



NEW VICTORY[®]

SCHOOL TOOL[®]

RESOURCE GUIDE



inspired by...

AANIKA'S ELEPHANTS



NEW VICTORY
THEATER

powered by
NEW
42

NEW VICTORY® EDUCATION

209 W 42nd Street, New York, NY 10036 • Education_Tickets@NewVictory.org | 646.223.3090



Bringing kids to the arts and the arts to kids since 1995, New Victory opens new worlds to young people and families through extraordinary performances, education and engagement programs both online and in its historic Times Square theater.

Powered by New 42, a cultural nonprofit dedicated to empowering artists, educators and families through the performing arts, New Victory served 138 schools and 20,000 NYC kids through performances, classroom workshops, teacher professional development and resources in the 2022-23 school year.

Featuring artistic disciplines and traditions from a multitude of cultures, New Victory has become a standard-bearer of quality performing arts for young audiences in the United States with theatrical stories and experiences that spark the imagination and broaden our understanding of the world and our place in it.

NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides

Filled with practical, engaging and ready-to-implement activities that allow any teacher to incorporate performing arts into their curricula, NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides are designed to enrich students' arts skills and creative expression.

Jobs for Young People

Discover the NEW 42 Youth Corps, a youth development program that pairs life skills training with jobs in the arts for high school and college students. Designed to meet students where they are, New 42 Youth Corps provides flexible paid employment through a mix of on the job experience as well as personal, academic and professional development through a series of workshops, speakers and networking opportunities.



Under the leadership of President & CEO Russell Granet, New 42 is a leading performing arts nonprofit whose mission is to make extraordinary performing arts a vital part of everyone's life from the earliest years onward.

Through our signature projects, New Victory and New 42 Studios, we serve young people, artists and educators with invaluable arts engagement and resources in and beyond the performing arts.



Support for New Victory Education has been provided by:

Con Edison, Muna & Basem Hishmeh Foundation, Kennedy Center VSA, The Pierre and Tana Matisse, Foundation, New York City Council, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City Department of Education, New York Community Trust, New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, Adolph and Ruth Schnurmacher Foundation, Inc.



Council on the Arts

NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides are made possible by a generous gift in memory of Fr. John R. Scarangelo, OFM whose lifelong passion for the theater was a powerful influence on all who were fortunate to know and love him.

NEW VICTORY® THEATER

NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides

A New 42® Project



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The content in this NEW VICTORY®
SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guide
aligns with:

NEXT GENERATION LEARNING STANDARDS

Reading: 1; 2; 3

Writing: 2; 3

Speaking and Listening: 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6

Language: 1; 2; 3

NEW YORK STATE LEARNING STANDARDS FOR THE ARTS

Creating, Performing,
Responding, Connecting

BLUEPRINT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING IN THE ARTS

Theater: Theater Making,
Developing Theater Literacy,
Making Connections

Visual Arts: Art Making,
Developing Art Literacy,
Making Connections



inspired by...

AANIKA'S ELEPHANTS

Feisty Elephant, Little Shadow Productions and Pam Arciero Productions
from Connecticut and New York

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Learn and Engage



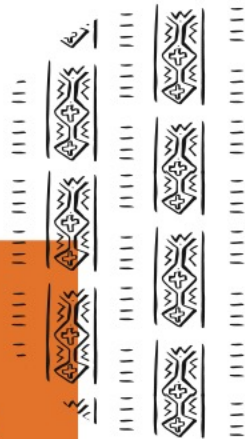
This section is an introduction to the artists, company, art forms and themes of this production. It also contains unit plan brainstorms, inspired by the production, that provide opportunities to begin thinking about the cultural, thematic and artistic elements of the show.



THE SHOW, THE ART FORMS AND INFO TO KNOW

What's the Show About?

Adventure into the African savanna with Aanika, a Kenyan girl who befriends a baby elephant she names Little. Their bond of sisterhood shows that a family can be anything—an animal orphanage, a widowed father and daughter or a herd of hunted elephants. With music, a variety of puppets and gentle humor, the stirring story of *Aanika's Elephants* by Annie Evans, an Emmy Award-winning writer, entertains and educates on the present-day plight of Africa's elephants.



