



OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Show Way The Musical

23 | 24

ONSTAGE STUDENT FIELD TRIP
RESOURCE GUIDE

[OVERTURE.ORG/ONSTAGE](https://overture.org/onstage)



ABOUT OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Overture Center for the Arts fills a city block in downtown Madison with world-class venues for the performing and visual arts. Made possible by an extraordinary gift from Madison businessman W. Jerome Frautschi, the center presents the highest-quality arts and entertainment programming in a wide variety of disciplines for diverse audiences. Offerings include performances by acclaimed classical, jazz, pop, and folk performers; touring Broadway musicals; quality children's entertainment; and world-class ballet, modern and jazz dance. Overture Center's extensive outreach and educational programs serve thousands of Madison-area residents annually, including youth, older adults, people with limited financial resources and people with disabilities. The center is also home to ten independent resident organizations.

RESIDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society
Children's Theater of Madison
Forward Theater Company
Kanopy Dance Company
Li Chiao-Ping Dance Company
Madison Ballet
Madison Opera
Madison Symphony Orchestra
Wisconsin Academy's James Watrous Gallery
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Internationally renowned architect Cesar Pelli designed the center to provide the best possible environment for artists and audiences, as well as to complement Madison's urban environment. Performance spaces range from the spectacular 2,250-seat Overture Hall to the casual and intimate Rotunda Stage. The renovated Capitol Theater seats approximately 1,110, and The Playhouse seats 350. In addition, three multi-purpose spaces provide flexible performance, meeting and rehearsal facilities. Overture Center also features several art exhibit spaces. Overture Galleries I, II and III display works by Dane County artists. The Playhouse Gallery features regional artists with an emphasis on collaborations with local organizations. The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters' Watrous Gallery displays works by Wisconsin artists, and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art offers works by national and international artists.

Dear Teachers,

In this resource guide you will find valuable information to help you apply academic goals to your students’ performance experience. We have included suggestions for activities which can help you prepare students to see this performance, ideas for follow-up activities, and additional resources you can access on the web. Along with these activities and resources, we’ve also included the applicable Wisconsin Academic Standards in order to help you align the experience with your curriculum requirements.

This Educator’s Resource Guide is designed to:

- Extend the scholastic impact of the performance by providing discussion ideas, activities and reading to promote learning across the curriculum;
- Promote arts literacy by expanding students’ knowledge of music, science, storytelling and theatre;
- Illustrate that the arts are a legacy reflecting the values, customs, beliefs, expressions and reflections of a culture;
- Use the arts to teach about the cultures of other people and to celebrate students’ own heritage through self-reflection;
- Maximize students’ enjoyment and appreciation of the performance.

We hope the performance and this resource guide will provide you and your students with opportunities to integrate art learning in your curricula, expanding it in new and enriching ways.

Enjoy the Show!



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Curriculum Categories

 Language Arts

 Social Emotional

 Social Studies

We want your feedback!

OnStage performances can be evaluated online! Evaluations are vital to the funding of this program. Your feedback educates us about the ways the program is utilized and we often implement your suggestions.

Survey: <https://www.surveymzmo.com/s3/4318898/OnStage-Post-Show-Survey>



Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

About Show Way The Musical

Show Way The Musical brings Jacqueline Woodson's Newbery Honor-winning picture book to life. With original music, foot-stomping dance, and six actors, this production shares the inspiring stories of seven generations of women in Woodson's family.

It shows how love, strength, and resilience can literally stitch a family together as generations strive to find their way through the turbulence of American history.

The 45-minute production follows these women and girls as they find their way, moving on through the days of slavery, through the Civil War, the Jim Crow era, the 20th century civil rights struggle, and the fight for literacy.

