



# Resource Guide | for Educators and Audiences

We include information about our production along with creative activities to make connections both before and after the show. For educators, all activities are aligned to the North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development. Look for the symbol below throughout the guide.



Goal APL-2: Children actively seek to understand the world around them. Goal CD-5: Children demonstrate self-expression and creativity in a variety of forms and contexts, including play, visual arts, music, drama, and dance.

Mainstage production  
ages 2-5



Written and Illustrated  
by Elisa Kleven

Adapted for the stage  
by Nicole B. Adkins

Director  
Nicia Carla

## Themes explored

friendship, emotions, colors, changes  
in weather, animal movement

## Synopsis

There once was a Little Red Bird and she was very curious. She wanted to know everything about the world. The Little Red Bird was feeling lonely and tries to make friends with a Grasshopper, a Green Bird and a Caterpillar. But they wouldn't play with her. One day the Little Red Bird meets a very playful Lion. She sees he has a green tail. She tries to ask the Lion about his green tail, but he doesn't understand the Little Red Bird. The Little Red Bird decides to follow the Lion to a field of orange flowers. They play in the orange flowers all day. Soon, the Lion walks back to his cave carrying the orange flowers, with the Little Red Bird following him. The Little Red Bird decides to build a nest right outside of the Lion's cave, so she can spend another day with him.

The next morning, the Lion comes out of his cave and the Little Red Bird sees his tail is orange. The Little Red Bird wishes she could ask the Lion about his tail, but the Lion hides his tail from the Little Red Bird. Even though she can't ask the Lion her questions, they go on another adventure together. They visit a blue lake and meet a Green Frog. After swimming and playing, they explore a meadow of blue flowers. The Lion gathers blue flowers to take back to his cave and the two of them travel home. As the Little Red Bird falls asleep she thinks about the adventures she has had with the Lion. She is full of questions about what the Lion is doing with those flowers, and if she could learn to speak Lion.

The next day the Little Red Bird wakes up as the Lion comes out of his cave. Today, his tail is blue, and he doesn't hide it from the Little Red Bird. The Lion is also carrying a bag full of berries and the pair set off on the day's adventure. While the Lion is gathering more berries, he gets a thorn stuck in his paw. The Lion cries and cries. The Little Red Bird pulls the thorn from her friend's paw. The Lion thanks her and they travel back home again. That night, there is a big storm and the Little Red Bird's nest is blown away as she is tossed about by the storm. The Lion leaves his cave to help the Little Red Bird and carry her out of the storm.

In the cave, the Little Red Bird sees the Lion's now red tail. This time, he shows her why his tail changes colors. He shows the Little Red Bird the paintings on the walls of his cave. She realizes the Lion is an artist who uses his tail as a paint brush. He has painted pictures of the orange flowers, the blue lake, and the green frog from their adventures. Then the Lion shows her his latest painting—it is of the Little Red Bird! The Little Red Bird loves her new friend and his paintings.

Children's Theatre of Charlotte is proud to partner with PNC as the exclusive corporate sponsor of the Preschool Series.



# Before the Tour Arrives



Theatre 360 extends the experience for classrooms to interact with with

Children's Theatre of Charlotte productions.

**Online engagement** Check out our collection of online games, websites and articles to deepen the connections of elements from the show. [Click here](#) to access.

**Workshops and residencies** Contact our Education Programs Coordinator, Tommy Prudenti, at [tommyp@ctcharlotte.org](mailto:tommyp@ctcharlotte.org) to book yours today!

## Audience expectations

You may wish to have a discussion with your students about their role as audience members. Live theatre only exists when an audience is present, and your students' energy and response directly affects the actors on stage.

Young audiences should know watching live theatre isn't like watching more familiar forms of entertainment: they can't pause or rewind it like a DVD, there are no commercials for bathroom breaks, nor can they increase the volume to hear if someone else is talking. Encourage your students to listen and watch the play intently, so they may laugh and cheer for their favorite characters when it is appropriate.

At the end of the play, applause is an opportunity for students to thank the actors, while the actors are thanking you for your role as an audience member. Here are some other guidelines to remember while you're watching the performance:

- Respect others during the performance. Stay seated and keep your hands to yourself.
- Please turn off cell phones and other electronic devices during the performance.
- Photography and video of the performance is prohibited by copyright law.



Goal CD-4: Children demonstrate appreciation for different forms of artistic expression.  
Goal APL-8: Children maintain attentiveness and focus.

