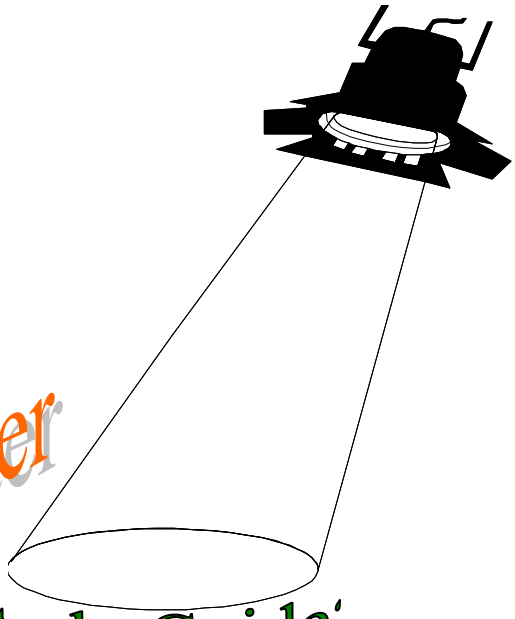
On Stage with American Family Theater



Study Guide:

Another fine teaching tool from:

American Family Theater inc.

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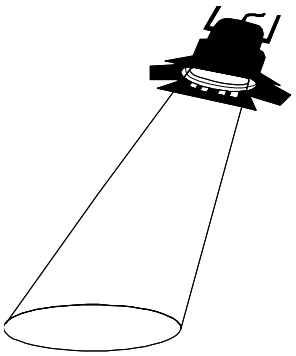
On Stage with American Family Theater
Black Journey



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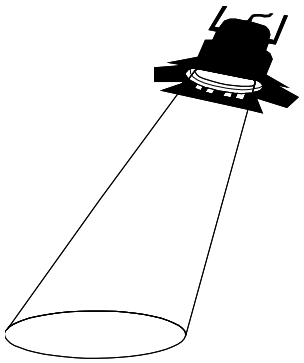


Letter from the Producer

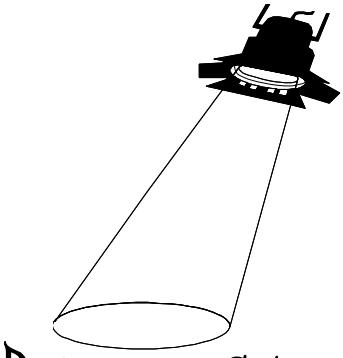
Dear Educator:

This guide contains suggested learning experiences for various grade levels. It is intended to help your students enjoy and utilize the theater-going experience. Please select those ideas that best relate to your curriculum and classroom needs.

Theater is, indeed, a superb learning tool that you and your students will share, cherish and remember. We look forward to welcoming you and your classes to the theater.

Cordially,

Laurie Wagman
Founder/Chairman



Before You Go:

ASK students to discuss their perception of the African American experience. Determine what the students already know about Black History.

- Do you know friends or family who took part in the Civil Rights protests?
- Do you know anyone who was with Martin Luther King in the Washington march?
- Have you seen the movie 'Roots'? (It's available on VHS and DVD.)
- Why was Alex Haley motivated to write his landmark book from which the film was made?

DEVELOP a 'Black Journey Resource Center' in your classroom (book list on pages 23 & 24)

- Select a book from your resource center and write a report about the issues and personalities that you found especially interesting.
- Make a timeline that traces the African American experience from the 1400's through to today. Mark key developments along the way.

EXPLAIN that BLACK JOURNEY will be performed live-on-stage.

- Can songs tell a story? Can dancing?
- What will the costumes tell us about the journey?
- How will the lights affect the mood of the show?
- Do you think this original musical, presented by Educational Theater Arts, can give new insights to the black experience for its audiences across the country?

ENCOURAGE students to use their imagination when they are at the theater.

- Do you think that a contemporary performer will be able to express the feelings of someone who lived long ago?

