



It's All
In the Story

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2011-2012 Season Play Guide

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Dramatized by Joseph Robinette
Based on the story by E.B. White



September
20-23
& 27-30

10:00 AM
and
11:45 AM

Dear Educator,

Lexington Children's Theatre is proud to be producing our 73rd season of plays for young people and their families. As an organization that values the arts and education, we have created this resource for teachers called the Play Guide.

Our Play Guides are designed to be a valuable tool for teachers in two ways: helping you prepare your students for the enriching performance given by LCT, as well as serving as an educational tool for extending the production experience back into your classroom.

We designed each activity to assist in achieving the Kentucky Core Content (KCC) and to integrate the arts with your core curricular subjects.

Teachers are important voices at LCT. We rely heavily on your input. If you have comments or suggestions about our Play Guides, show selections or any of our programming, your thoughts are greatly appreciated. Please look for the Teacher Response form that you will receive following a performance.

We are thrilled that you rely on LCT to provide your students a quality theatrical experience and we hope this resource aids you in extending our production into your classroom.

LCT's Education Department

OUR MISSION TO SCHOOLS, TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The mission of Lexington Children's Theatre Education Department is to provide students of all ages with the means to actively explore the beauty, diversity, complexity and challenges of the world around them through the dramatic process. We strive for young people to develop their own creative voice, their imagination and their understanding of drama and its role in society.

FREE TEACHER PREVIEWS

Want to be more fully prepared to share the theatrical experience with your students? LCT offers teachers the opportunity to preview many of our Main Stage productions.

Each Preview lasts about two hours and includes a free performance of the play. Don't miss this chance to bring some drama into your classroom!

Call Jeremy (859-254-4546 x226)
to reserve your spot today!

Play Synopsis

Our story opens on a farm with the birth of a litter of pigs. The farmer, Mr. Arable, is about to destroy the tiniest one, the “runt,” but is stopped by the pleading of his young daughter, Fern. She begins the bottle-feeding required for such a little pig -- whom she names “Wilbur” -- and the pig flourishes. Now that Wilbur is growing, Mr. Arable can afford to keep him and must sell him -- but, again at Fern’s urging, the pig is sold to her Uncle Homer Zuckerman. Since the Zuckerman’s farm is just down the road, Fern can still visit him often.

On the Zuckerman’s farm, Wilbur meets many new animals -- Goose, Sheep, and Templeton the Rat --but without Fern around as much, he admits to feeling lonely. One night, a voice calms him, and promises to be his friend. The next morning, he finds out that the voice belongs to a beautiful spider named Charlotte. Life is good at the Zuckerman farm for Wilbur and the other animals, until he discovers that the Zuckerman’s have been feeding and caring for him only to prepare him for the butcher’s block. Charlotte promises to save his life...somehow. She decides to trick the humans. After all, “Spiders are much smarter than people.” The next morning, the Zuckermans awake to find “SOME PIG” written in the spider web above Wilbur’s pen. Word spreads fast in a small town and soon people come from all over to see Zuckerman’s Famous Pig! Then the words “TERRIFIC” and “RADIANT” appear and earn Wilbur a trip to the county fair.



Charlotte and Templeton go with Wilbur to the fair in order to help him secure a blue ribbon. Charlotte is growing tired and uses the very last of her energy to spin the word “HUMBLE” and one other special item: her egg sack. Despite Charlotte’s efforts, Wilbur does not win the blue ribbon. But to everyone’s surprise the President of the Fair awards Wilbur a medal of honor. Charlotte has saved Wilbur, but she is not strong enough to make the journey back to the farm. Wilbur must say goodbye to his friend. With Templeton’s help, Wilbur takes Charlotte’s egg sack back to the farm and cares for it until the babies hatch. Though not all the spiders stay, he teaches the ones that remain of their mother. Charlotte was never forgotten by the farm animals as a “true friend and good writer”.

Your Role in Our Play



You may wish to have a discussion with your class about your upcoming LCT experience and their role as audience members. Remind your students that theatre can only exist with an audience. Your students’ energy and response directly affects the actors onstage. The quality of the performance depends as much on the audience as it does on each of the theatre professionals behind the scenes and onstage.

Young audiences should know that watching live theatre is not like watching more familiar forms of entertainment: they cannot pause or rewind us like a videotape, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, nor can they turn up the volume to hear us if someone else is talking. Your students are encouraged to listen and watch the play intently, so that they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate.

At the end of the play, applause is an opportunity for your students to thank the actors, while the actors are thanking you for the role they played as an audience.

