Aladdin KIDS! Table of Contents

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DEAR TEACHERS,

Welcome to a Curriculum Guide filled with resource materials for ALADDIN KIDS! These materials have been designed to expand your students’ engagement with and appreciation of this highly creative and visually spectacular production.

We encourage you to delve into Aladdin’s whirlwind adventure with your class. Activate your students involvement in Aladdin’s adventure by getting your students on their feet and experiencing these fun and thought-provoking activities. Further exploration through the performing arts education activities suggested in this guide can enrich your students' experience of the performance itself while further expanding their connection with the characters and the choices they make.

Thank you for joining us on this magic carpet ride adventure!
Some History on Aladdin

The story of Aladdin comes from the collection of stories told by fictional princess Scheherazade. Who was Scheherazade? She was one of the many wives of a great sultan, a sultan who apparently liked to marry women at night then kill them in the morning. So in order to prolong her death, Scheherazade told the sultan a series of stories over the course of 1,001 nights leaving the end a mystery so the sultan would leave her alive to hear the rest of the story. The sultan especially loved the adventures of Sinbad and Ali Baba. After the final story the sultan decided to keep Scheherazade.

Aladdin, arguably Scheherazade’s most well known story, is the tale of poverty stricken Aladdin who comes to possess a magical lamp inhabited by a powerful genie who grants him 3 wishes. Believe it or not, the story of Aladdin that we all know was actually an addition to Scheherazade’s tales by French translator Antoine Galland in the early 18th century. But Galland actually heard the story of Aladdin from an Arabian storyteller and made some changes to the story then added it to his version of the collection of tales (which was 118 pages). This makes the origins of the story hard to determine.

Aladdin Fun Facts

- The earliest version of the story actually place in China, not Arabia and Aladdin is of Chinese descent.
- Aladdin was, like many stories, turned into a play and during the Victorian era (1837–1901) and was quite popular due to the intricate sets that depicted Asian scenery and the magic tricks that were used on stage.
- In some versions of the story, Aladdin also possesses a magic ring.
- The name Jasmine is a creation of Disney. The name of Aladdin’s love interest is Badroulboudour.
- When Disney released the animated movie in 1992 it was not only Disney’s 31st animated film but also the most successful film of that year.
- There were two straight to video sequels of Aladdin, “Aladdin: The Return of Jafar” and “Aladdin: King of Thieves.”
- There are 50+ movie versions of Aladdin, including a popular TV show that Disney created.
Aladdin the Musical

In 2010, it was confirmed that an adaptation of the '92 movie was being made. It premiered in 2011 at the 5th Avenue Theater in Seattle, WA.

In 2012, other productions occurred in Utah, Missouri and California

The musical will run at the Ed Mirvish Theater in Toronto, Canada before heading to Broadway’s New Amsterdam Theatre in March 2014.

Videos

A look inside bringing Aladdin the Musical to the stage
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=USig3ZxnkH4

Aladdin the Musical at Disney California Adventure Theme Park
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95RJylVS52A

Aladdin Jr. at the Brunswick Acres School
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJRTenuaJ0w

Aladdin Jr. at the Poplar Road Elementary School
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6EG0Ti03-E

I’m bored.

I wish I had a pet parrot.

I miss Jasmine.
Pre-Show Ensemble Building Activities

Ensemble building activities are ways in which you can create unity within your class in preparation for seeing Aladdin as a class.

Cross the Room if...

• The teacher splits the class into two lines, facing each other

• There must be room for the students to cross room in the middle of both lines.

• When the teacher says “Cross the room if...” and asks a relatable question to the students. (i.e. “Cross the room if you enjoy listening to music)

• If the question is applicable to the students, then they cross the room.

• If the question is not applicable to the students, then they stay standing in their spot.

• The teacher can ask questions such as: Cross the room if you have ever seen a show in a theatre before? Cross the room if you have ever performed on stage before? Cross the room if you have ever read the book Aladdin? Cross the room if you have seen the Disney movie Aladdin? Cross the room if this is your first time seeing a live show in a theatre? Cross the room if you’re excited to see Aladdin with your classmates?

