



STUDY GUIDE FOR

The Three Little Kittens

Adapted by Kevin M Reese

TO THE PARENT/TEACHER

This guide has been provided to help children benefit the most from experiencing a live theatrical event. The activities described herein are only suggestions. Please feel free to pick and choose the things that will most benefit your children in the time you have available. It is our hope that the performance is not only entertaining, but is a valuable educational experience as well.

You will find that some of the activities contained in this guide are geared for younger, some for older children-- but there is something for everyone. Please feel free to reproduce and distribute any of the enclosed pages and activities for your personal use.

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Theatre Etiquette

1. Attending a theatrical performance is a social event. Just as the way you act (and behave) in church or temple is different than the way you act on the playground, there is certain behavior that is appropriate in a live theatre. Discuss with your children the types of behavior that is appropriate when they are members of an audience.
2. Explain that they need to act differently when they're watching a live play than if they're watching a movie in a theatre. Live actors can hear the audience's laughter and applause as well as their talking to their neighbor or rustling papers. And their responses-- appropriate or not-- really do affect the actors' performance. The end line is: How would they want to be treated if THEY were up on the stage.
3. Write to the actors. After you see the show, have your students write a letter to their favorite character or draw a picture of their favorite character or scene and send it to the theatre. The actors would LOVE to hear from your students. The actors may even have time to send a reply of some sort to your class (because of the volume of mail they receive, individual replies are probably not possible). You'll find our address in this guide.
4. Audience Participation. Normally, audience members should never talk during the play-- and especially not talk directly to the actors (it distracts other audience member and may even make the actors forget their lines). But the plays by KMR Scripts are unique in that we offer the audience special opportunities to participate in the production. They will probably not be asked to come onstage, but there are various times throughout the production where the actors will ask them questions or ask them to use their imaginations and pretend they are animals, trees, or people. At those times we encourage the audience to participate and/or answer them whole-heartedly (but not in an overly loud yell). Over the years, this has become one of the hallmarks of KMR Scripts' productions.

Safe Surfing on the Internet.

- 1 Encourage your young students to use the Internet as a great place for learning.
- 2 Make Internet surfing a family affair. Parents should know where children are on the Internet. Children should know and abide by the rules set down by parents as to what areas are appropriate. Keep computer use ONLY in well-trafficked areas-- no privacy.
- 3 Chatting is fun, make sure it is SAFE. Use the same rules for Internet chat that you use for talking to strangers on the sidewalk. Be friendly but cautious-- guard your anonymity.
- 4 Don't be afraid to use software that blocks objectionable material and sites on the Net. One wrong turn or misspelled search word can end a child in an inappropriate area.
- 5 Teach your kids "netiquette": the proper language and decorum of the Internet community.
- 6 Teach them to come to you with any questions or problems they encounter on the Internet.
7. Parents should screen all email written and/or received by their children.

Activities & Discussion

VOCABULARY

Here are some of the words and phrases the children will encounter during the performance:

masculine	predicament	catnap	identify	workmanship	fib
confession	appreciate	labor union	catnip	kitty litter	sleuth
exceptional	alternate	on the job training	spick-and-span (clean)		

- 1> **Ligers & Tigons.** Tom Cat tells us about his favorite animals that come from unusual combinations of animals (Lion + Tiger = Tigon) What combinations of animals can your class come up with that have funny/unusual names? (Dog + Cat = Cog or Dat, etc) There are also many jokes out there about this: “What do you get when you cross a dog and a rooster? – A cockadoodle poodle”
- 2> **Story Quilt.** Tell students they will each get to make a square for the paper patchwork quilt. Hang a piece of dark colored butcher paper (3' X 6') on the wall. Have each student design a square about a part of the story on a piece of art paper (10" X 10 "). Cut the edges of the squares with pinking shears before pasting them onto the quilt.
- 3> **Class play.** Using the KMR Scripts production as a guide, have the class come up with their own version of THE THREE LITTLE KITTENS (or another fairy tale). Write the script, cast and rehearse the play and perform it for another class.
- 4> **Draw a picture of their favorite character or event in the play or write a letter to their favorite character.** Display it on the wall or bulletin board. Or, send it to theatre. The actors LOVE to receive mail from their audiences.
- 5> **Have the students write a review of the play.** What were their favorite parts? Their least favorite? Did anything happen that they didn't understand or seemed confusing? Did they like the music or did it "get in the way of the story?" What did they think of the costumes and scenery? Help them understand that their opinions are most certainly valid but will most likely differ from that of others (and that is OK). Being able to objectively discuss their opinions and others' is definitely a skill that will benefit them the rest of their lives.
- 6> **Possible themes for papers or discussion:**
 - ▶ What was your favorite character in the story? Why?
 - ▶ Why is it important that we always tell the truth?
 - ▶ If you could live during another time in history, which would it be? Why?
 - ▶ What would you do if your dog or cat suddenly started talking?
 - ▶ What would you do if you woke up tomorrow and you were a cat?
- 7> **What lessons did the students learn from the story?**
 - ▶ Don't fib because it's the same as lying.
 - ▶ Learn to take care of your things.
 - ▶ Do your chores.
 - ▶ There are ways to make even the most boring task seem fun.
 - ▶ Using your imagination and pretending are fun.

