

# DIGITAL ASSEMBLY LEARNING GUIDE

## BOXTALES THEATRE COMPANY

### FOR TEACHERS

All Boxtales shows are crafted with the California Department of Education content standards in mind, covering English Language Arts, Word Analysis, Vocabulary Development, and Literary Response and analysis, to name just a few.

This learning guide is designed using world Myth & Folktales for Social, Emotional Learning (SEL) in interactive, ZOOM type distanced learning platforms.

The objectives of this learning guide are to:

- Introduce students to multicultural mythology and folktales, and their inherent value
- Provide tools for interpreting meaning in stories and how to use the lessons in life
- Help students develop self-awareness and self-management skills
- Help students develop social awareness and relationship skills
- Develop in students' skills for responsible decision making

These seemingly magical stories of the human imagination have been used throughout time, in all the worlds cultures, to carry wisdom and deal with a variety of humanity's deepest and most complex issues: where we come from, why we're here, how to live a meaningful life, and what we're capable of.

Also, the characters in the stories show examples of prosocial and antisocial behaviors and the corresponding effects on themselves, on those around them and their environment. They can help students develop self-awareness and self-management, social awareness and relationship skills, as well as responsible decision making. We have found that with the right engagement, the stories can help develop a growth mentality, good character traits, and resiliency with which to meet life's deeper challenges.

If you want to take this further, we have provided many more engaging, grade-appropriate post-show activities – all effective for distanced learning platforms.

Below those resources, we have provided synopses for any of the shows you might have chosen. (In case you might find them helpful!) For the multi-story shows, we have chosen a story from within the show for you to use. Feel free to make your own choices based on your class or interest.

## EXTENSIONS:

### GRADE SPECIFIC POST SHOW ACTIVITIES

**Grades K-12** (Do as many as time allows, or choose your favorite)

**1. Artistic Rendering**

Ask the students to paint or sketch their versions of one part of the show.

**2. Interactive art show**

Each student takes a turn showing their art. Share some positive remarks about the piece and then ask if anyone else would like to give words of praise for the pieces.

**3. Acting Challenge**

If you were one of the characters from the play, who would you be? Why?

Take a few minutes to remember a two - character scene from the play. (Collecting as many details as you can). Find a partner who will play the other character. Rehearse in a breakout room and come back to present to the class. (2 or 3 minutes each)

**4. Storytelling (Oral Tradition)**

Ask the students to take a moment and try to remember the show, start to finish, with as much detail as possible. Begin retelling the story (or stories) in your own words from the beginning, stopping and calling on students to take turns retelling the parts they remember. Let them digress, even retelling parts already told by others.

KEY: Don't allow them to correct or interrupt each other. Everyone's way of hearing and retelling is fair! (Even when they make up new material!)

**Grades 3-12** (Do as many as time allows, or choose your favorite, choose from above as well!)

**1. Write a Review of the Production**

Include answers to these questions and anything else you'd like to add:

- Your name, name of the school, name of the show
- Were the stories clear?
- Were the performers skillful?
- Was the show interesting? WHY?
- Your favorite part!
- Did you learn anything? WHAT?
- Would you recommend or like to see more Boxtales shows?

### **Grade 6-12**

#### **UNDERSTANDING STORY**

##### **What is a story?**

The simple elements of a story are:

**Context:** Time & place of the story

**Characters:** Who's in the story

**Action:** What happens in the story

**Tension:** Situations that raise the stakes

**Transformation:** The changes in the main character

**Meaning:** What the story is about. The reason for telling this story. The universal truth.

## STORY ARCH CONCEPTS & VOCABULARY

*\*Note- Please use the appropriate story synopsis below for this section*

**Beginning:** Introduce the setting, the characters, and the situation (conflict) they find themselves in and their goal.

**Plot Point 1:** A situation that drives the main character from their "normal" life toward some different; a conflicting situation that the story is about.

**Middle:** Story develops through a series of complications and obstacles, each leading to a mini-**crisis**. Though each of these crises is temporarily resolved, the story leads inevitably to an ultimate crisis—the

**Climax.** As the story progresses, there is a rising and falling of **tension** with each crisis, but an overall **rising tension** as we approach the Climax.

**Plot Point 2:** The resolution of the Climax.

**End:** Climax and the loose ends of the story are **resolved** during the “Denouement”. Tension rapidly dissipates. Finally, there is a description of transformation or even a moral.

