

TEACHER'S GUIDE
The Tortoise and the Hare
2015

Teacher's Guides are developed by members of Nine O'Clock Players, who operate Theatre for Children, a service of Assistance League of Los Angeles.

Committee Chairman: Roxanna Amdur
Committee Members: Carolyn Barbian, Judy Jensen

Mailing Address:
Nine O'Clock Players
Assistance League of Los Angeles
1360 N. St. Andrews Place, Hollywood, CA 90028

Weekend Performances of *The Tortoise and the Hare*
Saturday: March 28
Sundays: March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
All performances are at 2 p.m.
Ticket Donation: \$12
Group Sales and Birthday Parties available

Box Office:
323-469-1970
E-mail: nop@assistanceleague.net
Website: www.nineoclockplayers.com

Notes to the teacher:

Guides are distributed to facilitate learning and discussion and to provide an enhanced theatre experience for our audience. These pages have been written with young students in mind so that they will have a better understanding of the production they will be seeing.

Seat assignments are predetermined based on age levels of classes. Ushers will ask adults to sit toward the aisles.

The suggested activities are consistent with the California Department of Education Academic Content Standards in English Language Arts, Visual and Performing Arts (Music, Dance, and Theatre). www.cde.ca.gov

THE STORY OF THE MAKING OF A PLAY

ACT I: GETTING STARTED

First, a Play is chosen, one that is appropriate for young audiences. The Production Chairman, the person in charge of the play, then selects the following individuals who will help to tell the play's story:

- The Director, who plans how to tell the story by using actors who learn dialogue, songs, and dances
- The Musical Director, who teaches the actors musical numbers and orchestrates the music throughout the entire play
- The Costume Designer, who creates costumes based on the characters in the play
- The Scenic Designer, who builds sets to make the different scenes in the play appear on stage
- The Prop Designer, who fills the stage with objects (such as tables and chairs) to help the actors tell their stories
- The Lighting Director, who chooses colored lights to make the sets and stage look like real places
- The Sound Engineer, who teaches the actors how to use "mics" (microphones) they will wear during the play
- The Stage Manager and Technical Director, who help to make all the elements of the play come together
- Other essential jobs are the backstage crew, spotlight technicians, ushers, box office personnel and house managers

ACT II: THE PLAY COMES ALIVE

- Actors audition for the parts in the play. They sing a song, read lines from the script and are given a role to play.
- Beginning with rehearsals, the actors learn their lines, songs and dances, have costumes fitted, learn to use props and move scenery.

ACT III: ON WITH THE PLAY. . . .

The members of the audience arrive and are ushered into the theatre. They take their seats and see the piano and other musical instruments used by the musical director. An announcer says that the show is about to begin and asks the audience to practice theatre etiquette by remaining quiet while the actors are speaking and to enjoy the play by clapping for the parts they like.

After the play is over, audience members can talk to the actors and ask them about their characters or the play itself.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY: *The Tortoise and the Hare*

Welcome to Animal High School! In this musical based on the Aesop's Fable, Hip-Hop Harry Hare is the football captain with the big ego who ridicules the small but spunky Teddy Tortoise. Harry and his friends are constantly bullying and teasing the other students, so Teddy Tortoise decides he must devise a plan to unite all the students and, he hopes, put a stop to the bullying.

Teddy proposes a talent show to raise money to purchase books for the library, but the football players all laugh at him. So Teddy decides that the only way he can gain the respect of the athletes is to beat Harry in a race. He challenges Hip-Hop Harry Hare to a long race, hoping that his own perseverance will be a match for Harry's speed. Teddy sets the terms of the race: If Harry wins, Teddy and his friends will clean the football team's lockers and wash their underwear for the whole year. If Teddy wins, Harry and his friends will appear in the benefit show, dressed in cheerleader outfits. Teddy works out every day, repeating his anthem: "Don't stop. Never, ever stop." Of course, Harry the Hare can't imagine training. He is certain that a hare will always win a race against a slow-moving tortoise.

What do you think will happen? You might be able to guess who wins the race, but what about the bullying? Will it stop?

