

# PLAY GUIDE



## The Snow Queen

Based on the story by Hans Christian Andersen

Adapted for the stage by Vivian Snipes for Lexington Children's Theatre

**Presented at The Lexington Opera House: Nov. 28 - Dec. 5, 2016**



418 W. Short Street  
Lexington, KY 40507  
859.254.4546  
[www.lctonstage.org](http://www.lctonstage.org)

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# Dear Educator –

Lexington Children's Theatre is proud to be producing our 78<sup>th</sup> season of plays for young people and their families. As an organization that values the arts and education, we have created this Play Guide for teachers to utilize in conjunction with seeing a play at LCT.

Our Play Guides are designed to be a valuable tool in two ways: helping you prepare your students for the enriching performance given by LCT's performers, 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 Academic Standards (KAS), including the National Core Arts Standards for Theatre. Teachers have important voices at LCT, and 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 email Jeremy Kisling, our Associate Artistic Director in Charge of Education, at [jkisling@lctonstage.org](mailto:jkisling@lctonstage.org).

Please use the Teacher Response form following a performance. We are thrilled that you rely on LCT to provide your students a quality theatrical experience, and we hope this resource helps you in your classroom.

**LCT's Education Department**

## The mission of our education Programming



The mission of Lexington Children's Theatre's 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.

## Your role in the 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 on stage.

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 DVD, 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 you played as an audience.





## About the Mirror and its Pieces, A Little Boy and a Little Girl

In a city immersed in Norse mythology, Gerda and Kai live just across the rooftops from each other – their lives as intertwined as the rose trellis that bridges the gap between their windows. On Christmas Eve, Kai gives Gerda a gift of red shoes, each desperately hoping the other will take the first step in admitting their love. Kai and Gerda are interrupted by Gerda's Grandmother seeking aid in the streets. Traversing the snowy streets, the trio is unknowingly caught in the midst of a struggle between the Snow Queen and Jorelie, the leader of the dreaded wild hunt. Jorelie has a magic mirror that allows anyone who looks in it to see themselves

as they truly are. The Snow Queen sees herself in the mirror and breaks it. A splinter lands in Kai's eye and travels to his heart, turning it cold. When Grandmother presents Kai with a new sled to be shared with Gerda, Kai turns his back and walks alongside the River. He faces the Snow Queen, forcing Kai to stop and consider his decision. Kai chooses to leave to attain what he truly desires. The Snow Queen kisses Kai's forehead and follows him as he leaves his sled beside the frozen River. Searching for Kai through the storm, Grandmother finds his sled and assumes Kai has drowned.

## The Flower Garden of the Woman Who Knows Magic

It is spring and Gerda doesn't believe that Kai has died. Her memory intertwines with the present and she asks the River if it took Kai. The River answers, but Gerda does not understand. Gerda offers her red shoes to the River for the return of Kai. The River returns her shoes, claiming not to have Kai, but offers to take Gerda to him. Gerda struggles in the River until succumbing to the water. She is saved by The Woman Who Knows Magic, a sorceress living in an enchanted garden. The Woman Who Knows Magic resuscitates Gerda, pondering how lovely it would be to keep Gerda. The Flowers attempt to save Gerda from The Woman's magic, but the Woman banishes the Flowers from her garden. The Flowers are released by Gerda's tears and they tell her that Kai is still alive. Gerda attempts to run away but is stopped by The Woman. Gerda protests that The Woman has no right to control anything but herself. In a fury, The Woman creates a huge maelstrom, allowing Gerda to see the world as it truly is. Gerda chooses to stay in the real world, even if it means a world in which Kai does not love her.

