

Cock-a-Doodle-YOU!

Making CONNECTIONS

Discussion point 1: "The uniqueness of you, makes the uniqueness of me"

All of the characters in the play have something about them that makes them different, special, or unique. Which character do you most identify with? What about you makes you unique? What "uniqueness of you" are you most proud of? Is there a "uniqueness of you" that you are not proud of?

Discussion point 2: Accepting other people's differences

Pig, Cow, and Rooster do a lot of arguing in the beginning of the play. However, by the end of the show they have come to realize how important friends are. They realize that the greatest happiness can come from making our friends feel special and needed. Have you ever made someone feel bad because they were different? How does it make you feel to think about that now? What could you do to make that person feel better? What about you? Have you ever been made to feel bad because you were different? When have you felt good about being different?

Discussion point 3: Finding a calling

Most stories have a main character, or protagonist, who must overcome external or internal conflict in the course of the play. This struggle creates drama. In "Cock-a-Doodle-Don't," all of the characters have problems to solve, but Pig would most likely be considered the protagonist. Pig's problem is that he can't find his purpose -- or calling. He has no reason to get up in the morning, like Cow and Rooster. He can't seem to find his "Cock-a-Doodle-DO." How does he solve his problem and finally feel like he has a purpose? What about you? What makes you feel needed or important? Friends? Doing well in school? Your family? What else? What might your calling be?

Discussion point 4: "Our Promise to One Another"

The following pledge, presented in the play, was borrowed from use in LAUSD teachers' classrooms: "This day has been given to me fresh and clear. I can either use it or throw it away. I promise I shall use this day to its fullest, realizing it can never come back again. I realize that this is my life to use or to throw away". If you incorporate this pledge in your regular classroom activities, talk about how this pledge relates to, or is informed by, the message of the play and the Discussion Points above.

Activity 1: Write a letter to your favorite character or actor!

Some of your students may have a favorite character or actor to whom they would like to send a message and/or some questions. If so, please have them send Cow, Rooster, Pig, Dell, or their favorite actor a letter, and their friends from the play will write back! (See the Resource Sheet for our mailing address, and allow 6-8 weeks for the reply).

Terms to discuss

Theater Arts

actor	backdrop
playwright	costume
script	character
plot	comedy
director	drama
rehearsal	protagonist
scenic artist	audience
set	applause

Words from the play

unique	embarrassing
brethren	desperately
embrace	stray
coincidence	unknown
craving	explorer
share	calling
scraps	purpose
intolerant	journey

Cock-a-Doodle-Don't!

Presented by Unknown Theater and written by Brett Webster



About Cock-a-Doodle Don't

"Cock-a-Doodle Don't" is a play about a tom-boy named Dell and her three friends: Pig (who can't gain weight), Rooster (a bird that can't fly), and Cow (who suffers from lactose intolerance). Rooster and Cow are worried about Dell, who has some big, scary news on this very special Monday. And Pig, who can't find his purpose, is in for the surprise of his life.

Join us for this hilarious ho-down about embracing the things that make us unique, accepting other people's differences, and finding a purpose to make life meaningful.

About this study guide

This study guide is designed to help you and your students explore the art of theater, discover the world of the play, and discuss the issues of the play as they pertain to your daily lives.

There are suggestions for nearly 20 activities and points of discussion. Feel free to pick and choose which items are most appropriate for your class, and have fun!

"Cock-a-Doodle-Don't" is brought to you by...

unknown theater
THE UNKNOWN ARTISTS PROJECT

Illustration by George Almond



unknown theater
THE UNKNOWN ARTISTS PROJECT
7568 DELONGPRE AVE., LA, CA 90046
WWW.UNKNOWNTHEATER.COM
WATERS@UNKNOWNTHEATER.COM
(323) 969-9123



UnknownKids.com



Before and...

What is THEATER?

Discussion point 1: Have you ever been to the theater?

Tell us about any experiences you have had with theater. If you haven't been to the theater, what kind of live events have you attended? Baseball game? Live music? A performer at a friend's birthday party? How do you think theater may be different from these experiences?

Activity 1: Charting reactions to theater before the play

Write the question "What is theater?" on the board. Write down all of your students first responses underneath the question. Save this chart, because we'll come back to it after the show!

