

# “Lights, Camera, Action!” Using Plays to Connect Core Knowledge Across the Curriculum

**Grade Level or Special Area:** Connections, Preschool-8

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**Length of Unit:** Six Weeks

## 1. ABSTRACT

“All the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players!” Shakespeare knew this and so will your students with this exciting plan to write and perform plays utilizing Core Knowledge content! Students’ learning will increase ten-fold when they “act-out” the rich content of your curriculum. This system of writing plays applies to grades Preschool-8, and can be utilized for any Core Knowledge strand. By memorizing lines, rehearsing, and performing these exciting plays, your students will connect many ELA standards across the content areas. We will provide practical tips and timelines for bringing your Core content to life!

## 2. OVERVIEW

- A. Concept Objectives:
  - 1. The student understands similarities and differences among people. (TEKS Social Studies K.11)
  - 2. The student understands the concepts of time and chronology. (TEKS Social Studies 1.3)
  - 3. The student understands the value of work. (TEKS Social Studies 1.9)
  - 4. The student understands how individuals, events, and ideas have influenced the history of various communities. (TEKS Social Studies 3.1)
- B. While any content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence* can be utilized to write these plays, specific content from the *Sequence* we employed when writing plays includes:
  - 1. Kindergarten: World History and Geography
    - a. Geography: Spatial Sense (page 11)
      - i. Maps and globes: what they represent, how we use them
    - b. An Overview of the Seven Continents
  - 2. First Grade: American History and Geography
    - a. Early Exploration of the American West (page 30)
      - i. Daniel Boone and the Wilderness Road
      - ii. The Louisiana Purchase
        - a) Explorations of Lewis and Clark
        - b) Sacagawea
      - iii. Geography: Locate the Appalachian Mountains, the Rocky Mountains, and the Mississippi River
  - 3. Second Grade: American History and Geography
    - a. The Civil War (page 50)
      - i. President Abraham Lincoln: keeping the Union together
      - ii. Emancipation Proclamation and the end of slavery
  - 4. Third Grade: World History and Geography
    - a. Ancient Rome (page 70)
    - b. The Vikings
  - 5. Fourth Grade: Language Arts

- a. Fiction (page 89)
  - i. Legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table
    - a) How Arthur Became King
    - b) The Sword in the Stone
    - c) The Sword Excalibur
    - d) Guinevere
    - e) Merlin and the Lady of the Lake
    - f) Sir Lancelot
- 6. Fourth Grade: American History and Geography
  - a. Early Presidents and Politics (page 96)
    - i. George Washington as First President, Vice President John Adams
    - ii. John Adams, second president, Abigail Adams
    - iii. Thomas Jefferson, third president
    - iv. James Madison, fourth president
    - v. James Monroe, fifth president
    - vi. John Quincy Adams, sixth president
    - vii. Andrew Jackson, seventh president
- C. This presentation will address the following administrative and teacher issues:
  - 1. Integrating Reading and Literacy Across the Content Areas
  - 2. Involving Parents in the *Core Knowledge Sequence*
  - 3. Monitoring Students' Understanding of Content
  - 4. Integrating Music and Art into Reading, History, Math and Science
- D. Skill Objectives
  - 1. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)
  - 2. The student will locate information about the past from various sources. (TEKS Social Studies 2.3 adapted)
  - 3. The student will work independently and with others in a variety of settings. (TEKS Social Studies 4.24 adapted)

### 3. BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

#### A. For Teachers

- 1. *Core Knowledge Sequence*
- 2. Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your \_\_ Grader Needs To Know*.
- 3. Susan J. Tchudi *Putting on a Play: A Guide to Writing and Producing Neighborhood Drama*
- 4. Rachel Dickinson *Improve Your Primary School Through Drama*
- 5. Various Resources Depending Upon Content Chosen for Plays

#### B. For Students

- 1. Information from the *Core Knowledge Sequence* regarding the topic of study i.e., History and Geography, Literature, or Science.