## The Prince and Princess

Alone in the desert, Gerda decides to let her heart dictate where she goes from there. She comes upon a Guard, forbidding her from entering the castle during the dangerous dreams that come alive during Midsummer's Night. Gerda becomes flustered and can only repeat the last word the Guard speaks. A dangerous dream shadow rushes past, surprising Gerda and verifying the Guard's story. He tells Gerda that the dreams are softening now that the Princess has found a Prince. The Princess's suitors all stood on the front step only repeating the last word they heard until a shabby young man finally pleased the Princess and is to marry her. Hearing the description, Gerda believes she has found Kai. Gerda sidesteps the Guard's watchful eye to see the young man for herself. Gerda is accosted by the dreams; her cries wake the Princess and Prince. The Prince is not Kai, and the Princess is enraged by the disruption. The Princess demands Gerda be taken to the dungeon, but the Prince convinces her to let Gerda stay to allow her dreams to explain her presence. The Princess obliges. Gerda's dreams reflect her journey and in her dream Gerda sees Kai and the Snow Queen. Kai is alive, completing a task for the Snow Queen. The Snow Queen questions Kai, asking him why he chooses to stay. Kai cannot think clearly with the shard still in his heart. He continues to work and Gerda wakes, ready to continue her search. The Prince and Princess are reluctant to let Gerda go, warning her of the dangers in the Namdalen Forest. They send the Guard with her to protect from the threat of cannibalistic Robbers in the Forest.



# Play Synopsis continued



## The Little Robber Girl

Gerda twists her ankle, forcing them to rest. They are surrounded by the Robbers, who speak a foreign language. The Guard stabs Gudrun, leader of the Robbers, and she quickly disarms him. The Robbers begin chanting a sacrificial ritual and Gudrun kills the Guard, as Jorelie and the Wild Hunt come to claim his soul. The Robbers rejoice and Gudrun asks her tribe if they should kill the girl next. Her death is agreed upon, and the Robbers begin their ritual once more. During the ritual, Gudrun's daughter, Ylva, attacks her mother. Ylva wants to keep Gerda as a pet. Gudrun is ultimately pleased by the strength of Ylva and allows her to keep Gerda as long as she is useful. The Robbers begin to feast on the body of the Guard. Ylva falls asleep, holding Gerda.

Scared and hopeless, Gerda cries until she is hushed by a mysterious voice. She asks the voice about the Snow Queen and how to find her. The voice tells Gerda what he knows, giving her hope. The voice belongs to Bjarga the reindeer, also captured by the Robbers. Bjarga asks Gerda to untie him, and if she does he will take her to Lapland, where the Snow Queen is. Suddenly, a brigade is heard rushing through the forest. The Robbers wake, ready for battle, leaving Gerda and Bjarga behind. Gerda gathers her courage and unties Bjarga. Bjarga and Gerda narrowly escape the Robbers.

## What Happened at the Snow Queen's Palace and What Happened Afterwards

On their journey, Wolves overpower Bjarga. Gerda mourns as Bjarga's spirit rises and watches over her. Gerda once again looks inside herself to find Kai. The Snow Queen sends snowflakes to confuse Gerda, but she is not fazed. Bjarga departs once Gerda has found her direction. Battling the wind and cold, Gerda finds herself at the Snow Queen's castle. She spots Kai and is overjoyed. Kai counts the actions he completes and ignores Gerda. She begs him to come back to her, but Kai's response is that his work must be finished. Gerda helps him push the final piece into place. Kai drops down and begins to cry. Gerda summons the courage to tell Kai that she loves him. He shakes his head; Gerda takes that as a rejection. Hurt, she turns to leave. The shaking of his head was not rejection; the shard of glass fell and left his heart, allowing him to be the Kai he had been before. He embraces Gerda, revealing he loves her, too. The sled he had once rejected is presented again. Kai picks it up, and walks hand in hand with Gerda.



# What to know - before the show!

## Silent Messages



LCT's production of *The Snow Queen* utilizes the element of silence to convey various emotions and ideas. Movement and body language often communicate more than words alone. Help to prepare your students for this concept by asking them to communicate using pantomime. Pantomime is acting without words or props. Divide students into pairs and assign each pair one of the words listed below. Ask students to create a short scene or frozen picture without dialogue that expresses their assigned word. Have each pair share their scene and have the rest of the class guess what emotion or idea is being communicated.

