

2016-17 SEASON **New Victory®** Theater School Tool RESOurce Guides

A project of The New 42nd Street, a nonprofit organization





THE NEW VICTORY THEATER

The New Victory Theater is New York City's first full-time performing arts theater for kids, their families and classmates. Since it opened in 1995, The New Victory has quickly become an integral part of the cultural landscape in New York City, presenting a full season of adventurous, multidisciplinary works from around the globe and close to home. The New Vic seeks out sophisticated, thought-provoking, professional productions that are as artistically rich as they are entertaining.

The international productions on New VICTORY stages inform and inspire the work of the award-winning New VICTORY Education Program through a dynamic combination of school and public programs. Our school programs serve over 40,000 Pre-K through 12th grade students and teachers each season at almost no cost to the kids or their schools. Many of our partners are NYC-area Title I schools, with a high percentage of students who would be unable to experience live theater if it weren't for The New Victory. The enthusiastic young people who greet you on your way into the theater are part of the New Vic Usher Corps, a 3-year program that provides 27,000 hours of paid employment for 75-80 high school and college-age youth each season. Families who attend the New Vic together combine their theater-going with NEW VICTORY Family Workshops, as well as free in-theater engagement activities. Together, these nationally-recognized programs exemplify the organization's long-standing commitment to the intrinsic value of cultural participation in the lives of young people and families.

NEW VICTORY[®] SCHOOL TOOL[®] Resource Guides

Available to Education Partners for every show in our season, NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides provide educators with comprehensive materials that explore the artistry and key themes of each production. Filled with practical, ready-to-implement activities that allow any teacher to incorporate The New Victory into their classroom, the NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides are designed to enrich the performance experience before, during and after the students' trip to the theater.

New VICTORY Education Partnership

The NEW VICTORY Education Department is committed to building impactful and long-lasting relationships with schools and after-school programs. We believe that creating strong and meaningful partnerships between schools and arts organizations allows school communities to deeply enrich their arts programs and infuse creativity across the curriculum. By annually enrolling in the unique and award-winning NEW VICTORY Education Partnership Program, schools take advantage of \$2 tickets to NEW VICTORY school-time and after-school performances, free classroom workshops led by highly skilled teaching artists, in-depth resources and professional development that allow teachers to incorporate the arts into their classrooms.

Making Connections to Learning Standards

NEW VICTORY SCHOOL TOOL Resource Guides align with the Common Core State Standards, New York State Learning Standards and New York City Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts. We believe that these standards support both the high quality instruction and deep engagement that The New Victory Theater strives to achieve in its arts education practice.

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NEW VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guides are made possible by a generous gift in memory of Fr. John R. Scarangello, OFM whose lifelong passion for the theater was a powerful influence on all who were fortunate to know and love him.





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This section is part of a full New VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guide. For the complete guide, including information about the New VICTORY Education Department, check out: **NewVictory.org/SchoolTool**

INSIDE

A behind-the-curtain look at the artists, the company and the art form of this production

COMMON CORE STANDARDS Reading: 1; 2; 3; 4; 7 Writing: 1; 2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10 Speaking and Listening: 1; 2; 3; 4

Language: 1; 2; 3

NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS Arts: 1; 2; 3; 4 English Language Arts: 1; 2; 3; 4 Social Studies: 1; 2

BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS Theater: Theater Making, Developing Theater Literacy, Making Connections Visual Arts: Art Making, Literacy in Visual Arts, Making Connections

Summary

Something aerial. Something funny. Something beautiful. A troupe of seven skilled acrobats fuses circus, dance, physical theater and clowning into a singular, captivating performance that appears comically effortless. From reading a book to playing a game of poker, these inventive performers create silly, surreal scenes out of everyday ordinary acts. Make no mistake—because these guys won't—this show has SOMETHING for everyone!







Where in the world is SOMETHING from?

MILAN, ITALY



FUN FACTS

The city of Milan, Italy, is home to some of the most beautiful architecture in the world. One of the most stunning examples is the Duomo di Milano or Milan Cathedral, which took nearly 600 years to build!

Liber Di... Physical Theatre's four founders performed in the acrobatic dance piece "Olympic Spirit" during the Opening Ceremony of the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy.



Milan is home to Teatro alla Scala, Europe's largest opera house, which seats 2,800 people. That's over five times as many audience members as the New Victory!