Puppetry

When an object is animated and manipulated by a performer, giving the illusion of independent movement, this is known as puppetry! Examples of puppetry include *The Muppets*, *Sesame Street*, the Broadway production of *The Lion King* and, most recently, Little Amal, the 11.5-foot tall partly-animatronic giant puppet which was used as the focal point of performance art project *The Walk* in 2021. There are many kinds of puppets such as marionettes, hand puppets, rod puppets and shadow puppets. *Aanika's Elephants* uses an amalgam of puppetry styles pulled from cultures around the world, in particular highlighting large masks, direct manipulation, rod puppetry and glove puppetry.

Theater

Theater is an art form that employs live performers to present a story, real or imagined, in front of a live audience, typically on a stage. This theatrical experience may be performed using any combination of speech, gesture, movement or music. Visual arts, such as projections, set and painted scenery, as well as sound and lighting design, are used to breathe dramatic life into the storytelling experience. The term *theater* is derived from the Ancient Greek word *theatron*. In English, that word translates as “a place for viewing.”

What do your students already know?

Ask your students questions to find out how much they already know about the art forms and themes of the show. Some questions to start with are:

What does the word “family” mean to you? What makes a family?

What is something you want to protect?

How can we contribute to causes that we care about?

Storytelling

Storytelling is a social activity that can sometimes include improvisation, theatrics and, at times, a bit of exaggeration. *Aanika's Elephants* has all the recognizable parts of a story: characters, setting and plot! In this play, all of these elements work together to build a world and tell a special message. People have been passing down stories like these since the beginning of time to keep tradition, evoke emotions and encourage learning. Most importantly, storytelling takes the audience on a journey and invites them into someone else's shoes.



Photo: Zach Hyman

CONTEXT TO CONSIDER

Aanika's Elephants is a collaboration between Feisty Elephant Productions, Little Shadow Productions and Pam Arciero Productions.

Feisty Elephant Productions

Feisty Elephant is the production company started by Annie Evans. Her plays have been produced around the world, and she has written for many children's TV programs, most notably *Sesame Street*, for which she has received 13 Emmy Awards. She wrote on the U.S. version of the show for 22 years, story-edited other versions in Bangladesh, India and Indonesia, and led writing workshops in Mexico, Northern Ireland and South Africa.

Little Shadow Productions

From their original play *Zwerge* to the short film *Adventures of Liverwurst Girl*, puppets large and small are in Little Shadow Productions' DNA. Helmed by producer Jean Marie Keevins, Little Shadow aims to shine a light on meaningful stories and the people who tell them.

Pam Arciero Productions

When she's not wearing the director's hat for *Aanika's Elephants*, Pam Arceiro is also co-producing the show! Pam serves as the Artistic Director of the National Puppetry Conference at the O'Neill Theater Center and has been a principal puppeteer on *Sesame Street* for more than 30 years, performing numerous characters, most notably the trash- and Oscar the Grouch-loving Grundgetta Grouch.

Finding Sanctuary

Illegal poaching in Africa kills over 20,000 elephants per year due to demand for their ivory tusks. This poaching, along with man-made wells, drought and general human disruption, leaves many elephant calves abandoned and without family. Sanctuaries serve to rescue, rehabilitate and, ultimately, release these orphaned elephants back into the wild to help maintain the survival of this endangered population. These sanctuaries not only provide food, water and space to help young animals, but also promote community awareness, provide veterinary care and advocate for animal rights. There are many elephant sanctuaries throughout the world, namely throughout Africa and Southeast Asia, but there are even two in the United States! *Aanika's Elephants* was inspired by elephant sanctuaries in Kenya when the playwright studied the animal in Tsavo East and Tsavo West National Park.

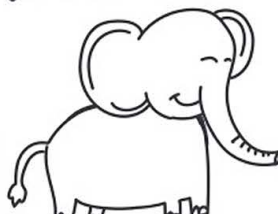
The African Savanna elephant is the largest land mammal in the world. Adult bulls weigh about 13,000 pounds on average!

Elephants can feed for 16 hours a day. They need to eat about 300 pounds of food a day, but they can eat up to 600 if they're hungry!

ELEPHANT-ASTIC FACTS!

Elephants are one of the only mammals that cannot jump. Their legs are not big enough to propel their bodies upward.

