

# BEHIND THE CURTAIN

## A CREATIVE & THEATRICAL STUDY GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

KATHY BURKS THEATRE OF PUPPETRY ARTS'



Script and Original Music by B. Wolf

**AGES 4 AND ABOVE**

**DECEMBER 2 - 18** STUDENT MATINEE

**NOVEMBER 21 - DECEMBER 21** 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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Play .....FROSTY AND FRIENDS

Script and Original Music by .....B. Wolf

Directed by .....Douglass Burks & Sally Fiorello

Poster Art.....Kim Rae Lyle

Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts

Artistic Staff .....Kathy Burks, Douglass Burks, Sarah Jayne Fiorello,  
Patricia Long, B. Wolf, Becky Burks Keenan

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.

**See pages 17 for the TEKS that your field trip to Dallas Children's Theater satisfies!**

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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 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. 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 during the performance.

- 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 call out to the actors on stage.
- Sit on your knees or stand near your seat.
- Bring snacks and 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 while you are being seated.
- Keep all hands and feet and items out of the aisles during the performance.

## CURTAINS UP AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Attending a play is an experience unlike any other. 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 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 before your very eyes. All of these things make seeing a play very different from television, videos, computer games, or CDs and audiobooks 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.

1. What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater? What did you notice first on the stage?
2. 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 the action took place?
3. How did the lights set the mood of the play? How did they change throughout? What do you think "house lights" are? How do they differ from stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?
4. 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?
5. Was there music in the play? How did it add to the performance?
6. 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?



- 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?
- Write a letter to a cast member telling them what you liked about their character.
- 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?
- Which job would you like to try? Actor, Director, Lighting or Sound Crew Member, Stage Manager, Set Designer, Costume Designer, or another role? What skills might you need to complete your job?
- 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 ON A BRIEF HISTORY OF PUPPETRY

Puppetry, like music and dance, is an ancient art ever evolving and renewing itself.

A puppet is an inanimate figure that is caused to move by human effort before an audience. The four most common kinds of puppets are:

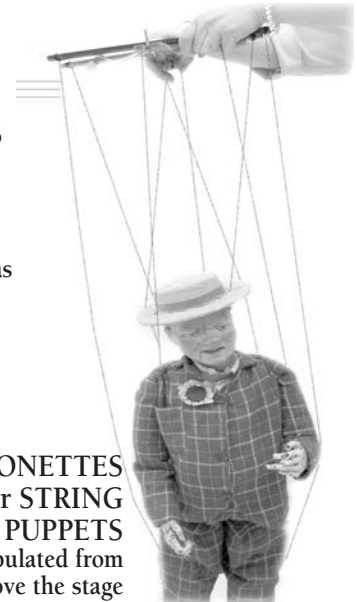
**SHADOW PUPPETS**  
--Operated from below the stage behind a screen or curtain. Light shines through the holes to create a shadow on the screen.



**ROD PUPPETS**  
--Manipulated from below the stage, or from directly behind the playing area, as in Black Theatre



**GLOVE OR HAND PUPPETS**  
--Operated from below the stage.



**MARIONETTES or STRING PUPPETS**  
--Manipulated from above the stage

Puppets exist in a wide variety of types, and may be two- or three- dimensional. They vary in size from finger puppets to larger than life-size, and range from simplest shapes to elaborately articulated figures.

The origins of puppetry are veiled in antiquity, but it is known that primitive peoples made puppets long before the invention of writing. Puppets probably served a function in the ritual magic practices by early man. Extensive use of puppetry for religious purposes is recorded in every subsequent civilization.

For centuries puppetry was effectively utilized in the church, but gradually some of the comic characters and scenes, originally introduced to lighten the miracle plays, got out of hand and became offensively boisterous and vulgar. Eventually puppets were totally expelled from the church. Henceforth, the art of puppetry was practiced in the streets, fairgrounds, inns, and later, when it had gained status again, in theaters of its own. In the present day it has returned to some churches. Whatever the setting, audiences have always responded wholeheartedly to those qualities unique to the art.

When operated with skill and artistry, puppets can convey with great intensity every emotion known to humankind, distilling the essence of feelings common to everyone. Puppets eloquently express the gamut of dramatic styles, from slapstick and riotous comedy to heart rending pathos and soul wrenching drama.

## **CURTAINS UP ON KATHY BURKS THEATRE OF PUPPETRY ARTS**

Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts, a professional company, is the oldest resident puppet theatre in the southwest. Established in 1973 as Kathy Burks Marionettes, and performing continuously since that time, the troupe has provided family entertainment for audiences in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex and throughout the United States.