## Meet the Preschool Touring Company



**LYDIA WILLIAMSON** (LITTLE RED BIRD) from Anson County NC, is thrilled to return to Children's Theatre of Charlotte. Her previous role was Peter in *The Snowy Day and Other Stories*. Receiving her BA in Theatre from Fayetteville State University, she values hard work and would like to send warm gratitude to the cast and crew for providing just that. Lastly, she encourages every child to lean forward, be engaged and enjoy!



**CHESTER SHEPHERD** (ELEMENTS) is thrilled to return to Children's Theatre of Charlotte. His previous shows include *Jackie and Me*, *The Cat in the Hat*, *Junie B. Jones is Not a Crook!* and *Hare & Tortoise*. He has also appeared locally in productions at Actor's Theatre of Charlotte and Paperhouse Theatre. He holds a BA from Bethel College and an MFA in Acting from Western Illinois University. Chester is forever grateful to Katy for her magnificent love, and dedicates this one to Baby Shepherd, due January 2019!



**DONOVAN HARPER** (LION) is a local thespian who has been performing onstage outside of Charlotte for nearly 10 years. This is his first production with Children's Theatre of Charlotte and he is very excited to be working with such a wonderful company. His other credits include Skye Masterson in *Guys and Dolls* (2013), Roger Davis in *Rent* (2017), and Coalhouse Walker Jr. in *Ragtime* (2018). He is very proud to be bringing this wonderful tale of friendship and love to the young, impressionable children of our neighborhood. Hope you enjoy the show!

# Before the show

## The BIG questions before the show

1. Do you have a special friend? What makes them special? What games do you like to play with your special friend?
2. What is an artist? How does an artist create their art? Have you ever created art? Are you an artist?



Goal LDC-2: Children participate in conversations with peers and adults in one-on-one, small, and larger group interactions. Goal LDC-7: Children respond to and use a growing vocabulary. Goal CD-9: Children explore concepts connected with their daily experiences in their community.

## Chirp, chirp, chirp!

In the play, Little Red Bird communicates using only “chirp” or “tweet.” Using only those words, sing a familiar song to your class. See if they can guess the name of the song. Then, ask for a suggestion from the class of a new song everyone could “chirp” or “tweet” together.



Goal CD-2: Children recall information and use it for new situations and problems.

## Weather changes

Using the worksheets provided by [education.com](http://education.com), have your students explore the weather and seasons including sorting activities and simple counting.



Goal CD-10: Children show understanding of numbers and quantities during play and other activities. Goal CD-11: Children compare, sort, group, organize, and measure objects and create patterns in their everyday environment.

## Can you make paint out of berries?

In the play, Lion collects berries from nature and uses them to make different color paints. To make your own paints, you will need:

- 1 cup of blueberries or cranberries or blackberries
- Cooking pot
- 1 cup of water
- Fine mesh strainer
- Container to hold paint

First, pick some berries from a plant or buy them at a grocery store. Then bring the water to a boil. Have your students guess what colors they might extract from the different berries. Then mash the berries and put them in the boiling water. Boil them for 5-7 minutes, then remove them from the heat and allow to cool. Place the strainer above the container to hold the paint. Additionally, you may want to place a coffee filter in the strainer to collect small seeds.

Find some white paper and begin painting with the juice. Make a list of items that can be the same color as your paint. Can you paint pictures of all of them?



Goal CD-15: Children explore the natural world by observing, manipulating objects, asking questions, making predictions, and developing generalizations Goal HPD-5: Children develop small muscle control and hand-eye coordination to manipulate objects and work with tools.

## Paint and Natural Pigment



Today it's easy to find paint. Specialty art stores, large retail stores, and even local supermarkets offer a wide variety of paints for children to use.

Long ago, these stores didn't exist, and artists had to make their own paints. Paints are made up of a variety of pigments held together by some kind of binder. These early artists needed to find their own pigments in nature.

[Click here](#) to learn more about how Native Americans used items from nature to make paints and dyes.