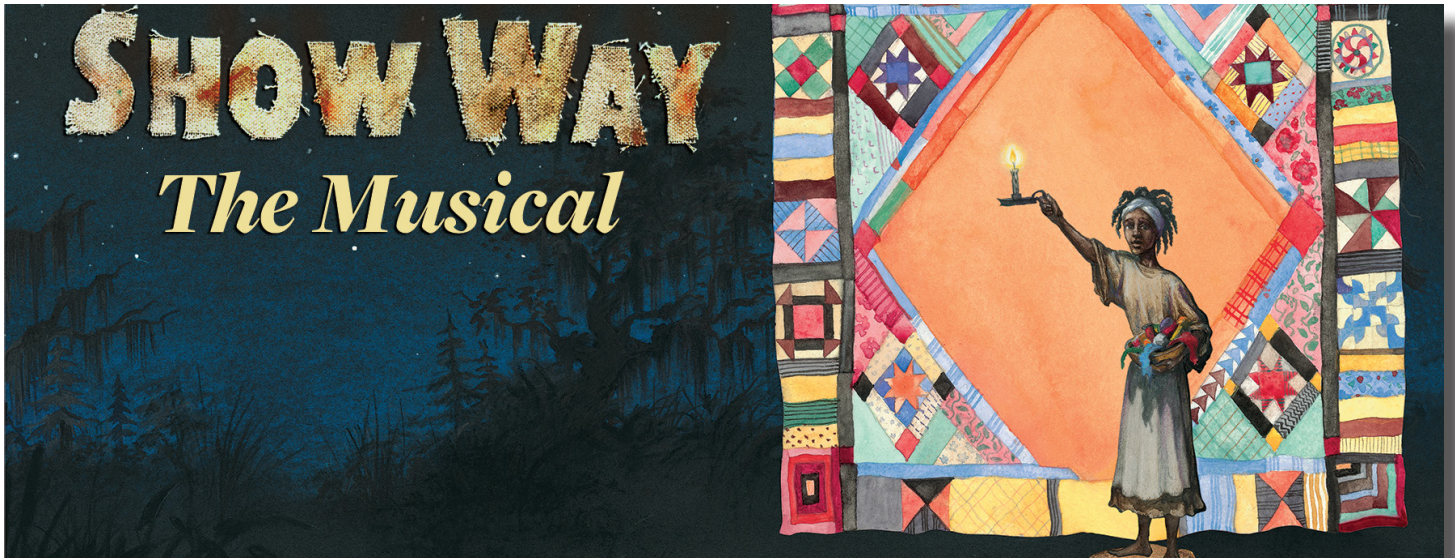
Show Way The Musical helps audiences get up close and personal with historic events by showing how these big issues affect an individual life. Many of the actors play multiple characters, changing their costumes to show the changing times. One performer plays the part of a Griot, or storyteller/narrator, who helps guide the time travel.

All this dramatic action takes place on a unit set, decorated with a giant quilt. This quilt set piece can show animations and convey important messages, just like the show ways described in the play.

Music and dance bring the passage of time to life in their own unique ways. The original score by Tyrone L. Robinson is performed off-stage by musicians playing drums and percussion, keyboard, banjo, guitar, upright and electric base. The choreography by Tiffany Quinn showcases African-American dance through the ages, such as buck dancing, juba, and the Charleston.

A **show way** is a type of quilt that once served as a secret sort of map, sewn in code, to help enslaved people find their way to freedom.

Show Way The Musical Program



Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour Presents

A world premiere Kennedy Center commission

SHOW WAY

The Musical

By Jacqueline Woodson

Adapted from her book *Show Way*, illustrated by Hudson Talbott

Music and Lyrics by Tyrone L. Robinson

Choreographed by Tiffany Quinn

Music Directed by Tiffany Underwood Holmes

Directed by Tavia Rivée Jefferson

Original Direction by Schele Williams

About Jacqueline Woodson



Jacqueline Woodson

Jacqueline Woodson started writing as a child and it seems she hasn't stopped since. At the time of writing this resource guide, she has published 8 picture books, 10 middle grade books, and 9 young adult books, plus 2 books for adults

Her writing has brought Jacqueline Woodson many awards. They include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship, the Caldecott Medal, the National Book Award, the Coretta Scott King Award, the Newbery Honor Medal, the Hans Christian Anderson Award, the Astrid Lindgren Memorial Award, and the Margaret A. Edwards Award for Lifetime Achievement.