### 4. RESOURCES

- A. *Core Knowledge Sequence*
- B. Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your \_\_ Grader Needs To Know*.

### 5. LESSONS

#### Lesson One: Act I: Selecting a Topic

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
  - a. The student understands the concepts of time and chronology.
2. Lesson Content
  - a. Consideration and selection of a topic from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*.
3. Skill Objective(s)
  - a. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)

B. *Materials*

1. *Core Knowledge Sequence*.

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. none

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Begin your play writing process by choosing a topic from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*.
2. Consider your options from the different strands such as History and Geography, Literature, Science, Sayings and Phrases, or even Math. Of course, Art and Music will be a perfect compliment for any topic chosen.
3. If at all possible, try to incorporate more than one strand into your play.
4. Consider your students and their interests. Think about the products that students could make to be used as props or as part of the set.
5. Select a topic to portray a time period that will be studied.
6. When selecting your topic, consider the parts and roles that could be created. Do you need a play with many parts or just a few? Think about how the subject matter could be put into dialogue.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. You'll know you've chosen the perfect topic for your play when you've selected a unit of study from the *Core Knowledge Sequence* and can begin to visualize the scenes and dialogue in your mind.

**Lesson Two: Act II: Script Writing**

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
  - a. The student understands how individuals, events, and ideas have influenced the history of various communities. (TEKS Social Studies 3.1)
2. Lesson Content
  - a. Writing a script
  - b. Developing scenes
  - c. Creating dialogue
3. Skill Objective(s)
  - a. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)
  - b. The student will locate information about the past from various sources. (TEKS Social Studies 2.3 adapted)
  - c. The student will work independently and with others in a variety of settings. (TEKS Social Studies 4.24 adapted)

B. *Materials*

1. “What Your \_\_\_ Grader Needs to Know”
2. Other resources for research purposes
3. Computer and writing materials

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. dialogue- conversation between two or more persons
2. scenes- a unit of action or a segment of a story in a play

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. To begin the actual script writing process, keep your students’ talents and development in mind.
2. Research your topic using a variety of sources. “What Your \_\_\_ Grader Needs to Know” is an invaluable resource and should be included when compiling the information that will be included in the script.
3. Decide on the story line of the play. What events will occur? What characters will take part? Think about an introduction with the use of a narrator.
4. After the basic outline of the play has been decided, divide the action into scenes. Consider how you will move students into place for their parts. Group students together on the risers or set so that they may move together when their time for action arrives. A change from one scene to another is a perfect opportunity for this movement. Is there music that could be played during this time? Music can set the mood for the next scene as well as help make the transition seem much smoother.
5. Create the dialogue for your script using the text you’ve chosen as your resource. Take the events that are described in the content and put the words into a conversation between characters. Students could assist in this area by making suggestions or writing lines or jokes.
6. In your mind, envision the action of the play. What will it look like? Where will the characters be on the stage at certain parts of the play? Will there be sound effects or motions involved? If there are funny lines or jokes in the play, you may want to write laughter by all of the children into the script. Where will the students be while they are waiting to enter the stage? Let the scenes come to life in your mind!
7. What is a play without music? Look through the Core Knowledge Sequence for any music that would fit in with your topic. Ask your Music teacher for suggestions and/or help for finding additional music.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. This phase of the play writing process will be complete when you have your script in hand. Remember, the script can be modified or adjusted at any time depending on any surprises that may arise.

**Lesson Three: Act III: Casting**

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
  - a. The student understands similarities and differences among people. (TEKS Social Studies K.11)
2. Lesson Content
  - a. Assigning parts for the play
3. Skill Objective(s)
  - a. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)

- b. The student will work independently and with others in a variety of settings. (TEKS Social Studies 4.24 adapted)

B. *Materials*

1. copies of the script for teachers such as Appendix
2. copies of scripted lines for students
3. casting sheet such as Appendix H

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. cast- the group of performers to whom parts are assigned; players
2. narrator- someone who tells a story
3. actor- A theatrical performer