Activity 2: The Applause Game

"Cock-a-Doodle-Don't" is a little different from some plays, because the audience is actually encouraged to interact with the characters. But one way the audience can always interact with and support the performers, in any show, is through applause. Have your students practice this kind of interaction by playing the Applause Game: Student A is sent out of the room, or asked to cover his or her eyes and ears. The other students devise a simple action, which they will make Student A perform when he or she returns – simply by applauding. This game is just like "Hot-and-Cold," except the students "clap" louder or softer in order to direct Student A towards completing the action. Start with something simple, like picking up a particular book, or pointing to a particular picture on the wall.

The world of COCK-A-DOODLE-DON'T

Discussion point 2: Have you ever been to a farm?

Is life different in the city than it is on a farm? Talk about some differences... On a farm, the day begins with a "Cock-a-Doodle-Do!" How does your day begin? How might your daily chores be different if you lived on a farm? How might you dress differently if you lived on a farm? What other differences can you think of?

Activity 3 (ELD): Identifying the animals in the play

See the accompanying Resource Sheet for pictures of a pig, a rooster, and a cow. Identify each animal, and the names of each animal's identifying attributes. For the pig: flat snout, curly tail, big belly, hooved feet, and pointed ears. For the rooster: beak or bill, wattle, comb, tail, wings, and claws. And for the cow: spots, udders, long-tail, hooved feet, stocky body and thick skin. (We'll refer back to this activity after the show!)

Activity 4: Singing "The Farmer in the Dell"

Students will also sing this song during the show! See the accompanying Resource Sheet for the lyrics. If you are not familiar with the melody, you can sing it together after the show! Ten or more children join hands and dance around the FARMER, who stands in the center of the circle as they sing. At the end of the first verse, the FARMER chooses his WIFE, who joins him inside the circle. At the end of the next verse, the WIFE takes a CHILD, and so on, until the last verse when everyone is in the circle except the PIG, who stands alone. Whoever ends up being the PIG becomes the FARMER for the next round. If you have more students than verses, just start calling out more animals as the game goes on! Encourage your students to explore the movement and physicality of each animal as they enter the center of the circle. (We'll return to animal movement activities after the show!)

After the play

THAT was theater!

Discussion point 1: What was it like to go to the theater?

Was it different from what you expected? How was your role as the audience of the play different from when you go to the movies or watch television?

Activity 1: Charting reactions to theater after the play

Now that your students have seen the show, chart responses again to the question, "What is theater?". Talk about the differences in the before and after charts.

Discussion point 2: The art of theater: reality vs. representation

Before the show, you identified some of the body parts of each of the animals represented in the show. Look at the pictures on the Resource Sheet again. Did the characters' costumes look anything like these photographs? How did you know the Pig was a pig, the Rooster was a rooster, and the Cow was a cow? What about the set? How did you know that the characters were on a farm?

EXPANDING the world of Cock-a-Doodle-Don't

Comprehension: The characters of the play

Can you name all of the characters in the play? (Pig, Rooster, Cow, and Dell). What made each of them different or special? (Pig can't gain weight. Rooster can't fly like other birds. Cow is allergic to milk. And Dell is a tom-boy who doesn't look like the pictures of girls in magazines or on T.V.). Which character did the animals talk about, but we never saw? (Old Man MacDonald). How did the animals feel about him?

Activity 2: Discovering the characters with movement and sound

Have your students each pick his or her favorite character in the play. Have them mingle about the room as their favorite characters and greet one another as their paths cross. Draw attention to detail in the movement: is the character heavy or light, proud or shy, fast or slow? How does the character talk? Does the character have an accent? A stuffy nose? Once they have settled into their characters, try acting out some of their favorite moments from the play, and/or move on to the next activity.

Activity 3: Acting out what happens next

Now that you've built some fun characters, try imagining the life of the characters after the play. Here are some situations to get you started: Have one student play the "little pig", whom we meet at the end of the play. How does he/she fit in to the group? What is special about his/her relationship to Pig? Have another student play Old Man MacDonald. How does "the morning wake-up call" change with him in the picture? Have yet another student play the first person Dell meets on her big adventure. What does she learn from him/her?

Activity 4: Storyboarding the sequel!

Now that the creative juices are really flowing, talk about all of the possibilities for life on the farm, and/or for Dell's life on her adventure in the big, unknown world. Have your students storyboard their ideas. Try having them work in teams of two or three to make the activity collaborative. If you come up with something really exciting, we would love to see it at Unknown Theater! Send the storyboard to us, and who knows what may happen!