EDUCATION GUIDE

The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley TYA

Monday, March 9, 2015
9:30am and 12:30pm

Tickets: $5.50 per person

Recommended for Grades K through 4

ABT Student Matinee series sponsored by

Valley Federal Credit Union

Alberta Bair Theater for the Performing Arts
2801 Third Avenue North • Billings, Montana 59103
406-256-8915
www.albertabairtheater.org
BEHIND THE CURTAIN
A CREATIVE & THEATRICAL RESOURCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

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As part of Dallas Children’s Theater’s mission to integrate the arts into classroom academics, the Behind the Curtain Resource Guide is intended to provide helpful information for the teacher and student to use before and after attending a performance. The activities presented in this guide are suggested to stimulate lively responses and multi-sensory explorations of concepts in order to use the theatrical event as a vehicle for cross-cultural and language arts learning.

Please use our suggestions as springboards to lead your students into meaningful, dynamic learning; extending the dramatic experience of the play.

DALLAS CHILDREN’S THEATER, one of the top five family theaters in the nation, serves over 250,000 young people each year through its local main-stage productions, national tour, educational programming and outreach activities. Since its opening in 1984, this award-winning theater has existed to create challenging, inspiring and entertaining theater, which communicates vital messages to our youth and promotes an early appreciation for literature and the performing arts. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing on theater for youth and families, DCT produces literary classics, original scripts, folk tales, myths, fantasies and contemporary dramas that foster multicultural understanding, confront topical issues and celebrate the human spirit.

DCT is committed to the integration of creative arts into the teaching strategies of academic core curriculum and educating through the arts. Techniques utilized by DCT artist/teachers are based upon the approach developed in Making Sense with Five Senses, by Paul Baker, Ph.D.

DCT founder and Executive Artistic Director, Robyn Flatt defines the artistic mission and oversees the operations of the organization, consisting of twenty-five full time staff members and more than 200 actors, designers, theater artists and educators.

CURTAINS UP ON PUTTING TOGETHER A PERFORMANCE

Every DCT performance you see is the result of many people working together to create a play. You see the cast perform on stage, but there are people that you do not see who help before, during, and after every production.

Director

• Determines the overall “look” of the performance.
• Guides the actors in stage movement and character interpretation.
• Works with designers to plan the lights and sound, scenery, costumes and make-up, and stage actions.

Designers

• Plan the lights, scenery, costumes, make-up, sound, and actions to help bring the director’s vision to life.
• There are also designers who work to create the posters, advertisements, programs and other media for the performance.
Stage Manager

- Before the performance, creates a cuesheet to guide the crew in getting things on and off the stage during the performances.
- During the performance, the stage manager uses this cuesheet to direct people and things on and off the stage at the proper times.

Crew

- Build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, and light and sound during the performances.

Cast

- Includes all of the performers who present the story on stage.

Audience

- That’s right! There can be no performance without you, the audience. The role of the audience is unique because you experience the entertainment with the performers and backstage crew.

CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Attending a play is an experience unlike any other entertainment experience. Because a play is presented live, it provides a unique opportunity to experience a story “as it happens.” Dallas Children’s Theater brings to life stories through its performances. Many people are involved in the process. Writers adapt the stories you read in order to bring them off the page and on to the stage. Designers and technicians create lighting effects so that you can feel the mood of a scene. Carpenters build scenery and make the “place” of the story become a real place, while costumers and make-up designers can turn actors into the characters you meet in the stories. Directors help actors bring the story to life and make it happen before your very eyes. All of these things make seeing a play very different from television, videos, computer games, or CDs and tapes of stories.

Hold a class discussion when you return from the performance. Ask students the following questions and allow them to write or draw pictures of their experience.