** This activity is good for the teacher to see the students past experiences with Aladdin and this is a good transition to talk about theatre etiquette.
A Scarf, is a Scarf is a….

Magic and mystery is performed throughout the show Aladdin. Encourage students to imagine they are magicians and to turn the scarf into something else.

- Teacher and student will form a circle.
- Teacher will explain to the class that they will be using a scarf and by using their imaginations they will physically turn the scarf into something else.
- When the scarf is passed to a student, the student holding the scarf will say “A scarf is a scarf, is a….” and the student will turn it into something other than a scarf. It can be a person, place or thing.
- Teacher will demonstrate first before passing the scarf around the circle.
- Examples of this activity are: A scarf is a scarf is a belt. A scarf is a scarf is a baby, a scarf is a scarf is a telephone.
- Encourage your students to create and use their imagination.

Name Game- Emotion/Gesture

- Teacher and students will form a circle.
- Students will state their name and how they are feeling.
- When everyone in the circle has had a turn. The teacher and students will start the game over again.
- This time, the students will state their name, state how they are feeling and act out an gesture that supports their emotion.
- After the students state name, emotion and performs gesture, the rest of the class will repeat/perform the emotion and gesture.
- For example "My name is Harry and I am sleepy (Harry puts hands on his head)"

Class says altogether “sleepy!” (Class puts hands on their head).
Archetypes Exercises

Archetypes are broad reoccurring characters or themes that pop up throughout literature, film, theatre, and art. Whether we know the word archetype or not, we can generally identify these character types and themes without too much trouble.

Think about the “Superhero” archetype for example. How does a superhero walk? What does a superhero sound like? How does a superhero interact with others?

Character Archetype Bus Stop

- Break the class up into groups of four
- Give each member of the group a slip of paper with a character archetype. These can include:
  - The Movie Star
  - The Super Villain
  - The Adventurer
  - The Trickster
  - The Dreamer
  - The Judge
- Have each student think about their archetypes.
- Each group will create a scene where they enter one by one to wait for a bus.
- The groups can present their scenes for each other.

Reflection Questions:
- How did we know which archetype was which?
- Why might two groups have slightly different interpretations of an archetype?
- What kind of archetypes are we expecting to see in Aladdin? How will we know when we see them?
Setting Exercises

Setting is important to theatre because it tells us when and where the action of a play happens. The setting can also provide details about how it feels to exist in the world of the play and the everyday conditions in which the characters live.

Turn Of The Dial

- Form students into two groups and call the first group to the front of the room.
- Call out a neutral setting. These can include:
  - A line for the movies
  - A subway car
  - The lunch room
- Have students move around as if in that location.
- Freeze the group and tell them that you have a magic dial that can add and intensify certain aspects of the setting.
- Have the students resume moving around the location.
- With the use of your “magic dial,” introduce and change elements like
  - Time of day (“Let’s see this setting at 8 in the morning”; “Let’s see this setting at 11.30 at night”)
  - Amount of light (“It’s now really dim”; “I just turned the lights on full blast.”)
  - The smell (“I’m changing the dial so that your setting smells like garbage.”)
  - Temperature (“I’m turning the temperature up to 100 degrees”; “I just set the dial to negative 20 degrees.”)
  - Number of other people surrounding them (“You are now surrounded packed into your setting, there’s hardly any room to move.”; “Everyone else is gone, it’s just you.”)
  - Amount of noise (“I turned up some construction noise”; “Now the setting is full of classical music”)
- Have students react the addition and intensity of these elements, noting how it changes how they interact with each other and the space.
- You can add or change more than one element at a time.
- After 5 minutes, the first group will sit down and the second group will come up to do the exercise.

