

Animal Tales Theatre

Grades 3-5

Standards Taught

Fine Arts: Theatre Standards

NA-T.K-4.1 and NA-T.5-8.1 Script Writing by Planning and Recording Improvisations Based on Personal Experience and Heritage, Imagination, Literature, and History
NA-T.K-4.2 and NA-T.5-8.2 Acting by Assuming Roles and Interacting in Improvisations
NA-T.K-4.4 and NA-T.5-8.4 Directing by Planning Classroom Dramatizations
NA-T.K-4.5 and NA-T.5-8.5 Researching by Finding Information to Support Classroom Dramatizations

Language Arts Standards

NL-ENG.K-12.4 Communication Skills
NL-ENG.K-12.5 Communication Strategies
NL-ENG.K-12.6 Applying Knowledge
NL-ENG.K-12.11 Participating in Society
NL-ENG.K-12.12 Applying Language Skills

Materials Needed

- Socks
- Paper Plates
- Brown Paper Lunch Bags
- Other Craft Supplies (including hot glue and gun, buttons, yarn, ribbon, popsicle sticks, straws, crayons, permanent markers and/or paint)
- Large Cardboard Box (Example: a refrigerator box or television box)
- Duct Tape
- One Animal Puppet (This can be a puppet you buy or make yourself.)
- HOTSheets (one for each student; topic will differ by group)
 - [Help Homeless Pets](#)
 - [Combat Cruelty](#)
 - [Friends for Hens](#)
 - [A Cause for Paws](#) (Stop Puppy Mills)
 - [Go Wild for Wildlife](#)
 - [Fight Fur](#)
- [Play Creation Worksheet #1](#) (One copy is needed for each group.)
- [Play Creation Worksheet #2](#) (One copy is needed for each group. You will need to make multiple copies of page two for each group.)

Preparation

1. Create a puppet theatre made of a large cardboard box. Design your own or use some of the following designs: (some designs may call for materials not mentioned above)
 - <http://familycrafts.about.com/od/royalcrafts/a/cbbccastle.htm>
 - <http://familyfun.go.com/arts-and-crafts/buildmodel/feature/famf48puppetstage/famf48puppetstage.html>
 - http://www.ehow.com/how_2081661_make-puppet-theatre.html



2. Create or purchase a puppet of your own to act as a host or hostess.

Opening Activity or Strategy

1. Greet the group and introduce your puppet (by name) as the Animal Tales Theatre Manager. Explain that he/she will be a guest speaker. Ask the class to give him/her a round of applause as he/she prepares to speak.
2. Ask students to listen to the Animal Tales Theatre Manager as he/she tells about his/her job in educating others about how to protect animals. Explain to the students that the theatre needs script writers and actors. (Example: Good day students! I have the important job in finding script writers and actors who will work to protect animals. The good news is that we are opening an Animal Tales Theatre right here in [name of town/city.] The bad news is that the company did not send any script writers or actors to the theatre. But Mr. /Mrs. [name of adult] sent me here because he/she thought you could help.)
3. Ask students to raise their hands if they feel they can help (name of puppet.)

Lesson Body

1. Explain (Either using the puppet or without the puppet) to students that the first step in getting the theatre ready is to create a few plays.
2. Split the students into groups of four or five and provide each student with a HOTSHEET. (Each group will receive a different HOTSHEET.)
3. Ask each group to read the HOTSHEET highlighting or underlining information that they feel are important main points.
4. Pass out [Play Creation Worksheet #1](#) to each group. Ask them to fill out the worksheet stating the main idea or problem and brainstorm ideas they have to create a play about solving the problem. (You may wish to time this activity for 6-8 minutes.)
5. After reviewing that each group has found the main idea, ask the groups to spend four minutes picking their favorite idea from the brainstorming session to turn into a play. Ask groups to circle the idea they agree upon.
6. Review the structure of a play with the students. (Tips can be found at <http://www.coxhoe.durham.sch.uk/classrooms/Y4%20Learning%20Resources/Play%20Script%20Rules.htm> and <http://openlearn.open.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=202464>.)
7. Pass out [Play Creation Worksheet #2](#) to each group. (Each group will need only one sheet.) Ask students to create their play and characters on this sheet. Groups should be given a minimum of fifteen minutes to create a play.
8. After reviewing the play of each group make copies of the original for each group member.
9. Ask the group to create a puppet for each character. They may design any kind of puppet they wish as long as he or she is recognizable as the character in the story.

10. After the puppets have been created, and each group has been given personal copies of their group play, ask each student group to quietly practice their play. (You may wish to review with the children how they can use their voice to show emotion and characterization.)
11. Once all groups are comfortable with their play bring the puppet acting as the Manager of the Animal Tales Theatre back and officially open the Animal Tales Theatre. (You may wish to have a ribbon cutting.)

Closure or Wrap-up

1. Ask students to present the plays for the group, families, or the entire school. The Animal Tales Theatre Manager puppet should introduce each group and provide some background on the group problem.
2. After each play is completed repeat the problem and ask the audience to state how the group solved the problem.

Extension

1. Record the plays on video to be played for other groups or post the videos on the school or a local animal protection group website. You may wish to “charge” the audience admittance in form of supplies needed by a local shelter or animal protection group. Contact the group to see what they need, then make the donation!
2. Print copies of the scripts and create a library of animal protection plays. Allow students to act out the plays using the Animal Tales Theatre and classroom puppets throughout the school year and/or club meetings.
3. Create costumes, have students rehearse the roles of the puppet character they created, and perform each play onstage for the school or community.
4. Create a playbill for each production
<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/lessonplan.jsp?id=64>.