1. What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater? What did you notice first on the stage?
2. What about the set? Draw or tell about things you remember. Did the set change during the play? How was it moved or changed? Was there any space besides the stage where the action took place?
3. How did the lights set the mood of the play? How did they change throughout? What do you think “house lights” are? How do they differ from stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?
4. What did you think about the costumes? Do you think they fit the story? What things do you think the costume designers had to consider before creating the costumes?
5. Was there music in the play? How did it add to the performance?
6. What about the actors? Do you think they were able to bring the characters to life? Did you feel caught up in the story? What things do you think the actors had to work on in order to make you believe they were the characters?
• Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from the stage. Consider your work from the viewpoint of the actors on stage. How might things look from where they stand?
• Write a letter to a cast member telling what you liked about the character.
• Write how you think it might feel to be one of the actors. Are the actors aware of the audience? How might they feel about the reactions of the audience today? How would you feel before the play began? What about after the show ends?
• Which job would you like to try? Acting, Directing, Lighting and Sounds, Stage Manager, Set designer, Costume designer or another role? What skills might you need to complete your job?
• Choose a favorite story and draw or use the computer to create a program cover design for a theatrical adaptation of your story.

CURTAINS UP ON THEATER VOCABULARY

ACTOR  any theatrical performer whose job it is to portray a character
CAST  group of actors in a play
CENTER STAGE  the middle of the stage
CHARACTER  any person portrayed by an actor onstage. Characters may often be people, animals, and sometimes things.
CHOREOGRAPHER  the designer and teacher of the dances in a production
COSTUME DESIGNER  the person who creates what the actors wear in the performance
DIRECTOR  the person in charge of the entire production
DOWNSTAGE  the area at the front of the stage; closest to the audience
HOUSE  where the audience sits in the theater
LIGHTING DESIGNER  the person who creates the lighting for a play to simulate the time of day and the location
ONSTAGE  the part of the stage the audience can see
OFFSTAGE  the part of the stage the audience cannot see
PLOT  the story line
PROSCENIUM  the opening framing the stage
PROJECT  to speak loudly
PROP  an object used by an actor in a scene
SET  the background or scenery for a play
SETTING  the time and place of the story
SOUND DESIGNER  the person who provides special effects like thunder, ringing phone, or crickets chirping
STAGE CREW  the people who change the scenery during a performance
STAGE MANAGER  the person who helps the director during the rehearsal and coordinates all crew during the performance
UPSTAGE  the area at the back of the stage; furthest from the audience
CURTAINS UP ON ADAPTATION

An adaptation is a change made in something so that it can fit a new use. This performance of The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley is an adaptation of a book, which is meant to be read, into a play, which is meant to be performed and viewed. Timothy A. McDonald took the story written by Jeff Brown and adapted it so that it could be performed for an audience on stage.

Consider these questions for discussion before you attend the DCT production:

- What kinds of things did the authors have to consider in writing a script of the story?
- What kinds of things would Jeff Brown be concerned about in having someone make a musical adaptation of their story?
- Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the book?
- What will the characters look like? Will they match their illustrations? What differences can you expect?
- What about the story? What changes might you expect in adapting it for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

After the performance, consider these questions:

- Were there any characters or events that were in the book but not in the play? Why do you think these choices were made?
- Did the changes make the story stronger or was it weaker because of them?
- What do you think the set and costume designers need to consider when bringing the book to the stage?
- What things helped to tell the story on stage?

Make a copy of Flat Stanley for each of your students to decorate and cut out. Encourage them to bring Flat Stanley with them to the theater. Take a picture at school, on the bus, or at the theater getting ready for the show and mail it to DCT at: Dallas Children’s Theater, 5938 Skillman, Dallas, Texas 75231.

CURTAINS UP ON THE AUTHOR

Jeff Brown was born in New York City in 1925 and died in 2003. In addition to having a successful career as a children’s book author, he was a story editor and assistant film producer in Hollywood. Mr. Brown also worked as a short-story writer and editor for The New Yorker and The Saturday Evening Post. His Flat Stanley series has sold nearly one million copies in the U.S.
CURTAINS UP ON DISCUSSING

Use the following questions to encourage a discussion of the story with students before and after attending the performance.

- Have you ever read the Flat Stanley books by Jeff Brown? Tell about the story.
- What can you tell about the play you will see from the title; The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley? What do you expect to happen in the show?
- How might you react if you woke up in the morning and were flat?
- What would you do if you were flat? What things can Stanley do that might be fun?
- How would you handle the ‘cool kids’ if they asked you to turn your friend into a kite and fly him? What should you do if someone pressures you into doing something you know is wrong?
- Stanley visits many places around the world. Where is the most interesting place you’ve ever traveled? Where would you mail yourself if you could? Why?
- In the show, an actor will portray Stanley both before and after he is flat. Actors will also portray other flat objects he meets on his adventures. How do you think the designers might represent these on stage? What things would change if you were flattened? How can an actor “change” his character to appear flat?