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. When assigning parts for the play, there are things to consider. Every student should have a part in the play, although some children may not feel comfortable with a speaking part. You may want to ask students if they prefer a speaking or a non-speaking part.
2. Parts come in all forms and sizes. Speaking parts can vary in length and difficulty. Some students desiring a speaking part may do much better with a narrator's lines than they would with elaborate acting. For students that will not have a speaking part, consider roles such as setting the stage for each act, dancing, crowd scenes, playing a musical instrument, being a score keeper of some sort, playing the part of an animal, or holding a prop. The options are endless!
3. How many students will be involved? How many are boys and how many are girls? Many parts can be played by a boy or a girl if it is written in this manner.
4. Many students would like to have the "leading role" in the play. If this is the case, you could have a formal audition process. Another option would be to introduce the script during class by letting the students read through it aloud. This would provide you the opportunity to hear different students read a variety of parts which would give you a better idea of how to cast the parts.
5. Know your students. Consider how they will handle the pressure of the actual performance. What are their speaking voices like?
6. Another way to give every student a part they would like is to have each child list 5 different parts they would like to have (or at least be willing to play). This opens up a lot of possibilities for making everyone happy with their part.
7. Everyone has a talent! Be sure to explain to students when the parts are distributed that every part is important and that every "actor" will be seen!
8. The beauty of writing your own play is that you can make the parts "fit" your students. This gives you ultimate flexibility!

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. This phase of the process will be complete when all parts are assigned and every student is included in the play with some type of part.

**Lesson Four: Act IV: Music To My Ears**

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
  - a. The student understands the value of work. (TEKS Social Studies 1.9)
2. Lesson Content
  - a. Selecting music for the play
  - b. Learning the music

- c. Musical performances for individuals or small groups
- 3. Skill Objective(s)
  - a. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)
  - b. The student will work independently and with others in a variety of settings. (TEKS Social Studies 4.24 adapted)

**B. Materials**

- 1. music for songs
- 2. copies of the music for children
- 3. instruments

**C. Key Vocabulary**

- 1. lyrics- the words of a song

**D. Procedures/Activities**

- 1. When at all possible, use Core Knowledge music in your play.
- 2. If additional music is needed, look for music that reflects the topic, the time period, or the mood of the play.
- 3. Look for music that is familiar to the students.
- 4. Find music that would be fun for the audience.
- 5. Experiment with creating your own music by rewriting familiar tunes with lyrics that fit the content of the play. Students love this!
- 6. Consider giving individuals or small groups of children the opportunity to perform a musical piece of significance.
- 7. Consider having an individual or small group perform a dance.
- 8. Consider having students use instruments during the play.
- 9. Utilize Music, Orchestra, and Band teachers!
- 10. Incorporate “movements” into your songs. The audience loves to see the children move and dance!

**E. Assessment/Evaluation**

- 1. You will be musically prepared when you have selected the appropriate music, songs, instruments, and dances for the play.

**Lesson Five: Act V: Backdrops, Props, and Costumes**

**A. Daily Objectives**

- 1. Concept Objective(s)
  - a. The student understands the value of work. 1(9)
  - b. The student understands how various sources provide information about the past. 2(3)
- 2. Lesson Content
  - a. Create backdrops, props, and costumes for the play
- 3. Skill Objective(s)
  - a. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)
  - b. The student will locate information about the past from various sources. (TEKS Social Studies 2.3 adapted)
  - c. The student will work independently and with others in a variety of settings. (TEKS Social Studies 4.24 adapted)

**B. Materials**

- 1. items necessary for making the backdrop such as a painter’s tarp, paint, markers, rulers, etc.

