GLOBAL ARTS:
Performances For Schools
Presents

Most Valuable Player
Friday, April 16, 2010 at 10am
Fine Arts Center Concert Hall

Study Guides for Teachers are also available on our website at www.fineartscenter.com - select For School Audiences under Education, then select Resource Room.

Please fill out our online surveys at http://www.umass.edu/fac/centerwide/school/index.html Thank you!
Welcome
Information for Teachers and Parents

Our goal is to offer high quality performances for young people in a safe and comfortable setting. Please help us by following the below guidelines.

Please arrive early. You should arrive at the theatre 30 minutes prior to the noted start time. Allow for travel time, parking, being seated and bathroom visits. It is important that we begin our performances on time so that all schools can meet their lunch and/or dismissal times.

Be sure to check the location of the performance when making your bus reservations. Performances take place in the Fine Arts Center Concert Hall or Bowker Auditorium in Stockbridge Hall. Please see the map at the end of this guide for driving and drop-off instructions.

Upon arrival your group will be greeted by an usher either at your bus or in the lobby. We do not issue individual tickets for performances. Your usher will direct your group to their reserved seats.

Both theaters are accessible for Mobility Impaired members. An infrared listening system is available in both theaters. Access parking is available adjacent to the theaters. An Access permit should be clearly visible in the parked vehicle. To better meet your needs, please inform us of any special seating requirements one month prior to the performance by calling 413-545-2116.

For the comfort of all our seated patrons, we request that backpacks, lunches and other gear be left on the bus. Also, please remove all hats when seated in the theater.

Food, drinks other than water, smoking, candy and gum are all not allowed in the theater. The use of cell phones, portable music players, cameras or any other recording device, including non-flash photography and cell phone cameras, is strictly prohibited. PLEASE BE SURE TO TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES.

Any teasing, disruptive and rude behavior by students towards each other or to others seated close-by during a performance is not acceptable. Teachers and chaperones will be held responsible for any such incident reported to the Fine Arts Center staff. All complaints received will be forwarded to the schools involved. Repeated offences from the same school/s may result in cancellation of future reservations for shows.
Please read and review the following information with your students.

**We expect** everyone to be a good audience member.

**Good audience members**…………

- Are good listeners
- Keep their hands and feet to themselves
- Do not talk or whisper during the performance
- Do not eat gum, candy, food or drink in the theater
- Turn off all cell phones and do not use portable music players, cameras or any other recording devices
- Stay in their seats during the performance
- Do not disturb their neighbors or other schools in attendance

“Theatre is not theatre without an audience.”

Live theatre differs from watching television or movies. Remember that performers can see and hear you. As an audience member you are a vital contributor to the performance experience that you and those around you will have. How you behave and how you react to the show will affect the artists’ performances. That is why each performance is a unique experience, it will never be repeated exactly the same. Talking to your neighbor, sending text messages, and other similar behaviors are distracting to the rest of the audience and to the artists. Please be respectful of the artists on stage performing for you by listening quietly. Of course, it is appropriate to react to what you are seeing – some things may make you laugh, gasp out loud, or you may be asked to respond by answering questions from the performers, singing along or clapping. Most of all, it is important to be present “in the moment” by being attentive and enjoy the performance. And of course – show your enthusiastic appreciation by applause at the end of the performance!
As part of DCT’s mission to integrate the arts into classroom academics, the *Behind the Curtain Resource Guide* is intended to provide helpful information for the teacher and student to use before and after attending a performance. The activities presented in this guide are suggested to stimulate lively responses and multi-sensory explorations of concepts in order to use the theatrical event as a vehicle for cross-cultural and language arts learning.

Please use our suggestions as springboards to lead your students into meaningful, dynamic learning: extending the dramatic experience of the play.

Dallas Children’s Theater on Tour

**BEHIND THE CURTAIN**

*A Creative & Theatrical Resource Guide for Teachers*
Dallas Children's Theater on Tour

BEHIND THE CURTAIN
A Creative & Theatrical Resource Guide for Teachers

DCT Executive Artistic Director.............. Robyn Flatt

Resource Guide Editor ...................... Marty Sherman
Resource Guide Layout/Design ........... Kim Lyle

Play ............................................. MOST VALUABLE PLAYER
Conceived by ................................. Gayle Cornelison
Written by ................................. Mary Hall Surface and
the original cast of the California Theater Center

Director of Production .................. Andy Long

Cover Art by .............................. Kim Lyle

Special Note: On a few occasions in the play, the "n-word" is spoken by characters who are prejudiced against Jackie Robinson. The use of this word is intended to accurately represent the persecution that Mr. Robinson experienced, in keeping with the historical context. It is not meant to offend the audience in any way, nor is it meant to suggest to children that using the word is permissible. DCT advises using the opportunity to discuss with your students how those types of words, and the unfair treatment that Mr. Robinson faced, are unacceptable in our society.

DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER, one of the top five family theaters in the nation, serves over 270,000 young people from 100 zip codes, 40 cities and 12 counties each year through its eleven main stage productions, touring, educational programming and outreach activities. Since its opening in 1984, this award-winning theater has existed to create challenging, inspiring and entertaining theater, which communicates vital messages to our youth and promotes an early appreciation for literature and the performing arts. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing on theater for youth and families, DCT produces literary classics, original scripts, folk tales, myths, fantasies and contemporary dramas that foster multicultural understanding, confront topical issues and celebrate the human spirit.

DCT is committed to the integration of creative arts into the teaching strategies of academic core curriculum and educating through the arts. Techniques utilized by DCT artists/teachers are based upon the approach developed in Making Sense with Five Senses, by Paul Baker, Ph.D.

DCT founder and Executive Artistic Director, Robyn Flatt defines the artistic mission and oversees the operations of the organization, consisting of twenty-five full time staff members and more than 200 actors, designers, theater artists and educators.

Permission is granted for material included in this Resource Guide to be copied for use in the classroom.
Curtains Up On Putting Together A Performance

Every DCT performance you see is the result of many people working together to create a play. You see the cast perform on stage, but there are people that you do not see who help before, during, and after every production.

Director
- Determines the overall performance “look” of the performance
- Guides the actors in stage movement and character interpretation
- Works with designers to plan the lights and sound, scenery, costumes and make-up, and stage actions

Designers
- Plan the lights, scenery, costumes, make-up, sound, and actions to help bring the director's vision to life
- There are also designers who work to create the posters, advertisements, programs and other media for the performance.

Stage Manager
- Before the performance, creates a cuesheet to guide the crew in getting things on and off the stage during the performances
- During the performance, the stage manager uses this cuesheet to direct people and things on and off the stage at the proper times

Crew
- Build and operate the scenery, costumes, props, and light and sound during the performances

Cast
- Includes all of the performers who present the story on stage

Audience
- That's right! There can be no performance without you, the audience. The role of the audience is unique because you experience the entertainment with the performers and backstage crew. You are a collaborator in the performance and it is important to learn your role so you can join all the people who work to create this DCT production.
Curtains Up On The Role of the Audience

Watching a play is different from watching television or a sporting event. When you watch T.V. you may leave the room or talk. At a sporting event you might cheer and shout and discuss what you’re seeing. Your role as a member of the audience in a play means you must watch and listen carefully because-

- You need to concentrate on what the actors are saying.
- The actors are affected by your behavior because they share the room with you. Talking and moving around can make it difficult for them to concentrate on their roles.
- Extra noises and movement can distract other audience members.

Are you ready for your role in this performance?
Check the box next to the statements that describe proper etiquette for an audience member.

☐ Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun.
☐ Share your thoughts out loud with those sitting near you.
☐ Wave and call out to the actors on stage.
☐ Sit on your knees or stand near your seat.
☐ Bring snacks and gum to enjoy during the show.
☐ Reward the cast and crew with applause when you like a song or dance and at the end of the show.
☐ Arrive on time so that you do not miss anything or disturb other audience members while you are being seated.
☐ Keep all hands and feet and items out of the aisles during the performance.
Learning Activities

Curtains Up After the Performance

Attending a play is an experience unlike any other entertainment experience. Because a play is presented live, it provides a unique opportunity to experience a story “as it happens”. Dallas Children’s Theater brings to life stories through its performances. Many people are involved in the process. Writers adapt the stories you read in order to bring them off the page and on to the stage. Designers and technicians create lighting effects so that you can feel the mood of a scene. Carpenters build scenery and make the “place” of the story become a real place, while costumers and make-up designers can turn actors into the characters you meet in the stories. Directors help actors bring the story to life and make it happen before your very eyes. All of these things make seeing a play very different from television, videos, computer games, or CDs and tapes of stories.

Hold a class discussion when you return from the performance. Ask students the following questions and allow them to write or draw pictures of their experience with DCT.

