

Cookin' Educator Guide



COOKIN'

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2023-2024 Season

children's
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Behind the Scenes

Learn more about the artists, history, and themes of this production.

What is this show about?

With a crazy deadline looming near, four frenzied chefs turn their kitchen into a dynamic, veggies-flying-everywhere performance as Korean *samulnori* drumming and martial arts take center stage. During this wildly energetic cooking competition, the chefs put on a masterful display of percussive food chopping, knife throwing, pot banging, and fire-blowing wizardry that will make you laugh, scream in delight, and even beg for a chance to sample their food. This is a nonverbal performance that weaves physical comedy and clowning together with virtuosic demonstrations of rhythmic, acrobatic skill.



South Korea Flag

Where does this show come from?

Cookin', or *Nanta* as it's known in South Korea, is the longest-running show in South Korean history! There are four exclusive theatres in South Korea and Thailand that are solely dedicated to producing this show. There's even a *Cookin'/Nanta*-themed hotel! *Cookin'* has toured to more than 60 countries around the world and is making its Midwest debut at Children's Theatre Company.

What is *samulnori*?

Samulnori is a genre of Korean percussion music that was traditionally performed in rice-farming villages to help ensure and celebrate abundant harvests. Translated to English, *samul* means "four objects" and *nori* means "play." The four traditional "objects" or instruments are a small gong struck with a small stick (*kkwaenggwari*), a larger gong used to keep the beat (*jing*), an hourglass-shaped drum (*janggu*), and a barrel drum similar to the bass drum.



What is physical comedy?

Physical comedy is a form of comedy where performers manipulate their bodies for a humorous effect. Physical comedy can include both slapstick and clowning, two comedic forms that are present in *Cookin'*.

Slapstick

An exaggerated form of physical comedy, slapstick involves intentional or accidental physical feats performed with **props** or the human body alone. **Props** are objects that are used during a performance. Slapstick comedy can result in apparent violence, awe, pain, confusion, or general trouble, but is presented in a lighthearted context.



Clowning

Clowning is an ancient and international art form. Clowning highlights the absurdity of everyday situations and is often nonverbal, allowing it to transcend language and cultural barriers.



Before You Go

Use these activities in your classroom to prepare your students for their field trip to CTC.

Collaborative Cooking



Grades: Grades 1 and up

Time Required: 5-15 minutes

Supplies: None

Set-up: The main action of this activity works best in an open space, like the front of a classroom.

In *Cookin'*, the chefs are working together to quickly cook a wedding feast. In this activity, students will work on their **collaboration** skills by exploring bold, physical choices that are inspired by and build upon ideas from their peers.

Students will utilize **pantomime** and work together as an **ensemble** to bake the wedding cake for the end of the feast.

Instructions:

1. Brainstorm together the different steps it takes to bake a cake. For example:
 - Cracking eggs
 - Stirring the batter
 - Measuring the flour
 - Chopping carrots (maybe it's a carrot cake!)
 - Decorating the cake
2. Identify an area of the classroom to be the **stage** (the kitchen) and an area to be the **audience**.
3. Have a volunteer enter the stage and pantomime one step of the cake-making process. This should be a repetitive motion that they can do repeatedly for a significant amount of time, almost like a machine in a factory. Encourage them to add a sound effect that corresponds to their motion. For example, a student could act out cracking the eggs. They should continue cracking them over and over and over again like a machine, making a cracking sound effect at the same time.
4. One by one, have the rest of the students get up and join. Encourage each student to engage in a different part of the cake-making process, building off of the students who have gone before. For example, if the first student is cracking the eggs, the next student can pour the eggs into a larger bowl, while the third student can act out stirring the larger bowl.
5. By the time everyone is up, you should have a bustling stage full of chefs all in motion and making sounds at the same time.
6. Now tell the students that you have a remote control, and you're going to press the super speed button and they'll start doing their repetitive motions and sounds in super speed! Next, try a slow motion button.
7. To end, tell the students you're going to press the super speed button. Countdown from ten saying that when you get to zero, the chefs will all carefully collapse to the floor with exhaustion, letting out a big sigh.