Join us to see a new spin on a classic tale.

VOCABULARY

- Being mean: using words or actions to make another person feel bad about himself
- Fund raising event: an activity designed to raise money to help an organization
- Nerd: a not so nice name for a very smart person
- Rich alumni: individuals who have attended a school in years past who donate a lot of money to help the school
- Vain person: one who thinks about himself all the time

BEFORE ATTENDING THE PLAY: THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Students often need guidance in how to behave while watching live theatre. Some pointers you can share with your students are:

- How the audience behaves is important—it helps to make the play fun for everyone. Students must not walk in the aisles while actors are present or try to touch the actor or the props. They can applaud when appropriate, but talking or clapping when actors are speaking or singing is to be avoided.
- Audience members may not use any photographic device (flash, digital, cell phone cameras) during the play.
- Please explain to the students the differences between watching live theatre, movies and television.

BEFORE THE PLAY: DISCUSSION

- What are the responsibilities of the actors and the audience? (See Theatre Etiquette above.)
- What careers are involved in producing a play? (See “The Story of Making a Play” in this Teacher’s Guide.) Do you think you would be interested in any of those jobs? Which ones? Why?
- Here are the two main characters in our play: the bully Harry Hare and the challenger, Teddy the Tortoise. Choose one that might be interesting to you. When you get to the theatre to see the play, notice how your character reacts to the other characters. Think about how you would describe your character to your classmates.

BEFORE THE PLAY: MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The teacher says “In the play there are 2 main characters: Hip-Hop Harry Hare, who moves quickly, and Teddy the Tortoise, who moves slowly. We will begin by moving slowly like Teddy. Watch and follow me.” The teacher moves slowly in high, medium and low levels, side to side, etc., as the children follow. The process is repeated moving quickly. Children form partners. One is the leader the other the follower as they move slowly, then quickly. Switch roles. Then one partner moves quickly followed by the other moving slowly, creating a movement pattern that goes from slow to quick. Partners could also move at the same time, one quickly, one slowly. Other combinations could be explored.

BACK AT SCHOOL, AFTER THE PLAY: DISCUSSION, WRITING, SPEAKING

- Report to the class on the character that you followed during the play. Was the character smart or foolish, nice or mean, successful or unsuccessful, brave or cowardly, conceited or humble? In what ways?
- Write a conversation you might have via email or texting with Harry the Hare. Start with something like, “Why are you so arrogant and proud?” and let Harry answer. Then you respond to his answer.
- What do you think it would feel like to be bullied? Embarrassing? Hurtful? Would bullying make a person feel like crying? If you have ever been bullied, how did you feel? Do you think you should tell your teacher?
- What could a school principal or teacher do to stop bullying?
- One of the themes of the play is, “Steer a steady course in a strong straight line and your life will be fine.” What does that mean? Write a story of your own to illustrate that idea.
- Draw a cartoon strip with three pictures illustrating an event in the play.

AFTER THE PLAY: MOVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The teacher says, “In the play you heard Coach Moose tell Teddy and Harry which route they were to take during the race. They’d be going uphill, downhill, to the right, to the left. Teddy follows the route and never stops while Harry stops to eat, dance and sleep. You will be in groups of four where you will draw a map of your race route. Remember to use different directions as you draw the route. Also indicate at least three stops along the way.” After the children draw the route, they will move following their map, moving together in place at each indicated stop. As they move at the stop, the purpose of the stop, to eat, sleep, etc., should be reflected in the movements. Each group presents its movement race to the class. Groups could switch maps and move to each other’s maps.

TEACHER’S GUIDE QUESTIONNAIRE

Please help us evaluate the content of this teacher’s guide by offering any comments or suggestions. Share with us any activities you developed for the children in your charge related the play, either before or after attending the production. Send samples, if possible!

Thank you for your participation. You may mail your ideas to:

Nine O’Clock Players
Assistance League of Los Angeles
1360 N. St. Andrews Place
Los Angeles, CA 90028-8529
Attention: Roxanna Amdur

You may also e-mail your ideas or responses to: nop@assistanceleague.net

