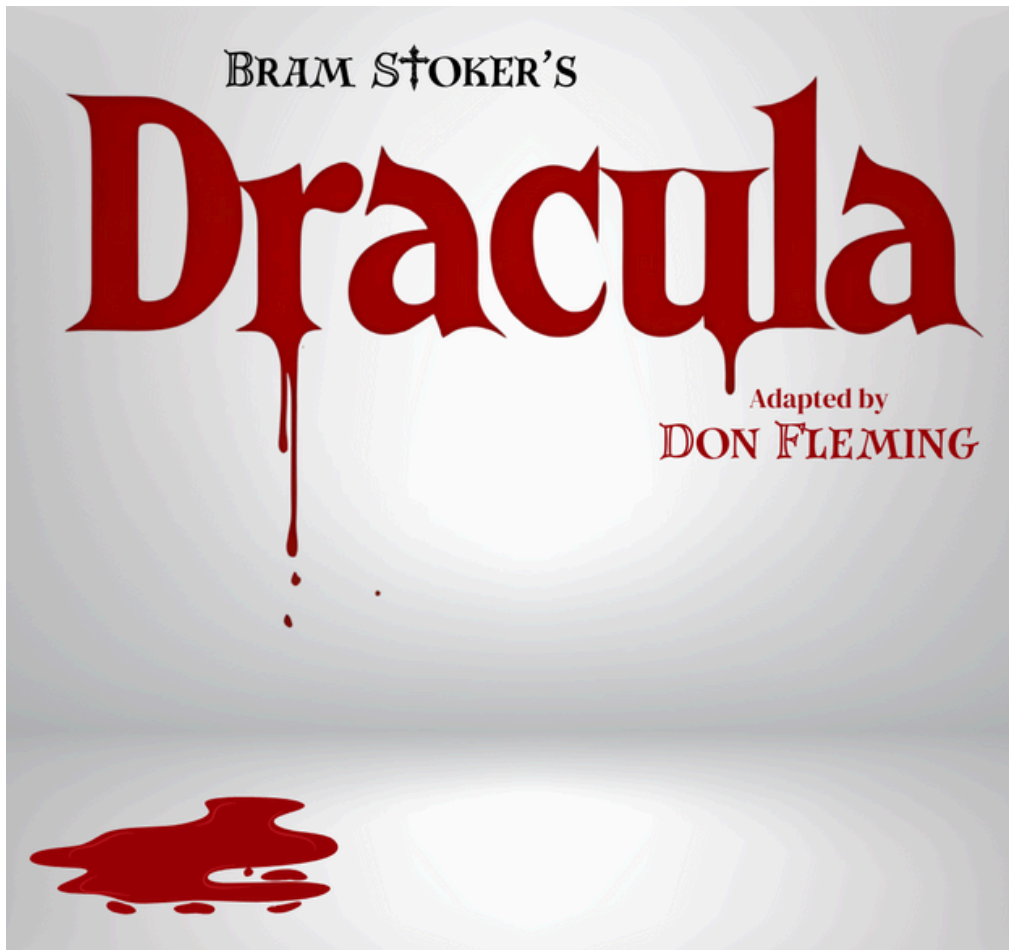


Fort Wayne
youththeatre
*Education
Guide*



Fort Wayne youthatre

About Us...

Did you know Fort Wayne Youthatre is the fifth oldest children's theatre in the country? Since 1934, we've been on a mission to educate, engage, and entertain through the power of live theatre.

It all started when the Old Fort Players (now Civic Theatre) imagined a place where children participated in theatre to develop poise, self-confidence, and an ability to express themselves creatively. Thus, the "Children's Theatre" was born! The very first class had 40 students – paying just \$1 for 8 weeks of lessons! Their first show, *The Steadfast Tin Soldier*, featured 75 young actors performing for audiences at the Majestic Theatre. Tickets were only 10¢ for kids and 25¢ for adults!

In 1978, Broadway actor Harvey Cocks took the lead as Executive Director, inspiring young performers for more than 40 years. In 1984, the Youthatre began its independent journey. Over the decades, Youthatre moved to different homes across the city before finding its place at Park Lake Professional Center in 2025. Today, Youthatre is guided by Executive Director Heather Closson, Artistic Director Christopher J. Murphy, and a team of amazing local artists.