Prepare for the Play

A DAY AT THE FARM - NARRATIVE PANTOMIME



Discuss life on the farm. What chores or responsibilities must happen to keep a farm running smoothly? What happens if the farm has livestock such as cows, pigs, chickens or sheep? When do crops need to be planted? What types of vegetables or food would you grow on your farm?

Choose one chore on the farm and devise a pantomime to act out what you doing. Remember pantomime is acting without

words or props. Your choices should be clear and concise. Perform the activity and see if your classmates can guess your chore.

KCC's SC-E-2.1.2, AH-EP-1.3.3

CHARACTER BIO-POEM

Charlotte's Web has some great characters in it. A fun way for students to demonstrate their understanding of characterization is to have them create a "bio poem" using one of the characters from Charlotte's Web.

Have a class discussion about the different characters in the play and teach about character traits. The students can "publish" their poems by typing them on the computer and drawing a picture of their character. Have the students share their poems with the class when they are finished writing.

Character's first name

Who is _____
(insert four descriptive words that describe the character)

Who loves _____

Who fears _____

Who needs _____

Who gives _____

Who believes _____

Character's last name



KCC's RD-E- 3.0.7, WR-EP-1.1.12

Charlotte's Quiz

Name: _____

Answer each question by using your pencil to fill in the circle.



- 1. Who first saved Wilbur's life?**
 Charlotte. Fern. Mr. Zuckerman.
- 2. What is the first thing Charlotte writes in her web?**
 "Some Pig." "Terrific." "Spiders are your friend."
- 3. Who buys Wilbur when the pig is about five weeks old?**
 Homer Zuckerman. The Mayor of Maybury. No one buys him.
- 4. Who is Templeton?**
 A goose. A rat. Another spider who lives in the barn.
- 5. Who stays behind at the fairgrounds when everyone else goes home?**
 Templeton. Wilbur. Charlotte.
- 6. Which character got faint when he saw the writing in Charlotte's web?**
 Mr. Arable. Lurvy. Mr. Zuckerman.
- 7. Wilbur is the runt of his litter. That means, compared to his siblings, he was the**
 smallest. biggest. fastest.
- 8. Salutations means:**
 Tomorrow. Goodbye. Greetings.
- 9. Why did Templeton collect magazines?**
 To help Charlotte spell words. To look at pictures of food. To line his rat hole.
- 10. How many eggs are in Charlotte's egg sac?**
 339. 514. 541.

Grief & Bibliotherapy

Bibliotherapy is the therapeutic use of books in the treatment of illness or personal problems.

Every child develops in his or her own way and comes to school with individual gifts and feelings. There are times when a child may experience great pain or loss of a person or pet close to him or her. Teachers are wonderful people who a child can lean on during this very difficult time of life. One way teachers can show support is by accessing the wide array of literature that is available on the subject of loss. Using literature to start a conversation on this subject can help kids see that others can empathize with them. Death is a part of life. However, death can be a difficult concept for a young person.

There are many books that deal with this subject; *Charlotte's Web* is just one book that deals with death at an age appropriate level. Dealing with loss through literature is one way to show the child that he or she is not the only person that has gone through this ordeal.

Encouraging children to express themselves through literature is sometimes referred to as bibliotherapy. A simple definition of bibliotherapy is the use of books to show children how to solve problems.

According to one source, "Bibliotherapy is acknowledged as an effective way to help a child who has suffered a loss. By reading a particular book, the child may see the parallels between his or her own life and characters and situations in the book."

For example, in *Charlotte's Web*, Wilbur deals with the loss of Charlotte by taking the responsibility for her baby spiders. Wilbur also hangs up a medal in memory of his friend. A child who has suffered some sort of a loss in his or her own life could read *Charlotte's Web* and follow Wilbur's example and do something special to honor that special person or pet that they have lost.

Bibliotherapy can help teachers talk about the circumstances of the main character and compare those to what a young person is going through. Through the book, a young person will be able to see the support offered to the one who has suffered the loss. Bibliotherapy also gives children an opportunity to see how to cope and move forward with their situation.

It is important to remember that every person, child or not, deals with loss in a very specialized way. Literature is just one way to help. The most important thing for teachers is to be there if a child needs to talk through his or her feelings. First and foremost just be a friend and support the child with kindness and understanding.



The information in this article comes from "Helping primary school children manage loss and grief: Ways the classroom teacher can help" by Jan Milton

Extend the Experience

EXPLORING FREINDLY ADJECTIVES

Charlotte wrote words that described Wilbur in her web. Words that describe are called adjectives. List all the words that Charlotte used in her web. Now use the list and work with your class to write a sentence using the words from the play.



Next have your students think of their friend in class and write down the five adjectives that describe that person. Have the students write one or two sentences using those adjectives in a sentence.



