

ExxonMobil

DISCOVERY SERIES



[Jk]creativ.



Shout!
with Jakari Sherman & [Jk]creativ.

THE
**HOBBY
CENTER**
FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

**2026-2027 Season
5th Grade Curriculum Guide**

Table of Contents

3. About the Performance

Performance synopsis, about the arts organization

4. The Hobby Center

Learn more about The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts and the theater spaces that hold our show series!

5. Theater Etiquette

Audience Guidelines

6. Vocabulary

Words and definitions from the performance

7. Pre-show Activities

Discussion, activities, and printable worksheets for pre-show engagement

11. TEKS/STAAR Alignment

Alignment to 5th grade standards

13. Classroom Connections

Core curriculum alignment

14. Post-Show Activities

Extended learning through discussion, activities, and career exploration

16. Post-Show Worksheets

Extended learning through printable post-show worksheets

18. Resources

Recommendations for 5th graders and teachers

About the Performance

[Jk]creativ.

[Jk]creativ is a multidisciplinary creativ company developing purpose-driven and truth-seeking cultural works. Through myriad creativ initiatives – from visual design to live performance; discussion groups to serving the unhoused – the company is redefining how the arts and creatives are engaged as agents of change within communities.

Creativ Director, Jakari Sherman is a recent MacDowell Fellow and Dance Source Houston Artist-in-Residence, who is considered the first modern choreographer of 'stepping'. For two decades, Jakari has pioneered the integration of traditional and contemporary stepping into full-length concert works, challenging conventions through storytelling, technology, and cross-disciplinary innovation.

Jakari is the former Artistic Director of Washington, DC-based Step Afrika!, and an ethnochoreologist conducting research into the culture and history of stepping and other percussive movement practices. His work has been recognized globally for its unique blend of cultural exploration and energetic percussive dance.



Shout!

Shout! is a multidisciplinary and multimedia performance that brings history to life for young audiences. Through stepping, percussion, contemporary dance, song and text, students discover the Ring Shout, a sacred tradition practiced in secret during enslavement that affirmed dignity, spiritual devotion, and embodied resistance.

This engaging work explores the Ring Shout as a living model of freedom through three core principles: DIALOGUE, UNITY and EVOLUTION. Students journey through PAST (traditional practice rooted in research and oral history), PRESENT (how these principles show up in community organizing today), and FUTURE (speculative visions of healing and liberation). Framed within the true story of French Town, a historic Houston community created by Creoles from Southwest Louisiana, the participatory performance connects local history to broader themes of cultural preservation, resilience, and community-building. Age-appropriate and curriculum-aligned, *Shout!* offers students a dynamic introduction to unique music, dance and culinary traditions, and the ongoing journey toward freedom as a way of life.



About the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts

The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts opened to the public in 2002 in downtown Houston, at the edge of the city's renowned Theater District. The district is home to several major performing arts organizations, including Houston Grand Opera, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony, Performing Arts Houston, Theatre Under The Stars, DaCamera, and Alley Theatre. Located beside Tranquility Park and one block from Houston City Hall, the Hobby Center was named in honor of former Texas lieutenant governor and Houston businessman William P. Hobby Jr. after his family foundation made a significant contribution to the project. The Hobby Center was built on the site formerly occupied by the Houston Music Hall and Sam Houston Coliseum, both of which were demolished in 1998. Today, the Hobby Center includes three performance spaces designed specifically for theater, music, and live performance experiences:

- **Sarofim Hall** is a 2,650-seat proscenium theater designed to accommodate large-scale touring Broadway productions and major live performances. Resident companies include Theatre Under The Stars and Broadway Across America. The hall's design combines grandeur with theatrical elegance. Golden latticework frames the space, while multi-storied gold-leaf columns stand in contrast to deep midnight-blue walls. Overhead, the Joe and Lee Jamail Celestial Dome Ceiling features twinkling fiber-optic stars arranged to mirror the Texas night sky.
- **Zilkha Hall** is an intimate 500-seat "jewel-box" theater, a term used to describe smaller performance spaces designed with rich detail, warmth, and close audience connection. Home to many of Houston's local arts organizations, the hall features excellent acoustics, deep-rose tones, and walnut wood accents across two seating levels.
- **The Founders Club** is an intimate live music venue with cabaret-style seating. Guests may purchase tables of four or be seated with others, creating a social and relaxed atmosphere. The series features both local performers and nationally recognized artists in a format not commonly found in Houston. Concerts span a variety of genres, including Broadway songbook, jazz, and world music.