Youthatre isn't just about what happens on stage—we take theatre into the community, too! Our touring troupe, Youthatre-On-The-Go, brings stories to schools, libraries, hospitals, and community centers. In 2018, our Young Heroes of Conscience series, which has celebrated inspiring figures like Anne Frank, Ruby Bridges, and Harriet Tubman, won the Mayor's Arts Award.

For over 90 years, countless youth have discovered their voices, made lifelong friends, and experienced the joy of storytelling. And the story is still being written – by the young artists of today.



ELEMENTS OF A PRODUCTION

SETS

The scenery pieces that form the area in which the performers act out the play. Sometimes scenery is very realistic, making the audience think they are inside a real house, for example. Other times the scenery is quite fanciful or limited. What different sets can you name in the show? What time and place does it look like?

LIGHTS

The lighting instruments that help to create the right atmosphere on the stage. Lights direct the attention of the audience to specific areas of the stage or to a specific performer. The lights may be different colors to add special effects such as nighttime or a storm. How do the lights in this production show changes in the time and place?

PROPS

The objects performers carry to help them act out the story. Look for important props that help define character or place. Can you name a few?

MAKE-UP

The cosmetic bases, blushes, lipsticks, mascara and eye liners which helps the performer physically become the character he/she is playing. Make-up is also used so that the performers facial features can be seen clearly under the bright stage lights from a distance. Do you notice any special make-up in the show?

COSTUMES

The clothing the performers wear. Depending on the story being acted out, this clothing may be what a character of the time would have actually worn. It may also be very exaggerated or fantastic in the case of a dream or a fairy-tale. Costumes help the audience know what a character is like or where and when he/she lived. Are the costumes drab or colorful? Do they look realistic? What do they tell you about the time and place?



BEHIND *the* SCENES

COREY LEE (Lighting Designer) is currently an Assistant Clinical Professor of Theatre at Purdue University Fort Wayne and the Production Manager for the Fort Wayne Ballet. Lee has designed and worked on over 20 Youtheatre productions. Lee graduated with an M.F.A. in Theatre Design and Technical Production from the University of Memphis. Lee earned a B.A. in Theatre and a B.S. in Secondary Education with an emphasis in earth/space science from Purdue University Fort Wayne. Lee was previously the lighting designer and technical director at the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre, some of his designs include ***Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street, Jekyll and Hyde, The Spongebob Musical, Matilda, Rock of Ages, The Rocky Horror Show, Disney Newsies, Avenue Q, and Memphis.*** Previous lighting design credits include ***Sondheim on Sondheim, The Glass Menagerie, Into the Woods, The Laramie Project (PFW), I Hate Hamlet, Peter and the Starcatcher (Arena Dinner Theatre), Holiday Pops(Fort Wayne Philharmonic) and Seussical (University of Saint Francis).*** Lee has also taught at Ball State University, Huntington University, University of Saint Francis, and the University of Memphis, Fort Wayne Youtheatre, and Northrop High School. Lee has also worked with the Mikautadze Dance Theatre, Embassy Theatre, Manchester University, Fort Wayne Summer Music Theatre, Summit City Music Theatre, First Presbyterian Theater, and Genesis Outreach. When he isn't in a theatre or a classroom, he can be found spending time with his wife, Meagan, their two children, Caleb and Mariah, and their dog, Stella.



COREY LEE

Lighting Designer of **DRACULA**



Q: What does a Lighting Designer do?

A lighting designer shapes the lighting for performances, enhancing storytelling through mood, time of day, and audience focus. They determine light placement, colors, brightness, and transitions, collaborating closely with the director, set designer, and costume designer to ensure cohesive lighting that fits the show's world.

Q: How old were you when you started lighting design, and what inspired you to try it?

I discovered my passion for technical theatre in middle school, initially focusing on sound. A teacher encouraged me to continue in high school, leading to my first opportunity with the Fort Wayne Youtheatre's production of "Sugar Water Sunday." There, I met Miriam Morgan, the technical director, who introduced me to advanced lighting techniques. I adjusted my schedule to intern with her, which expanded my knowledge beyond audio to lighting design. Miriam guided me in creating my first lighting design for a school musical. This internship also led to a technical theatre/design position at the Fort Wayne Youtheatre. I love how lighting enhances storytelling, guides audience focus, and evokes emotions, making it my favorite aspect of theatre amid its evolving technology and collaborative nature.