The students then stand up one at a time and share their two sentences and five adjectives and the rest of the class tries to guess to whom each person is referring.

KCC's WR-E-3.5.3, WR-EP-2.4.3

LIVING ON A FARM VS. IN THE CITY

Living in a city is very different from living on a farm. On a farm you must take care of animals, grow crops and do a lot of maintaining equipment. In the city, there's going to work, dealing with traffic, phone calls, office work and shopping. But young people in both the city and the farm must clean their room, do their homework and listen to their parents.



Make a list of the differences and similarities of living in the city versus living on a farm. What tasks are the same for young people and what tasks are different. What about food, clothing and shelter? How are they different. Then draw a Venn diagram and discuss where the varying tasks and items should fall on the diagram.



KCC's SS-E-1.3.1, MA-E-3.2.3, RD-E-4.0.9

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

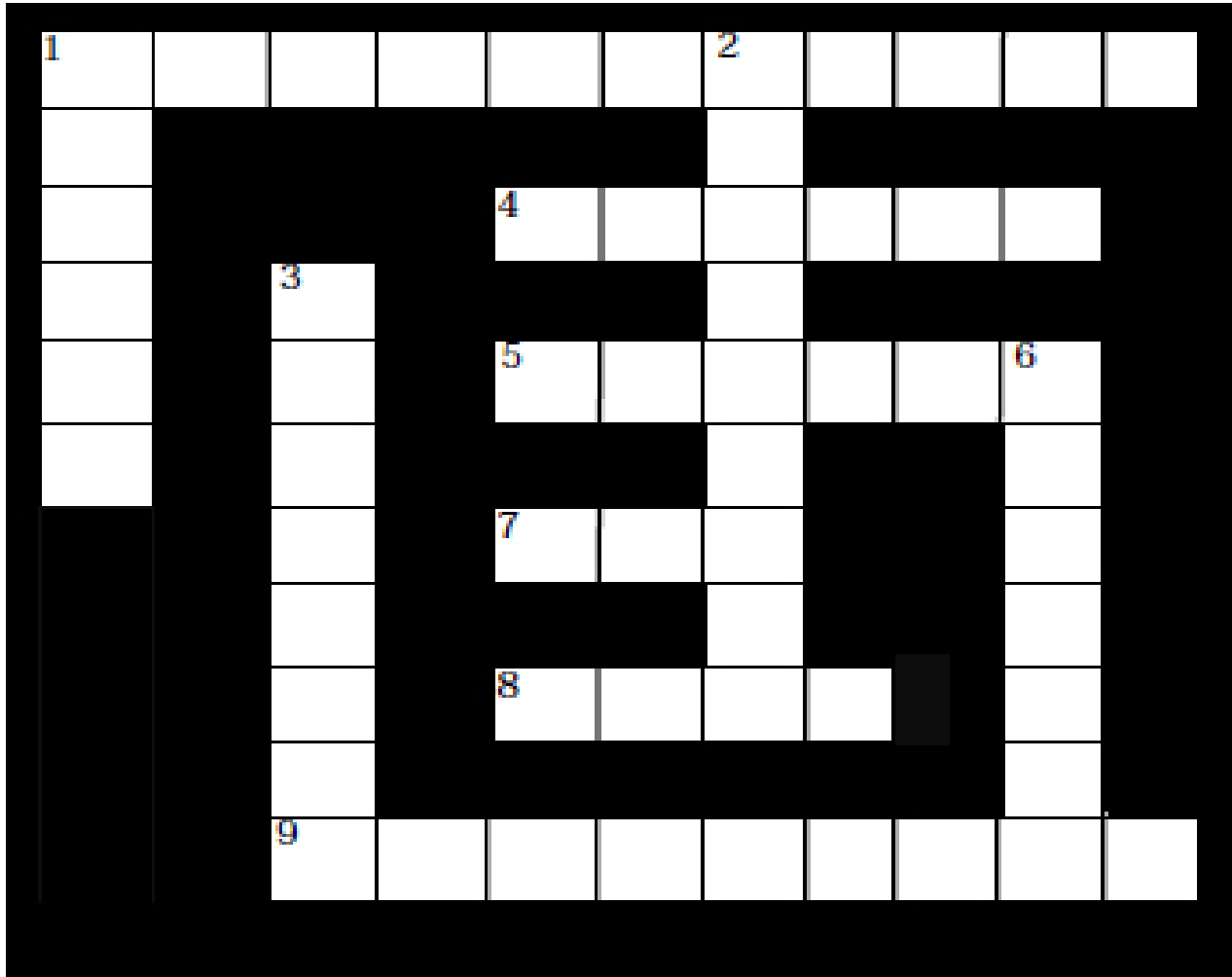
Across - 1. Salutations 4. Humble 5. Wilbur 7. Rat
8. Runt 9. Charlotte

Down - 1. Spider 2. Templeton 3. Terrific 6. Radiant

Answers to quiz: 1. Charlotte 2. Some Pig 3. Homer 4. A rat 5. Charlotte
6. Lurvy 7. Smallest 8. Greetings
9. To help Charlotte 10. 514

Charlotte's Crossword

See if you can fill in this crossword puzzle about the play.