2. items necessary for making props such as boxes, butcher paper, scissors, tape, stapler and staples, hot glue gun and glue sticks, paper bags, fabric, etc.
3. resources for information and ideas such the *Core Knowledge Sequence*, other resource books, or the internet

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. props- theatrical property

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Involve your parents and members of the community. This is the perfect opportunity to get other involved in the Core Knowledge experience! Parents can assist in planning, purchasing, errand running, creating, preparing, making, supervising and assisting with all areas of the set production.
2. Use Art teachers to help you select and prepare art content from the Core Knowledge Sequence.
3. For backdrop, consider using large paint tarps. They can be painted and hung behind the stage. If you choose a tarp of heavy material, the reverse side of the backdrop can be painted differently and used in a future play.
4. Select costumes that are child-friendly and “fit” the time period. Involve the parents and students in this process. Be creative with your use of materials and think outside the box. Consider contacting a costume shop for special costume needs. Make sure you give parents plenty of time to find and prepare costumes for their children. Send home a note such as Appendix to help parents as a guide.
5. Get the students involved with the making of the set. Let them utilize their math skills, creativity, and artistic talents to make, create, and “set the stage”!

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

6. You’re stage is set and ready to go when preparations have been made for costumes, props, and a backdrop for the stage.

**Lesson Six: Act VI: Practice, Practice, Practice!**

A. *Daily Objectives*

1. Concept Objective(s)
  - a. The student understands the value of work. (TEKS Social Studies 1.9)
2. Lesson Content
  - a. memorization and fluency of students’ parts
  - b. finalization of costumes, props, and stage area
  - c. completion of music preparation
3. Skill Objective(s)
  - a. The student will communicate in written, oral, and visual forms. (TEKS Social Studies 4.23 adapted)
  - b. The student will work independently and with others in a variety of settings. (TEKS Social Studies 4.24 adapted)

B. *Materials*

1. costumes
2. props
3. a set stage
4. copies of the script for students and teachers
5. music

C. *Key Vocabulary*

1. fluency- able to speak smoothly, easily, and readily

D. *Procedures/Activities*

1. Utilize class time for learning the subject matter related to the topic of the play through the lessons taught. This will make the students' parts more meaningful and memorable.
2. Use class time to practice individual and group parts. Incorporate fluency, listening, and public speaking through this practice. Students should be learning to say their parts from memory using fluency as they speak. Set a deadline for when students MUST know their lines by memory.
3. If more than one class will be performing in the play, cast the classes together. This will enable you to conduct practices of specific scenes during the class period and eliminate some of the time needed to pull all of the students together for group practice.
4. Use Music teachers to help with the practice of the music during music classes. Ask for their help during the group practices as well.
5. Schedule a dress rehearsal on the day before the play. For this final rehearsal, students should be fully dressed in their costumes, all props should be completed and in place, and the music should be ready to go. This is an excellent opportunity to polish any rough spots in the play. This is also a great chance to take a lot of pictures! Invite parents to attend the rehearsal and get some fabulous close up shots of their children.

E. *Assessment/Evaluation*

1. This section will be assessed by how smoothly everything runs for the dress rehearsal. The students' lines should be spoken with fluency, the props should be in perfect working order, and the music should be set and ready with everyone knowing their part.
2. all props
3. extra sets of the script for the teachers
4. music
5. an

6. **CULMINATING ACTIVITY:** Opening Night

- E. **BE ORGANIZED!!!** Have students arrive early and already in costume. Have parent volunteers organized to help with last minute costume needs. Have something for the students to do while they are waiting for the play to begin i.e., watching a movie or drawing on paper.
- F. Have an "Emergency Kit" that is stocked and ready in case of any type of emergency related to the play. The kit should contain safety pins, tape, scissors, stapler and staples, glue gun and glue sticks, extra sets of the script, etc.
- C. Introduce your Core Knowledge Play with background information for the audience.
- D. Have a wonderful performance and feel the reward of all your hard work paying off!
- E. Applaud parents, businesses, and other staff members . . . recognize all who helped make the play a success.