ACROBATICS + CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS × DANCE = SOMETHING

A Closer look:

Liberi Di... Physical Theatre was founded in 2007 by four artists, Davide Agostini, Stefano Pribaz, Valentina Marino and Giulia Piolanti, all of whom are exceptionally skilled in gymnastics. Trained in circus arts, acting and dance, they put their heads together to create shows that offer a unique mix of art forms and performance styles!

SOMETHING is a contemporary circus performance which represents a dreamlike world with music and dance. It's meant not only to convey fun and joy, but also the struggles that we all face in our day-to-day lives.









INSIDE / THE ART FORM

ACROBATICS

In SOMETHING, the performers create spectacle by using acrobatics as a means of storytelling. Acrobatic performance entails feats of brute strength, agility, coordination and balance. The performers in SOMETHING climb on top of one another, swing from silks and use each other as human counterweights. This type of performance dates all the way back to the Minoan civilization around 2000 B.C.E., with citizens performing acrobatics on top of bulls. While there are no bulls in SOMETHING, you will definitely see the same elements of danger and excitement in this high-flying performance!

CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS

Circus is an art form that is centuries old and is traditionally associated with three rings and clowns. SOMETHING is performed by circus professionals, but there are no red noses or animal tamers. SOMETHING is categorized as contemporary circus, an art form that was developed in the late 20th century and emphasizes character, story and aesthetics, as opposed to traditional circus elements.

LYRICAL DANCE

This type of dance is a hybrid of traditional ballet and jazz. The movements are informed by emotion and specific intentions. Typically, music used in lyrical pieces has lyrics, hence the name and the action of the dance is derived from those lyrics. This style of dance naturally lends itself to storytelling due to its focus on emotion. In SOMETHING, lyrical movement is used in playful ways to tell stories without the use of words.

WHAT DO YOUR STUDENTS KNOW NOW?

Prior to exploring SOMETHING with your students, find out how much they already know about **CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS** and **ACROBATICS**. In addition, allow them to explore the themes: **TEAMWORK** and **DISCIPLINE**.

Have you ever been to the circus? What kind of acts did you see?

Based on images and what you know, how do you think SOMETHING might be different from other circuses?

Do you know what contortion is? How is it different from acrobatics? What do you think a contortionist's daily training regimen consists of?

What kind of costumes do most acrobats wear? What do you think they are made of?

What are the benefits of working as a team or in an ensemble? What are the challenges?

What are important elements of teamwork or ensemble?





NSIDE / UNIT PLAN BRAINSTORM

THE WORLD IS A CIRCUS (SOCIAL STUDIES, THEATER ARTS)

Use the experience of seeing SOMETHING to explore different types of circus from around the world with your students! Over the course of a few days, give them the opportunity to research the different kinds of circus affiliated with different countries and cultures. Once they've completed their research, have your students give a presentation on the similarities and differences between the various circuses and cultures. To support this unit, use the Activity: *Warm It Up* in the **Before** section.

TALENT SHOW! (ELA, VISUAL ARTS)

Have your students embark on a creative writing unit that allows them to explore what it would be like to create their very own contemporary circus! Divide the class into groups and have each group devise their own act. Once each group has finished brainstorming their circus act, have the groups write a treatment or pitch, to convince the other groups that their act should be in the circus. Once each group has made their pitch, it's time to create a theme, storyline and name for your circus and to create a show poster for your act! To support this unit, use the Activity: *Let Me Dance Phrase That!* in the **After** section.

THE PHYSICS OF CIRCUS (ELA, SCIENCE)

What is the science of circus? Explore the physics behind the tricks with your students as part of a science unit! Lead activities, followed by reflective discussions, about such concepts as gravity, velocity, inertia, centripetal force and weight-sharing. A few leading questions to help you get started are *How could we study the ability to toss and catch different objects of varying size? What factors influence the speed at which an object is moving? How can we affect change on our ability to balance?* To support this unit, use the Creativity Page: *Obstacles? Of Course!* in the **Before** section and the Activity: *Let Me Dance Phrase That!* in the **After** section.



This section is part of a full New VICTORY® SCHOOL TOOL® Resource Guide. For the complete guide, including information about the New VICTORY Education Department, check out: **NewVictory.org/SchoolTool**

BEFORE

Ready-to-implement classroom activities that explore the themes and artistry of the show

COMMON CORE STANDARDS Language: 1; 2; 3

NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS Arts: 1; 2 English Language Arts: 4

BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS Theater: Theater Making, Developing Theater Literacy, Making Connections Visual Arts: Art Making, Literacy in Visual Arts, Making Connections



BEFORE / ACTIVITY

In SOMETHING, the performers have to exert an extreme amount of energy and prepare themselves to dance and perform acrobatic tricks. Acrobatics requires a finely tuned sense of balance and the ability to trust fellow performers. Teach these basic partner balances to build up your students' own sense of balance and trust in their classmates.

