

ONCE UPON A TIME... Discovering the Magic in Reading

An Assembly Program for Children in Kindergarten through 8th Grade

Teachers Study Guide

Through the magic of storytelling, children learn why reading is important.

(Note to teachers: The following activities work best if given to the students at least one week prior to the program.)

ACTIVITIES PRIOR TO THE SHOW:

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- Do you believe reading is important? Why or why not? **(grades K-8)**
- Do you like to read? if not, why not? **(grades K-8)**
- Have you ever heard the expression “Once Upon a Time? ” What does it make you think about?
- Is storytelling important? Why or why not? **(grades K-8)**
- What is imagination? Where does imagination come from? Has your imagination ever gotten you into trouble? When? What kind of trouble? **(grades K-8)**
- Make a list of ten things you’ve read today and where you were while reading. For instance, “While eating breakfast, I read the back of the cereal box.” Or, “While walking down the school hall, I read Jimmy’s t-shirt.” **(grades K-8)**
- What does reading a book offer you that watching a movie does not? and vice versa **(grades 4-8)**
- If you could not read, would you be able to find a job? Hold down a job? Name three jobs that do not require their employees to be literate. **(grades 6-8)**

VOCABULARY WORDS AND CONCEPTS TO REVIEW: **(grades 3-8)**

- Sputnik: Any of a series of Soviet satellites launched into earth orbit, especially the first, in 1957
- Iron Curtain: The military, political, and ideological barrier established between the Soviet bloc and western Europe from 1945 to 1990
- John F. Kennedy: The 35th president of the United States of America
- Sweltering: Oppressively hot and humid
- Desiccated: thoroughly dried out
- Ascending Crags: A steep, rugged mass of rock projecting upward
- Bomb shelter: A place to be protected from a bomb explosion
- The Beatles: A 1964 rock band
- Tomboy: A girl who acts like a boy

USING TECHNOLOGY:

- Using the internet, find the origin of the phrase “Once Upon a Time” **(grades 6-8)**
- Using the internet, find out what a “stink bug” is. **(grades 6-8)**

ACTIVITIES AFTER THE SHOW

DRAWING

- Draw a picture of Mamie from the story “Mamie’s Grocery.” **(grades K-8)**
- Draw the 26 Giant children, plus Igor, from the story “The Giants.” **(grades K-8)**
- Find the story, “The Little Match girl,” by Hans Christian Anderson, in the school library, and draw pictures to go along with the tale. Then, rewrite the ending, such that the little Match girl lives. How is it she was able to live? Was she helped? Who helped her? **(grades K-8)**
- Draw a picture of a wall. Then, draw graffiti on the wall telling the passersby why reading is NOT important. **(grades K-8)**
- Draw a map of the terrain leading to Mamie’s Grocery in Tower Gardens. **(grades K-8)**

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- What is a Tom Boy? If you’re a girl, would you consider yourself a Tom boy? Would you want to know the little girl from Mamie’s Grocery? Why or why not? **(grades K-8)**
- If you met the little Match girl on the street, what would you tell her to comfort her? **(grades K-8)**

INTERNET ACTIVITIES:

- Find three stories, not mentioned in the show, which begin with “Once Upon A Time...” What lessons can you draw from these three stories? Save the Keywords in a Scroll. **(grades 4-8)**

WRITING ACTIVITIES AFTER THE SHOW

- Create a song and some words to sing to comfort the little match girl. **(grades K-8)**
- Write and draw a comic book which continues the adventures of the Giants family. **(grades K-8)**
- Write and draw a comic book which continues the adventures of the little Tom Boy from the story, “Mamie’s Grocery.” **(grades K-8)**
- Write a story about a family of stink bugs. **(grades K-8)**
- If you’ve ever been to camp, or if you’ve ever been to a slumber party, you’ve probably heard a ghost story. Write the story you’ve heard then tell it to the class. **(grades K-8)**
- Interview a family member, preferably an older family member, about one person in their life who made a great impression on them. Take good notes. You can even tape record the interview. Then, write a portrait of that very important person. **(grades 4-8)**
- Build a story as a class: one person begins the story by writing one line. Send the story around from person to person, from student to student. Then, read it aloud at the end. **(grades 2-8)**
- Create a family newsletter talking about the events of the week, of the year and send it to all your family members. **(grades 2-8)**
- List Making: Make a list of everything you liked about the show, *Once Upon A Time... discovering the magic in Reading*. **(grades 2-8)**
- Create a short story with much dialogue about a time when you were pressured into doing something you did not want to do. At the end, tell us the results of having done it and what you learned. **(grades K-8)**
- Write a poem describing Madam Keller, the Fortune Teller. **(grades 2-8)**

ACTIVITIES AT HOME

- Write a story, and get your friend to write a story. And then, hold a storytelling party where all the kids get up and tell a one to five minute story while the other kids listen and watch. Serve refreshments afterwards. **(grades 4-6)**

RECIPES/BAKING

- Make cookies in the shape of crystal balls and hands with life lines on the palms. **(grades K-2)**

CRITICAL THINKING ACTIVITY (grades 6-8)

- Using words and/or music, create a 30 second commercial selling the importance of reading to kids in your school.
- Are you familiar with board games Monopoly and Candy Land? Make a board game about the importance of reading.
- **Family history exercise:** write a personal narrative of a family story and then annotate it with historical footnotes, referring to outside sources for documentation that supports or disproves claims made in the narrative.
- **Book banning argument:** Choose a favorite book you've read in the past and present it to the school board a position paper that recommends banning the book you select. Consider why it is "offensive" or "inappropriate" for school students to read. Remember that you are making an argument, so be sure to use persuasive writing.

DRAMA:

- Find a story you love. Read it many many times. Learn it well. Then, tell it to a group of friends or to the class.

INTERNET ACTIVITIES:

- Email: Write an email to a friend in which you describe what you liked and how you felt about the show, *Once Upon A Time... Discovering the Magic in Reading*. **(grades 6-8)**