She has served as the Young People's Poet Laureate, the National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, and as the Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence.

Although Jacqueline Woodson is very serious about her writing, she has an interesting way of doing it. She wrote on her website that she has to turn her notebook sideways to write.

On her website, Jacqueline Woodson wrote that **Show Way** was the first book she wrote based, at least in part, on her family history. She said she started writing the book because she wanted to preserve that history, especially after her daughter was born and her grandmother died.



Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

African Americans and Dance



Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

African Americans have had a huge impact on dance in the United States.

In fact, most of this country's best-known forms of social, or casual, dance have their roots in the Black community – and many of them are featured in *Show Way The Musical*.

From their origins as a fusion of African rhythms and other styles of movement and music enslaved people encountered in the Americas, to taking center stage on Broadway and in the movies, African American dance styles have changed over the years. This production shows that evolution as it follows the story of Soonie and her family.

Some of the dance styles featured in the show include:

- Patting Juba – Also known as Hambone, this dance style involves rhythmic footwork and slapping and patting the arms, legs, and the rest of the body in time
- Charleston – This dance style is widely associated with flappers and the Jazz Age of the 20s, and came from the African American community
- Lindy hop – Closely linked with the Swing Era, this fast-moving style of partner dance first started in Harlem

The innovation and influence continues. From Michael Jackson and the moonwalk, to hip hop, the Harlem shake, and dabbing, different dance styles continue to emerge and capture the public imagination.

Quilts & Quilt Codes

Quilts have been part of American life since before Europeans arrived on these shores, for the practice of making a fabric sandwich out of two layers of cloth with some sort of filler in the middle is common across the globe. The first evidence of quilting in history seems to be an ivory carving from ancient Egypt.

Quilts can be beautiful, practical, or both. Quilts are commonly used to promote a cozy night's sleep, or for decoration, but they do have other uses. In the Middle Ages in Europe, quilts were used to provide padding under armor, or sometimes as a substitute for armor. In the colonial era in the U.S., quilting bees gave quilters a chance to interact with others and strengthen social ties while they worked on their projects.

Individuals or groups may make special quilts to mark important occasions and life transitions, such as a marriage or the birth of a child. Quilts can also tell the story of a family or an individual.

Show Way The Musical is based on the premise that individuals fleeing North to escape slavery sometimes did so with the aid of quilts that were actually maps in code. Known as show ways or Underground Railroad quilt codes, these secret maps could help people stay on course or find assistance.

However, there is significant disagreement about whether the whole idea of Underground Railroad quilts is based on reality. Many historians, quilters, and experts on the Underground Railroad maintain that there is not enough evidence to back up this claim. Other experts find it a credible idea.

One of the great things about artistic expression, whether it's a book, movie, or theatrical production like Show Way The Musical is that they don't necessarily have to be based on things that actually happened to feel true to audiences. The artists who made this production leave it up to audiences to decide for themselves.



Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

Ideas for Classroom Discussion & Resources

- From **A Guide to the Works of Jacqueline Woodson**, by Erica Rand Silverman and Sharon Kennedy....Create a class Show Way quilt. All children use the same exact size and type of paper. Younger children could draw a self-portrait and write their name. Older children can design squares that tell their stories or important events of the school year. Hang the paper “quilt pieces” directly next to each other to create a paper quilt. Discuss how their class quilt relates to the Show Way quilt and what each quilt symbolizes. The quilt will be a great way to preserve the class history!
- Think about the different dance styles you saw in Show Way The Musical. Can you describe any similarities between those dances and dances people do today?
- Ask students what Show Way The Musical showed them about American history.
- Ask students how characters in Show Way The Musical gained inspiration from their ancestors. Then ask students to talk about different ways their ancestors inspire them.



Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

Resources

Jacqueline Woodson's [website](#) has lots of information on the author and her work,

The Kennedy Center has developed a Show Way The Musical resource guide for educators available [here](#)

Find resources for Black History Month [here](#)

Black History Month [resources](#) for kids

General background on the Underground Railroad is available [here](#)

Learn more about the [impact of African Americans on American dance](#)

[Link](#) to a song....

