



THEATRE

ACTING SCHOOL





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THEATRE
ACTING SCHOOL

Introduction to the world of theater

Welcome!

Did you know that not everyone has a theater at home? In the past, only the nobles or rich people had them in their palaces or castles. How lucky to have one of your own! Have fun “pretending to be” someone and your friends can “pretend to be” someone else! Invite all your family members to come too, because it is important to have actors in a play, but you also need an audience.

The actors perform and play a role in your theatrical performance.

Spectators participate by watching the play and applauding.



Let's discover our little theater

- **1 3D structure** and **1 stage** on which you can act with friends and family.
- **3 double-sided backgrounds** for the fable setting.



- **8 transforming double-sided lateral stage wings** to stimulate imagination while "pretending to be in a..."



- **12 double-sided characters** that you will get to know on the next page
- **6 scripts** with fables ready to be enacted.

Then all you need to do is to set up a suitable **space** for your spectators.

In our theater there are twelve characters. They are all animals and will act with us in six entertaining fables.



• **Two mice**
One from the countryside
and one from the city.



• **Mosquito**
Fast and funny.



• **Lion**
Strong and brave.



• **Hare**
Arrogant.



• **Turtle**
Friendly and kind.



• **Wolf**
Scary, with big teeth.



• **Crane**
Elegant, with a long beak.



• **Fox**
Smart, with tawny fur.



• **Stork**
With an elegant gait.



• **Frog**
Croaking and hopping.



• **Ox**
Big and beautiful.



The characters are printed on both sides and have two different expressions. The supporting stands have two lengths and can be used as you like during the performance.

Assembly

1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



Useful tips

1- It is helpful to print out the scripts and to photocopy the six fables in as many copies as the number of performing actors or in accordance with the number of characters involved in each fable. Children who don't know how to read yet can be assisted by an adult who will read the script for them and help them act.

2- During the play, you can decide to move or change the background and lateral wings according to the story. You can also vary the characters by using their different expressions.



Some fun activities

To become an actor you have to practice a lot. However, since the purpose of this theater is to have fun, here are some exciting and useful exercises



First exercise, called the Zzebra!

Let's warm up our vocal cords and train them! Let's imitate the sound of a mosquito, then say «ZZZZZ!» for a long breath, keeping the same spontaneous note you started with. We can practice even more by emitting the «ZZZZ!» on a higher note.

Second exercise, called the Ssssake!

Pronounce the "SSS" or the "Sh" like when a teacher wants you to hush up! Do it repeatedly, placing a hand on your tummy just like real actors do.

Performing arts professions

Not only actors work in a theater! In fact, there are many other professions involved.

Scenographers

They create the scenography, together with the decorative elements on the performing area (the stage and wings). They take care of the scene, wing and background changes.

Screenwriters

They write the scripts with the dialogues for the various characters.

Costume designers

They choose the stage costumes.

Make-up artists

They support costume designers in the creation of the best make-up for each character.

Stage technicians

They are responsible for the actual preparation, setting up and scene changes. In our theater, scenographers and stage technicians can help each other.

What is dramatization?

The dramatization is based on one's imagination skills.

It is an **imitative game** that works through roleplaying, the imitation of different physical aspects and the various habits of others (animals, objects or people).

It is also a **mime game** and can be enriched by each actor through using gestures, sounds and words (funny or exaggerated).

It is also a **form of language**, a skill typical in children, in addition to being a delightful **form of communication**, which helps develop deeper relationships among all the actors, as well as among the spectators.

Fables and their authors

Shall we fable-theatre?

That is... shall we tell fables by dramatizing them?

Now that we know everything about our theater, let's put ourselves to the test with fables! Fables are almost as old as mankind. There are very ancient ones, some even date back to the time of the Egyptian pharaohs. Our heritage also boasts ancient fables from the Romans and the Greeks.

Aesop and **Phaedrus** are two of the most famous fable writers in history.



The **fable** is a different narrative genre from a **fairytale**. The first is short, playful and has animals as characters; the latter is not set in a precise time and place and uses human characters.

The former, **Aesop**, was the inventor of fables. He is so legendary that some people even doubt that he ever existed! He was born in Greece around the seventh or sixth century B.C.E.

Phaedrus, on the other hand, was born around 20 B.C.E. and lived in Rome. He was the author of the most important and appreciated collection of fables in Latin literature.

And now it's your turn!

Let's read, choose, share, rehearse, and dramatize!

Start by reading the following six fables with attention and a spirit of imitation.

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

by Aesop

Actors: two mice

Difficulty: ●●●

Key: ● Narrating voice



Wings



Backgrounds



Wings

Wings



Backgrounds



Wings

Once upon a time there was a well-mannered mouse who lived in the city. One day, he went to the country to visit his cousin, who had coarse manners.

