



**NEW MEXICO YOUNG ACTORS
SNOW QUEEN STUDY GUIDE**

SUMMARY

SNOW QUEEN
by Stacey Lane

Directed by Paul Bower
Assistant Director: Lee Megill
Costumes by Jaime Pardo

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to New Mexico Young Actors production of ***Snow Queen***. We are offering this study guide as a way to help you prepare your classes for our upcoming production. Included in this guide are a synopsis of our story, a list of characters, a vocabulary list and lesson ideas, as well as some audience protocol reminders. We always enjoy hearing from you and your students and look forward to receiving any pictures, stories, or comments about the production. Thank you for your interest and support of New Mexico Young Actors. We look forward to seeing you soon!

Synopsis

The fairy tale, *Snow Queen*, was originally written and published by Danish author, Hans Christian Andersen in December of 1844. It was an originally told in seven stories, or chapters. Our play was written by Stacey Lane and published by Pioneer Drama Service in 2014. Our story follows the little girl, Gerda, in search of her cousin Kay, who has been kidnapped by the cruel Snow Queen and her minions, the Flurries, and taken to the Snow Queen's castle in the far north. In her quest to rescue Kay, Gerda meets many other characters along the way, some of whom will help her, while a few will try to take advantage of her. Gerda eventually finds the castle, rescues her beloved cousin, and warms the heart of the Queen.

Cast of Characters

Goosebump, a minion
Shiver, another minion
Snow Queen, icy villain
Puppy, sweet young dog
Birthday Kid, excited child
New Mother, proud mommy
Kay, Gerda's cousin
Gerda, adventurer
Flora, magical old woman
Petunia, flower

Daffodil, another flower
Arctic Fox, high-spirited companion
Crow, misguided gossip
Princess Dawndrell, generous royal
Caleb, royal gardener
Mumbles McCoy, inarticulate robber
Hagiba, ringleader of the robbers
Broody Brody, moody robber
Freckle, little robber girl
Reindeer, prisoner of the robbers

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION (PRE-PERFORMANCE)

1. *How many of you have experienced a live dramatic performance? What did you see?*

2. *What are some of the differences between seeing a live performance and watching television or going to a movie?*

- Theater features live actors on-stage. They have spent many weeks rehearsing for the performance.
- The audience is a very important part of the performance. Appreciation and enthusiasm for the performers is shown by close attention and participation and applause at the proper times. The success of the play often depends on the audience.
- The atmosphere of a live performance is entirely different from your home, where the television is always available.
- It is easy to identify with live actors. You can see how they use their bodies and voices to convey different emotions.
- Actors wear costumes and make-up to help create the impression of the characters they play.
- There is much more to most live performances than actors. Special sets, effects, lighting, music, costumes, and of course, the audience add to the total experience.

3. *Introduce your students to the following theatrical terms:*

Box Office • Acts & Scenes • Producer • Program • Overture • Costumes • Props • Director • Stage • Curtain Call • Stagehand • Lobby • Usher • Musical Theater • Orchestra Pit • Playwright • Scenery • Makeup • Actor • Balcony • Play

4. *Introduce your students to the following terminology found in our comedy:*

Maleficent, Imp, Peculiar, Bouquet, Snickerdoodle, Dillydally, Ransom, Hooligan, Shenanigans, Tundra, Teamwork, Lullaby, Determined, Flurries

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Discuss the role of the audience and proper theater etiquette.

- Arrive on time so that you do not miss anything and so that you will not disturb the rest of the audience while trying to get comfortable. Lights may go out before the performance begins and seating is very difficult after that time.
- It is easier for you (and the rest of the audience) to see and hear the performance if you stay in your seat and listen very carefully.
- Try your best to remain in your seat once the performance has begun. There is no intermission during the performance of *Snow Queen*, which is 50 minutes in length.
- Although you may wish to say something to the actors, you need to hold your thoughts, as you will disturb their concentration.