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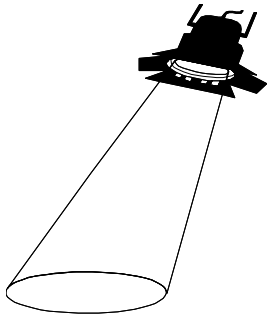


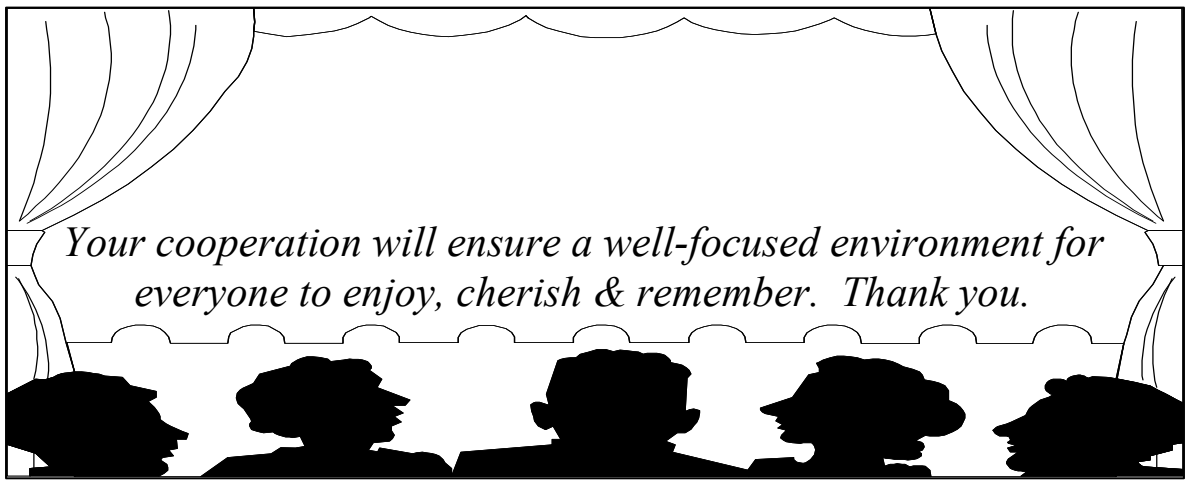
Theater Etiquette

The audience plays a key part in the overall theater experience. Each audience member affects those around him or her as well as the performers.

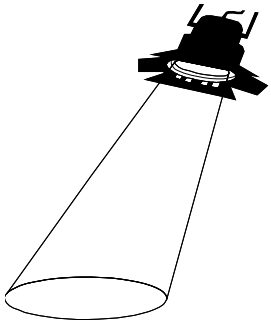
Remind your class that everyone will have an especially wonderful time at the performance by remembering their theater manners.

Here is how students can help:

- It is important to remain seated throughout the entire performance.
- Restroom visits are best made prior to seating.
- Photography and recording during the performance are not permitted.
- Give your full attention and energy to the performers. In return, the performers give it back to you with a better performance.
- Don't talk during the show unless you are asked. Sometimes we think that if we whisper, it is okay. But if everyone in the audience whispers, it can be disruptive to the performers.
- Turn watches, pagers and cell phones to silent.
- Do not interrupt performers with comments that may disrupt the performance for others.
- Show the performers your appreciation for their efforts by applauding.



On Stage with American Family Theater Black Journey



SCENIC BREAKDOWN/MUSICAL NUMBERS

SCENE 1 Present Day
"HOLD ONTO THE DREAM"

SCENE 2 1820 - Africa
"DRUM DANCE"

SCENE 3 1840 - The South
"SWING LOW, SWEET CHARIOT"

SCENE 4 1890 – Along the Road
"FREEDOM"

SCENE 5 1915 – Wilberforce University
"A NEW TRAIN TO RIDE"
"JIM CROW BLUES"