At its inception the company performed exclusively with the antique marionettes which belong to Kathy Burks. Formerly owned and toured throughout the world by The Sue Hastings Company, of New York City, this is one of the largest collections of antique marionettes in the country, consisting of approximately 1,000 unique figures from the 1920's and '30's. These antiques proved too fragile, however, to withstand the rigors of continual performance. They currently make their home at Dallas Children's Theater, where they appear in various exhibits celebrating the power of Drama, past and present. Now the public may enjoy both the beauty and the history of these incredible puppets.

With the retirement of the Hastings collection, Kathy Burks Marionettes began to design and construct new marionettes for performance, and to incorporate other styles of puppetry into its presentations. At last the company name seemed a misnomer, and in 1992 Kathy Burks Marionettes became Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts, one of the few puppet theatres in the country to perform using all styles of puppetry, including traditional bridge and cabaret marionettes, hand puppets, shadow puppets, and Black Theatre rod puppets. Performance material ranges from adaptations of classic stories and fairy tales, to scripts based on original themes, and to puppet theatre interpretations of musical masterpieces such as *The Nutcracker*, *Til Eulenspiegel*, and *Carnival Of The Animals*. The company has also collaborated with Dallas Children's Theater in live productions.

Although entertainment is the troupe's primary goal, educational aims are inextricably interwoven. Both the founder of the company and the playwright/composer possess degrees in education.

Each member of the company is a dedicated artist with an extensive background in various theatre arts. Skills in set and costume design, acting, directing, dance, lighting design, playwrighting, and musical composition all combine with expertise in puppet manipulation to produce a complete theatrical company which specializes in elaborate puppet productions.

## CURTAINS UP ON THE ADAPTATION

An adaptation is a change made in something so that it can fit a new use. *Frosty and Friends* is an adaptation of a story song, which is meant to be told through singing, into a puppet play, which is meant to be performed and viewed. B. Wolf took the story and adapted it so that it could be performed by puppeteers with puppets for an audience. Consider these questions for discussion before you attend the DCT production:

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

- What kinds of things would Ms. Wolf need to be concerned with in creating a script for puppets? Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the song?
- What will the characters look like? Will they match their descriptions? What differences can you expect?
- What kinds of changes might you expect knowing that puppets will be performing the story?

### After the performance, consider these questions:

- What kinds of things would Ms. Wolf need to be concerned with in creating a script for puppets? Do you think the performance will be shorter or longer than the song?
- What will the characters look like? Will they match their descriptions? What differences can you expect?
- What kinds of changes might you expect knowing that puppets will be performing the story?

## CURTAINS UP ON THE AUTHOR



### B. Wolf

Ms. Wolf has composed and orchestrated music and served as musical director for many DCT productions including *Madeline's Christmas*; *A Year with Frog and Toad*; *Pinkerton!!!*; *If You Give a Pig a Party*; *The Velveteen Rabbit*; *Jack & the Giant Beanstalk*; *Pecos Bill*; *James and the Giant Peach*; and *Go, Dog, Go!*. An award winning playwright, Ms. Wolf has authored several children's plays that have been performed nationwide, including the original adaptation of Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. Since 1976, as resident playwright and composer with Kathy Burks Theatre of Puppetry Arts, she has written more than thirty puppet plays, musicals, and operettas, most of which remain in the troupe's repertoire. Ms. Wolf has worked with numerous other theaters throughout the Dallas area and she was honored with a Dallas-Fort Worth Theater Critics Forum Award for her unique musical underscore of