Q: What is your favorite show you have ever designed?

This answer is always changing because the projects keep getting better as I get better. I tend to fall back on Sweeney Todd or Jekyll and Hyde at the Fort Wayne Civic Theatre. I LOVE dark musicals, but then I also love things like The SpongeBob Musical and Matilda. It isn't always about the design, but also about the other people in the room.

Q: What does your process look like?

If it's a musical, I always listen to the music first. So many feelings and ideas can come right from the cast recording. Then I turn to the script. I begin finding an idea or concept for the show. Meeting with the director or the production team is where things take off. I thrive on collaboration and creative energy from others. I start to research the show and find photos that help communicate my ideas. I sketch out different ideas and designs. There is a lot of planning and communication. Once I get in the rehearsal room and see the energy from the cast, it can be an explosion of ideas. When everyone is in the room having a blast, it is hard not to want to go bigger and better! Then we hang and focus the lights. Then we start to make the show look good through different lighting cues.

Q: If someone wanted to be a lighting designer, how should they start?

Go get involved somewhere! Maybe it starts backstage or running sound, but get a foot in the door. Reach out to any local theatre or school. I'm more than happy to let someone sit by me and learn during the process. Some may even discover it later in life, but theatre is always a welcoming environment for newcomers. There are numerous educational resources available on the internet. I went to college and graduate school for this, but everyone has to attend school to pursue this career. It all depends on their interests and life goals. My ultimate goal was to be a teacher, but I discovered design and became a professor instead. Your interest might be working lights for a rock band, opera, museums, or television. Knowing where you want to go will help someone guide you.

ABOUT: STORYLINE

Read about the plot of Bram Stoker's classic horror story, DRACULA!



DRACULA

begins with Jonathan Harker, a young English lawyer, traveling to Transylvania to finalize a property deal with Count Dracula. The locals react with fear when he mentions Castle Dracula, but he continues. As he nears the castle, wolves howl ominously.

Harker finds Dracula pale and peculiar. His unease intensifies when Dracula lunges at him after a shaving accident. Harker encounters three female vampires and narrowly escapes. He learns Dracula is a vampire who feeds on blood and realizes he is the next victim. Trapped in the castle, Harker watches Dracula leave for England with fifty boxes of dirt.

In England, Harker's fiancée, Mina, visits her friend Lucy Westenra, who is recently engaged. One night, Mina finds Lucy sleepwalking near a graveyard with two red marks on her neck, assuming it's a pinprick. Lucy falls ill and is sometimes seen with a bat. After Mina leaves to see Jonathan, Lucy's condition worsens despite care from Dr. Seward and Dr. Van Helsing. They use garlic to ward off vampires, but Lucy dies.

Reports of a creature attacking children surface. When Jonathan and Mina return to England married, Jonathan's account of Dracula leads Van Helsing to suspect Lucy's vampirism. To stop her, they destroy her corpse.

The group decides to hunt Dracula and destroy the fifty boxes of dirt he brought. According to legend, Dracula needs his homeland's soil for strength, so their destroying it could prevent his regeneration. Discovering Mina's strange behavior, Van Helsing and Seward find her drinking blood from Dracula's chest. The vampire escapes to Transylvania but is pursued by the group. They destroy him and the last box of dirt, though Quincey Morris dies in the process.



ABOUT: BIOGRAPHY



Learn about the author of
DRACULA, Bram Stoker!

Abraham Stoker (8 November 1847–20 April 1912), better known by his pen name, Bram Stoker, was an Irish author of horror novels and mystery fiction, who wrote the Gothic horror novel "Dracula" (1897). Widely considered a milestone in vampire fiction, it is one of the most famous classics of English literature.



Officers of the College Historical Society 1872-73 showing Bram Stoker seated at centre.