1. What was the first thing you noticed when you entered the theater? What did you notice first on the stage?
2. What about the set? Draw or tell about things you remember. Did the set change during the play? How was it moved or changed? Was there any space besides the stage where the action took place?
3. How did the lights set the mood of the play? How did they change throughout? What do you think “house lights” are? How do they differ from stage lights? Did you notice different areas of lighting?
4. What did you think about the costumes? Do you think they fit the story? What things do you think the costume designers had to consider before creating the costumes?
5. Was there music in the play? How did it add to the performance?
6. What about the actors? Do you think they were able to bring the characters to life? Did you feel caught up in the story? What things do you think the actors had to work on in order to make you believe they were the characters?

GIVE IT A TRY!

- Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from the stage. Consider your work from the viewpoint of the actors on stage. How might things look from where they stand?
- Write a letter to a cast member telling what you liked about the character.
- Write how you think it might feel to be one of the actors. Are the actors aware of the audience? How might they feel about the reactions of the audience today? How would you feel before the play began? What about after the show ends?
- Which job would you like to try? Acting, Directing, Lighting and Sounds, Stage Manager, Set designer, Costume designer or another role? What skills might you need to complete your job?
- Choose a favorite story and draw or use the computer to create a program cover design for a theatrical adaptation of your story.
Most Valuable Player

Curtains Up on the Authors

Most Valuable Player is unique in that it was written by a group of individuals. The director of the California Theatre Center, Mr. Gayle Cornelison, conceived the idea for the show and Mary Hall Surface took the idea and wrote and developed the play along with the original company (members) of the CTC. Consider a discussion of the merits of working together to create something. Look for comparisons between working as a team to write a play and working together as a team in baseball. What might Jackie Robinson have to say about Most Valuable Player and its creation?

Curtains Up on SOCIAL STUDIES

Most Valuable Player tells the story of Jackie Robinson, whose extraordinary determination helped win the fight against racial inequality and the prejudices that were prevalent in American society throughout his lifetime. Use the following activities before the performance to help your students understand the social and political injustices Jackie Robinson and other African-Americans faced.

“The right of every American to first-class citizenship is the most important issue of our time.”
– Jackie Robinson

Discuss the following words with your students. Provide dictionaries for students to clearly define the meanings of: prejudice, discrimination, equality, and boycott.

Why do you think people are prejudiced?
What do you think causes prejudiced thinking?
Do you think people can change their thinking? Why or why not?
Does discrimination still exist today?
What examples can you name?
What measures have we taken to protect American citizens from discrimination?
What forms does discrimination take beyond that of race?

Some of the St. Louis Cardinals threatened to boycott during the playoff game with the Dodgers because of Jackie Robinson’s presence in the League.
What other significant boycott events in our history of civil rights can you name?
When is boycotting an effective method of resistance?
When would it be ineffective?

“Jackie, we’ve got no army. There’s virtually nobody on our side. No owner, no umpires, very few newspapermen. And I’m afraid that many fans may be hostile. We’ll be in a tough position. We can win only if we can convince the world that I am doing this because you’re a great ballplayer, and a fine gentleman.”  - Branch Rickey, president and general manager of the Brooklyn Dodgers
Curtains Up on SOCIAL STUDIES (continued)

The Brooklyn Dodgers' president, Mr. Branch Rickey shared Jackie Robinson's frustrations about the inequalities and discrimination within the baseball league but he encouraged Jackie to "fight" using "passive resistance."

Use the following questions as a starting point for this activity.
What is passive resistance?
Why would Branch Rickey encourage Jackie Robinson not to fight back?
Why does it sometimes take more courage not to fight those who antagonize us?
Did the technique work for Jackie Robinson?
What finally influenced him to alter his approach in dealing with people who were against him?

USE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

Allow students to work as a class and list other American citizens who worked peacefully to effect a change in our social or political systems. Assign small groups the task of researching and gathering information to present to the class. Provide each group a copy of the outline list for preparing their presentations:

Include the following in your group report:

I. Visual Presentation: provide a collage, a power point presentation, video, or other video representation of your subject. Use photos, words, drawings, and other images to capture the essence of the person you have researched.

II. Audio Presentation: use music or vocal images to create a "soundtrack" to your presentation. Be creative!

III. Written Presentation: prepare a written report describing your subject and his or her influence on America's (or the world's) social or political systems. Use the following questions to help you in your research.

