

StoryBook Theater

EDUCATOR'S CURRICULUM GUIDE

AAA presents

The Little Engine That Could

StoryBook Theater Focus:
BELIEVE IN YOURSELF



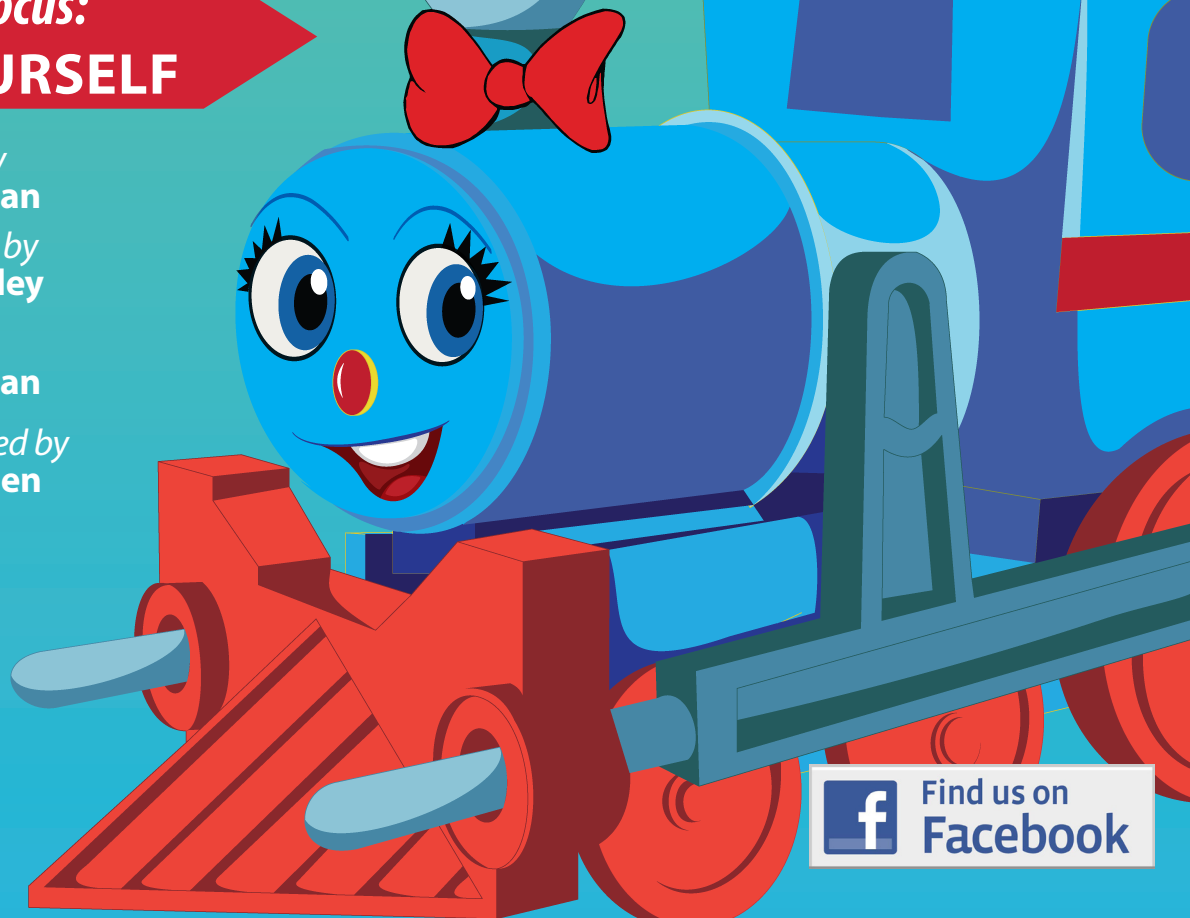
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The Little Engine That Could



WELCOME, EDUCATORS!

HELLO, TEACHERS!

Thank you for choosing to bring your class to StoryBook Theater's production of *The Little Engine That Could*. We're confident that you'll find our show entertaining and educational. 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 in Arts, Communication, Reading, Writing, and Math. 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're not meant to be followed to the letter, but to be used as ideas for your own classroom's creative dynamic.

