



ALASKA JUNIOR THEATER'S 2025 - 2026 SEASON

TEACHER STUDY GUIDE 2025/2026 SEASON



School Shows:

March 19, 2026 at 10:30 AM & 12:15 PM

Atwood Concert Hall

Benefit & Public Show:

Saturday, March 21, 2026

Benefit at 5:00 PM | Public at 8:00 PM

Atwood Concert Hall

Alaska Junior Theater * 430 W 7th Ave, Suite 210 * Anchorage, AK 99501

P 907-272-7546 * F 907-272-3035 * www.akjt.org

- Curriculum Connections
- Learning Resources
- Performance Background
- Activities for the Classroom
- Theatre Etiquette

Curriculum Standards

Alaska Junior Theater, we believe that every child deserves the chance to experience the transformative power of live professional theatre—regardless of their financial circumstances.

Since 1981, Alaska Junior Theater (AJT), a private nonprofit organization, has been dedicated to bringing the best in professional theatre from around the world to Alaska's young audiences. Each year, more than 25,000 students experience live performances at the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. For many, these school-time shows are their only opportunity to experience the magic of live performing arts.



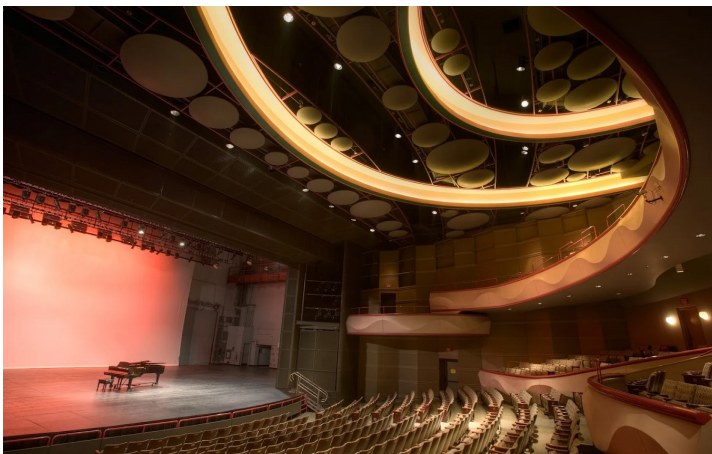
Each production we present is carefully selected for its strong educational value and direct connection to Alaska Content Standards. In addition to performances, AJT offers enriching teacher and student workshops, in-depth study guides and classroom transportation to ensure accessibility for schools across the region.

We are deeply committed to equity and access. By keeping our educational ticket price at just \$10, we make live theatre affordable for all students—though that amount covers only half the actual cost of each ticket. To bridge this gap, we actively seek support from corporations, foundations and generous individuals. Their contributions help subsidize ticket prices and provide full scholarships to students with financial need.

To support educators in aligning classroom learning with live performances, Alaska Junior Theater invited area teachers to review our 2025/2026 Season offerings for direct connections to Alaska Content Standards. These curriculum-aligned connections help assure teachers and administrators that AJT programs not only inspire students through the performing arts but also support classroom goals.

Below are the identified content standard connections for **Ball in the House**. These links are designed to assist with lesson planning and enhance the educational value of the performance.

To get a complete copy of the Alaska Content Standards, visit: <https://www.asdk12.org/commoncore/>.



Discovery Theatre, ACPA

Common Core State Standards

CCR Anchor Standard 4:2
CCR Anchor Standard 6
CCR Anchor Standard 8
Writing Standard 1
Speaking and Listening 1

National Standards for Music Education

MUSIC ED: Re7.1.3a - MUSIC ED: Re7.1.5a
MUSIC ED: Re7.2.2a - MUSIC ED: Re7.2.5a
MUSIC ED: Re8.1.2a - MUSIC ED: Re8.1.7a
MUSIC ED: Re9.1.PKa - MUSIC ED: Re9.1.8a
MUSIC ED: Cn10.0.Ka - MUSIC ED: Cn10.0.8a



