



Ferdinand the Bull

TEACHER GUIDE

Kupferberg Center Performances @ Queens College

The Teacher Guide is a convenient source of background information, mini-lessons, and pre- and post-concert activities that coordinate with the performance and Student Guide to encourage learning across the curriculum. Most activities can be easily adapted to suit different age groups. This Guide supports the "Blueprint for Teaching & Learning in the Arts," and includes City and State Learning Standards. Click on the URL's to link directly to suggested websites. Feel free to reproduce these materials, as well as Student Activity Pages that may be posted on this website.

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Please send documentation (photographs, compositions, etc.) of class activities based on this guide so we can share your successes with other schools attending Revelations performances. Thanks!

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Hudson Vagabond Puppets, under the artistic direction of founder Lois Bohovesky, tours nationally and internationally, performing for children and their families in concert halls, theatres and schools. Ms. Bohovesky has designed and built hundreds of puppets. She studied puppetry with Bill Baird, dancing with Eric Hawkins, and has worked at Henson Associates, where she built puppets for The Great Muppet Caper. In addition to directing Hudson Vagabond Puppets, Ms. Bohovesky presents workshops on puppet manipulation, construction, character study, and improvisation. Visit Hudson Vagabond Puppets at www.hvpuppets.org.

GET READY FOR THE SHOW

This puppet show is based on Munro Leaf's "The Story of Ferdinand." The set designs for the show are based on the book's illustrations by Robert Lawson. Adapt the following activities to suit your grade level, as class or take-home activities.

CURRICULUM FOCUS: LANGUAGE ARTS

Activity: Read "The Story of Ferdinand" by Munro Leaf, with illustrations by Robert Lawson.

- NYC English Language Arts Learning Standard: 1b, 2b, 5a
- Coordinate with Student Guide: "About the Story"

Activity: Role on the Wall

- NYC English Language Arts Learning Standard: 5a
- Coordinate with Student Guide: "Who Am I?"

Teaching Point: How do we learn about the characters in a story? We pay attention to how they act, what they say, and what other characters say about them.

PART I: Individual work: Students complete the "Who Am I?" activity

Whole Group: Draw a large box on the board. On the inside, write student responses from the activity that shows what Ferdinand likes to do, how he is thinking and what he is feeling. Outside the perimeter of the box, write what others think and say about him. They can use the text and the illustrations to back their comments. In the Student Guide, children are asked to write only what the men who come to look at Ferdinand say about him. You can expand this by asking how the *picadors* and *banderilleros*

respond to him, and what the matador tries to get him to do. Accept every offer; there are no “right” answers, only individual interpretations.

Discuss: What was different about the way Ferdinand saw himself and how others saw him? How did he stay true to himself?

PART II. Individual Work: Students do the second part of the “Who Am I?” activity.

Discuss: What is different about the way you see yourself and the way others see you? What is the same? Why do you think there are similarities or differences to the way you see yourself versus the way others see you? How do people who know you well see you differently from those who don’t know you well? How can *you* stay true to yourself?

Activity: Write a poem that would help others get to know you. Fill in the missing blanks.

Who I Am *by* _____ (*student name*)
My name is _____
I am (write 4 adjectives that describe you) _____, _____, _____, and _____
I am a sister/brother to _____
I like _____
I love _____
I need _____
I give _____
I am afraid of _____
I want to see _____
I live _____

Have students share their poem with someone they would like to get to know better.

NB: See “Curriculum Focus: Theater” below for additional activities on this topic.

Activity: What activities make us feel peaceful inside?

- NYC English Language Arts Learning Standard: 2b
- NYC Arts Learning Standard: 1
- Blueprint for the Arts: Visual Art: Making Art, Making Connections
- Coordinate with Student Guide: Take it home: Parent and Kid Corner

Teaching Point: Each individual has different activities that inspire peaceful and happy feelings.

Either assign the activity as a home project, or create the project in class. Students will write or draw what makes them feel peaceful and happy on one or more flowers.