Reflection Questions:
- What are the settings of some of your favorite plays, stories, and movies?
- What do you think is the setting for Aladdin? How do you think it feels there?
- How can describing setting help us better understand plays, stories, and movies?
About the Rehearsal Process

The students at PS 161 worked incredibly hard to put on this production of Aladdin Kids. Their process was very unique, as are many creative processes in the arts. PS 161 paired up with a group of graduate students in the Educational Theatre Masters Program at City College. Together, along with a professional music director, this group of artists collaborated to create Aladdin Kids.

The process started with auditions, during which the students showcased their skills in the areas of acting, singing, dancing, and ensemble work. After a few days of auditions and ensemble building, the show was cast.

Rehearsals took place three times per week. On Tuesdays, the graduate students from City College came to PS 161. Typically, a small group of graduate students, usually around four, would lead the day’s rehearsal. Two or three scenes would be blocked in about an hour and a half. It was extremely exciting and fast-paced.

Wednesdays were reserved for music rehearsals. The cast would meet with their musical director and learn all of the songs in the show.

Thursdays operated as a day for review. The staging, choreography, character work, and music work were all put together on Thursdays.

Rehearsal took place for 11 weeks. During the final week, or tech week as it is called in the theater, costumes, props, set, and other final touches were added to the production.

It was a process that students and directors will not soon forget.
Post Show Exercises

Now that the class has seen the show, you’ll want to discuss the student’s experience of watching Aladdin Kids. Here are some fun and active ways to get your students to share their favorite characters and scenes from the play. These activities will also deepen their understanding and create personal connection to some of the themes and big ideas in Aladdin Kids.

THE ALADDIN SLIDESHOW

*Have the students get into groups of 4 or 5 and form a circle.
*Each student goes around the circle and shares one moment or scene from the play that stuck out for them.
*The students in each group work together to create a frozen image, or tableau, for each one of their favorite moments in the group.
*Each student gives a title to their own tableau.
*The groups all present their tableaus to the class as a ‘slide show’ of their trip to Aladdin.

THE MUSEUM OF AGRABA

*Divide the class into two groups.
*Everybody in the group selects one character from the play.
*Select one volunteer from each group to be the ‘museum guide’.
*Have every student with a character strike a pose that they can hold as a frozen ‘statue’ of that character.
*If two students select the same character, see if you can prompt them to make different choices as the statue if they haven’t already.
*Have the first group of students spread out throughout the classroom as their statues. The second group becomes the visitors to the museum.
*The museum guide leads the group from statue to statue, offering a brief description of each one.
*After all the statues have been visited, the second group spread throughout the room in their own statues and the first group becomes their audience.

ADDITIONAL REFLECTION: If many students are familiar with the Disney film, you can ask them to describe ways in which the play and movie were similar and different.
Three Wishes

- Have students take out a piece of paper or writing journal.
- Explain that you will be brainstorming a list of 3 wishes, just like Aladdin had in the play.
- First write the number one and next to it, write down one wish you would make for yourself.
- Now write number 2 and next to that write down one wish for someone else, a real person you know or know of.
- Finally, write the number 3 and next to that write down one wish for your community. This can be your school community, your neighborhood, your family, basically any community that you belong to.
- If necessary, lead a discussion about what ‘community’ means.
- Break class into groups.
- Share your wishes with your group.
- If time is short the activity can end here, but ideally move on to the next step.
- Assign each group to work with either wish 1, 2 or 3.
- Ask each group to choose 1 wish from the group for that particular wish number. For example if you were assigned number 3 you will chose one wish for the community from the group.
- As a group, create a frozen picture, like a painting, with your bodies showing that wish coming true.
- Share each frozen image with the entire class one at a time, if time permits, and lead a group discussion in what you see and notice.