FACE TO FACE:



1. Partners stand facing each other toe-to-toe.



2. Partners hold each other's wrists in a catcher's lock*.

*Catchers' Lock Tip: Hold your partner's wrists to create a strong lock between the pair. This signals an agreement to keep each other safe.



 Instruct students to keep their bodies stiff as boards. Both partners should lean back until their elbows are completely straight. Make sure they are still standing toe to toe as they lean back.



4. Once the pair finds their balancing point, encourage them to release their outside hands, rotating their shoulders outwards and "style" with the free hand.

> Hint: Circus performers end each trick or act with a "Style." This is a pose of your own choosing that lets the audience know when to applaud!



BACK-TO-BACK:

 Partners stand back-toback. Students should feel their shoulder blades pressing into their partner's shoulder blades.

Safety Tip: Remind students that if they stand straight up in the middle of this trick, their partner will fall!



2. Keeping their bodies straight, both students walk their feet away from the center. Apprehensive students might want to grab hands. If they do, their arms should be straight down. The shape should look like an A or an upside-down V. **Safety Tip:** Encourage students to keep their knees straight as they lean back. Some students will sit as they lean back, creating a bend. Ask them to pull their belly button forward to make their body straight.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What did you find most challenging about these two weight-sharing activities?

How could this activity help build trust?

Why do you think acrobats and dancers might do this type of work in preparation for a performance?



BEFORE / RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Be a part of your kid's field trip! www.NewVictory.org/SchoolTool



WATCH

Check out the video trailer and a message from the company! WWW.NEWVICTORY.ORG

While you're there, do the suggested Family Activities to learn more about the show.



Ask your kid BEFORE the show:

What skills does a circus performer need to have? What are you most excited about for your trip to The New Victory Theater?

Ask your kid AFTER the show:

What was your favorite part of the show? Did anything about the show surprise you? What's the most challenging act you saw in the show?



The New Victory is New York City's only performing arts theater exclusively devoted to kids, their families and classmates, bringing exhilarating stories, innovative art forms and unparalleled performers from around the world to its historic stage in Times Square. For a full list of shows in the New Vic 2016-17 season, visit **www.NewVictory.org**.



State 1 Outrse CREATIVITY PAGE

One of the themes in SOMETHING is overcoming obstacles. Use the space provided to map out your very own obstacle course. What objects that are found in your home or school could be used to create the ultimate obstacle course? Draw it!

As an added bonus, recreate your obstacle course inside of your classroom! But ask your teacher for permission first! This section is part of a full New VICTORY[®] SCHOOL TOOL[®] Resource Guide. For the complete guide, including information about the New VICTORY Education Department, check out: **NewVictory.org/SchoolTool**

EN ROUTE

Trip logistics and a brief student activity to be completed shortly before seeing the show.

Provide this section to all teachers and chaperones attending the show!

COMMON CORE STANDARDS READING: 1; 2

NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS Arts: 1

BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS Visual Arts: Art Making, Making Connections

Heads up!

SOMETHING is set in a surreal, dreamlike world where fantasies come alive! This production is a contemporary circus that employs acrobatics, dance and clowning. Prepare your students to watch closely and see how the performers defy the laws of gravity!







CREATIVITY PAGE



WHICH CIRCUS PERFORMER ARE YOU?

In SOMETHING, each performer possesses their own unique talents. What secret talents do YOU have? Take the quiz below to find out if you're an acrobat, aerialist, a clown or a dancer!