Bulletin Board Project

Cover a bulletin board with grass-green paper. Place a large cutout of Ferdinand under his cork tree on the board. If you are not comfortable with free-hand drawing, project the image of Ferdinand smelling the flowers onto a large piece of butcher-block paper. Copy the picture with colored chalk; when you are through, redo the lines in marker. Students can paint or color in Ferdinand. Do the same for the cork tree.

Staple the flowers from the Student Guide activity onto the board around Ferdinand and his cork tree.

See “Curriculum Focus: Science” below to complete the display. Add the information children learn about cork onto the display. If the bulletin board is near your classroom library, make it a quiet space for reading. Your students will enjoy “smelling the flowers” as they read!

Activity: Choral Poem

Whole Group: Assign parts for students to read aloud.

Teaching Point: We can learn likeable things about bulls.

Extension: Write original rhyming couplets to add to the poem.

Bulls by Katie Krause & Lauren Chupita

(Based on the structure of “Giraffes” by Mary Ann Hoberman)

All: Bulls.

I like them.

Ask me why.

Group 1: Because they like to run and play

Group 2: Because they gambol all the day

Group 3: Because they munch on grass and flowers

Group 4: Because they entertain for hours.

Group 5: Because their bodies are so big and wide,

Group 6: Because they run but just can't hide.

Group 7: Because they like to be so rowdy,

Group 8: Because they play when days are cloudy.

Group 9: Because they can be pretty loud,

Group 10: Because *el toro* is so proud.

All: Because. That's why

I like bulls.

Activity: Finger play teaches subtraction.

Teaching Point: We can learn to subtract by reciting a finger play poem, and hiding one finger at a time. It's a finger play and simple subtraction, too!

“Five Little Bulls” by Kate Muchlinski

(Patterned after “Five Little Monkeys Jumping on the Bed”)

Five little bulls, bumping heads.

Bumped too hard, one bruised red.

Four little bulls, bumping heads.

Bumped too hard, one flew in the shed.

Three little bulls, bumping heads.

Bumped too hard, one sent to bed.

Two little bulls, bumping heads.

Bumped too hard, off one fled.

One little bull couldn't bump heads.

Got so sad, moped by the hedge.

CURRICULUM FOCUS: SCIENCE

- NYC Science Standard 2c, 6a

Teaching Point: What can we learn about cork trees?

Whole Group: Ferdinand loves to sit under his cork tree just quietly and smell the flowers. In Leaf's book, illustrator Richard Lawson drew a whimsical tree with bunches of wine corks dangling from the

branches. Point out to the students that cork trees don't actually look like that. Lawson was just having some fun!

Small Groups: Use the Internet to do a search on cork trees. The teacher can read some of the information aloud, depending on the reading levels of your class. Copy the chart below on a board for Whole Group work, or hand out individual copies of the chart. Have children complete the chart by putting a check in the true or false column. Review the correct answers together.

Facts About Cork Trees	TRUE	FALSE
Cork trees need lots of rain.		
Portugal produces the most corks in the world.		
Cork is the bark of the oak cork tree.		
Cork trees grow widely in parts of the western Mediterranean region, where Spain is.		
Cork trees grow in a forest.		
Cork trees need only a little bit of sunlight.		
Cork trees have to be cut down to harvest the cork.		
Cork is fireproof; it chars, but doesn't burn.		
Bulletin Boards are made of cork.		
Basketballs have cork centers.		

ANSWER KEY

- Cork trees need lots of rain. (F)
- Portugal produces the most corks in the world. (T)
- Cork is the bark of the oak cork tree. (T)
- Cork trees grow widely in parts of the western Mediterranean region, where Spain is. (T)
- Cork trees grow in a forest. (T)
- Cork trees need only a little bit of sunlight. (F)
- Cork trees have to be cut down to harvest the cork. (F)
- Cork is fireproof; it chars, but doesn't burn. (T)
- Products made from cork include flooring materials (e.g., linoleum), shoe insoles, roofing panels, gaskets, safety helmet liners, bottle stoppers, dartboards, bulletin boards, and cores for golf balls and baseballs (T)

Activity: To add to the Bulletin Board Project above, prepare wine-cork shaped pieces of paper in advance, and have children write one of the cork facts, or the names of one of the products made from cork, on each piece of paper. Add these to the bulletin board display. You can also ask students to bring in real bottle corks from home and add these to the display, creating a mobile, hanging them from the branches of the cork tree, or attaching them to the "cork facts" pages. Or, you can purchase cork squares at a drug or hardware store and use them as part of the display. Attach the squares to your bulletin board. Have children cut out pictures of products made from cork from magazines or from downloaded web sites, and arrange these on the cork squares with staples or pushpins.