TOWN MOUSE (Enters stage)

COUNTRY MOUSE - Good morning, my cousin!

Welcome! Today, I have lard and beans, and bread and cheese. That's all I have to offer you, but I am happy to share it with you!

TOWN MOUSE - I cannot understand, dear cousin, how can you get by on such poor food?

I guess you can't expect anything better from this country life!

COUNTRY MOUSE (a little ashamed)

- Well, yes...

TOWN MOUSE- Come with me! I'll show you how I live in the city.

In a week, you will marvel at the thought of having endured country life!

The two set off. Late at night, they arrive at the town mouse's house.

TOWN MOUSE (elegantly)

- After such a long journey, you must be hungry... Would you like some dinner?

COUNTRY MOUSE - With pleasure! My belly is as empty as an abandoned barn!

So the city mouse takes his cousin to the large dining room in which there are the leftovers of a sumptuous banquet. They immediately start devouring everything that looks delicious. They are however interrupted by some ferocious barking.

COUNTRY MOUSE – What’s that noise?

TOWN MOUSE Oh, relax! Those are just the house dogs!

COUNTRY MOUSE - Just? Dogs? I do not like this kind of... uh, music, during meals!

As if the barking wasn’t enough, the doors start to slam... The window panes start to rattle...

The chandeliers creak...



And two huge mastiffs enter the room running and barking as loudly as they can. The two mice barely have time to jump off the table, and run out into the street. Safe at last!

COUNTRY MOUSE Goodbye, my cousin!

TOWN MOUSE - But why! Are you leaving already?! So soon?

COUNTRY MOUSE - Yes! It is better, SO much better, to peacefully eat lard and beans than to eat sweets and jams in anguish. (The country mouse exits the stage and the city mouse is speechless)



THE LION AND THE MOSQUITO

by Aesop

Actors: a lion and a mosquito

Difficulty: ●

Key: ● Narrating voice



Wings



Backgrounds



Wings



Once upon a time there was a strong, ferocious lion, king of the Forest. Nobody dared to approach him, since, with only one gold-colored look, he was capable of scaring anyone to death. Can you imagine what happened when he roared? Roahrrr! Roahrr! One day, while the lion was resting in the shade of a great tree, a mosquito approached him, buzzing loudly. It flew around the lion's head three times, and then...

MOSQUITO (defiantly) - I'm not afraid of you!

And you are not stronger than me!

LION (laughing and roaring) - What are you talking about?! I am so much stronger than you! If only I wanted to, I would sweep you away with just one thought!

MOSQUITO - Really? What kind of strength do you possess anyway? You bite with your teeth and scratch with your nails... I am truly so much stronger than you!

LION – Is that so? Well, if you have so much courage, then fight with me!

And the lion burst into a loud laugh.

MOSQUITO - Yes, of course, let's fight!

(the fight begins)

Impetuously, the mosquito pounced on the lion's nose and stung him badly in various places.

The lion's nose now looked like a colander. The lion defended himself by scratching with all the strength he had, managing to wound and cut himself.

What torture for the poor lion! Ouch!!

LION - Damned mosquito... Such an insignificant creature! You managed to beat me! I cannot believe it...

The mosquito triumphantly flew away. Every time that the mosquito met someone, it bragged about its deed.

MOSQUITO - I have defeated the King of the forest!

Hurray! I am stronger than him!

But while flying and bragging, the mosquito didn't notice a spider- web stretched between two branches and got trapped in it. The mosquito burst into tears, aware of the danger. But the lion, surprisingly, with one of his paws, destroyed the web and freed the mosquito. LION - I saved you, little friend, but remember... There will always be someone stronger than you! You taught me that!



THE TORTOISE AND THE HARE

by Aesop

Actors: a hare and a tortoise

Secondary actors: a fox and a wolf

Difficulty: ●●

Key: ● Narrating voice



Wings



Backgrounds



Wings



Once upon a time, in a shady forest, a group of animals was having a conversation.

HARE (insolently) - I am the fastest animal in the world, as you all well know! I will beat whoever has the courage to challenge me.

HARE (Turning to the tortoise) Look at you! You are so slow that anyone could beat you!

TURTLE - I might be as slow as you say, but for sure I am able to get to the edge of the meadow.

HARE Very well then! You and I will race! That reed there will be our starting point!

At the sound of “READY, STEADY, GO!” the hare started running as fast as a bullet.

(The hare starts running)

In only four jumps, the hare was already halfway there, it turned around and couldn't even see the tortoise's shadow. The hare was so certain of winning, that it decided to take a nap under the shade of a tree.

(The hare falls asleep)

Meanwhile the tortoise proceeded slowly, enjoying the sun and the beautiful day.

TORTOISE (murmuring) – slow and steady wins the race...



Among the thick and dense trees, the other animals could be heard whistling and murmuring, betting on the hare which, in the meantime, was sleeping like a log and snoring like an ogre.

