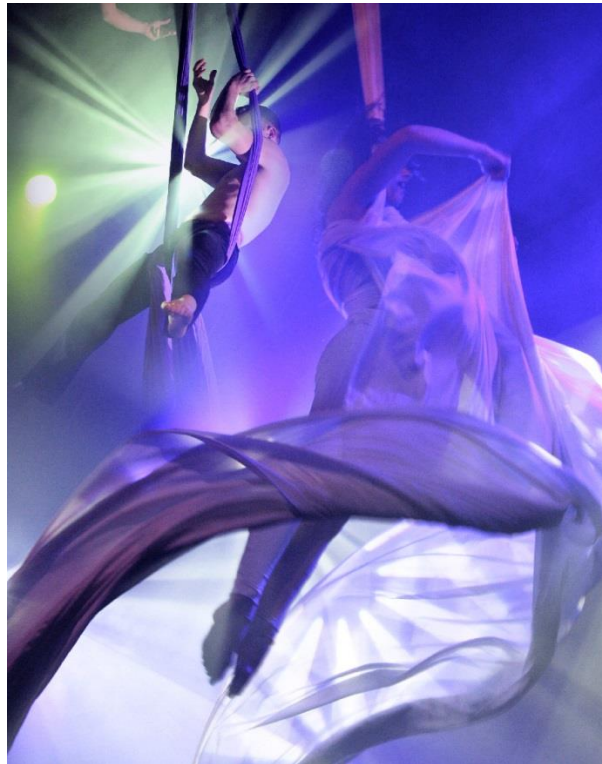


DCA PRODUCTIONS
In cooperation with the Joshua M. Freeman Foundation
PRESENTS:



THE ACROBATS OF CIRQUE-TACULAR



Students Study Guide

Message to Teachers

On behalf of The Acrobats of Cirquetacular, I would like to thank you for taking the time to review the enclosed information. It is our hope that this information and the activities will prepare your students for the exciting and unique performance that your students will experience. It will serve as a vehicle to educate your students about the diversity of the Art of Circus performances while creating a better understanding of the capabilities and achievements of people with amazing feats of daring.

CIRQUE-TACULAR - Study Guide

The Science, History, and Importance of Circus

Overview

- Circus is for EVERYONE! It is an ever-evolving art form that has delighted DIVERSE cultures throughout HISTORY. Adult and child, student and teacher, coach and athlete alike can experience the joy, surprise, and spectacle of stunts that seem to defy the limits of PHYSICS, GRAVITY, DIRECTION, MOTION, BALANCE, MASS, PRECISION, ACCURACY, SPEED, ANATOMY, STRENGTH, FLEXIBILITY, ENDURANCE, and FITNESS. This study guide will offer tools teachers can use to facilitate student conversations long after the curtain has closed (and perhaps inspire a future career for that special student... as the 'magic of circus' unfolds before their eyes!)



For Teachers

- This Study guide is designed to assist in preparing lessons in the lead-up to a performance by CIRQUE-TACULAR. Information is organized first by subject, then by topic. Content, activities, discussion questions are listed after each section. Numerous resources exist online for further research. We encourage you to expand on this introductory framework in the areas that most align with your students' age, interests, and abilities.



CIRCUS & HISTORY

- Minoans - The **Minoan civilization** was an Aegean Bronze Age civilization that arose on the island of Crete and other Aegean islands such as Santorini and flourished from approximately 3650 to 1400 BCE. It was rediscovered at the beginning of the 20th century through the work of British archaeologist Arthur Evans. Will Durant referred to it as "the first link in the European chain."



- Ancient China - China has always been an exceptionally history-conscious culture with a long continuity, and the Chinese system of writing was invented very early. Martial art demonstrations or shows were popular and, as elsewhere in Asia, in China, too, many of the movements employed by dances originated from the martial art techniques.



- Wild West Shows - were traveling vaudeville performances in the United States and Europe. The first and prototypical **Wild West show** was Buffalo Bill's, formed in 1883 and lasting until 1913.



- Travelling Circus - A **circus** is a company of performers that may include clowns, acrobats, trained animals, trapeze acts, musicians, hoopers, tightrope walkers, jugglers, unicyclists and other object manipulation and stunt-oriented artists. The term 'circus' also describes the performance which has followed various formats through its 150-year modern history.



- Modern Circus - **Contemporary circus**, or **nouveau cirque** (as it was originally known in French-speaking countries), is a genre of performing art developed in the later 20th century in which a story or a theme is conveyed through traditional circus skills. Animals are rarely used in this type of circus, and traditional circus skills are blended with a more character-driven approach. Compared with the traditional circuses of the past, the contemporary approach tends to focus more attention on the overall aesthetic impact, on character and story development, and on the use of lighting design, original music, and costume design to convey thematic or narrative content.