A brief overview of the history of [quilting](#)

An article on the history of [quilting in America](#)

An [article](#) exploring whether “Underground Railroad Quilts” are fact or fiction

Arts Education Activity

Harriet Tubman: Secret Messages Through Song

Students are introduced to African American spirituals and their use of a secret language to share information. Students will listen to and analyze spirituals, then write an original spiritual to share a secret message.

Grades: 3-5

Original Writer: Gladys Van Der Woude

Adaptation: Carol Parenzan Smalley

Editor: JoDee Scissors

Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Discover the history and meaning of African American spirituals.
- Analyze and decode spirituals.
- Apply call and response techniques and syncopated rhythms in a song.
- Describe secret words and phrases in a spiritual.
- Write an original spiritual that conveys a secret message.

Materials

Lyrics to Do You Want to Be Free

Lyrics to Wade in the Water

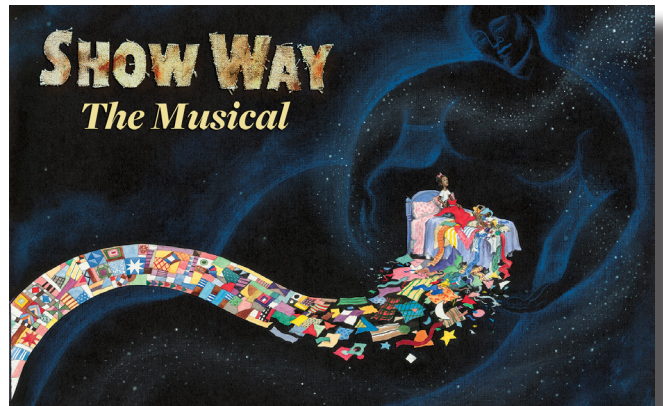
Codes and Phrases Used on the Underground Railroad

Wade in the Water [Video](#)

African American Spirituals [Video Cinema](#)

Do You Want to be Free [recording on website](#)

[Website](#) on African American spirituals



Teacher Background

Teachers should review historical information about Harriet Tubman from the following resources: Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Visitor Center, Harriet Tubman Timeline/ [Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway](#), and [National Parks Service: Harriet Tubman](#)

Activity - Secret Messages Through Song(con't)

Student Prerequisites

Students should know historical details about enslaved people, the Underground Railroad, and African American history.

Accessibility Notes

Modify handouts and provide assistive technologies for students. Allow extra time as needed for task completion.

INSTRUCTION

Engage

1. Without any introduction, play the song “Do You Want to Be Free?” During the chorus, model for students how to sing the “response” portion. Gesture to the students to join you in singing this part of the song.
2. Introduce the song, “Do You Want to be Free” and give students a copy of the Song Lyrics: “Do You Want To Be Free?” Play the song again and have students sing along. Ask students: What are you hearing? (a song, a story about history using music, an African American spiritual, a children’s chorus) Who is this song about? (Harriet Tubman) Who is Harriet Tubman? (a leader in the Underground Railroad, she helped enslaved people escape the south and move north) From whose perspective is this song written? (Harriet Tubman’s) What format is used in the chorus? (call and response, sing and repeat, sing and echo) Who is performing the song? (an adult and children’s group)

