

The Children's Theatre Company

Building Character Onstage!

Presents

Building Character Onstage™

Study Guide

An Interactive Study Guide for Teachers (Acting)

The Butter Battle Book



Children's Theatre Company
526 West 26th Street, Suite 1012
New York, NY 10001
212-633-6629 tel
212-633-6603 fax
www.childrenstheatrecompany.org

© 2005 Children's Theatre Company

Act . Dance . Drama . Music . Writing
53 East 11th Street, New York, NY 10003
Tel: 212.633.6629 Fax: 212.633.6603
www.childrenstheatrecompany.org

The Children's Theatre Company

Building Character Onstage!

Dear Educators,

Our Building Character Onstage Study Guides have been created to enhance your students' experience of each of our Dr. Seuss performance showcases and to extend their themes into your curriculum. We know your classroom time is precious, but we hope you will find some of the included activities valuable to your students. These are simply suggested activities, and you should feel free to adapt them to best fit your grade level and curriculum.

It is our belief that theatre arts are basic to education. We hope that, you'll find these activities both educational and entertaining.

Sincerely,

Mehr Mansuri
Executive Director

Permission is granted for material in this Building Character Onstage Guide to be reproduced for use in the classroom. If any material is used or reproduced for any other purpose, please accompany with this phrase:

Text Used with permission of the Children's Theatre Company.

© 2005 Children's Theatre Company

Art . Dance . Drama . Music . Writing
53 East 11th Street, New York, NY 10003
Tel: 212.633.6629 Fax: 212.633.6603
www.childrenstheatrecompany.org

The Children's Theatre Company

Building Character Onstage!

The Butter Battle Book by Dr. Seuss

~ Music and lyrics by Lory Lazarus

Story Summary

Engaged in a long-running battle, the Yooks and the Zooks develop more and more sophisticated weaponry as they attempt to outdo each other. In this battle between the two neighbors, (over which way to butter your bread!), Dr. Seuss masterfully relates how petty differences must be considered in a constructive way. Allusions to the Cold War, like the wall dividing the two sides, is Dr. Seuss's vehicle for conveying the astounding destructive potential behind a war where the enemies lose sight of their true goals. The war ends up getting fought for the wrong reasons- reminding us of the danger and the prejudice attached to such battles, which can eat away at our morals, our societies, and our motives. While the underlying theme to the book is the absurdity of battle, Dr. Seuss tries to convey that people must overcome their pride to live in peace.



This CTC World Premiere and original musical adaptation by Lory Lazarus, which includes hilarious songs such as "You'll be Toast!"- also allows adults to consider the obvious historical parallels and the deeper implications of the story line. Ultimately, Dr. Seuss does the world a wonderful service by creating a dialogue for children and adults about international understanding.

Bewitched by the beauty of the Truffula Trees, an enterprising villain gets greedy and chops down the wondrous Truffula trees to produce and mass-market "Thneeds." The Lorax is not only an ecological warning, but also speaks to the dark side of "free enterprise" at its most depraved and greedy state.

Social & Ethical Studies Objectives – Get Students Talking about Cold War, Prejudice, Cultural Differences, Historical Battles

Character & Spiritual Education/ Resilience Skills Objectives – 3VEES: VOCABULARY, VIRTUES, VALUES (ethics)

Get Students Talking about Conflict Resolution vs. Conflict Prevention; Unity in Diversity vs. Uniformity, Prejudice, Acceptance, Openness

Exercise- Isolation:

- **Aim:** Encourage class to examine the arbitrariness of people's prejudices and encourage acceptance and openness to people who might not be exactly alike.
 1. Teacher informs students that today they may only sit with people like them.
 2. After announcement the Teacher should begin to break the class up, but through silly/ridiculous differences (Everyone who has blue eyes on one side, anyone with an "H" in their name", Anyone wearing pink socks, etc...) until eventually everyone is sitting alone.
 3. Discuss why it's silly to be sitting alone when, although there are differences, there are also similarities (Like Chinese food, have a younger brother or sister, etc... until the community is built up again)
 4. A good note to end on would be that we're all human beings as it unites us with everyone in the world. ("One World" is a great companion piece to this as well and it might be a good time to learn it)

© 2005 Children's Theatre Company

Act . Dance . Drama . Music . Writing
53 East 11th Street, New York, NY 10003
Tel: 212.633.6629 Fax: 212.633.6603
www.childrenstheatrecompany.org