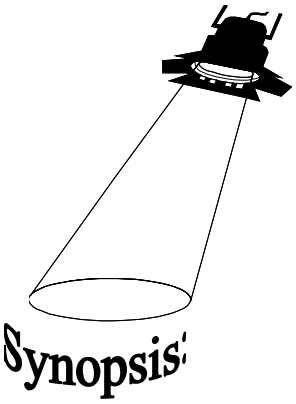
SCENE 6 1925 - Harlem
"CHARLESTON"
"I KNOW YOU"

SCENE 7 1950 - Detroit
"MOTOWN MEDLEY"

SCENE 8 1965 – The Freedom Rides
"I WANT TO OPEN MY WINDOW"

SCENE 9 Present Day
"PART OF THE AMERICAN DREAM"
"HOLD ONTO THE DREAM"

On Stage with American Family Theater Black Journey

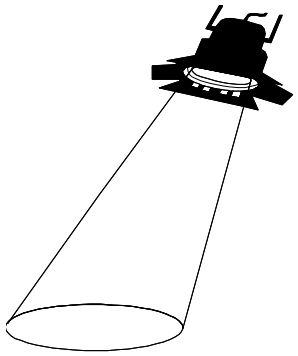


Educational Theater Arts is proud to present Black Journey, the remarkable voyage of a people from the villages of Africa to modern-day America. The production visits over 200 years of the African American heritage…a heritage that reflects courage and creativity that has flourished in spite of bigotry and prejudice; that draws strength from faith and family. The musical celebrates Black influence and contributions in every field of endeavor, from science and industry to education and literature; from the performing and visual arts to government and community service and so much more.

From the personal insights of a broad range of characters, Black Journey defines a nation in flux. Music from each era connects the years… a bold and unique tapestry of communication that defines every period.

With respect and appreciation for the people it celebrates, Black Journey begins its portrait with traditional African chants and progresses to gospel music. The voyage continues a path through jazz, blues, rag, swing, rock-n-roll, and rap… each step a powerful and ever evolving art form that will forever echo the African American experience… now and in all the futures to come.

On Stage with American Family Theater



Touchstones:

When we discuss the Black experience in America, there are events and people that are key. Students will welcome the opportunity of researching these touchstones and the issues they represent.

Slavery

- Points of origin
- The journey
- Places of entry into the Americas
- Plantation life
- Religious Foundations
- Underground Railroad
- Harriet Tubman
- Frederick Douglass

Civil War

- Abraham Lincoln
- The reasons behind the Civil War
- Opening days of the war
- The Emancipation Proclamation
- The 13th Amendment to the United States Constitution
- Civil Rights Act of 1866 and its limitations

Segregation

- The South after the Civil War
- How segregation started
- Jim Crow Laws
- Voting requirements in the south

Harlem Renaissance

- What was the Harlem Renaisanace?
- W.E.B. DuBois
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
- The birth of the Blues
- Literature and the arts

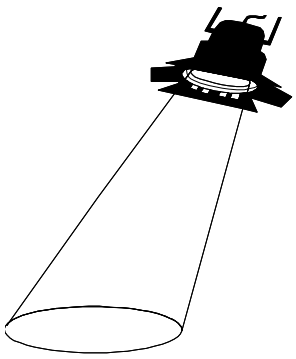
Civil Rights Movement of the 50's and 60's

- Martin Luther King Jr.
- Civil Rights Protests
- Malcolm X
- Government response: Executive, Judicial, Legislative

Through the Years: Accomplishments & Contributions

- Jesse Owens
- Maggie Lena Walker
- Matthew Henson
- Crispus Attucks
- Oprah Winfrey
- Guion Bluford
- Tiger Woods
- Douglas Wilder
- Jackie Robinson
- Ralph J. Bunche
- Colin Powell
- Thurgood Marshal
- Booker T. Washington

On Stage with American Family Theater



After The Show:

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Ask the students to express their feelings as they recall the story line of the production.

- How would you feel if you were forcibly taken from you home – separated from your family and country, and made to live in a strange land as a slave?
- How would it feel to not be able to go to school or eat or live in certain areas because of the color of your skin?
- How does your own family's entrance into America compare or differ from the experience of the African slaves?
- What is your dream for your future? Who is your role model?
- How can you fight prejudice and bigotry at your school?
- Why do you think that music seems to change with each new generation? Is new music influenced by older music; by the social & political climate? Does music reflect the era of its popularity?
- Which style of dancing in the performance did you like best? Why?

