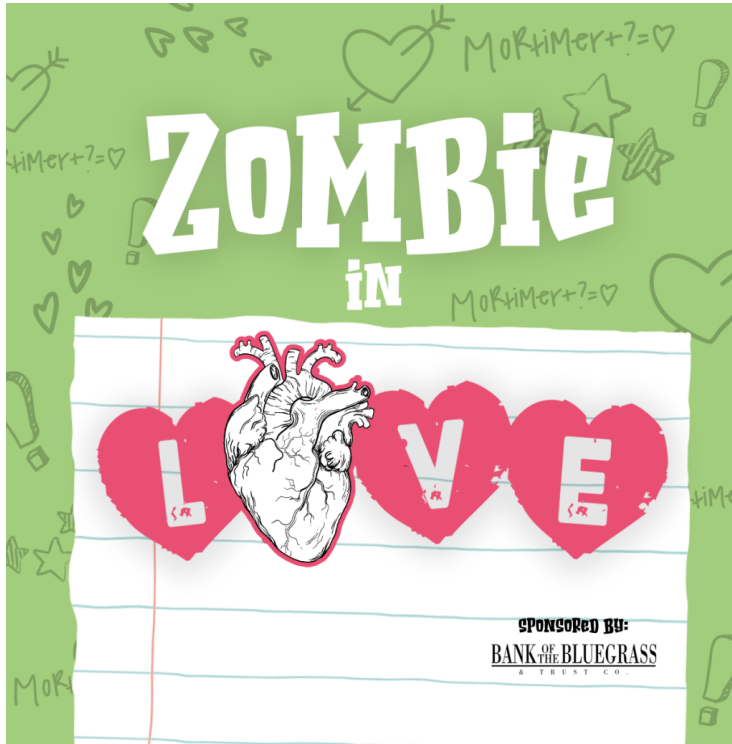


2023-2024 Season Play Guide



A Learning Stage Series Production
October 15 - November 5, 2023

Our Mission to Students, Teachers, and Families

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.

Dear Educator,

Lexington Children's Theatre is proud to be producing our 85th 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 Kentucky Academic Standards (KAS) and to integrate the arts with your core curricular subjects.

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

Play Synopsis

In a dark and spooky tomb, a chorus of worms set the stage for the tale of “Mortimer the Morose.” While he is a zombie, Mortimer (or “Mort” as his worm friends call him) is a teenager trying to find his place in the world, specifically high school. Cupid’s Ball, the big school dance, is coming up, and Mort wants to get a date. Other than the worms, the closest thing Mort has to a friend is Rodney, who insists that changing his outward appearance will be the key to getting a date to the dance. But despite his efforts, the girls at school don’t seem to appreciate his genuine gifts and attempts at wooing. (Maybe he should have taken the dead finger out of the ring before giving it to someone.)



In another part of the school, we meet Mildred, another teen who happens to be a zombie. Mildred’s friends don’t want a zombie for a friend anymore, which has Mildred looking for a friend or someone to enjoy life (after death) with who appreciates her. Mort and Mildred almost meet when they find themselves on opposite sides of a vent connecting their usual hiding spots in the school: the janitor’s closet and office supply storage room, respectively. This encounter gives Mort a little bit of hope that there might be someone out there for him.

With support from his worm friends, Mort places an ad in the newspaper hoping to meet his someone special at the Cupid’s Ball at midnight. At the ball, he waits not so patiently by the punchbowl, hoping that each girl who approaches might be answering his ad. At 12:06, Mildred finally arrives, knocking into the punch table, sending the punchbowl flying. Together, Mort and Mildred have the confidence to embrace their weirdness, which inspires everyone else to do so as well.

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 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 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 they played as an audience.

Before the Play

Make a Musical Moment

Zombie in Love is a musical based off a book of the same name by Kelly DiPucchio. Musicals are a form of theatre that combines song, dialogue, acting and dance into one performance.



Have your students think about one of their favorite children's book. Have them think about a moment in the book that was exciting or important to the growth of a character. Now let's make a song! By using the melody from a popular song have student re-write the lyrics. What is the mood of the song? Does it fit with the emotion your character is trying to show? Do the lyrics rhyme? What information needs to be said in this song?

For further exploring create a dance to your new song. Through movement and body language we can communicate emotions, tension and relationships. Split the class into small groups and have them pick one of their songs they would like to choreograph. Like a refrain repeats in a song, certain movements can repeat in a dance. Choose 3-5 moves and see how you could arrange them differently throughout the song. How can you show variations on these 3-5 moves?

KAS: MU:Cr1.1.3; MU:Cr2.1.3a; DA:Cr2.1.3b



Zombify Me, Captain!

