

ON STAGE AT THE CENTER

Teacher's Guide

The Joshua Show: Episode 1



ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

A modern day Mr. Rogers with hipster appeal, Joshua Holden and his puppet sidekick, Mr. Nicholas, bring their award winning family production *The Joshua Show* across the globe. When Mr. Nicholas makes an unnerving self-discovery that causes him to spiral down a path of loneliness and hopeless despair, it's up to Joshua and his cast of characters, including Larry the Lint and the Wonderbook, to show his best friend the joy in being yourself. With live music, tap dancing, physical comedy, and multiple styles of puppetry, this whimsical show is sure to bring out everyone's joyful side. Come celebrate puppets, live music, and joy with Joshua!

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Joshua Holden is an award-winning international puppeteer, actor, and joy-maker based in NYC and was named one of "20 Theatre Workers You should Know" by American Theatre Magazine. Joshua was on the Broadway national tour of *Avenue Q*, the Lead Puppeteer in *Peter Pan 360* (ThreeSixty Entertainment), and garnered an Arts Impulse award as well as an IRNE nomination for "Best Actor In a Musical" as Bill Snibson in *Me & My Girl* (Reagle Music Theatre of Greater Boston). He also worked with international street artist Banksy on his controversial piece "Sirens of the Lambs". A proud Massachusetts native and an alumnus of the Walnut Hill School for the Arts, he earned a B.F.A. in Acting from The Chicago College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University.

BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE

Questions to Ask:

- Have you ever felt sad or grumpy? What did you do to cheer yourself up?
- How do you spread kindness to others? What are some kind things that others have done for you?
- What does "authentic" mean? How can you be authentic?
- What is something special you like about yourself? For example, do you have a secret talent or skill? What is something you like about your best friend? What makes them special?

THEATER ETIQUETTE

Please share these tips on how to be a respectful audience member.

1. Be an engaged and polite listener. The show requires your full attention!
2. Refrain from talking to your neighbor. Students enjoy the performance more if they can hear and pay attention uninterrupted.
3. Applaud if you like something. Normally, the audience applauds at the end of an act or scene. However, great audiences applaud when they are impressed with a scene or laugh when something is funny.
4. Entering and exiting the performance space in an organized and calm manner is important for your safety and the safety of the performing artists.



AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

1. How many puppets did you meet in *The Joshua Show*? Which was your favorite puppet and how would you describe their voice?
2. What was your favorite moment in the performance today? Can you show it without using words? Can your friends guess what your favorite part of the show was?
3. If you were to write a letter for Joshua to read on his show, what would it be about? What do you think Joshua would say back?
4. What does Joshua do when he feels happy or joyful? What do you do when you feel happy?
5. Larry the Lint tells jokes to remind Joshua to smile and spread joy instead of sadness. Do you have a favorite joke? What is it?
6. Why do you think it's important to celebrate what makes you authentic or different?

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Puppet Up

Many of Joshua's friends, like Mr. Nicholas, are puppets. What kind of puppets did Joshua use during the show? As a class, research the variety of puppets used in performances. Ask your students to think about the differences and similarities between actors and puppets. Do they prefer one over the other? Invite your students to make their own puppet friend. Using either a sock or paper bag for a base, your students can use markers, pipe cleaners and other craft supplies to make their own puppet friend. When they have completed their puppet friend, ask your students to compare their puppet to Joshua's puppets. Are they the same type of puppet? What is similar or different about each puppet?

The Joy in Being You

Joshua often talked about the importance of being "authentic." When he showed his arm hair to the audience he talked about how this made him one of a kind. Have your students think about a reason they are authentic. Have them draw a picture of their authentic self and highlight what is unique about themselves. Ask your students to show their portrait to the class and remind them that the things that make you different are the things that make you great!

My Own Show

Have your students imagine they are hosting their own show. Would it be similar to Joshua's show? Would they have puppet friends? What would it be about? What would they call it? Would it have a theme song? Have students partner up and take turns hosting their own show and being a sidekick. Have them select a word of the day and try to center the show around that word and even sing their new theme song!

Move your Bones

Put on some fun music and have your students stand up and do a silly dance! The crazier the better. Let them shake and move from their head down to their toes. Shout out different emotions and have them express that emotion as they dance. How would you dance excited? Grumpy? Scared? Start turning the music on and off and have the students stop dancing with the beat, see who can be the best listener and stay in the game the longest!

Look Who's Talking

Joshua uses his voice to become the different characters throughout the show. Have students use their voice to help them become a character in a story. Explain that great storytellers change their voice through the diction, pace, pitch and volume they use to represent a character. Have students practice saying phrases, such as, "I won't go," or "I need to talk with you," using different types of diction, pace, pitch and volume. Which one best represents someone who is friendly? Mean? Helpful? Have students work in groups to act out different scenes of a well-known fairytale, such as *Cinderella* or *The Three Little Pigs*. Make sure they use their voice to help them become their assigned character.