In addition to his writing, Stoker was also a prominent theatre manager. He worked as the business manager of the Lyceum Theatre in London for several years, collaborating closely with the renowned actor Sir Henry Irving. His role as a theatre manager involved overseeing the day-to-day operations, coordinating performances, and ensuring the theatre's success. This experience in the theatre world not only enriched his storytelling but also provided him with a unique perspective on drama and character development, influencing his literary works.

The primary antagonist of the novel, Count Dracula, has often ranked among the most iconic and best-known fictional figures of the entire Victorian era, and the character's popularity has resulted in more than 700 adaptations for films, movies, plays, comics, video games, cartoons, stage performances, and other forms of media. Although he was the author of 12 mystery novels and novellas, Stoker's reputation as one of the most influential writers of Gothic horror fiction lies solely with "Dracula." **Dracula** became a stage play written by the Irish actor and playwright Hamilton Deane in 1924, then revised by the American writer John L. Balderston in 1927. It was the first authorized adaptation of Bram Stoker's 1897 novel.

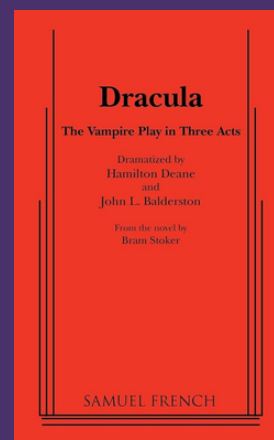
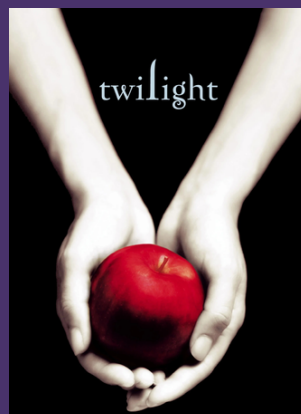
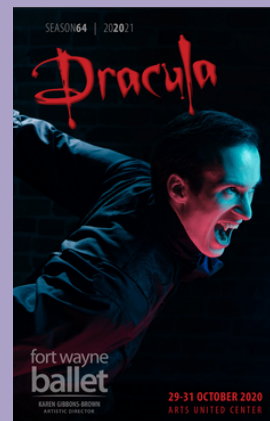
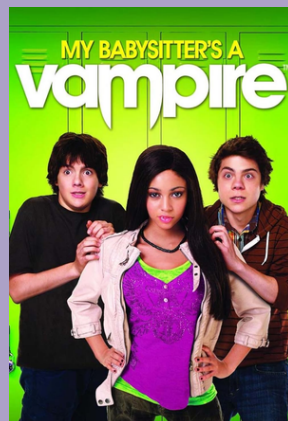
Q: WHAT DOES AN AUTHOR DO?

A: An author uses their knowledge to write stories to help our imagination take flight! They may write books, poems, or essays to help us understand complex feelings, or us comedy to make you laugh!

ABOUT: *Adaptations*

Look familiar?

Many movies, TV shows, and theatrical productions have drawn inspiration from "Dracula" and Stoker's spine-chilling depictions of vampires!



ACTIVITY #1:

PAPER PLATE VAMPIRE

This activity is best suited for Kindergarten through Elementary students



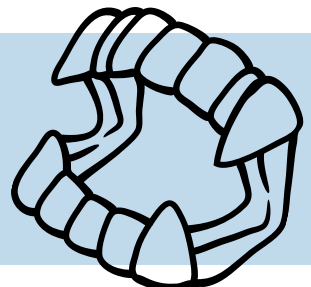
Materials:

- Paper Plate
- Paint
- Paintbrush
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Glue stick
- Black marker
- Vampire template

1. Paint your plate and allow it to dry.
2. Cut out your vampire's facial features and face shape template.
3. Cut out your vampire's face and glue on features.
4. Use black marker to draw a nose and mouth!

Why did Count Dracula get kicked out of the house?

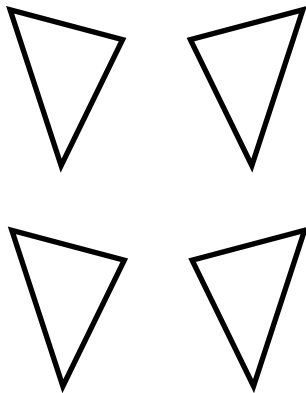
Because he was a pain in the neck!



