

Program Name: Letters, Numbers, Shapes, and Colors

Artist: Laughing Matters

## Special Requirements:

One 6' table

## Special Points of Interest:

This performance is 30 minutes in length and can accommodate 100 students maximum

## Performance Description

Leslie and Jay Cady use mime and juggling to help little nippers learn basic concepts they need for kindergarten.

The show is a journey through the alphabet, beginning with “A is for Audience” and a lesson about good audience behavior.

“B” is for balls and a poem about numbers and juggling up to seven objects.

The kids learn about mime as silent storytelling and get to act out mime stories.

Jay and Leslie also share their skill at plate spinning, hat tricks, Chinese yo-yo, and other props.

Jay sets up mysteries for Leslie and the audience to solve involving blocks of different shapes and colors. The students must identify patterns and predict what shape and color come next.

This pattern recognition activity is in accordance with math standards for pre-kindergarten through first grade set by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

“Letters, Numbers, Shapes, and Colors” is full of things to watch, things to do, and things to think about that reinforce core concepts which are essential to early education.



## Educational Objectives & Standards

### Students will:

- See circus arts including juggling, stacking cups, spinning plates, and Chinese yo-yo
- Learn appropriate audience behavior
- Participate in mime as silent storytelling and sign language as silent communication

### Standards addressed:

- Letters of the alphabet
- Numbers 1-21
- Primary and secondary colors
- Circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, and ovals
- Recognition of patterns of shape and color and prediction of what comes next in the pattern

## Artist Bio: Jay & Leslie Cady

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Leslie and Jay Cady have been full-time performing artists since 1980. They have performed their engaging blend of juggling, mime, magic, and wacky dialogue in 32 states and seven foreign countries.

Jay and Leslie enjoy using their big bag of tricks to illustrate and reinforce curriculum concepts. Their infectious sense of fun is a hit with students, teachers, and administrators.

In 1984, they studied with legendary mime Marcel Marceau. They were two of 60 students chosen to study

with Marceau in the first two-week workshop he taught in the United States.

They have two daughters who join the act in the summer. When Jay and Leslie were PTA Cultural Arts Chairpersons they saw the need for school assemblies that reinforce curriculum.

Jay and Leslie have twice been nominated for the “Best of Kansas City Theater Awards”. They have performed for ESPN, the National Theater of Guatemala, and the U.S. Department of Defense Overseas Tours.

### List of Resources:

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#### Videos:

Really Rosie. Dir. Maurice Sendak. Perf. Carole King. 1992

This is a wonderful collaboration of stories told through song, text, and illustration. Jay & Leslie include “One Was Johnny” and “Alligators All Around” in the pre-show music for “Letters, Numbers, Shapes, and Colors”.

#### Online Resources:

A fun sign language website for kids:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/5875/index.htm>

Learn about the benefits of sport stacking at [www.speedstacks.com](http://www.speedstacks.com).

Contact KCYA for more information about this and other programs

816.531.4022  
KC YA.org

### Vocabulary

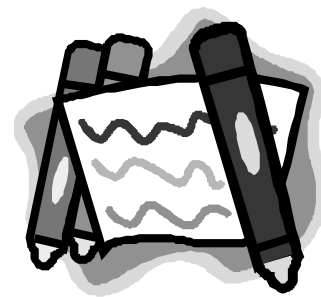
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**Audience:** the people who are watching a show. Good audience behavior includes sitting quietly (“criss-cross applesauce” if sitting on the floor), keeping your eyes on the performers, and clapping for parts of the show that you like.

**Mime:** a way of telling a story silently. You don’t use words, you act the story out. You don’t use real things, you use imaginary things.

**Sign Language:** a way that hearing-impaired people communicate using their hands to form letters and words.

**Sport Stacking:** the sport of stacking and downstacking cups. Many schools have Speed Stacks—sets of stacking cups used for ambidextrous activities that stimulate the brain as well as the hands. As a sport, the emphasis is on speed, but the cups can be used in early education as objects to count, colors to talk about, and patterns to make. If your school has Speed Stacks, borrow them. Kids love playing with them.



### Post-Performance Activities

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1. Make up your own mime alphabet. Look at a letter and then talk about things that start with that letter. Try acting out something you might do with one of those things.
2. Set up mysteries like the ones Jay & Leslie did in the show with the cylinders and blocks. If you don’t have cylinders, boxes or little

screens made of construction paper will do. The “clues” don’t have to be blocks, they can be almost anything. The important thing is to be able to reveal each clue separately. That makes it more dramatic and more fun to discover the pattern and predict what comes next.