Zombies are people too... but not really. How would you zombify these simple AB or "open" scenes?

AB scenes are open for interpretation. Split your class into groups of two. Have the groups read through the scene and decide the following:

- WHO are the characters in this scene, and how do they know each other?
- WHERE does this scene take place?
- WHAT is the conflict or problem?

Have students practice and act out their scene with these decisions in mind. Next, zombify the scenes by adding zombies to at least one of the following elements: character, setting, action or conflict. Have each group share their zombified scenes with the class.

A: Hello
B: Oh, hi
A: What are you doing here?
B: Not much. Just this.
A: Oh
B: Well, see you later
A: Yeah, see you around

A: We can't stay here.
B: Why not?
A: It's not safe.
B: You keep saying that.
A: Because it's true.
B: You're overreacting.
A: Not this time.

KAS: TH:Cr3.1.3a;
TH:CR3.1.3b

Night of the Living Dead

An oxymoron is a figure of speech placing two contradictory terms next to one another to describe something. Our play deals with cute zombies. Students will create an image using their bodies and freeze. Use the oxymorons listed below and have your class create frozen pictures. See if your class can guess which example they are displaying.

- Big baby
- Skinny sumo wrestler
- Silent scream
- Sad smile
- Tall dwarf

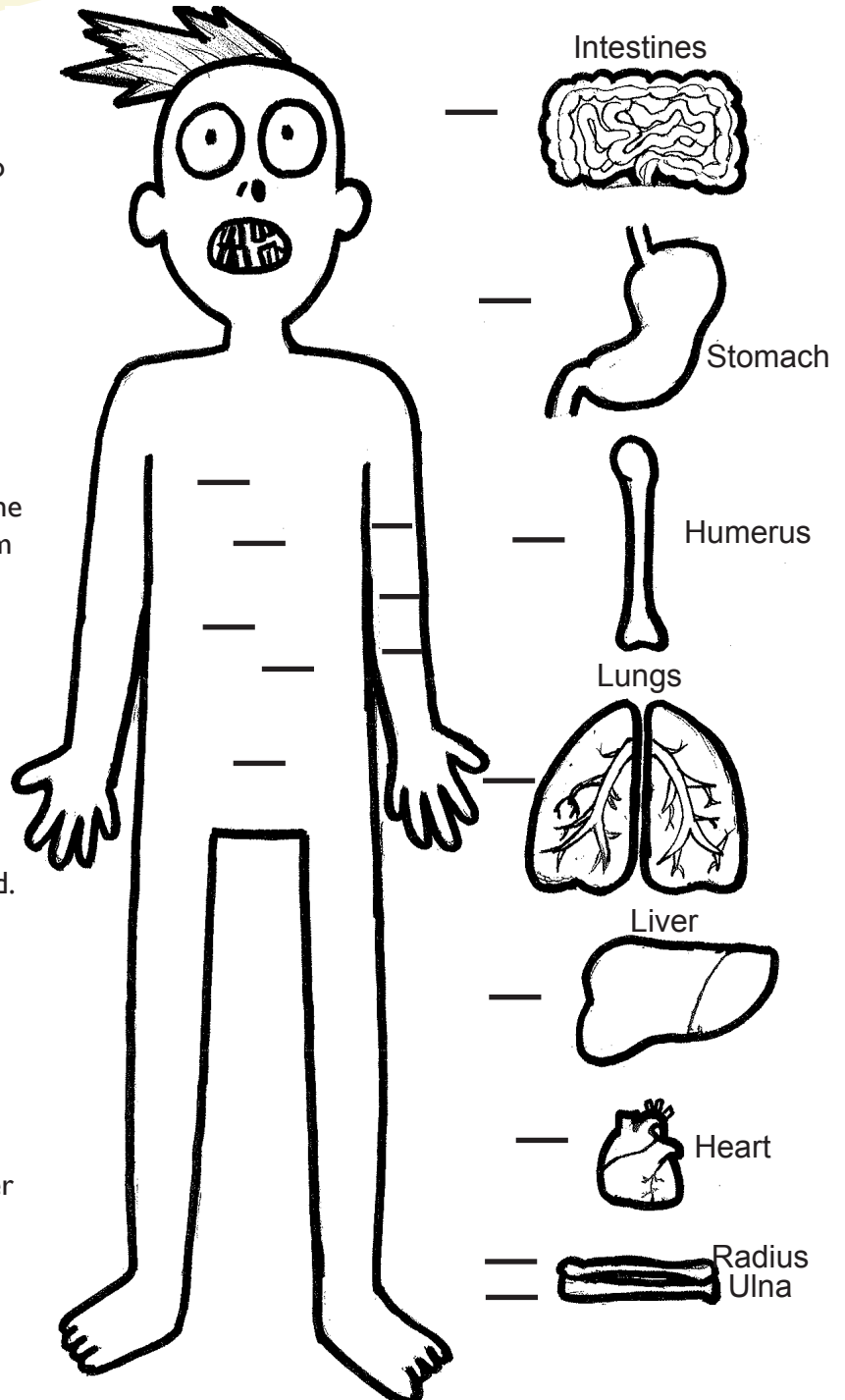
KAS: TH:Pr5.1.2a; TH:Cr3.1.3b

Pull Yourself Together!