(The wolf and the fox whistle and murmur as the tortoise overtakes the hare and moves towards the finish line)

Perhaps, it might be for this reason that the hare did not see the tortoise moving forward. The hare kept on snoring even when the tortoise crossed the finish line and started resting. The hare finally woke up at the sound of astonished applauses celebrating the winner.



THE WOLF AND THE CRANE

by Phaedrus

Actors: a wolf and a crane

Difficulty: ●●

Key: ● Narrating voice



Wings



Backgrounds



Wings

Once upon a time there was a wolf in the mountains, known for its ferocity and great appetite.

When the wolf was hungry, really hungry, there was no animal that could escape its fangs. One day, a little sharp lamb bone got stuck in its throat ...

WOLF (howling): - Ouch!

Try and try again, no matter how hard the wolf tried, the bone didn't budge. Moreover, that bone made eating impossible!

Since the wolf was very smart, it decided to look for a certain crane that was famous for its ability to heal any illness. So the wolf set off.

WOLF (once arrived at the right house, with a sweet voice, so as not to scare the crane)

- Madam Crane, good morning! I know you are better than a doctor! Only you can help me ...

CRANE - Come in!

(The wolf enters)

CRANE - What has happened to you, my friend? You are upset and your breathing is a little labored... What can I do for you?

WOLF - While I was eating, a bone got stuck in my throat. If you take it out, I promise to give you a reward.

The crane couldn't believe its luck... it could now brag of having healed the wolf of the mountains for the rest of its life.

CRANE - I'll operate on you, my Wolf friend!

(The crane makes the wolf lie down on the grass and asks it to open its jaws wide. With no further ado, the crane slips its beak into the wolf's mouth and removes the bone).

WOLF (howling first in pain and then for joy)

- Ooohhhh! Oohhh! Now I'm fine!

I knew you would be able to heal me.

CRANE - What will my reward be?

WOLF – What!? You dare ask me for another reward?

Wasn't it enough for you to stick your beak into my throat without me cutting it off?

The crane stares at the wolf as it gets scarier and more menacing by the second... Better not to insist.

The crane had been a fool.

(The crane remains frozen in front of the wolf)



THE FOX AND THE STORK

by Phaedrus

Actors: a fox and a stork

Difficulty: ●●

Key: ● Narrating voice



Wings

Backgrounds

Wings



Once upon a time there was a fox who, in a very friendly manner, invited a stork to lunch.

STORK (happy for the invitation) - Good day, Madam Fox! She was very hungry and the pantry at home was empty.

FOX (inviting the stork to come in and sit down at the table) - Welcome, my friend! Take a seat and eat! Unfortunately, the fox had put some good broth into a very wide and shallow plate...

(While the fox stuffed itself, the stork tries and tries to eat, over and over again, but to no avail, since its beak is not suitable for broth and for that kind of dish)
After a while, the stork goes home feeling even hungrier, and also sorry.

After a few days, it was the stork's turn to invite the fox over to her house.

STORK (welcoming the fox) – Good day, Madam Fox!

FOX - Thank you my friend!

STORK - Have a seat and eat!



The stork serves a delicious shredded meal, placed inside a tall and narrow vase.

(While the stork eats away, the fox tries and tries, over and over again, to eat but to no avail, because its mouth is not suitable for that dish)

STORK (the fox, hungry and depressed, continues to lick the neck of the vase in vain)

- You gave me the example!

STORK (eating greedily) Now bear the consequences!



THE FROG AND THE OX

by Phaedrus

Actors: a frog and an ox

Secondary actors: froglets in the lateral wings

Difficulty: ●

Key: ● Narrating voice



Wings



Backgrounds



Wings



Once upon a time there was a frog in a meadow, with her little ones. The frog saw a large ox. It was brown, shiny and beautiful!

FROG (admiring the ox) Goodness gracious!

FROG (even more ecstatic): - Wow and wow!

Envious of that enormous animal, the frog who was little and green, started puffing its wrinkled skin, trying to become bigger than she was. She puffed and puffed and puffed and puffed!

FROG (turning to its froglets) Did I get bigger than the ox, my little ones?

FROGLETS - No, sorry, mommy!

Immediately afterwards, focusing on the task, the frog continued to puff, with more force. She **puffed** and **puffed** and **puffed**!

FROG - And now? Am I bigger than the ox, my little ones?

FROGLETS - No, sorry, mommy!

She tried again, stubborn and obstinate.

FROG - And now? Am I bigger, my little ones?

FROGLETS - No, sorry, mommy!

In response, she started puffing again.

FROG - So who is the biggest?

FROGLETS - The ox!

The frog kept asking, puffing beyond imagination.

Then, indignant, wanting to grow more and more,

She **puffed** and **puffed** and **puffed**...