CURRICULUM FOCUS: THEATER

- NYC Arts Learning Standard: 1
- Blueprint for the Arts: Theater: Making Theater: Acting, Playing Making, Theater Literacy, making Connections, Working With Community and Cultural Resources
- NYC English Language Arts Learning Standard: 5a
- Coordinate with Student Guide: "Who Am I?"

- Coordinate with Teacher Guide: “Curriculum Focus: Language Arts, Activity 2: Role on the Wall”

Teaching Point: We can learn about a character by *imagining* what he is thinking and feeling.

Whole Group: Divide the group in half, with each person having a partner in the other group. The groups make two lines, facing each other. Place partners opposite one another, allowing a few feet of space between the lines. Designate them as “Line I” and “Line II.” All the students on Line I will pretend to be Ferdinand. Ask them to think about any one point in the story, and when you say, “GO,” they will assume positions illustrating that point. A few minutes after you yell “GO,” the students on the Line II call out, “One, two, three, image!” The students in Line I make their image and freeze it. Ask students in Line II to carefully observe their partner, and while the images are held, ask them to cross the room and stand close behind their partners. Tell them they will voice Ferdinand’s thoughts, by interpreting the outer image. “Tell your partner what you think Ferdinand is thinking inside just by how they are holding their bodies.”

Discussion: Ask partners to discuss: “Did the image your Line I partner make help you know what to say?” “Did the words your Line II partner used add to or change your feelings while you were holding your image?” “Has anything changed about how you think of Ferdinand?”

This strategy should help give you a variety of perceptions and interpretations.

Return to Focus on Language Arts: Activity: Role-on-the-Wall. Is there anything students would like to add to the thoughts already written? Record any additions.

Activity: Building dramatic context.

Teaching Point: We can learn more about a character by what others say about him, even if what they say is not true.

Small Groups: Divide the class into groups of even numbers if possible; groups of 8 would work well. Students form pairs within each group. Ask them to imagine themselves as other bulls in the pasture and to improvise a conversation – gossip – about Ferdinand. After everyone is chatting, freeze the action once per group. Hold your hand above one pair in a group each time and call “Freeze!” Tell that pair they will continue to gossip while everyone else observes. When you put your hand down, groups can unfreeze and continue to chat until you focus on the next pair. It is fine to have conflicting statements, just as in real gossip – most of it is untrue!

Activity: Devising

Teaching Point: We can learn more about a character by acting out details about him that may not have been written in detail in a story. (Inference)

Part 1: Divide class into small groups. Give a devising task to each group. Each group can create images or a scene from a part, or stage, of Ferdinand’s life. Suggested task stages:

- (a) Ferdinand as a very young bull, revealing some of his hopes, dreams and fears
- (b) An important turning point in his life. (Chosen for the bullfight? Refusing to fight?)
- (c) What happens to him after the bullfight?

Tell students that they can use any useful information from the gossip activity to help create their scenes. Share the scenes.

Part 2: Divide the class in two. Pretend you are having a birthday party for Ferdinand. Each group chooses a student to play Ferdinand. Ask them to find a response to this prompt for Ferdinand to answer: “What are you the most proud about what you did in your life?” Share the party scenes and responses.

Extension: Learn “Happy Birthday” in Spanish to use in your scenes!

¡Feliz cumpleaños a tí!
¡Feliz cumpleaños a tí!
¡Feliz cumpleaños Ferdinand!
¡Feliz cumpleaños a tí!

Reflection

1. Did the scenes you created tell a story?
2. Did the story seem real, like you were telling and “imaginative truth?”
3. Did our images and scenes help us understand Ferdinand and his story?
4. What thoughts do you have that you would like to share?

