

THE RELUCTANT DRAGON



CCT Touring Show
2018-2019



Columbus Children's
THEATRE

In This Study Guide

Experiencing a Columbus Children's Theatre Touring Production is an engaging, fun, and educational way for students to experience live theatre! We are happy to give you a simple, yet informative, guide that will allow you to expand your students' viewing of *The Reluctant Dragon*.

In this study guide you will:

page 2 - Introduce students to theatre etiquette.

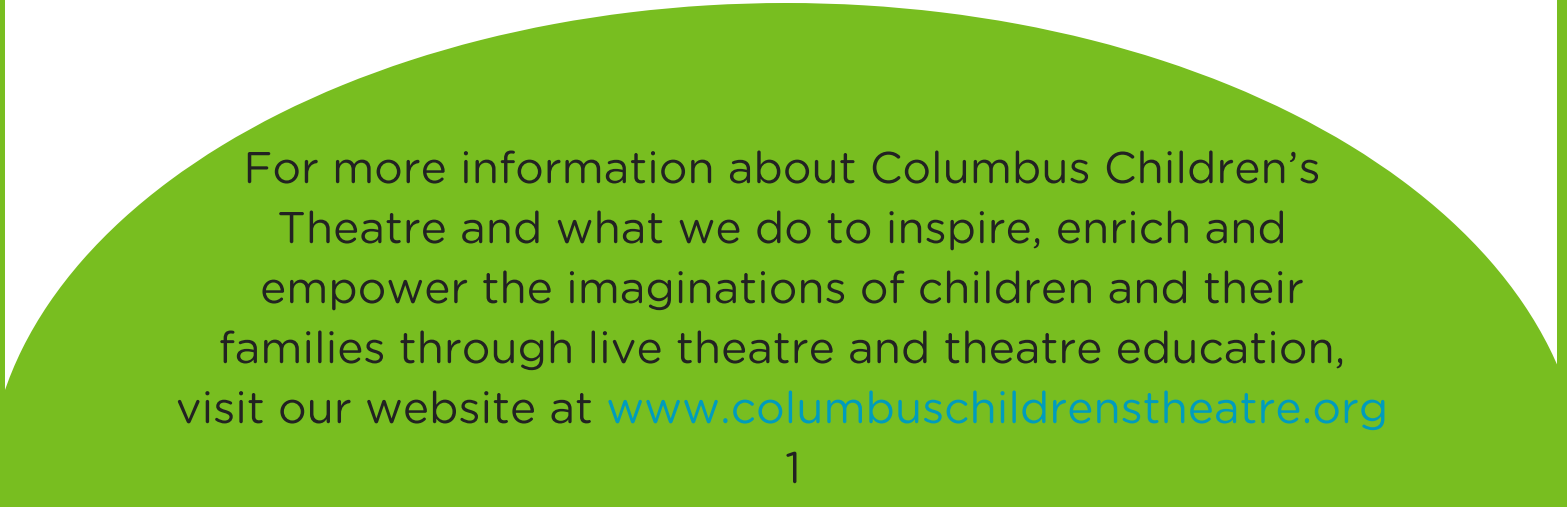
page 3 - Introduce students to the roles of a theatrical production.

page 4 & 5 - Discuss the background of the show.

page 6 - Provide insight to the show's themes.

page 6 - Ask questions to be used in further discussion.

page 7- Highlight several activities to connect the play to other content areas in your classroom.



For more information about Columbus Children's Theatre and what we do to inspire, enrich and empower the imaginations of children and their families through live theatre and theatre education, visit our website at www.columbuschildrenstheatre.org

Theatre Etiquette

There are certain unspoken rules that apply to theatre audiences that only those that have been initiated into the process know. It is essential to learn and understand how to be a good audience member during a live performance, so that it can be an enjoyable experience for all!

Above all, it is important to remember that the actors on stage can see and hear you at the same time you can see and hear them. Be respectful of the actors and your fellow audience members by being attentive and observing these DO's and DON'T's. Viewing a live show is a special experience, one that you will remember for a lifetime, so it's very important to remember the rules of theatre etiquette. That way, everyone can have a good time!

- DO be seated on time!
- DON'T get up during the performance.
- DO use the restroom before the performance!
- DON'T use electronic devices (unless access devices).
- DO clap and laugh if you see something that you like!
- DON'T talk to your neighbor during the performance.



Roles in a CCT Touring Performance

CCT's touring productions are the result of many people working collaboratively together. Many people know and understand what actors are—the people on the stage telling the story. But did you know that there are more people working hard “behind-the-scenes” to make the performance happen? Below are just a few of those people.

The Director:

Responsible for the overall concept of the show - they guide a vision to create the world on stage in which the show may exist. They work with the actors to help them interpret their characters and move on stage. They also work closely with designers in planning the sounds, lights, scenery, costumes, props - basically, everything you see on the stage.

The Designers:

Work with the director and with each other to create the look of the world of the show. This includes Set Designer, Costume Designer, Sound Designer, Props Master and others.