Elephants have about 150,000 muscle units in their trunk. They can use their trunk like a snorkel when they swim, which means they can breathe while submerged in water!



Aanika's Elephants: A Synopsis

Aanika's Elephants tells the story of a young East African girl named Aanika as she redefines the word *family* and stands up for what she believes in.

The play opens on Aanika and her father, whom she calls Papa, at an elephant orphanage where her father works with the kind Ms. Mutembi. Aanika frequently cares for and plays with the animals around the **sanctuary**, helping her father when she can. When an injured and feeble baby elephant arrives at the orphanage, Aanika immediately connects with her and promises to save her. As the elephant heals, Aanika names her Little. Over the next two years, Aanika and Little become more than friends as they grow up together — they become sisters.



One day, after a walk in the sanctuary, Papa grows weak and passes away suddenly. The elephants in the sanctuary attempt to help him sit up, but his body is lifeless. While she mourns his death, Aanika must become the ward of her next-of-kin, her abusive uncle, who demands she cook and clean for him. When Aanika's uncle removes her from school and takes her away from the only home she's known, she decides to flee into **the bush**, making one final farewell to Little. Camping that night, Aanika has a brief conversation with her dead father, but she is interrupted when she learns that Little has followed her. The two of them band together to survive in the wilderness, locating fresh water and food, but are faced with many dangers. Dangerous poachers often frequent the bush, hunting elephants. When Aanika and Little find elephant bones and hear gunshots, they must remain undiscovered and seek comfort in one another.



Hooded puppeteers operate the elephant puppets in *Aanika's Elephants*. Photos: Martin P. Robinson

(continued on next page)



Aanika's Elephants: A Synopsis

Eventually, Aanika and Little stumble upon a small herd of elephants that Aanika immediately recognizes as Little's relatives. The pair join the elephants, even though the Matriarch of the herd, whom Aanika names Hapendi Mimi, does not like Aanika and forces her to trail behind. However, when Aanika rescues the herd's baby elephant from a pool of mud, Hapendi Mimi finally accepts her, letting Aanika be a part of this new family.



PHOTOS: MARTIN P. KOJINSON

As Aanika joins this new family, she fears the ivory-seeking poachers even more, especially since Mimi and the other elephants have long, beautiful tusks. She frequently calls out to her departed papa and mama, seeking advice on what to do. Aanika decides she will try to contact Ms. Mutembi at the sanctuary to get help by leaving a written message. Ms. Mutembi receives her note, and enlists the Warden to help her find Aanika.

Unfortunately, on Aanika's way back to the herd, she encounters an evil-spirited poacher with a gun in hand. In the climax of the show, the elephants burst onto the scene, and without compassion for the animals, the poacher fires his gun and shoots Little in the leg. At the same time, Ms. Mutembi and the Warden discover Aanika and Little and return them quickly to the sanctuary to treat Little's wound. Thankfully, Little survives the gunshot, and her leg is able to completely recover over time. Back home again, Ms. Mutembi, Aanika and Little live as a family once more.

Words to Know:

Janu: Hindi name for soul or life force

Asante sana:* Swahili for "thank you very much"

Sanctuary: a place of refuge or safety;
a nature reserve

The bush: a large, undeveloped area with
natural plants and wildlife, typically in Africa and
Australia

*While this word does not appear in the synopsis,
it is spoken aloud in *Aanika's Elephants*.



UNIT PLAN BRAINSTORM



All in the Family (English Language Arts, Visual Art, Theater)

Family can look many ways and mean different things to different people. Brainstorm with your students the definition of *family* and what it means to them. Let this spark a conversation about all the kinds of family that exist and what constitutes a family. Some questions to get you started are: *What emotions do you feel when you think of the word family? Where in your life do you find family? How does family treat one another?* Then, shift the focus to who your students consider family. This could be their caregivers, pets, friends or local community. Ask each student to write or illustrate a “family portrait” that includes all the members of who they consider family. For each family portrait, encourage your students to create an accompanying pose or tableau that reminds them of their family or how their family makes them feel. One by one, have your students share their family portrait and their accompanying pose with the class, so everyone can learn about where each other comes from and all the different types of families. Finally, invite your students to take their visual artwork out of the classroom and share it with the people they depicted in their portraits, making sure to tell their unique families how much they mean to them.