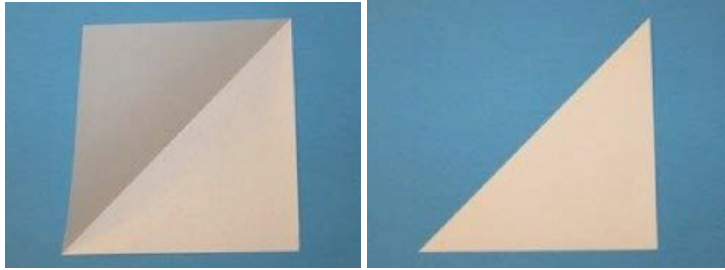
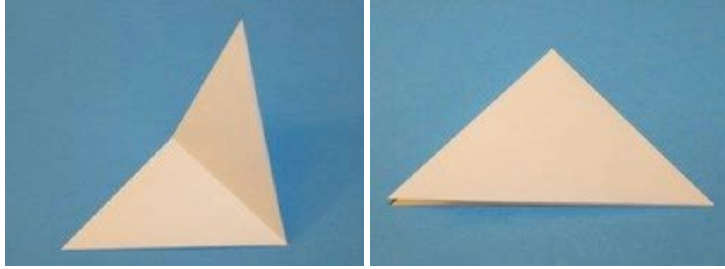
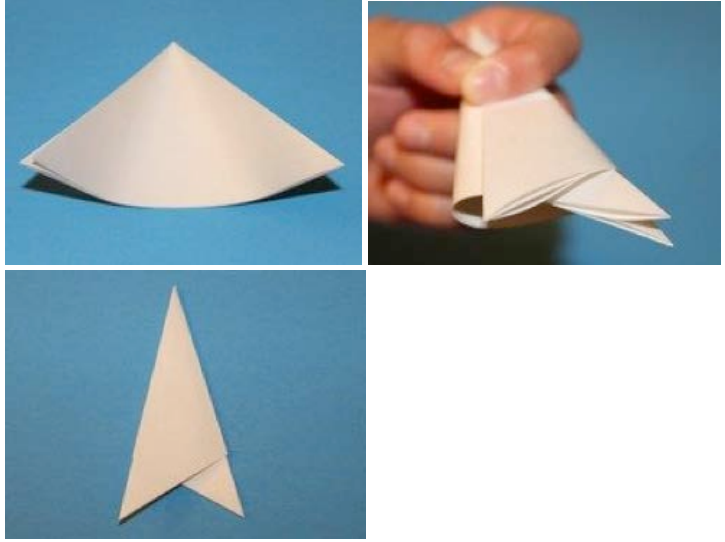
Bootstraps Comedy Theater's *The Boxer*. She was most recently seen (and heard) providing the live sound track to *The Curse of Castle Mongrew*, *Goodnight Moon and Go, Dog, Go!* She composed the music and lyrics for *Little Women* performed in February by the Teen Scene Players of DCT.

# CURTAINS UP ON ART

## Fold and Cut Snowflakes

You will need:  
Square sheets of paper  
Scissors

Here's How:

	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Start with a square piece of paper, but if you only have regular 8.5x11 paper, follow these instructions to make a square sheet.</p>
	<p><b>Step 2:</b> Fold the one corner to the other to form a triangle.</p>
	<p><b>Step 3:</b> Fold the triangle in half</p>
	<p><b>Step 4:</b> Roll up the left and right corners until the sides are even, then flatten. We're basically folding the triangle into 1/3rd. Make sure to keep the top of the triangle sharp and pointy.</p>





**Step 5:**  
Turn the paper over to see a triangle.



**Step 6:**  
Cut across the bottom of the triangle.



**Step 7:**  
Now snip and cut away at the triangle any way you like. When you're done, slowly unfold the paper to reveal your masterpiece.

## CURTAINS UP ON SCIENCE

### What is a snowflake?

A snowflake begins to form when an extremely cold water droplet freezes onto a pollen or dust particle in the sky. This creates an ice crystal. As the ice crystal falls to the ground, water vapor freezes onto the primary crystal, building new crystals – the six arms of the snowflake. The snow we end up seeing on the ground is an accumulation of these ice crystals.



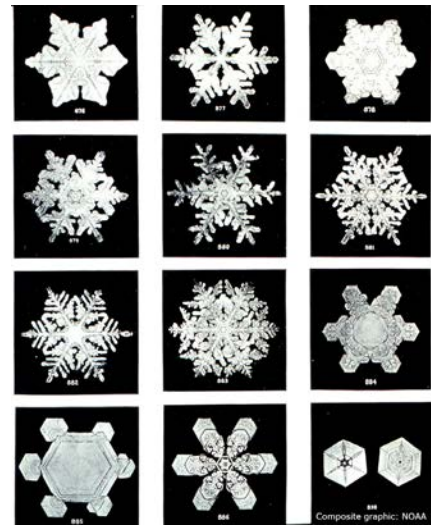
credit: Agricultural Research Service, United States Department of Agriculture

### Snow as an Insulator?

#### *Insulator*

*An object, such as a blanket or a fur coat, that tends to slow down the rate at which heat is transferred from one object to another.*

Snow is such a good insulator that some animals dig snow caves in which to hibernate through the winter. New snow is composed of a high percentage of air trapped among the accumulated snow crystals. Since the air can barely move, heat transfer is greatly reduced. Fresh, uncompacted snow typically is 90 to 95 percent trapped air. It's important to note that wet snow is much more dense than dry, fluffy snow. Dry, fluffy snow has lots of trapped air which makes fluffy snow a better insulator.



credit: NOAA



#### **You'll need:**

- SNOW! (or a large amount of frost from a freezer)
- Bowl to hold snow
- Ruler

Students can “see” the insulating properties of snow by measuring the actual water level of a pile of snow.

First, gather a bowl of snow and insert a ruler to measure the depth of the snow. Record your findings. Allow the snow to melt in a warm room and measure the water level left after it has melted.