- Sing or participate *if and only if* you are invited to do so. Your participation is often very important.
- Show the cast and crew your appreciation for their hard work with applause. Do this when you like a song, dance, or joke.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES (POST- PERFORMANCE)

1. *Write an Epilogue:* Predict what happened next in the story. Write an article in which you tell the readers what happened after the Snow Queen becomes the Sun Queen. What happened to the other characters in the story? Be as specific as possible and keep with the spirit of the original story.

2. *Discuss real life situations that reflect the moral in Snow Queen.*

a) Ask the children what stories they can come up with that illustrate how important it is to be honest and kind in all situations. Discuss how selfishness not only harms other people, but can also be harmful to the selfish person emotionally and spiritually.

b) *Snow Queen* presents a message of kindness and love. Discuss why the Snow Queen may have wanted to kidnap Kay. What caused her to change her heart at the end of the story? How can a positive word impact someone who is facing a hard time?

c) In Gerda's quest to find Kay she encounters many characters who help her along the way. Share some lessons that are learned through these encounters. How can we be helpful to those around us? Develop a group project to help address a need in your local community.

d) Our story emphasizes the importance of teamwork. In her quest to find Kay, Gerda assembles a team that help her find the Snow Queen's castle. How would the story change if Gerda had to make it on her own? How did each of the team members (Arctic Fox, Crow, Reindeer, Freckle) contribute to Gerda's success? This is the perfect opportunity to explore more group projects as a class.

3. *Music:* Was music used in the performance? Was it live or recorded? How could you tell? When was the music used? Why? Did it help develop the plot? What types of music were used, or were different types used? Can you describe how different kinds of music would make you have different kinds of feelings? When a play is a musical, an actor must have additional skills. Can you name some? A musical costs much more to produce. Can you name some additional expenses? (e.g., orchestra, a practice piano, a score, a choreographer, etc.)

4. *Sets:* Describe the sets used in the play you just saw. What props or details were used to suggest specific times or settings? How could lighting be changed to create a mood, season, time of day, etc.? What materials might have been used in building the sets? How were the sets and props moved on and off the stage? Describe a simple scene (a day in school, a trip to the mall, a ride in the car or on the bus) and ask students to describe a basic set for the scene.

5. *Costumes*: What would you need to know to create costumes for a play (research, sewing, theatrical effects, knowledge of fabric, etc.)? Why is the right costume important to the character in the play?

6. *Dance*: Describe the kind of dancing in the play. How is it different from the kinds of dancing you might know? What purposes could dance have in a play?

7. *Art activities*:

- Draw a picture of a favorite scene or character.
- Draw a picture of what the audience might look like from on-stage.
- Re-create a scene from the play using clay forms in a box.
- Design a program cover for the play using the title, date, and an illustration inspired by the play.
- Draw an advertisement for the play.

8. *Language arts*:

- Choose a character that you liked and write a one-day's diary for that character. Write a letter to a cast member telling what you liked about her or his character.
- Discuss the play. Was there a hero or heroine? A villain? The setting? Was there a moral to the story?
- In 25 words or fewer, describe the plot of the play.
- Discuss the work of a movie/theater critic. Write a newspaper-type review of the play
- Discuss live theater. Are the actors aware of the audience? Why might an actor change his presentation because of audience reaction? Would it be easy to be an actor? Conduct an interview with a classmate pretending to be one of the actors and find out the actor's feelings about being on stage, memorization, rehearsals, costumes, audience, etc.
- Make a list of all the personnel needed for a play (director, actors, musicians, author, designers—set, costumes, lights, sound—stagehands, choreographer, producer, etc).

SNOW QUEEN – INTERNET ACTIVITIES

http://hca.gilead.org.il/snow_que.html

The Snow Queen fairy tale

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/contributor/hans-christian-andersen>

Biography of Hans Christian Andersen

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Christian_Andersen

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