We would like to thank AAA Washington for their generous support helping to ensure StoryBook Theater is accessible to all. Have fun and enjoy the play!

~ The StoryBook Staff

SYNOPSIS

Dolly, Clown, and Bear are trying to get over the mountain to their new families when the train they're riding breaks down. Broken Engine apologizes for the trouble and suggests that the toys wait for another train to come to take them over the mountain. The first train to arrive is talking on her phone. Phone Train is happy to offer the toys a ride, but they decide that it would not be safe because she is too distracted by talking on her phone. While the toys and the Broken Engine wait, they play the Train Alphabet Game to pass the time. They think and think and think of a different train word for each letter of the alphabet. The second train to arrive loves a good party but is also very distracted while driving. The toys say, "Thank You, but No Thank You," and wait for another train to come along and help them. They continue playing their game until a third train arrives. This train is not paying very close attention to their driving, and almost hits the toys! Although the Inattentive Train is happy to offer the toys a ride too, they again say, "Thank You, but No Thank You," and return to their waiting game. After what feels like a very long time, a fourth train arrives. This Little Engine is happy to help but is afraid it might not have the power to get them all up the mountain. With some encouragement from the Broken Engine and the Toys, the Little Engine agrees to give it a try and promises the toys that she will drive safely to the top. Although it is a hard journey, the Little Engine makes it to the top of the mountain with encouragement from her new Toy friends, and she gets them safely to their new families.



BEFORE THE SHOW:

Here are some ways you can prepare your class to see the play.

- It's a good idea to eat a snack before the trip and use the restroom before the show starts, so students are not distracted during the play.
- Get your students excited about the show by sharing your knowledge and excitement! Reading a story book version of the play is often helpful so students can identify the characters in the play and also generate more discussion after seeing the production.
- Make sure students understand that what they will see on stage is make-believe, and that the actors in the costumes are safe people. This is especially important with potentially scary characters.
- Encourage your students to be active audience members. All StoryBook Theater performances include some audience participation, such as singing, laughing and clapping. There may be times when the characters on stage speak directly to the audience and ask questions. There are some times when the actors will be talking only to each other, and that's when the audience should be quiet.
- Try out a few of the activities in this guide. They are designed to make your StoryBook Theater experience last longer than the 55-minute show.



Theater Terms

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

- **Character** - the "who" in a play, scene, or story, which can be a person, creature, or thing
- **Setting** - the "where" of a play, scene, or story including the time and place in which the action occurs
- **Action** - the "what" of a play, scene, or story; incidents and events within the story (beginning-middle-ending) that move the plot along
- **Conflict** - the problems that the characters in the play have to solve
- **Prop** - any object used by an actor in a scene
- **Set** - the scenery or background for a play

Character List

- Clown
- Dolly
- Bear
- Broken Engine
- Phone Train
- Party Train
- Inattentive Train
- Little Engine

Settings

- Train Station
- Mountain



Vocabulary

- **Caboose** - the train car at the very back of the train
- **California Zephyr** - a passenger train that runs between Chicago and San Francisco
- **Distracted** - unable to concentrate
- **Engineer** - a person who designs, builds, and/or operates an engine, like on a train
- **Enthusiastic** - showing a lot of enjoyment or excitement
- **Flatcar** - a railroad car with no sides or roof
- **Gratifying** - gives pleasure or satisfaction
- **Hibernate** - to remain inactive for an extended period of time
- **Locomotive** - the engine of a train
- **Passenger** - a person who is travelling in a vehicle, but not driving

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, 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: 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 - GIVING AND ACCEPTING

(Grades 1-4)

Learning Targets: Students will develop improvisation skills by using voice (dialogue) and body (action) to share ideas with an audience.

Materials: none

Room Arrangement: Open space, players sit in a circle

What the TEACHER does:

1. Divide students into pairs. Identify one student as A and the other as B.
2. Explain to the students that A is going to give B an imaginary gift. B will "open" the gift, decide what it is and exclaim "It is a _____!" B will thank A; and A will accept the thanks.
3. Have the students reverse roles.
4. Continue until all pairs have played both roles.
5. Encourage the students to share what they have observed from this activity. Which role did they like best? Why?

Extensions: What are some of the different reactions you noticed from the gift receivers? What type of gifts might give such responses?

Try the game again, pretending to be a specific character (Dolly, Bear, Party Train, Little Engine...) giving/receiving gifts. How did your reactions change?

Learning Standards: Theater: Cr 1.1, Cr2.1, Cr5.1, Cr6.1, Pr5.1, Cn10.1



ACTIVITY #3 - MANY VOICES

(Grades PreK - 2)

Learning Targets: Students will explore the use of voice to express different feelings and characters

Materials: none

Room Arrangement: Seated circle

What the TEACHER does:

1. Ask how people use their voices differently to convey different feelings, moods, wants, etc.
2. Explain that actors use their voices to express different characters in a play by changing the sound of their voices.
3. Gather students in a seated circle.
4. Instruct students to echo your voice.
5. Using your regular speaking voice, say the phrase "This is my talking voice." (students will echo)
6. Substitute different words for "talking" and change your voice to match each time. Examples: "This is my whisper voice" (echo)
7. Ask students for different voices to try and initiate. (Loud, soft, robot, alien, high, low, sleepy, excited, sad.) Echo each time.
8. Encourage students to try different voices that might indicate a different kind of person or animal and have the class echo.

Extensions:

1. Before the play: List the characters from the story. Describe how you think each character's voice will sound. Think about the sounds the actual animals make (ducks, chickens, cats, geese, swans, foxes, wolves, mermaids, etc.), and how they might affect the way the character sounds.
2. Add a movement to go along with each different voice in the activity above.
3. Have students tell short stories using different voices, either to express the story better, or just to have fun using a different voice. Ask students to make observations about how the different voice made the story mean a different thing or have a different feeling. (ghost story, joke, mad, happy, sad, etc.)

Learning Standards: Theater: Cr1.1, Cr3.1, Cr4.1, Pr4.1, Pr5.1, Pr6.1



ACTIVITY #4 - TRAIN LETTER GAME

(Grades PreK - 4)

This game is played by the characters in the play. Students should work together to think of a train related word for each letter of the alphabet. Suggestions are listed below.

- A** Abandon, Accident, Adequate, Aid, All aboard!, All-clear, Amtrak, Appeal, Automation, Axle
- B** Baggage cars, Ballast, Bankrupt, Baron, Billow, Blocks, Blue-collar, Boiler, Bolt, Box car, Brake, Brakeman, Branch line, Buff
- C** Cab, Caboose, Call, Cargo, Carry, Cars, Chug, Circuit, Cities, Class, Clerk, Coaches, Colored-light, Comfort, Communication, Commute, Commuter, Competition, Conductor, Conglomerate, Connect, Container, Controls, Coolies, Corporation, Costs, Coupler, Crew, Cross-tie, Crossings, Curve
- D** Denim, Derail, Detection, Device, Diesel, Dining car, Dining car, Direction, Discontinue, Disputes, Distance, Double-deck, Downhill
- E** Efficient, Electric, Elevated, Engine, Engineer, Equipment, Express, Extend, Extent
- F** Fast, Fast-track, Federal, Finances, Fireman, Fishplate, Flange, Flatcar, Freight, Frontier, Fuel, Future
- G** Gangs, Gas-turbine, Gauge, Government, Grade, Grant
- H** Hauling, Heavy, High-speed, Historical, History, Hobby, Hopper car, Hotbox, Hydraulics
- I** Immigrants, Industry, Inefficient, Inspection, Interchange, Intercity, Iron plates
- J** Jam, Job, Joint bar, Journal box, Journey, Junction
- K** Keen, Keep
- L** Label, Labor, Landscape, Line, Linking, Locomotive, Long-distance, Luxurious
- M** Machinery, Mail, Main-line, Maintenance, Major, Mediate, Merge, Metro-liner, Model, Money, Monorail, Multiple track
- N** Network, Nonstop
- O** Oil-burning, Operation, Order, Overall, Overheat, Overpass, Overuse
- P** Passenger, Passion, Piggyback service, Popular, Power, Precaution, Private car, Provide, Public, Puff, Pull, Pullman
- Q** Quality, Quantity, Query, Quest
- R** Rail car, Rail yard, Railroad, Rails, Rapido, Rate, Redirect, Refrigeration, Registration, Regulate, Repair, Retarder, Rights, Roadbed, Rolling stock, Route, Run, Running
- S** Safety, Scanner, Scenery, Seats, Security, Semaphore, Serve, Service, Settlers, Shape, Shipping, Shop, Sidings, Sight see, Signal, Size, Sleek, Sleeping car, Smoke, Snack bar, Speed, Spike, Stable, Standard, Station, Steam, Steam-power, Steel, Stop, Strength, Strike, Subway, Switch, Swivel, System
- T** Tanker, Technology, Terminal, TGV, Third rail, Ticket, Tie, Toil, Tough, Town, Toy, Tracks, Traffic, Train, Transcontinental, Transportation, Traveler, Trees, Tunnel
- U** Uncouple, Unions, Unprofitable, Uphill
- V** Vibration, Vision, Vital
- W** Weather, Weight, Weld, Westward, Wheels, Whistle, Whistle stop, Wire, Work rules, Worker, Worldwide, Worn, Wreck
- X** A railroad crossing sign
- Y** Yard
- Z** Zeal, Zephyr