Variations and Adjustments

Start over with a different kitchen task. This could be cooking a different meal, cleaning the kitchen, etc. Brainstorm the actions together before beginning, or challenge them to think of actions on their own. Each student can announce what their action is when they join the kitchen, or you can have the rest of the group guess based on their movement and sound effect.

With a large group, you can split up into smaller groups of 5+ to increase active time for each student. You can hold the universal remote for all of the groups, or you can designate a student within each group to control the remote.

With a large group, you can also decide to only have 5-10 students participate in each kitchen task while the rest of the class observes.

Nonverbal Storytelling—The Ice Cream Saga

Grades: Grades K and up

Time Required: 5-10 minutes

Supplies: None

Set-up: This activity can be done standing in a circle or with students standing near their desks.

Cookin' is largely **nonverbal**, meaning the performers rely on physicality and facial expressions to tell the story rather than spoken words. In this activity, students will practice using **clowning** to tell a **nonverbal** story.

Instructions:

1. Explain to students that you will be giving them a series of prompts, and their objective is to act out the prompt only using their body and their face to communicate *what they are doing* and *how they feel about it*.
2. With the students standing, give them the following spoken prompts. Before each prompt, you can choose to use the phrase “Using just your body and face, show me...” to remind the students not to use words. Take your time and allow students to explore the emotions within the story and fully act out each prompt. You may choose to model and join them in acting out the prompts as well.
 - Using just your body and face, show me that you are looking at a menu on an ice cream truck.
 - You’ve decided what you want! You order an ice cream cone and pay the vendor.
 - You take your ice cream from the vendor and are very excited to start eating!
 - You try one lick of the ice cream; it’s delicious! You have another lick, and another, and another, but you’re eating so quickly the ice cream falls off of the cone!
 - Show me how you feel that you dropped your ice cream.
 - But, you have an idea! Look around to make sure no one is looking, and crouch down to scoop your ice cream off of the ground and back onto your ice cream cone.
 - Show me how you feel now that you have the delicious ice cream back.
 - You begin eating the ice cream again, more slowly this time.
 - It’s delicious, but you notice that there is some used gum from the ground inside your mouth! You start chewing the gum and blow a large bubble.
 - You decide it’s time to take out the gum, but now it’s stuck to your fingers! You try to shake it off, but it’s no use. You look around for inspiration for how to get this gum off of your fingers, and you come up with an idea! You wipe the gum onto the bottom of one of your shoes.
 - But, now one of your feet is stuck in place! You try to lift your foot off the ground, but it won’t budge. Take your free hand (that’s not holding the ice cream cone) and pull on your leg to free it. It works, but you nearly fall over in the process!
 - You regain your balance and continue eating your ice cream.
 - It is so good, you can’t resist eating it quickly and shoving the whole thing in your mouth.
 - But now you have a brain freeze! It passes, but you now have a stomachache from eating too quickly.

Reflection Questions

What were some of your favorite moments from today’s activity?

What about clowning or nonverbal storytelling did you find challenging? What was easy?

Can you think of other stories you could act out without words?

Variations and Adjustments

Add more items that students can find in their ice cream to extend the story. For example, students could find a rock, a long piece of hair, a flying bug, etc. What do these look like when the students move them around their mouth? What are creative ways to get rid of these items? For example, pull the hair out like a long spaghetti noodle or have the bug land on your finger before lifting it in the air to let it fly away.

Have students act out the story all together first and then have volunteers act it out again individually or in small groups. Have the students in the audience make observations about similarities and differences in students’ performances.

3 Things

In the day or so before your field trip, share the following prompts with your students. You can read them aloud to your class or give each student a copy. When you return from the performance, review the list again. What do they remember noticing or thinking about during the performance?

During the performance:

Look for...

1. Kitchen objects used as percussion. What objects do you see them using?
2. Real food used on stage. What foods can you recognize?
3. Korean lettering on large drums.

