



NEW MEXICO YOUNG ACTORS

Present

Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Adapted and dramatized by **Vera Morris**
Based on the story by **Washington Irving**

TEACHER STUDY GUIDE

Dear Teachers,

Welcome to New Mexico Young Actors production of ***Legend of Sleepy Hollow***. We are offering this study guide to help you prepare your classes for our upcoming production at your school. Included in this guide are a **synopsis** of our story, a **list of characters** you'll meet in the play, 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 after our visit. Thank you for your support of New Mexico Young Actors!

LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW SYNOPSIS

Some of the spooky ghosts of the village introduce the story. The ghosts exit and residents enter discussing how the town will provide for the new school master, **Ichabod Crane**. Sixteen-year-old **Katrina van Tassel** appears with the young girls, **Hilda** and **Greta**. They gossip about the Sleepy Hollow boys, including **Brom Bones**, who has his eye set on Katrina. Bones enters with his sidekick, **Yost**, both attempting to impress the girls with their brawn. Soon after, Ichabod Crane arrives and immediately takes a liking to Katrina and displays his love of good food. Ichabod proves to be quite the disciplinarian when he is later found in the schoolhouse teaching multiplication to his pupils. To the delight of the students, Ichabod is distracted as Katrina enters and invites him to a sewing circle with the locals where there will be plenty of vittles and ghost stories, including the legend of the **Headless Horseman** of Sleepy Hollow. Ichabod attends the event that evening and is accosted by ghosts in the graveyard while walking home, an occurrence he believes to be a fantasy and blames on indigestion from the piccalilli at the party. After a choir rehearsal later that week, Ichabod offers to walk Katrina home and is set upon by the jealous Brom Bones. Katrina stands up to Bones as Ichabod cowardly ducks behind her. Bones and Yost get even later by releasing a beehive into the classroom while Ichabod is teaching. Sometime later, there is a party at the home of the **Van Hudsons**. In attendance is Ichabod, who garners the courage to ask for Katrina's hand in marriage, a request which is firmly denied. Bones overhears and angrily kicks Ichabod out of the party. Ichabod finds himself once more walking home alone through the graveyard where he is chased by the infamous headless horseman and never seen in Sleepy Hollow again.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Woman in White, Indian Chief, Pirate – ghosts of Sleepy Hollow

Katrina Van Tassel – a young woman living in Sleepy Hollow, the protagonist of our story

Mrs. Trenkler – Katrina's aunt

Mrs. Van Tassel – Katrina's mother

Farmer Stuyvesant, Widow Van Doorn, Mrs. Van Hudson – citizens of Sleepy Hollow

Hilda, Greta – Katrina’s closest friends

Brom Bones – a young man who is in love with Katrina, always ready for a fight or some fun

Yost – sidekick of Brom Bones

Ichabod Crane – the new schoolmaster in town, a bit pompous perhaps

Willie, Wilda, Johanna, Hendrick, Henrietta – students in Ichabod Crane’s classroom

The Headless Horseman – legend, ghost, or a fable... he rides at night

LESSON IDEAS

Preparing Your Class for a Live Theater Experience

1. *How many of you have experienced a live theater performance? What did you see?*
2. *What are some of the differences between seeing a play and watching television or going to a movie?*

- Theater features live onstage actors. They have spent many weeks rehearsing for the performance.
- The audience is a very important part of the performance. Appreciation for the performers is shown by close attention, participation, and applause at the proper times. The success of the production often depends on the audience.
- 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 portray.
- 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.

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 in your seat.
- It is easier for you (and the rest of the audience) to see and hear the performance if you stay seated and listen very carefully.

- There is no intermission during the performance, which is 60 minutes in length. Be sure to use the restroom before the performance begins.
- 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.
- Listen to how the music sets the mood and affects your own feelings.
- Show the cast and crew your appreciation for their hard work with applause after a song, dance, or joke.

Theatrical Terms to Know:

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

Classroom Discussion and Extension Activities (Pre- or Post-Performance)

Content Vocabulary

The following are some words you will hear spoken in *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*:

Bachelor	Peck
Braggart	Piccalilli
Bushel	Pugilism
Conscientious	Rogue
Enunciation	Superstitious
Geography	Swashbuckling
Hessian	Vexing
Impudence	Vittles
Insolence	Whippoorwill
Maxim	Widow

Reading/Writing

- Read aloud the original story of *Legend of Sleepy Hollow* by Washington Irving to your class or consider reading excerpts if time doesn't allow you to read the entire book.
- Write a description of one of the characters and share it with a partner. After sharing, students can question each other about the ideas presented. This can be done with a drawing for lower levels.
- Write an Epilogue: Predict what happened next in the story. Write an article in which you tell the readers what happened after Ichabod Crane disappeared from Sleepy Hollow. What happened to the other characters in the story? Be as specific as possible and keep with the spirit of the original story.

Other Curricular Connections

- Discuss real life situations that reflect the moral in *Legend of Sleepy Hollow*.
 - a) Ask the children what important traits they value in another person. Why is it important to be sincere and honest in your relationships? Explore how putting others first is better than bragging about oneself.
 - b) Discuss how Ichabod Crane could have been a better teacher. How could he have changed his approach to discipline? What about Ichabod's pursuit of Katrina? Did he have honorable intentions?
 - c) Reflect on the characters in the play. Ask your students which character they identify with the most. Why? List positive and negative traits of each character. What might each character do to improve his or her flaws?
- Draw a picture of a favorite scene or character.
- Draw an advertisement or program cover for the play.
- Ask the students to identify musical instruments that they heard in the play. Discuss other instruments that could have been added for greater effect.
- How did the music express the action or emotion of the story (tempo, volume, range of notes, etc.)?
- Recreate a scene from the play in your classroom. Assign students to play various characters and have them work together to create short scenes from the play.

INTERNET RESOURCES

Access the complete text of Washington Irving's short story, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, at Project Gutenberg:
www.gutenberg.org

This tourism-based website is devoted to the history and lore of the real town of Sleepy Hollow, New York:
<https://visitsleepyhollow.com/>

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