Build

1. Introduce the history of African American spirituals to students. Note that enslaved people sang to entertain themselves, for religious reasons, to communicate information, to pass the time, to make their work easier by moving to the beat, etc. Explain that enslavers prohibited reading and writing. Since literacy was forbidden, enslaved people sang songs to remember things and to communicate information. Their songs often contained codes that enslaved people knew but enslavers did not.
2. Introduce the concept of codes in songs and communications. Ask students: What secret codes do you use that your parents or friends may not know? Why do you use these codes? Why would enslaved people use codes?
3. Watch the performance of “Wade in the Water.” Ask students: What did you hear? What do you think the song is about? What does “wade in the water” mean? Who is Moses? Who are “the children of the Israelites”? Why are some phrases repeated? (they are the primary message, they are the chorus’s “response”)
4. After you listen to the performance once, give students a copy of the Song Lyrics: “Wade in the Water.” Listen a second time to “Wade in the Water.” Ask students to underline repeated phrases and words in the song.
5. Give students a copy of the worksheet Codes and Phrases Used on Underground Railroad. Working in groups, ask students to try to decode the song. They may be able to find key words or parts of phrases to help them. Share interpretations of the song with each other. (They should find words like “Jordan,” “friends,” “water.”)
6. Show students “Wade in the Water” again. Ask students to listen to the “beat.” Snap your fingers to the beat (syncopated rhythm) and clap along. Encourage the students to join you with the finger snapping and hand clapping.
7. Define syncopation. Syncopation is a shifting of accents and stress. It is often on the “off” or “up” beat. Explain that

Activity - Secret Messages Through Song(con't)

Apply

1. Write an original African American spiritual. Divide the class into pairs or small groups. Have each group select a topic that was important to an enslaved person from the Underground Railroad. For example, a song about following the North Star, hiding from those who want to capture you, leaving your family behind, surviving winter weather, looking for the Promised Land or freedom, or wondering what your new life will be like. Consider whose voice we might be hearing (such as Tubman's in the first song). Use code words and phrases to communicate a secret message. Write an original spiritual to a known tune (such as one of the spirituals heard in this lesson) or to an original tune with two or more verses and a chorus. Encourage students to use the call and response technique and syncopation. Have students share the lyrics of the song with their classmates.
2. Perform the original spirituals for the class. Have students demonstrate any clapping or snapping that will go along with the performance.

Reflect

1. Assign each group a spiritual written by another group. Ask each group to decode the song. Ask students: What message did the group convey? What did you have to decode? Can a song have more than one interpretation? What did they do well? What emotions did you feel as you listened to the spirituals in this lesson (recorded and original)? How do you think enslaved people when they listened or sang spirituals?



Extend

Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

1. Explore other African American spirituals. Share African American Spirituals from the Library of Congress or locate content from African American Spirituals.
2. Look for code words and phrases in modern music. Select a popular or favorite song to decode. Have students share their findings.
3. Write an original story that uses Underground Railroad code words or phrases. Have students read their stories to another class.
4. Create a “new” language that uses a unique set of code words and phrases. Write a dialogue between two people using the “new” language.

Activity - Secret Messages Through Song(con't)

Song Lyrics: “Wade in the Water”

Instructions: Read the lyrics to the spiritual “Wade in the Water” and look for code words and phrases that may have been used to transmit information. Write an interpretation of the lyrics based on your findings.

Chorus:

Wade in the water (children).

Wade in the water.

Wade in the water.

God’s gonna trouble the water.

Verse 1:

If you don’t believe I’ve been redeemed,

God’s gonna trouble the water.

I want you to follow him on down to Jordan stream.

(I said) My God’s gonna trouble the water.

You know chilly water is dark and cold.

(I know my) God’s gonna trouble the water.

You know it chills my body but not my soul.

(I said my) God’s gonna trouble the water.

(Come on let’s)

Repeat Chorus

Verse 2:

Now if you should get there before I do,

(I know) God’s gonna trouble the water.

Tell all my friends that I’m comin’ too.

(I know) God’s gonna trouble the water.

Sometimes I’m up Lord and sometimes I’m down.

(You know my) God’s gonna trouble the water.

Sometimes I’m level to the ground.

God’s gonna trouble the water.

(I know) God’s gonna trouble the water.

Repeat Chorus two times

Activity - Secret Messages Through Song(con't)

Song Lyrics: “Do You Want To Be Free?”

Chorus:

Do you want to be free? (Do you want to be free?)
I'll give you the key (I'll give you the key)
Come with me (Come with me)
and leave slavery (and leave slavery)

Chorus

Gather around, I'll tell you about
the road to freedom, without no doubt
I'm Harriet Tubman, I rescue slaves
If you come with me, you'll have to be brave.