CURTAINS UP ON WRITING

Use what you know about writing letters to send Stanley somewhere new and interesting.

You will need:
- Writing paper
- Pencils or pens
- Envelopes
- Stamps
- Flat Stanley — one per student
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils

Make one copy of Flat Stanley for each student.

Provide students with materials and encourage students to color Stanley.

Use the world map and whiteboard or chart paper and help students brainstorm interesting places to which they can send Stanley. Encourage them to consider family members, friends, performing arts centers, museums or other landmarks around the world. Mail Stanley, along with a letter describing the activity, to your chosen location. Be sure to include a self-addressed, stamped envelope so Stanley can return home.

Use the following sample letter for student use.

Dear Friend,

Thank you so much for agreeing to host my good friend Flat Stanley. You should know that Stanley is a big fan of the arts so visits to a play, concert, dance or museum are favorite activities for him. I hope you can take some pictures with him. Please send them to me so I can see what he did and my class can mark his travels on our map.

Thank you very much,
CURTAINS UP ON ART AND SCULPTURE

A Change in Structure: Create a sculpture in the style of Dale Chihuly.

You will need:
- Coffee Filters
- Sharpie
- Markers
- Liquid Starch
- Spray Bottle
- Aluminum Foil — students should have several pieces they can make into balls.
- String or Yarn

1. Provide students with three to five coffee filters. Write their names along the scalloped edge with a Sharpie so they are easily identified after they’ve been decorated.

2. Encourage students to color their filters giving consideration to the fact that colors will blend in the next step of the process.

3. Spray the filters with liquid starch. Place foil balls in the centers of the filters and carefully lift the edges and tie with string.

4. Allow the filters to dry then nestle them inside each other to form a sculpture in the style of Dale Chihuly’s blown glass flowers.

CURTAINS UP ON SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS

Two- and Three-Dimensional Shapes

Provide students with shape models and household items, such as cans and boxes. Allow students to describe the shapes based on their characteristics, including sides (edges), angles and faces. Have students look at three-dimensional models and find the two-dimensional shapes from which they are constructed. Allow students to construct their own shapes using paper nets — two-dimensional models that can be cut out and taped to form three-dimensional figures.

A geometry net is a 2-dimensional shape that can be folded to form a 3-dimensional shape or a solid. Or a net is a pattern made when the surface of a three-dimensional figure is laid out flat showing each face of the figure. A solid may have different nets.

There are altogether 11 possible nets for a cube as shown in the following figures.
Challenge older students to draw their own geometry map of a cube, cylinder, or cone. Below are the steps to determine whether a net forms a solid:

1. Make sure that the solid and the net have the same number of faces and that the shapes of the faces of the solid match the shapes of the corresponding faces in the net.
2. Visualize how the net is to be folded to form the solid and make sure that all the sides fit together properly.

**CURTAINS UP ON GEOGRAPHY**

You will need:
- Map of the world
- Map pins

Once Stanley has returned home, chart the locations he visited on the map with map pins. You can display the letters and pictures you receive in the classroom or hallway of your school.

Use the letters you receive to map the places your Stanley visits. Where in the world????? Is Stanley?

**CURTAINS UP ON READING MORE!**

**Books:**

By Jeff Brown:
- *Flat Stanley*
- *Flat Stanley in Space*
- *Invisible Stanley*
- *Stanley, Flat Again!

*The Journey of the One and Only Declaration of Independence* by Judith St. George

*Mailing May* by Michael O. Tunnell, illustrated by Ted Rand

**On the internet:**

www.flatstanley.com — the official site of the *Flat Stanley Project.*

www.harpercollinschildrens.com/HarperChildrens/kids — this site has information on Jeff Brown and *Flat Stanley* for kids, parents, teachers and librarians.

http://www.chihuly.com — this site offers a wide variety of information about artist Dale Chihuly and his work.
Additional Information on Dale Chihuly Assembled by William Mouat

Born in 1941 in Tacoma, Washington, Dale Chihuly was introduced to glass while studying interior design at the University of Washington. After graduating in 1965, Chihuly enrolled in the first glass program in the country, at the University of Wisconsin. He continued his studies at the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), where he later established the glass program and taught for more than a decade.