### **Who is a Protagonist?**

The protagonist is the main character of a story, who makes the key decisions, and experiences the consequences of those decisions. The protagonist is the primary agent propelling the story forward and is often the character who faces the most significant obstacles. The obstacles and complications a protagonist faces are often provided by an opposing *antagonist*, revealing the strengths and weaknesses of the protagonist's character.

## **\*STORY SYNOPSES**

### **JAMBO WATOTO – Tales & Rhythms of Africa**

#### **The Hunterman and the Crocodile**

Donso the hunter-man, against his better judgment, agrees to carry Bamba the Crocodile back to his home in the river. After carrying Bamba into the water and releasing him, Bamba takes hold of his arm, to make Donso his next meal.

As they argue, about right and wrong and how a good deed should be repaid, they float by a cow, a horse, a chicken, and an old mango tree, and Donso begs them all to help. They all refuse and say that he deserves to be eaten by the Bamba.

Finally, a clever rabbit approaches and plays a trick on the Bamba to help free Donzo. Once they're out of the river and Bamba is back up on Donso's back, the tables are turned and the rabbit suggests that he take Bamba home to his wife "to make a great meal."

On his way home, Donso learns that his wife is gravely ill and that she needs the tears of a crocodile to recover. He then gives Bamba his freedom in exchange for a gourd of his tears. Donso learned his lesson and from that time forward he has reminded people of the importance of living in harmony with nature and the necessity of placing Man among – not above – all living things.

### **THE HERO TWINS – A Mayan Tale**

This story takes place long before humans were on the earth. Before humans could be created the world had to be cleared and the forces of good and evil had to be balanced. The first twins played the ball game called "tlachtli" in the Upper World. Underneath the Upper World was the Underworld where the evil Lords of Xibalba lived. They could hear the twins playing and asked them to come down and play with them.

The twins went down to the Underworld and failed several tests put to them by the Lords. They were sacrificed. One of the brothers, One Hunter, had his head placed in a tree. One Hunter spit in the palm of a woman named Xquic. Now she was with child, in fact, twins. She fled to the Upper World, where she met the mother of One Hunter.

Xquic had twins named Hunter and Jaguar Deer. They were farmers first, but rat told them they were meant to be ballplayers like their father. They too went down to the Underworld, leaving their mother corn plants which, if they died, would indicate that they too had died. These twins passed the tests their father had failed as well as new ones which included the House of Knives and the House of Bats. In the House of Bats, the twins discovered that they had the power to bring things back to life. They knew that through willing self-sacrifice, giving of one's self, life is generated. With this knowledge, they sacrificed themselves in front of the Lords but magically came back to life disguised as old men with this power of bringing things back to life. The Lords of Xibalba wanted this magic done to them, yet after the Lords sacrificed themselves, the brothers didn't bring them back to life, thus destroying the power of the Lords and avenging their father's death.

The brothers returned to the Upper World. The corn plant they left their mother was used to make the human beings, as well as to feed them. The brothers ascended into the sky and became the Sun and Moon we have today.

## **WATER'S OF THE EARTH – Multicultural Tales of the Sea**

### **Sealskin Soulskin Story**

A lonely man steals the sealskin of a Selkie (a seal-woman.) When she asks for the skin back the man refuses to return it unless she marries him and lives with him for seven years. She agrees and eventually they grow to love one another and have a child together, a boy.

Eventually, the woman becomes ill and crippled and in the eighth year, she demands her skin returned to her. The man becomes angry and refuses for fear she will leave him and return to the sea. After the man storms out, the boy is summoned by a mysterious ocean spirit to where the sealskin is hidden.

He returns the skin to his mother and they both plunge into the ocean to meet with the wise old Grandfather Seal. The Grandfather nurses the woman back to health and together they take the boy back to the land where he becomes a great musician and shaman.

## **LEYENDAS DE DUENDE – Magical Tales of Latin America**

### **Paco and the Witch**

Paco is a good boy who likes to help his mom but when he goes to town to run an errand he has to pass through the dark forest where a Bruja, or witch, is waiting to snatch him up. She takes him prisoner but he is helped by some native animals of Puerto Rico, (Señor Cangrejo, the crab, La Cotorra, the parrot and El Coquí, the frog,) who betray the witch and help set Paco free.

## **LEARNING GUIDE PRE AND POST PRESENTATION GOOGLE SLIDESHOW**

**[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cxOw3IDSIPHITGQsjcyUy\\_hFuSi8wuqvGE-l6Lkd0-k/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1cxOw3IDSIPHITGQsjcyUy_hFuSi8wuqvGE-l6Lkd0-k/edit?usp=sharing)**