ExxonMobil DISCOVERY SERIES

The ExxonMobil Discovery Series is the Hobby Center's flagship education program, welcoming 5th grade students from across Houston to experience live performances by local and touring artists. Aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), the series brings dance, music, and theater to life in ways that connect directly to what students are learning in the classroom. Every performance is free—including transportation—and includes curriculum materials and artist Q&As that deepen the experience.

For the 2026-27 school year, the Hobby Center is thrilled to be partnering with 22+ school districts to serve nearly 50,000 5th graders.

Special thanks to lead underwriter ExxonMobil and generous supporters: Cullen Trust for the Performing Arts, Elkins Foundation, George and Mary Josephine Hamman Foundation, Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation, Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo, The John M. O'Quinn Foundation, Texas Commission on the Arts, H-E-B, Vivian L. Smith Foundation, and Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion

Theater Etiquette

Before you come to the Hobby Center for the Performing Arts, Please take some time to talk with your students about what to expect. Going to a live performance is a group experience unlike any other, and many students are more familiar with going to the movies or sporting events. Please help them prepare for what they'll see and how they should act. Other things to Keep in Mind: Make sure your students use the restroom before they leave school or at the theater before the show. If you get up during the performance, you may miss the best part! The performance runs approximately one hour long with no intermission. In entering or exiting the theater, safety is the primary concern. Please follow instructions from the house managers and ushers in taking your seats.

Going to a performance is different than going to a movie:

- This production is performed live. The performers can see, hear and react to the audience!
- Audience members can show the performers when they appreciate their performance! If something is funny, you can laugh! If the performers are doing a great job, then you can clap!
- Sometimes, the performers will ask you to participate by singing or clapping; please do not talk unless the performers ask you to!
- At the end of the show, the performers will bow. This is called a curtain call. If you really loved the show, you can give them a standing ovation to show that you appreciate their hard work!
- School clothes are appropriate, but some people like to dress up to go to the theater. Just make sure you are comfortable.

Going to a performance is the same as going to a movie:

- The lights dim before the performance begins and the theater stays dark during the show.
- Audience members are expected to stay quiet in their seats during the performance.
- Audience members may NOT take any pictures or video during the performance. (This is distracting to the performers and other audience members and this show contains copyrighted artistic material.)
- All cell phones and other electronic devices should be powered OFF or put on SILENT as soon as you enter the theater.

VISIT RESTROOM BEFORE - NOT DURING.

ARRIVE EARLY.

QUIET & SEATED DURING SHOW.

NO PHOTOS OR VIDEOS DURING SHOW.

PHONES OFF/SILENCED.

RESPECT THE SPACE & OTHERS.

LISTEN & ENGAGE.

APPLAUD APPROPRIATELY.

Vocabulary

- **Accordion** – A musical instrument that makes sound when air is pushed through it while the player presses buttons or keys.
- **Ancestor** – A family member from long ago, such as a grandparent or great-grandparent, who came before you.
- **Circle** – In *Shout!*, the circle represents a place where people gather, feel safe, heal, and build community together.
- **Colorism** – Treating people differently because of the shade of their skin, even when they are part of the same community.
- **Community** – A group of people who live, work, or share experiences together and care for one another.
- **Creole** – A culture shaped by the blending of African, French, Spanish, Native American, and other traditions, especially in Louisiana.
- **Culture** – The traditions, foods, music, language, celebrations, and beliefs that people share and pass from one generation to the next.
- **Freedom** – The ability to live, express yourself, and make choices while being treated with dignity and respect.
- **Gullah Geechee** – Descendants of West and Central Africans who created a unique culture and language in the coastal areas of South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and North Carolina.
- **Gumbo** – A Louisiana stew made from many ingredients. In *Shout!*, gumbo also symbolizes how every person contributes to a strong community.
- **Heritage** – The traditions, stories, and customs that families and communities pass down over time.
- **Mardi Gras** – A celebration in Louisiana known for music, dancing, parades, and community traditions.
- **Okra** – A green vegetable often used in gumbo that came to America through African traditions and became an important part of Creole cooking.
- **Percussion** – Music created by striking, shaking, scraping, or tapping an instrument—or even your own body, to make rhythm.
- **Ring Shout** – A historic African American tradition in which people move together in a circle while singing, clapping, and creating rhythms as a way to build community, express faith, and preserve culture.
- **Rhythm** – A pattern of beats in music or movement.
- **Roux** – the base of the gumbo
- **Stepping** – A rhythmic movement tradition developed by African American college fraternities and sororities that uses claps, stomps, and body percussion to create music and tell stories.
- **Tradition** – A custom, celebration, skill, or belief that is shared and passed from one generation to the next.
- **Washboard** – A ridged metal board that can be played like a percussion instrument to create rhythmic sounds.
- **Zydeco** – A lively style of music from Louisiana that blends African, Creole, and Cajun influences and often features the accordion and washboard.