Resources related to **BALL IN THE HOUSE**



FICTION PICTURE BOOKS ABOUT MUSIC

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| • <u>Music</u> - Jill McDonald | EBB MCDONAL |
| • <u>We are one</u> - Ysaye M Barnwell | E BARNWELL |
| • <u>Bing bop bam: time to jam!</u> - Valerie Bolling | E BOLLING |
| • <u>Jazz for lunch</u> - Jarrett Dapier | E DAPIER |
| • <u>Jazz on a Saturday night</u> - Leo Dillon | E DILLON |
| • <u>We could fly</u> - Rhiannon Giddens | E GIDDENS |
| • <u>Change Sings: a children's anthem</u> - Amanda Gorman | E GORMAN |
| • <u>When I hear spirituals</u> - Cheryl Willis Hudson | E HUDSON |
| • <u>There's a rock concert in my bedroom</u> - Kevin Jonas & Danielle Jonas | E JONAS |
| • <u>Marley and the family band</u> - Cedella Marley | E MARLEY |
| • <u>Pajammin'</u> - Ziggy Marley | E MARLEY |
| • <u>Mole music</u> - David McPhail | E MCPHAIL |
| • <u>Mary had a little jam</u> - Tammi Sauer | E SAUER |
| • <u>The deaf musicians</u> - Pete Seeger | E SEEGER |
| • <u>Bhangra Baby</u> - Kabir Sehgal | E SEHGAL |
| • <u>Because</u> - Mo Willems | E WILLEMS |

FICTION - PICTURE BOOKS YOU CAN SING TOGETHER

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| • <u>Singing -- cantando de colores: a bilingual book of harmony</u> - Patty Rodriguez and Ariana Stein | EBB RODRIGU |
| • <u>Heads, shoulders, knees, and toes = Cabeza, hombros, piernas, pies</u> - Annie Kubler | J-FOR SPAN KUBLER |
| • <u>Juba this, Juba that</u> - Helaine Becker | E BECKER |
| • <u>John Denver's Take me home, country roads</u> - Christopher Canyon | E CANYON |
| • <u>Today is Monday</u> - Eric Carle | E CARLE |
| • <u>If you're a monster and you know it</u> - Rebecca Emberley | E EMBERLEY |
| • <u>A-tisket, A-tasket</u> - Ella Fitzgerald | E FITZGER |
| • <u>Build a house</u> - Rhiannon Giddens | E GIDDENS |
| • <u>The seals on the bus</u> - Lenny Horl | E HORL |
| • <u>There was a tree</u> - Rachel Isadora | E ISADORA |
| • <u>The rice in the pot goes round and round</u> - Wendy Wan-Long Shang | E SHANG |

Check out ebooks and audio books by these authors and many more at the ListenAlaska and hoopla and download music at Freegal on the Anchorage Public Library Website:
anchoragepubliclibrary.org

About **Ball in the House**

Ball in the House is a high-energy Boston-based a cappella group that brings every performance to life using only the human voice. Blending R&B, soul, pop and hip-hop, they create a full-band sound—complete with vocal percussion, soaring harmonies and dynamic leads—without a single instrument in sight.



Touring nationally with over 200 shows a year, Ball in the House has shared the stage with music legends like The Beach Boys, The Temptations and Lionel Richie, as well as modern acts like the Jonas Brothers. Their captivating live shows and impressive vocal range have earned them national TV appearances on America's Got Talent, The TODAY Show and PBS, plus features in campaigns for brands like Amazon and Cool Whip.

Beyond the stage, the group is dedicated to music education, offering workshops and school performances that inspire and engage the next generation of musicians. With a fresh take on classic sounds and a passion for connecting with audiences, Ball in the House proves that the voice is the most powerful instrument of all.

Ball in the House consists of the talents of Oscar Hall (Baritone), Tyler Nordin (Tenor), Kevin Cincotta-Guest (Bass), Wallace Thomas (High Tenor) and Jon Ryan (Vocal Percussion).



What to Expect



And Now I See: Celebrating American Music is an entertaining, informative and eye-opening new show from **Ball in the House**. Delve into the rich tapestry of African American music, spanning Spirituals, Gospel, Jazz, Soul, Hip Hop and R&B.

