



By Dwayne Hartford

**Welcome to Childsplay's
Resource
Guide for Teachers and
Parents**

We hope you find this guide helpful in preparing your children for an enjoyable and educational theatrical experience. Included you'll find things to talk about before and after seeing the performance, classroom activities that deal with curriculum connections and education standards, and resource materials.

The Story:

The world-famous master storyteller, Marie, with the help of her two assistants, Liz and Enrique, tells the story, "A Ribbon of Green." This is the tale of a river in the desert. The three first take the audience far back in time to when the river was created through the friendship of the Land, the Wind and the Water. Using puppets, projections and other theatrical magic, the three characters show how life came to the river – first plants, birds and animals, then early native people, followed by pioneers and farmers. Throughout all this, the storytellers show how the river adapted to suit the needs of those who settled along its banks.

Liz is a young, earnest environmentalist who is passionate about the desert and the river. She believes that the story is ultimately a tragic one, with man destroying this fragile habitat. Enrique hopes to be a master storyteller himself. In his optimistic, if not oblivious view, the story of the river is a happy one. Marie tries to keep her two antagonistic assistants on task, which grows more and more difficult as the story progresses. Eventually she gives up and turns the story over to them, telling them it is theirs to finish. Forced to work together, the two find that the only way the story can continue is if man learns that it is not enough for this river in the desert to adapt to him. He must adapt to life here. And if this is learned, the story of the river need not end at all, but can continue on through countless generations of storytellers.

Directed by **Anthony Runfola**

Scenic Design by **Jeff Lemire**

Costume Design by **D. Daniel Hollingshead**

Sound Design by **Christopher Neumeyer**

Projection Design by **Anthony Runfola**

Stage Manager: **Alexandra Corder**

The Cast

Marie.Christiann Cosler-Thijm

Enrique. Ritchie Chilaca Montes

Liz. Cynthia Callejas

School Tour, September– December, 2008

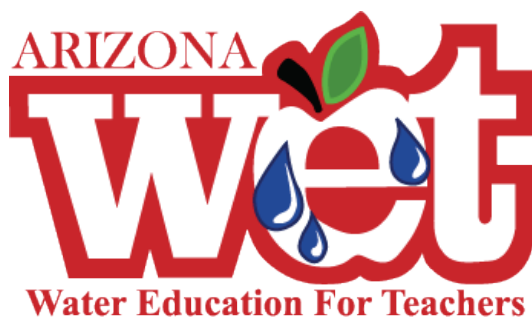
Production support:

Scottsdale Cultural Council

Arizona Commission on the Arts

The Phoenix Suns

Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture through appropriations from the Phoenix City Council
City of Glendale/Glendale Arts Commission



Things to Talk About and Do :

Here are topics for discussion or activities to use before or after seeing the production:

nature • science • water conservation • eco-friendly • environment • desert • storytelling • southwest history • native peoples

Theatre Etiquette:

It's helpful to review the rules of theatre etiquette before seeing a show, especially since this may be the first live theatre experience for some of your students. Please take a moment to discuss the following pointers prior to seeing the performance:

- ▶Use the restroom before seeing the show as we do not have intermission during our school performances.
- ▶Stay seated during the performance.
- ▶ Be respectful to the performers and other people in the audience by not talking during the performance. Remember, the actors can see and hear the audience just like you can see and hear them.
- ▶Appropriate responses such as applause or laughter are always welcome.
- ▶Food, candy, gum and beverages are not allowed during the performance.
- ▶Use of cell phones (including text messaging), cameras or any other recording device is *not allowed during the performance at any time!*
- ▶Following the performance (time permitting), the actors will give the audience an opportunity to ask some questions. The Q & A usually lasts about five to ten minutes.

Some questions to ask before seeing the production that you can discuss afterwards:

How is an overhead projector used to help communicate the story? How are puppets used

in the play? How do the actors use their voices, bodies and imaginations to create different characters? How many characters does each actor play? How many languages are spoken in the play?

