

Babble Lab Educator Guide



2023-2024 Season

children's
theatre
company

TABLE of CONTENTS

Behind the Scenes.....	p.3
The Show, Art Forms, and Prior Knowledge	
Early Childhood Programming at CTC	
Before You Go.....	p.6
Activity: Letter Walks	
Activity: Shape Your Body	
Classroom Prep: Three Things to Look For and Listen For	
Before You Go—At Home.....	p.10
Resources for Families	
Activity: Sound Scavenger Hunt	
Heading to CTC.....	p.13
Trip Guide	
Accessibility	
Content Advisories	
Social Story	
After the Show.....	p.18
Activity: Design Challenge	
Activity: Science and Letter Experimentation	
Worksheet: Connect the Alphabet	
Further Resources.....	p.22





Behind the Scenes

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





What is this show about?

Strap on your safety goggles and clean out your ears! When an experiment unexpectedly goes awry, a concoction of sneaky, sprightly L E T T E R S takes over a weird and wondrous science lab. Watch them jump into jars, spring from drawers, bounce around the room, and even play hide-and-seek as our scientist makes her surprising findings: Bluku terullala blaulala loooo! Rakete bee bee? Rekate bee zee! Enjoy the blubbering and blibbering exploration of spoken blurbbles as they spring forth in this one-of-a-kind, gee-gaw-filled laboratory. Created with early learners in mind.

Perfect for Pre-schoolers

CTC's pre-school programs are specifically designed to be developmentally appropriate for our youngest audience members. At under 45 minutes long, it is perfectly tuned to engage early learners and we welcome all the wiggles, giggles, and comments it inspires.

We know that children like to touch and move and have included some ways for them to do so during the play.

- We want children to feel free to vocalize, so during the play, the theatre is a no-shushing zone.
- After the show, there will be a chance to meet the actor playing the scientist.

Your experience of the play starts as soon as you enter the lobby!

- Ushers will give you a place in the lobby to put your coats. You will be invited to take off your shoes and put on a pair of cozy puppet socks.
- There will be activities in the lobby including books, coloring, sensory exploration, and puppet play. Students are encouraged to play and explore.
- We recommend arriving around 10:15am to allow time for creative play. Seating does not begin until the show starts at 10:30am.

How is this play different from your other field trip offerings?

- This special offering is specifically designed for pre-school students. While our other field trip offerings allow one adult for every five students, this production allows for one adult for every two students.
- While our other performances have capacities of 745 (in the United Health Group stage) or 298 (in the Cargill stage), this performance is limited to 120 people to allow for a more intimate setting.
- Seating for our pre-school performances does not begin until 10:30am when the show starts. Seating is done in library storytelling style with students up front and adults behind.





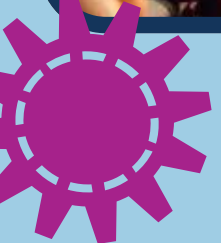
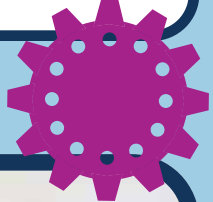
Early Childhood Programming at CTC

Children's Theatre Company's early childhood programs include nationally recognized pre-school productions, Creative Play, and Theatre Arts Training classes for ages 2-5. CTC collaborates with and presents work by leading performing artists for early learners from around the world and is a national leader in creating new plays that respect and encourage the playful nature of audience members ages 2-5.

Because the first five years of life are an especially unique stage of remarkable learning, growth, and development, Children's Theatre Company incorporates evidence-based strategies and developmentally appropriate practices to build social, emotional, and cognitive skills through positive, interactive experiences, led by professional theatre artists and educators. In their early years, children develop skills in the arts that allow them to explore a variety of ways to be creative and express themselves. Skills in the arts are highly interrelated with development across domains.

Impact of Theatre Arts Activities

- Pretend play builds curiosity through exploration and imaginative questioning.
- Language-rich stories and songs build vocabulary and activate brain development.
- Creative storytelling gives children opportunities to make choices and use their voices.
- Expressive movement exercises large motor skills, supporting muscle and brain development.
- Self-expression is foundational to self and social awareness and to developing healthy relationships.





Before You Go

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





Letter Walks

Grades: Grades pre-K and up

Time Required: 10-30 minutes

Supplies: None

Set-up: This activity works best in an open area where students can move, like the front of a classroom.

This activity challenges your students to use their bodies and imaginations to physically become different characters as well as create letter associations. It is easiest if you are able to move desks to the side or utilize a large open space.

Instructions:

1. When you say “go” students can begin to walk around the space; however, when you say “stop” they must freeze. Practice this a few times so that everyone understands.
2. Next, challenge students to walk around the space like an animal that starts with the letter “B.” Again, they cannot begin until you say “go.” Give them a few moments to explore the movement of their chosen animal and then say “stop.”
3. Take a moment to make observations on what you saw and guess which animal students chose (for example “I noticed that (insert student’s name) is holding their hands in front of them like paws. I wonder if they are a bear?”). You can also ask students to raise their hands if they were also being a bear to allow everyone in the class to have a voice. Unpack any animals that students were acting out that do NOT start with the assigned letter.
4. Repeat this activity with other letters and spend time reflecting after each.