ALTERNATE TITLES

Have the students be creative and think of some other possible titles for the show.

ART

Plan and paint a mural showing the African American people and their journey from slavery to their accomplishments of today and their profound contribution to America in every field of endeavor.

On Stage with American Family Theater

LANGUAGE ARTS

❖ WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

- The show begins with the song 'Hold onto your Dreams'. Write about your dreams for the future.
- Have some students play the characters in the show, other students may conduct interview them and write articles about them.
- Abraham Lincoln said, "I don't like that man. Therefore, I must get to know him." What did he mean?
- Write a story told from the point of view of a slave escaping through the Underground Railroad.

❖ VOCABULARY:

- Use a dictionary to look up some vocabulary from the show. Be sure to use them in a sentence! *Emancipate, segregation, renaissance, ancestors, protest*

❖ LITERATURE

- Read and discuss these works by African American authors.
  - Ages 4 – 8 My Painted House, My Friendly Chicken, & Me by ***Maya Angelou***
  - Ages 4 – 8 To Hell with Dying by ***Alice Walker***
  - Ages 3 – 6 The Sweet & Sour Animal Book by ***Langston Hughes***
  - Ages 4 – 8 The Dream Keeper & Other Poems by ***Langston Hughes***
  - Ages 9 – 12 The Book of Rhythms by ***Langston Hughes***
  - Ages 11 – 18 The Block: Poems by ***Langston Hughes***
  - Ages 12 – 18 Rite of Passage by ***Richard Wright***
  - Ages 4 – 8 The Creation by ***James Weldon Johnson***
- Using the Supplemental reading list on pages 23 & 24, read about some other famous authors.

❖ WORD GAMES:

- Have the students find as many words as they can using the letters in:

B L A C K J O U R N E Y

- Unscramble these words:

DOEFMER (Freedom)	RSAYLVE (Slavery)
ISMUC (Music)	EHMALR (Harlem)

TECHNOLOGY

❖ Incorporate the interviews and articles about the show that students have created, include picture and photos and put together a newspaper. Use a word processing program. Include advertisements too!

❖ Create a website about Black History. Celebrate accomplishments, culture and courage.

MUSIC/DANCE

❖ African Americans have had a vast influence on music & dance throughout the world. Use you school library & the internet to research that influence. Find a creative way to share your information with the rest of the class. Ideas: write a report, make a collage, choreograph a dance, film a video

SOCIAL STUDIES

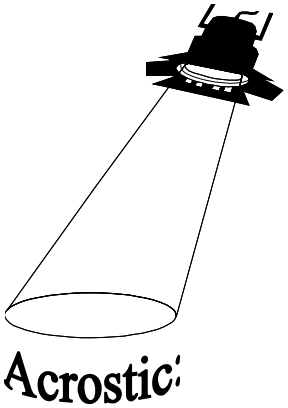
❖ America has its own unique culture. Identify those areas where African Americans have enhanced that culture.

SCIENCE

❖ African American inventors have made many contributions through the years. Here is a list of inventors & scientists. Research what they invented and tell how it has helped society today.

Norbert Rillieux	George Washington Carver	John R. Cooper
Elijah McCoy	Granville T. Woods	John Edward Hodge
Lewis Howard Latimer	Frederick McKinley Jones	Dr. Samuel L. Kountz
Jewel Plummer Cobb	Mae C. Jemison	Lloyd August Hall
Garrett Morgan	Daniel Hale Williams	George Carruthers

On Stage with American Family Theater



An acrostic is a simple poem based upon a single word. Use the words Black Journey and try to find other words or phrases, beginning with those letters, that pertain to our show.