To support this unit, use the My Chosen Family Creativity Page in the Discover and Create section.

The Elephants in the Room (Science, Theater)

There are three different types of elephants: African Savanna, African Forest and Asian. Embark on a class research project to learn more about each type of elephant and what these incredible animals can do. Some topics to explore are: the foods elephants eat, where they live and how they communicate with each other. Be sure to research what makes the three species of elephants different from each other and the unique features of each species! Once your students have researched all about elephants, bring them to life right in the classroom. Have each student create an elephant character and name. Make sure that they specify which species of elephant their character is. Once they’ve created their elephant, let them come up with a backstory for their animal inspired by their research. Some questions to inspire them are: *What does your elephant like to eat? What does your elephant like to do? Do they have large or small ears? Do they have tusks?* Now, it’s time to get on your feet and embody them! As a class, practice walking like an elephant, thinking about an elephant’s weight, size and mannerisms. Next, have your students adjust their movements to fit their elephant’s character. Have them mime eating, drinking water and playing in the mud! Finally, transform your classroom into a watering hole, and have all the students’ elephants interact with each other and exist in their natural habitat.

To support this unit, use the A Stuffy Story with Cuddly Characters Activity in the Respond and Connect section.

One Person’s Trash... (Science, Visual Art)

All of the puppets in *Aanika’s Elephants* are made out of recyclable materials! Build a work of art and help the planet at the same time by inspiring your class to craft using only found resources. Start with a class discussion about the importance of recycling and what it can do for the environment. Then, gather recyclable materials in your classroom such as newspaper, popsicle sticks, empty tissue boxes or old binders. They can even venture outside the classroom by examining what could be reused at your school, in your students homes or in your community. After they’ve gathered their materials, put your students into pairs and have them build a three-dimensional shape, or sculpture, by gluing or taping different materials together. Since *Aanika’s Elephants* centers on family and home, have the pairs construct something that reminds them of their family or where they come from. This could be an object that reminds them of their home or just a shape that conveys how their family makes them feel! Start small by trying to build a sculpture with only three or five different materials. Then, have pairs team up to see if they can attach their sculptures to each other’s and build something bigger! Keep growing the groups and the scale of the sculptures until you can attach every pair’s object to form one giant creation as a class! Now this mega sculpture has a piece of every student’s family and home living inside it. Give your sculpture a safe home in your classroom and use it as inspiration for storytelling or as a reminder of where your class comes from.

To support this unit, use the Standing for Something Creativity Page in the Respond and Connect section.

Discover and Create



In this section are ready-to-facilitate activities and kid-centered creativity pages which provide opportunities to delve a bit deeper into the themes and artistry of the show!



Embodying Emotions



Use this activity to introduce your students to the story of *Aanika's Elephants* and prepare students for elements of a story that may evoke strong emotional responses.*

Materials Needed: *Aanika's Elephants* synopsis (p. 8), chart paper, markers

1. Gather students in a circle and tell them that they are about to embark on an emotional journey by exploring the synopsis of *Aanika's Elephants*. Divide the synopsis of *Aanika's Elephants* (p. 7 and 8) into bite-sized sections and read each section aloud. After each section, have a brief discussion about the action of the story and ask students what emotions they're experiencing as they listen.
2. Next, ask students to find their own space in the room. Then, as you re-read the synopsis, invite them to activate their emotions by becoming living statues, striking a pose representative of a unique feeling, emotion or range of emotions inspired by the synopsis. For example, if the story's tone sounds or feels mysterious, they might strike an inquisitive pose or perhaps cower in fear. Hold space for their imaginations to run free as they become a gallery of emotion-inspired sculptures.
3. Ask volunteers to share their chosen pose or sequence of poses with the group, explaining which part of the synopsis inspired their pose and why.
4. Next, point students to chart paper located in four different parts of the room, each labeled with different emotions (e.g., Sadness, Curiosity, Fear, Amazement).
5. Ask students to walk to the emotion that most accurately matches the pose they created. **Note:** *If students created more than one pose, you might choose to move through this step more than once.*
6. Invite them to stand near the chart paper that represents the emotion they expect to feel while watching *Aanika's Elephants*. As before, if students feel pulled to more than one emotion, hold space for them to move within that spectrum and facilitate a conversation about that range of emotions.
7. Gather the students back in a circle and invite a conversation about what the word sanctuary means to them and how they would create one in your classroom. Ask them questions like: *What would our shared sanctuary look and feel like? Is it a physical place in our classroom or is it taking a deep breath and feeling our own heartbeat? When might we use our sanctuary?*
8. Finally, remind them that, if or when they start feeling some of these strong emotions or feel overwhelmed either in the classroom or while seeing *Aanika's Elephants*, they can return to or think about their sanctuary to re-center themselves and feel calm.