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Well, there go Mort's intestines again! He's always falling apart. See if you can match the function to the body part by labeling the body part with the appropriate number. Help Mort even further by labeling the blanks in the body with the proper body part! If you have any plans on being a surgeon, feel free to cut the body parts out and stick them in Mort's body! Keep in mind that some of the body parts may overlap – bodies are stuffed.

1. This organ's main function is to filter blood coming in from the digestive tract.
2. Many muscles in the arm attach to this bone to perform movements of the arm, hand and wrist.
3. Many muscles (i.e. bicep and triceps) are attached to this bone, making it especially important for throwing, lifting, and writing.
4. This organ collects oxygen from the air and removes carbon dioxide from the body.
5. This bone is found on the thumb side of the forearm and rotates to allow the hand to pivot at the wrist.
6. This organ is where a major part of digestion occurs in the body, it's where gastric acid breaks down food.
7. This organ/muscle pumps blood throughout the body giving it necessary oxygen and nutrients.
8. The "smaller" organ absorbs most of the nutrients from what we eat and drink. The "larger" absorbs water from waste.



Zombies 101

Zombies: lumbering, slow, grotesque creatures. It seems that every time we turn around this time of year, this common character type leers at us from around every corner. From plodding, mindless, decaying reanimated corpses to sprinting, intelligent virus-infested creatures, zombies have captured our interest. But with the many zombie movies, books and TV shows come different theories about what Zombies are and what they do. And still questions remain...



From where does the term “zombie” come?

Our term “zombie” has several different origin possibilities. The term can be traced to Haitian folklore; in Haitian French, a *zombi* is a dead body reanimated through magic. It can also be traced to the West African Kimbundu term *nzúmbe* meaning “ghost.”

How are zombies created?

The original Haitian folklore surrounding zombies claims a *bokor*, or a sorcerer or priest in the religion of Vodou, revive a body through magical means, often using black magic and/or neurotoxins found in nature. Zombies can also be created through the horrific mutation of a virus, bringing once calm, logical people into raving, rotting monsters.

How fast are zombies?

The “classic zombie,” as seen in George A. Romero’s 1968 classic *Night of the Living Dead*, shows zombies as slow, thick-witted, lumbering creatures, clocking a mere 1-2 mph. These monsters could easily be outrun, seeing as they moved at a shuffle-walk. However, if one ascribes to the recent adaptations, such as the newly released *28 Days Later* or *Zombieland*, zombies can move at much faster paces, sprinting across the screen and into viewers’ nightmares at closer to 8 or 9 mph.

What do zombies eat?

According to *the Zombie Survival Guide*, zombies don’t need to eat; they do so merely as a leftover habitual impulse, as well as a way to bring about more zombies. Most zombie enthusiasts will passionately argue BRAAAAAAINS!

Where’s the safest place to live in a zombie apocalypse?

According to a study by the Zombie Research Society, the safest countries to live in are: 1. Australia 2. Canada 3. United States 4. Russia. 5. Kazakhstan based on population density, climate, topography, gun-ownership rate, military capability, natural resources, and public infrastructure.

Within the United States, using the same standards, Texas reigns as the safest place to live in the event of a zombie apocalypse.

What items do I need to be prepared for a zombie attack?

The Center for Disease Control created an extensive list of things every person would need in the unlikely event of a zombie attack. You need water (1 gallon per day), food (preferably non-perishable items), medications (both prescription and non-prescription), tools and supplies (from duct tape to utility knives), sanitation and hygiene products (such as bleach, soap, towels), clothing and bedding, important documents (copies of driver’s license, passport, birth certificate), first aid supplies, and, perhaps most importantly, a plan to put into place in case the impossible were to happen.

Can zombies swim?

While zombies lack the physical coordination to swim, as long as they carry the appropriate amount of weight to cancel out their buoyancy, theoretically, they could simply stroll across the bed of any body of water.