B LUES

L _____

A _____

C _____

K _____

J _____

O _____

U _____

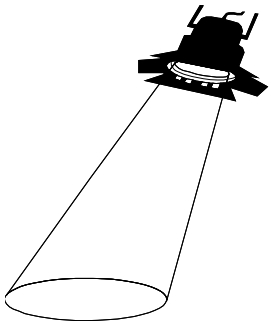
R _____

N _____

E _____

Y _____

On Stage with American Family Theater



THINK THEATRICALLY:

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION:

- Describe the sets and how they establish the scenes for different parts of the story. (What did you actually see and what did you see with your imagination?)
- How did the addition of music and dance add to the story?
- What kind of dances did you see? How were they different?
- What did the different costumes tell you about each character?
- What do you think was the funniest part of the show? The scariest? The nicest?
- Have you ever been to a live stage show before?
- What role did the audience play in the production?
- If you could be in the show, which role would you prefer?
- What other stories do you think would make a good play?

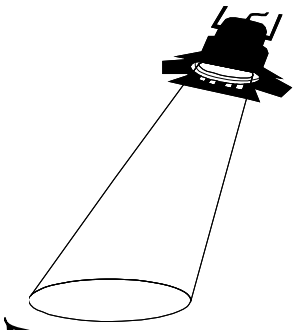
HOW ABOUT YOU:

- Do you like to act? Sing? Dance?
- Have you ever been on stage?
- What did you do on stage?
- Share your experience with your class.
- Would you like to be in a show?

CREATE YOUR OWN MUSICAL:

Write your own story or choose a favorite storybook and make a musical out of it. Start by writing a script, music & lyrics. Decide who will play each part, who will sing and who will dance. Choreograph the song(s). Have the students not playing parts design sets and costumes and make them. Give everyone a job that best suits their capabilities! Perform your play for another class or grade.

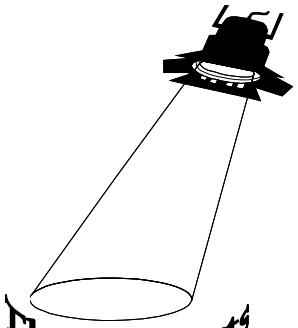
On Stage with Amercian Family Theater



Fan Letter:

Write a letter to your favorite actor in the show. Express how you feel about the character in the show.

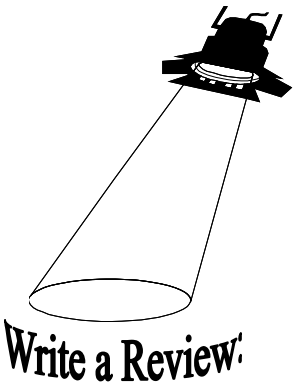
On Stage with American Family Theater



Here is a list of words about the theater for you to get to know!

Actor	A theatrical performer.
Applause	Approval expressed by the clapping of hands.
Back-Stage	The area behind and to the side of the part of the stage where the action of the performance takes place.
Choreographer	The person who develops and arranges the dance movements for the dancers and actors.
Composer	A person who writes music.
Costume	A style of clothes, including garments, accessories and hair style, characteristic of a particular country, period or cultural, worn on-stage during a theatrical production.
Crew	The group of people who run the various technical operations during a performance, including the lighting, curtain, set, scene changes, sound effects and props.
Designers	Individuals who create the set, costumes, lighting and sound effects for the performance.
Director	The person who supervises all the artists during rehearsals and instructs all dramatic aspects of the production.
Lyricist	The person who writes the words for a song.
Musical Theater	A play that uses music, song and dance to tell the story.
Play	A staged representation of an action or story.
Playwright	The person who writes plays.
Props	All the objects used in a theatrical production.
Score	The sheet music that the actor memorizes and performs.
Script	Pages from which the actors read their lines.
Stage Manager	The person who assists the director during rehearsal and supervises the physical aspects of a stage production.

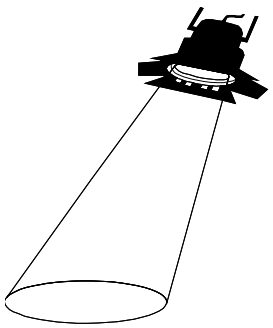
On Stage with American Family Theater



Compose Your Own Review. Use the words below for some ideas.

