

Young Audiences of Atlanta, Inc

Study Guide for Teachers

Peter Hart / Atlanta Puppet
"Circus Berzerkus"

Grades: Pre-K - 5

Audience Limit: 230 (Adjustable)

Length: 30 – 50 min. (Adjustable)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

An inspiring circus theme marionette show with a unique approach providing high quality professional performance with emphasis on areas of school curriculum. Praised by educators for curriculum tie-ins and motivating students. The production features puppets that dance, juggle, swing on the trapeze, do dare devil stunts and more!

The flexible variety format gives "Circus Berzerkus" the advantage of presentation to a wide range of school and community audiences. Educational Components are adjusted to grade levels attending.



Audience Etiquette

This program, like all Peter Hart / Atlanta Puppet programs, features a degree of audience interaction. Mr. Hart is adept at leading the audience through their interactive roles. There are some things you can do that will enhance and improve basic audience etiquette:

- ☆ Before the program, discuss with your students what makes a good audience.
- ☆ Compare appropriate behavior for different kinds of audience situations – e.g., rock concert, sporting event, ballet.
- ☆ Students will get more out the program if they come prepared. Use this guide to help students anticipate what to listen and look for.
- ☆ Set a good example. Catch up on paperwork after the performance and reframe from extraneous conversations with other teachers during the program.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Peter has long been regarded as one of the finest and skillful professional puppeteers in the South. His exceptional talents have received praises from audiences at Walt Disney World / Epcot, the Georgia Governor's Mansion, Six Flags Over Georgia, Centennial Park, the 1996 Olympics, and in Europe. He has performed as Head Puppeteer in over 70 different professional puppetry productions that have won 4 International Awards from UNIMA.

Peter specializes in developing and presenting puppet performance programs that go beyond adaptations of traditional fables. His original scripts reflect his vast knowledge of puppetry as a valid performance art form; his 20+ year experience as a professional puppeteer; and his desire to introduce audiences to puppet forms not commonly seen on television.

The mission of Young Audiences is to improve the lives and learning of young people through the arts.

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Study Guides Available at:
www.ya-atlanta.org

Program Description

The program is presented in a variety format using specialty marionettes performed in an "overt" or "cabaret" style. This allows the audience to see the puppeteer and how he operates the figures. There are moments of audience interaction during the performance.

The program is adjustable to appropriate grade levels. Segments of the program can also be edited to accommodate time restrictions.

Program Segments:

- ◆ *Opening* – Puppeteer describes how the performance the audience is about to see is a result of using 4 areas of learning: library research, reading, mathematics, and following instructions.
- ◆ *Puppet Routines* – A series of 4 – 5 different puppet routines is presented with specialty marionettes (dancing, juggling, trapeze, unicycle, break-away)
- ◆ *Construction* – Description of materials and construction method used to make one of the marionettes
- ◆ *Review* – A review of the 4 areas of learning that went into making the show
- ◆ *Finale* – A grand specialty marionette routine is performed

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In the program "Circus Berzerkus", students will learn:

1. How library and reading skills they are now learning in class directly relate to the production of a puppet show.
2. How math skills (adding, subtracting, etc) they are now learning in class directly relate to the production of a puppet show.
3. How important it is to be able to understand and follow directions for any task given.
4. The various materials and construction techniques used in the crafting of the puppets
5. The different styles of "specialty" marionettes not often seen in the USA via puppets inspired by different nationalities.

Background Information About Art Form

Puppetry, as a performance art form, employs many areas of learning in the production of a successful presentation. The puppet artist must have knowledge of theatrical performance areas that include music, dance, acting, and script writing. In addition, the artist must also be familiar with craft areas for construction of the puppet figures, sets, and scenery.

Among cultures that practice puppetry (European, African, Asian, Indonesian, American), marionettes are regarded as the more complicated form to master. Although marionettes are used in these cultures in the telling of traditional stories and fables, the height of mastery is often demonstrated in specialized marionettes that perform short routines in a variety format. Prime examples of this style of presentation are Chinese Opera marionettes; Music Hall marionettes of England; and the German Puppenspeil of Albrecht Roser.

Vocabulary, Terms, Definitions

Marionette – A puppet on strings

Paper Mache – Glue mixed with paper. It is used in making puppets.

Armature: A form used as a base when sculpting

Pre-Performance Learning Activities

Ask students if they have puppets at home. What kind of puppets do they have?

Post- Performance Learning Activities

For Grades K – 2:

- ◆ While coloring in the drawing(s) provided, **discuss** which parts of the show were students' favorites and why.
- ◆ **Discuss** other materials that could be used to make puppets.
- ◆ **Write** - Have students make a list as if they were going to an arts materials store or home improvement (Home Depot) store.

For Grades 3 – 5:

- ◆ Library research was important when putting the show together. If the students went to the biggest library in the world, what different kinds of books would they need to help them put a show together?
Write: Make a list of books that may be needed.

Extra: There is a book list at:

www.yapuppet.com/yabooks1.htm that can be used to help make a list

- ◆ **Discuss** other reasons why it would be important to know how to use numbers (add, subtract, multiply and divide) if you were putting together a puppet show.

Extra: There is a classroom Math Exercise at:

www.yapuppet.com/yamath.htm that uses the Skeleton

- ◆ **Write** - Have students write a poem that describes the further adventures of Top Hat Bones. Could they set their poem to a hand clapping rhythm?
Share - Have the students perform their new songs in groups or individually.

Extra: You can find the lyrics to Top Hat Bones Song at: www.yapuppet.com/yalyrics.htm



Relevant Curriculum Standards

Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 Fine Arts Theatre Arts

Topic: Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding

Standard: Describes and demonstrates the role and responsibility of the audience

Standard: Demonstrates awareness of and uses school, community, and professional resources for theatre experiences

Grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Guidance B.

Educational & Occupational Exploration

4. Topic: Awareness of the benefits of educational achievement.

Standard: Identify academic skills needed in several occupational groups

5 Topic: Awareness of the relationship between work and learning.

Standard: Describe the importance of preparing for occupations.

Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 Language Arts

Written Communication

Topic: Reference/Study

Standard: Uses the media center and available technology as sources of information and pleasure

Grades 1, 3 Fine Arts General Music

Topic: Artistic Skills and Knowledge:

Creating, Performing, Producing

Standard: Creates simple accompaniments using body percussion or classroom instruments.

Topic: Connections

Standard: Participates in song stories, singing games, and musical dramatizations

Resources

Read about puppets and puppetry at websites provided:

www.sagecraft.com/puppetry/index.html

There is a book list at:

www.yapuppet.com/yabooks1.htm that can be used to help make a book list

There is a classroom Math Exercise at:

www.yapuppet.com/yamath.htm that uses the Skeleton Marionette

You can find the lyrics to Top Hat Bones Song at: www.yapuppet.com/yalyrics.htm

Curriculum Connections

The activities listed in the **Post-Performance Learning Activities** will enhance your students' appreciation of the performance and can be used to tie-in with other classroom subjects such as Math and Language Arts.

An additional activity:

Music plays an important part in the show. An example heard was a polka (Bavarian Dancers). Americans know country music, jazz, rap music, soul music, and rock music.

Share: What are examples of music from other countries? Do any students have examples of music from other countries that their parents or grandparents may have listened to when they were young?



Check Out Arts for Learning at:
www.arts4learning.org

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