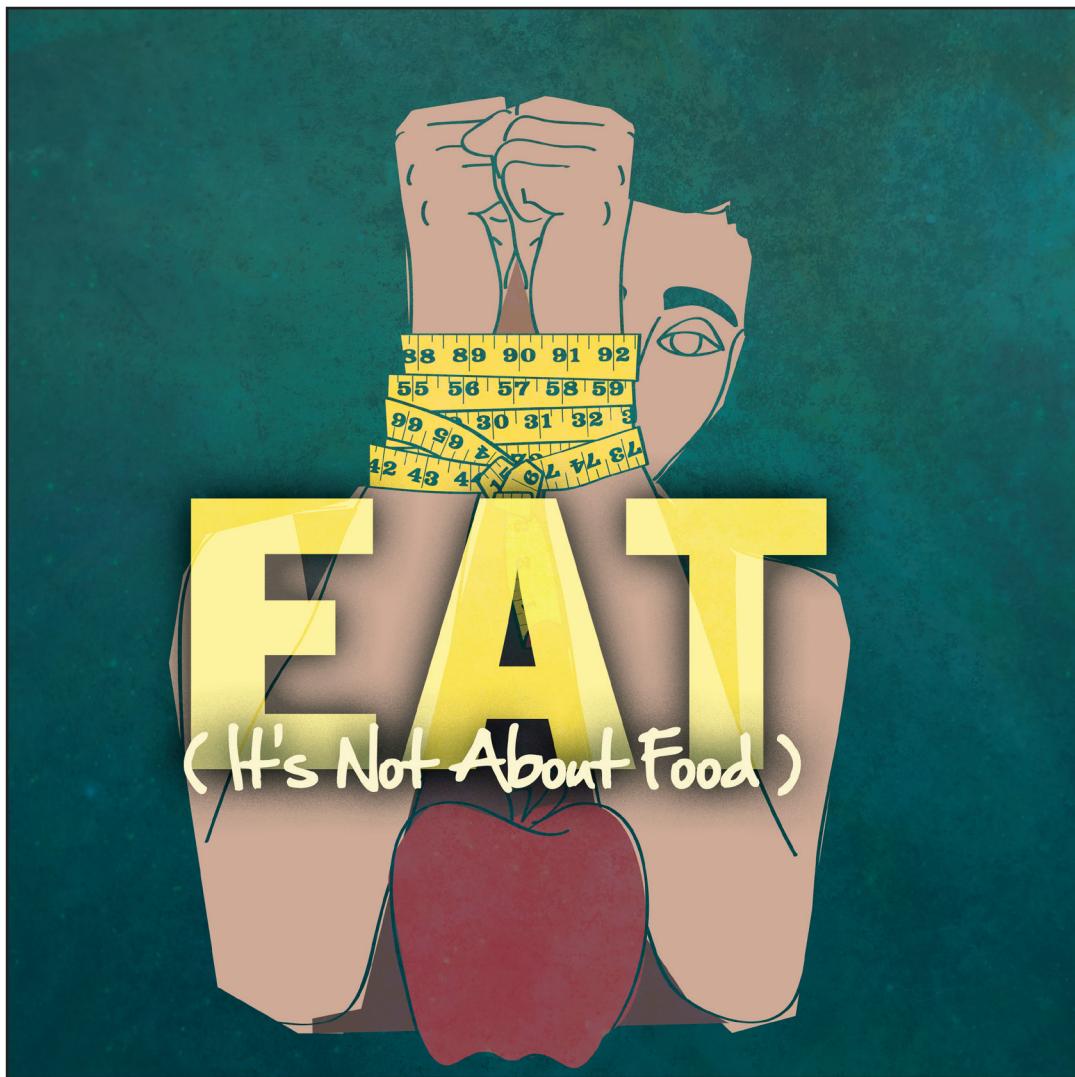


BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A CREATIVE & THEATRICAL STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



By Linda Daugherty

NOT SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 12

FEBRUARY 14 – FEBRUARY 16 STUDENT MATINEE

FEBRUARY 10 – FEBRUARY 19 PUBLIC SHOWS

As part of DCT's mission to integrate the arts into classroom academics, the ***Behind the Curtain Resource Guide*** is intended to provide helpful information for the teacher and student to use before and after attending a performance. The activities presented in this guide are suggested to stimulate lively responses and multi-sensory explorations of concepts in order to use the theatrical event as a vehicle for cross-cultural and language arts learning.

Please use our suggestions as springboards to lead your students into meaningful, dynamic learning; extending the dramatic experience of the play.