Variations and Adjustments

Challenge students to come up with multiple animals for each letter.

Have students draw pictures of their favorite animal and write the first letter of the animal’s name next to the animal.

Shape Your Body

Grades: Grades pre-K and up **Time Required:** 10-30 minutes **Supplies:** None

Set-up: This activity can be done in an open space or in a typical classroom setup.

This activity allows students to explore letter shapes using their body. This activity works well in an open area and encourages spatial awareness, motor skills, creative problem solving, teamwork.

Instructions:

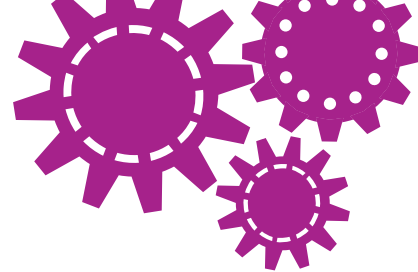
1. Ask each student to find their own personal space to stand in the room.
2. Next, say “when I say go, you will shape your body into the letter...” and choose a letter for them to turn into. Choose a letter that is easily accomplished by one person. Take a moment to notice the different ways that students are becoming the letter. Which students chose to make a lowercase letter and which students did uppercase?
3. Instruct students to find a partner or assign partners. Again, say “when I say go, you will work with your partner to shape your bodies into the letter...” Again, take a moment to make observations as a group.
4. When students are ready for the next challenge, combine partner groups to make larger groups. Continue to combine groups and assign letters until the entire class is working together to make the letters with their bodies.

Reflection Questions

Was it easier to make letters with more people? Or was it more challenging?



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. Science equipment. What do you remember?
2. Letters moving.
3. A **metal slinky**.



Metal Slinky

Listen for...

1. The sound of a deflating balloon.
2. Sounds that make you laugh.
3. A sound that's in your name.





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.



Resources for Families

Extend your child's theatre experience at home!

Questions to ask your child BEFORE they see the show:

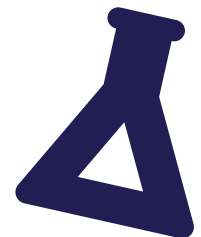
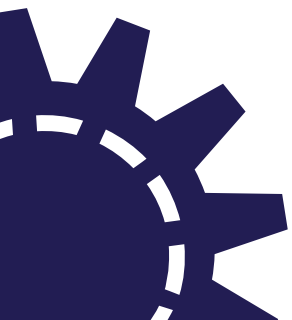
- What's your favorite letter? What sound does it make?
- What instruments do you think they'll use in the performance?
- What about your field trip are you most excited about?

Questions to ask your child AFTER they see the show:

- Did the Scientist speak gibberish? Could you understand what she was saying?
- What surprised you during the play?
- Did the letters ever come into the audience?
- What was your favorite part of the play?

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

childrenstheatre.org/babblelab



Sound Scavenger Hunt

Babble Lab is all about the joy and wonder of sound. Go on a sound scavenger hunt with your family to see what sounds you can find!

Walk through your neighborhood and cross out the sounds as you hear them. How many can you find? Were you able to identify the sounds before you saw the objects that created them?



Music



A Cricket



A Door Closing



A Car



Construction



A Bird



Water



A Squirrel Running



Police Sirens



Bouncing Ball



Dog Barking



An Airplane



Wind



A Bicycle



A Fly or Bug



Laughter



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

Arrival

We recommend arriving at 10:15am. Buses can unload in the circle driveway on 3rd Ave S between the 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 to the MacMillan Family Lobby.

Seating begins when the performance begins at 10:30am.

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

Seating

Seating for our preschool performances does not begin until 10:30am when the show starts. Seating is done in library storytelling style with students up front and adults behind.

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 MacMillan Family Lobby and Cargill Stage are fully accessible on the ground level. CTC's accessible seating area is located in the front row of the theatre. Please email schools@childrenstheatre.org in advance to request accessible seating, if needed. The rest of the seating can be accessed by going up a set of stairs. The restrooms in the MacMillan Family Lobby are fully accessible.

An Accessible/All-Gender/Family Restroom is located next to the elevator on the 2nd level in the Target Lobby. An adult-sized changing table is available upon request.

Sensory Sensitivities

The performance is live streamed in the lobby for anyone needing to take a break during the performance. Please feel free to come and go from the lobby 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

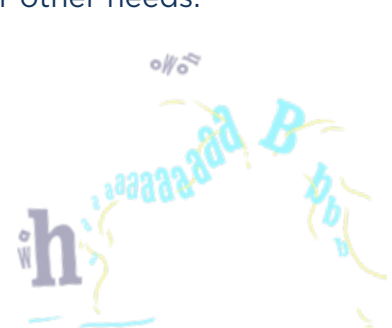
Please let an usher know if you would like to use an assistive listening device. These devices come equipped with an over-the-ear earpiece. This earpiece can be unplugged, and other devices, such as cochlear implants, can be plugged into the receiver using the 1/8" jack. If you will be plugging in your 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.