NOTE FOR TEACHERS:

*This activity can be adapted to any text or performing art-viewing experience to honor and safely explore strong emotions that may be evoked.

Reflection Questions:



What about this activity stood out to you?

What was it like to explore emotions through gestures and poses?

What comes to mind when you think of the word "sanctuary?"

My Chosen Family

Consider your chosen family—the people in your life who make you feel heard, seen and loved. How does that **chosen family** support each other? How do they provide **sanctuary** for you when needed? Use the space below to draw your chosen family and all of the elements of that family that uplift and comfort you. You may choose to share that photo with someone or keep it to yourself to reference whenever you need a reminder that your chosen family is always there for you.

Words and Phrases to Know:

Chosen family: a group of people who intentionally choose to love and support each other, regardless of marriage or blood relationship.

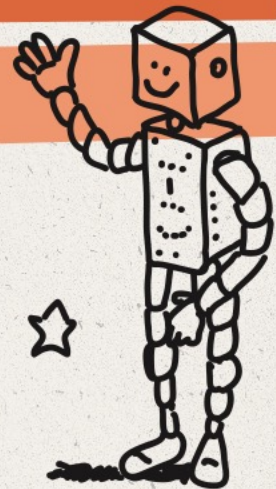
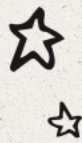
Sanctuary: a place of refuge and protection.



Arts Break @ Home



To bring the arts home, share this section with families. Arts Break supports family engagement with exciting activities for the whole family!



Be a part of your kid's viewing experience!



Ask

Ask your kid **BEFORE** they see the show:

- ▶ What do you know about elephants or puppetry?

Ask your kid **AFTER** they see the show:

- ▶ What emotions, big or small, did you feel while watching the show?



Watch

Now, [watch the trailer for Aanika's Elephants.](#)
Then, utilize the next page to engage even more!

Engage

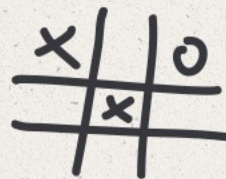
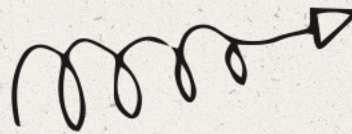
Visit New Victory Arts Break to bring exciting art-making experiences into your home!



About the New Victory



Provide this section, which has information about how to get to the theater and New Victory's style of theater etiquette, to anyone attending a live performance.



Trip Guide

Provide this resource to the school trip Leader and all teachers/chaperones attending the performance.

Aanika's Elephants will be performed
at the New Victory Theater,
209 West 42nd Street, New York, NY

Before you leave school

Bags will be collected by NEW VICTORY staff and stored during the performance when you arrive. We advise you to **leave all bags and lunches at school** if possible.

Plan to arrive at the venue at least 45 minutes before curtain time. The building opens one hour prior to curtain (i.e. 10am for an 11am performance). If you realize that your group is running late, please contact the theater DIRECTLY at **646.223.3020**. If you are arriving by bus, ensure your driver drops your group off on the **north side of 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues**

Arrival

When you reach the venue, a member of the NEW VICTORY Front of House (FOH) staff wearing a green vest will check in with the School Trip Leader.

If you arrive by bus, they will direct your bus to a location on the street where it is safest to unload the students. It is important to wait until our staff checks with the School Trip Leader and Bus Driver before unloading the students. They will record the bus number and give the School Trip Leader and the Bus Driver correlating tags. If you are unable to be dropped off near the theater, please record the bus number for our FOH staff. Please remember to have the School Trip Leader and the Bus Driver exchange cell numbers. The FOH staff will give a time for the bus to return to pick up your school group. If you are arriving by subway or other public transportation, please form a line outside the theater when you arrive, and wait to check in with a FOH staff member before entering the theater.