Your Family Arts Center
DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER
Enriching kids & families with the fun of Broadway-like plays & much more!

Dallas Children's Theater

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A Creative & Theatrical Resource Guide for Teachers

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PlayEAT (It's Not About Food)

ByLinda Daugherty

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER, one of the top five family theaters in the nation, serves over 250,000 young people from 196 zip codes, 146 cities and 78 counties and 32 states each year through its main stage productions, touring, educational programming and outreach activities. Since its opening in 1984, this award-winning theater has existed to create challenging, inspiring and entertaining theater, which communicates vital messages to our youth and promotes an early appreciation for literature and the performing arts. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing on theater for youth and families, DCT produces literary classics, original scripts, folk tales, myths, fantasies and contemporary dramas that foster multicultural understanding, confront topical issues and celebrate the human spirit.

DCT is committed to the integration of creative arts into the teaching strategies of academic core curriculum and educating through the arts. Techniques utilized by DCT artists/teachers are based upon the approach developed in *The Integration of Abilities and Making Sense with Five Senses*, by Paul Baker, Ph.D.

DCT founder and Executive Artistic Director, Robyn Flatt defines the artistic mission and oversees the operations of the organization, consisting of twenty-five full time staff members and more than 200 actors, designers, theater artists and educators.

TEKS that your field trip to Dallas Children's Theater satisfies are listed at the back of this guide.

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CURTAINS UP ON THE ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE

Watching a play is different from watching television or a sporting event. When you watch T.V., you may leave the room or talk at any time. At a sporting event you might cheer and shout and discuss what you're seeing. Your role as a member of the audience in a play means you must watch and listen carefully because:

- You need to concentrate on what the actors are saying.
- The actors are affected by your behavior because they share the room with you. Talking and moving around can make it difficult for them to concentrate on their roles.
- Extra noises and movement can distract other audience members.



Are you ready for your role in this performance?

Consider the following and discuss the appropriateness of the behavior as an audience member:

- Your best friend sits next to you during the performance and you whisper about a particular moment of the show that strikes you as funny.
- Your cell phone is on silent and you've forgotten your project for a class later in the day. You know your mom's at home so you'll just send her a quick text and she can drop it off at school for you.
- You're great at multitasking and this provides a perfect chance to finish up that little bit of homework you didn't get done last night.
- The show is comical and you're so happy you aren't sitting in class right now so you applaud at particularly hilarious points in the play.
- The seats are tons more comfortable than the desks at school so you kick back, stick a leg out and relax for the show.
- Lights out, comfy seat...NAP TIME!!!

CURTAINS UP ON THE ROLE OF THE AUDIENCE (contd.)



1. Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from the stage. Consider your work from the viewpoint of the actors on stage. How might things look from where they stand?
2. Write a letter to the director telling what you liked about their character.
3. Write how you think it might feel to be one of the actors. Are the actors aware of the audience? How might they feel about the reactions of the audience today? How would you feel before the play began? What about after the show ends?
4. Which job would you like to try? Acting, Directing, Lighting and Sounds, Stage Manager, Set designer, Costume designer, or another role? What skills might you need to complete your job?
5. Choose a favorite story and draw or use the computer to create a program cover design for a theatrical adaptation of your story.

CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Attending a play is an experience unlike any other entertainment experience. Because a play is presented live, it provides a unique opportunity to experience a story as it happens. **Dallas Children's Theater** brings to life stories through its performances. Many people are involved in the process. **Writers** adapt the stories you read in order to bring them off the page and on to the stage. **Designers and technicians** create lighting effects so that you can feel the mood of a scene. **Carpenters** build the scenery and make the place of the story become a real place, while costumers and **make-up designers** can turn actors into the characters you meet in the stories. **Directors** help actors bring the story to life and make it happen before your very eyes. All of these things make seeing a play very different from television, videos, computer games, or CDs and tapes of stories.



Hold a class discussion when you return from the performance on the multi-sensory nature of a theater experience. Use the following questions as springboards to the discussion:

- What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater?
- What did you notice first on the stage?
- What about the set? What things do you remember? How vivid are they now? Did the set change during the play? How was it moved or changed?
- Was there any space besides the stage where action took place?
- How did the lights set the mood of the play? How did they change throughout? How do house lights differ from stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?

CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE (contd.)

- What did you think about the costumes? Do you think they fit the story? What things do you think the costume designers had to consider before creating the costumes?
- Was there music in the play? How did it add to the performance?
- What about the actors? Do you think they were able to bring the characters to life? Did you feel caught up in the story? What things do you think the actors had to work on in order to make you believe they were the characters?