Here are some vocabulary words to review:

egrets * eagles * herons * sagebrush * mesquite * evaporation * melodramatic * canal * trench * primitive * commandeer * riparian * biodegradable * conservation * environmentalism * habitat * global warming *

The Art of Storytelling: In the play, the character Marie is a professional story teller and Liz and Enrique are her apprentices. The entire premise of the play revolves around telling the story of the ribbon of green – a river in the desert. The oral tradition of storytelling has been around as long as humans have been on earth and have been able to communicate. Stories were often used to explain the unexplainable: life and death, nature, and the spiritual world, for example. As stories passed from one teller to another, from one generation to the next, they gradually changed and were recorded thus preserving their content. Today, the formal art of storytelling has grown in popularity with storytelling festivals happening all over the world. Storytelling, whether sharing a short tidbit about a personal experience or performing a story in front of an audience, is a tradition that is and will continue to be a major part of the human experience. Talk about storytelling before you see the production. **What makes a good story? What are the parts of a story (character, setting, conflict, resolution, point of view, etc.)? What is the difference between a personal story (one you tell to another) and a formal, written story? What makes a good story teller (use of voice, body, eye contact, etc.)?**

How Exposure to Nature Affects Our Children:

The term "biophobia" is used to describe children (and adults) who display an aversion to nature. Are we creating a generation of "biophobic" children? Is this "biophobia" contributing to problems like childhood obesity and attention deficit disorder? Studies now say that children need nature in order to improve mental and physical well-being. The phrase "nature deficit disorder" (coined by Richard Louv in his book *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*) has been used to describe the effects of the absence of nature in a child's life. Louv says that problems like obesity, depression, attention disorders and stress can help be alleviated with regular exposure to nature. Before computers and video games, children were sent outside to entertain themselves. Nowadays, children are involved in a number of organized activities from soccer practice to piano lessons and their unstructured free time is limited. Many parents are more comfortable with children playing indoors so they don't have to worry as much about their safety. A study by the University of Maryland reported that between 1997 and 2003 there was a 50% drop in kids who participated in outdoor activities. The Nature Conservancy found that children under 13 now take part in freestyle, play outdoors for only a half-hour a week. When children have free time to play and explore they engage their imaginations in a different way than they do when playing sports or other organized activities. The benefits of spending time outdoors are numerous and can only help our children to gain respect for the environment and living things. -Source: Raising Healthier Kids, USA WEEKEND, Nov.16-18, 2007

Activities Connected to Curriculum (AZ Education Standards noted in bold)...

Discussion Starters

Story Structure: All plays have three P's: People in a Place with a Problem. **Where does the play take place (setting)? Who are the people (or characters)? What are the problems (conflicts)?** Talk about the plot: **What happens at the beginning of the play? The middle? The end? What is the climax or high point in the plot? Resolution?**

Change: In most stories and plays, characters make discoveries and often change as a result of their discoveries. **What discoveries do the characters make in the play? How do the characters change from the beginning of the play to the end?**

Teamwork: The two characters Enrique and Liz disagree throughout most of the play, but in the end, work as a team to accomplish a goal. **In what situations is teamwork important? Have you ever found it difficult to be a team player? What can you do to improve a situation in which someone doesn't want to cooperate as a team?**

Creative Drama/Theater

Public Service Announcements (P.S.A.): In teams of two or three, write a 30-60 second commercial that communicates something that can be done to help the environment. Rehearse your P. S. A. and then share it with the rest of the class or make recordings of them and watch them on T.V. **T-S1C1-401, 4WP-R1**

Character Interviews: In pairs, create T.V. interviews with desert creatures, native peoples, pioneers, wind, water, land or any other character that could be connected to the play. Write out a list

of questions that the interviewer can ask and talk about what the answers should be. Rehearse asking and answering the questions and then share your interviews with the class. **T-S1C1-401, W-S3C2-01,-02,-03**

Creature Puppets: Choose one of the desert creatures mentioned in the play (or another one) for which you can create a puppet. It can be a hand puppet made with a sock, a finger puppet, a stick puppet or any other type you can imagine. Be creative with materials; you can make a puppet out of almost anything. Have a puppet sharing circle where everyone takes turns introducing their puppet to the rest of the group. **T-S1C2-01, VA-S1C-01,-02,-03**

Personal Stories: Think of something memorable that has happened to you that you could develop into a two minute story. Write down an outline of your story making sure it has a clear beginning, middle and end. With a partner, practice telling your story out loud. Think about using a loud voice, speaking clearly and using eye contact with your audience. Make your story interesting and fun to listen to. **T-S1C1-401, W-S3C1-01,-02**

