

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A CREATIVE & THEATRICAL STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



Featuring the works of Edgar Allan Poe, W.W. Jacobs,
Philip Schaeffer and The Coterie Theatre

RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 12 AND UP
OCTOBER 18 – OCTOBER 26, 2017 STUDENT MATINEE
OCTOBER 13 – OCTOBER 29 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

Astonishing 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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PlayGHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS

Featuring the works ofEdgar Allan Poe, W.W. Jacobs,
Philip Schaeffer and The Coterie Theatre

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 PUTTING A PERFORMANCE TOGETHER

Every DCT performance you see is the result of many people working together to create a play. You see the cast perform on stage, but there are people behind the scenes that you do not see who help before, during, and after every production.

The DIRECTOR

Determines the overall look of the performance.

Guides the actors in stage movement and character interpretation.

Works with designers to plan the lights and sounds, scenery, costumes and make-up, and stage actions.

The DESIGNERS

Plan the lights, sounds, scenery, costumes, make-up, and actions to help bring the director's vision to life.

There are also designers who work to create the posters, advertisements, programs, and other media for the performance.

The STAGE MANAGER

Before the performance, they create a cue sheet to guide the crew in getting set pieces on and off the stage during the performances.

During the performance, the stage manager uses this cue sheet to direct people and things as they move on and off the stage.

The CREW

Build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, and light and sound during the performance.

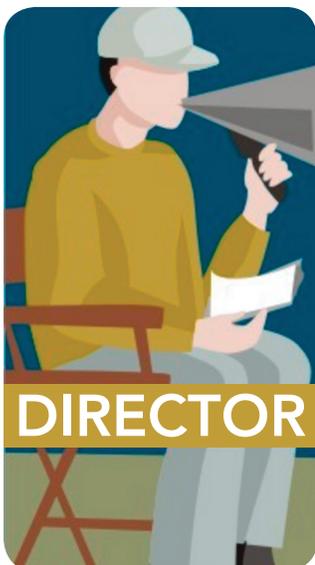
The CAST

Includes all of the performers who present the story on stage.

The AUDIENCE

That's right! There can be no performance without you—the audience. The role of the audience is unique because you experience the entertainment with the performers and backstage crew.

You are a collaborator in the performance and it is important to learn your role so you can join all the people who work to create this Dallas Children's Theater production.



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?

Check the box next to the statements that describe proper etiquette for an audience member.

- Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun.
- Share your thoughts out loud with those sitting near you.
- Wave and shout out to the actors on stage.
- Sit on your knees or stand near your seat.
- Bring snacks and chewing gum to enjoy during the show.
- Reward the cast and crew with applause when you like a song or dance, and at the end of the show.
- Arrive on time so that you do not miss anything or disturb other audience members when you are being seated.
- Keep all hands, feet, and other items out of the aisles during the performance.

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 an actor telling what you liked about his or her 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?

CURTAINS UP ON THEATER VOCABULARY

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| ACTOR | any theatrical performer whose job it is to portray a character |
| CAST | group of actors in a play |
| CENTER STAGE | the middle of the stage |
| CHARACTER | any person portrayed by an actor onstage. Characters may often be people, animals, and sometimes things. |
| CHOREOGRAPHER | the designer and teacher of the dances in a production |
| COSTUME DESIGNER | the person who creates what the actors wear in the performance |
| DIRECTOR | the person in charge of the actors' movements on stage |
| DOWNSTAGE | the area at the front of the stage; closest to the audience |
| HOUSE | where the audience sits in the theater |
| LIGHTING DESIGNER | the person who creates the lighting for a play to simulate the time of day and the location |
| ONSTAGE | the part of the stage the audience can see |
| OFFSTAGE | the part of the stage the audience cannot see |
| PLAYWRIGHT | the person who writes the script to be performed. Playwrights may write an original story or adapt a story by another author for performance |
| PLOT | the story line |
| PROSCENIUM | the opening framing the stage |
| PROJECT | to speak loudly |
| PROP | an object used by an actor in a scene |
| SET | the background or scenery for a play |
| SETTING | the time and place of the story |
| SOUND DESIGNER | the person who provides special effects like thunder, a ringing phone, or crickets chirping |
| STAGE CREW | the people who change the scenery during a performance |
| STAGE MANAGER | the person who helps the director during the rehearsal and coordinates all crew during the performance |
| UPSTAGE | the area at the back of the stage; farthest from the audience |

CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

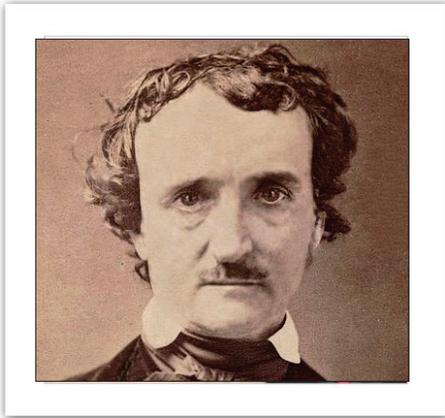
Attending a play is an experience unlike any other entertainment experience. Because a play is presented live, it provides a unique opportunity to experience a story as it happens. **Dallas Children's Theater** brings stories to life through its performances. Many people are involved in the process. **Playwrights** adapt the stories you read in order to bring them off the page and onto 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 setting 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 of stories.



Hold a class discussion when you return from the performance. Ask students the following questions and allow them to write or draw pictures of their experience at DCT.

- What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater?
- What did you notice first on the stage?
- What about the set? Draw or tell about things you remember. 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? What do you think the house lights are? How do they differ from the stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?
- 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 AUTHORS



EDGAR ALLAN POE was one of the most important and influential American writers of the 19th century. He was the first author to try to make a professional living as a writer.

Much of Poe's work was inspired by the events that happened around him.

LITERARY PIONEER

Poet

His poetry alone would ensure his spot in the literary canon. Poe's notable verses range from the early masterpiece "To Helen" to the dark, mysterious "Ulalume." From "The Raven," which made him world-famous upon its publication in 1845, to "Annabel Lee," the posthumously published eulogy for a maiden "in a kingdom by the sea."

Master of Macabre

Most famously, Poe completely transformed the genre of the horror story with his masterful tales of psychological depth and insight not envisioned in the genre before his time and scarcely seen in it since. Stories like "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Cask of Amontillado," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Fall of the House of Usher" reveal Poe's talent at its height.

Pioneer of Science Fiction

He was an early pioneer in the genre of science fiction. Poe was fascinated by the science of his time, and he often wrote stories about new inventions.

Father of the Detective Story

Poe is credited with inventing the modern detective story with "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." His concept of deductive reasoning, which he called "ratiocination" inspired countless authors, most famous among them Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes.

From: <https://www.poemuseum.org/who-was-edgar-allan-poe>

Read more: <https://www.poemuseum.org/poes-biography>



W.W. JACOBS William Wymark Jacobs (1863-1943) was an English author of short stories and novels who was quite popular in his lifetime, primarily for his amusing maritime tales of life along the London docks. Today he is best known for a few short works of horror fiction, one being "The Monkey's Paw" published in 1902. It has, in its own right, become a well-known classic.

CURTAINS UP ON ADAPTATION

An *adaptation* is a change made in something so that it can fit a new use. This performance of *Ghouls and Graveyards* is an **adaptation** of short stories, which are meant to be read, into a play, which is meant to be performed and viewed. Dallas Children's Theater, Philip Schaeffer, and The Coterie Theatre in Kansas City, Missouri worked to take the tales and poems written by Edgar Allan Poe, W.W. Jacob's short story, and regional folk tales and **adapt** them so they could be performed for an audience on stage.