PRE-SHOW

DISCUSSION

Finding Your Circle

- What makes you feel safe, welcome, and accepted?
- Who is part of your "circle" at home, school, or in your community?
- How can people work together to make everyone feel like they belong?

Culture Through Traditions

- What traditions does your family or community celebrate together?
- How can music, food, and stories help people remember their history?
- Why is it important to pass traditions from one generation to the next?

Music Beyond Instruments

- How can your body create music without using an instrument?
- What patterns or rhythms can you make by clapping, stomping, or snapping?
- Why do you think people use music and movement to tell stories?

Growing Through Change

- How do communities change over time?
- What traditions should people try to protect as communities grow?



PRE-SHOW

ACTIVITIES



Circle of Belonging

Draw or write the names of the people, places, and activities that make up your own "circle." Share how each one helps you feel safe, supported, or free to be yourself.

Community Gumbo

Imagine your classroom is a pot of gumbo. Choose one "ingredient" that you would contribute to help your class grow into a stronger community.

Body Beats

Create a four-beat rhythm using claps, stomps, snaps, or pats. Teach it to a partner, then combine your rhythms to create one class performance.

Found Sound Orchestra

Gather safe everyday objects from around the classroom and experiment with the sounds they make. Which objects create the most interesting rhythms? How can ordinary items become musical instruments?

Circle Hunt

As you watch *Shout!*, count how many circles you notice onstage. Look for circles created by the performers, movement, staging, or storytelling, and think about what each circle might represent.

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY

GET READY TO WATCH *SHOUT!*



This performance tells a story using dance, music, rhythm, film, and food. Get ready to watch, listen, and notice!

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 MOVEMENT CHALLENGE: CAN YOU TELL A STORY WITHOUT WORDS?

Work with a partner or small group. Use only your body (movement, facial expressions, clapping, stomping, etc.) to show each emotion. No talking!

HAPPY	EXCITED	PROUD	WORRIED	WELCOMING
Draw how you showed it.	Draw how you showed it.	Draw how you showed it.	Draw how you showed it.	Draw how you showed it.



Reflection: Was it easy or difficult to tell a story without words? Why?

2 PERFORMANCE DETECTIVE: LOOK FOR THESE!

During the performance, keep your eyes and ears open.
Check the boxes when you notice each one.



☐ Circles

☐ Body Percussion
(clapping, stomping, etc.)

☐ Gumbo (food and community)

☐ Okra
(a special plant)

☐ Music
(live and recorded)

☐ Film / Projection
(story on screen)

☐ Storytelling
(without words)

☐ Community
(people together)

☐ Other: What did you notice?

3 PREDICTION: HOW WILL IT ALL COME TOGETHER?

Look at the ideas below. How do you think they will connect to tell one big story in *Shout!*?



+



+



+



+



+



How do you think all of these things fit together into one story?

PRE-SHOW ACTIVITY

THE JOURNEY OF MUSIC & TRADITION



Music, dance, and food have traveled across oceans and generations.

Explore the journey before you watch *Shout!*

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 MAP THE JOURNEY

Trace the path of traditions as they traveled and grew.

WEST AFRICA



The roots of many rhythms, songs, dances, and traditions.



Which traditions traveled?

