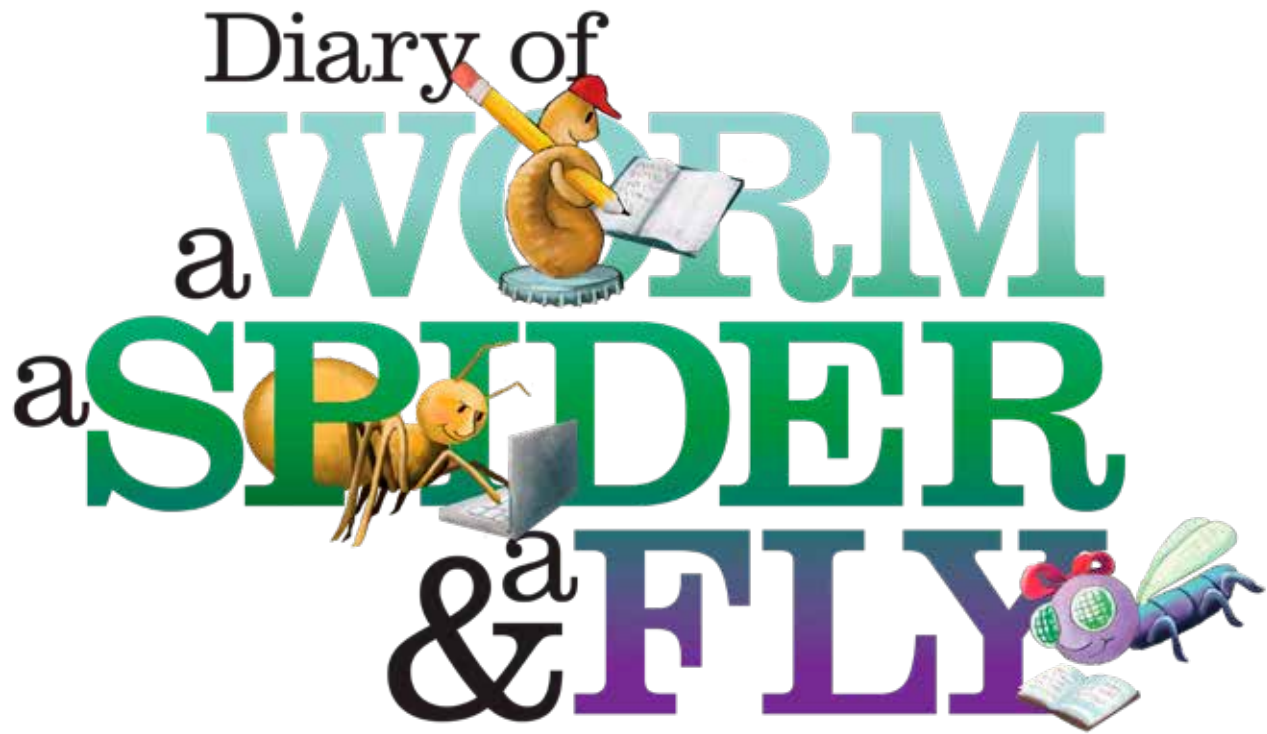


BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A CREATIVE & THEATRICAL STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS



Book, Music & Lyrics by Joan Cushing
Based on the three books by Doreen Cronin and illustrated by Harry Bliss

RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 3 AND UP
NOVEMBER 26 - 30, 2018 & JULY 2 - 5, 2019 STUDENT MATINEE
JUNE 14 - JULY 7, 2019 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 students 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

DCT Executive Artistic DirectorRobyn Flatt

Resource Guide EditorsMarty Sherman and Jessica Colaw

Resource Guide Layout/Design.....Jamie Brizzolara

PlayDIARY OF A WORM, A SPIDER & A FLY

Based on the book byDoreen Cronin

Illustrations byHarry Bliss

Adapted byJoan Cushing

© 2011 Doreen Cronin and Harry Bliss. By special arrangement with Pippin Properties, Inc. and Gurman Agency LLC.

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER, one of the top five family theaters in the nation, serves over 250,000 young people and their families from 197 zip codes, 101 cities and 89 counties and 27 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 38 full time staff members and nearly 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 Resource Guide.