Consider these questions for discussion before you attend the DCT production:

- What kinds of things did playwrights have to consider in writing a script of these stories?
- What things might they have considered in choosing the particular short stories included in GHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS?
- What will the characters look like? How will they match the images described by each of the authors? How might they differ?
- What about the story? What changes might you expect in adapting it for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

After the performance, consider these questions:

- What kinds of things did playwrights have to consider in writing a script of these stories?
- What things might they have considered in choosing the particular short stories included in GHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS?
- What will the characters look like? How will they match the images described by each of the authors? How might they differ?
- What about the story? What changes might you expect in adapting it for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

CURTAINS UP ON DISCUSSION

1. How does the director set the tone for the story before it even begins?
2. What was the relationship between the old man and the narrator?
3. Why did the narrator decide to murder the old man?
4. What examples does the narrator use to tell us he is not "mad"?
5. What is ironic about his telling us he is not "mad"?
6. What does the old man do when he hears the narrator chuckle? Why did the narrator chuckle?
7. What was the narrator's reaction as he gazed upon the old man's vulture eye?
8. What finally forced the narrator to leap in to the room?
9. How did the narrator actually kill the old man?
10. How does the narrator get rid of the corpse?

11. Who came knocking at the door at four o'clock?
12. How did the narrator react to the visitors?
13. In his triumph, where did the narrator place his chair while talking to the police?
14. Why did the narrator confess to murdering the old man?
15. What is the climax of the story?
16. Which is more important to Poe's purpose: the murder of the old man or the description of the narrator's mental state?
17. By repeating key words and phrases, Poe controls the pace of his story, increases the tension, and emphasizes the madness of the narrator. Give some examples of Poe's repetition.
18. Why is the setting of "The Tell-Tale Heart" vague?
19. Whose heart did the narrator actually hear?

CURTAINS UP ON WRITING

"Be careful what you wish for; you just might get it!"

In "The Monkey's Paw," wishes are granted but with unexpected and ironic results. Consider the following list of common desires and their possible positive and negative effects. Finally, see if you can phrase a wish in such a way that all negative effects could be avoided.

| WISH | POSITIVE EFFECTS | NEGATIVE EFFECTS | "PERFECT" WISH |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Money | | | |
| World Peace | | | |
| Immortality | | | |
| Athletic Abilities | | | |
| Beauty | | | |
| Intelligence | | | |

CURTAINS UP ON USING TECHNOLOGY

Use the technology you have available in order to find the answers to the following questions. The websites listed in CURTAINS UP ON MORE might help you.

- + Provide the following biographical information on Edgar Allan Poe: birthdate, birthplace, death date, death location.
- + What tragic childhood events influenced Poe's writing?
- + There are many theories on what caused Poe's death. List five of them.
- + According to the Edgar Allan Poe Museum, what U.S. state did Poe call home?
- + What does the Poe Society of Baltimore think about this claim?
- + What famous military academy expelled Poe in 1831?
- + Who did Poe marry? How old was she when they married?
- + What is "Murders in the Rue Morgue" the first of?
- + When was "The Raven" published?
- + Check out the Poe photo gallery. Which picture looks most like the Poe you envision while reading his stories?

CURTAINS UP ON LITERARY ELEMENTS

IRONY – events that occur that directly contradict the expectations of the characters, the reader or the audience.

FORESHADOWING – the use of clues that suggest events that have yet to occur.

Which of the stories you saw contain examples of foreshadowing? Describe them.

Which devices were used in the theatrical production to foreshadow what was to come?

How did they differ from the literary examples?

IMAGERY – the descriptive language used in literature to re-create sensory experiences.

Poetry is known for its use of language to create images that evoke strong feelings and senses. In DCT's production of GHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS, two of Edgar Allan Poe's poems are presented, "The Conqueror Worm" and "A Dream Within a Dream," along with "La Llorona" which comes from a Mexican folktale.

Provide students with written copies of the poetry in GHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS and encourage them to find specific examples of imagery used in each.

SUSPENSE – a feeling of growing curiosity or anxious uncertainty about the outcome of events.