Gain insight into the origins, evolution, and cultural significance of each genre, tracing their influences through time. This show celebrates the immense impact of African American musicians and their music, shedding light on their influence while addressing the impact of racism on musical styles and artists alike.

In today's cultural climate, where conversations about identity, history and social justice are more vital than ever, this show serves as a powerful educational experience. It invites audiences to explore the roots of African American music not just as entertainment, but as a lens through which to understand the struggles, triumphs and creativity of a people whose influence has shaped the American soundscape.

By tracing the evolution of genres like Spirituals, Jazz and Hip Hop, the show sparks curiosity, deepens cultural awareness and offers a compelling way to connect the past with the present—making it a rich resource for anyone seeking to learn, reflect and inspire meaningful dialogue.



What is **A Cappella**?

A cappella music is when people sing without any musical instruments. It's all about using your voice to make all the sounds!

In a singing group or choir, there are usually five main voice parts: soprano (highest female voice), alto (lower female voice), tenor (highest male voice), baritone (middle male voice) and bass (lowest male voice).

A cappella groups also use these same voice parts.

One cool difference in a cappella is how they do percussion. Usually, percussion means hitting instruments like drums. But in a cappella, a person makes all those drum sounds with their voice! This is called beatboxing. Beatboxers can make sounds like electric drums, synthesizers and even electric guitars. They can also make classic drum sounds to keep the beat with the group.

The words "a cappella" come from Italian. They mean "in the manner of the church" or "in the manner of the chapel." This is because this style of singing first started in religious music. An old example is a **Gregorian chant**, which is a type of a cappella singing.



Types of A Cappella Music

There are many different kinds of a cappella music. Some popular types include barbershop, classical, contemporary, gospel, doo-wop, jazz, and world music.

Barbershop Music

A barbershop group usually has four singers. This style got its name because men used to gather in barbershops and sing together without instruments. A barbershop quartet can have four male voices or four female voices. You can also find mixed barbershop quartets, usually with two male and two female voices.



The four voice parts in barbershop are bass, baritone, lead, and tenor. In barbershop music, the lead singer sings the main melody, which is the "tune" of the song.

Barbershop quartets are featured at Disneyland!

Classical A Cappella

In classical a cappella, singers perform classical pieces. This can include famous songs like 'A Turkish March' or parts of the 'William Tell Overture.' They also sing older styles like madrigals.

Contemporary A Cappella

Contemporary a cappella is very popular today. In this style, the bass line is often very strong. The "chorus" (all the singers except the bass, percussion, and solo singer) has many different sounds. The percussion often sounds very much like real drums. This type of a cappella is similar to 'doo-wop,' but the chorus parts are more complex and use a wider variety of sound effects.

Doo-wop A Cappella

Doo-wop music is also becoming more popular because it has a simple style. Even though it has a simple "moto" (which means the "progression of music" in Italian), it can be very interesting with great singing and chorus parts.



Why Study Music?



Music training helps under-achievers. In Rhode Island, researchers studied eight public school first grade classes. Half of the classes became "test arts" groups, receiving ongoing music and visual arts training. In kindergarten, this group had lagged behind in scholastic performance. After seven months, the students were given a standardized test. The "test arts" group had caught up to their fellow students in reading and surpassed their classmates in math by 22 percent. In the second year of the project, the arts students widened this margin even further. Students were also evaluated on attitude and behavior. Classroom teachers noted improvement in these areas also.

Source: Nature May 23, 1996



High school music students score higher on SATs in both verbal and math than their peers. In 2001, SAT takers with coursework/experience in music performance scored 57 points higher on the verbal portion of the test and 41 points higher on the math portion than students with no coursework/experience in the arts.

Source: Profile of SAT and Achievement Test Takers, The College Board, compiled by Music Educators National Conference, 2001.



A ten-year study, tracking more than 25,000 students, shows that music-making improves test scores. Regardless of socioeconomic background, music-making students get higher marks in standardized tests than those who had no music involvement. The test scores studied were not only standardized tests, such as the SAT, but also in reading proficiency exams.