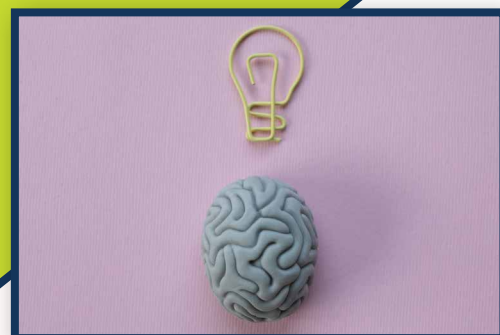


Listen for...

1. Changes in music to set the mood.
2. Traditional Korean musical instruments.
3. Performers using short words or noises to communicate emotions or reactions.

Think about...

1. The performers had to practice a lot to do what they do. What is something that you practice?
2. What were the moments that surprised you?
3. Try retelling the story verbally. Are your classmates' versions similar to yours or different?





Before You Go—At Home

Print this section and send it home with permission slips. This section supports family engagement and provides tools to help families reflect with students about their theatre experience.

Before You Go—At Home



Resources for Families

Extend your child's theatre experience at home!

Questions to ask your child BEFORE they see the show:

- Other than drums, what do you think the performers will use for percussion?
- How do you think they'll tell a story without words?
- What about *Cookin'* are you most excited about?

Questions to ask your child AFTER they see the show:

- What was your favorite part of the show?
- What surprised you the most?
- What objects did the performers use to create rhythms onstage?

Check out CTC's *Cookin'* Audience Guide for more information, discussion questions, and activities for the whole family.

childrenstheatre.org/cookin



Our Family Cookin' Traditions

The chefs in *Cookin'* are working on making a Korean feast with traditional Korean dishes. What are some of your family's cookin' traditions? Discuss with your child and write or draw pictures of your traditions in the worksheet below.

	Everyday Meals	Special Occasions
Who cooks the food?		
What foods do you eat?		
What gets put on the table (silverware, napkins, candles, etc.)?		



Heading to CTC

Provide this resource to all teachers, staff, and chaperones attending the field trip. This section contains field trip procedures, accessibility information, and CTC's approach to theatre etiquette.

Trip Guide

CTC Theatre Etiquette

At CTC, we encourage audiences to engage with the live theatre experience and react freely. It's ok to laugh if something is funny, exclaim if something is surprising, gasp if something is scary, and maybe even dance along in your seats if the music inspires you. We value the real-time, honest reactions of our student audiences.

We do, however, thank you for your partnership in making sure that any reactions from your students are kind and respectful towards the actors onstage and towards all of the people who worked so hard to make the show possible. If there is a group seated near you that is being disrespectful, please don't hesitate to notify an usher.

Arrival

Check-in begins 1 hour prior to the performance. Buses can unload in the circle driveway on 3rd Ave S between 24th St. and 25th St. An usher will greet you at your bus and will need to know the name of your school and how many buses you are traveling with. If all of your buses have arrived, we will ask you to unload and make one line. We will lead you inside and upstairs to the Target Lobby.

Groups are seated in the order of arrival, and your entire group must be present before you can check in. Seating begins 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance.

CTC does not print or issue individual tickets or stickers for student matinee performances. Instead, as you line up in the lobby, one of our ushers will count your group to ensure that you are not over your allotted number of seats. It is helpful if you can provide the usher with a final count for your group, but not required.

Seating

Seating in the theatre begins 30 minutes prior to the performance. An usher will lead your group into the theatre in one line. We recommend spacing chaperones throughout the line to aid in guiding the students. To ensure that everyone gets a seat, please take whichever seat the usher is asking you to, including chaperones. Once your whole group has been assigned a seat, you are more than welcome to rearrange students and chaperones as you need to and utilize the restroom facilities.

