

# JACK'S ADVENTURE

## IN AMERICAN HISTORY

### About our Play

Jack is in big trouble! He's just learned that he has to take an American History test - NOW! Fortunately, his teacher gives him a few minutes to study before the test. She reminds him to spend time thinking about what history would have been like if Jack had lived then. Well, Jack doesn't need to be told twice! He cracks open his history book and immediately begins a journey through 400 years of American history. From Virginia Dare to Neil Armstrong, some of the most influential, exciting and colorful figures in our country's past emerge to help Jack prepare for his test. In turn, Jack is able to help solve problems along with help from the audience in order to get the Constitution written, insure that women have the right to vote with the 19th Amendment, and work on Ford's assembly line! When his teacher returns, Jack is ready to take his test! At the end of the play, Jack's teacher asks that we all think hard about the contributions we can make in order to see our names in the American History book. Our history is constructed by people who contributed magnificent inventions to our world. Can you think of any inventions you would like to create to help your fellow Americans? Others people were wonderful statesmen and patriots. What contributions would you like to make to our government and political landscape? Or perhaps your make will be in the arts, in literature, or in sports! The possibilities are endless, so take your time and think about what you would most like to do to see your name in the history book. All of us have the power to make the world a better place, simply by stating small in our own communities!



### NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

- The United States of America celebrated their **239th** Anniversary of declaring their independence from Britain in **1776**.
- Abraham Lincoln was the **16th** President of the US who ended the Civil War. He was assassinated **5** days later.
- United States of America's flag contains **50** stars to represent all the US States and **13** stripes to represent the original colonies.
- Franklin D. Roosevelt was the **32nd** President of the United States and held his presidency for the longest time, from **1933** to **1945**, **12** years = **3** terms!



The first dollar bills issued in the USA were in 1862. The current design for our one dollar bill was created in 1963, featuring a painting of George Washington, the first President of the United States of America!



The US Constitution is our country's document that embodies the laws and principals by which we are governed, written in 1787.

## Student Activities

### Create Your Own Historical Play!

This activity incorporates creative thinking, knowledge of history, writing and performance!

- 1) Break students into small groups. Have each group develop a short play from other historical events that they have studied this year. Some ideas could be: George Washington becoming president, Native American and the Pilgrims working together, expeditions to explore the Western United States, or events specific to your state's history!
- 2) Discuss all the things that make a play possible. Have each group think about how costumes, props, and the set could help bring their new story to life. If there's time, try to create some of these props or costume pieces from everyday items!
- 3) Have each group think about and practice how the people in their story move and talk. Voila! The beginning steps of performing a play have been accomplished. This is the same work our actors do when preparing for a role in a play.
- 4) Time for performance! Have each group perform their short play. Remind the other students about being good audience members

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1) If you had the chance to meet anyone in history, who would you choose? Why?
- 2) What would it be like to leave everything you know behind in order to sail to a "New World"?
- 3) Imagine trying to build a nation from scratch just as our early leaders did. What kinds of things must be established for a good nation to work? What are the first things that need to be done?
- 4) What are some other significant events in history that our play didn't dramatize?
- 5) If this play were to be produced again in 100 years, what events do you think would be talked about?

while they watch their friends onstage!

### Design a Flag!

This activity incorporates creative thinking, visual arts, and writing!

- 1) Have students pull out paper and crayons or colored pencils.
- 2) Create a personal flag that includes pictures or symbols of things that are important to you. Be creative!
- 3) Have each student create a new flag for the USA. Have them write a short description of the flag they have drawn. Talk about why the student made his/her specific choices.

### Branches of US Government!

This activity incorporates visual arts, writing, and association.

- 1) Have students draw a tree with 1 big trunk labeled Constitution.
- 2) Above the trunk, 3 branches should shoot out and be labeled Judicial, Executive, & Legislative.
- 3) The students can continue to draw branches that label the offices within the branches of government.
- 4) When the students have drawn all their branches they can start writing the specific jobs that each office in each branch is responsible for.
- 5) Discuss with your class how the system of Checks and Balances work, you can also quiz them after all the drawings are finished!