Source: Dr. James Catterall, UCLA, 1997



Music majors are the most likely group of college grads to be admitted to medical school. Physician and biologist Lewis Thomas studied the undergraduate majors of medical school applicants. He found that 66 percent of music majors who applied to med school were admitted, the highest percentage of any group. For comparison, (44 percent) of biochemistry majors were admitted. Also, a study of 7,500 university students revealed that music majors scored the highest reading scores among all majors including English, biology, chemistry and math.

Sources: "The Comparative Academic Abilities of Students in Education and in Other Areas of a Multi-focus University," Peter H. Wood, ERIC Document No. ED327480 "The Case for Music in the Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, February, 1994



The world's top academic countries place a high value on music education. Hungary, Netherlands and Japan stand atop worldwide science achievement and have strong commitment to music education. All three countries have required music training at the elementary and middle school levels, both instrumental and vocal, for several decades. The centrality of music education to learning in the top-ranked countries seems to contradict the United States' focus on math, science, vocabulary, and technology.

Source: 1988 International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IAEEA) Test

Classroom Activities

A cappella classroom activities focus on vocal exploration, rhythm, harmony and listening skills, using body percussion (making drum sounds, snapping) and vocal sounds to create music, learn scales/solfege and develop improvisation skills.

Warm-ups & Skill Building

- **Body Percussion:** Teach students to create drum sounds (bass, snare) and high-hats with their mouths, using them to form rhythmic patterns or accompany songs.
- **Scales & Solfege:** Use simple rounds (like "Come Along and Sing With Me") with solfege (do-re-mi) or note names for ear training, relying only on voice.
- **Vocal Warm-ups:** Incorporate whole-body stretches to reduce tension and improve breath support, posture, and articulation.

Games & Improvisation

- **"Pass the Ball":** Students pass an imaginary ball, adding a simple sound each time, creating layers and loops; a conductor can isolate sections for solos.
- **Freeze Dance:** Students move to vocal beats (marching, tiptoeing) and freeze in poses when the music stops.
- **Genre Exploration:** Compare vocal styles and sounds from different music genres to understand cultural context. For example, use Country and Hip Hop. What's different? What's the same?

Educational Integration

- **Math:** Sing skip-counting (2s, 3s, etc.) to familiar tunes to make multiplication/division memorable and fun.
- **Literacy:** Use songs children know and love for phonics, vocabulary or creative writing prompts. Why do your students love their favorite music so much?

Technology-Based Activities

- **Acapella App:** Use Tiktok to record multiple vocal tracks in a video duet, allowing students to build harmonies layer by layer in a fun and interactive way.

What is **Racism**?

- **Racism** is the harmful belief that one's race or skin color is better than another's, and as a result, treating someone poorly based on their race. It includes systemic, structural and institutional racism and more.
- **Stereotypes** are assumptions about someone's behavior based on their social group, like race. They're dangerous as they can lead to prejudice and implicit bias, including racial stereotypes of White, Black, or any other race, gender stereotypes, and/or other stereotypes based on characteristics we can't control.

For example, when children identify certain traits as belonging to boys or girls and make assumptions based on their sex or gender.

Refer to Books and Movies as Examples:

Books

- *A is for Activist* by Innosanto Nagara
- *The Day You Begin* by Jacqueline Woodson
- *All Are Welcome* by Alexandra Penfold
- *Not My Idea: A Book about Whiteness* by Anastasia Higginbotham

Movies

- *The Color of Friendship* (2000)
- *Zootopia* (2016)
- *Frozen II* (2019)
- *Trolls World Tour* (2020)



Why Does **Racism** Matter?

Racism matters because it has profound, devastating impacts on individuals, communities and society as a whole, affecting health, opportunities and overall well-being. It creates systemic and interpersonal barriers that perpetuate inequality and injustice.

