played by the same actor with a simple costume change and acts as the narrator of the play. Our 4th actor plays Cactus who helps narrate with Sun/Moon and also plays the role of the Snake. The Snake costume is hat that looks like a snake head and a coiled puppet that the actor wraps around his body with Sun/Moon puppeting the tail.

All 4 actors use an 'old west' dialect during the show.

(Con't)

SCENERY, PROPS & PUPPETS

The scenery for the show evokes a landscape of the desert with a small covered wagon that the actors will use to change location and also store props and instruments in. There are two stair units that look like rocks from the front and a hitching post on the back that are wheeled around the space as well. Two Cacti units are also brought on stage to help create our Cactus Grove along with the actors (Sun/Moon & Cactus) who pretend to be cacti as well.

The props are very simple items that give the suggestion of the larger item. For example, we use a blue piece of fabric and small cut out wave shapes to evoke a river; a painted pool noodle as a branch; and a painted sheet to create a rain cloud.

The cast will use live instruments throughout the show to add to the 2 musical numbers and also punctuate various comedic bits. Instruments used are maracas, a tambourine, a harmonica, a set of bells, and a slide whistle.

LIGHTS AND SOUNDS

We Found a Hat includes 2 songs throughout the show with sound effects punctuating comedic bits in a cartoon style as well as the natural sounds heard in the desert such as owls hooting and screeching, a coyote howl and wind gusts. The lights will change colors during the show, going from sunrise to sunset. There are also constellation effects seen on the backdrop during the dream sequence with, of course, a mirror ball to help create the magic of the dream.

The house lights will be left up during the show and the sound will be reduced by approximately 20%.

THEATRE LAYOUT

When you enter the theatre, you will walk across the stage floor and up 2 steps to the first row of seats. The seating is 8 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.

WE FOUND A HAT PARENT CUE SHEET

Action on Stage	Sensory Sensitivities & Difficult Concepts
House Manager will give a curtain speech	Stage lights will dim and actors will enter the stage as the speech finishes up.
Introduction to the desert	The stage lights will shift to dusk (blues) colors and a coyote will be heard howling in the distance. Cactus will play the harmonica during the scene. Sun will change to Moon. Kai will pretend to fall into an imaginary river.
Kai & Sizi prepare for their journey	A sound effect of a wind gust is heard as it blows on Kai. Kai will exclaim in excitement at various times throughout the scene. An owl is heard as the tortoises settle in to sleep.
The first day of the journey	The lights transition to daytime, Moon changes to Sun and Cactus plays a maraca to indicate the new day. An owl is heard screeching overhead. SONG: "Walking 'Round" Cactus will play the harmonica during the song.
Kai and Sizi find the Hat	The stage lights will dim and a dramatic sound effect will be heard when Cactus places the Hat on a rock for the tortoises to find. When Kai spots the hat, a sound effect of a harp and chimes will be heard. Sizi throws a rock at the hat to knock it off the rock, a cartoon sound effect accompanies the throw. When the tortoises each try on the hat the stage lights will dim, an angelic tone will be heard and Cactus will jingle a set of bells.
Kai and Sizi come across a river	Some blue fabric will be used to create a river, the sound of a river flowing will be heard. Sizi finds a branch to assist them across the river. A splash will be heard when Kai gets into the river. Kai is nervous the Hat will get wet in the river and sits up (making Sizi nervous he will tip). The wind gusts and pushes Kai to the shore. A triumphant trumpet will be heard.
Kai and Sizi come across a snake	An owl screeches overhead. Cactus will use a tambourine to underscore Sun's exposition about desert animals. 'Chariot's of Fire' will be heard as Kai demonstrates his fast running, with a record scratch at the end. Cactus will become the Snake and Sun will use a set of shakers to create the rattle. The snake will threaten the tortoises by hissing at them. Stage lights will create large shadows of the actors onto the backdrop. Sizi will pretend to be a Fox and 'roar' at the Snake with support from a sound effect. Triumphant trumpets will be heard.
Kai and Sizi argue	Kai & Sizi argue about who gets to wear the Hat. Cactus will jingle bells when Sizi pretends to be a fox again. Kai will exclaim when he gets that Hat back.

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Action on Stage	Sensory Sensitivities & Difficult Concepts
Kai & Sizi come across a cacti grove	Two Cacti will be brought onstage to create the grove with Sun & Cactus playing cacti as well. A rhythmic beat will be heard as Kai navigates the Cacti. Triumphant trumpets are heard when Kai gets through. Sizi will exit the through the vom as she walks around the grove. The stage will transition to evening and back to daytime, a rooster will be heard crowing, an owl will be heard screeching.
Sizi joins Kai again	Kai & Sizi argue about the hat again. An owl is heard hooting. Sizi decides nobody can have the hat, a dramatic sound effect is heard, an owl screeches and the lights shift, casting large shadows on the backdrop. Music will underscore the tortoises as they say goodbye to the hat. Kai sobs loudly when he says goodbye to the hat. Cactus will play the harmonica.
Sizi & Kai share a dream	An owl hoots. Kai & Sizi share a dream where they both have the hat. The stage lights will transition to night, two blankets will cover the back of the stair units to create stars. Constellations of Hats will appear on the backdrop. Music underscores the movement of the tortoises 'flying' through the sky with their hats. The mirror ball will be used in the movement sequence as well.
Kai & Sizi climb a mountain	Lights will transition to daylight, an owl screeches. A storm blows in as they start to climb the mountain. Thunder and rain is heard, a large sheet is used to create a rain cloud. The lights will darken and the lights will flash faintly to create a lightning effect. An angelic sound and bells will jingle when Kai & Sizi pretend to put the hat on again.
Kai & Sizi make it to the winter burrow	The lights will transition to daytime when the tortoises reach the winter burrow and the storm ends. The tortoises give each other rocks as gifts and pretend they are hats.
Finale	SONG: 'When We are Home' - Kai & Sizi will use maracas during the song, Sun will use a tambourine, Cactus will use a harmonica.
Second Finale/Bows	The actors will have large cue cards and invite the audience to sing along!