Visual Art

Sand Creations: One of the inspirations for the use of the overhead projector in this production was the art of Ilana Yahav (www.sandfantasy.com). You'll need a clear, glass pan (pyrex cake pan or pie dish), fine craft sand and an overhead projector. Put the pan on top of the projector and pour some sand into it. Turn on the projector and create things in the sand. Can you use this technique to help tell a story? **VA-S1C1-01,-02**

Bird Drawings: Research the many types of birds that can be found in Arizona and choose one that you like. Find a good, color picture in a book or on the internet

that you can use to help you draw your own version of the bird. Hang them around your classroom. **VA-S1C4-101, 5T-F1-01,-02**

Music

Water Conservation Jingles: A jingle is a catchy tune that is used to influence people to remember a product or a company. It's usually just a few sentences set to music. In teams, create short jingles to help audiences remember something about water conservation. Share with your class. **M-S1C4-01**

Writing and Reading

Make Your Voice Heard: You can influence change in the world by being an active member of society. Write a letter to the governor with your suggestions on water conservation. Take turns reading them out loud to the class. **W-S3C4-01**

Cinquains: A cinquain is a five line poem. Write a cinquain about water, (or something else connected to the production. Here's the format:
line 1 - one word (noun) a title or name of the subject
line 2 - two words (adjectives) describing the title
line 3 - three words (verbs) describing an action related to the title
line 4 - four words describing a feeling about the title, a complete sentence
line 5 - one word referring back to the title of the poem
Take turns reading them out loud to the class. **W-S3C1-01,-02**

Native Peoples:

-Read Native American folktales. Identify the themes in the folktales and the moral of each tale. Write your own folktale about wastefulness. Be sure to include a beginning, middle, end and a moral.
-Read about the lost Hohokam tribe. Use your imagination and write a story about what you think happened that caused them to

A Little Bit of Water Booklist

Prepared with the help of Tim Wadham, Member, Board of Directors, Association for Library Service to Children



Curriculum Connections:

Nature

Shape Me a Rhyme: Nature's Forms in Poetry by Jane Yolen
Color Me a Rhyme: Nature Poems for Young Readers by Jane Yolen
Linnea's Almanac by Christina Bjork
Look Again! By Tana Hoban
Uno's Garden by Graeme Base
On Meadowview Street by Henry Cole
Yum! Mmmm! ¡Que Rico: America's Sproutings by Pat Mora

Science

Earth-Shaking Science Projects about Planet Earth by Robert Gardner
Exploratopia by Pat Murphy
The Magic School Bus and the Science Fair Expedition by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen

Water Conservation

The Secret of Water: For the Children of the World by Masaru Emoto
The Magic School Bus at the Waterworks by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen
What is Water? and Where is Water? by Robin Nelson
Water, Our Precious Resource by Roy A. Gallant
Agua Agua Agua: an Aesop's Fable by Pat Mora
The Water Hole by Graeme Base



Environment

Earth Smart: How to Take Care of the Environment by Leslie Garrett
Common Ground: The Water, Earth and Air We Share by Molly Bang
Just a Dream by Chris Van Allsburg
Window by Jeannie Baker
Where the Forest Meets the Sea by Jeannie Baker

Desert

Deserts: Thirsty Wonderlands by Laura Purdie Salas
A Desert Scrapbook: Dawn to Dusk in the Sonoran Desert by Virginia Wright-Frierson
One Day in the Desert by Jean Craighead George
Listen to the Desert/Oye al desierto by Pat Mora
The Desert is My Mother/El desierto es mi madre by Pat Mora
Coyote Raid in Cactus Canyon by Jim Arnosky
The Seed and the Giant Saguaro by Jennifer Ward



Storytelling

Jack Plank Tells Tales by Natalie Babbitt
The Adventures of Marco Polo by Russell Freedman
Wait! I Want to Tell you a Story by Tom Willans

Southwest History

In the Days of the Vaqueros: America's First True Cowboys by Russell Freedman
Empires Lost and Won: The Spanish Heritage in the Southwest by Albert Marrin
Weedflower by Cynthia Kadohata

Native Peoples

All Our Relatives: Traditional Native American Thoughts About Nature by Paul Gobel
Brother Eagle, Sister Sky: A Message from Chief Seattle by Chief Seattle
Bird Springs by Carolyn Marsden
Into the West by James M. MacPherson

Interesting Internet Connections:

<http://phoenix.gov/riosalado>

-official website for The Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area