Babble Lab Content Advisories

Language: 0 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The actor communicates with the audience using sound and gesture instead of words.



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



Violence and Scariness: 0 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Sensory Advisories: 1 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Everyday objects and lab equipment are used to experiment with sound. A balloon flies around the room as it emits air and noise. A crash is heard, and the lab becomes dark for just a moment.



Potentially Anxious Moments: 0 out of 5 stars ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The scientist feels sad.

Please contact schools@childrenstheatre.org with any questions.

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.



Grades: Grades pre-K and up

Time Required: 30-45 minutes

Supplies: None

Set-up: This activity can be done with students sitting at their desks or together on the carpet.

A **sound designer** is someone who thinks about what the world of the play sounds like including the music and noises in the background. In this activity, students will act as sound designers and brainstorm sounds they might hear in different locations.

Instructions:

1. Ask the students to close their eyes and listen to the sounds of the classroom. Have them share one at a time what they hear. If you'd like, you can write their answers on the board or a large piece of chart paper.
2. Next, ask the students to brainstorm other locations, or settings, a play might take place in. Remind them that the play they saw at CTC took place in a science laboratory. Where else do stories take place? Write down their answers on the board.
3. For each location, brainstorm together sounds you might hear in those locations.

Use the template below for inspiration!

Location	Sounds
Castle	
Forest	
Backyard	
Science Laboratory	
Grocery Store	
Beach	

Science and Letter Experimentation

Use the two scientific experiments below to explore both science and letters! Educators can introduce the basic scientific method of hypothesis, experimentation, and analysis by asking questions of students throughout the process.

Volcano Eruption—A Color Experiment

Instructions:

1. Use food coloring to create 3 glasses of vinegar in each primary color (red, yellow, and blue).
2. Place a few tablespoons of baking soda at the bottom of a cylindrical container (empty soda bottle, cup, etc.).
3. Choose two colors of vinegar and ask your students to guess or hypothesize what color those two colors will make when mixed together.
4. Pour the two colors into the baking soda and watch as the new color erupts out of the glass. Discuss the results as a class.

You will need:

- Vinegar
- Food coloring
- Baking Soda
- An empty bottle or glass



Mystery Letter Reveal

Instructions:

1. Without showing your students, write the alphabet with the white crayon on the white paper, one letter per sheet.
2. Hand out the 26 sheets of paper to your students. If you have fewer students, you can double up and give students multiple sheets.
3. Have the students use watercolor paints to reveal the secret letter on their piece of paper.
4. Once the papers have dried, have the students organize them into alphabetical order and display them in your classroom.

You will need:

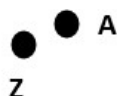
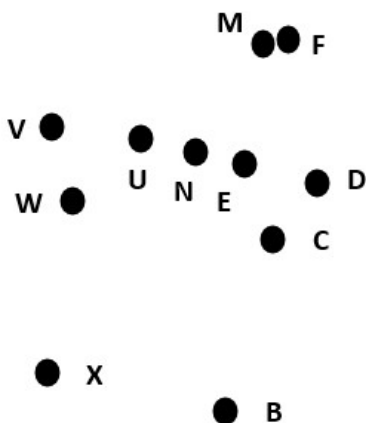
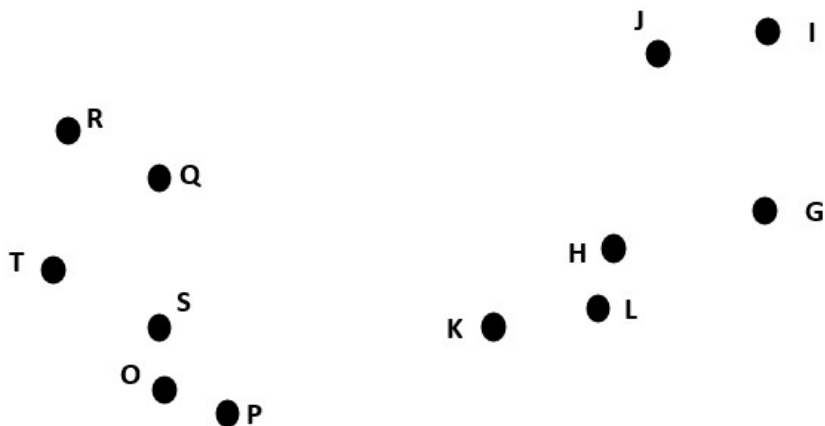
- White paper
- White crayon
- Watercolor paints



Connect the Alphabet

Connect the dots below in the order of the alphabet to reveal a picture.

When you are finished, color the picture!



Further Resources



More About *Babble Lab*



Say What? Autumn Ness' *Babble Lab*
CTC's Newest Play in Development for
Pre-school Audiences.



Meet Autumn Ness, CTC Company
Member and Pre-school Play Aficionado

Further engage your students' social, emotional, and cognitive development with a CTC in-school Creative Play residency!

Recommended for ages 2-6, Creative Play is an interactive storytelling program designed to help students develop skills in self-regulation, problem-solving, and emotional expression. Email schools@childrenstheatre.org for more information.

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

Questions? Email:
schools@childrenstheatre.org