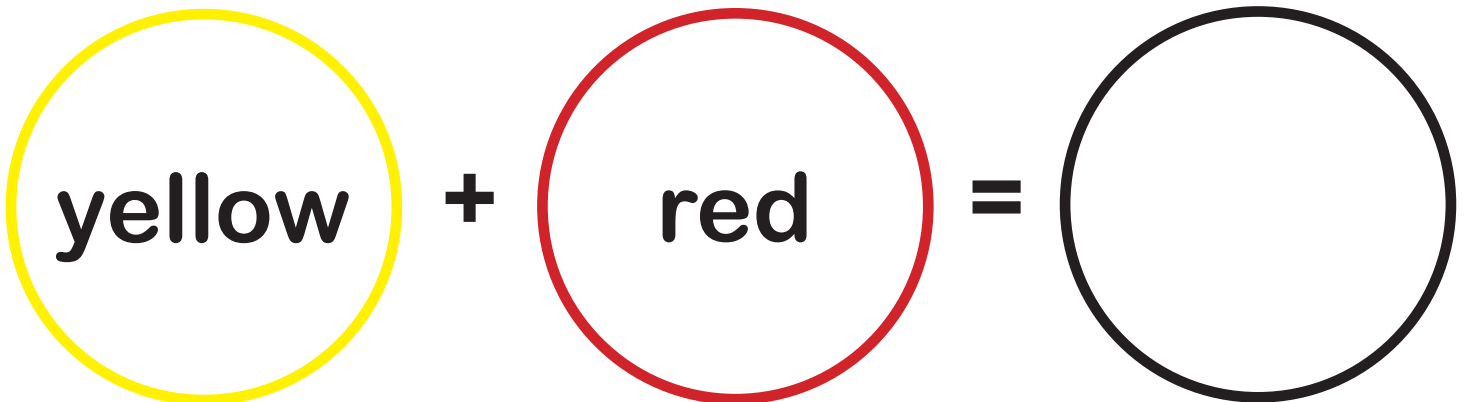
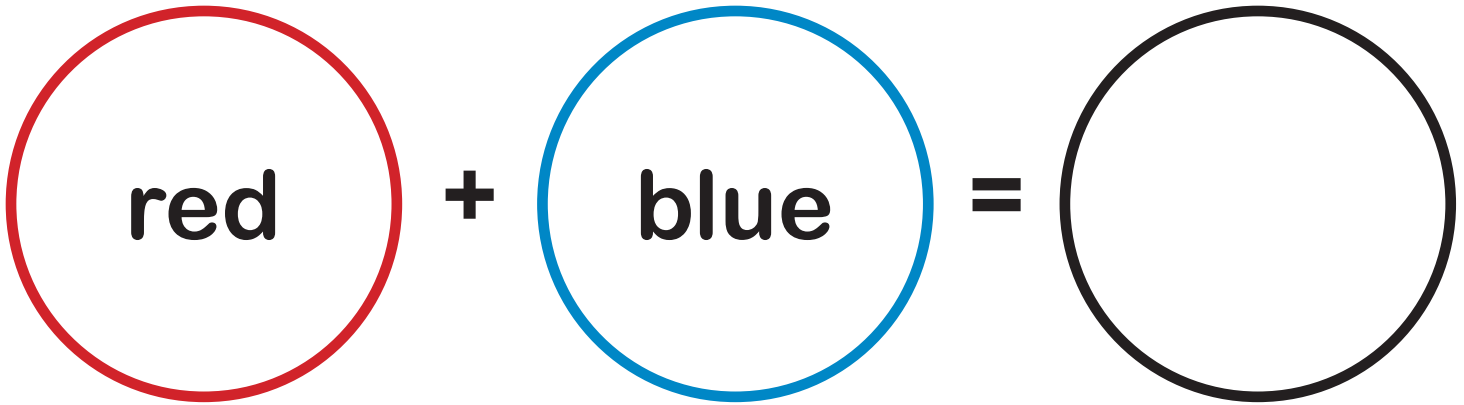
What sorts of plants, flowers, or berries can you find around your backyard or a nearby park that you might be able to use to create your own paint? What colors do you see that you could turn into paint pigment?

# Worksheet for before the show

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**COPY PAGE**

Using a crayon, fill in the first circles with the correct colors and then mix them in the last circle! What new colors do you make after mixing them?



# After the show

To have a good friend, you must BE a good friend.

Begin this activity by leading a discussion on the characteristics of a good friend. Then talk about the play and allow students to give examples about times when Lion showed he was becoming Little Red Bird's friend.

Jumpstart your discussion by talking about some of these characteristics of good friends.

- Listen to each other.
- Build each other up rather than put each other down.
- Try to understand each other's feelings.
- Help each other solve problems.
- Disagree without hurting each other.
- Care about each other.
- Are honest with each other.

Finally, draw a picture of what you think a good friend is.