<http://az.audubon.org>

-Arizona Audubon website

www.caph2o4u.com/contest/correlations.htm

-Central Arizona Project educational website

www.ag.arizona.edu/AZWATER

-Water Resources Research Center, University of Arizona

www.projectwet.org/index.html

-teaching educators to teach students about water

<http://askabiologist.asu.edu/expstuff/experiments/birdsongs>

-ASU's great interactive site about birds and their songs

www.whitehutchinson.com/children/articles/outdoor.shtml

-an interesting article on children and playing outdoors

www.ecokids.ca/pub/eco_info/topics/water/water/index.cfm

-water conservation around the house

<http://earth911.org/just-for-kids>

-all about what kids can do to help protect the environment

www.ci.phoenix.az.us/WATER/watermen.html

-city of phoenix water info for kids

www.abirdsworld.com/html/kidsnest.html

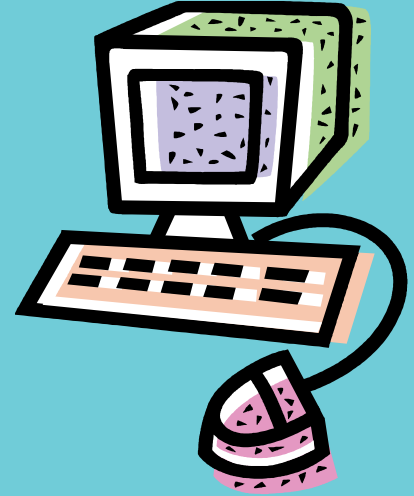
-lots of links to bird sites

www.sandfantasy.com

-inspiration for the use of sand and the overhead projector in the production design

www.epa.gov/region01/students/pdfs/gndw_712.pdf

-water cycle and water conservation



The Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area

The Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area is a five-mile stretch of the Salt River that has been transformed from a dry wasteland into a lush riparian corridor by the City of Phoenix, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the Maricopa County Flood Control District. The area offers walking and cycling trails and exciting bird watching, as over 200 bird species have been sighted here. Admission is free and the park is open from dawn to dusk. For more information on the project, please see <http://www.phoenix.gov/riosalado>.

Audubon Arizona is in the process of building The Nina Mason Rio Salado Audubon Center, to be located adjacent to the 595-acre Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area. This new nature center will be an ideal place to tell the story of the Salt River's successful restoration and to convey the significance of desert riparian habitats. The Center is scheduled to open in early 2009 and will offer a wide variety of nature-related programming for teachers and the community at large. We hope to see you there soon! In the meantime, Audubon Arizona is offering pilot programming at the habitat; for more information about this, please contact Cathy Wise at (602) 468-6470. And don't forget to explore the Rio Salado Habitat on your own using the Audubon Arizona Scavenger Hunt!

Coming Soon! The Nina Mason Rio Salado Audubon Center



Wonderful Waterbirds! (based on information in the Audubon Adventures classroom series)

A long-legged great blue heron waits at the river's edge. Suddenly it stabs its long, sharp bill into the water and snatches a frog. Nearby, a startled pied-billed grebe sinks underwater in a blink of an eye. A mallard duck watches the scene while a lovely white snowy egret flies overhead. All of these birds are waterbirds—birds that swim, dive or wade in bodies of water and depend on them as places to feed and raise young.



Waterbirds come in many shapes and sizes, but all are well-equipped for life in and near water. A duck's webbed feet help it to swim. A diving duck's legs are set far back on its body to help it streak underwater. A heron can extend its long flexible neck lightning fast to grab fish. Many shorebirds have long, sharp bills that are perfect for poking into mud and sand to find food.

Waterbirds eat many kinds of animals, including insects, frogs, fish and shellfish. Many waterbirds also eat plants and their droppings help spread seeds.

Waterbirds are also prey for hungry coyotes, foxes and hawks. Humans hunt some waterbirds for food and sport, such as ducks and geese. Hunting was once the biggest threat to the survival of waterbirds—especially of the great egret as its feathers were used to decorate hats. These birds are now protected by law and their numbers have stabilized.

Habitat destruction is now the biggest threat to waterbirds. More than half of the wetlands in the United States have been drained and turned into farmlands or cities. These losses affect waterbirds that migrate—fly long distances between their summer and winter homes. Migrating waterbirds stop at wetlands along their path to rest and eat. When birds arrive to find that a habitat is gone, they must keep flying even if they are exhausted.