LOUISIANA



African, French, Spanish, and Indigenous cultures blended together.



Which traditions changed?

HOUSTON – FRENCH TOWN



Creole families built community and kept traditions alive—music, food, and more!



Which traditions are still celebrated today?

2 TRADITION MATCH-UP

Draw a line to match each tradition to where it is most connected.



RING SHOUT (CIRCLE DANCE)



ZYDECO MUSIC



STEPPING (BODY PERCUSSION)



ACCORDION



WASHBOARD



OKRA OR GUMBO



BODY PERCUSSION

•



WEST AFRICA

•



LOUISIANA (CREOLE CULTURE)

•



HOUSTON – FRENCH TOWN

3 THINK & CONNECT

Before the performance, think about these questions.

- Why is it important to keep traditions alive?

- How do music, dance, and food help people feel connected?

- What do you think you will learn or feel during *Shout!*?

LISTEN BEFORE YOU WATCH!

Scan the QR code to listen to music that inspires *Shout!*



[LINK](#)

What did you notice or feel while listening?

FIFTH GRADE

TEKS Alignment

ELAR & READING- §110.7

TEKS: 5.6(A), 5.7(E), 5.9(E)

Student Learning Connection:

Students analyze how dialogue, movement, music, and symbolism communicate themes of community, identity, resilience, and cultural traditions while interpreting dramatic storytelling.

Science -§112.16

TEKS: 5.1(A), 5.1(B), 5.5(A)

Student Learning Connection:

Students investigate plant growth, observation, and the science of cooking by exploring how okra grows, how ingredients combine to create gumbo, and how scientific inquiry connects to everyday life.

Mathematics - §111.7

TEKS: 5.1(A), 5.1(E), 5.7(A)

Student Learning Connection:

Students recognize mathematical patterns, sequencing, counting, rhythm, and geometric relationships while exploring stepping, body percussion, and circular movement patterns.

Social Studies - §113.16

TEKS: 5.14(A), 5.14(B), 5.16(A)

Student Learning Connection:

Students examine how communities preserve traditions, adapt to change, and strengthen cultural identity by exploring the history, music, food, language, and storytelling traditions represented in *Shout!*.

Health - §115.17

TEKS: 5.1 (B), 5.2(A), 5.3(A)

Student Learning Connection:

Students explore how belonging, cooperation, empathy, and self-expression contribute to healthy relationships and supportive communities.

Fine Arts -§117.114

TEKS: (a1), (a2), (a3)

Student Learning Connection:

Students analyze how stepping, rhythm, body percussion, music, and movement communicate stories, preserve cultural traditions, and express identity through performance.

FIFTH GRADE

STAAR Alignment



RLA

STAAR Reporting Category:

*Reading Comprehension,
Vocabulary, Author's Craft,
Composition, Inquiry & Research*

Student Learning Connection

Analyze how dialogue, movement, music, and symbolism work together to communicate themes of community, belonging, resilience, and cultural traditions. Make inferences about characters, setting, and theme while connecting the performance to informational texts about history, culture, and the arts.

Mathematics

STAAR Reporting Category:

*Pattern, Relationships, Data
Analysis, and Mathematical
Processes*

Student Learning Connection

Recognize patterns, sequences, counting, rhythm, and geometric shapes through stepping and body percussion. Apply mathematical reasoning by identifying repeated movement patterns, circular formations, timing, and beat structures used throughout the performance.

Science

STAAR Reporting Category:

*Matter and Energy; Scientific
Investigation and Reasoning*

Student Learning Connection

Investigate plant growth, observation, and the science of cooking by exploring how okra grows and how ingredients combine to create gumbo. Use scientific thinking to make predictions, record observations, and explore physical changes that occur during cooking.

FIFTH GRADE

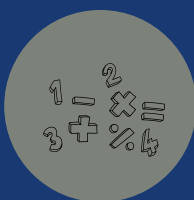
Curriculum Connections



English Language Arts

In The Classroom

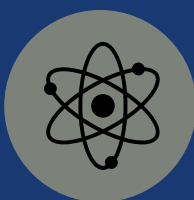
Explore how stories can be told through dialogue, movement, music, and symbolism. Students analyze theme, point of view, and character while making connections between family traditions, cultural heritage, and personal experiences.



