

BEHIND THE SCENES

BEHIND THE STORY

1. A main theme in 'The Lion King' is responsibility. What are some of the other themes the story touches on?

2. One of the dramatic techniques used throughout the production is the use of circles, can you list where circles are used?

3. What does the circle represent in the story?

4. Why does the story of 'The Lion King' have such a broad appeal?

Research: The Prodigal Son, feedback to the group on what it is and how it is similar to Simba's story.

ANSWERS

FROM SCREEN TO STAGE

1. Creating the African Savannah live on stage; turning actors into animals.
2. Working with visionary director Julie Taymor plus a range of technical solutions including the latest in digital technology.
3. The 'double event' - the audience has to do two things at once, look at the animals represented on stage as well as being lost in the story and characters.
4. More music was required to make the production longer, to express different aspects of the story and add depth to the characters and African contexts.

BEHIND THE STORY

1. Homeland, exile, identity, Prodigal Son, finding your strength, love, loss, finding who you are.
2. Sunrise, masks, wheels used in puppets, Pride Rock.
3. The circle of life, balance.
4. The circle of life represents each person's life journey, being part of a wider community and also sharing the planet as a whole.

MEET THE CHARACTERS

1. Nala needs to step up and save the savannah. She makes the decision to go out and seek help. She has to convince Simba to return to the Pridelands to take up his rightful place as King.
2. Scar is no longer first in line to the throne.
3. In the beginning of the film 'The Circle of Life' is sung by a woman. Rafiki plays an integral role in Simba's personal development; she is conveyed more spiritually and as a guide to Simba and the audience. Her role has more depth in the stage show. The South African performer is cast in order to provide a rich, authentic cultural performance through language, interpretation and accent.
4. Zazu is Mufasa's trusted adviser and occasionally provides childcare for Simba.
5. Timon and Pumbaa provide a safe haven without responsibilities where he can run away from his problems.

AN ACTOR PREPARES

1. 5.30pm (2 hours) 6.15pm vocal warm up.
2. More to explore, building up the backstory.
3. Motors, boom, mask, battery pack, wires, leather chaps, leotard, cage.
4. 15kg/2.5 stone.
5. Actor must work with masks, intricate costumes, different languages. The mask and puppets must look like an extension of the actor's body. It is important that the actors are so comfortable with the mask and puppets that it becomes second nature to move with them.

DISCOVER THE COSTUMES

1. The double event.
2. Africa, Indonesia.
3. They would need to be light weight, flexible and durable.
4. A natural, sun-baked appearance, dry hot African savannah.
5. Feather, silk, bone, wood.

MASKS AND PUPPETS

1. 300
2. Japan, Bunraku, African, Indonesian.
3. Six people work in the puppetry department at 'The Lion King'.
4. Carbon fibre, balsa wood, horse hair, peacock feathers.
5. Puppets have to be durable, light, strong, have a natural look, usability.

SETTING THE SCENE

1. Back wall/backdrop.
2. Pride Rock, Stampede, expanse of the African savannah, Scar's cave, jungle, Elephant Graveyard, night sky.
3. The wildebeest stampede.
4. Tells the emotional story of the production, the mood, the atmosphere.

ANSWERS

BEING A LION KID

1. To divide the pressure of eight performances a week between a team and so that they don't miss too much school.
2. Warm up, make up, get into costume.
3. Learn songs, choreography, learn staging and be joyful!
4. They have to continue to go to school and complete their homework.

MAKING THE MUSIC

1. Origins of the music, Pop (Elton John) African (Lebo M), 'Rhythm of the Pridelands'.
2. Add depth to the story, score and characters. Julie Taymor describes this as 'spiritual'.
3. African drums are the 'heartbeat' of the show. Drums play an important role in African society, bringing people together and being played at community events and celebrations.
4. The percussionists are in the boxes at the side of the auditorium.

DANCE AND MOVEMENT

1. Conveys the story and our understanding of the animal characters.
2. Creates the movement and dance within the show.
3. Isolation, precision: Julie discusses a lion, cheetah, Mufasa, Scar. Celise discusses lioness and hyenas. The movement reflects the character and changes as they do.
4. Hip Hop, Jazz, Modern, African, Caribbean, Ballet.
5. Dance provides the vocabulary for the production; feelings and emotions of the characters will be conveyed through the movement.

CURRICULUM LINKS, PRIMARY

EPISODE TWO - BEHIND THE STORY

KEY STAGE 2 ENGLISH

| LOWER KEY STAGE 2 - English | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Spoken language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings • maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments |
| Reading Comprehension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks • increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally • identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books • cause and effect in both narrative and non-fiction (for example, what has prompted a character's behaviour) |

| UPPER KEY STAGE 2 - English | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Spoken language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings • maintain attention and participate actively in collaborative conversations, staying on topic and initiating and responding to comments |
| Reading Comprehension | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks • increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions • making comparisons within and across books • preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience • drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence • summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas • identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning |

CURRICULUM LINKS, SECONDARY

EPISODE TWO - BEHIND THE STORY

| BTEC Entry level / Level 1 Performing Arts | |
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| Unit 1: Introduction to the Performing Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2. Know about performance roles in performance venues • 3. Know about non-performance roles in performance venues |
| Unit 14: Working in the Performing Arts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. Know what skills and training are required for jobs in performing arts • 2. Know what opportunities there are for progression in performing arts |
| Unit 16: 2 Know job roles in the performing arts industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2. Know job roles in the performing arts industry |

KEY STAGE 3 – English

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|-----------------------|--|
| Spoken English | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• using Standard English formal and informal contexts, including classroom discussion• structured discussions |
| Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• reading a wide range of fiction and non-fiction, including in particular whole books, short stories, poems and plays with a wide coverage of genres, historical periods, forms and authors.• studying setting, plot, and characterisation, and the effects of these• understanding how the work of dramatists is communicated effectively through performance and how alternative staging allows for different interpretations of a play |