**HANDOUTS/WORKSHEETS**

- A. Appendix A – "Lights, Camera, Action!" Writing a Core Knowledge Play Handout
- B. Appendix B – Timeline
- C. Appendix C – Excerpts from Scripts
- D. Appendix D – Sample Parent Note

- E. Appendix E – Sample Costume Note
- F. Appendix F – Sample Song
- G. Appendix G – Sample Cast Sheet
- H. Appendix H – Photographs

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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- E. Hirsch, Jr. E.D. *What Your Third Grader Needs To Know*. New York: Dell Publishing, 2001 (Revised), ISBN 0-385-33626-8.
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# "Lights, Camera, Action!" Writing a Core Knowledge Play

By Denise Smith & Sarah Cude

## Act I: Selecting a Topic

- *Core Knowledge Sequence*
- History and Geography
- Novels
- Science
- Sayings and Phrases
- Math

## Act II: Script Writing

- Write a script with your students' talents and development in mind
- Use "What Your \_\_\_ Grader Needs to Know"
- Create dialogue from text
- Divide the action into scenes
- Envision the action

## Act III: Casting

- Know your students
- How many students are involved?
- Boys v. Girls
- Actors v. Narrators
- Everyone has a talent
- Make the parts "fit" your students

## Act IV: Music

- Use Core Knowledge music when at all possible
- Rewrite familiar tunes with lyrics that fit content
- Utilize Music, Orchestra, and Band Teachers

## Act V: Backdrops, Props and Costumes

- Parent involvement
- Paint tarps make great backdrops
- Use Art content from the *Core Knowledge Sequence*
- Costumes that are child-friendly and "fit" the time period
- Think outside the box
- Let students "set the stage" using math skills, creativity, art

Act VI: Practice, Practice, Practice

- Utilize class time for subject matter
- Incorporate fluency, listening, and public speaking
- Use Music and Art teachers
- Cast classes together
- Schedule Dress Rehearsal

Act VII: Opening Night

- BE ORGANIZED!!!
- Parent Volunteers
- Introduce your Core Knowledge Play with background information for the audience
- Applaud parents and businesses . . . recognize all who helped make the play a success

## Appendix B

### Timeline for Planning Activities

**6 Weeks Prior to Play Performance:** Begin your unit of study. Have play written and music selected/written before unit starts. Appendix A, C, and G

**5 Weeks Prior to Play Performance:** Assign roles to the students. Start learning songs in Music class. Appendix G

**4 Weeks Prior to Performance:** Send letter home to inform parents of the upcoming performance, costume requirement, request materials and help. Schedule a parent meeting to discuss needs for the play. Appendix D and E.

**3 Weeks Prior to Performance:** Introduce play to class, preferably have someone dress in period costume. Review characters, setting, roles and read play with class. Send home lines to be memorized and note to parents. Appendix F

**2 Weeks to Performance:** Begin practicing play in individual classes. Do an initial run-through and teach blocking and inflection of lines. Take an inventory of costumes and decide what costumes are still needed.

**10 days to performance:** Practice play everyday now. Schedule times for all classes in grade level to practice together. Hang backdrop and assure that all props are ready.

**5 days to performance:** Arrange to have parent volunteers help on performance day. Continue practicing as much as possible every day. If possible have Music teacher attend practices.

**2 days to performance:** Have students bring costumes to school.

**Day before performance:** Dress rehearsal. Make sure everything is ready and make adjustments if needed.

**Performance Day!** Have parent volunteers arrive an hour before performance time to assist with last minute details. Students arrive in costume 30 minutes before performance. Parents can assist with costume adjustments and crowd control. Lights, camera, action! It's show time! Be sure to recognize all the parents and people involved in making the play a success!!

Appendix C

**Christmas Around the World**  
A Kindergarten Core Knowledge Play by Shay Troutman

HANUKKAH

\_\_\_\_\_ Hanukkah is a Jewish celebration called the  
Festival of Lights.

\_\_\_\_\_ It celebrates the victory of Maccabee's  
famous fight.

\_\_\_\_\_ Children play dreidel and light the menorah.

\_\_\_\_\_ Then just for fun, they all dance the hora.

\_\_\_\_\_ Here is the Dreidel Song.

