

StoryBook Theater

EDUCATOR'S CURRICULUM GUIDE

Syd the Solstice Kid



These educational resources have been underwritten, in part, by 4Culture, using funds from the King County Lodging Tax.

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HELLO, TEACHERS!

Thank you for choosing to bring your class to StoryBook Theater's production of *Syd the Solstice Kid*. We are confident that you will find our show entertaining. We have created this packet for you to help make seeing our play an even richer learning experience for your students. We have included some pre-show preparatory reading materials and a few post-show activities and games. All of our exercises were carefully developed to meet the Washington State Learning Standards. Not all activities may be practical for your particular grade level, so feel free to pick and choose, as well as modify, from the activities below to best meet your classroom's learning needs. They are not meant to be followed to the letter, but to be used as ideas for your own classroom's creative dynamic. Have fun, and we hope you enjoy the play!

~ The StoryBook Staff

Synopsis

The play begins with Syd who introduces us to many of the different words for "sun" that are used around the world. The ever-curious Syd wants to know why the days are so short in December, and where the sun goes. When Syd's friends appear, they each tell a solstice story from across the globe.

The first story comes from Scandinavia when the universe was created. The Sun Goddess, Sol, and the Sun God, Mani, were assigned their roles in the universe. Sol's job was to shine all the time to warm the earth, while Mani was to hang above the earth and wax and wane and have an occasional eclipse. The other gods realized that if Sol and Mani were doing their jobs all the time, then the earth would get too hot, so they needed to create night time for the earth to cool back down. The gods decided that wolves were the answer! Wolves would eat Sol and Mani, and since they are gods too, they could not die. While they're in the wolves' stomachs, the earth would have night, but as Sol and Mani were in the wolves' bellies, Sol began to glow, and slowly pushed her way out and the sun came back.

The second story comes from the Inuit tribe that lived way up north where it was dark. Syd and their friends tell the story of Crow who spent his days flying from north to south and back again, telling stories about the warm and bright sun in the south. The Inuit people asked Crow to fly south and bring back the sun so that they could see better for hunting and to stay warm. After much convincing, Crow flew south and found a woman returning home to the lodge of her father where there was a box that glowed. Thinking it must be the sun, he magically turned himself into a speck of dust, convinced the woman's son to take the ball



of light out of the box and outside to play. Once they were outside, Crow turned back into his natural form and took the ball of light and flew north. As Crow was flying north, he dropped the ball of light and it shattered, releasing all the daylight and brightening the sky. The Inuit people celebrated, but Crow warned them that the light would not last forever, and that they would have six months of daylight while the other six months were dark.

The third story comes from China, where the Dongzhi Festival, also known as the Winter Solstice Festival, is one of the most important festivals celebrated during the winter. The origins of the festival can be traced back to the well-known yin and yang philosophy of balance and harmony. This festival marks the return of light, where the ensuing daylight hours are longer and thus a positive energy is released. In northern China, it is a tradition to eat dumplings on Dongzhi because according to stories passed down over centuries, winters were so cold that children's ears would freeze and fall off! Legend has it that an old and famous doctor decided he would help the freezing children, so he began making dumplings to put on their ears to keep them warm.

The final story comes from the Kalahari Desert in Africa where the Kung San people lived. In this story, the world is lit by the Sun Man whose armpits glowed and shined. Whenever the Sun Man raised his arms, it was day, and whenever the Sun Man lowered them, it was night. As the years went by Sun Man grew tired and sore, and he could not keep his arms up. All the animals across the land were cold and scared, so they worked together to find the Sun Man and raise him up into the sky where he became the sun that we know today.



Theater Terms

The activities that follow will incorporate these important terms and concepts.

- **Character** - the people in the play
- **Setting** - where the action takes place
- **Plot** - the sequence of actions, from beginning to end
- **Improvisation** - in acting, making up the lines as you go without planning them
- **Pantomime** - to act without words, only moving your body
- **Prop** - any object used by a character in a play
- **Set** - on the stage, this is what shows the different settings, like the background or furniture

Character List

- Syd
- Kaysy
- Simon
- Deonn
- Sol
- Mani
- Wolves
- Inuits
- Crow
- Mother
- Chief
- Son
- Children
- Doctor
- Sun Man
- Grandfather Mantis
- Rock Rabbit
- Mongoose
- Blue Crane



Vocabulary

- **Chilblains** - A painful, swollen blister caused by cold temperatures
- **Cultures** - The shared beliefs, practices, and experiences of a group of people
- **Cycle of Life** - A cycle is a pattern that always comes in a particular order and never ends, like the four seasons
- **Destination** - A place that someone or something is going
- **Devoured** - Ate quickly
- **Dumplings** - Small balls of cooked dough filled with vegetables, meat or fish, that are either steamed, boiled, or fried
- **Eclipse** - When something blocks the light, like when the moon crosses between the earth and the sun
- **Exclaimed** - Cried out suddenly, usually in anger or surprise
- **Fascinated** - Extremely interested or excited
- **Frightened** - Afraid or anxious
- **Ginormous** - Extremely large
- **Helios** - Greek word for sun
- **Lodge** - A small house at the edge of a defined area, like a park
- **Scandinavia** - The part of the world containing Norway, Sweden, and Denmark
- **Sol** - Spanish word for sun
- **Solstice** - the longest day of the year (summer solstice) and the shortest day of the year (winter solstice)
- **Tai You** - Japanese word for sun
- **Viking** - Scandinavian pirates and traders from over 1,000 years ago
- **Vibrant** - Full of energy and enthusiasm
- **Village** - A very small town
- **Wax & Wane** - To grow or shrink in size, number, or strength
- **Zon** - Dutch word for Sun



ACTIVITY #1 - GOING TO THE THEATER

(Grades PreK - 4)

Learning Targets: Students will practice and define appropriate behaviors when seeing a live performance.

Materials: Board or paper and marker to make list of student ideas

Room Arrangement: Seated circle to start, with room to walk around

What the TEACHER does:

1. Initiate a discussion with questions such as "how do we behave at school?" "how do we behave at home?" "on the playground?" "at the library?" etc.
2. Introduce the question "how do we behave at the theater?" and encourage students to share ideas.
3. Designate areas of your classroom to be various locations. Have students move around the room, and encourage students to act out the appropriate behavior when they are in each space.
4. Once they have established the appropriate behaviors, write a list of ground rules that will apply when going to the theater.

Adapted from:

<http://www.usq.edu.au/artsworx/schoolresources/piedpiperofhamelin/preparingyourstudents>

Learning Standards: Theater: Cn11.1

Common Core Language Arts: SL.1, SL.2, SL.3

ACTIVITY #2 - SOUNDINGS

(Grades PreK - 2)

Learning Targets: An actor's voice helps create and express the character. Students will explore many variations of sound that are possible with their voices.

Materials: none

Room Arrangement: Open space, players sit in a circle

What the TEACHER does:

1. Discuss how actors use their voices to express different characters and emotions in a play. You may have volunteers name some specific characters with distinct voices. How would they describe the voice? (squeaky, nasal, low, shy...?)
2. Explain that players will take turns saying their first names as quickly/ slowly/unusually as they can, focusing on voice variations. The sound will be passed around the circle. The activity continues until everyone has experimented with and passed their own name.
3. Model for the students by exploring your own name, using a voice variation. Pass it around the circle. Try a different variation.

4. Ask for a volunteer to start the activity and continue until every player has had a turn. Encourage different voice variations—the more variety, the better!

5. Ask for feedback after the activity. What did they notice about exploring their voice? Was it easy/difficult to do?

Extensions: List the characters from the play "Syd the Solstice Kid" Describe and imitate how their voices might sound.