Harmful Effects of Racism

Racism manifests in various forms (individual, institutional and structural) and leads to significant harm:

- **Physical Health Impacts:** The chronic stress associated with exposure to discrimination causes “toxic stress,” leading to elevated blood pressure, a weakened immune system and a higher risk of chronic diseases and shorter lifespans for people of color. It also results in disparities in healthcare access and quality of treatment.
- **Mental and Emotional Health Impacts:** Racism is a major cause of trauma, leading to distress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, PTSD symptoms and substance use disorders. It can make people feel like they don’t belong or matter, undermining their sense of identity and dignity.
- **Economic and Social Barriers:** Systemic racism, embedded in laws and policies, creates obstacles to accumulating wealth, accessing quality education, employment and housing. This results in ongoing socioeconomic disparities, such as higher unemployment rates and lower wages for racial minorities, even with the same level of education as their white counterparts.
- **Injustice and Inequality:** Racism influences the criminal justice system, leading to biased policing, mass incarceration and unfair sentencing for people of color. It also contributes to environmental injustices, where communities of color are disproportionately exposed to hazards like toxic waste sites.
- **Societal Harm:** While racism primarily harms marginalized groups, it damages society as a whole by hindering human potential, creating division and distrust and preventing the realization of an equitable society based on justice and shared rights for everyone.

By understanding and acknowledging the pervasive and destructive nature of racism, societies can work toward dismantling these unjust systems and fostering an environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.



Coloring Page



What can we do to defeat Racism?

We can be...

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

Beautiful
Change
Courageous
Determine
Equality

Expressive
Friendly
Happy
Hopeful
Important

Joyful
Kind
Loved
Loving
Peaceful

Positivity
Powerful
Strong
Unity
Willing

Name: _____

Name: _____

Vocal Gymnastics



Part 1: Let's do an activity together! Participate in vocal exercises and tongue twisters. Answer the question, why is it important to warm up your voice with vocal exercises?

TONGUE TWISTER

- "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers."
- "She sells seashells by the seashore."
- "How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?"
- "Unique New York, New York's unique."

VOCAL EXERCISE

- Make a "brrrr" sound by blowing air through closed lips while vocalizing. This helps to warm up the lips and vocal cords.
- Repeat "da-da-da" or "la-la-la-la-la," increasing the speed as you become more proficient.



Why is it important to warm up your voice with vocal exercises before singing or speaking for an extended period?