Social Studies & Geography

- 1> Improvisation. One of the purposes of Social Studies is to understand the customs and traditions of other people, to see that there is more than one way to live-- or do anything. A good way to help the students think along these lines is to have them do some role play (improvisations). Have the students make up short skits about THE THREE LITTLE KITTENS. They don't need to do the whole story--just a part of it. They don't need to confine themselves to only the characters in our play (or a film or storybook)--they can be creative in putting other characters into the situation. The important thing is that they walk in the shoes of someone different, seeing how life can look different from another perspective.
- 2> Draw their house. The cats in our play are “indoor” cats– they don’t go outside. Their whole world is their house. Draw a map, floor plan, or picture of the inside of their house. Show the living room, kitchen, bedroom, their mother’s room, where the cat litter is– they may even add some that weren’t shown in the play, but are seen in their imaginations.
- 3> Lies vs fibs. The Mama Cat tried to teach her kittens that there is no such thing as a harmless lie (AKA: white lie or fib, half-truths, etc.). Help your students understand that they must guard their reputation for always being truthful. The story of the Little Boy Who Cried Wolf is a perfect example, also used in the show. Also discuss how we may lie by not only what we say– but also by what we DON’T say.
- 4> All about Cats: (thanks to www.catsinfo.com)
 - ▶ Cats were first domesticated about 4000 years ago (cir 2000 BC) in Egypt.
 - ▶ In ancient Egypt, you would be sentenced to death if you killed a cat.
 - ▶ There are 36 recognized breeds of pedigree cats. Siamese cats are the most popular breed.
 - ▶ It has been scientifically proven that owning cats is good for our health and can decrease the occurrence of high blood pressure and other illnesses. Stroking a cat can help to relieve stress, and the feel of a purring cat on your lap conveys a strong sense of security and comfort. But purring does not always indicate that a cat is happy. Cats will also purr loudly when they are distressed or in pain.
 - ▶ A cat has more bones than a human being. We humans have 206 and the cat has 230 bones.
 - ▶ The average litter of kittens is between 2 - 6 kittens.
 - ▶ An adult cat has 30 teeth, 16 on the top and 14 on the bottom. An adult human has 36 teeth.
 - ▶ When a cat rubs up against you, the cat is marking you with it's scent claiming ownership.
 - ▶ On average, a cat will sleep for 16 hours a day.
 - ▶ The average lifespan of an outdoor-only cat is about 3 to 5 years while an indoor-only cat can live 16 years or much longer. The life expectancy of cats has nearly doubled over the last fifty years.
 - ▶ It is believed that after the first 2 years of a cat's life, each feline year is approximately 4 human years. Cats are adolescents at about 6 months to one year old, middle aged at about 8 years of age, and considered senior citizens at about 12 years of age.

Math

Introduce a graphing activity by asking which of the characters in THE THREE LITTLE KITTENS your students liked the best. Label the different characters of the story on a bar graph (perhaps put a picture on it, too). Survey the class and record the numbers on the graph by coloring one space per student above the correct character. Discuss the information revealed on the graph by asking: Which character was liked the most? Which character was liked the least? Were any characters liked the same? You might also graph their favorite scene or part of the story or whether they liked the book, cartoon, or play better.

Color Page