Freedom Sculptures

- Ask students to take out a piece of paper or journal.
- On the board write the prompt, “I feel free when…”
  - Ask students to write about moments in their lives when they do or when they have felt really “free.”
  - If necessary lead a discussion of what “freedom” means.
  - Pair off students.
  - Ask each pair to decide who is A and who is B.
  - Partner A will first turn B into a statue of partner A’s personal freedom moment.
  - First ask your partner if they are comfortable with you touching them.
  - If they are, slowly and respectfully moving your partner into the right shape.
  - If they are not, slowly show them how you want them to stand as your statue using your own body as a model.
  - Pay attention to all parts of the body, hands, head, facial expression, feet, legs, hips, everything.
  - When Partner A is finished, partner B stays frozen and A’s walk around to see their classmates work.
  - Repeat with Partner B as the sculptor.
  - Ask students if they remember how the idea of Freedom played a role in Aladdin?
- How are our ideas of freedom similar to or different from Aladdin’s?
Status Activity Continued: We're all Human Beings, Rich or Poor

- Ask students to take on the character they had last in the exercise with the teaching artist from before you saw the show
- Give them a moment to walk around the classroom again as their characters if you feel comfortable with this
- Put class into pairs
- Have students discuss the following things one at a time as their character with their partner. Give students time to improvise and chat about answers to each before giving the next
  - What did you have for breakfast?
  - What is your biggest fear?
  - What makes you happier than anything else in the world?
    - What is your biggest problem in life?
- Bring students back to the full group and discuss what they learned about the differences and similarities between people of different statuses

Status Activity with Characters
From the Play: We all have Problems!

- Split class into two groups
- Tell them you’ll be taking on characters from the show you just saw
- Assign half to be Sultan’s and half to be Aladdin’s (doesn’t matter male or female)
- Either ask them to walk around the room and take on their characters silently or (if more comfortable) ask them to simply stand and pose and look around the room as their character
- Ask them to take out a piece of paper or journal
- Explain you will be writing as your new characters from the play
  - Write the number 1, and write down your biggest problem in life
    - Write the number 2, and write down what makes you the most happy in life
  - Pair students off (1 sultan and 1 Aladdin in each pair)
  - Ask them to share their answers as their characters
- Lead a group discussion about similarities and differences between the characters
Drawing a Character’s Essence:

• On the board write down the following four characters with space under or next to each to write down brainstorm words
  - Jafar
  - Aladdin
  - Jasmine
  - The Sultan
• As a class brainstorm words that describe that character. Encourage students to think outside of the norm in addition to the usual descriptive words (colors or animals might associate with that character etc)
• Ask students to choose one of these characters to work with
• Take out or hand students blank (not lined) paper
• Give students markers, crayons, colored pencils, paint etc. Any drawing materials they or you have and are comfortable with.
• Ask students to draw the essence or “soul” of that character. Not a picture of what the character actually looks like, but fill the page with colors and shapes or images that are related to the sorts of words you came up with as a class defining that character.
• After students have finished allow students to walk around the class and see their classmates work

Generosity vs. Selfishness

• Pair off class
• Ask them to chat first about what the word generosity means to them
  - When have they been generous to others or experienced generosity in their lives
• Now chat about what selfishness means
  - When have they seen selfishness in the world, when have they been selfish or been the victim of selfishness
• Have students stand up
• On the count of 3 ask them to take on the word generosity, keeping in mind everything they just chatted about, and freeze in whatever shape that word makes them think of
• On the count of 3 do the same for selfishness
• Chat about the kinds of shapes they took on for each and why
• Ask them to think and chat about how this relates to the show Aladdin you watched
Blueprint Benchmarks

Developing Theater Literacy:
Responding to Theater Performance
Students practice constructive responses to theater performance using observable evidence to support opinion.

Making Connections through theater
Connecting Theater to Personal Experience, Community, and Society Through an Exploration of Themes, Culture, and History
Students refine their personal responses to theater by comparing various interpretations of a work and the context that informs the production of that work.

Working with Community and Cultural Resources
Partnering With Theater Organizations Outside of School
Students see live theater in school and at outside venues through partnerships with theater and theater education organizations.

Working With Theater Professionals in the School
Students explore theater organizations and companies through in-school residencies aligned with the theater curriculum.

Exploring Careers and Lifelong Learning
Theater for Enjoyment and Lifelong Learning
Students reflect upon and communicate their experiences as audience members to peers, families, and professionals.

Common Core

SL.5.1
SL.5.2
SL.5.4
RL.5.2