

Kansas City Young Audiences

Teacher Program Guide

Missouri Cultural History—Missouri Writers Come Alive

Artist: Susansylvia Scott

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more information on
this and other
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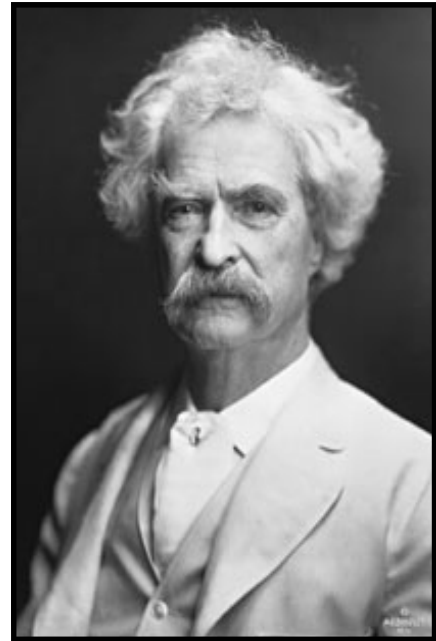
Performance Description

Master Teaching Artist Susansylvia Scott, 2006 Lighton Prize winner for Teaching Excellence, presents dramatic tellings from the works of famous Missouri writers in this engaging presentation. Some of the noted authors Susansylvia storytells from include Eugene Field, who wrote children's poetry. Other authors explored are Ida Chittum, Langston Hughes, and Mark Twain. These writers represent the different ethnic groups that settled the state and are a fundamental part of Missouri folklore.

In addition to famous published authors, Susansylvia recreates some of the well-known Missouri folktales and Native American legends with the help of the students.

Each performance includes

a thorough review of all authors and elements included in the presentation.



Mark Twain

Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Learn the importance of oral and written tradition in the forming of a state culture and life style
- Be introduced to traditional Missouri folklore and cultural heritage

Behavioral Studies:

- Understand that group and cultural influences contribute to human development, identity, and behavior

Language Arts

- Can talk about characters and their actions in stories
- Can talk about sequence of a story

Special Points of Interest:

Missouri poet, Langston Hughes, while working as a busboy in Washington, D.C., slipped three poems into the satchel of guest Vachel Lindsay who was famous for his public readings of poetry. Lindsay's enthusiastic rendition of and response to Hughes's poems led to a scholarship at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania.

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Large, cleared space (library or empty room); space up front must include room for student participations

Artist Bio: Susansylvia Scott

Master Teaching Artist Susansylvia Scott is a creative and innovative storyteller. She holds a Master of Arts in Theater from the University of Missouri, Kansas City. Two of her mentors are Vincent Dowling, of the Abbey Theater in Dublin, Ireland and John Houseman, a teacher at the Julliard School of Drama and featured in the *Paper Chase*.

Based on her experiences on the stage and screen,

Susansylvia specializes in unique and creative audience participation. She is also a successful private tutor for children with dyslexia and learning challenges.

Susansylvia's workshops, residencies, and master classes for teachers and students emphasize reading comprehension and creative writing. She was the Lighton Prize winner for Teaching Excellence in 2006.



Susansylvia Scott

Vocabulary

Culture: these patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population.

Folklore: traditional stories and explanations passed down in a community or country.

Heritage: a way of life or traditional culture that passes from one generation to the next in a social group.

Poetry: a piece of literature written in meter; verse.

Tall tale: a fanciful or greatly exaggerated story.

Tradition: the passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation, especially by oral communication.

Post-Performance Activities

1. Go to the library and explore American folklore and folk tales. How do these stories represent the culture and the people of the era in which they were written? How have they changed?
2. Try to find parallels between American folklore and Native American folklore. Did European settlers borrow or adapt Native American stories to communicate their experiences on the Prairie?
3. Examine ancient myths and legends from Greek, Roman, and older cultures. Did any of the elements of these stories make their way into the folklore and stories of the Frontier? Are there similarities between the Greek gods and fictional characters such as Paul Bunyan?
4. Try creating an original folktale about a memorable event in your family. Then pass it along to other members of your household. Days later, ask the last person who was told the story to retell it. Is it the same or has it been embellished with their own perceptions of the event?

List of Resources

BOOKS

The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes
(Vintage Classics)

by Langston Hughes, Arnold Rampersad
(Editor) Vintage; 1st Vintage classics ed
edition (October 31, 1995)
ISBN: 0679764089

Complete Short Stories of Mark Twain
(Bantam Classic) by MARK TWAIN
Bantam Classics; Revised edition
(March 1, 1984) ISBN: 0553211951

Wynken, Blynken, and Nod
by Eugene W. Field, David Mc Phail,
Cartwheel Books; (March 1, 2004)
ISBN: 0439543037

The cat's pajamas by Ida Chittum
Parents Magazine Press; (1980)
ASIN: 0819310301