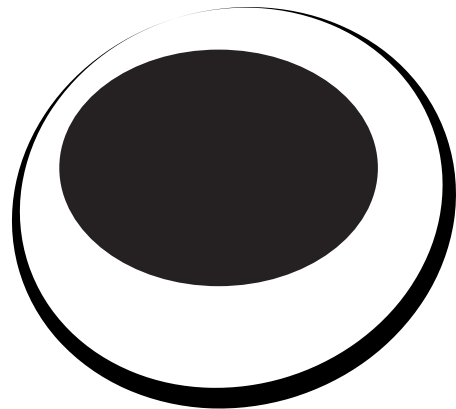
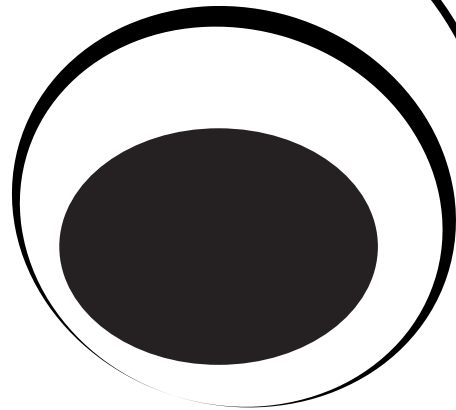


hair
trace on black paper

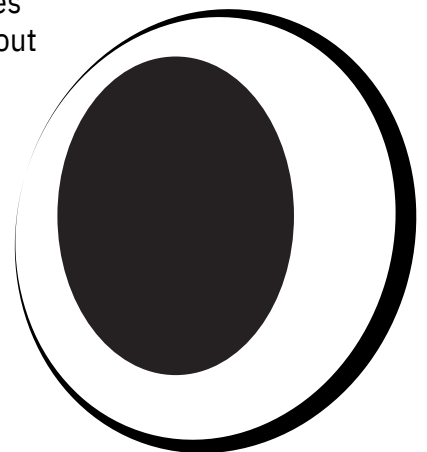
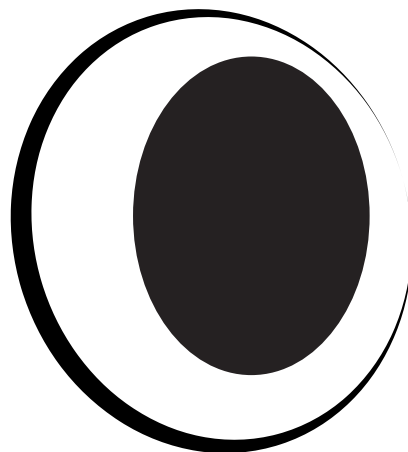
ears
trace on purple
or blue paper