CURTAINS UP ON THE PLAYWRIGHT



Ms. Daugherty's plays have been produced at Dallas Children's Theater; The Kennedy Center; Stage One; The Louisville Children's Theatre; Baltimore Children's Theater Association; Atlanta's Alliance Theatre; Kansas City's Theatre for Young America; Richmond's Theatre IV; Portland's Northwest Children's Theatre; The Children's Museum of Indianapolis; Fort Worth's Casa Mañana Theatre; The Children's Theatre of Charlotte; Savonlinna City Theatre, Finland; The Edinburgh Festival; New York University's Department of Educational Theater; and in community theaters, colleges and schools throughout the United States. National touring productions of her plays have been presented in more than 150 cities in 41 states.

More than 20 of Ms. Daugherty's plays have premiered at Dallas Children's Theater, which was named one of the country's top five children's theaters by TIME Magazine. Her play, *Bless Cricket, Crest Toothpaste, and Tommy Tune*, is a winner of the Bonderman/Indiana University/Purdue University/Indiana Repertory Theatre Playwriting Competition, the Dallas-Ft. Worth Theater Critics Forum Award for New Plays, and the Southwest Theatre Association's Coleman A. Jennings Award for Best Children's Script. In addition, *Bless Cricket...* is included in the book, Theatre for Children: Fifteen Classic Plays published by St. Martin Press and is excerpted in the book, Scenes and Monologues for Young Actors, published by Dramatic Publishing Company. *Bless Cricket...* is also featured in the April, 2000, issue of AMERICAN THEATRE and the ongoing community education program, The Jellybean Conspiracy, affiliated with the University of Missouri-Kansas City Institute for Human Development. Ms. Daugherty has received the Southwest Theatre Association's Playwright Award for Best New Children's Script, the Orlin Corey Outstanding Playwright Award, and five Dallas Theatre League nominations for Outstanding New Play. The National Endowment for the Arts has awarded grants to Dallas Children's Theater productions of Ms. Daugherty's *African Tales of Earth and Sky* and *Coyote Tales* which was also a recipient of a Theatre Communications Group grant. She has dramatized three books by celebrated children's author and illustrator, Steven Kellogg. Ms. Daugherty has served as a consultant to the San Antonio Independent School District's Learning About Learning creative arts program and as Education Director of Dallas Children's Theater where she is currently Playwright-in-Residence. As an actress, she has appeared on Broadway, at The Manhattan Theater Club, and in regional theaters including the Ivanhoe Theater in Chicago (where she received a Jefferson Award nomination), Seattle Repertory Theater, Dallas Theater Center, Indiana Repertory Theater, Casa Mañana Theatre in Ft. Worth, and Dallas Children's Theater.

CURTAINS UP ON EATING DISORDERS

The term, eating disorder, is most often identified with anorexia nervosa or Bulimia Nervosa; however, eating disorders are not limited to these two conditions. Students may have misconceptions regarding eating disorders, those who are affected by them, factors that lead to eating disorders, and treatments for them. Use the following activities to encourage students to clarify misconceptions about eating disorders.

Assign groups to research different eating disorders and gather information to share with the class.

- + What are the most prevalent eating disorders? Are eating disorders limited to Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa?
- + What are the symptoms of eating disorders? What are some of the causes?
- + What are some ways to detect and prevent eating disorders?
- + What methods are used to treat eating disorders?

Define the following vocabulary words as you do your research:

- Eating disorder
- Anorexia nervosa
- Bulimia nervosa
- Obsession
- Chronic
- Self-image
- Esteem
- Binge eating
- Exercise Bulimia
- Purging/Compensatory behavior
- Disordered Eating (as compared/contrasted to Eating Disorder)

Allow students to present their findings to the class in a panel discussion format. Follow up by encouraging students to write their answers to these questions:

- + What sources did you find most informative?
- + Were you surprised by anything you found? If so, why?
- + What is your opinion about the prevalence of eating disorders within our society today?
- + What suggestions would you make to help raise the awareness of eating disorders among children, teens, and adults, including teachers, parents and coaches?

CURTAINS UP ON QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Use the following questions for discussion *after attending the performance*. Encourage students to share their thoughts and listen carefully to the ideas and opinions of fellow classmates as well.

What messages did Amy's mother send to her daughter regarding body image throughout the play? Were they positive or negative messages? Was she aware that she was sending these messages?

Can you note examples in your own life of negative messages sent and/or received?

How did the coach's demeanor during his and her lectures on eating disorders send messages about body image? Consider other non-verbal messages you noticed throughout the performance.