Across

1. A Greeting
4. Not Proud
5. Fern Saves him from father's axe
7. Templeton is one of these
8. The smallest in the litter is called...
9. A spider who writes words in her web to save Wilbur

Down

1. Eight legs, spins webs
2. The character that likes to collect items on the farm
3. A word in Charlotte's web that means very good
6. Glowing brightly

Open Response Question

Charlotte spinning words into her web is one of the major production challenges in ***Charlotte's Web***. How did Lexington Children's Theatre's production use the scenery, lights, sound and costumes to accomplish placing the words in the web. Describe how theatre artists accomplished this using the vocabulary found on the right side of the page.



4

The response uses and exhibits understanding of staging and how they production elements are dependent on each other. The response demonstrates consistent use of knowledge and uses critical vocabulary and terms. The response demonstrates effective communication skills, and provides insightful use of supporting examples and relevant details.

3

The response exhibits a mediocre understanding of staging and how they production elements are dependent on each other. The response demonstrates some knowledge uses some vocabulary and terms. The response demonstrates effect communication skills, with use of supporting examples and relevant details.

2

The response exhibits a limited understanding of production elements and how they effect the action. The response demonstrates little knowledge uses a vague language and terms. The response may include errors or misconceptions. The response communicates on a basic level, with limited use of supporting examples and relevant details.

1

The response is not able to identify correctly any of the students knowledge. The response includes errors or misconceptions. The response demonstrates ineffective communication skills with little or no use of supporting examples and relevant details.

THEATRE TERMS

Here is a list of some of the terms used in the theatre to help your students learn more about theatre and its terms.

Costume - any clothing an actor wears onstage for a performance.

Director - the person who oversees the entire process of staging a production.

Lighting Designer - the person who develops a lighting concept and design for a production.

Pantomime - to act without words through facial expression.

Property or Prop - anything that an actor handles onstage as well as furniture and other items used to enhance the set.

Scenery - onstage structures to help establish the time and place.

Set Designer - the person who develops the design and concept of the set.

Tableau or Tableaux - a silent and motionless depiction of a scene, often from a picture.

Transition - movement, gesture, or words that acts as a bridge between beats in a monologue; verbal or visual connection that links scenes.

Suggested Reading

The Dead Bird by Margaret Wise Brown.

A simple story of a group of children who find a dead bird and bury it in the woods. The children visit the bird's grave and decorate it with flowers daily, until eventually, they forget.

Jim's Dog Muffins by Miriam Cohen.

First-grader Jim has been having a hard time since his dog Muffins died. At school, he becomes angry when his classmates don't seem to understand how he feels. Can his good friends make him feel better?

Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Patterson.

Jesse Aarons has dreams of being the fastest runner in fifth grade, but his dreams change when Leslie Burke moves in next door. Together they create a magical kingdom which falls apart when Leslie accidentally falls into a rushing creek. Jesse must find a way to cope with the loss of his best friend.

Thank You, Grandpa by Lynn Plourde.

Grandpa shows his granddaughter the beauty of the world. And when they see a grasshopper who has passed they say "thank you and goodbye" for the joy it brought to the world. And when Grandpa also passes, the little girl knows how to honor his life.

The Fall of Freddie the Leaf by Leo Buscaglia.

A warm story about Freddie, a leaf, who experiences the changes that come with each passing season and finally falling to the ground with winter's snow.



LCT Teaches in your School!

Let LCT's professional artists bring their extensive experience into your classroom. An LCT residency program is designed to offer young people the opportunity to learn in a dynamic, fun and challenging way. LCT tailors a residency to the needs of your students, curriculum and budget. We offer residencies that range from a one time visit to a month long intensive program.

- Performance Workshops - Two week intensive unit culminating in a performance. LCT provides all scripts, costumes, props and scenery.
- Kentucky Core Content - Elements of Drama - This residency is a one time visit to assist students in preparation for the KCC testing.
- Spotlight on Reading - Students will explore popular literature through drama, creative writing, art and movement.
- Science and Art - Students can explore a variety of scientific concepts using drama. Experience the wonders of nature, animals, bugs, weather, plants, recycling, or the rain forest through the use of role-play, movement and pantomime.

Call 254-4546 x233 or x226 TODAY!