The question of lunch

The New Victory Theater is not equipped to host lunch/snacks.

Seating

In order to make your experience at the theater as efficient and safe as possible, you will not be issued tickets. NEW VICTORY Education staff carefully assign seats in advance of each performance, factoring in grade, group size and special circumstances. We are not able to honor specific seating requests with the exception of requests required for accessibility. For safety and group traffic flow, we ask that your group remain seated after the show. As soon as we are able to escort you to your bus or the subway, a NEW VICTORY Usher will come to you. If you have any questions, please contact the Education Department at Education_Tickets@NewVictory.org.

Accessibility

Wheelchair accessibility: Wheelchair seating must be requested in advance, at the time of the ticket reservation, and is subject to availability.

Assistive listening devices: Assistive listening devices are available for patrons who have hearing impairments. We suggest you request this service in advance.

Sign Interpretation and Audio Description: A sign interpreted and/or audio described performance is available for each education production at New Victory. We suggest you reserve tickets to these performances to have this service and request it during your order. Please contact Education_Tickets@NewVictory.org if you are not able to reserve tickets and need this service.

Sensory-Friendly: NEW VICTORY Education offers sensory-friendly performances for certain shows. There are additional staff members onsite to support audience members. The sound will be adjusted to lower levels and the house lights will be left at half. Fidgets are available as needed at every New Victory performance; please ask a staff member if you need one during your next visit.



Trip Guide

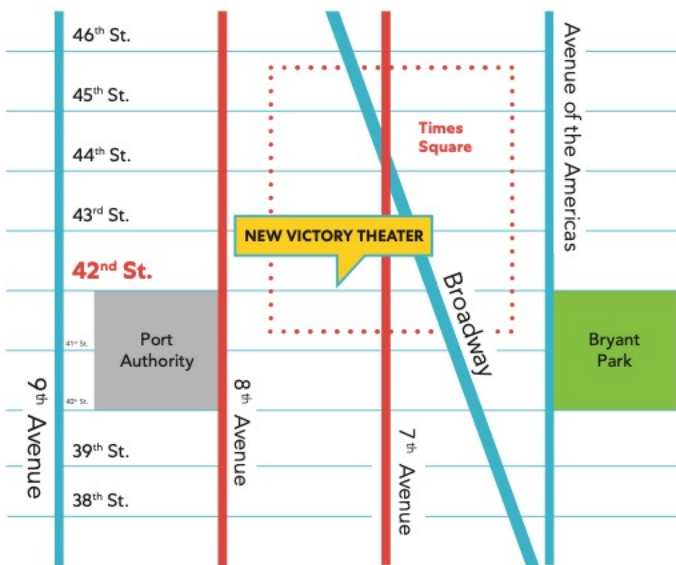
If you are traveling by bus, please also share this important information with the bus driver.

Directions

THE NEW VICTORY THEATER 209 West 42nd Street

BY SCHOOL BUS

It is safest to drop off and pick up your school group on the **north side of the street** in front of the venue. Turn onto 42nd Street from 7th Avenue so students can unload in front.



BY MTA, SUBWAY OR BUS

1/2/3 N/R/Q/W/7

Exit the station at 42nd Street/7th Avenue. When you come out of the turnstile, take the stairs to your right. New 42 Studios is directly to the west of the subway station.

A/C/E to Port Authority

Exit at 42nd Street/8th Avenue. Walk to 42nd Street, turn east, and continue walking until you arrive at the New 42 Studios.

B/D/F/M

Exit at 42nd Street/6th Avenue. Walk west on 42nd Street until you come to 7th Avenue. The venue is on the north side of the street at 7th Avenue, next to the subway station.

The **M10, M16, M27, M42, M104 buses** all stop within one block of the venue.

During the show

42nd Street is extremely congested and has a high volume of traffic. **According to the New York City Department of Transportation, vehicles are not allowed to sit idle or park on the street without special permission.** Once your bus is empty, it is important that the bus driver find parking at a nearby location— see possible parking locations below.

If a driver chooses to park on 42nd Street, they do so at their own risk of being ticketed by the police. The New Victory Theater is not responsible for bus drivers who receive parking tickets.