Amy's friends congratulated her on her "willpower" in denying herself food and told her "the guys are gonna freak out when they see you at school tomorrow." Why do you think society places such value on thinness? Do you ever feel that pressure from your friends? From yourself?

Why do you think Amy, Elliot, Lisa, Joey, and the others were so resistant to the help they were being provided? Why not "just eat"?

Discuss the wrestlers' desire to "make weight." Why was the need to lose three pounds so great? Why are athletes willing to take risks to lose weight rapidly? What sorts of pressures do they face?

Eating disorders are often mistaken to affect girls only. What about males? What messages do boys receive regarding body image? What impossible images are presented to them?

What effect did each of the eating disorders have on friends? Parents? Teachers and coaches? How do they affect younger siblings?

What responsibility do celebrities have in helping present positive messages about body image? Are they held to a different standard? Can they affect a change?

Why do you think the impossible image is still so prevalent? What steps are being taken to improve the image of a healthy body in the fashion, beauty, and sports industries? Is it enough?

Who holds the ultimate responsibility for change? Is it the media? Celebrities? Parents? Consumers?

CURTAINS UP ON MEDIA INFLUENCES

Allow students to brainstorm reasons eating disorders are so prevalent in our society. What messages do the media present to us about food and physical beauty? Provide magazines, newspapers, and video clips and encourage students to find conflicting messages regarding food and body image. (For example, an ad for “all you can eat” restaurants placed within the same magazine that advertises “easy, guaranteed weight loss” or has overly thin fashion models on the cover.)

Discuss students’ findings using the following questions:

- + What contradictory or “mixed” messages do the media present regarding body image and food?
- + Knowing what we do about the dangers of eating disorders, why do the media continue to send these mixed messages?

You will need:

- Copies of popular sports, fashion and teen magazines
- Scissors
- Glue
- Large poster board or bulletin board paper

Allow students to peruse the magazines and clip pictures that advertise, glorify, or exploit dieting, body image, or being thin. Encourage them to work together to create a “Mixed Messages” collage or poster.

Go one step further and assign groups to create their own public service campaign to raise awareness of eating disorders and promote healthy self-esteem. Encourage them to create a billboard, video, or radio announcement and present it to the class.

Follow up the activity by helping students brainstorm ways they can help counteract the mixed messages for themselves, and thereby avoid some of the pressures that can lead to eating disorders.

Examples may include:

- Learning to recognize mixed messages sent by the media- i.e. “eat all you want and still lose weight.”
- Practicing in appreciating themselves and others for traits and talents that are not related to appearance.
- Spending time in activities they enjoy and that build confidence.

CURTAINS UP ON HEALTH

Education about healthy eating and proper care of one's body is crucial in helping increase positive self-image among children and teens, and dispelling myths regarding weight. Use this activity to encourage students to educate themselves while helping others learn what realistic fitness and healthy body weight means.

Here's How:

Allow students to work in small groups to research and create an informational pamphlet discussing healthy body weight and how to determine individual goals for fitness and nutrition.

Each group's pamphlet should contain the following:

- A cover page with an engaging title to generate interest in the information
- A glossary of terms related to determining healthy body weight and/or fitness goals
- Methods for calculating BMI, percentage of body fat, and calories needed for a specific activity
- Links to websites they have used in their research
- At least one quote they think inspires self-confidence and positive self-image

When completed, share the pamphlets with the class or print them and provide them to students throughout your school.

CURTAINS UP ON MORE

Books:

[Life Without ED](#)

by Jenni Schaefer

[The Eating Disorders Sourcebook](#)

by Carolyn Costin, MA, MED, MFCC

[The Parent's Guide to Eating Disorders](#)

by Marcia Herrin, EdD, MPH, RD and Nancy Matsumoto

[The Beginner's Guide to Eating Disorders Recovery](#)

by Nancy Kolodny

[Over It: A Teen's Guide to Getting Beyond Obsessions with Food and Weight](#)

by Carol Emery Normandi and Laurelee Roark

[Next to Nothing: A Firsthand Account of One Teenager's Experience with an Eating Disorder](#)

by Carrie Arnold with B. Timothy Walsh

Website Information and Screening Resources:

[www.theelisaproject.org](#)



[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](#)

<http://www.feedyourinstinct.com.au/>

<http://screening.mentalhealthscreening.org/NEDA>

<http://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/parent-toolkit>



Shining a Light on Eating Disorders

[www.nationaleatingdisorders.org](#) the site for the National Eating Disorders Association, NEDA, has curricular materials, posters, clothing and jewelry to help promote healthy self-image and offers a helpline for anyone who is suffering from or who knows someone suffering from an eating disorder.