## SPOTLIGHT: HEROES FROM HISTORY

**Harriet Tubman** - Made thirteen missions to rescue approximately 70 enslaved family and friends through the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, she also was the first woman to leave an armed expedition in the war.



**Martin Luther King Jr.** - Leader of the American Civil Rights Movement from the mid 1950's until his death by assassination in 1968. He held non-violent protests against segregation and worked tirelessly to gain equal rights for African Americans.

**Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins, & Buzz**

**Aldrin** - On July 20, 1969 these American astronauts led the Apollo 11 Mission and became the first humans to land on the moon.



### Jack's Timeline:

**1200+ BC** - Native Americans cross into "America" via an ice bridge from Asia.

**1000 AD** - Viking explorer Leif Ericsson explores the Atlantic coast of America.

**1492** - As many as 100 million indigenous people live in the Americas when Europeans begin exploration of the "New World" with Columbus as captain!

**1587** - The English attempts at a second colony soon becomes the infamous "Lost Colony". The disappearance of this colony remains one of history's great mysteries.

**1607** - Jamestown becomes the first permanent English settlement in Virginia.

**1620** - Pilgrims land at Plymouth Rock and introduce the "Thanksgiving Dinner"!

**1760** - Ben Franklin, inventor of the printing press, flies a kite in a lightning storm.

**1773** - Settlers protesting high taxes imposed by England enjoy a "Boston Tea Party".

**1776** - Thomas Jefferson writes the Declaration of Independence.

**1777** - Betsy Ross is credited as the designer of the first "stars and stripes" style American flag.

**1781** - The Constitution is developed with the help of the Continental Congress.

**1861** - The Civil War breaks out between the North and the South. It last four years and costs hundreds of thousands of people their lives.

**1863** - The Gettysburg Address is delivered by Abraham Lincoln.

**1869** - The transcontinental railroad is completed.

**1903** - The Wright Brothers fly their famous airplane in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

**1908** - Henry Ford sells the first Model T! The assembly line is launched in Michigan, making the car affordable for the first time!

**1915-1923** - George Washington Carver finds more than 100 uses for the peanut. As a black inventor, he became one of the most significant contributors to agriculture in the souther US!

**1920** - Women receive the right to vote with the Nineteenth Amendment.

**1950s - 1960s** - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. leads peaceful demonstrations that result in legislation that recognizes American citizens as equals, regardless of race.

**1969** - Neil Armstrong is the first person to step foot onto the moon!



## Independence Day Word Search

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

### Word Bank

BARBECUE                      FLAG                      PARADE                      RED

BLUE                      FAMILY                      FREEDOM                      HOLIDAY

PARTY                      PATRIOTISM                      SUMMER                      WHITE

# Before, During and After the Play...



## YOU CAN DO THIS TOO!

**Where to start:** All of our actors started out playing and telling stories when they were young -then they decided to study acting in school. Now they are pros! Here are some ways you can start doing theatre right away!

**In School!** Does your school have plays or musical performances? This is a great place to start.

**In Your Community!** Many towns have community theaters or local acting groups. See if you can try out!

**Start Something!** If your school doesn't have a drama club or a theatre club, talk to your favorite teacher about how you might be able to start one.

**At Home!** Get together with friends, cousins, brothers and sisters and make your own play. You can make up plays based on your favorite books and stories. Invite family and friends to see your performance.

**Try your best at new things!** There are lots of jobs in the theatre besides acting. There are people who paint the sets, make costumes, write plays and more. Get the most out of your art, music and English classes & you could be a theatre pro!



## BEFORE YOU SEE THE PLAY...

Attending the theatre is very different from watching TV or going to the movies. For one thing, the actors are real people who are performing right then and there. They can see and hear everything that happens in the audience. Because of this, YOU are an important part of the play and its important to do your job as an audience member well. Here are some tips before you see the play.