(Sing The Dreidel Song)

Appendix C  
**Heroes In Mother Goose Land**  
A Kindergarten Core Knowledge Play by Shay Troutman

**ALL SING**

*Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star  
Star Light, Star Bright*

Mother Goose

Welcome to our Kindergarten program, Heroes In Mother Goose Land. Our wish is for you to sit back and enjoy yourselves as we show you how Mother Goose characters can help each other out.

**ALL SAY**

(Cat, Cow, Moon, Dog, Dish, Spoon  
at Center Stage)

*Hey, diddle, diddle, the cat and the (hands out),  
The cow jumped over the moon;  
The little dog laughed to see such sport,  
And the dish ran away with the spoon.*

Cat  
Jack (Enters from Stage Left with  
Jill)  
Jill

Hey diddle diddle, where's my fiddle?  
Here's your fiddle Mr. Cat. We found it at the bottom of the hill.  
Goodbye now. We have to go up the hill to fetch a pail of water. (Jack and Jill go back to Stage Left)  
Thank you, thank you, thank you! You are my heroes. Be careful going up the hill Jack and Jill.

**ALL SING**

(Jack and Jill at Stage Left)

*Jack and Jill went up the hill  
To fetch a pail of water;  
Jack fell down and broke his crown,  
And Jill came tumbling after.*

**ALL SING**

(Humpty Dumpty And King's Men  
at Stage Right)

*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.  
All the king's horses, and all the king's men,  
Couldn't put Humpty together again.*

King's Man #1  
King's Man #2  
King's Man #3  
King's Man #4  
King's Man #5  
King's Man #6  
Jack & Jill

We can't help Humpty Dumpty.  
We'll never be able to help anyone.  
We can't give up. Surely someone needs our help.  
Hey, what's going on over there? (King's Men move to  
Are you okay? Let us help you. Stage Left)  
We couldn't help Humpty, but we can help you Jack and  
Jill.  
Thank you! You're the best! You are heroes!

APPENDIX C

**"1<sup>st</sup> Grade Goes West"**

A First Grade Core Knowledge Play by Denise Smith

Speaker: Welcome to our program. Tonight you will see how the "First Grade goes West"!

Narrator 1: How does a great country grow?

Narrator 2: From "sea to shining sea".

Narrator 1: You're right! And that is just how America grew into a great country.

Narrator 3: After the American Revolution, Americans wanted to move west.

Narrator 4: They were going into a new frontier.

Narrator 5: There were no towns. Places and things were strange to them.

Narrator 6: What do you call a person who makes a new path through the wilderness?

Everyone: A trailblazer!

Narrator 7: Blazing a trail means marking trees with paint or small cuts so that others can follow where you have gone.

Narrator 6: Who was one of the greatest trailblazers?

Everyone: Daniel Boone!

Narrator 1: That's right. I wonder how Daniel Boone made those trails?

Narrator 7: Let's find out!

## APPENDIX C

# A Penny for Your Thoughts

A Second Grade Core Knowledge Play

By Denise Smith

**Narrator 1:** Welcome everyone to our production of "A Penny for Your Thoughts". Today we will feature one of America's most loved and respected presidents, Abraham Lincoln. As the 16<sup>th</sup> President of our great country, Abraham Lincoln had a great impact on our country's history.

**Narrator 2:** But that's not all. President Lincoln also influenced our country with his humor, wisdom, and great character. "A Penny for Your Thoughts" will highlight many of the famous quotes made by Abraham Lincoln. You'll agree with us, President Lincoln's thoughts were certainly worth *at least* a penny.

**Narrator 1:** Maybe that's why his picture's on the penny. Hmmm...

**Child 1:** Will you please stand for The Pledge of Allegiance. (*Everyone says the pledge*)

Thank you, you may be seated. Hey, Mr. Abraham Lincoln, we'll give you a penny for your thoughts.

**Child 2:** Yeah, your thoughts are worth at least a penny.

**All Abes:** Sure, you bet!

**Child 3:** Alright, let me hear your thoughts about your life.

**All Abes:** OK!

*All Abes will participate in reciting the following poem, "The Life of Lincoln".*

APPENDIX C

# When In Rome

A Third Grade Core Knowledge Play

By Denise Smith

The stage is set for the ending of a weather forecast for the Roman Empire. A game show will begin immediately after.