ACTIVITY #5 - MUSIC AND FEELINGS (Grades K - 4)

Materials: A large piece of drawing paper and markers or crayons for each student, instrumental music recordings

Room Arrangement: Tables or desks with chairs for each student with space to move easily between and around them

Main Event (AFTER seeing the play)

1. Talk about how the characters felt when they sang different songs or how the songs made the kids feel.
2. Give each student a piece of paper and some markers or crayons. Have students fold their papers to create creases that separate four quadrants.
3. Play short samples of instrumental songs (for example: Baby Genius Learning with Vivaldi, African drumming, Native American flutes, Swing music, movie underscoring, etc.) and have the students draw what the music makes them think of in one quadrant of their paper. Repeat to fill either one side or both sides of the paper.
4. When everyone is finished, create a gallery walk by laying papers out on desks in plain view and have students walk through the gallery.
5. Ask students to point out any similarities or marked differences between the drawings. Ask students to make observations about how the music changed the kind of drawing in each quadrant, and how each person interpreted the music differently.

Learning Standards: Music: Re8.1, Re9.1, Cn10.0, Cn11.0

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Don't miss the next StoryBook Theater production...



April 13- May 19, 2019

AFTER THE SHOW:

ACTIVITY #6 - BE A GOOD PASSENGER

(Grades PreK-4)

In the play, the three engines who offered to help pull the toys over the mountain were not always paying attention to what they were doing. They were distracted.

1. Do you remember what those trains were doing that was distracting?
2. How do you behave when riding in the car. What kinds of things do you usually do?
3. What do you do to get the driver's attention?
4. Do any of your actions make driving difficult for the adult behind the wheel?
5. What can you do differently to be a good passenger?

Students should make a craft of a train and write on it one thing they can do to be a good passenger. Keep it in the car as a reminder!

DISCUSSION, VISUAL ART AND WRITING PROMPTS

1. The Toys refused help from some very distracted Trains. What other ways can people be distracted while they're driving?
2. What do you already know about trains? How many have ever ridden on a train or a subway? Where did they go? Ask: What do trains carry besides people? Have you ever seen a freight train? How many cars do you think it had? If possible, show children photographs of different kinds of trains. Ask if children have toy train sets that they might bring to school.
3. Write a letter to your favorite character in the play. What did you admire about them? Do you share something in common?
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: Cr2.3, Cn10.1, Re7.1, Re8.1,

Visual Arts: Cr1.2, Cr2.2, Cr3.1, Re7.2, Cn10.1

Language Arts: W.1, W.3