Learning Standards: Theater: Pr4.1, Pr5.1, Cn10.1

ACTIVITY #3 - THE SUN IS RISING

(Grades PreK - 2)

Teach the song lyrics below, written to the tune of "The Ants Go Marching One-By-One"

"The sun is rising in the east!
Uh-huh! Uh-huh!
The sun is setting in the west!
Uh-huh! Uh-huh!
My nose is north, my tail is south!
And so I turn myself about
And the sun keeps rising in the east
And setting in the west!
Boom boom boom boom boom!"

Explore varieties of voices and characters! How would Sun Man sing this song? How would the cold children in the Chinese story? How would it sound if you were tired? If you were angry? Etc.

Learning Standards: Theater: Pr4.1, Pr5.1, Cn10.1; Music: Pr4.3





ACTIVITY #4 - WORLD MAP (Grades 1-4)

Supplies Needed: Crayons, markers, or colored pencils; scissors; glue sticks; continent outlines and blue construction paper for each student.

Have the kids color in the continents and label them. Cut the continents out and glue them into position on their blue paper using a globe or world map as a guide. After the maps are finished, identify all the locations that are discussed in the play (see list below). Are these locations close to each other? Does seeing where these locations are on the map change how you understand the stories told in the play? Has anyone visited any of these locations and have a story to share?

List of Cultures/Nationalities: Greek, Dutch, French, Irish, Icelandic, African, Argentinian, Japanese

List of Locations: Africa, Alaska, Canada, China, Denmark, Greenland, Japan, Kalahari Desert, Norway, Sweden

EALRs: Social Studies 3.1.1, 3.2.1, 4.2.2

Learning Standards: Visual Arts: Cr2.3, Cn11.1

ACTIVITY #5 - MAGIC BOX (Grades PreK - 3)

Learning Targets: Students will improvise with an imaginary prop

Materials: 1 medium sized empty box, which may optionally be decorated with wrapping paper

Room Arrangement: Seated circle

What the TEACHER does:

1. Tell the students that you have something very special to share with them in your magic box.
2. Invite them to watch you as you lift "it" out of the box and hold "it"/ use "it". (basketball, kitten, yo-yo...)
3. Have students raise their hand if they think they know what "it" is.
4. Put "it" back in the magic box and call on students for guesses.
5. When someone guesses correctly, ask how they knew...what were the clues? Take "it" out of the box again to demonstrate or show more specifics if necessary.
6. Invite a student to take something else out of the box to share with the class. Encourage very specific motions and gestures to help the class guess the object.
7. Continue this process until all have had a turn creating an "it".

Extensions:

Ask each student to think of something they would like to put in the magic box. What would they choose? Share ideas with the class. After you have lifted "it" out of the box, ask if any students would like to hold "it"? Hand "it" to them and encourage them to improvise.

Explain that "it" changes quickly. Create an "it" and pass it to students. Students will accept it the same way that it is given, but then they will transform the magic "it" into something else, establish in carefully through specific gesture and motion, and then pass it on.

Learning Standards: Th:Cr1.1, Pr5.1

AFTER THE SHOW:

DISCUSSION, VISUAL ART AND WRITING PROMPTS

1. You heard Solstice Stories from several different cultures during the play. Does your culture have a story about the sun or solstice? Write it down and share it with your classmates!
2. Create your own solstice story! Why do you think the sun goes away in the winter? How do you think it comes back? Be creative!
3. Write a letter to your favorite character in the play. What did you admire about them? Do you share something in common? How did their character in the play compare to the character in the original story?
4. Describe the StoryBook set. How many different settings were there? Describe how the artist designed them. Draw a picture of your favorite set from the play.
5. Describe the StoryBook costumes. What were they made out of? Which one was your favorite? Draw a picture of it.

*Learning Standards: Theater:Cr1.1, Pr4.1, Re8.1, Cn10.1, Cn11.2
Common Core Language Arts: W.3, W.5, W.8, SL.2, SL.5, L.1, L.2*

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