**Introduction:** Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to our 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade play "When In Rome". Today's program will begin with the Roman Empire News already in progress.

**Newsman #1:** And that last story wraps up our news for this hour. What a busy day we've had here. Next up is Adrian with our regional weather forecast. Adrian, how is it looking?

**Adrian:** Well, it was a warm one today here in the hub of the Roman Empire. Rome hit a high of 76 although we did experience quite a rain shower. We've had reports of pouring rain, high winds and some lightning strikes. Our local field reporter is out there right now with a close up look at this storm. How is it out there?

**Field Reporter #1:** (reporter holding an umbrella) All I can say is wow! This is quite a storm. As you can see the winds have been high and the rain just won't let up. It looks like we're going to have to ride this one out. Back to you.

**Adrian:** Let's check in now with our Eastern region reporter. How are things in Mesopotamia today?

## APPENDIX C

# American Idol The Early Presidents Edition

A Fourth Grade Core Knowledge Play by Denise Smith & Sarah Cude

The stage is set for "American Idol: The Early Presidents Edition", which is the newest constitutional craze! As Ryan Sea-to-shining-Sea, the Idol's host, opens this week's episode, the popular judges, Randall, Simone, and Paul are eagerly awaiting the presidential performances.

Ryan Sea-to-shining-Sea: Welcome, welcome...wow, just look at all of you. You look fabulous tonight. No wonder we're "a more perfect union". Folks, you're in for a big treat tonight, yes indeed. We are looking for a positively perfect President to fulfill the title of America's Early President Idol. Well, let's not wait any longer, let's meet our judges. First we have the robust Randall, polite Paul, and of course our most loved judge, simple Simone. *the judges wave as the audience applauds* Is everybody ready?

Everyone: Yes!

Ryan: OK, you heard them. We the people are ready! *everyone cheers* Let's meet our first contestant, the powerful President George Washington! *the crowd goes wild as Washington enters the stage* Welcome George, are you ready for this?

Washington: Yes, absolutely!

Ryan: And what will you be performing for us this evening?

Washington: It's a truth telling rap that I call the "Cherry Tree Chop". *everyone cheers*

## APPENDIX D



Help!

The third grade teachers are looking for moms and dads to help with props and a backdrop for our play. We will be having an informal meeting on Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 in Mrs. Smith's room for anyone interested in this project. If you are unable to attend the meeting but would still like to help, please send a note to your child's teacher and we will get you involved.

## APPENDIX D



Dear Parents,

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders are eagerly approaching the “When in Rome” performance on Thursday. Here are a few details to keep everyone informed.

- Every child must wear a toga. It may be any solid color (no pictures or patterns). Please wear a shirt and pants, shorts, or a skirt under your toga. For shoes, please wear sandals or plan to go barefoot.
- Children should wear their togas to school on Thursday. Please do not send your toga early.
- The students will perform for the school at 9:00 a.m. LISD TV will be here to film the play! Parents are invited to attend.
- After the morning performance, students will take their toga off and wear school clothes for the rest of the day. Please send a sack to hold your child’s toga for the remainder of the school day.
- Togas will be sent home at the end of the day.
- All students should be in their homeroom by 6:00 p.m. that evening.
- Please come dressed in togas again for the evening performance.
- Parents will wait in the cafeteria. Please go ahead and enjoy your spaghetti dinner. 😊 If you would like for your child to eat, please hold a plate for him/her until after the performance.
- The children will begin the play at 6:30. We plan to be finished by 7:00. At that time, children may join their parents at the tables and eat dinner.
- The students may then serve adults by asking them if they would like a drink refill. This is optional.
- Mrs. Rollo has asked that you stay for the PTA meeting. The Ida Smith Teacher of the Year Award will be presented. We would love for you to be with us for this exciting evening.