Extend the Experience

Fearful to Funny

Zombies are terrifying undead creatures perfectly at home in horror films. But *Zombie in Love* looks at zombies in a different light, taking something scary and putting it in a relatable situation: a zombie trying to get a date to the high school dance. Have students create their own ridiculous reality by combining one item from each column. For example: werewolf + planetarium = tantrum outside the moon room!

Fearful Creatures:

- Vampires
- Evil clowns
- Werewolves
- Wicked Witch
- Grim reaper
- Ghosts
- Ghouls

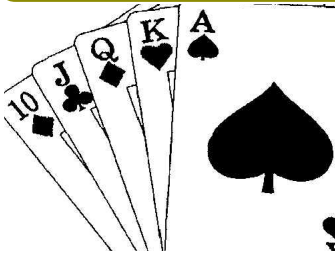
Situations:

- Grocery shopping
- Going to the movies
- Taking a pet to the vet
- At the dentist
- Field trip to the planetarium
- Picnic at the park
- First day of school shopping



Have students tell the story of their funny, fearful mishap by drawing a three-panel comic strip.

KAS: TH:Pr4.1.2a; C.3.3b; L.2.1f



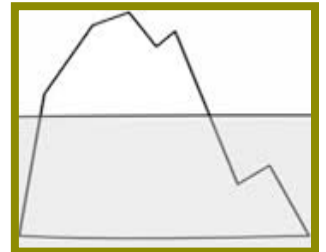
Exploring Status

In the play, we see Mortimer attempt to navigate the social world of his high school. Have each student draw a card from a deck of playing cards (you can also make your own from index cards or post-it notes). Without looking at their card, each student places it on their forehead so the number faces out. Establish that 2 is the lowest status card and ace is the highest. Have the class walk around the room and non-verbally interact with each other based on the cards they see on their classmates' heads. If they think they have a higher card than someone else, this might change how they interact with that person. After a few minutes of this, have the class attempt to line up (without speaking) in numerical order. Then reveal the cards and see how accurate their line is. Afterwards, reflect with your class: What kind of clues did you get from others to help you figure out your card? How did it feel to be treated that way based on your card? How does your experience connect to what you saw in *Zombie in Love*?

KAS: TH:Cn11.1.3; K.H.CO.1

Celebrating Individuality: Identity Iceberg Collages

In the play, Mortimer and Mildred are excluded because they are different. In this activity, students will explore the different identity markers that make up who they are. Have each student draw a horizontal line across a piece of paper, and the outline of an iceberg that reaches above and below the line. They will complete this iceberg map individually, and will not need to share it with anyone else. Explain that only some parts of this iceberg can be seen on the surface, but that it extends below, just like some parts of our identity are more visible than others. Have students brainstorm different words that describe part of their identity (example: "female," "white," "8th grader," or "writer"). Write the words above or below the surface of the iceberg, according to how visible the marker is. Remind students that each person gets to decide for themselves what is visible and what is not.



Next, have students make collages of images that represent what they wrote down on their identity icebergs. They may choose to leave out some words or represent them in an abstract way. Display these collages in your classroom to celebrate your class' unique identities.

KAS: TH:Re8.1.3c; VA:Cr2.1.3

Expiration Date -- 10-31-2023

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Now that Mortimer and Mildred have officially hit it off, it's time for them to go on a *real* date with each other. Below, fill out the details of this date: Where does the date take place?, When does it take place?, What are Mort and Mildred wearing to the occasion?, etc. But just like any real date, things don't always go as smoothly as one may hope. There are some challenges to overcome! You must incorporate these three things into the date:

1. Loss of body part(s)
2. Another character from the musical
3. Yourself

Date & Time: _____

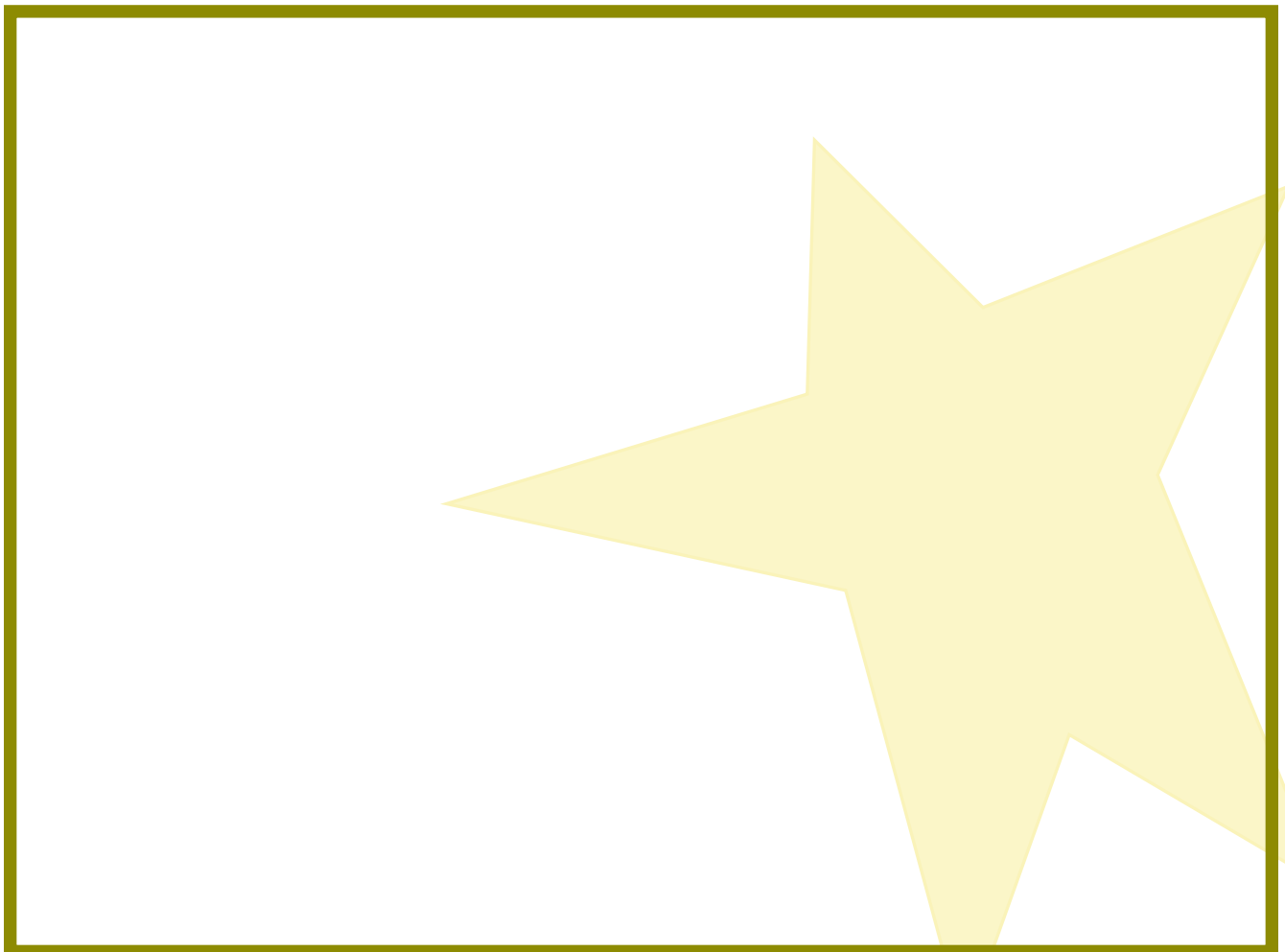
Place: _____

Event: _____

What to wear: _____

What to bring: _____

Once you have filled out all of the details of the date, show what it looks like! Make sure you include the three challenge elements within your picture. Try to fill most of the frame below, keeping in mind what the surroundings of this date would look like.



Suggested Reading

If you like stories of adventure, humor, and the undead --you might enjoy these books, as well:

Zombie Queen of Newbury High by Amanda Ashby

While trying to cast a love spell on her date for senior prom, Mia inadvertently infects her classmates and teachers with a virus that will turn them all into zombies.

Zombie in Love 2+1 by Kelly DiPuccio

Zombie lovebirds Mortimer and Mildred discover a baby on their doorstep. They are worried sick when the baby sleeps through the night and hardly ever cries. How will they teach him to be a proper zombie child?

You Are So Undead to Me by Stacey Jay

Megan Berry, a Carol, Arkansas, high-school student who can communicate with the Undead, must team up with her childhood friend Ethan to save homecoming from an army of flesh-hungry zombies.

Zombie Blondes by Brian James

Each time fifteen-year-old Hannah and her out-of-work father move, she has some fears about making friends, but a classmate warns her that in Maplecrest, Vermont, the cheerleaders really are monsters.

Zombies Don't Play Soccer by Debbie Dadey

The Bailey School Kids are going to find out what is wrong with the new Soccer Coach. The coauthor is Marcia Thornton Jones.



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 single 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.
- **Empathy in Action** - This residency is a week-long residency with a focus on anti-bullying and tolerance.
- **Playwriting** - Students will work to develop their creative writing skills through an interactive writing program.
- **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 rainforest through the use of roleplay, movement and pantomime.



Call 859-254-4546 x226 TODAY!