Lunch

Lunch space must be reserved in advance. If your group has reserved space in our lobby to eat lunch after the show, please bring the lunches inside with you when you arrive. We will store them in the lobby during the show. We recommend consolidating lunches into paper or reusable shopping bags. Large coolers and bins can be heavy and unwieldy, and individual lunches can easily be lost or forgotten on the bus.

After the show, those with reserved lunch space will have a designated area of the lobby to utilize. The lunch space allows for picnic-style eating on the floor. You may be sharing the lobby with other schools or may be directed to our other theatre's lobby if we have multiple groups staying for lunch. Custodial services are provided by CTC.



Accessibility

Mobility Accessibility


The Target Lobby and UnitedHealth Group Stage are on the 2nd floor. At the building entrance, school groups will be led to the right and up a flight of 28 stairs to get to the lobby. Those wishing to use the elevator will find it to the LEFT of the entrance doors. CTC's accessible seating area is located in the last row of the main level of the theatre. Please email schools@childrenstheatre.org in advance to request accessible seating, if needed. The rest of the seating on the main floor can be accessed by going down a set of gradual stairs, and the balcony is accessed by going up another flight of 18 stairs. There is no elevator access to the balcony level. An Accessible/All-Gender restroom is located next to the elevator on the 2nd level in the Target Lobby. An adult-sized changing table is available upon request.

Quiet Room/Sensory Sensitivities

The Quiet Room is located at the rear left side of the main floor of the UnitedHealth Group Stage. There are 3 stairs to get to the seating in the Quiet Room. The Quiet Room is separated from the audience by a glass window, so students can verbalize freely. Those utilizing the Quiet Room can still see and hear the performance. The performance is also live streamed in the lobby. The Quiet Room is open to everyone and cannot be reserved. Please feel free to come and go from the Quiet Room as you need to throughout the show.

Please let an usher know if someone in your group would benefit from a fidget, ear plugs, noise canceling headphones, or coloring/activity sheets during your visit.

Assistive Listening Devices



Please let an usher know if you would like to use an assistive listening device. These devices come equipped with an over-the-ear earpiece. This earpiece can be unplugged, and other devices, such as cochlear implants, can be plugged into the receiver using the 1/8" jack. If you will be plugging in your own device, please bring the appropriate cord as CTC does not have these on hand.

Sign Interpretation and Audio Description

A sign interpreted and/or audio described student matinee performance is scheduled for each production at CTC. We suggest booking your field trip for these scheduled performances if you need either of these services. Please contact schools@childrenstheatre.org if you are unable to reserve your field trip for the scheduled performance(s) and need to request this service for a different date. CTC requires at least 3 weeks' notice to schedule ASL interpretation or Audio Description.

Prayer/Private Nursing Space

During your visit, please ask a member of our staff to use our private space for nursing, pumping, prayer, or other needs.

Cookin' Content Advisories

Language: 0 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Very little English is used. The performance features Korean music and is primarily non-verbal.

Themes and Situations: 0 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One Chef gets stuck in a trash can, one Chef gets yelled at by two Chefs, and two Chefs hit each other with brooms.

Violence and Scariness: 1 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Professional performers engage in food chopping, knife throwing, and fire blowing. While it might be nerve-racking, they are trained professionals.

Sensory Advisories: 4 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Music can be loud and audience cheering is often encouraged. Lighting moves quickly from dark to bright and lights are flashed. Some strobe lights are used. Loud music and loud drumming are used throughout. Fire is used onstage to simulate cooking and for fire-breathing.

Potentially Anxious Moments: 2 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Professional performers engage in food chopping, knife throwing, and fire blowing. While it might be nerve-racking, they are trained professionals. Performers enter the audience and bring volunteers onstage.

What happens to the food used in the performance?

All food used in the show will be composted, eventually providing enrichment for depleted soil and aiding in wetland restoration and erosion control.

Trip Guide

This tool is called a **social story** and tells students what to expect at the theatre. Hand it out to anyone who may benefit from knowing procedures in advance.