“The Monkey’s Paw” is filled with techniques to build suspense. Encourage students to match the literary technique used to build suspense in each of the following instances:

- Unusual characters
 - Unusual setting
 - Dilemma
 - Dramatic actions
 - Withholding information to keep the audience wondering
 - Cliffhanger
 - Irony
 - Unusual Situation
-
- + The story begins with Father’s line, “Listen to that wind!”
 - + Herbert states that he doesn’t see the money and bets he never will.
 - + The son comes back from the dead.
 - + The story doesn’t reveal who is knocking at the door or give a reason the father doesn’t want his son to come back.
 - + The story deals with a monkey’s paw that is said to grant wishes.
 - + The wish comes true but in a very tragic way.
 - + The father is forced to decide between pleasing his wife or sending his son back to his grave.
 - + When the mother hears the knocking, she rushes to the door. The father tries to find the paw; the mother can’t get the door open; the wish is made; and then there is silence.
 - + The story ends with nothing at the door.

CURTAINS UP ON FUN WITH MATH

Researchers at Kings College London have come up with the perfect formula to determine what makes the perfect scary movie. Follow these links to news reports regarding the researchers' findings and see if you agree:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/entertainment/3537938.stm>

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2004/aug/05/film.filmnews1>

For added fun, try watching your favorite scary movie and plug in the values to see where your movie rates!

The Formula:

es = escalating music

u = the unknown

cs = chase scenes

t = the sense of being trapped

a = character is alone

dr = in the dark

fs = film setting

tl = true life

f = fantasy

n = number of people

sin = blood and guts

s = shock

1 = stereotypes

$(es+u+cs+t)2 +s+(tl+f)/2 + (a + dr+fs)/n +sin x - 1$

CURTAINS UP ON CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Using what you've learned about the Horror genre of literature, create a word cloud or collage using terms and images that are common to stories, poems, and scripts of horror.

Fill the shape completely with words representative of either the genre or one of the specific stories or poems from DCT's production of GHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS. Be creative in the way you fill the shape. Check out www.wordle.net or www.WordArt.com for inspiration. Outline masters have been included for "The Tell-Tale Heart" and "The Long Walk Home." (see following page)

CURTAINS UP ON HORROR

How do you react when you experience terror? Does your heart race? Do you hold your breath? Do you laugh? Scream? Cry? What is the big draw? Why do you think we like to be frightened?

Divide your class in to teams and encourage them to search for the answers to these questions. Use the following starting points for their research:

- What theories can you find using the Internet? Do you agree or disagree with them? Why?
- Try formulating a survey and interviewing a number of people of different ages. Organize your data and try developing a theory of your own.
- Finally, hold a class discussion and allow groups to present their findings. Follow up with a class report on the findings for the school newspaper or a similar outlet.

CURTAINS UP ON MORE

ABOUT POE:

www.knowingpoe.thinkport.org

www.poestories.com

www.poemuseum.org

www.imdb.com (movie database where movie versions of the stories can be found)