Possible parking locations

8th Avenue (both sides)
between 38th and 39th Streets

11th Avenue (both sides)
between 39th and 40th Streets

Pick up

Taking Midtown traffic into consideration, bus drivers should leave their waiting location approximately 15 minutes prior to the return time given by the Front of House staff. Front of House staff will also help find a spot on 42nd Street to safely load your student group after the show has ended. For safety purposes, once FOH staff have verified that your bus is in a secure location for pickup your school group will be escorted to load up.



Etiquette



NO-HUSH ZONE: OOHS, AAHS AND APPLAUSE

Thank you for being our partner and making the performing arts a priority for your students! New Victory prides itself on presenting performing arts that make kids (and adults) exclaim, dance, scream, laugh and giggle! We love when kids vocally and physically respond to what they're seeing on stage. In fact, many of the visiting artists tell us that their favorite part of performing at the New Victory is the real-time, honest reactions from the kids in the audience. Therefore, we ask you and your fellow teachers to help us by making the New Victory a "no-hush zone." Of course, we ask for your help in managing respectful behavior to avoid distractions that are not directly related to the action on stage. Additionally, please ensure that you, your colleagues and students follow the directions of the NEW VICTORY Ushers and other theater guidelines such as no electronic devices or eating and drinking in the theater.

LOVE

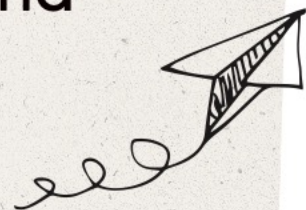




Respond and Connect



The activities and creativity pages invite young people to reflect on the experience of seeing a live show (if applicable), and provide opportunities to make connections to themselves, each other and the world around them.



Reflection

Engage in a conversation with your students to help them process their thoughts and feelings about the show. On a large piece of chart paper, draw the outline of a person. On the outside of the outline, have students write or draw their favorite moments from the show. On the inside of the outline, have students write or draw their own feelings about the show and what emotions they felt during the show. Then, use some of the questions below to lead students in a discussion:



What was the story about?

Who were the characters and how did they relate to one another?

What did you think of the storytelling elements (puppetry, music, sound design, etc.)?

What were your favorite parts of the show?

How did the show make you feel?



Teacher Tip

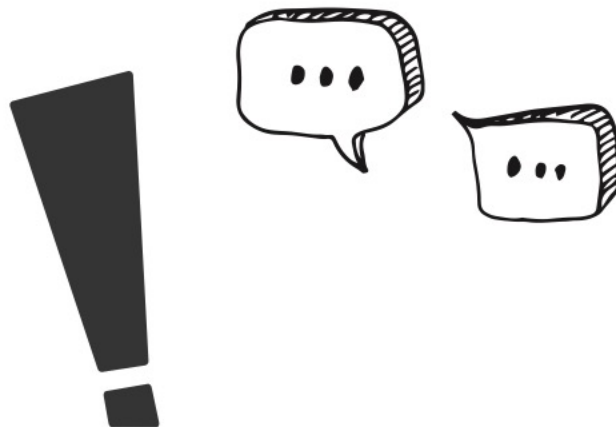
Engaging in dialogue, asking questions and recalling observations are skills that we believe should be fostered and encouraged. When leading a performance reflection discussion, try the following model of critical response:

Describe (*I noticed...*)

Analyze (*I wonder...*)

Interpret (*I think/feel...*)

Evaluate (*I believe...*)



Critic's Notebook



Headline: _____

What I noticed and what surprised me:

How the show made me feel:

What mood were you in after the show? What about the show made you feel that way?

My Opinion:

Consider the puppetry, music, set, costumes and lighting:



A Stuffy Story with Cuddly Characters

Use the activity below to help students tell an original story about, and explore the physicality of, their favorite stuffed pal.