[www.campaignforrealbeauty.com](#) Dove's website offers wonderful resources from downloadable workbooks for girls and their moms or mentors, to short but powerful films offering a glimpse of how beauty and body images have become so distorted.

[www.bulimia.com](#) specializes in eating disorders publications.

[www.anred.com](#) ANRED (Anorexia Nervosa and Related Eating Disorders) addresses frequently asked questions about eating disorders and provides general information regarding the background, treatment, and recovery from them. You can find a space on the site that specifically addresses the topic of athletes with eating disorders.

[www.something-fishy.com](#) is one of the largest, oldest and most comprehensive web sites available on the topic. It not only includes a lot of valuable information on Anorexia, Bulimia, Binge Eating Disorder and Compulsive Overeating, but online peer support forums and a large treatment finder.

T.E.K.S. SATISFIED BY EAT (It's Not About Food)

117.34 - Theatre, Grade 6.

- 6.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Analyze and apply audience behavior at all performances.
 - B - Develop simple oral and written observations about visual, aural, oral, and kinetic aspects of informal play-making and formal theatre and describe these components in art, dance, and music.
 - C - Compare and contrast ideas and emotions depicted in art, dance, music, and theatre and demonstrate uses of movement, music, or visual elements to enhance classroom dramatization.
 - D - Compare selected occupations in theatre.

117.37 - Theatre, Grade 7.

- 7.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Identify and demonstrate appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances.
 - B - Evaluate the effectiveness of selected film and television performances.
 - C - Identify visual, aural, oral, and kinetic components in art, dance, music, and theatre; compare and contrast the presentation of the same subject in art, dance, music, and theatre; and create improvisations, integrating art, dance, and/or music to express ideas and emotions.
 - D - Compare career and avocational opportunities in theatre.

117.40 - Theatre, Grade 8.

- 8.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Analyze and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of live performances.
 - B - Define the terminology and process of evaluation (intent, structure, effectiveness, value) and apply this process to performances, using appropriate theatre vocabulary.
 - C - Identify visual, aural, oral, and kinetic components in art, dance, music, and theatre; compare character, setting, and action in art, musical theatre, dance, and theatre; and express emotions and ideas in improvisations and scripted scenes that integrate art, dance, and/or music.
 - D - Compare career and avocational opportunities in theatre.

117.64 - Theatre, Level I.

- 5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Analyze and apply appropriate behavior at various types of live performances.
 - B - Develop appropriate theatre vocabulary to apply the concepts of evaluation (intent, structure, effectiveness, value) to live theatre, film, television, and electronic media in written and oral form with precise and specific observations.
 - C - Identify and compare the treatment of moods in theatre, musical theatre, dance, art, and music and integrate more than one art form in informal performances.
 - D - Select career and avocational opportunities in theatre and describe the training, skills, self-discipline, and artistic discipline needed to pursue them.

117.65 - Theatre, Level II.

- 5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Judge and apply appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances.
 - B - Evaluate emotional responses to and personal preferences for dramatic performances, using appropriate theatre vocabulary, and apply the concepts of evaluation (intent, structure, effectiveness, value) to live theatre, film, television, and electronic media in written and oral form with precise and specific observations.
 - C - Identify the treatment of theme, character, setting, and action in theatre, musical theatre, dance, art, and music and integrate more than one art form in informal presentations.
 - D - Select career and avocational opportunities in theatre and film and explore the training, skills, self-discipline, and artistic discipline needed to pursue them.

T.E.K.S. SATISFIED BY EAT (It's Not About Food)

117.66 - Theatre, Level III.

- 5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Compare behavior at various types of performances and practice audience etiquette.
 - B - Apply the concepts of evaluation to performances and evaluate theatre, film, television, and electronic media with depth and complexity, using appropriate vocabulary.
 - C - Compare communication methods of theatre with that of art, music, and dance and integrate more than one art form in informal and formal performances.
 - D - Make judgments about selected career and avocational opportunities in theatre, film, and television and analyze the training, skills, self-discipline, and artistic discipline needed to pursue them.

117.67 - Theatre, Level IV.

- 5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.
- A - Evaluate and practice appropriate audience behavior at various types of performances.
 - B - Apply evaluation concepts to performances and compare and contrast literary and dramatic criticism of theatre, film, television, or electronic media.
 - C - Compare the nature, components, elements, and communication methods of theatre, music, art, and dance and compare more than one art form in a specific culture or historical period.
 - D - Evaluate career and avocational opportunities in theatre, film, television, and electronic media, justifying choice(s), and analyze the training, skills, self-discipline, and artistic discipline needed to pursue them.