



STUDY GUIDE FOR

Cuddle Bears

By Kevin M Reese
www.kmrscripts.com

TO THE PARENT/TEACHER

This guide has been provided to help children benefit the most from experiencing a live theatrical event. The activities described herein are only suggestions. Please feel free to pick and choose the things that will most benefit your children in the time you have available. It is our hope that the performance is not only entertaining, but is a valuable educational experience as well.

You will find that some of the activities contained in this guide are geared for younger, some for older children-- but there is something for everyone. Please feel free to reproduce and distribute any of the enclosed pages and activities for your personal use.

Theatre Etiquette

1. ***Audience Behavior.*** Attending a theatrical performance is a social event. Just as the way you act (and behave) in church or temple is different than the way you act on the playground, there is certain behavior that is appropriate in a live theatre. Discuss with your children the types of behavior that are appropriate when they are members of an audience.
2. ***Live Theatre.*** Explain that they need to act differently when they're watching a live play than if they're watching a movie in a theatre. Live actors can hear the audience's laughter and applause as well as their talking to their neighbor or rustling papers. And their responses-- appropriate or not-- really do affect the actors' performance. The end line is: How would they want to be treated if THEY were up on the stage.
3. ***Write to the actors.*** After you see the show, have your students write a letter to their favorite character or draw a picture of their favorite character or scene and send it to the theatre (see the next page for an email address, too!). The actors would LOVE to hear from your students. The actors may even have time to send a reply of some sort to your class. Because of the volume of mail they receive, replies to individual students may not be possible-- but they'd still love to hear from you!
4. ***Audience Participation.*** Normally, audience members should never talk during the play--and especially not talk directly to the actors (it distracts other audience member and may even make the actors forget their lines). But the plays by KMR Scripts are unique in that we offer the audience special opportunities to participate in the production. They will probably not be asked to come onstage, but there are various times throughout the production where the actors will ask them questions or ask them to use their imaginations and pretend they are animals, trees, or people. At those times we encourage the audience to participate and/or answer them wholeheartedly (but not in an overly loud yell). Over the years, this has become one of the hallmarks of KMR Scripts productions.

Activities & Discussion

Cuddle Bears

1. **STORY CIRCLE.** Have the children make up their own version of Cuddle Bears. Have them sit in a circle. Pick one child to begin the story and go clock-wise around the circle, allowing everyone a chance to add to the story. You may have to limit each child's contribution to one story event (some children are avid storytellers!).
- 2 **BEAR FACTS**
 - ▶ Bears are wild animals that can be dangerous. They are not playful and cuddly like Teddy Bears.
 - ▶ Though Bears cannot see very well, they have an excellent sense of smell.
 - ▶ Bear cubs only weigh one-half to one pound at birth. Compare that to a human baby.
 - ▶ Bears are OMNIVOROUS, which means they eat all kinds of things: meat, vegetables, fruit, honey, ants, nuts, etc.
 - ▶ There are seven species (varieties) of bears in the world: Large Brown Bears, American Black Bears, Asiatic Black Bears, Polar Bears, Sun Bears, Sloth Bears and Spectacled Bears.
 - ▶ Panda Bears and Koala Bears are not really members of the Bear family.
 - ▶ Bears spend most of their winter sleeping (hibernating)
3. **REVIEW.** Have the students write a review of the play. What were their favorite parts? Their least favorite? Did anything happen that they didn't understand or seemed confusing? Did they like the music or did it "get in the way of the story?" What did they think of the costumes and scenery? Help them understand that their opinions are most certainly valid and will most likely differ from that of others (and that is OK). Being able to objectively discuss their opinions and others' is a skill that will benefit them the rest of their lives.
4. **VISIT THE INTERNET.** If you have a computer at home or school and have access to the Internet, you can look at a special web site that is just for you! **Kevin M Reese**, the man who wrote the play *Cuddle Bears*, works for a company called **KMR Scripts**. They have a web site and there is a special area for kids. There are lots of fun (and safe!) things to do and you can even send the playwright a letter. You can find it by typing:

www.kmrscripts.com

Then click on the words; "Hey, Kids!" and it will take you to the Kids' area. You'll be surfing!

5. **BEING POLITE.** The little Cuddle Bear learns that saying PLEASE and THANK YOU are very important. Why are such polite words important? What are some other words that polite people use? How does it make you feel if you do something for somebody and they don't say "thank you?"