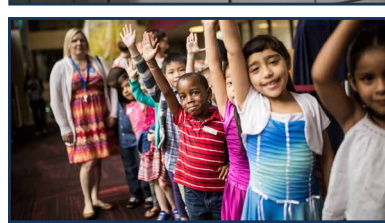
Bus—I will ride on the **bus** from my school to the theatre.



Lobby—I will enter the **lobby** and be greeted by the theatre staff and ushers. I can say hello to them. There may be a lot of other students from different schools in the lobby at the same time. I will stay with my teachers.



Bathroom—If I need to go to the **bathroom**, I will let my teacher know, and they can take me. I can go to the bathroom any time I need to during the show.



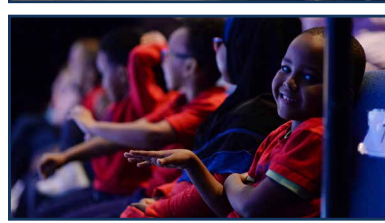
Enter the Theatre—When it's time to **enter the theatre**, there may be a line at the door. I will wait in line for my turn to go through the door.



My Seat—An usher will show me to my **seat**. During the show I will sit in my seat next to my classmates.



During the Show—If the show is funny, I can **laugh**. If something surprises me, I can **gasp**. At the end of the show, I can **clap** to tell the actors I enjoyed the performance.



After the Show—I will wait **patiently** for my teacher to lead me out of the theatre.



Leave the Building—I will leave the building with my classmates and get **back on the bus** to my school. There may be a lot of other students from different schools leaving at the same time. I will stay with my teachers.



After the Show

The discussion prompts and activities in this section are an extension of the theatre-going experience and allow students to reflect on the experience of seeing a live show and further engage with the art forms and themes of the performance.

Springboard

Use this page to recall observations, reflect, and think critically about the show you just saw!

The part of the show that grabbed my attention the most was

While watching the show, I had the strongest reaction to

The show made me think about

Before seeing this show, I didn't know that

A question I have about the show is

If I were the director, one thing I would change is

One thing I saw during this show that I've never seen before was

After seeing the show, my friends and I talked about

Overall, the show made me feel

Culinary Cadence

Grades: Grades 1 and up **Time Required:** 10-15 minutes

Supplies: Whiteboard or large chart paper and marker

Set-up: This activity works best with separate spaces in the room for small groups to work.



In this activity, students will reflect on *Cookin'* and create their own original rhythms with food as inspiration.

Instructions:

1. With your students, brainstorm and create a list of ingredients that were featured in *Cookin'*, have a cultural significance to your students, or are their favorites. Write the list on the whiteboard or large chart paper where everyone can see it. Encourage your students to come up with ingredients that have multiple syllables to make this activity more fun! Examples include kimchi, cauliflower, cabbage, cilantro, etc.
2. Split your students into 3 or more small groups. Each group should have their own space in the room to work.
3. Explain that they'll be working together to create their own original rhythms using ingredients and different parts of their body as percussive instruments.
4. Instruct groups to select one word from your brainstorm list. Once they've chosen the word, they should say it a few times to create a steady beat. For example, caul-i-flow-er, caul-i-flow-er, caul-i-flow-er. Once they have a spoken steady beat, have them pick a part of the body to drum out that same rhythm while continuing to say the word. Some suggestions for body percussion include:
 - Tapping or patting their thighs
 - Tapping their chest or belly
 - Snapping their fingers
 - Rubbing their palms together
5. Once they've explored their first word, ask each group to explore a second word using a different part of their body to create a percussive rhythm.
6. Next, ask each group to explore a third word and rhythm using yet another part of their body. Have them sequence all three of their words/rhythms into a three-part performance.
7. Encourage students to play with different **volumes** (quiet/loud) and **tempos** (fast/slow).
8. Once each group has practiced their rhythmic sequence, have each group share out!

Reflection Questions

What are some similarities and differences between each group's rhythmic sequence?
Did any group choose the same ingredient? Was their rhythm for that ingredient the same or different?
Can you think of other ways to create rhythms with your body that weren't presented?