The Road Manager:

Organizes every aspect of the production—schedules, resources and communicates with the director, designers, and Resident Artists. The Road Manager works with the Director of Theatre Education at CCT to also ensure all shows and workshops meet CCT's high educational standards. They are in charge of making everything run smoothly and on time, from rehearsal to performance, every time!

The Cast:

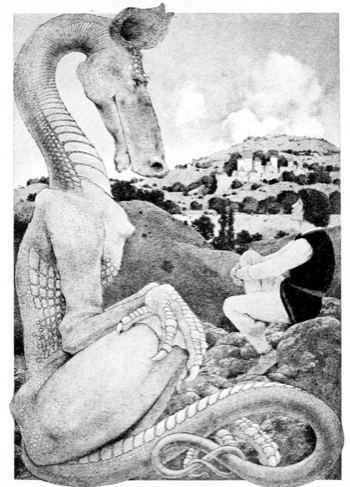
The cast is what we call the group of actors who are on stage performing the characters in front of the audience. They practice for many hours over many days to learn how to tell the story.

The Audience:

This is where you come in! The show you see would not exist without you. The hard work everyone puts in to create a show is all done to share the story with you!

A Favorite Children's Fairytale

"The Reluctant Dragon" is an 1898 children's story by Kenneth Grahame, originally published as a chapter in his book *Dream Days*. It is Grahame's most famous short story and it is a model for many modern stories in which a usually a scary and threatening creature, the dragon, is portrayed as a sympathetic character. The story also served as the key element to the 1941 Disney feature film with the same name.



About The Authors

Adapted by William Goldsmith, based on the short story by Kenneth Grahame. Kenneth Grahame was born in Scotland in 1859. From the age of five he lived with his grandmother in Cookham Dean, Berkshire, where he spent a lot of time on the banks of the River Thames. Later in his life he lived in Blewberry by the Berkshire Downs. It was here that he wrote "The Reluctant Dragon," which was first published in *Dream Days* in 1898, ten years before the publication of his most famous work, "*The Wind in the Willows*" (1908).

William Goldsmith is the Artistic Director at Columbus Children's Theatre and has authored 35 scripts for young audiences which have toured the state playing to over 800,000 children in Ohio. He also wrote the World Premiere of *Ebenezer!*, a musical adaptation of "A Christmas Carol" which premiered at CCT in 2004.

About The Show

"Dragons are a scourge and a pest, and must be abolished!" At least, that's what all the villagers say. It doesn't seem to matter that this particular dragon wouldn't hurt a fly and only wants to be lazy around his cave and make up poetry! He certainly doesn't want to fight, though it seems he will have no choice when the hero Knight St. George arrives. All is not lost, though, for the dragon does have one friend - a Shepherd's daughter, a small girl with a great deal of knowledge and imagination. Perhaps she can help find a solution to the reluctant dragon's problem. This play proves, "you shouldn't judge a book (or dragon!) by its cover!" With poetry, audience participation, and themes of empathy and friendship, this production is fun, fantastical, and engaging for all audiences. Classroom connections include the study of families and communities of the past, poetry/spoken word, and classic literature.

Characters

- Shepherd - Father of the Girl
- Mother - Mother of the Girl
- Girl - A book smart, bright and friendly young girl.
- The Dragon - A dragon who enjoys books and poetry. He is not fearsome whatsoever.
- St. George - A knight in shining armor. Our "Hero".



Themes

Empathy:

The girl in our story has a lot of empathy for the dragon. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. To walk in another's shoes so to speak. There is a theme of empathy throughout this story as the girl tries to tell the whole village to feel for the creature as well as St. George.

Friendship:

The theme of friendship can also be found in our story. The Girl befriends the dragon and they read and create poems together. The girl is also loyal to him and helps her friend by figuring out ways to keep him there without the village banishing him... or worse!

Questions

- Are there other characters that show empathy for the dragon besides the girl?
- Why do the girl and the dragon become friends?
- Why is the dad afraid of the dragon?
- Does the dragon teach St. George anything?
- Even though St. George is a hero to the villagers, who is the real hero of this story?



Activity Suggestions for Further Fun & Learning

Art:

Make your own dragon!

Using a paper plate create your own version of the reluctant dragon. Find out how here:

<http://www.learnwithplayathome.com/2015/06/simple-paper-plate-dragon-craft.html>

Social Studies:

Medieval Times Persona!

Just as the students participate as villagers in the show, use these handouts to help your students go even further in creating a persona from the times of knights, lords and ladies!

Find the handout here:

<http://www.box.frodelius.com/Medieval/handouts.html>

English Language Arts:

Read the Original story by Kenneth Grahame!

After reading the story, ask the class to identify what is different between the original book and the play's adaptation of the story.

Write a limerick!

The Reluctant Dragon loves to make up limericks. Try your hand at writing your own limerick. A limerick, if you remember, is a humorous verse of three long and two short lines rhyming AABBA.

Use the example from one of the dragon's poems:

A handsome young man a knight
Came to see me today, what a sight!
St. George was his name,
And he thought I was game,
But I told him that I wouldn't fight.

We can't wait to
perform at your school!

See you Soon!