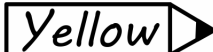

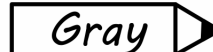


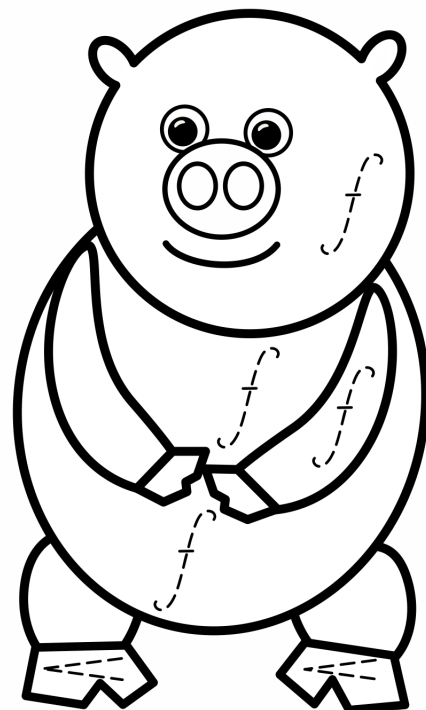
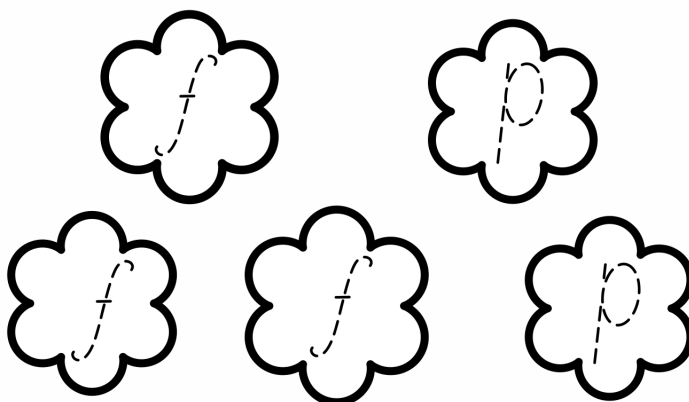
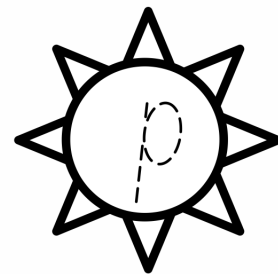
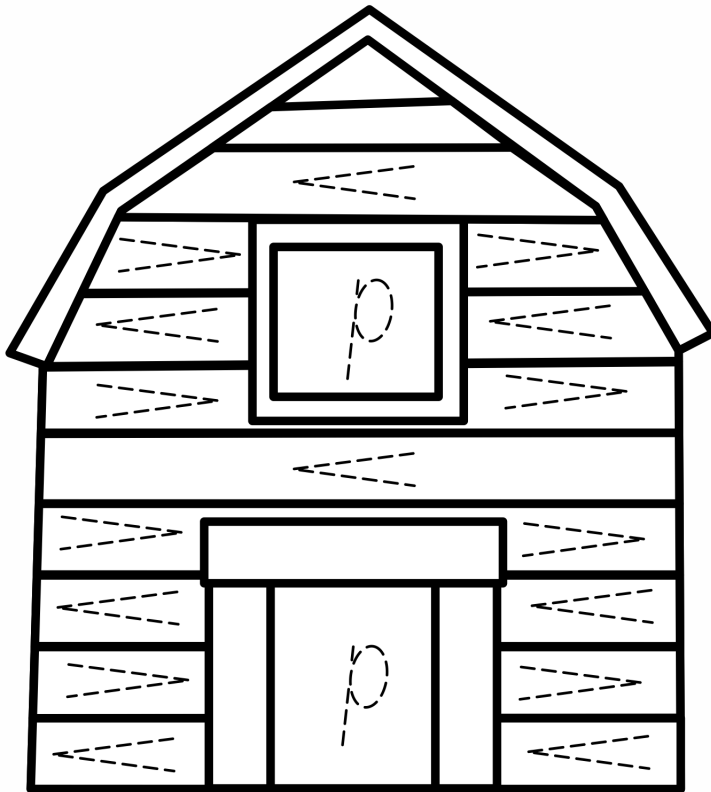
Trace the Music Symbols

Name _____

then color the picture using the key.

Complete with colors of your choice.

<i>f</i> Forte Loud	<i>p</i> Piano Soft	 Crescendo	 Decrescendo
 Pink	 Yellow	 Brown	 Gray



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Name: _____

February in America: Black History Month!

Black History Month (BHM) is a time in America, Canada and The United Kingdom, when everyone celebrates the achievements and contributions of black people to society. In America and Canada, it is always celebrated in February. Black History month started as Black History week, but over time, was changed to last for 30 days.

Many schools have festivals and plays during this time. Community groups, museums, churches and other groups often have special events to celebrate as well. People are encouraged to think about African Americans in society who inspire them, and also think about ways to inspire those around them.

Madam C. J. Walker

- Entrepreneur
- Philanthropist
- 1st Female Self-Made Millionaire



Malcolm X

- Muslim Minister
- Civil Rights Activist
- Famous For:
"By any means necessary"



Serena Williams

- Professional tennis player
- Only woman to win \$40+ million in prize money
- 30 Grand Slam titles



Harriet Tubman

- Abolitionist, humanitarian
- Led slaves to freedom in Underground Railroad
- Fought for women's suffrage



Duke Ellington

- Composer, pianist & big-band leader (orchestra)
- Famous for making jazz a popular American artform



Granville Woods

- Inventor who held more than 50 patents
- Created a communication device for trains & streetcars



Name: _____

Black History Matching

_____ ()

- Entrepreneur
- _____
- 1st Female Self-Made Millionaire

_____ ()

- Inventor who held more than 50 patents
- Created a communication device for trains & streetcars

Serena Williams ()

- _____
- Only woman to win \$40+ million in prize money
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Duke Ellington ()

- Composer, pianist & big-band leader (orchestra)
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_____ ()

- Abolitionist, humanitarian
- _____
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Malcolm X ()

- _____
- Civil Rights Activist
- Famous For: "By any means necessary"