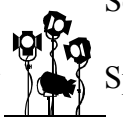
Actors	Choreography	Makeup	Props	Singing
Cast	Costumes	Music	Set	Special Effects
Characters	Lighting	Plot	Set Designer	Theater

On Stage with American Family Theater



Careers in the Arts:

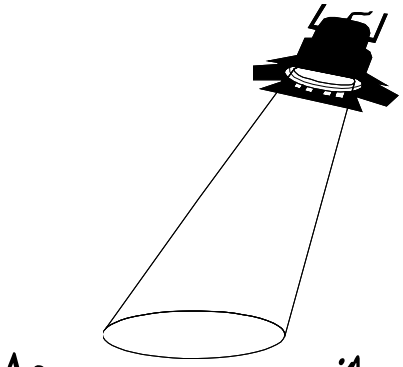
Accompanist	Computer Graphics	Illustrator	Props Designer
Actor/Actress	Composer	Instrumentalist	Publisher
Artist	Concert Singer	Librettist	Scenic Designer
Artistic Director	Conductor	Lighting Designer	Special Effects
Art Teacher	Costume Designer	Makeup Artist	Stage Director
Band Director	Critic	Music Teacher	Stage Hand
Casting Director	Dancer	Musician	Stage Manager
Choir Director	Dialect Coach	Orchestrator	Theater Director
Choreographer	Extra	Painter	Camera Operator
Cinematographer	Fashion Designer	Producer	Vocalist



Active Learning

What career would you consider interesting?
Where do you think you could go to learn more about it?

On Stage with American Family Theater



African Americans in the Performing Arts:

Alvin Ailey was the founding director of the internationally renowned, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

Marian Anderson was the first African American singer to perform at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City.

Louis Armstrong was a jazz musician and singer whose masterpieces helped shape American jazz.

Pearl Bailey is an entertainer who has not only received awards for her performances but for her work as a humanitarian as well.

Josephine Baker was a popular dancer, singer and actress.

Chuck Berry is one of the most influential figures in the development of rock and roll music.

Halle Berry became the first African American women to receive an Academy Award for Best Actress.

James Hubert "Eubie" Blake was a renowned jazz pianist and composer.

Nat "King" Cole, popular singer of the 50's & 60's, was also one of the most stylistically advanced jazz pianist of the 40's.

Prima ballerina **Janet Collins** was the first Black artist to perform on the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House.

The first African American to star in a television series was **Bill Cosby**. He has received many awards including the Kennedy Center Honors.

Dorothy Dandridge was the first African American to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actress.

Katherine Dunham was a performer and choreographer who did ground breaking work in all aspects of dance, theater, music and education.

Duke Ellington is considered the greatest composer in the history of jazz music and one of the greatest musicians of the 20th century.

Aretha Franklin is a singer who has won many awards and honors including a Grammy Legends Award, a Kennedy Center Honors Award for lifetime achievement in the performing arts and a Grammy Lifetime Achivement Award.

Savion Glover made his Broadway debut at the age of 12 and went on to become one of the youngest men to be nominated for a Tony Award.

Tony Award winning, actor/singer/dancer **Gregory Hines** has been seen not only on the stage but on TV and the movies too!

Billie Holiday was one of the greatest jazz-blues singers of all time.

The current artistic director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater is **Judith Jamison**.

Quincy Jones is an award-winning composer, arranger, musician and producer with his own record label.

One of the developers of ragtime music was American composer and pianist **Scott Joplin**.

A winner of a student Academy Award, **Spike Lee** has become one of the most prominent American filmmakers with his own production company.

Bobby McFerrin is not only a ten-time Grammy Award winner but, a world-renowned classical conductor.

Oscar Micheaux was the first African American to direct a full-length motion picture.

Dancer/choreographer, **Arthur Mitchell**, is the director of the Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Sydney Poitier was the first African American to be nominated for an Academy Award for Best Actor in 1958. He would go on to win an Oscar for Best Actor in 1963.

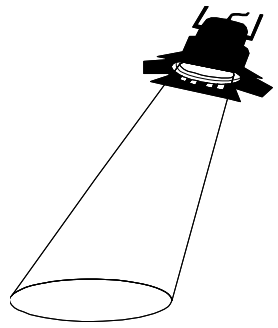
Leontyne Price was an operatic soprano who trained at the Julliard School and performed with the San Francisco Opera Company, the Vienna State Opera and the Metropolitan Opera Company.

Bill "Bojangles" Robinson was a tap dancer and one of the first black entertainers to achieve popularity with members of different races in the United States.

Fats Waller was a pianist and composer of many jazz classics.

Singer – songwriter **Stevie Wonder** had his first success at the age of 13 and has since won many awards including a Grammy Lifetime Achievement award.

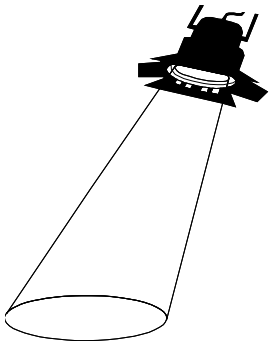
On Stage
with
American Family Theater



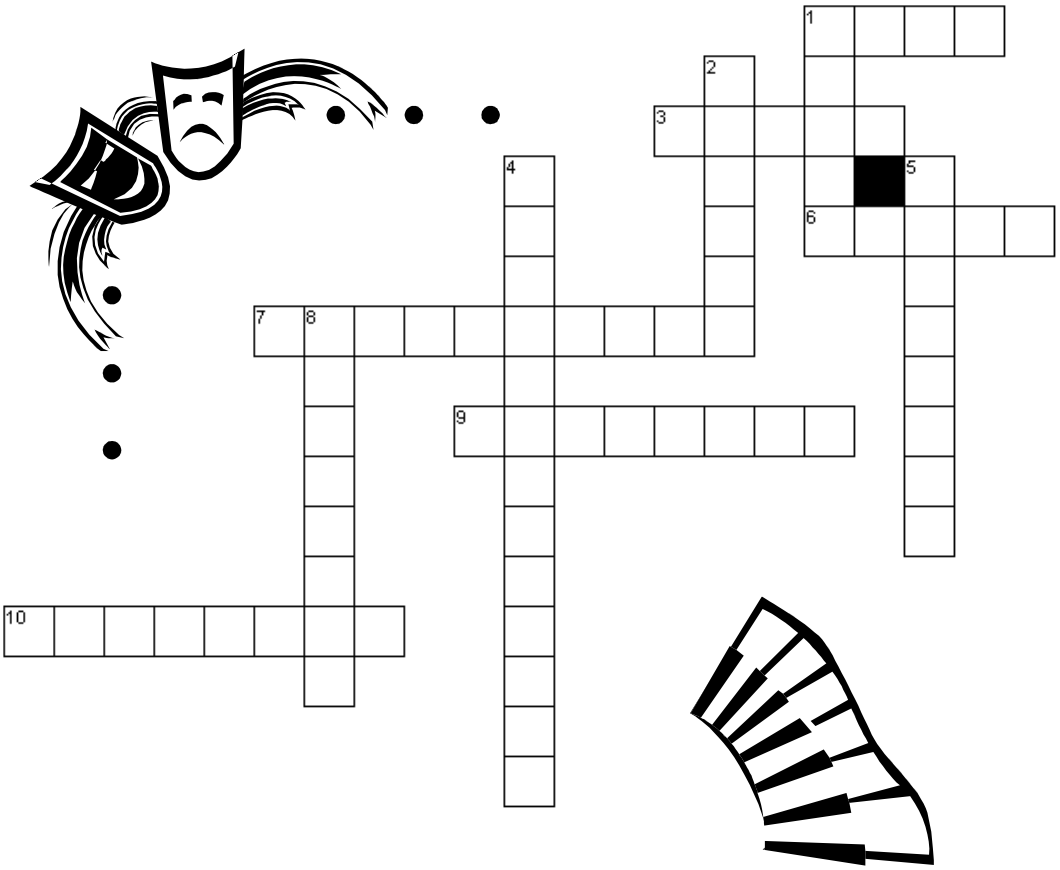
Be Creative:

Make a picture of your favorite scene in the performance. Be sure to show costumes, the set and the actors you like best.

