

Study Guide For Teachers

Catskill Puppet Theatre In *The Lion's Whiskers*

presented by

Young Audiences

(866) 500-9265

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Lion's Whiskers is a musical adaptation of an Ethiopian folktale, featuring a cast of human characters and African animals. A stepmother seeking to win the heart of her husband's little boy consults a wise man. He says that she will gain the boy's affection only if she plucks a wild lion's whiskers. The show, about courage and love, features masks, puppets and original songs.

LEARNING GOALS

- To provide a quality example of puppetry including the elements of production, such as movement, music, sculpture and playwriting as well as light, sound and scene designs.
- To give the audience an opportunity to ask questions about puppetry in general.
- To teach the concept of self-sacrifice for a greater good.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Folklore is an important part of human society. It is the collected wisdom of the people from ancient times to the present. Folklore is stories, songs, beliefs, legends, myths, arts, crafts, costumes, music, dance, rhymes, and holiday celebrations.

Folktales are the most popular of folklore. They are stories that people like to read and tell others. Sometimes, people used crafts or puppets to tell folktales. Puppets added movement and excitement to stories. Finally, oral folktales were written down or tape-recorded by scholars, teachers, missionaries, and others. People liked the stories and wanted them for others to read.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

Discuss the following questions with your students:

1. What folktales do you already know about?
2. Do you think puppets help a storyteller tell a tale? How?
3. Do you think a puppet's character is shaped by its movement and voice? How? Give an example.
4. When a puppet is talking, should the puppet move or stand still? Why or why not?

VOCABULARY WORDS

Students will learn more about the ancient form of puppetry through an African folktale.

Ventriloquist	Puppeteer
Marionette	Folklore
Scholar	Missionaries
Ancient	Generation
Myth	Legend
Campaign	

AFTER THE PROGRAM

1. Some say a lion is king of the jungle. What is the first thing you would do if you were king of the jungle?
2. Pretend animals are selecting a president instead of a king. Write a campaign speech for one of the candidates.
3. Read more about Ethiopia at the library. Find Ethiopia on a map. Where in Ethiopia do you think the folktale took place?
4. A **fact** is a statement that can be proved true. An opinion is a statement that reflects judgment. Opinions cannot be proved true. Write one fact about what a king needs to be like. Write one opinion about what a king needs to be like.
5. Write a short description about your favorite character in "The Lion's Whiskers" program.
6. Write your own tale about how lions got their whiskers.

Puppets can be quick and easy to make:

- Dress up a paper bag with crayons, yarn, buttons or fabric.
- Paint a face on an old, wooden spoon.
- Make finger puppets with an old glove. Cut off the glove's fingers and you have 5 puppet fingers to decorate with lipsticks or eyebrow pencils.

ARTIST INFORMATION

Since 1979, John Potocnik and Carol Mandigo, co-founders of the Catskill Puppet Theater, have been touring internationally, enchanting young and old with their delightful musical productions. Combining backgrounds in art, music, drama and American folk culture, they are one of the nation's finest touring companies. Catskill has received accolades from such premier venues as The Ottawa, Calgary and Winnipeg Children's Festivals, The New England Puppetry Series, The New York State Museum and hundreds more schools, libraries, fairs and festivals.

RESOURCES

The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction by Jan Brunvand (Norton, 1968).

Storytelling with Puppets by Connie Champlin (American Library Association, 1985).

Here is a wonderful resource for puppets and puppet related materials

The Puppetry Store
1525 24th Street Southeast
Auburn, Washington 98002
206-833-8377