1. If you could juggle any object, what would it be?

- a. Juggling balls
- b. Chairs
- c. Scarves

2. You have the chance to swing on a flying trapeze. What do you do?

- a. Climb the ladder and perform death-defying acrobatics
- b. I'll swing, but I won't do any tricks
- c. Watch from the comfort of solid ground

3. Out of the choices below, what is your favorite color?

- a. Red
- b. Blue
- c. Yellow

4. What type of dance do you enjoy the most?

- a. Ballet
- b. Lyrical
- c. Jazz

5. From the list below, choose your favorite mythical creature.

- a. Unicorn
- b. Dragon
- c. Elf
- 6. If you were performing and noticed a sad audience member, what would you do?
 - a. Wave to them
 - b. Do a backflip to WOW them
 - c. Fake a fall to make them laugh

7. What are you more afraid of?

- a. Heights
- b. Spinning fast, high above a crowd of spectators
- c. The unknown
- 8. You're on stage and something is about to go terribly wrong with your circus act. What do you do?
 - a. Ask my partner for assistance
 - b. Solve it by myself
 - c. Run away from it and hope it solves itself

NOW, ADD UP YOUR POINTS AND SEE WHAT TYPE OF **CURCUS PERFORMER** YOU ARE!

LEGEND:

A's = 6 points each B's = 4 points each C's = 2 points each

1 - 16 Points = YOU'RE A DANCER!

You've got excellent moves AND you know how to entertain an audience!

16-28 Points = YOU'RE A CLOWN!

You know that problems can happen, but you also know how to cope with them—through laughter!

28-40 POINTS = YOU'RE AN AERIALIST!

You aren't afraid to soar to new heights!

WOW, you have abilities beyond comprehension! People will FLIP when they see you work your acrobatic magic!





TRIP GUIDE

Provide this resource to the School Trip Leader and all teachers/chaperones attending the performance.

Before you leave school

We advise you to LEAVE ALL BAGS AND LUNCHES at school, if possible. If not, bags will be collected by New VICTORY staff and stored during the performance.

Plan to arrive at the NEW VICTORY venue at least 30–45 minutes before curtain time. The building opens one hour prior to curtain (i.e. 10am for an 11am performance). If you realize that your group is running late, please contact the theater DIRECTLY at **646.223.3020**. If you will be arriving by bus, please ensure that your driver drops your group off on the **north side** of 42nd Street between 7th and 8th Avenues.

Arrival

When you reach 42nd Street, a member of the New Victory Front of House staff wearing a green vest will check in with the school trip leader.

If you arrive by bus, they will direct your bus to a location on the street where it is safest to unload the students.

It is important to wait until our staff checks in the School Trip Leader and Bus Driver before unloading the students.

They will record the bus number and give the School Trip Leader and the Bus Driver correlating tags.

<u>Please remember to have the School Trip</u> <u>Leader and the Bus Driver exchange cell</u> <u>numbers.</u>

The Front of House staff will give a time for the bus to return to pick up your school group.

The question of lunch

NEW VICTORY venues are not equipped to host lunch/ snacks. In the early autumn and spring months, nearby Bryant Park (42nd Street at 6th Avenue) offers a pleasant place for lunching, and there are also public restroom facilities.

Seating

In order to make your experience at the theater as efficient and safe as possible, you will not be issued tickets. Your group will be assigned seats in advance by the Education Department. Your seating assignment will not be available prior to the performance. If you have any questions, please contact the Education Department at: Education_Tickets@NewVictory.org.

Accessibility

Wheelchair accessibility: Wheelchair seating must be requested in advance, at the time of the ticket request, and is subject to availability. Assisted listening devices are available for patrons who have hearing impairments.







TRIP GUIDE

If you are traveling by bus, please also share this important information with the bus driver.

Directions to THE NEW VICTORY THEATER OR THE DUKE ON 42ND STREET/ 209 West 42nd Street

NEW 42ND STREET STUDIOS 229 West 42nd Street

BY SCHOOL BUS

It is safest to drop off and pick up your school group on <u>the north side of the street</u> in front of the venue. Turn onto 42nd Street from 7th Avenue so students can unload in front of the theater space.



During the show

42nd Street is extremely congested and has a high volume of traffic. According to the New York City Department of Transportation, vehicles are not allowed to sit idle or park on the street without special permission. Once your bus is empty, it is important that the bus driver find parking at a nearby location—see possible parking locations below.

If a driver chooses to park on 42nd Street, they do so at their own risk of being ticketed by the police. The New Victory Theater is not responsible for bus drivers who receive parking tickets.

Possible parking locations

8th Avenue (both sides) between 38th and 39th Streets 11th Avenue (both sides) between 39th and 40th Streets

Pick up

Taking Midtown traffic into consideration, bus drivers should leave their waiting location approximately 10 minutes prior to the return time given by the Front of House staff. Front of House staff will also help find a spot on 42nd Street to safely load your student group after the show has ended.