Mathematics

In The Classroom

Investigate rhythm through counting, sequencing, repeated patterns, and geometric shapes. Students explore how stepping, body percussion, and circular formations demonstrate mathematical thinking in movement and performance.



Science

In The Classroom

Discover the science behind food and plants by observing how okra grows and investigating how ingredients combine to create gumbo. Students use observation, prediction, and experimentation to connect scientific thinking to everyday life.



Social Studies

In The Classroom

Examine how communities preserve traditions through food, music, language, storytelling, and celebration. Students explore how cultural practices strengthen identity, respond to change, and connect generations.



Health / SEL

In The Classroom

Reflect on the importance of belonging, cooperation, and safe spaces. Students discuss how communities support one another, how traditions bring people together, and how self-expression through movement and storytelling can build confidence and connection.

Discussion



The Circle as Freedom

- How did the ring shout create a space for freedom, healing, and belonging?
- When did the circle feel strongest, and when did it seem threatened?
- What responsibilities do people share when they create a safe community space?

What the Community Carries

- How did food, language, music, and movement preserve memories across generations?
- Why did Maw Maw describe the okra seed, gumbo recipe, and circle as things that “remember”?
- Which traditions in the performance changed over time without losing their meaning?



When the Circle Is Challenged

- How did language loss, colorism, and freeway construction threaten the community in different ways?
- Why were the film and construction soundscapes used to interrupt the live performance?
- What helped the community rebuild its circle instead of disappearing?



Everyone Feeds the Circle

- How did gumbo become a metaphor for building community?
- What did stepping and body percussion show about creating with what is available?
- What could you contribute to a circle where everyone feels seen, valued, and free to express themselves?



POST-SHOW Activities

Reflective Writing

- **A Tradition Worth Keeping**

Write about a family or community tradition that is important to you. Explain what it teaches, why it matters, and how you hope it will continue in the future.



Create & Perform

- **Found Sound Challenge**

Working in small groups, create a short rhythm using classroom objects or body percussion. Perform your composition and explain how you used everyday materials to make music.



Science Investigation

- **Grow an Okra Plant**

Plant an okra seed and observe its growth over several weeks. Record measurements, draw observations, and predict how the plant will change while learning why okra became an important ingredient in the performance.



Culture Connections

- **Build a Community Gumbo**

Create a visual recipe using qualities that help a community thrive. Instead of ingredients, choose values like teamwork, kindness, perseverance, respect, and generosity, then explain why each one belongs in the pot.



Career Spotlight

- **Behind the Performance**

Choose one career from *Shout!* writer, filmmaker, dancer, costume designer, percussionist, animator, or creative director. Research the role and create a trading card showing what they do, the skills they need, and how they contributed to the production.



POST-SHOW

PRINTABLE ACTIVITY

Worksheet -Everyone Has Something to Bring

Name: _____

Date: _____

1 What Do YOU Bring?

Think about yourself. Write or draw an example for each box.



A TALENT

Something you are good at or enjoy doing.



A TRADITION

A family or cultural tradition that is important to you.



A SKILL

Something you have learned or can teach.



A WAY I HELP OTHERS

How you show kindness or support to others.



SOMETHING I'M PROUD OF

Something about yourself or your experience.

2 How Do Your Gifts Help?

Choose one or two from above and explain how your gift helps your family, classroom, or community become stronger.



3 Learning From *Shout!*

Write or draw one thing you learned from the performance that will stay with you.

4 Your Next Step

One thing I can do this week to make my community stronger is...



PRINTABLE ACTIVITY



Worksheet - Grow Your Own Okra in the Classroom

Name: _____

Date: _____



DID YOU KNOW?

Okra is a warm-weather plant. It loves sunlight, water, and takes patience to grow!

1 PLANT YOUR OKRA SEED

Follow these steps to plant your okra seed.



1. Fill a cup or small pot with potting soil.
2. Plant 1 seed about 1/2 inch deep.
3. Water gently until the soil is moist.
4. Place in a warm spot with lots of sunlight.
5. Observe and record your plant's growth!

3 OBSERVE & RECORD

Check on your plant regularly and record your observations.