If you have any questions, please contact us. Thank you for your support. Our stage area looks fabulous thanks to our talented parents. The children will be so wonderful!

We’ll see you on Thursday,  
The Third Grade Teachers

APPENDIX E

Dear Parents,

We have begun an exciting Social Studies unit on Ancient Rome. The students will have many fun activities and experiences during our study. One of the most important events on our calendar is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade PTA Program which will be performed on **Jan. 29**. We will perform in the morning for the entire school (time will be announced later), and again at the evening PTA meeting. This PTA meeting will be Murfee's annual spaghetti dinner. Our students may have the opportunity help serve during the dinner. All 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students will need to wear a toga for these events. Attached you will find information on how to make a toga and crown. Underneath the toga, each child should wear a white t-shirt and either pants, shorts, or a skirt. The togas should be sent to school between Jan. 26 & Jan. 28. Further details will follow as we get closer to these dates. Please clip, sign and return the note at the bottom. We are so excited about our Roman Unit!

Thank you for your help,  
Denise Smith

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I understand that my child will be performing at the PTA meeting on Jan. 29 and will need to wear a toga.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student name

\_\_\_\_\_

parent signature

## To Make A Toga



- Please use a white or solid color sheet. (no pictures)
- Have your child practice putting on the toga at home.
- Label the toga with your child's name. (on a piece of tape at the edge would be fine)
- Some type of cord should be used as the belt.

## APPENDIX F

### Roman Architects

To the tune of "I've Been Working On The Railroad"  
Words by Denise Smith

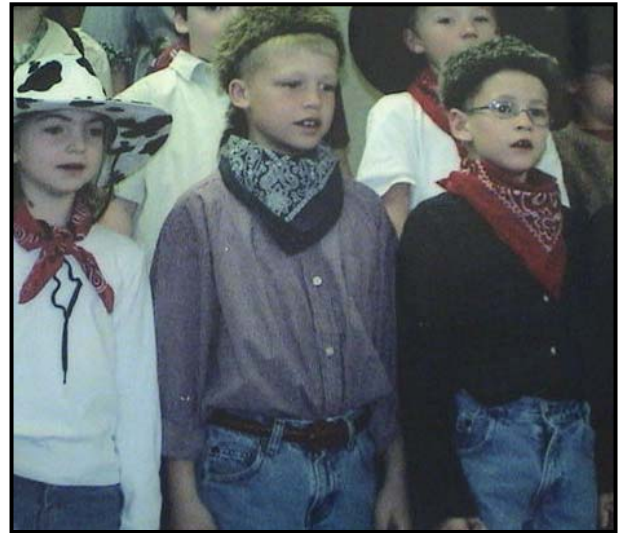
I've been working on the Empire  
All the live long day  
I've been working on the Empire  
Just to pass the time away  
Can't you see the Colosseum  
The temples and the Pantheon  
We've been building domes and arches  
We're Roman architects  
Building, Building  
We are Roman architects  
Building, Building  
We're Roman architects  
La, la, la la la, (continue for this verse while students play  
instruments that sound like construction)  
We're Roman architects  
Hm m m m m m m m m (continue for this verse while students  
play instruments that sound like construction)  
We're Roman architects

## APPENDIX G

### When in Rome Cast

1. Scorekeeper
2. Music
3. Introduction #1
4. Newsman #1
5. Adrian
6. Field Reporter #1
7. Field Reporter #2
8. Field Reporter #3
9. Resident
10. Newsman #2
11. Introduction #2
12. Theme song singers
13. Announcer #1
14. Host
15. Announcer #2
16. Rules Expert
17. Category Expert
18. Contestant #1
19. Contestant #2
20. Contestant #3
21. Contestant #4
22. Contestant #5
23. Contestant #6
24. Commercial #1 spokesperson #1
25. Commercial #1 spokesperson #2
26. Courier #1
27. Courier #2
28. Courier #3
29. Prize person
30. Builder #1
31. Builder #2
32. Builder #3
33. Builder #4
34. Wealthy Roman

APPENDIX H



## APPENDIX H