On Stage with American Family Theater



Crossword



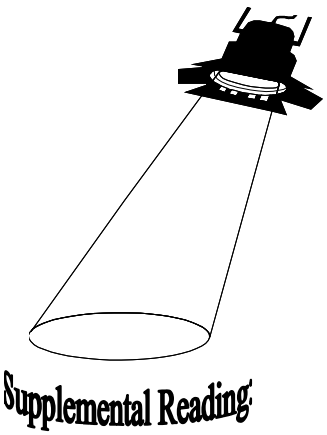
Across

1. **a staged representation of a story**
3. **a theatrical performer**
6. **sheet music the actor memorizes & performs**
7. **person who writes plays**
9. **clothes worn on stage in a performance**
10. **approval expressed by clapping of hands**

Down

1. **objects used in a theatrical production**
2. **pages from which actors read their lines**
4. **person who develops dances**
5. **person who writes music**

On Stage
with
American Family Theater
Black Journey



This is a list of suggested reading material:

Biographies about African American authors:

Maya Angelou (Journey to Freedom) – Ages 9 -12
by Judith E. Harper

Maya Angelou: More Than a Poet – Ages 11 - 15
by Elaine Slivinski Lisandrelli

James Baldwin (Importance of Series) – Ages 11 - 15
by James Tackach

James Baldwin: Voice from Harlem – Ages 12 - 18
by Ted Gottfried

Paul Laurence Dunbar (Black Americans of Achievement) – Ages 9 - 12
by Tony Gentry

Alice Walker: Freedom Writer – Ages 9 - 12
by Caroline Evensen Lazo

Alice Walker: Author of the Color Purple (People to Know) – Ages 11 & up
by Barbara Kramer

Alex Haley (Black Americans of Achievement) – Ages 9 - 12
by David Shirley

Revolutionary Poet: A Story About Phillis Wheatley – Ages 8 - 12
by Maryann N. Weidt

Hang a Thousand Trees With Ribbons: The Story of Phillis Wheatley – Ages 12 - 18
by Ann Rinaldi

Zora Hurston & the Chinaberry Tree – Ages 4 – 8
b*y William Miller*

Jump at De Sun: The Story of Zora Neale Hurston – Ages 9 – 12
by A.P. Porter & Lucy Ann Hurston

Zora Neale Hurston: Southern Storyteller – Ages 12 – 18
by Della A. Yannuzzi

Other book recommendations:

Black Stars: African American Women Scientists and Inventors – Ages 9 – 12
by Otha Richard Sullivan

Black Cowboy, Wild Horses: A True Story – Ages 4 – 8
by Julius Lester

The Black Soldier: 1492 to the Present – Ages 10 – 13
by Catherine Clinton

Black Cowboy: The Life and Legend of George McJunkin (The Forgotten Pioneers) Ages 9 – 12
by Franklin Folsom

Black Heroes of the American Revolution – Ages 9 – 12
by Burke Davis

From Slave Ship to Freedom Road – Ages 9 – 15
by Julius Lester

The History of the Black Church (African American Achievers) – Ages 10 – 13
by Norma Jean Lutz

Black, Blue & Gray: African Americans in the Civil War – Ages 9 – 13
by Jim Haskins

Black Women of the Old West – Ages 9 – 14
by William Loren Katz

Freedom Like Sunlight: Praisesongs for Black Americans – Ages 9 – 18
by J. Patrick Lewis

Negro Leagues: All-Black Baseball – Ages 4 – 8
by Laura Driscoll

Black Stars of the Harlem Renaissance – Ages 9 - 12
by Jim Haskins

Till Victory is Won: Black Soldiers in the Civil War – Ages 11 – 14
by Zak Mettger