Date	What I See (Draw your plant)	Height (inches)	New Leaves or Flowers?	How Is It Growing?
_____		_____	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____
_____		_____	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____
_____		_____	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____
_____		_____	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____

4 THINK & CONNECT

Answer the questions below.

What does okra need to grow strong?



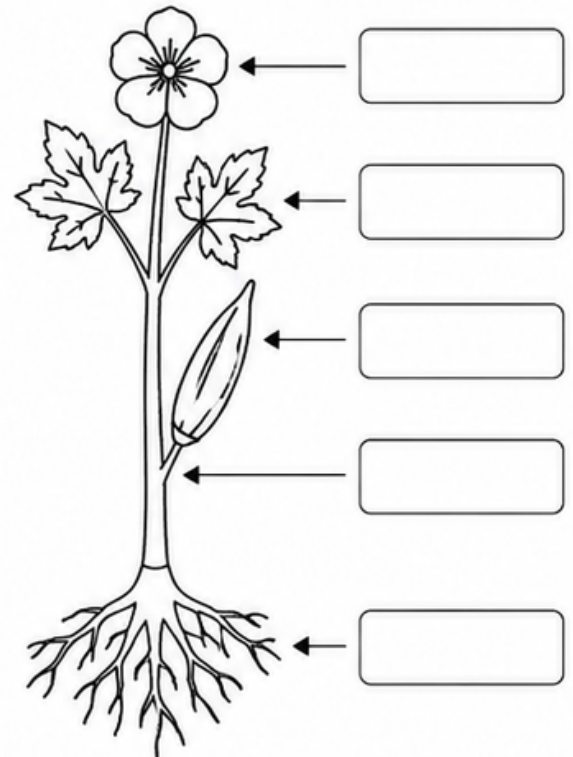
How does growing okra help you understand the ideas in *Shout!!*?

Why are plants and traditions important to our communities?

2 PARTS OF THE OKRA PLANT

Label the parts of the plant using the words below.

flower leaf stem pod roots



5 PREDICT & REFLECT

Look ahead and reflect on your journey.

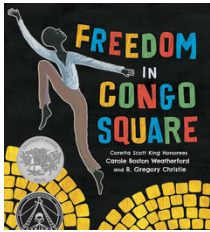


What do you predict will happen next to your okra plant?

One thing I learned from growing okra is...

FIFTH GRADE RESOURCES

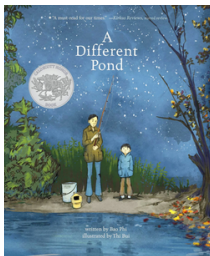
Books



"Freedom in Congo Square"

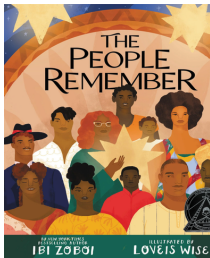
by **Carole Boston Weatherford**

This poetic picture book shares the history of Congo Square, where enslaved people in 19th-century New Orleans gathered on Sundays to make music, dance, and preserve African traditions.



"A Different Pond" by Bao Phi

A young Vietnamese American boy joins his father on an early-morning fishing trip to catch food for their family. Through their quiet time together, the boy learns about his father's memories of Vietnam, his family's sacrifices, and the meaning of home.



"The People Remember"

by **Ibi Zoboi**

Using the seven principles of Kwanzaa, this lyrical book traces the history of African descendants in America from their ancestral roots through enslavement, resistance, achievement, and joy.

Websites

Northwestern State Creole Heritage Center.



Explore Louisiana Creole history, culture, traditions, and communities.

Link: [Heritage Center](#)

Kennedy Center



Discover lessons and resources that connect the arts with classroom learning.

Link: [Arts Integrated Resources](#)

CONNECT WITH US

thehobbycenter.org/education

© 2026 The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts. All rights reserved.

This resource is provided for personal and educational, noncommercial use. Educators and schools may download, print, and reproduce materials for instructional purposes. Materials may not be sold, altered for commercial purposes, republished, or distributed by other organizations without prior written permission from The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts. Please credit The Hobby Center for the Performing Arts when sharing or referencing these materials.

Let us know what you think.
Please take our survey!



[Post-Show
Student Survey](#)



[Post-Show
Teacher Survey](#)