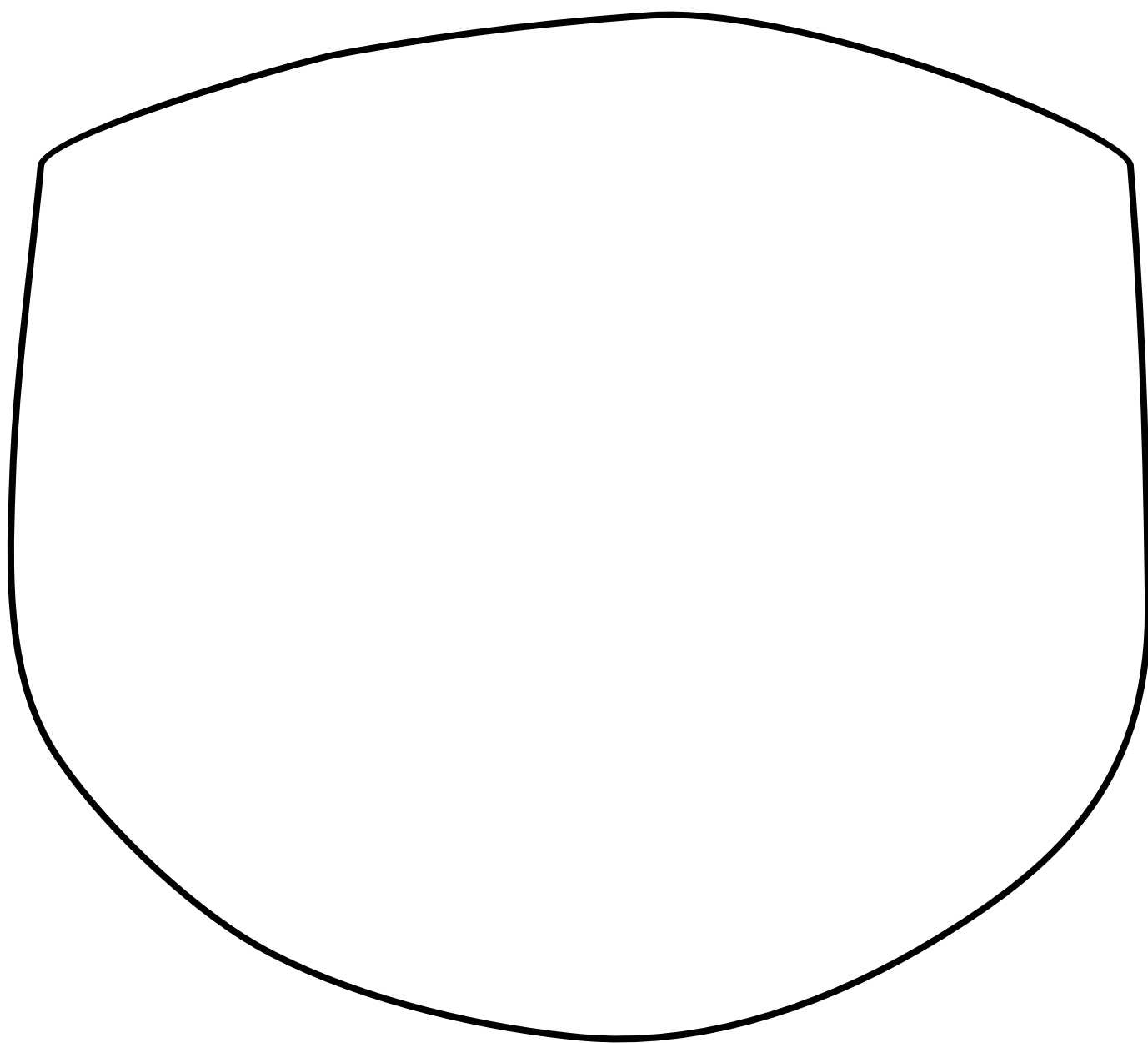
teeth
cut out



eyes
cut out



print on white paper

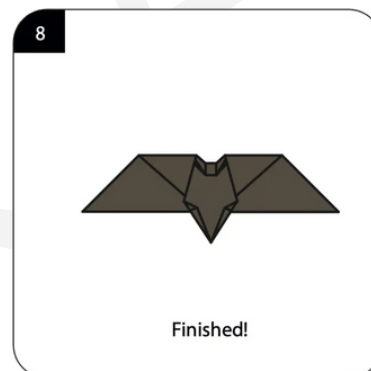
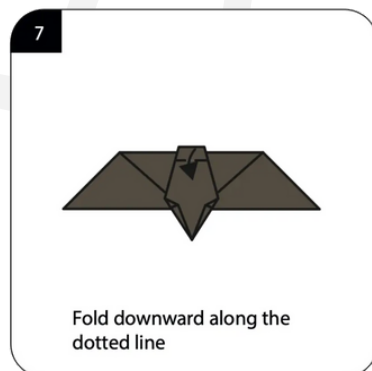
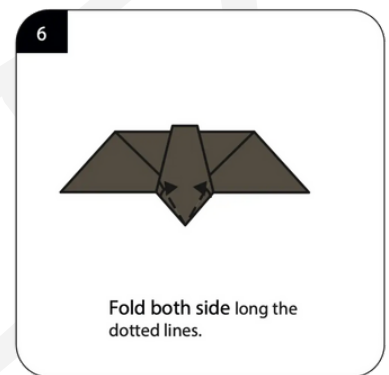
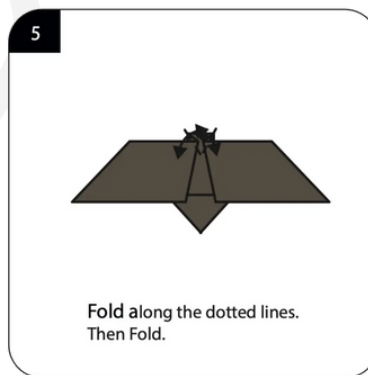
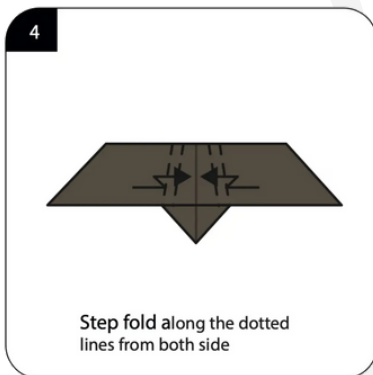
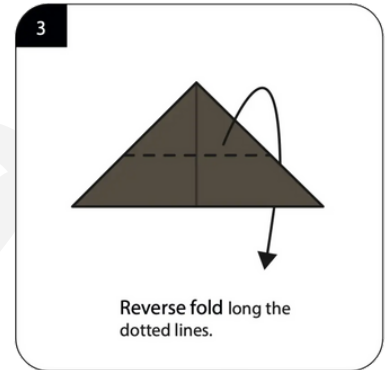
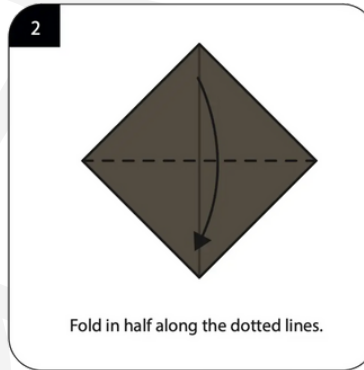
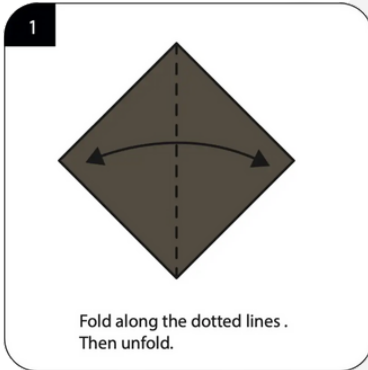


head template
print on white paper

ACTIVITY #2:

BAT ORIGAMI

This activity is best suited middle school through high school students!



ACTIVITY #3:

LANGUAGE PROMPTS

Use these prompts to inspire your students to practice their language skills!



Creative Writing Prompt:

Radio News Report:

Students can write a news report on Count Dracula's death, incorporating interviews, eyewitness accounts, and perspectives from different characters.

Research & Discussion:

Character Analysis:

Students can create character profiles, analyze the motivations and actions of characters like Dracula, Mina, and Van Helsing.

Interactive Activities:

Broadway Poster Project:

Students can design a posters for ***Dracula***, showcasing their understanding of the plot, characters, and mood.

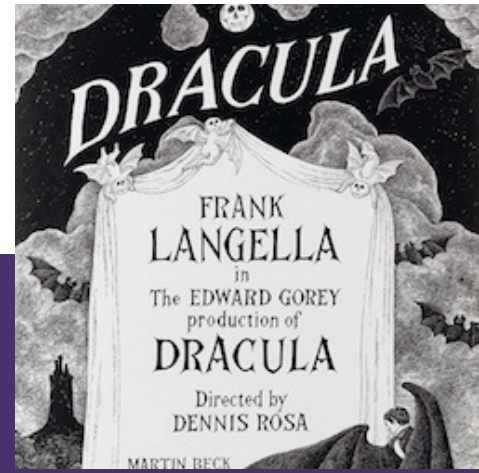
Themes to explore:

Good versus Evil:

Discuss the conflict between Dracula and the protagonists, and how it reflects broader themes of good and evil.

POP QUIZ:

TEST YOUR MEMORY



See how much you remember from the performance of DRACULA with this brief quiz on the play, the plot, and characters.