Fortunately many people are working to preserve and create new waterbird habitat. One such project is the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Project. For more information see:

<http://phoenix.gov/RIOSALADO/habitat.html>

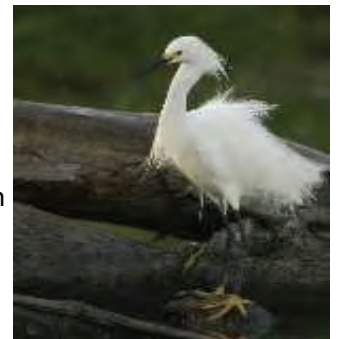
MEET SOME WONDERFUL WATERBIRDS!!

Pied-billed Grebe: This small diver eats fish and small aquatic animals. "Pied" means "striped" and refers to a dark band across this birds' beak. Grebes are rarely seen out of the water as their legs are placed far back on the body—a trait that makes them excellent divers but awkward walkers. They can dive to 20 feet and stay submerged for 30 seconds or more!



Great Blue Heron: This regal bird stands almost 4 feet tall and is the largest member of the heron family in North America. This bird is commonly seen hunting fish and frogs from river and lake shorelines. Great blue herons forage by remaining perfectly still until a prey item happens by—then they quickly strike.

Snowy Egret: Snowy Egrets can be told from their close relative, the Great Egret, by their bright yellow feet and black bill. These birds may group together in areas that offer abundant food, including fish and frogs. Hunting birds often crouch low and stand but the bird may also run swiftly after prey.



Mallard: Our most familiar urban and suburban duck, male mallards are told by their shiny green heads. Female mallards are speckled brown—a trait that helps them blend into their surrounding while they are sitting on eggs. Mallards eat mostly seeds and aquatic plants.

FILL IN THE BLANK with a WONDERFUL WATERBIRD from above

1. This common waterbird has bright yellow feet: _____.
2. The _____ eats mostly seeds and aquatic plants.
3. The _____ stands almost 4 feet tall.
4. This bird can dive as deep as 20 feet _____.

See these waterbirds in action at the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area!

Color Arizona's state bird



Cactus Wren

- builds many nests in the protection of cactus thorns. It lives in one and uses the rest as decoys.
- the female lays 4 to 5 buff eggs with brown speckles.
- the Cactus Wren was adopted as Arizona's state bird in 1973.

HOW MUCH WATER DO YOU USE?

Below are some everyday household activities and the approximate amount of water used per activity:

Washing hands (tap running): 2 gallons
Dish washing by hand (tap running): 30 gallons
Bath: 40 gallons
Toilet flushing: 5 gallons per flush

Brushing teeth (tap running): 10 gallons
Dishwasher: 15 gallons
Shower: 10 gallons per minute
Running Washing Machine: 40 gallons

With the help of your family members, figure out how much water you use at home in a week by keeping track of how often you and your family perform the activities above. Keep a daily record in a notebook and then add up the totals and record each days total in the chart below.

Monday: _____ gallons total

Tuesday: _____ gallons total

Wednesday: _____ gallons total

Thursday: _____ gallons total

Friday: _____ gallons total

Saturday: _____ gallons total

Sunday: _____ gallons total

Total water usage for the week:
_____ gallons total

NOW, figure out how you and your family can REDUCE your weekly water usage (turn off faucet when brushing teeth, take shorter showers, etc.). How many gallons of water per week can you save?

WORD SEARCH: Circle the words in the puzzle to the right. Words may read up, down, sideways, backwards, or diagonally.

CONSERVE
RIVER
HOHOKAM
PIONEER
LAND
WATER
WIND
STORY SPACESHIP
BIRDS
GREEN
EARTH

P	I	H	S	E	C	A	P	S	M
E	R	I	V	E	R	K	R	D	A
N	V	R	E	D	I	E	Y	N	K
S	F	R	N	W	E	J	B	A	O
T	H	I	E	N	A	I	P	L	H
O	W	T	O	S	R	T	T	C	O
R	C	I	R	D	N	R	E	Y	H
Y	P	I	S	A	Z	O	F	R	Y
V	K	S	L	L	E	K	C	P	Q
T	N	E	E	R	G	Z	G	M	X

SAVE THE EARTH!

Come up with a list of at least ten things you can do to help protect our environment and live a "greener" life.



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____