CURRICULUM FOCUS: SOCIAL STUDIES

- NYC Social Studies Standard: 2
- Coordinate with Student Guide: *Corrida de Toros*

Teaching Point: We learn that some traditions, like bullfighting can be seen as both honorable and dishonorable at the same time.

Whole Group: Using photos obtained from the internet (Google images: bullfighting), explain that most bullfights take place in Spain, Portugal, Mexico and other Latin American countries, and even France. No one knows exactly when it began, but there are caves drawings showing people fighting bulls that date as far back as 2000 BC. According to some anthropologists, the Moors brought the art of bullfighting to Spain. However it came about, it is generally regarded as part of Spanish culture.

Be sensitive to the needs of your own group in explaining bullfighting. Basically, the bull is worn down by the *picadors* and their lances, and by the *banderilleros* and their pointed sticks, until the *matador* delivers the deathblow with his sword. There are rules and protocols that must be followed. In every instance, the bull is killed at the end, dragged around the ring by mules, his severed ear delivered to the matador as a trophy. There is the rare exception when a bull so charms the crowd, they shake their handkerchiefs and the mayor responds by displaying an orange handkerchief that permits the bull to live. (The bull is then sent to a farm to be used as a stud, but never again in the ring, since once he learns what he is up against, he would have strategies that would make him too dangerous for the matadors to face.) There are people on both sides of the controversy of bullfighting; some believe it is an integral part of Spanish culture that should be honored; others see it as cruel, inhumane and unnecessary torture of an animal that would otherwise live his life in peace in a pasture. This past spring, residents of Catalonia voted to abolish bullfighting. Students may want to follow this debate online.

Activity: The Human Barometer

Teaching Point: We can make choices on where we stand on an issue.

In order for a human barometer to allow the students to apply critical thinking skills and personal choices to the activity, it is important to stay neutral on the topic of bullfighting, just laying out whatever facts you think are appropriate for your group.

- Ask those who think bullfighting is an honored tradition in Spain that should remain part of the culture because it is important to its people, walk to one side of the room.
- Those who think it should no longer be a sport, walk to the other side of the room.
- Those who are uncertain can make a line in the middle, closer to one side or the other if they are leaning that way.

The folks on either side will get to tell those in the middle why they believe the undecided should join their side. Then the middle ones must choose, based on the arguments given.

There is no right or wrong; it is an individual choice.

Activity: Conflict Resolution

- NYC Social Studies Standard: 5
- Coordinate with Student Guide: “Stop the Fight! Ferdinand’s Guide to Peace”

Teaching Point: Use applied theatre techniques to learn how to use these conflict strategies in real life.

Whole Group: Review the STOP strategies in the Student Guide.

The teacher’s role is “The Joker;” he or she speaks to the audience and also to the actors.

- Divide your class into 3 groups. Each group is going to tell the story of someone in a fight:
 - Group 1 will do a *person* fight;
 - Group 2 a *place* fight;
 - Group 3 a *thing* fight.

Each group will devise 3 short scenes; in the first scene, everyone is happy. In the second scene, the fight begins and the actors pretend to fight (NO physical fighting under any circumstances! words only – a tug of war over a ball or a crayon is acceptable). The important thing is that they do not use any of their conflict resolution skills to end the fight. In the last scene, the person – or people – are sad. Each scene only needs to be a couple minutes long.

- Group 1 then shares their scene with the whole class. The Joker (teacher) asks the class if they liked that everyone was so sad at the end (hopefully they will say no!) Inform them that through the magic of theater, they will get to change things. “We are going to rewind the play. Should we start at the beginning, or where the fight starts?” (It saves time to start where the fight begins.) “Now, when you see the character doing or saying something that you think they could have said differently to solve their problem peacefully, yell STOP! Are you ready? Actors, please begin from the fight.”
- When someone from the class yells stop (the first person who calls it gets chosen, but try to get to everyone eventually), ask them what the character could have said or done differently, using our conflict-resolution strategies.
- Then surprise them by asking them to take the character’s place for a moment and repeat what they said, to see if it makes a difference. Ask the main character to step out a moment. Ask the other characters to respond to what the audience member is saying. Give it a minute or so, thank them – never criticize or tell them their strategy was wrong – then ask the next person who yelled stop if they would like to try their idea out. Once they have explored that part, you can move on to the next bit where they can change things.