BY MTA. SUBWAY OR BUS

1/2/3. N/R/Q/W/7

Exit the station at 42nd Street/7th Avenue. When you come out of the turnstile, take the stairs to your right. All New VICTORY venues are directly to the west of the subway station.

A/C/E to Port Authority Exit at 42nd Street/8th Avenue. Walk to 42nd Street, turn east, and continue walking until you arrive at New VICTORY venues.

B/D/F/M

Exit at 42nd Street/6th Avenue. Walk west on 42nd Street until you come to 7th Avenue. The venues are on the north side of the street at 7th Avenue, next to the subway station.

The M10, M16, M27, M42, M104 buses all stop within one block of the venues.



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AFTER

Ready-to-implement classroom activities that offer the opportunity to reflect on and extend the experience of attending the performance

COMMON CORE STANDARDS Reading: 1 Writing: 1; 2; 4 Speaking and Listening: 1; 3; 6 Language: 1; 2; 3

NEW YORK STATE STANDARDS Arts: 1; 2; 3 English Language Arts: 1; 3; 4

BLUEPRINT FOR THE ARTS Theater: Theater Making, Developing Theater Literacy, Making Connections Dance: Dance Making, Developing Dance Literacy, Making Connections Visual Arts: Art Making, Literacy in Visual Arts, Making Connections









Following your trip to The New Victory, you may find that your students want to discuss the performance and their opinions. Reflecting on the show and voicing an aesthetic response is an important part of the theater-going experience. Allowing your students the opportunity to articulate their own thoughts and hear the ideas of their classmates will increase the impact of the theater experience.

Engage in a conversation with your students regarding their thoughts and feelings about the show. Use the following questions as prompts:

Did this performance of SOMETHING challenge your view of what circus is? If so, how?

What were your favorite moments of the show?

What themes did you notice in SOMETHING?

How did the different acts make you feel?

TEACHER TIP

Engaging in dialogue, asking questions and recalling observations are skills that we believe should be fostered and encouraged. When leading a performance reflection discussion, try the following model of critical response:

Describe (*I saw...*)

Analyze (I wonder...)

Interpret (I think/feel...)

Evaluate (I believe...)







AFTER / PERFORMANCE REFLECTION

Be a theater critic! Write your review of SOMETHING. Your review should include the following elements: An eye-catching headline, an opening that clearly states your opinion on the production and how you came to have that opinion, a brief summary of what you saw and what made this production unique. Oh and don't forget to think about the set, costumes, lighting, music, characters and performing choices!

BE A CRITIC

Headline: _

What I saw and what surprised me:

How the show made me feel: What mood were you in after the show? What about the show made you feel that way?

My Opinion Consider the acrobatics, music, set, costumes and lighting.

AFTER / PERFORMANCE REFLECTION

LET ME **DANCE** PHRASE THAT!

In SOMETHING, the performers show off their acro-dance skills. See what kinds of dance pieces your students can create in your classroom!

Materials: Music

- 1. Tell your students that they are going to create a collective dance phrase.
- 2. Divide the class into 3 groups and tell each group they are charged with the task of creating one movement per group member. The movement can be inspired by the music they hear, a color they see or an emotion they are feeling or have felt. Hint: Tell your students that there is no wrong way to do this. Their movements can be based in technique or can be as pedestrian as needed, based on each individual's ability.
- 3. Once each student has created their own unique movement, have each group work together to connect the movements from one person to another, ultimately creating one fluid group dance phrase. Hint: The groups should all be standing in a circle for this exercise.
- 4. Give your students about 5-10 minutes to figure out how they're going to create their group's dance phrase.
- 5. Have the groups share out their movement phrases!
- 6. Have the whole class come together in one large circle while staying with their group members. Work together as an ensemble to bring all of the movements together in one extended dance phrase.
- 7. Discuss what it was like to work as a group to create a piece of choreography!

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How did your group work together successfully to create a dance phrase?

What were your challenges? How did the other groups surprise you?

What skills did you use today that you saw the performers in SOMETHING use on stage?







CREATIVITY PAGE Storyhoard Your Dream

Create a storyboard or series of illustrations that details a dream you recently had. If you can't recall a recent dream, take a few quiet moments to yourself to meditate—close your eyes and breathe in and out a few times to relax—and allow yourself to daydream a bit! Once you have recalled your dream or daydream, reimagine it in the form a circus. Draw your dream circus in the spaces below!



Sources

http://www.liberidi.net/?lang=en http://www.turismo.milano.it/wps/portal/tur/en