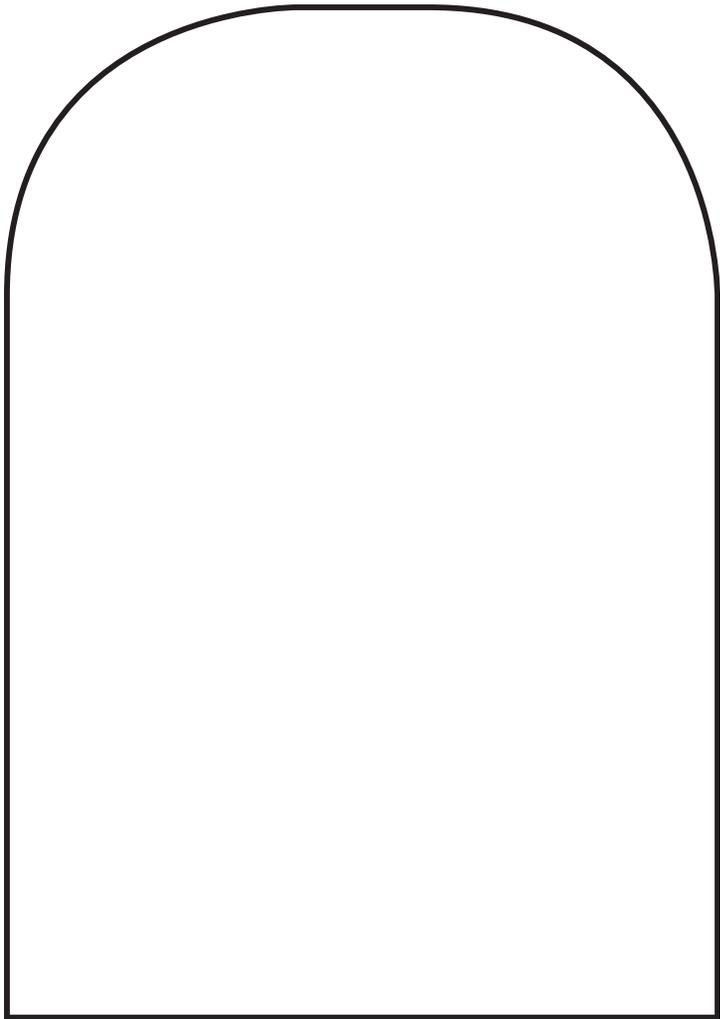
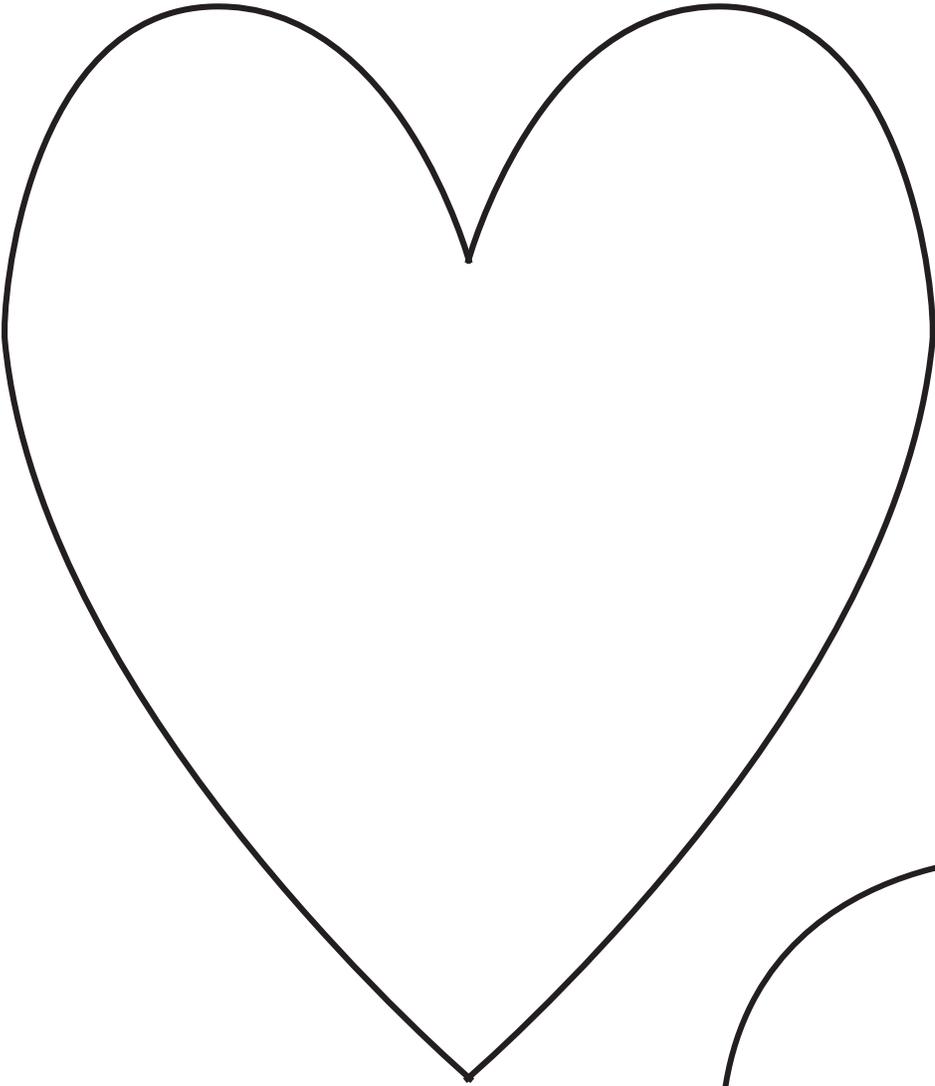
www.nps.gov (National Parks site where you can find information about The Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site)