The important thing is to use as many strategies as they can think of, so when they are in an actual conflict situation, they can pull them out of their mental ‘toolbox’ and use them! When you have finished getting to as many people as possible, thank the audience and the actors for all their help and give them lots of praise and applause.

Follow this pattern for the next two groups. If the children are tired, do one group a day as your social studies lesson.

Thanks to Chris Vine, director of the Applied Theatre Program of the School of Professional Studies at CUNY for teaching these strategies to this author.

RESOURCES

Student Bookshelf

The Story of Ferdinand, by Munro Leaf, Illustrations by Robert Lawson. Viking Children’s Books; Original Penguin Putnam, 1935, latest Puffin, 2007.

The Day Adam Got Mad. By Astrid Lindgren. Farrar Straus Giroux, 1993

The Bull and the Fire Truck. By Tony Johnson. Scholastic, 1996

Stella’s Bull, by Frances Arrington. Houghton Mifflin, 1994.

Faster than the Bull, by Braun Lutz, Heinemann Library, 1995.

Alphabet Fiesta: An English/Spanish Alphabet Story, by Anne Miranda. Turtle Books; Bilingual Edition, 2001.

The Berenstain Bears and the Bully by Stan and Jan Berenstain. Perfection Learning, 1996.

Bully on the Bus by Carl Bosch. Parenting Pr., Inc., 1988.

Best Day of the Week, by Nancy Carlsson-Paige. Redleaf Press, 1998.

The Ant Bully, by John Nickle. Scholastic, 1998.

Teacher's Bookshelf

Bullfight by Garry Marvin university of Illinois Press, 1994

The Bully, the Bullied, and the Bystander: From Preschool to High School--How Parents and Teachers Can Help Break the Cycle (Updated Edition), by Barbara Colorosa, Harper Paperbacks, 2009.

Getting Equipped to Stop Bullying: A Kid's Survival Kit for Understanding and Coping with Violence in Schools, by Becki H. Boatwright, Susan J. Smith-Rex and Teresa A. Mathis. Educational Media Corp., 1999.

Before Push Comes to Shove: Building Conflict Resolution Skills with Children, by Nancy Carlsson-Paige and Diane E. Levin. Redleaf Press, 1998. (Uses Carlsson-Paiges children's book, *Best Day of the Week* as a starting point)

Teaching Children to Care: Management in the Responsive Classroom, by Ruth Sidney Charney. Northeast Foundation for Children, 1991

Creative Conflict Resolution: More than 200 Activities for Keeping Peace in the Classroom, by William J. Kreidler. Scott, Foresman and Company, 1984.

Early Childhood Adventures in Peacemaking, by William J. Kreidler. and Sandy Tsubokawa Whittall. Cambridge, MA: ESR, 1999.

Websites:

www.hvpuppets.org

Hudson Vagabond Puppets website

<http://www.conflict-resolution.org/>

The Center for Conflict Resolution provides ways for individuals and groups "to communicate constructively, thoughtfully and compassionately and...enhance cooperation among people in conflict so that they see their mutual involvement and responsibility." It contains materials, ideas and guidance for teachers.

<http://www.bullying.org/>

Bullying.org, a project of I*EARN-Canada, was conceived and created by teacher William Belsey and a peer-support group of students (grades 1-8) in response to the shooting at W.R. Myers High School in Canada (which occurred one week after two students opened fire in Colorado). It is a site where children can go to find, "a collaborative attempt to help people help each other."

<http://www.ncpc.org/topics/conflict-resolution/activities-and-lesson-plans>

Conflict Resolution Activities and Lesson Plans for Kids K - 5

The activities were created by teachers and reviewed by teachers, principals, law enforcement officers, and community members to ensure their quality and effectiveness.