E
Professional tennis player

G.
Harriet Tubman



K.
Madam C. J. Walker

M.
Philanthropist

B.
Led slaves to freedom in Underground Railroad



H.
Muslim Minister

I.
Granville Woods



Answer Key

Name: _____

Black History Matching

K. Madam C.J. Walker (D)

- Entrepreneur
- **Philanthropist**
- 1st Female Self-Made Millionaire

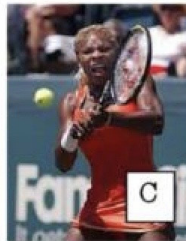
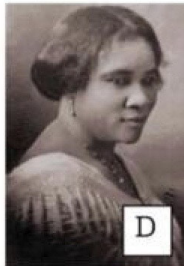


B.

Led slaves to freedom in Underground Railroad

I. Granville Woods (A)

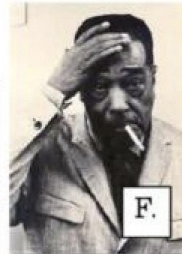
- Inventor who held more than 50 patents
- Created a communication device for trains & streetcars



Serena Williams (C)

- **Professional tennis player**
- Only woman to win \$40+ million in prize money
- 30 Grand Slam titles

E
Professional tennis player



Duke Ellington (F)

- Composer, pianist & big-band leader (orchestra)
- Famous for making jazz a popular American artform

G.
Harriet Tubman

G. Harriet Tubman (L)

- Abolitionist, humanitarian
- **Led slaves to freedom**
- Fought for women's suffrage



H.
Muslim Minister

I.
Granville Woods

Malcolm X (J)

- **Muslim Minister**
- Civil Rights Activist
- Famous For: "By any means necessary"

K.
Madam C. J. Walker

M.
Philanthropist

We can be...



Word Search on Page 12

Theater Etiquette and Experiences

We have a wonderful opportunity at this performance to help youth learn about attending live performances. Please discuss the following with your students:

1. **Concentrate to help the performers.** The audience gives energy to the performer who uses that energy to give life to the performance. Sometimes young people do not realize how a live performance differs from watching a movie or television show. A live presentation has not been pre-recorded with the mistakes edited out. This makes it riskier for the performer and more exciting for the audience. It also means the audience has a real contribution to make to the overall event. Each audience member affects those around him/her as well as the performer. An usher will show you where to sit. Walk slowly and talk quietly as you enter the theater.
2. **For safety's sake, do not lean over or sit on the balcony railings or box ledges.** Please be careful on the stairs. Avoid horseplay and running throughout the building.
3. If necessary, use the restroom **before the performance begins.** Adults need to accompany young students. **After the show, we need the entire audience to go directly to their buses.**
4. You may talk quietly to the people next to you **until the performance begins.**
5. When the lights in the theater begin to dim, it is the signal that the performance is about to start. **Stop talking and turn your attention to the stage.**
6. Stay in your seat throughout the entire performance.
7. During the performance, listen quietly and watch closely. **Talking during the performance will distract** other audience members and performers. Try not to wiggle too much and don't kick the seat in front of you. These disruptions make it hard for others around you to concentrate on the show.
8. Sometimes during a performance you may respond by laughing, crying, or sighing. By all means feel free to do so! **LAUGHING IS APPROPRIATE.** (Teachers, please do not hush the students while they are laughing.) If something is funny, it's good to laugh. If you like something a lot, applaud. This will let the performers know that you are enjoying the show. **BUT PLEASE DO NOT TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBOR DURING THE SHOW!**
9. At the end of the show, **applaud to say thank you** to the performers. The performers will bow to acknowledge your appreciation and thank you for coming.
10. When the lights get brighter in the theater, the show is over. **Stay in your seats until the OnStage Coordinator dismisses your school.**
11. Please remember:
 - Taking photographs or using recording devices is strictly prohibited.
 - Beverages and food, including gum and candy, are not allowed in the theater.
 - You are only one person among several hundred in the audience.
 - Please respect the performers and your fellow audience members.

Please inform your adult chaperones that ushers will be available throughout the performance if there are any difficulties.

Thank You!