ABOUT HORROR IN FOLKLORE:

www.americanfolklore.net/folklore/horror-stories/

ABOUT "THE MONKEY'S PAW":

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbmJ8QvrEXg> (John Lithgow reads "The Monkey's Paw," presented by National Public Radio)



T.E.K.S. SATISFIED BY GHOULS AND GRAVEYARDS

110.19 – English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 7

7.3 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

7.4 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

7.5 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

7.6 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

B – Analyze the development of the plot through the internal and external responses of the characters, including their motivations and conflicts.

7.8 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author’s sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding. Students are expected to determine the figurative meaning of phrases and analyze how an author’s use of language creates imagery, appeals to the senses, and suggests mood.

7.15 – Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas.

7.23 – Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather.

7.24 – Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information.

7.25 – Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience.

110.20 – English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 8

8.3 – Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

8.4 – Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

8.5 – Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

8.6 – Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

8.8 – Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author’s sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

8.15 – Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas.

8.23 – Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather.

8.24 – Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information.

8.25 – Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience.

110.31 – English Language Arts and Reading, English 1

1.2 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Theme and Genre. Students analyze, make inferences and draw conclusions about theme and genre in different cultural, historical, and contemporary contexts and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

1.3 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Poetry. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of poetry and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

1.4 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Drama. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of drama and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

1.5 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Fiction. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about the structure and elements of fiction and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

1.7 – Reading/Comprehension of Literary Text/Sensory Language. Students understand, make inferences and draw conclusions about how an author’s sensory language creates imagery in literary text and provide evidence from text to support their understanding.

1.14 – Writing/Literary Texts. Students write literary texts to express their ideas and feelings about real or imagined people, events, and ideas.

1.21 – Research/Gathering Sources. Students determine, locate, and explore the full range of relevant sources addressing a research question and systematically record the information they gather.

1.22 – Research/Synthesizing Information. Students clarify research questions and evaluate and synthesize collected information.

1.23 – Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience.

111.27 – Mathematics, Grade 7

7.3 – Number and Operations. The student applies mathematical process standards to add, subtract, multiply, and divide while solving problems and justifying solutions.

111.28 – Mathematics, Grade 8

8.2 – Number and operations. The student applies mathematical process standards to represent and use real numbers in a variety of forms.

111.39 – Mathematics, Algebra 1

1.2 – Linear functions, equations, and inequalities. The student applies the mathematical process standards when using properties of linear functions to write and represent in multiple ways, with and without technology, linear equations, inequalities, and systems of equations.

117.212 – Theatre, Middle School 2

2.5 – Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A – Understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of performances.

C – Demonstrate knowledge of production elements in theatre, film, television, and other media.

D – Explore career and vocational opportunities in theatre.

117.213 – Theatre, Middle School 3

3.5 – Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A – Understand and demonstrate appropriate audience etiquette at various types of performances.

C – Demonstrate knowledge of production elements in theatre, film, television, and other media.

D – Explore career and vocational opportunities in theatre.

117.315 – Theatre, Level 1

1.5 – Critical evaluation and response. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A – Analyze and apply appropriate behavior at various types of performances.

D – Evaluate live theatre in written and oral form with precise and specific observations using appropriate evaluative theatre vocabulary.

D – Explore career and vocational opportunities such as theatre education, arts administration, performance, design, management, and playwriting in theatre.