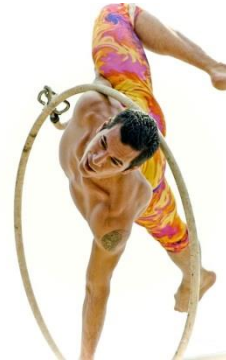


CIRCUS & LANGUAGE ARTS

- Many Languages - Word **Circus** in foreign **language** from **many languages** and countries around the world.
- Developing a Vocabulary – ex: acrobat - an athlete who performs acts requiring skill and agility and coordination
- Developing Notation – cirque is an art form and cultural activity whose medium is movement
- Musical Language – incorporating music and timing with the movements
- Puns and Jokes – comedy timing
- Physical Comedy & Timing - classes and private lessons for youth and adults.

CIRCUS & CULTURE

- China
- Mexico
- Russia
- United States
- Canada
- Contemporary Circus
- Costumes
- Musical Influences



CIRCUS & MATH

- Counting in Juggling – throwing 3 or more objects between the hands
- Counting in Acrobatics - individuals or groups of 5 or more manipulate one or two pieces of apparatus: clubs, hoop, ball, ribbon, rope and freehand (no apparatus).
- Tempo and Timing - in keeping with the style of the music and tempo.
- Calculating Force - the physics of gymnastics
- Weights and Measures – strength training
- Calculating Time - Acro is a competitive gymnastic discipline where partnerships of gymnasts work together and perform figures consisting of acrobatic moves



CIRCUS & HEALTH

- Extreme Anatomy
- Flexibility
- Strength
- Balance
- Endurance
- Training



CIRCUS & SCIENCE

- Center of Gravity
- Inertia
- Mass
- Force
- Material Science
- Gravity
- Directional Forces
- Precision vs. Accuracy



- Many preschoolers love the animals, clowns, and acrobatics of the circus. This Pre-K circus lesson plan outlines ways to teach preschool aged students about the circus.

Circle Time

Ask the students the following questions.

1. Have you ever been to a circus?
2. Have you ever seen a clown?
3. What did you see at the circus?

Stories:

4. *Little Monkey Says Good Night* by David Walker
5. *Circus* by Lou Chort
6. *Circus Caps for Sale* by Espher Sheluelkina

Songs: *The Little Clown*

Lyrics and motions:

This little clown is fat and gray (hold up thumb).

This little clown does tricks all day (hold up next finger).

This little clown is tall and strong (hold up next finger).

This little clown is wee and small (hold up next finger).

And, this little clown can do anything at all (hold up little finger).

Now for the Lessons

Math:

Match the Circus Items: Cut out two of each of various circus shapes (clowns, lions, elephants, etc.). Put all the cutouts in a bowl or a clown hat, and let the children match them and then sort them any way they see fit (animals/non animals, by colors, etc.).

Cotton Candy Matching: Create triangular cotton candy holders and puffy looking cotton candy cutouts in several different colors. Let your students match the cotton candy with its matching holder.

Feeding the Elephant: Have a picture of an elephant laminated and have a number written on it and the student has to count out the amount of peanut to match the number on the elephant picture.

Language:

Read a circus story to the kids. Then ask them to draw their favorite thing from the circus, and have them print what it is on the paper next to their drawing. Discuss the drawings and vocabulary.

Science:

Blowing on Balloons: Get either kazoos or the party favors that open when you blow out on them, and show your students that the same thing happens when you put the end of a balloon over the part you blow in to. Younger children will be amazed by this! Explain why the balloon gets bigger when it is blown up (air) and why deflating the balloon makes the kazoo or party favor make noise (also air).

Demonstrate the Power of Air With Balloons: Very simply, this is a science activity to teach children about air. First blow up a balloon. Then let the air out in a way that your children can see the air in action: Some ideas are to put the end over a party favor or to let the air out blowing on a piece of cotton or a child's hair. Additionally, you can show how the air escaping can make noise by pulling the opening tight.

Arts and Crafts

7. Make a clown face: Use a paper plate for the face and use cut up pieces of yarn for hair. Cut different colors of construction paper into various shapes like triangles, circles, and squares, and use the shapes for a hat, eyes, nose, and mouth. Also use pompoms for the tip of the hat.
8. A lion can be made with a paper plate and yarn, and cut up circle and triangles can be used for eyes and nose. The yarn can also be the whiskers.
An elephant can be made with the paper plate as well, but the shapes are cut out differently because the trunk shape and ear shapes are not perfect circles, squares, or triangles. The teacher will have to make sure all shapes are pre-drawn, and then the children can cut them out at the teacher's discretion. This is a good craft for practicing cutting with scissors.
9. Decorate a popcorn bag: You will need small paper bags; crayons, paint, and/or markers; and popcorn. Give the children each a bag and the materials, and let them make a decorative popcorn bag. Once the bags have dried, put some popcorn in it and, let them have it for a snack or to take home.

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