Variations and Adjustments

After sharing out, have students go back with their groups and add on one or two more words/rhythms to their sequence.

After sharing out, have students go back with their groups and change three aspects of their sequence without switching out words or percussion choices. For example, students could change the order of their sequence, the tempo of one or more of their rhythms, and the volume of one or more of their rhythms.

Follow the Rhythm

Grades: Grades K and up **Time Required:** 10-15 minutes

Set-up: This activity works best in a space where everyone can sit comfortably in a circle

Supplies: None

Just like the performers in *Cookin'*, students will need to use their **focus skills** to maintain awareness of their **ensemble members** and **collaborate** towards a common objective.



Instructions:

1. With the full group seated in a circle, select one person to begin as the Restaurant Manager or Guesser. Explain that the Restaurant Manager will exit the room and step into the hallway (or stand in a corner with their back turned).
2. While the Restaurant Manager is gone, you will select another person to be the Head Chef. Make sure everyone in the circle knows who the Head Chef is. Ask the Head Chef to begin making a rhythm with their body. This could be patting their thighs, drumming on the floor, patting their chest, etc. It should be a steady beat that is easy for everyone to follow.
3. All the other students in the circle are the rest of the Chefs. It is their **objective** to follow the Head chef and do whatever the Head Chef is doing. Ask the Head Chef to change the rhythm and motion one or two times and make sure that everyone else follows along.
4. As they are continuing the rhythm, ask the Restaurant Manager to reenter the room and stand in the middle of the circle of Chefs. The Restaurant Manager has three guesses to figure out who the Head Chef is.
5. Without calling them out by name, encourage the Head Chef to continue to change the rhythm/motion but do their best not to do so while the Restaurant Manager is looking at them, lest they get caught!
6. After the Restaurant Manager has three guesses or guesses correctly, the Head Chef will become the next Restaurant Manager and step out of the room.
7. Continue playing for as long as you have time or until every student has an opportunity to lead the rhythm.

Reflection Questions

What was challenging about being the Restaurant Manager? The Head Chef? One of the following chefs?
How did you work together to keep the identity of the Head Chef a secret?
What role did you enjoy playing the most in this activity?

Variations and Adjustments

Throughout the activity, help the students come up with strategies for keeping the identity of the Head Chef a secret. What can the other ensemble members do to discreetly follow the Head Chef's lead and not make it obvious?

If you are unable to send your Restaurant Manager out of the room, you can have them turn their back and stand in a corner. When you select the next Head Chef, you will need to point at them without saying their name out loud. Have the rest of the students in the circle silently point at the Head Chef to confirm that they know who the next leader is.

My Restaurant

The chefs in *Cookin'* are working on a Korean feast. Fill in the menu below to plan out what kind of food and drinks you would serve at your very own restaurant.

Menu	
Beverages	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Entrees	
1.	
2.	
3.	
Desserts	
1.	
2.	
3.	

What would you name your restaurant? _____

Variations and Adjustments

Have students research traditional Korean food and have them plan a menu for a Korean restaurant. Once complete, have students present their menu to the class and describe each Korean dish. Alternatively, you can have students write a marketing blurb for their restaurant that highlights the dishes they researched.

Have students research traditional and/or contemporary Korean music and have them create a playlist for their restaurant.

Further Resources

More about South Korea



Korean Food

<https://www.korea.net...>



K-8 Lesson Plan Ideas

<https://afe.easia.columbia.edu...>



Watch—*Samdo Nongak Garak* (Farmers' Band Rhythm of the Three Provincial Areas)—performed on all four traditional *samulnori* instruments

<https://www.youtube.com...>

More about *Cookin' Nanta*



All about Nanta

<https://www.nanta.co>



Interview with Director Seung-Whan Song

<https://seoullysg.weebly.com...>



Watch—PyeongChang 2018 Opening Ceremony, directed by *Cookin'* director Seung-Whan Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch...>

Mail letters to:
Children's Theatre Company
2400 Third Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Questions? Email:
schools@childrenstheatre.org