2018-19 Education Sponsors



Educational support is also provided by:

CAPITAL FOR KIDS
FROST BANK
STRAKE FOUNDATION
ORIEN L. & DR. JACK WOOLF CHARITABLE FOUNDATION
THE HERSH FOUNDATION
PEROT FOUNDATION
THE ROY & CHRISTINE STURGIS CHARITABLE TRUST
THE RYAN GOLDBLATT FOUNDATION
GREEN MOUNTAIN ENERGY
DCT's official renewable energy partner

Sensory-Friendly Sponsors include:



Anonymous

The Aileen and Jack Pratt Foundation
W.P. & Bulah Luse Foundation

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 ADAPTATION

An *adaptation* is a change made in something so that it can fit a new use. DIARY OF A WORM, A SPIDER & A FLY is an **adaptation** of a book, which is meant to be read, into a play, which is meant to be performed and viewed. Joan Cushing took the stories written by Doreen Cronin and **adapted** them so that 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 Joan Cushing have to consider in writing a script of the stories?
- What kinds of things would Doreen Cronin be concerned about in having someone make a musical adaptation of her stories?
- Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the books?
- What will the characters look like? Will they match their illustrations? What differences can you expect?
- What about the story? What changes might you expect in adapting them for the stage? Why would these changes be necessary?

After the performance, consider these questions:

- Were there any characters or events that were in the books but not in the play? Why do you think these choices were made?
- Did the changes make the story stronger or was it weaker because of them?
- What do you think the set and costume designers need to consider when bringing the books to the stage?
- What things helped to tell the story on stage?



Use the following template to illustrate the similarities and differences between the books and DCT's performance of DIARY OF A WORM, A SPIDER & A FLY.

Name:

Date:

Compare and Contrast Template

Books



A Venn diagram template consisting of two overlapping circles. The top circle is labeled 'Books' and the bottom circle is labeled 'Play'. The circles overlap in the center, creating a space for comparison. The circles are drawn with thin black lines on a white background.

Play

CURTAINS UP ON THE AUTHOR



DOREEN CRONIN is *The New York Times* bestselling author of *Diary of a Worm*, *Diary of a Spider*; as well as *Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type*, a Caldecott Honor Book; and *Giggle, Giggle, Quack*. She lives in Brooklyn, NY, with her husband and their daughters.

CURTAINS UP ON THE PLAYWRIGHT



JOAN CUSHING is best known for her political satirical revue *Mrs. Foggybottom & Friends*, which opened in 1986 at New Playwrights Theatre, and moved to the Omni-Shoreham Hotel in Washington, D.C., where it ran for 10 hit years, and four years on the road, including performances at Don't Tell Mama and The Triad in NYC. More recently she has adapted 16 popular children's books as musicals, receiving over her hand to adapting popular children's books as musicals, receiving over 400 productions and 5 national tours. Works include *Miss Nelson Is Missing!*, winner of the 2003 Nat'l Children's Theatre Festival; *Junie B. Jones & a Little Monkey Business!*; *Miss Nelson Has a Field Day!*; *Petite Rouge: A Cajun Red Riding Hood* (2007 NY Musical Theatre Festival); *Heidi* (w playwright Martha King De Silva); and

George & Martha: Tons of Fun, all commissioned by Imagination Stage, *Lawrence*, commissioned by Gabriellino High School; *Brave Irene*, commissioned by Adventure Theatre, and *Diary of a Worm, a Spider & a Fly*, commissioned by Oregon Children's Theatre. Most recently Cushing wrote two new works for Children's Theatre of Charlotte: *Ella's Big Chance: a Jazz Age Cinderella* - a retelling of the age old story by beloved London writer Shirley Hughes, set in the Roaring 20's, with a more empowered heroine and a surprise ending - and a musical musical version of *Grace for President* - based on the book by popular children's writer Kelly Di Pucchio. Ms. Cushing lives in the Nation's Capital where all the crazy politics happens. Her husband Paul Buchbinder died of pancreatic cancer several years ago, but left her with three beautiful sons and four splendid grandsons.

Adapted from <https://www.joancushing.com/bio.html>

CURTAINS UP ON DISCUSSION

Use the following questions to lead a discussion with students after attending DCT's performance of DIARY OF A WORM, A SPIDER & A FLY.

- How do Worm, Spider, and Fly feel about the first day of school?
- In what ways are the characters like their real counterparts (for example, how is Butterfly similar to a real butterfly)?
- How do you think Worm feels when Spider and Fly sing about their legs?
- What are the bugs afraid of?
- What happens when Worm tries to fly?
- What do the bugs want to be when they grow up?
- Why does Worm lie about eating his homework?
- How did Fly and her friends save Aunt Rita?
- Why do Worm, Spider, and Fly end up in time-out?
- Why does Spider miss a few days of school?
- What is Worm's important role?
- What are the bugs excited to do over summer break?
- What facts about different bugs did you learn?
- In what ways are the bug friends similar to you and your friends? How are they different?

