

A Peek Behind the Curtain

A live theatre performance requires lots of dedication and teamwork from many different people. The following is some basic information about that, as well as your duties as an audience member that will help create a fun experience for everyone.

Who's Who?

- The director is responsible for putting the show together, from a mere vision to a full production in a short amount of time.
- The cast are the actors in a show.
- It takes a team of dedicated crew members to help put on a show from backstage. They help with makeup, costumes, lights, props and ushering.
- Designers decide what kind of sounds, lights, sets and costumes effectively tell a story.
- The stage manager oversees the rehearsal schedule and performances. He or she also monitors where the actors need to be on stage.

Do's & Don'ts

- Arrive on time for the performance.
- Pay attention to the show. Turn off all cell phones and anything else that beeps, vibrates or lights up. This also means no texting!
- Don't take any photographs during the performance. It's distracting to the actors and your fellow audience members.
- Stay in your seat throughout the entire performance, even if something in the show excites or startles you.
- Don't talk during the performance.
- If something in the show is funny, laugh out loud. If something wonderful happens in the story, clap your hands.

What's Your Role?

Believe it or not, you – the **audience** – are the most important part of a theatre performance! Plays and musicals are created to entertain, enlighten and inspire people. The laughter, tears and applause from audiences are an integral part of the theatre experience.

About San Diego Junior Theatre

Every cast and crew member is enrolled in one of our classes. Ranging from 8 to 18 years old, our students learn from grown-ups who are experienced theatre arts professionals. With their guidance, young people get a taste of what it takes to work in theatre world.



About Kate DiCamillo and *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*

The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane is the fourth published novel of American author Kate DiCamillo. Ms. DiCamillo's first novel, *Because of Winn-Dixie*, won widespread recognition and launched her writing career. Among other accolades, she is the recipient of two Newbery Medals and was appointed the U.S. National Ambassador for Young People's Literature by the Library of Congress for 2014-2015. *Edward Tulane*, with its themes of love, loss, and redemption, has appeared on multiple "Best Books for Children" lists, including the list of 100 all-time favorite children's novels compiled by the *School Library Journal*. In 2006 it won both the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award for children's fiction, and a Parent's Choice Award.

ACTIVITIES

FAVORITE TOYS

The character of "Edward Tulane" is actually a china rabbit given to a young girl as a gift. Ask your students to draw a picture of their favorite toy, and write a brief description that includes the following three things:

- What is unique or special about the toy
- Who gave it to them, or where they got it from
- What they think will happen to the toy when they are grown up

Ask each student to share their drawing and description with the group. Encourage their classmates to ask questions other questions about the toy, to begin a conversation about why toys are so important to children (and even adults!).

THE MAGIC OF STORYTELLING

In Junior Theatre's production of *Edward Tulane*, many of the actors remain on stage during the entire show and take turns telling the story, with some of the actors playing multiple characters and playing musical instruments. The uniqueness of this kind storytelling lies in the collaborative efforts of the ensemble. To give your students a taste of what it's like to tell a story this way, choose a story that your class is already familiar with, like a popular fairy tale. Divide the story into three parts – the beginning, the middle and the end. Then divide your class into three groups and assign each group a part of the story. Each group should be tasked with creating a tableau, or frozen picture, of their part of the story. As each group shows the class their tableau, ask other classmates to narrate what's happening in that moment. Do all three tableaus, with narration, 2-3 times until the process of storytelling happens smoothly. Bravo! You've just become a storytelling ensemble!



CLASS CONVERSATION: WHAT IS A JOURNEY?

"If you have no intention of loving or being loved, then the whole journey is pointless."

– *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, p. 189

In the novel, Edward Tulane starts with one child and has several owners throughout his existence. Through it all, he is guided by the kindness and determination of those he encounters...and by the stars. Ask your students about the metaphor of a journey. What does it mean to travel from one place to the next? Can a journey only happen between physical places, or are there other ways a person can make a journey? What are the kinds of things that happen while you're on a journey? Encourage your students to think about journeys both in the literal and the figurative sense. Ask them why a journey might be important, and how it could impact a person's life.