Goal LDC-13: Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes.

## The BIG questions after the show

1. Why did Lion "just smile" when Little Red Bird asked him questions?
2. In the play, why do you think Green Bird is annoyed by Little Red Bird? What does it feel like when someone interrupts you?



Goal LDC-2: Children participate in conversations with peers and adults in one-on-one, small, and larger group interactions. Goal ESD-7: Children recognize and respond to the needs and feelings of others.

## Parts of a story

The basic parts of a story are beginning, middle and end. Using the worksheets provided by [allkidsnetwork.com](http://allkidsnetwork.com), help your students identify the sequence of events. Click on the link below.

### What's the order?

With your class, draw pictures of the events in the play *The Lion and the Little Red Bird*. Can your class put them in order from beginning to the end?



Goal APL-2: Children actively seek to understand the world around them. Goal LDC-13: Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes.

## Narrative Pantomime

Narrative pantomime involves students simultaneously acting out a narrative read by the teacher. The narration is designed to explore an environment or develop understanding of a character's experience. To begin, ask the students to find a comfortable space in the room. Next, read a brief narrative in second person (you form). Remember, pause briefly between sentences to allow your students time to explore the actions. To get you started, we've listed one below.

*Imagine you are lying down in your cave. You open your eyes and begin to stretch. It's time to wake up. You scratch your claws against the floor, and yawn showing all of your sharp teeth. You are a lion, and it's time to start your day.*

*You stroll out of your cave, and into a field of flowers. You see one very beautiful flower. What color is it? You get closer and sniff the flower. You carefully reach out, and pluck the flower from the ground.*

*Just then, you have an idea! You let out a giant roar and race back to your cave!*

Now, what happens next? Feel free to add to the story or create your own!



Goal HPD-4: Children develop the large muscle control and abilities needed to move through and explore their environment.

Additionally, students can make a 'lion' headband mask to further enhance their creative exploration. Use the template on the next page.