• In what ways did your subject's life affect his/her desire to work for change?
• What actions did your subject take to work for change?
• What similarities and differences did you find between the life and example of your subject and those of Jackie Robinson?
Curtains Up on WRITING

Extra! Extra! Read All About It!
Imagine you are a sports journalist assigned to cover the National League playoffs between the 1947 Brooklyn Dodgers and St. Louis Cardinals. You have an exclusive interview with Jackie Robinson before the game. Write a list of questions you would like to ask him then write an article about the game based on what you learned at DCT's performance of MVP. Try taking it one step further and read some articles from the late 1940's. Examine the language usage and write your article using similar terminology and structure.

What's In a Phrase?
Choose one of the following statements made by Jackie Robinson and write your reaction to it. What do you believe is meant by the statement? Do you agree or disagree with it? Why or why not?
“There's not an American in this country free until every one of us is free.”
“A life is not important except in the impact it has on other lives.”
“How you played in yesterday's game is all that counts.”

Poetry in Motion
“There was never a man in the game who could put mind and muscle together quicker than Jackie Robinson.”
-- Branch Rickey

Write a descriptive poem about Jackie Robinson using the knowledge you've gained from the show. The following format will help you.

JACKIE ROBINSON
Provide a noun describing him
Add two adverbs
Add three adjectives
Rename the subject with a noun

Center your poem on a sheet of paper and use decorative illustrations before displaying it in the classroom.

Curtains Up on ART

Create a multimedia collage of images that depict either the history of racial inequality in our country or the development of baseball as “America's Pastime”. Use a variety of media—pencil, crayon, pastels, chalk, paint, photographs and other print media. Display the collages in the classroom or hallway and allow your students time to study and reflect on them.
Curtains Up on MATH

*Sabermetrics* is the official term given to the analysis of baseball through objective evidence, particularly baseball statistics. The term was coined by Bill James and is derived from SABR, which is an acronym that stands for the Society for American Baseball Research.

**Give it a Try!** Distribute baseball cards to students and discuss what the statistics on the cards mean. Then use the following formulas to determine the statistics based on hypothetical situations.

**Batting Statistics**
Batting average is determined by dividing the number of base hits by the total number of at bats.
On-base percentage is determined by dividing the total number of hits plus walks plus hits by pitch by at bats plus walks plus hits by pitch plus sacrifice flies.
Slugging percentage is found by dividing the total number of bases of all base hits by the total number of times at bat.

Try using sabermetrics to objectively analyze Jackie Robinson's career.

Jackie Robinson's Career Stats
Games (G): 1382
At-Bats (AB): 4877
Runs (R): 947
Hits (H): 1518
Doubles (2B): 273
Strike Outs (SO): 291
Triples (3B): 54
Home Runs (HR): 137
Walks (BB): 740
Runs Batted In (RBI): 734
Hits By Pitch (HP): 72

**Diamond Math**

The ball field itself is a mystic creation, the Stonehenge of America." - Roger Kahn in *A Season in the Sun* (1997)

Make copies of the baseball diamond layout sheet (page 12) for use with these activities:
Using the measurements on the layout sheet, determine how long it would take runners to make it to first, second, and third base at varying speeds.
What is the distance between second base and home plate?
How long would a runner need to make a double play if he ran 5 mph?
Investigate the Pythagorean theory and determine its application to the baseball diamond.

What other geometric figures are included in the design of a baseball diamond?
Curtains Up on HISTORY

Use the following facts to create a timeline of integration within Major League Baseball.

1845- Alexander Cartwright codifies the rules of baseball.
1867- The National Association of Baseball Players rejects the all-black Philadelphia Pythians from joining the league.
1876- The first major baseball league is formed and named The National League.
1878- Bud Fowler becomes the first African-American to cross the color barrier in organized baseball but he is shuffled between various teams until 1884.
1883- Moses "Fleet" Walker joins the minor league as a catcher and in 1884 he became the first black major league player when he joined the American Association Toledo Blue Stockings.
1887- In July, the International League bans future contracts with black players. By 1899, there were no black major league players left.
1901- In an attempt to break the color barrier, Baltimore Oriole manager John McGraw adds Charlie Grant to the team roster under the name Chief Tokohamato. His plan fails because fans recognize Grant because he was a prominent player on an all-black team.
1920- On February 14, Rube Foster organizes eight teams in the first black professional baseball league, the Negro National League.
1959- On July 21, the Boston Red Sox sign Pumpsie Green and become the last major league team to integrate.

Use your timeline to consider the following:
For decades, baseball has been considered "America's Pastime" and is used as an example in phrases like "Baseball, Mom, and Apple Pie". In what way does has the history of baseball's integration mirrored that of other areas of our society?
What role do sports play as an example for the larger society?
What role has baseball played in American culture over the years? What influence does it continue to have?