Chorus

Follow me, you won't get whipped
We're going on a very dangerous trip
If you turn back, you'll stay a slave
If you come with me, you'll work and get paid.

Chorus

Only take what you can carry in your pack
We're going to freedom and we're not coming back
Quakers and friends will help you get far
To get to freedom, go towards the North Star.

Chorus

Activity - Secret Messages Through Song(con't)

Codes and Phrases Used on the Underground Railroad

Abolitionist-Person who demanded an immediate end to slavery.

Agent-Coordinator, who plotted courses of escape and made contacts.

Baggage-Fugitive enslaved people transported by Underground Railroad workers.

Bundles of wood-Fugitives that were expected.

Canaan-Canada.

Conductor-Person who directly transported slaves.

Drinking Gourd-Big Dipper constellation and the North Star.

Flying bondsmen-The number of escaping enslaved people.

Forwarding-Taking enslaved people from station to station.

Freedom train-The Underground Railroad.

French leave-Secret departure.

Gospel train-The Underground Railroad.

Heaven-Canada, freedom.

Jumping off place-Place of shelter for fugitives.

Load of potatoes-Escaping enslaved people hidden under farm produce in a wagon.

Moses-Harriet Tubman.

Operator-Person who helped freedom seekers as a conductor or agent.

Parcel-Fugitives that were expected.

Patter roller-Bounty hunter that was hired to capture runaway enslaved people.

Preachers-Leaders of and spokespersons for the Underground Railroad.

Promised Land-Canada.

River Jordan-Ohio River.

Shepherds-People who encouraged enslaved people to escape and escorted them.

Station-Place of safety and temporary refuge, a safe house.

Station master-Keeper or owner of a safe house.

Stockholder-Someone who gave money, clothing, or food to the Underground Railroad.

Activity - Secret Messages Through Song(con't)

Phrases Used on the Underground Railroad

The wind blows from the South today. - A warning that bounty hunters were nearby.

A friend with friends. - A password used to signal arrival of fugitives with an Underground Railroad conductor.

A friend of a friend sent me. - A password used by fugitives traveling alone to indicate they were sent by the Underground Railroad network.

When the sun comes back and the first quail calls. - Early spring, a particular time of year good for escaping.

The river bank makes a mighty good road. - A reminder that tracking dogs could not follow the scent of fugitives through the water.

The dead trees will show you the way. - A reminder that moss grows on the north side of dead trees, so if the North Star was not visible, they would know which way to walk.

Left foot, peg foot. - A visual clue for escapees left by an Underground Railroad worker famous for his wooden leg.

The river ends between two hills. - The Tombigbee River in Mississippi.

When the great big river meets the little river. - The Ohio River and its tributaries.

Steal away, steal away, steal away to Jesus. - Used to alert other slaves that an escape attempt was anticipated.



Photo by Kyle Schick for Elman Studio.

Academic Standards

Theatre Education Standard 3 – Respond

TP.R.4.i: Analysis - Identify separate elements in a theatrical work such as characters, plot, and performance elements.

TP.R.5.i: Reflection - Identify separate elements in a theatrical work such as characters, plot, and performance elements.

TP.R.6.i: View Performance - Demonstrate developmentally appropriate audience etiquette.

Standard 4 – Connect

TP.Cn.5.i: Cultural Social Context - Explain how theatre relates to self, others, and the world.

TP.Cn.6.i: Research - Identify the “given circumstances,” environmental and situational conditions that influence a theatrical work.

TP.Cn.8.i: Cross Disciplinary - Identify how theatre connects to literature and social studies.

Music Education

Standard MG 4: CONNECT—Students will relate prior knowledge and personal experience with music to cultural and historical context.

MG4.Cn.5.i: Compare the historical and cultural aspects of music with other disciplines.

MG4.Cn.6.i: Explain how music relates to self, others, and the world.

MG4.Cn.7.i: Examine and evaluate musical connections, similarities, and differences.