CURTAINS UP ON ART

PAPER BAG PUPPETS

You will need:

- Paper lunch sacks
- Red and black construction paper
- Black chenille stems
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Black marker

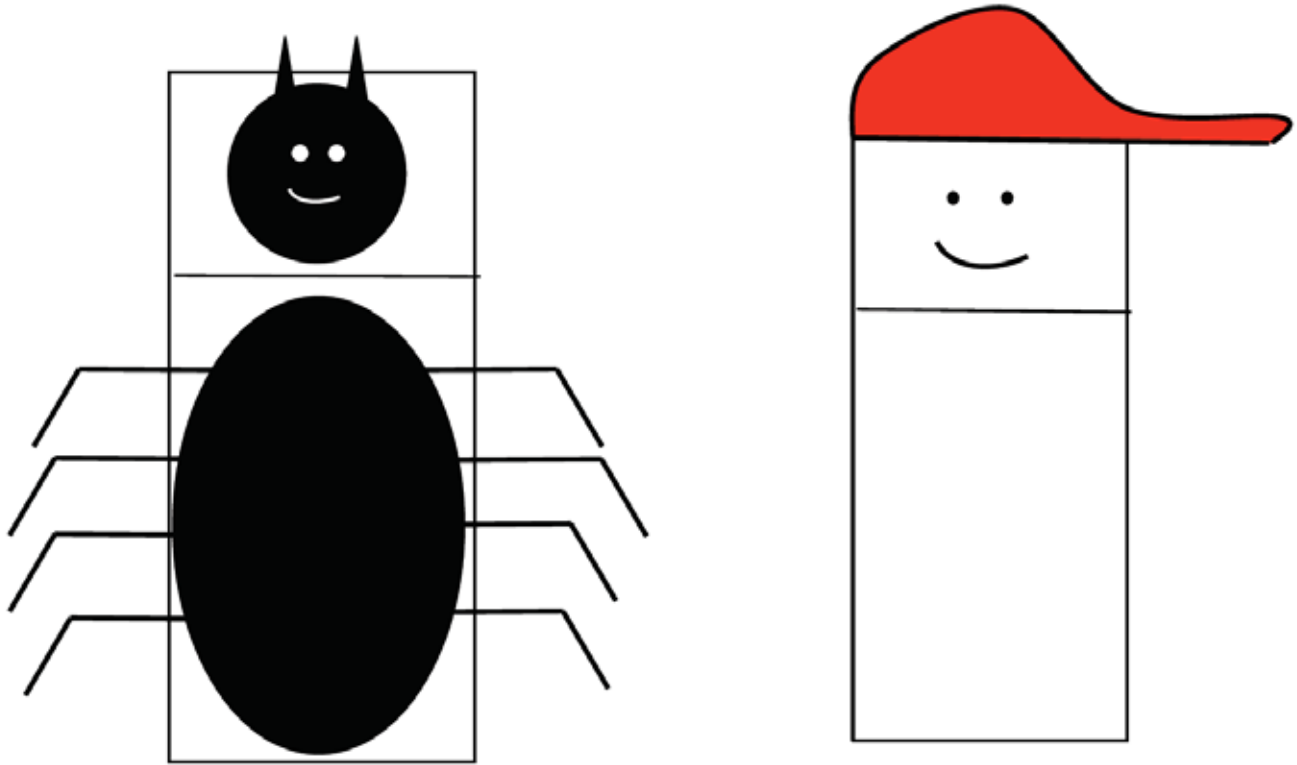
Provide each student with a paper lunch sack, scissors, and glue stick. Students who choose to make the spider puppet will need a sheet of black construction paper and four chenille stems while students making the worm will need a half sheet of red construction paper to make his cap.

The worm puppet is made by cutting a cap shape from a half sheet of construction paper. Students should make certain they draw the cap on the long side of the paper before cutting it out. Glue the cap to the top of the flap portion of the paper sack and add a face using black marker or crayons.

CURTAINS UP ON ART (CONT'D)

The spider puppet is made with a large oval of black paper for the body and a smaller circle for the head. The head is glued to the top flap of the sack while the body is glued to the sack's front. Chenille stems can be cut in half and attached to the sides of the body with glue.

Encourage students to re-enact or create their own scenes using their hand puppets.



FINGERPRINT PAINTINGS

You will need:

- Fingerprints or stamp pads
- Plain or manila drawing paper
- Crayons, markers or colored pencils

Provide students with paper, paint or stamp pads and drawing materials. Help them press their fingerprints onto the paint or stamp pad and press firmly on the drawing paper. When the fingerprints have dried, encourage students to use the markers, crayons or pencils to add “features” and create imaginary fingerprint bugs: spiders, worms, and flies. If there is time, add a background to the pictures to create a story illustration.

CURTAINS UP ON WRITING

Authors sometimes use a convention called **personification** whereby they give creatures who are not human characteristics that are human in order to help tell their stories. In *Diary of a Worm*, *Diary of a Spider*, and *Diary of a Fly*, Doreen Cronin gave a worm, a spider, and a fly human characteristics in order to entertain readers and teach them about these bugs. Discuss the characteristics the author gave to each of the characters to personify them and list them on a chart.