1. What are some things that can hurt Dracula?
 - a. Sunlight
 - b. Garlic
 - c. Holy objects
 - d. All of the above
2. What does Dracula eat?
 - a. Human food
 - b. Human flesh
 - c. Blood
 - d. Insects
3. Can Dracula fly?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. Where does Dracula live?
 - a. United States
 - b. Transylvania (Romaina)
 - c. Germany
 - d. Egypt
5. What does Mina assume has caused the two small wounds in Lucy's neck?
 - a. An insect bite
 - b. Human teeth
 - c. A shawl pin
 - d. A vampie bat
6. Dracula is...
 - a. A good guy
 - b. A bad guy
7. Does Dracula have any special powers?
 - a. He can hypnotize people
 - b. He can kill with his breath
 - c. He can hypnotize people
 - d. He can time travel
 - e. He can shoot fire from his eyes
8. What kind of creature is Dracula?
 - a. A Werewolf
 - b. A Vampire
 - c. A Zombie
 - d. A Mummy
9. What happens to Dracula in the end?
 - a. He flies away
 - b. He wins a big battle
 - c. He is defeated
 - d. He takes a vacation to Hawaii
10. Where does Dracula sleep?
 - a. In a bed
 - b. Underground
 - c. In a tree
 - d. In a coffin

Answer Key

Q1: d) All of the above, Q2: c) Human blood Q3: a) Yes Q4: b) Transylvania Q5: c) A shawl pin Q6: b) A bad guy Q7: a) He can hypnotize people Q8: b) A vampire Q9: c) He is defeated Q10: d) In a coffin

Fort Wayne Youtheatre
ACADEMY
of Performing Arts

ACTING | DANCE | VOICE | TECH THEATRE | PRIVATE LESSONS

Fall Semester

September 6 - November 1, 2025

Spring Semester

January 31 - March 21, 2026

Summer Camps

June and July 2026

Learn More at www.FortWayneYoutheatre.org



SUGGESTED READING...

Elementary: *What Is the Story of Dracula* by Micael Burgan, *The Little Vampire* by Angela Sommer-Bodenburg (Series), *Dracula - Kid Classics* by Bram Stoker, edited by Margaret Novak.

Middle: *Dracula for Kids* by Luke Hayes, *The Sussex Vampire* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, adapted by Sweet Cherry Easy Classics, *How Not To Be A Vampire Slayer* by Katy Birchall.

Highschool: *Dracula* by Bram Stoker, *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, *Vampires: A Handbook of History & Lore of the Undead* by Agnes Hollyhock.



LANGUAGE ARTS

STANDARDS

Most Youtheatre productions are literature-based and on the recommended reading list of the Library of Congress.

Language Arts Standard: Perceive, identify, describe and analyze the distinguishing characteristics of form, structure and style of story.

- Retell story identifying plot, theme, characters, and setting.
- Recall story plot utilizing chronological order.

Language Arts Standard: Evaluate Theatre/Literary work based on critical perception and analysis.

- Share perception of theatre experience in the area of voice, movement, mood and motivation.
- Make suggestions for alternative endings.
- Analyze and critique story and performance through creative writing.
- Create a similar story through creative writing.

Language Arts Standard: Use Theatre /Literary work to develop affective areas of self-concept, problem solving and interpersonal skills.

- React to feelings of self and others within a production.
- Identify conflict within story as it relates to self and others.
- Compare and contrast problems and resolutions found in different stories and real life situations.
- Express personal attitudes, values, and belief systems as it relates to theatre piece.
- Interact freely in conversations, class discussions and dramatic activities.
- Contribute to the solving of problems through dramatization/improvisation.

Language Arts Standard: Examine Theatre /Literary work in a historical and multicultural context.

- Identify similarities and differences between characters from diverse cultures depicted.
- Identify historical differences/figures in different time frames depicted in story.
- Identify significance of historical aspects in story.

Exploring Aesthetics: A Philosophical Basis for Life!

- Attending live theatre helps children value its importance to the community and helps develop a lifelong commitment and love of Theatre and Literature. Students experience aesthetic growth through appreciation of Theatre.
- Students discover through experience that making art is an essential human activity. It requires collaboration, and enhances creative thinking.