Help students understand that the difference is due to the high percentage of air trapped among the snow crystals which helps make snow a good insulator.

### Sensory Fun with Easy to Make “Snow”

Mix 3 cups of baking soda with ½ cup of hair conditioner. You'll want to make sure the conditioner used is white or your 'snow' will be tinted. Place in a large plastic tub or bin and allow students to discover digging, molding, pouring, and playing with snow indoors!

# CURTAINS UP ON MATH

## “Snowy” Counting Cards

### You will need:

Sturdy cardstock  
Wagon Wheel Pasta (uncooked)  
Zipper bags  
Counting Cards Template

### Here’s How:

Copy the template (on page 12) onto sturdy cardstock and cut out. You’ll need one card for each number you plan to use with your students. At the top of each card, write the numeral and its name in bold marker. You may wish to laminate the cards. Provide students with a zipper bag of uncooked wagon wheel pasta ‘snowflakes’ and encourage them to read the numbers and place the appropriate number of snowflakes on the card.

This activity can be used in group settings or as an individual activity for enrichment when students have ‘free’ time.

## Would You Like to Build a Snowman?

Practice with ordinal numbers.

### You will need:

Sturdy cardstock in a dark color  
Small, Medium, and Large circles cut from white paper  
Construction paper scraps in black, orange and other colors  
Safety scissors  
Glue sticks

Hold a class discussion about ordinal numbers. Explain that often we use them in giving instructions on how to do things. In this activity, students will follow instructions using ordinal numbers to ‘build’ a snowman and decorate him as Frosty’s friends did.

Provide students with a sheet of dark cardstock, one of each sized circles, and some scraps, scissors, and glue stick for decorating the snowman.

Verbally instruct the students to (FIRST) place the large circle on the bottom of the page. Continue to instruct them in the steps to putting together their snowmen using the ordinal statement of numbers to refer to placement of the circles.

**"Snowy" Counting Card template**



## CURTAINS UP ON READING

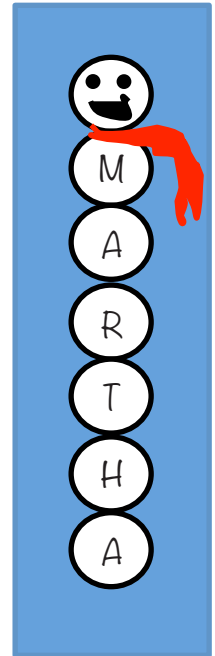
This activity helps students practice their name recognition at the same time it encourages them to make reading personal. Each student will construct a personalized snowman bookmark to use when reading.

### You will need:

Blue construction paper cut into 2 ½ inch strips  
White circle sticker dots  
Markers

### Here's How:

Provide students with a strip of construction paper and a sheet of white sticker dots. Instruct them to count the number of letters in their names. Starting at the bottom of the strip, students should stack a dot for each letter, one on top of the other, on the paper. Next add one more dot for the snowman's face. Encourage students to neatly write one letter of their name on each dot starting with the bottom with a marker. Use markers to draw a face, scarf, hat, and arms and feet to the snowman.



## CURTAINS UP ON PHYSICAL FITNESS

### Throwing Snowballs

Throwing overhand can be fun to learn when you use 'snowballs' and a target.

### You will need:

Hula Hoop  
Tennis balls  
Masking tape  
White spray paint

### To set up the game:

Begin by spraying the tennis balls white to create 'snowballs' for your students to throw. Attach the hula hoop to a blank wall outside or in a gym area. This will be the target. Mark a throwing line with masking tape on the ground or floor.

To instruct and practice the technique:

Share and demonstrate the four steps to overhand throwing with your students.

1. Start with the side of your body opposite the throwing arm facing the target.
2. Step forward with the foot opposite the throwing arm and raise your arm back and up over your shoulder.
3. Bring your arm forward while you turn your body toward the target.
4. Release the ball and follow through with your throwing arm across your body.

### Extend the activity by:

Setting up two targets and allowing students to work in teams

Recording before and after scores for each student to measure progress of the skill

Changing the size of the target hoops to work on precision in throwing

## **CURTAINS UP ON MORE**

### **Books you might like:**

*The Snowman* by Raymond Briggs

*Snowmen at Night* by Caralyn and Mark Buehner

*The Biggest Snowman Ever* by Steven Kroll

*Snowman in Paradise* by Michael Roberts

### **More on the science behind snow:**

National Snow and Ice Data Center: <https://nsidc.org/>

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: <http://www.noaa.gov/>

*Snow Watch* by Cheryl Archer

## **T.E.K.S. satisfied by FROSTY & FRIENDS**

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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.

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

117.7 - Theatre, Grade 1.

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

A - Identify appropriate audience behavior.

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

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.

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