Choose an animal or object you like or know and write a diary entry in which you personify the object or animal and provide insight into its day or week. Consider the characteristics your object might need to help “tell” its tale.

CURTAINS UP ON READING

FACT OR FICTION?

Students often think story tellers make up all of the characters, events, and information presented in their stories. *DIARY OF A WORM*, *A SPIDER* & *A FLY* includes some factual information about these bugs. Use the following activity to explore fact and fiction with your students.

Hold a class discussion encouraging students to list different events from the play. List them on the board or chart paper as they are mentioned. When you have a nice list, discuss with students the difference between facts and fictions helping them understand that while the story they saw is make-believe, there are facts that can be learned from it. Look at your list and help students determine what things from the play might be fact.

Use the following questions to help springboard your discussion:

- Do worms live underground?
- Are they good diggers?
- Can spiders and flies read and write?

CURTAINS UP ON MATH

WIGGLY WORM ESTIMATION

Estimation is fundamental to understanding the concept of measurement because it requires students to recognize a context for establishing the relative need for accuracy. Students need many opportunities to estimate as it build confidence in the reasonableness of answers, it is basic to predictions, and it aids in the development of spatial awareness.

You will need:

- Unopened packages of gummy worms
- Masking tape
- Markers, crayons or colored pencils
- A variety of objects of different lengths
- A piece of string
- Wiggly Worm Estimation Record Sheet

First, divide your class into pairs and provide each with a bag of gummy worms, crayons or markers, and a copy of the Wiggly Worm Estimation Record Sheet (page 15.) Ask students to estimate the number of worms of each color in their bags before opening them and record the estimate on the record sheet.

Next, allow students to open the bags and count and record the actual number of worms and their colors to check their estimations. Provide time for the class to compare their findings and to discuss possible reasons for the varying number of worms in each bag. Determine with your students whether all the bags had the same colors of worms.

Extend the activity by providing students with a number of items of varying lengths and ask them to sort them according to length in gummy worms. Use the distinction of “longer or shorter than one gummy” to help them sort. Once they’ve sorted the worms, allow students time to verify or confirm their estimates and discuss their strategies and success.

Finally, work as a class to estimate and measure a large object in the classroom like the whiteboard, bulletin board, or a student's height. Estimate the number of worms needed to measure the length and be sure to measure without gaps between the worms. Provide “clean” unopened bags of worms to eat at the end of the activity!

.....

.....

WIGGLY WORM ESTIMATION RECORD SHEETS

STEP 1. COLOR

[illegible]

STEP 2. LENGTH

[illegible]

CURTAINS UP ON READING

Give these books a try:

Yucky Worms by Vivian French

Garden Wiggles: Earthworms in Your Backyard by Nancy Loewen

Max's Worm Cake by Rosemary Wells

The Worm Family by Tony Johnston

Or try these by Doreen Cronin:

Click, Clack, Moo

Thump, Quack, Moo

A Busy Day at the Farm

M.O.M. (Mom Operating Manual)

Stretch

Bounce

T.E.K.S. SATISFIED BY DIARY OF A WORM, A SPIDER & A FLY

117.3 - Music, Kindergarten.

K.4 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

A - Identify steady beat in musical performances.

117.4 - Theatre, Kindergarten.

K.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Begin to identify appropriate audience behavior.

C - Demonstrate awareness of the use of music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

D - Observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.

117.6 - Music, Grade 1.

1.6 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

A - Distinguish between beat/rhythm, higher/lower, louder/softer, faster/slower, and same/different in musical performances.

117.7 - Theatre, Grade 1.

1.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify appropriate audience behavior.

C - Identify the use of music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

D - Observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.

117.9 - Music, Grade 2.

2.6 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

A - Distinguish between beat/rhythm, higher/lower, louder/softer, faster/slower, and same/different in musical performances.

117.10 - Theatre, Grade 2.

2.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify and apply appropriate audience behavior.

C - Employ music, creative movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

D - Observe the performance of artists and identify theatrical vocations.

117.12 - Music, Grade 3.

3.6 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

A - Define basic criteria for evaluating musical performances.

117.13 - Theatre, Grade 3.

3.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Evaluate and apply appropriate audience behavior consistently.

C - Incorporate music, movement, and visual components in dramatic play.

D - Observe the performance of amateur and professional artists and begin to compare vocations in theatre.

117.15 - Music, Grade 4.

4.6 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates music and musical performance.

A - Apply basic criteria in evaluating musical performances and compositions.

117.16 - Theatre, Grade 4.

4.5 - Response/evaluation. The student responds to and evaluates theatre and theatrical performances.

A - Identify and apply appropriate audience behavior at performances.

C - Compare and contrast the ways ideas and emotions are depicted in art, dance, music, and theatre and select movement, music, or visual elements to enhance classroom dramatizations.

D - Compare theatre artists and their contributions.