MG4.Cn.8.i Describe roles of musicians in various music settings and world cultures.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

Speaking & Listening Standards K-5

Comprehension & Collaboration

SL.4.2 Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats.

EE.SL.4.2 Ask and answer questions about details from a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

Social Studies History

SS.Hist1.a.i: Cause – Use evidence to draw conclusions about probable causes of historical events, issues, and problems.

SS.Hist1.b.i: Effects – Use evidence to draw conclusions about probable effects of historical events, issues, and problems.

SS.Hist2.a.i Patterns stay the same – Describe patterns of continuity over time in the community, state, and the United States.

SS.Hist2.b.i: Patterns stay the same – Describe patterns of change over time in the community, state, and the United States.

SS.Hist2.c.i: Contextualization – Analyze individuals, groups, and events to understand why their contributions are important to historical change or continuity.

SS.Hist4.a.i: Historical context – Describe the historical context (situation) of a primary or secondary source.

SS.Hist4.d.i: Point of view – Describe the impact of the POV of the author on a primary or secondary source.

Political Science

SS.PS1.a.i: Values and principles of American constitutional democracy – Differentiate between majority rule and minority rights (as a function of a democratic republic).Hypothesize why laws and constitutions exist.

SS.PS2.c.4-5: Asserting and reaffirming human rights – Critique instances where groups have been denied access to power and rights, and any law or customs that have altered these instances.

Summarize how people organize to gain a greater voice to impact and change their communities.

SS.PS3.b.3-4: Linkage institutions – Provide examples of how various types of media are used in elections and government

Dance

Standard DD 3: RESPOND – Students will critically interpret intent and meaning in order to evaluate artistic work. Students will demonstrate developmentally appropriate etiquette skills with guidance in response to a performance, as well as grade appropriate practices of Dance Literacy, Reflection, and Analysis.

Standard DD 4: CONNECT – Students will relate prior knowledge and personal experience with dance to cultural and historical context, including developmentally appropriate Cultural Social Awareness and Cross Disciplinary connections.

About Live Performance

Unlike movies or television, theater is a LIVE performance. This means that the action unfolds in front of an audience, and the performance is constantly evolving. The artists respond to the audience's laughter, clapping, gasps and other reactions. Therefore, the audience is a critical part of the theater experience. In fact, without you in the audience, the artists would still be in rehearsal!

Remember, you are sharing this performance space with the artists and other audience members. Your considerate behavior allows everyone to enjoy a positive theater experience.



Prepare: Be sure to use the restroom before the show!

Find Your Seat: When the performance is about to begin, the lights will dim. This is a signal for the artists and the audience to top conversations. Settle into your seat and get ready to enjoy the show!

Look and Listen: There is a lot to hear (dialogue, music, sound effects) and a lot to see (costumes, props, set design, lighting) in this performance. Pay close attention to the artists onstage. Unlike videos, you cannot rewind if you miss something.

Energy and Focus: Artists use concentration to focus their energy during a performance. The audience gives energy to the artist, who use that energy to give life to the performance. Help the artists focus that energy. They can feel that you are with them!

Conversations: Talking to neighbors (even whispering) can easily distract the artists onstage. They approach their audiences with respect, and expect the same from you in return. Help the artists concentrate with your attention.

Laugh Out Loud: If something is funny, it's good to laugh. If you like something a lot, applaud. Artists are thrilled when the audience is engaged and responsive. They want you to laugh, cheer, clap and enjoy your time at the theater.

Discover New Worlds: Attending a live performance is a time to sit back and look inward, and question what is being presented to you. Be curious about new worlds, experience new ideas, and discover people and lives previously unknown to you. An open mind, curiosity, and respect will allow a whole other world to unfold before your eyes!

Please, don't feed the audience: Food is not allowed in the theater. Soda and snacks are noisy and distracting to both the artists and audience.

Unplug: Please turn off all mobile phones and other electronics before the performance. Photographs and recording devices are prohibited.



Overture Center's mission
is to support and elevate
our community's creative culture,
economy and quality of life
through the arts.

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SERIES SPONSOR

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