Friendship  
Compassion  
Hatred  
Anger  
Love  
Royalty  
Respect

Family  
Fear  
Hunger  
Jealousy  
Anxiety  
Guilt  
Exhaustion

Courage  
Loyalty  
Deception  
Confusion  
Trust  
Pride  
Understanding

KAS: TH:Pr6.1.4; TH:CR1.1.3c; TH:Pr4.1.4b

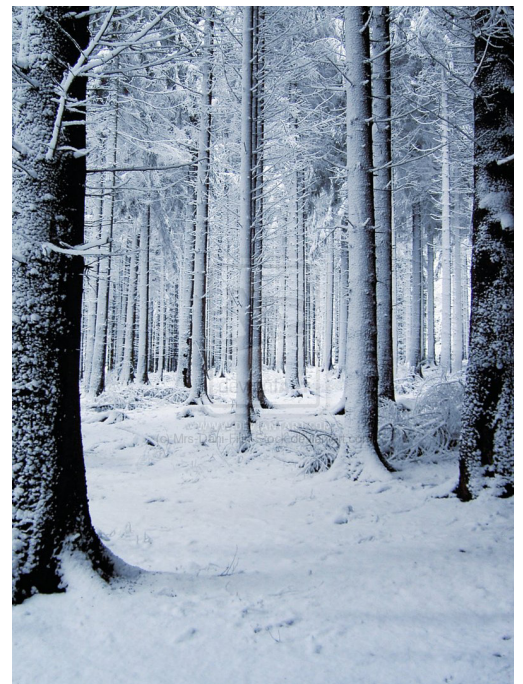
## Winter Haiku

Nature plays an important role in *The Snow Queen*. Gerda, the story's protagonist, battles the cold and snow of winter and seeks help from various beings like flowers and the river while on her journey to find her friend Kai. Haikus, a form of Japanese poetry, are often about nature or natural things. A haiku uses a non-rhyming verse that conveys a complete image or feeling in three lines of syllables - the first line contains five syllables, the second has seven, and the last has five. Have your students create their own haikus about winter to be shared with the class.

Example:

**Snow is falling down  
It is very cold tonight  
The world is silent**

KAS: ELA-WR:4.4; ELA-WR:4.3d





# What to know – before the show!

## A Closer Look at *The Snow Queen*

Hans Christian Andersen's *The Snow Queen*, published in 1845, has many things that set it apart from other stories. With seven chapters, it is much longer than a traditional fairy tale. It finds inspiration in other stories, such as *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, a Norwegian tale that also features a girl who has an adventure-filled journey to rescue a boy. Most traditional fairy tales, such as those collected by the Brothers Grimm, were imagined and passed down verbally from generation to generation and would change over time, resulting in more than one variation. This is not the case in many of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. He imagined and wrote nearly all of the fairy tales in his collections, including *The Little Mermaid*, *The Ugly Duckling*, and of course, *The Snow Queen*.

The characters found in *The Snow Queen* are not typical, even today. First of all, the story follows Gerda, who is a girl. While a story following a female protagonist isn't unheard of, Gerda isn't an adult or even a teenager. She is a child who has everything she needs for her journey already inside of her. She flips the standard fairy tale upside down by relentlessly searching for her friend until she finds and rescues him. She encounters and is assisted in her journey by many other strong, primarily female characters, which is something that is not common, even for stories today. Gerda is cared for by her grandmother, helped by witches, protected by a robber girl who is also a child, and given clothing and a guide by a princess. Even the antagonist of the story, the Snow Queen, is a woman. In fact, the only male character with a position of power is the Prince, who was chosen by his wife, the Princess.

### Reflection Questions

What other stories feature a female protagonist?

Can you think of any stories that only have female characters, or any stories that only have male characters?

## What about *Frozen*?



© Disney 2013

The movie *Frozen* is based on *The Snow Queen*, so why are the two stories so different? *Frozen* is the final product of 70 years of work. Disney's first attempt at adapting *The Snow Queen* was in 1943 and was attempted many times after, but it always fell flat because of one problem: the Snow Queen herself. Scriptwriters found it difficult to adapt a character that was mostly symbolic. The only information about her given in the original story is a description of her appearance. Her motives are never explained and she doesn't even make an appearance during the climax at the end of the story. Attempts were made to make her into a relatable character, but none were successful until recently, when it was suggested that the Snow Queen was sister to the Gerda character, whom they had been calling Anna. Gerda became Anna, the robber girl became Kristoff, and the Snow Queen became Elsa, who had a backstory and motive for her actions, and *Frozen* was born.

# What to know - before the show!

## Anatomy of a Snowflake

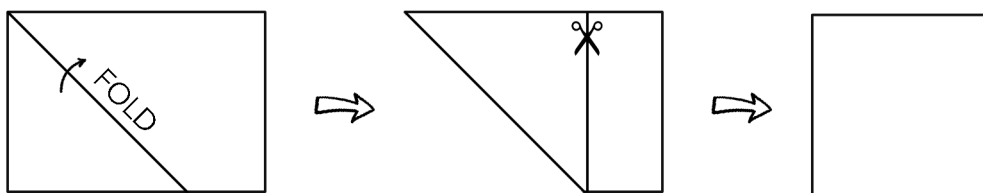
Snowflakes are used to challenge others, cover, and make way for the Snow Queen. In the play, as in nature, no two snowflakes are exactly alike. However, all snowflakes are based on the geometric shape called a "hexagon." A hexagon is a polygon with six angles and six sides. If a snowflake were to be folded in half, both sides would match up equally. Have your students make a paper snowflake using the instructions below. Cut each snowflake in half and allow your students to hide half of the snowflake. Collect the other half and pass them out to the class at random. Have your students find the matching half of the snowflake and tape them back together.

**KAS: MA.4.G.1-3**

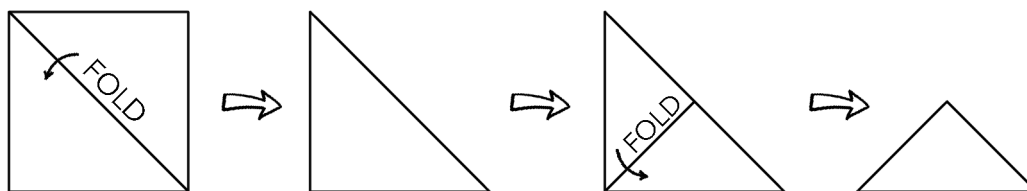
### You Will Need:

- Paper
- Scissors

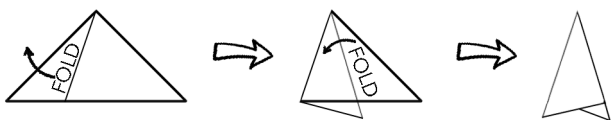
1. Fold over one of the paper's edges and cut off the extra part to make a square.



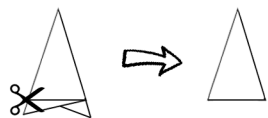
2. Fold your square in half diagonally to make a triangle. Fold in half again to make a smaller triangle.



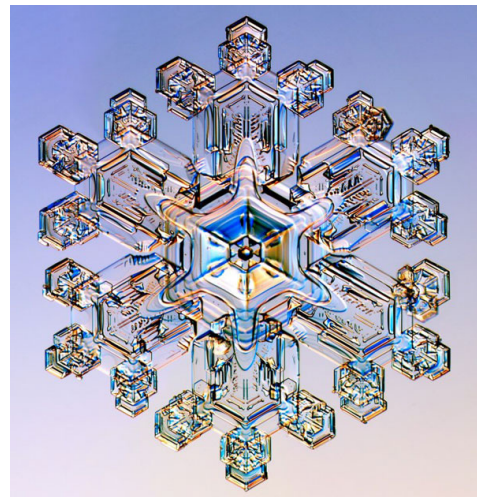
3. Fold the triangle in thirds with one side to the back and the other side to the front.



4. Cut the edges off the bottom.



5. Around the outside edges of your triangle, cut shapes (circles, squares, triangles, squiggles, etc.). Once the cutting is done, carefully unfold your creation!



# What to know - before the show!

## Learn a Little Swedish



LCT's production of *The Snow Queen* utilizes the Swedish language for the trolls and the robbers. Swedish is a Nordic language derived from Old Norse and is very similar to both Danish and Norwegian. Below is a list of Swedish words to assist your class in learning some Swedish before attending the play.

**KAS: NL.IL.1**

	ENGLISH WORD	SWEDISH WORD	HOW TO SAY IT
Polite Phrases	Hello	<i>Hej</i>	Hay
	Good Evening	<i>God kväll</i>	Goh kvell
	Goodbye	<i>Adjö</i>	Ah-yuuh
	Please	<i>Snälla</i>	Snell-la
	Thank You	<i>Tack</i>	Tahck
	Excuse Me	<i>Ursäkta/Förlåt</i>	Ooshehk-tun/fur-loht
	I'm Sorry	<i>Jag är ledsen</i>	Yaag ayr lessen
	Yes/No	<i>Ja/Nej</i>	Yah/nay
	What's your name?	<i>Vad heter du?</i>	Vah hay-ther doo
	My name is _____.	<i>Mitt namn är _____.</i>	Mit nahm-narh _____.
Numbers	One	<i>En/Ett</i>	En/Ett
	Two	<i>Två</i>	Tvoh
	Three	<i>Tre</i>	T-reh
	Four	<i>Fyra</i>	Fuhrah
	Five	<i>Fem</i>	Fehm
	Six	<i>Sex</i>	Sayks
	Seven	<i>Sju</i>	Hwoo
	Eight	<i>Atta</i>	Oh-tah
	Nine	<i>Nio</i>	Nee-yoh
	Ten	<i>Tio</i>	Tee-yoh
Colors	Red	<i>Röd</i>	Rud
	Orange	<i>Orange</i>	Oh-rhanj
	Blue	<i>Blå</i>	Bloh
	Green	<i>Grön</i>	Grun
	Yellow	<i>Gul</i>	Ghool
	Purple	<i>Lila</i>	Leela
	Pink	<i>Rosa</i>	Rhosa
	Black	<i>Svart</i>	Svaahrt
	White	<i>Vit</i>	Veet



# How to grow – after the show!



## Rulers of the Seasons

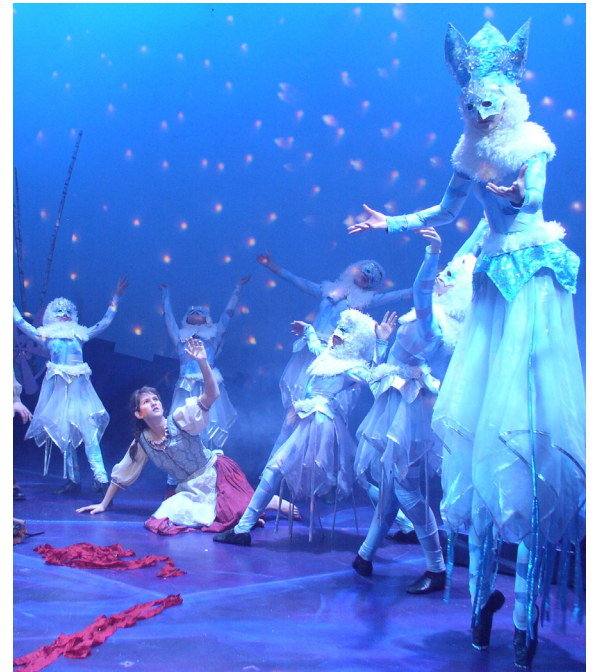
The Snow Queen controls and manipulates the snow in LCT's production of *The Snow Queen*. Discuss with your class: what does the Snow Queen have in common with snow? Discuss how the story would have changed had the Snow Queen been in control of a different form of precipitation. Ask your students to pick one form of precipitation or weather phenomenon to research. Have them create characters that control this type of weather (e.g. The Hail Duchess, The Tornado King, etc.) and write a short story based on their creation.