Materials Needed: one stuffed animal per student (if students don't have one, provide one for them)

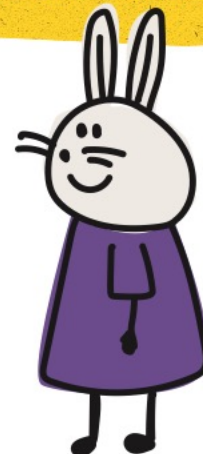
1. First, have students spread out in the room so they have enough space around them to move and explore. Make sure each student has a stuffed animal (aka stuffy or cuddly). If a student doesn't have one, give them time to choose one from the classroom!
2. Start by guiding students through an exploration of their furry friends' stories. Ask them questions like: *Where does your stuffy come from? How were they created? What is their name? Do they speak? If so, what language? How did you come to know your stuffy?* You may want to play some soft instrumental music while you hold space for this exploration.
3. After some time, ask students to make their stuffed animals breathe in and out, and move and walk through space. Ask them: *How does your stuffy walk? What sounds do they make? How do they jump? How do they sit?* Then, tell them they are going to embody their friends for this activity and tell a story from their perspective. Have students stand in their own space in the room and lead them in a full-body shake out to reset themselves.
4. Ask them questions similar to those in Steps 2 and 3, this time focusing on the way they physically embody their characters.
5. Give students enough time to feel comfortable embodying their furry friends. They should all feel as though they've had sufficient time to explore and experiment, giving life to their pals.
6. Then, let students know that in a moment, they will each get the opportunity to introduce themselves to another classmate as their stuffy, and to demonstrate how they sound and move around the classroom.
7. Give students the opportunity to walk around the room as their stuffy character and, pair up and introduce themselves as their stuffy, embodying all of the characteristics they've explored throughout the activity.

Reflection Questions:

How did it feel to act as your cuddly?

What did you notice about your friends' portrayal of their characters?

How were others' characters different from yours?



Standing for Something



What can you do to become an advocate for conservation and speak up for the humane treatment of animals and their habitats? One thing you can do right now is write a letter to an animal rights advocacy group or to a congressperson! Use the space below to compose a thoughtful letter advocating for animal rights and what you think should be done to help protect animals and their habitat today and for years to come.



To Whom it May Concern,

A large rectangular area with horizontal blue lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and cover most of the page's width.



Sources

COMPANY

Feisty Elephant, Little Shadow Productions and Pam Arciero Productions

CONTENT & THEMES

International Elephant Foundation: 25 Things to Know About Elephants

Reteti Elephant Sanctuary

Sheldrick Wildlife Trust: Our Mission

National Geographic: 5 Facts About the Largest Animal

World Wildlife Fund: 10 Facts About Elephants

World Wildlife Fund: Stopping Elephant Ivory Demand

PRODUCTION PHOTOS

Martin P. Robinson



Our Guiding Pillars



The Guiding Pillars on this page are the foundation of the ways in which NEW VICTORY Education strives to cultivate collaboration and creativity for everyone. As we continue to grow and evolve, so do our pillars, and we continue to rethink their meaning and overall impact. We hope these values offer inspiration as you engage in creative art-making through the unit plan brainstorms, activities and creativity pages in this NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guide!

Arts for All

Invite everyone to create art in ways that are accessible to and inclusive of everyone.

Art Form

Honor and explore the technique of the art forms represented in the works we present.

Community

Encourage ensemble and collaboration within the communities with which we engage.

Create

Activate art-making and creativity to explore the art form in each production and beyond.

Discovery

Employ methods and ask questions that encourage opportunities for curiosity, risk-taking, inquiry, meaning-making, deepening understanding, and learning about oneself, one's peers and the world around us.

Play

Spark imagination, encourage joy in learning and evoke laughter.

A Land Acknowledgement

The New Victory Theater is on the island known as Mannahatta, now called Manhattan, in Lenapehoking, the homeland of the Lenape people. These lands are intertribal trade lands under the stewardship of many Nations, and New Victory acknowledges the systematic erasure of their true history.

The land of the five boroughs that make up New York City was and still is inhabited by the Lenape, Merrick, Canarsie, Rockaway and Matinecock Nations. We celebrate and pay deep respect to the Peoples of these Nations, their cultures, their communities, their elders past and present, those with us today, and all their future generations.

We recognize that seized lands are historically inhabited by people who are racialized, marginalized and displaced by those in power, and we offer this land acknowledgement as a step in reexamining our relationship to that history. We offer our gratitude to the Indigenous peoples of many the Nations who continue to act as stewards of the land, and we encourage you to learn more about these vibrant communities.



Photo: Mark LaRosa