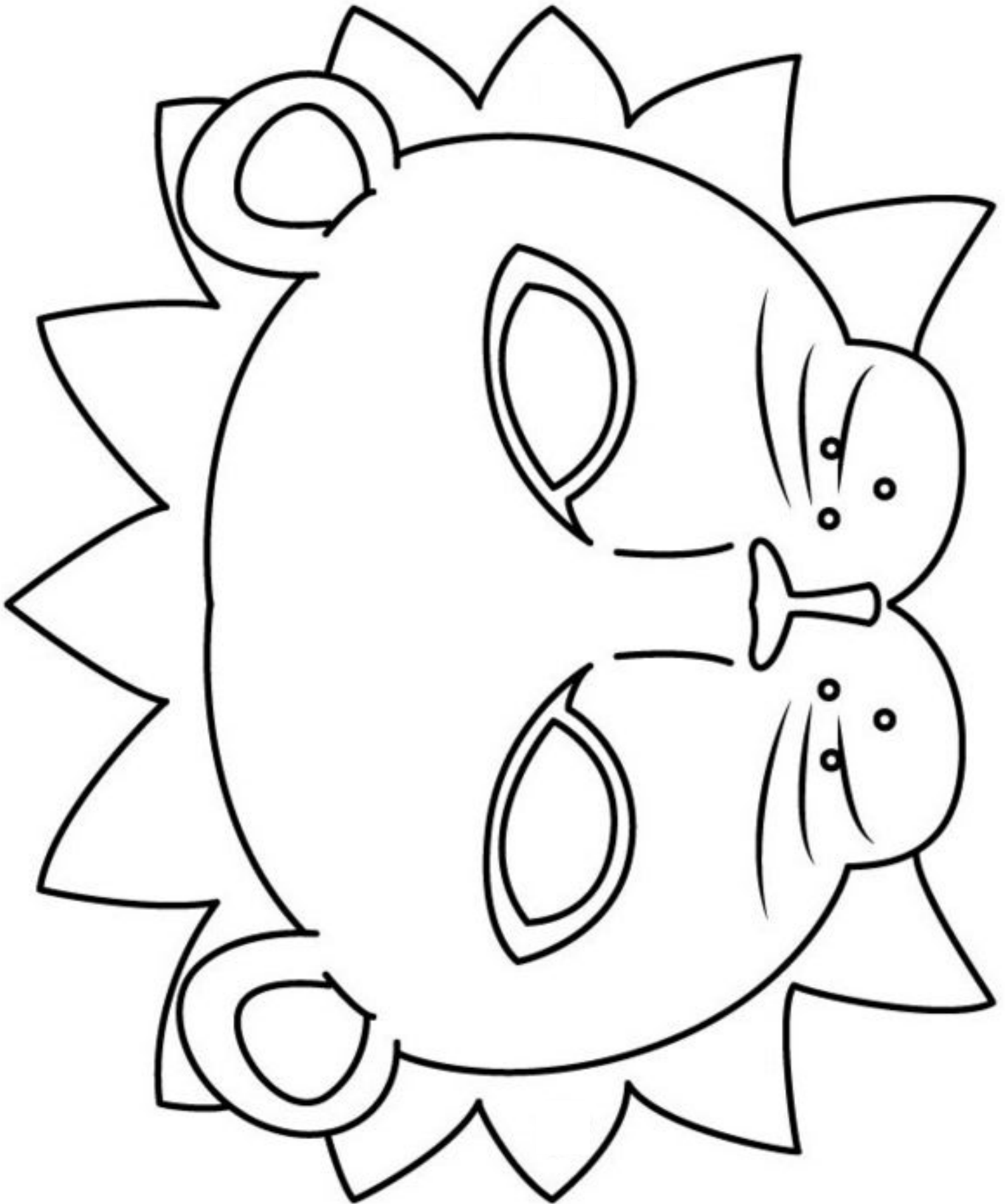


Goal HPD-5: Children develop small muscle control and hand-eye coordination to manipulate objects and work with tools.

## Worksheet for after the show

Using the template below, create your lion mask and then attach it to a headband. Use the headband mask in the "Narrative Pantomime" activity.

**COPY PAGE**



If you enjoyed the show, travel to **ImaginOn** or your local **Charlotte Mecklenburg library branch** and check out these books. Check availability at [cmlibrary.org](http://cmlibrary.org).

### Recommended for emergent readers

#### ***Birds***

**by Kevin Henkes**

Fascinated by the colors, shapes, sounds, and movements of the many different birds she sees through her window, a little girl discovers they both have something in common.

#### ***Early Bird***

**by Toni Yuly**

Early Bird wakes up before the sun. She is hungry. What will she have for breakfast?

#### ***The Happy Lion***

**by Louise Fatio**

When the door to his house at the zoo is left open, a lion decides to visit his friends. He quickly learns that people are not nearly as polite or friendly in town as when they visit him at the zoo.

### Recommended for early readers

#### ***Welcome Home, Mouse***

**by Elisa Kleven**

Stanley, who is very clumsy, accidentally smashes Mouse's house, then promises to try to make a new one.

#### ***The Wishing Ball***

**by Elisa Kleven**

A conniving crow convinces Nellie, a little cat, that his glittery rubber ball is a magical star which she can use to wish for a warm house, food, and a friend.

#### ***Horrible Bear!***

**by Ame Dyckman**

When Bear breaks a little girl's kite, she thinks he is a "HORRIBLE BEAR!" Until she makes a mistake of her own and learns the power of saying "I'm sorry."

#### ***The Lion Inside***

**by Rachel Bright**

A little mouse decides to seek lessons in roaring from the mighty lion, who happens to be afraid of mice. And the two become good friends!

Every play Children's Theatre of Charlotte produces is created by a talented team of designers, technicians, actors and a director. As a class, discuss what you experienced when you saw the performance.

## THEATRE CORNER

1. What was the first thing you noticed on the stage?
2. Name three things you noticed about the set. Did the set help tell the story? What sort of set would you have designed?
3. What did you like about the costumes? Did they fit the story? What sort of costumes would you have designed?



Goal CD-4: Children demonstrate appreciation for different forms of artistic expression. Goal LDC-2: Children participate in conversations with peers and adults in one-on-one, small, and larger group interactions.



## Write to Us!

Children's Theatre of Charlotte  
300 E. Seventh St.  
Charlotte, N.C. 28202



Goal LDC-13: Children use writing and other symbols to record information and communicate for a variety of purposes.

## Storytimes To Go!

Contact: Pamela McCarter

Phone: 704-416-4662

[Contact Outreach Services](#)

Preschool centers in Mecklenburg County can acquire activity kits from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library to encourage pre-literacy development. Each kit includes ten picture books and may contain other materials such as flannel board activities, puppets, manipulatives or music recordings to enhance the theme. All residents with a library card are eligible to borrow the kits and may have them sent to the library branch of their choice.