**KAS:TH:Cr.1.1.5a; TH:Cr1.1.4a**

## Frozen Images

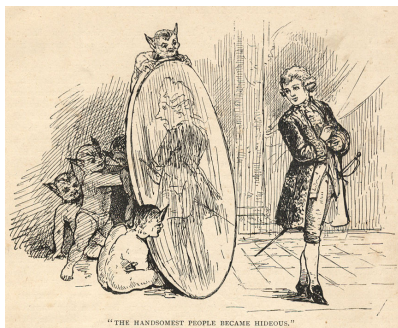
*The Snow Queen* contains six stories in one tale. Below are the titles of each story. Divide your class into groups and assign each group one of the six stories. Using their bodies, have the students create frozen pictures of what happened in each part of the story. Help your students to consider the characters, settings, emotions, and plot points in each story. Encourage each group to have a clear beginning, middle, and end to their portion of the story (this can be done by having three separate frozen images). Share these frozen images and see if the other groups can guess which part of the story is which.

- *About the Mirror and Its Pieces*
- *A Little Boy and a Little Girl*
- *The Flower Garden of the Woman Who Knew Magic*
- *The Prince and Princess*
- *The Little Robber Girl*
- *What Happened at the Snow Queen's Palace and What Happened Afterward*



**KAS:TH:Cr1.1.4c; TH:Cr1.1.5c**

## Mirroring Exercise



In *The Snow Queen*, the magic mirror shows the beholder as they truly are. Group your students into groups of two and have each pair decide who will be A and who will be B. Have each pair stand facing each other. Student A will start by moving their body slowly. Student B should mirror Student A's moment, copying each detail of the action to the best of their ability. Encourage students to start by using just their arms and hands before adding more complex movement from the rest of their body. Once both students are moving fluidly together, have the pairs switch so Student B is leading and Student A is mirroring. Afterwards, reflect with your students: Did you prefer to be the leader or the follower, and why? What was challenging about this activity? How did you and your partner work to move together seamlessly?

**KAS: DA:Pr5.1.2a; DA:Pr5.1.3b**

# How to grow – after the show!

## Everyday Heroes and Heroines



In *The Snow Queen*, the heroine, Gerda, conquers all obstacles on her journey to save her friend, Kai. Discuss with your class what they think a hero is. Do heroes have to have special powers or abilities? Make a list of the most important characteristics they think a heroine or hero should display. Discuss with them that a hero can be defined as an ordinary person who prevails in extraordinary situations. Each of us is a “hero” on our own journey. Have your students create a comic about a time when they overcame obstacles or helped someone else with themselves starring as the hero/heroine.

KAS: ELA-WR:4.3a; ELA-WR:5.3b; ELA-WR:4.4

### My Comic


# How to grow - after the show!

## What to Read Next

### ***The Astonishing Adventures of Fanboy and Goth Girl* by Barry Lyga**

Two high school outcasts, for two completely different reasons, find friendship in their oddity and their interest of comic books.

### ***Book of a Thousand Days* by Shannon Hale**

Based on the classic tale by the Brothers Grimm, Dashti, a maid, and Lady Saren, her mistress, are imprisoned in a tower for seven years for Saren's refusal to marry a man she despises.

### ***Ella Enchanted* by Gail Carson Levine**

Ella goes on a journey to reverse her "gift" and experiences life-changing moments along the way.

### ***Many Waters* by Madeleine L'Engle**

Brothers Sydney and Dennis Murray find themselves face-to-face with Noah in the desert thanks to their parents' time machine.

### ***My Swordhand is Singing* by Marcus Sedgwick**

Tomas is a father to Peter and a man with a past: a past that is tracking him with deadly intent, and when the dead of Chust begin to rise from their graves, they both must face a soulless enemy and a terrifying destiny.

### ***Un Lun Dun* by China Mieville**

In present-day London, strange things start happening around Zanna. Soon, Zanna and her friend Deebea find themselves in an alternate reality.

## LCT teaches in YOUR school!

### Would you like to see some of these play guide activities modeled in your classroom?

Book a workshop for your class with one of LCT's teaching artists! In our pre-show workshops, our teaching artists will engage students in acting skills and themes from the play through drama activities. In our post-show workshops, students will get to extend their play-going experience by strengthening their personal connection to the play and deepening their understanding of the themes and characters.



Call us at 859-254-4546 x233 to book a pre or post-show workshop for your class!

To learn more about Lexington Children's Theatre and what programming is available to bring to your school visit:

[www.lctonstage.org/for-educators/in-school-experiences/](http://www.lctonstage.org/for-educators/in-school-experiences/)