How has baseball been incorporated into American movies, literature, music, and advertising?

Real Characters/ Real People
The characters in Most Valuable Player are based on people who really were a part of Jackie Robinson's life. Use the internet and your library to find photographs and biographical information on some of the other characters in the play: Branch Rickey, Pee Wee Reese, and Leo Durocher. You might also be interested to find information on Jackie Robinson's younger brother who came in second to Jesse Owens in the Olympics! See what you can find out on your own.
Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the building, procedures are in place to ensure that the audience can exit safely.

Sections 4, 5, 6
Exit through the lobby.

Sections 1, 2, 3 & Pit
Exit toward stage.

Note: Interior house conditions may necessitate alternate exit routes.

Mezzanine 1, 2, 3
Exit rear through lobby.

Balconies 1, 2 exit toward stage, up two flights and down interior fire escape.
PARKING AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE FINE ARTS CENTER’S
CONCERT HALL and RAND THEATER

School Bus Parking: Students should be dropped-off at Haigis Mall off of Massachusetts Avenue. University Security will direct buses to an appropriate parking lot during the performance (typically by the football stadium). PLEASE BE SURE YOUR BUS DRIVER KNOWS THAT ALL PERFORMANCES LAST APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR AND THEY SHOULD RETURN A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE ANTICIPATED END TIME. If drivers are not with the buses, they may miss the radio call from security asking them to return for pick-up, resulting in unnecessary delays returning to your school.

Individual cars: If necessary, individuals may drop-off students with a chaperone at Haigis Mall (you will be directed by security to the mid-point turn of Haigis Mall – see map) prior to parking. We recommend parking in the Campus Center Parking Garage to avoid searching for a metered space. It is a five-minute walk to the Concert Hall. All other available parking during weekdays is at meters. Available lots and pricing (current as of 1/1/07) are listed below:

Parking in the Garage is available to our patrons at a discounted rate of $1. To receive this rate you MUST give the Garage attendant a parking pass. To receive your pass, please call our office to let us know that you will be arriving by car. Parking passes are sent with the invoices. Please call (413) 545-2116 if you didn’t receive one.

Parking meters are enforced Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5PM. Meter rates are $1.00 per hour.

Parking Garage – near Campus Center, across from the Mullins Center off Commonwealth Avenue
Lot 34 – Behind Visitors Center with 3, 5 & 10-hour meters available
Haigis Mall – 2 hour maximum on meters
Lot 62 - Adjacent to Fernald Hall with 3 hour maximum on meters, limited spaces available.

From the North: (Vermont, Greenfield) I-91 south to Route 116. Follow signs on 116 “To the University of Massachusetts.” Exit ramp leads to Massachusetts Avenue. Turn left (east) on to Massachusetts Avenue toward the campus. Continue through one light and watch for Lot 34 by the Visitors Center on your right and the entrance to Haigis Mall on your left.

From the South: (Springfield, Holyoke) I-91 north to Route 9. Turn right (east) on Route 9 over the Coolidge Bridge and through Hadley. Turn left (north) on Route 116 (across from Staples) heading toward campus. Turn right at first exit at “University of Massachusetts,” then bear right onto Massachusetts Avenue toward campus. Continue through one light and watch for Lot 34 by the Visitors Center on your right and the entrance to Haigis Mall on your left.

From the West: (Northampton, Pittsfield) Route 9 east through Northampton and over Coolidge Bridge. Follow remaining directions under “From the South”.

From the East: (Belchertown, Ludlow) North on Routes 21, 181 or 202 to Route 9 into Amherst. Right on to North Pleasant Street (main downtown intersection), north through center of town. Turn left at Triangle Street (Bertucci’s Restaurant on your right), rejoining North Pleasant Street. To reach Lot 34 and Haigis Mall continue on main road, which becomes Massachusetts Avenue. Haigis Mall will be on your right, Lot 34 on your left.
For Concert Hall, Rand Theater and Bowker Auditorium – Patrons traveling by car are encouraged to park in the parking garage. Discounted parking is available in the garage for $1. A parking permit is required for discounted parking in the garage. Please call the Arts & Educational Programs Office if you require permits at (413) 545-2116. All other parking on campus is at available meters at the rate of $1 per hour. Parking is enforced Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5 PM.

Buses will drop-off students as indicated on map. Buses will be given parking instructions by Campus Security.