(The frog explodes)

The frog ended up bursting and... alas, dying!



Imagine the scene!

At this point, we have become good actors...
Now let's unleash our creativity!

Some tips

Let's choose the actors and assign roles to family and friends.

Then, let's set up the background and the wings. It is easier to start with those provided, but if there is a set designer or a budding stage technician in your group, they will be able to create new ones which are even more original and just as beautiful!

To get inspired, you can leaf through some good storybooks and find many more good ideas!

This will help you avoid random choices!

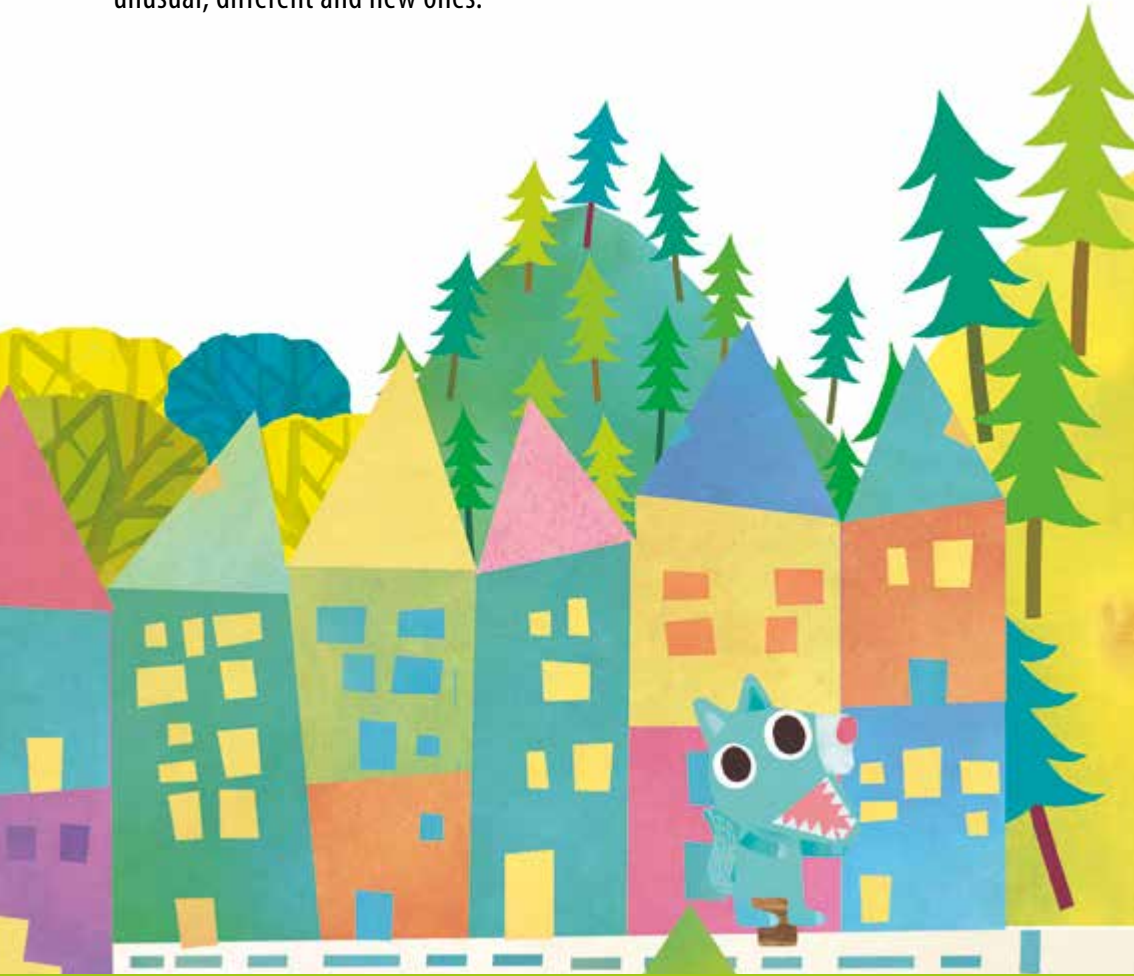
It is true that theater is improvisation but it is also technique and rigor.

Finally - most importantly - once you have become familiar with every aspect of theater and dramatization, put yourself to the test.



How?

- **Create new and compelling stories** by inventing various **scripts** (i.e, scripts with **dialogues and narrating voice**). You can get inspiration from the six scripts provided.
- **Devise different endings**, there doesn't always have to be a happy ending...
- **Use the twelve characters provided**, mix them, or invent others, possibly unusual, different and new ones.





WARNING:

**CHOKING HAZARD-Small parts.
Not for children under 3 yrs**

Conforms to the requirements of ASTM Standard Consumer Safety Specification on Toy Safety, F963



Multiple Intelligences Games

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