In 1968, after receiving a Fulbright Fellowship, he went to work at the Venini glass factory in Venice. There he observed the team approach to blowing glass, which is critical to the way he works today. In 1971, Chihuly co-founded Pilchuck Glass School in Washington State. With this international glass center, Chihuly has led the avant-garde in the development of glass as a fine art.

His work is included in more than 200 museum collections worldwide. He has been the recipient of many awards, including eleven honorary doctorates and two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Chihuly has created more than a dozen well-known series of works, among them, Cylinders and Baskets in the 1970s; Seaforms, Macchia, Venetians, and Persians in the 1980s; Nijimia Floats and Chandeliers in the 1990s; and Fiori in the 2000s. He is also celebrated for large architectural installations. In 1986, he was honored with a solo exhibition, Dale Chihuly objets de verre, at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Palais du Louvre, in Paris. In 1995, he began Chihuly Over Venice, for which he created sculptures at glass factories in Finland, Ireland, and Mexico, then installed them over the canals and piazzas of Venice.


About the Workshop

The Workshop was established to celebrate the innovation, imagination, and the bold creative spirit of the artist Dale Chihuly. Opened in 1992 as Portland Press, a small publishing company dedicated to the production of books about glassmaking, we slowly evolved into a place that not only published work about Chihuly’s art, but also became a staging ground for him as an artist and designer with the creation of his Studio Editions and Prints. Over the years we have extended the scope of the Workshop, collaborating with Chihuly on a range of projects from books, films, and stationery to limited edition blankets with Pendleton Woolen Mills.

It’s the Workshop’s mission to foster an environment where we are continuously engaged in projects that move beyond the expected and into areas where exploration and experimentation are the standard.

Dale Chihuly’s Bridge of Glass is a 500-foot (150 m) pedestrian covered footbridge in Tacoma, Washington. On the right is an end-to-end view of the bridge, and images on the left are from the Chihuly Glass Gardens.
The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley
ABT Student Questionnaire

NAME

SCHOOL ___________________________ GRADE ___________________________

1. What would be the most fun job in a theatrical tour production and why?
   Director ______________________________________________________________
   Designer ______________________________________________________________
   Manager ______________________________________________________________
   Actor _________________________________________________________________
   Crew _________________________________________________________________
   Audience Member ______________________________________________________

2. Were you able to create an in-class sculpture in the style of Dale Chihuly? Was this as exciting as creating a Flat Stanley of your own? (Use the back of the page if you need it.)

3. Describe the following shapes:
   A. Triangular Prism _____________________________________________________
   B. Rectangular Pyramid ________________________________________________
   C. Cylinder __________________________________________________________
   D. Cone ______________________________________________________________

4. Where did your Stanley visit? What do you think you saw when he arrived? What will he tell his friends about his adventures when he returns home?

______________________________________________________________________
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# The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley

**ABT Teacher Evaluation Form** (Feel free to use the back of this form.)

**NAME**

**SCHOOL** ____________________________  **GRADE** ____________________________

1. Did you feel that *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* program was directly applicable to your content area?  
   - Y ☐  N ☐  Why or why not? ______________________________________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

2. In one paragraph, summarize your students’ observations about *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* Did they enjoy it?  
   - Y ☐  N ☐  Why or why not? ______________________________________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

   Did the information from the program make a difference in teaching and/or learning outcomes?  
   - Y ☐  N ☐  If so, how? ____________________________________________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

3. If you had one program with a historical or cultural perspective that has not been emphasized at ABT in the past two to five years, what would it be? ______________________________________________________
   
   Why did you choose this program? __________________________________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

4. Did *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley* interest children of varying learning modalities (ie. visual, auditory, kinesthetic and/or mixed styles)? Why or why not? ______________________________________________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

5. Do you feel that your students were adequately prepared with the study guides? ______________________
   
   ______________________________________________________

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*Please return your student questionnaire forms and this evaluation form to: Dr. William Mouat, ABT Director of Education and Community Outreach, PO Box 1556 • Billings, Montana 59103*