1. Please be quiet and respectful so everyone else around you can hear and see what is happening on stage and so the actors can do their job.
2. The actors may ask you to participate. Don't be afraid to respond, ask a question or volunteer!
3. Keep your hands to yourself and your eyes up front.
4. If you like the play, be sure to clap at the end.
5. Have fun! Enjoy yourself!



## After seeing the Play...

Write your own review of the play! A review is a way of telling your thoughts about a play, movie or book. Consider the following when you are writing your review.

*What was your favorite part? Who was your favorite character? Can you summarize the play in your own words? If you had written this play, would you have done anything different? Would you recommend this play to a friend? Name one new thing you learned from watching this play!*



## FUN FACTS ABOUT THEATRE!

After a play is over and everyone goes home, there is always a light left on backstage. It's called a ghost light!

The oldest play that is still around was written by an Ancient Greek named Aeschylus. It's almost 2500 years old!

The longest performance on stage ever was over 23 hours long! It happened in New Jersey in 2010.

William Shakespeare is a famous playwright. He wrote 37 plays and is still quoted by many people. There are 157 million google pages that mention him--the most of any famous person ever!

In theatre, it's considered bad luck to tell an actor, "Good luck" before a performance. Instead, you're supposed to say, "Break a leg!"

Ancient Greek audiences stamped their feet rather than clapping their hands to applaud.

# Everything about the Theatre!



A mini-van is our hip and favored mode of transportation for touring the country!

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## THEATRE VOCABULARY!

**Actor:** The people on-stage performing the play.

**Backdrop:** The background for the play.

**Props:** Anything that an actor holds while on-stage--a cane, book or rubber chicken.

**Downstage:** the area closest to the audience a long time ago stage were built at angles.

**Upstage:** The area away from the audience, like the back wall of the a stage.

**Director:** The person who told the actors where to go while they were on-stage and helped them create the characters they would play.

## Facts about us!

1. Did you know we're owned by an Emmy winning actor?
2. Our actors average 1,000 miles a week traveling the country to entertain young audiences.
3. Our programs have been seen in almost every corner of the country and around the world.
4. We watch over 1200 actors a season audition, before we cast our season.
5. We offer dozens and dozens different shows a season from Black History to anti-bullying and literary classics.
6. We toured Moscow with performances of our Aesop's Fables.
7. We're based in Asheville, NC.



### ABOUT US!

Founded in 2003, Bright Star Theatre tours the nation offering high quality, affordable programs to every imaginable venue. We've had countless engagements at the National Theatre, Toured to Moscow and are so grateful to be in your very school today!

**Costumes:** The wigs, clothing and glasses that the actors wore to help flush out their characters .

**Auditions:** How an actor gets a role is by auditioning, they may have to interview, pretend to be a character from the play, read something from it, etc.

**Set Designer:** The person who decided what should be on the background and who painted or created it.

Were there other terms that came up in the show or from the experience of seeing the live play that you'd like to learn more about?



The Process of a Play:

1. Actors audition
2. Directors cast the show (that means they choose actors)
3. The directors and actors rehearse the play (that means they practice it).
4. A team of people works on building the set, costumes and props.
5. The play opens (that means it is performed for the first time)!

Were there other terms that came from the experience of seeing the live play that you'd like to learn more about?

### BRIGHT STAR THEATRE

Bright Star Touring Theatre performs across the country from Boston to Burbank and virtually every school, museum, theatre, community event in between. Each Season our shows run the gamut from Black History to anti-bullying, from literary classics to biographical shows. Our shows are available throughout the year for any event in any part of the world.

### JACK'S ADVENTURE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Created by Bright Star Touring Theatre Lead Authorship carried out by David Ostergaard, All Rights Reserved.

Learn more about this show, this company & our whole Season:

[www.brightstartheatre.com](http://www.brightstartheatre.com)

### JACK'S ADVENTURE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Made it's Debut in January 2004  
National Tour

We want every show to be special and remarkable for our audience. Please feel free to connect with us at anytime to tell us about your experience: