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King Center
for the performing arts
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STUDY GUIDE

Let Your Imagination Take You Places!

**Celebrating 20 Years
of LIVE Theatre for Youth**



SWAZZLE'S DREAM CARVER
Tues., Jan. 27, 2015, 10:30 am

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Season 2014-2015

Dear Friends and Patrons of the Arts,

Thank you for your interest in the King Center Theatre For Youth and Outreach Program. The mission of the program is to inspire, nurture and sustain a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts among our youth theatre patrons. This is accomplished by the diverse array of entertaining and educational arts offerings.

Accompanied by study resource materials made possible by each artist and their management teams to augment the theatre experience, we hope you find the materials useful.

A live theatrical experience can leave a memorable impact even after the show is over....so, *Let Your Imagination Take You Places!*

We are looking forward to your attendance at the show.

Yours in the arts,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen".

Karen Wilson
Director
Theatre For Youth and Outreach Program



A Study Guide for Classroom Teachers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter to Teachers • 2

Creating Dream Carver • 3

About Dream Carver • 4

Historical and Cultural Significance • 5

Spanish Vocabulary Words • 6

About Puppets • 7

Classroom Activities • 8 - 11

Activity One: Classroom Discussion

Activity Two: Coloring

Activity Three: Writing/Vocabulary

Activity Four: Creative Expression



A message from Sean and Patrick Johnson Co-Owners of Swazzle Inc.

Dear Teachers,

We understand that today's educational landscape can be challenging. We also know that finding time in the ever more rigorous school schedule for the arts is growing more difficult. Keeping that in mind, we would like to extend our heartfelt thanks for taking your class to see Swazzle's production of Dream Carver. This show has been a labor of love for us and our company, and we look forward to sharing it with you and your students.

We got involved in puppetry at the age of 13 and our love of that unique art form has led us to a fulfilling career in the arts. As artists ourselves, we believe that exposure to the arts is essential for children to thrive, learn and develop into creative and engaged adults. We are grateful for teachers like you that take the initiative and enable children to see our productions who may not otherwise have this unique opportunity.

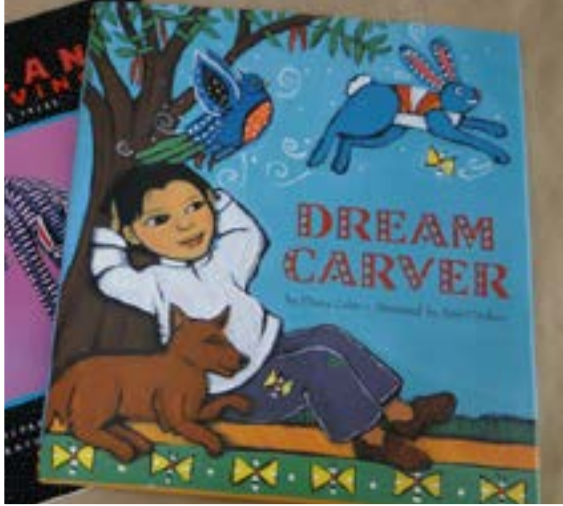
This study guide is being provided to help you expand on your classroom's theater experience. We hope you will use this guide to highlight many of the educational messages of the show and make your Dream Carver experience deeper and more educationally enriching. The activities we've provided here are suggestions, and we hope that you use them as is, or modify and adapt them to fit your educational needs.

Most importantly we hope you and your students have fun and enjoy Dream Carver.

Sincerely,
Sean and Patrick Johnson
Swazzle Inc.
www.swazzle.com



Creating Dream Carver



Dream Carver by Amy Cohn, illustrations by Amy Cordova

Dream Carver began when Sean and Patrick Johnson were searching for a new puppet show to present at libraries in Southern California. Their search brought them to the Glendale Public Library where they discovered the book Dream Carver. They were both struck by the engaging story, bilingual text and colorful illustrations.

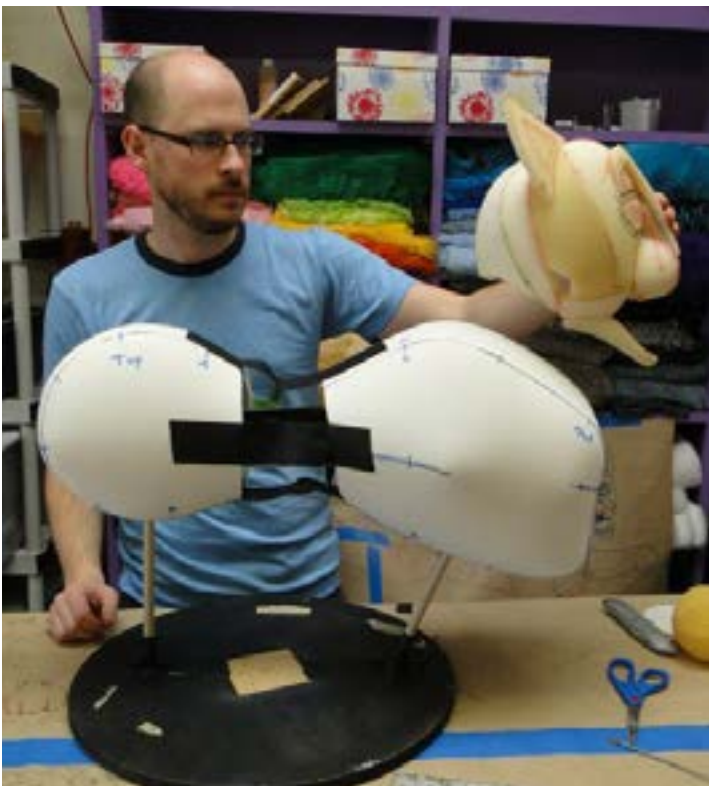
After securing the rights from the publisher Sean and Patrick set to work creating the show with the full support of the author Diana Cohn and illustrator, Amy Córdova.

At Swazzle, Sean and Patrick's puppet company located in Glendale, CA they gathered together a creative team of writers, composers, actors and of course puppeteers and puppet builders to create this ambitious production.

Dream Carver started it's life as a small one person show that was performed at local libraries. It then evolved into a two person show that was presented at elementary schools all around Southern California. Finally, with the help and support of the Segerstrom Center for the Performing Arts in Costa Mesa, and the Pasadena Playhouse in Pasadena it was transformed into the fully realized theatrical production that you are about to see.

The show took months to create from script to final stitch. Each puppet took weeks to design and build. The colorful jaguars that Mateo sees in his dreams each have over 200 hand stitched spots.

The main message of the show is to follow your hearts and make your dreams come true. That is what we've done with Dream Carver.



Patrick Johnson assembles the foam structure of the Jaguar.



Sean Johnson pulls the fur over the Jaguar puppet.

About Dream Carver



Mateo dreams of creating a new kind of carving

Dream Carver is a 55-minute bilingual musical based on the children's book of the same name written by Diana Cohn and illustrated by Amy Córdova. It is the story of Mateo, a young boy in Oaxaca, Mexico whose father has taught him to carve small wooden toys in the traditional way. One night, Mateo dreams of fantastic, brightly colored animals that dance and sing, led by a charismatic Quetzal. When he awakes, he is impelled to carve his dream animals into life.

Dream Carver features a variety of colorful hand-crafted puppets, including large-scale, full-body hand puppets, rod puppets and black-light puppets. The set is a multilevel environment that evokes a pastoral Mexican landscape and captures the essence of the book's illustrations.

The show features a cast of puppeteers whose credits include Avenue Q, The Pee-wee Herman Show and The Muppets. The message of the show is delivered in five original songs that encourage young audiences to think creatively, try new things, and follow their dreams.



Mateo's Dream Animals encourage him to follow his dreams.

Historical and Cultural Significance

Both the book of Dream Carver and the show are fictional accounts of a real man, Manuel Jimenez who pioneered and popularized the traditional art of Oaxacan Wood Carving.

Like the Mateo character in our show, real life Manuel grew up in Oaxaca Mexico, one of the country's poorest states. He spent his days herding goats and working on his family's farm.

Like other villagers he spent his free time carving little toy animals. These were not the bold colorful wooden figures that Oaxaca is now famous for, but rather small modest sculptures.

Things began to change for Manuel when he began carving out of Copalillo, which is not the wood the carvers usually used. He moved past beyond the tradition of carving miniature toys and begin making sculptures that were large bold and colorful. Now, thanks to his vision and creativity Oaxacan wood carving is a popular folk art that is know all over the world.



Spanish Vocabulary Words

This is a list of Spanish vocabulary words that are used frequently in Dream Carver. Familiarize yourself with these words and listen for them during the show.

Jugetes - Little wooden toy animals.

Tradición - Tradition.

Imaginación - Imagination.

Tallando - Carve.

Amigo - Friend.

Pintura - Paint.

Madera - Wood.

Animal' - Animal.

Quetzal - A colorful bird that lives in the forests and woodlands.

Colores - Colors.

Dia de los Muertos - Day of the Dead, a Mexican holiday observed throughout Mexico and around the world. The holiday focuses on gatherings of family and friends to remember loved ones have died.

Machete - A large cleaver like knife.



About Puppets

The story of Dream Carver is told with large puppets. Puppetry is one of the oldest ways to tell a stories. It's an art form that dates back to as late as the fifth century.

There are many different types of puppets: shadow puppets, marionettes or string puppets and rod puppets - to name a few. In Dream Carver we use hand puppets. They are called hand puppets, because the puppeteer puts their hands inside to make the puppet move.

Puppets can be made from a variety of materials, hard and soft. Our puppets are made from soft materials, a technique that was originally pioneered by Muppet creator Jim Henson. Soft materials include foam, fleece, fur and fabric.



Soft foam



Hard foam (L200)



Fake fur



Fleece

Classroom Activity

Classroom Discussion

Before seeing the show, read *Dream Carver* by Diana Cohn illustrated by Amy Córdova and use the following questions to help your students discuss the story.

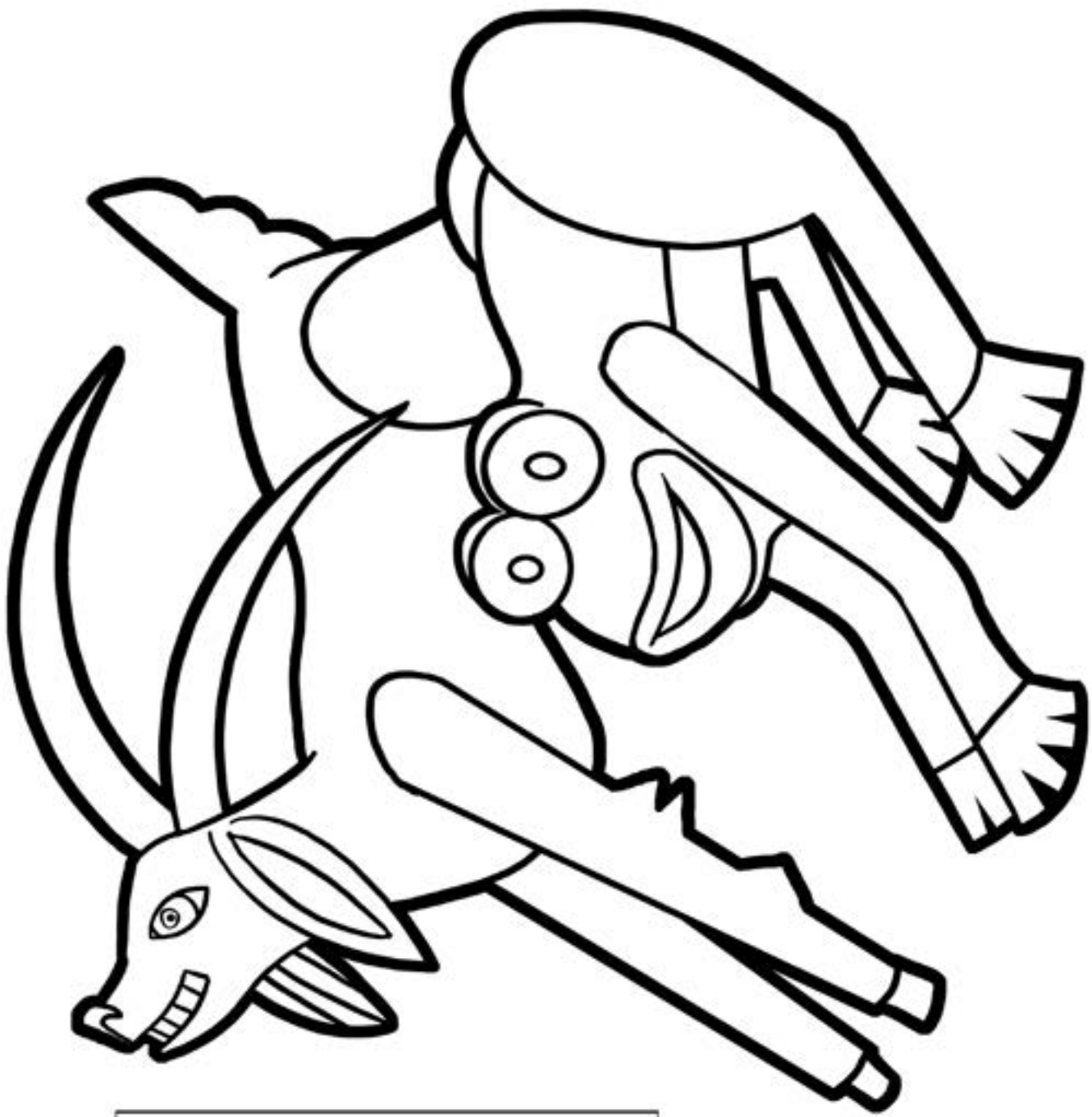
1. Mateo, the main character of the story comes from a family that has a tradition of wood carving, does your family have any traditions?
2. Mateo dreams of creating colorful carvings, have you ever had a dream of creating something new?
3. It wasn't easy for Mateo to carve his first dream animals, it took a few tries and practice. What skills do you have that you've had to practice to get good at?
4. Mateo day dreams and sees a world full of color. Take a look at the world around you, what do you see? Can you imagine what it could look like if it more vibrant and colorful? Describe it.
5. Before the Day of the Dead Festival Mateo was very anxious and he could barely sleep. Have you ever been so excited about an upcoming event that you found it hard to sleep?
6. In the end, Mateo's father learned from Mateo, have you ever done something that your parents or another adult learned from?
7. Mateo gives his first and most special carving to his father, have you ever made something special for one of your loved ones?



DREAM CARVER

In the story *Dream Carver*, Mateo is inspired by the colors and patterns he sees in the world around him as he paints the dream animals he has carved.

Look out the window. What colors do you see on the cars and the clothes of people passing by? What shapes and patterns do you see in the clouds, the grass, and the trees? Let the colors and patterns you see inspire you as you color in these animals with markers, paint, crayons or pencils.



DREAM CARVER

In the story *Dream Carver*, Mateo sings about the beautiful colors he sees around him. Use some of these Spanish words for colors to write a song or a poem to describe the world around you.

Red = **Rojo**

Orange = **Naranja**

Yellow = **Amarillo**

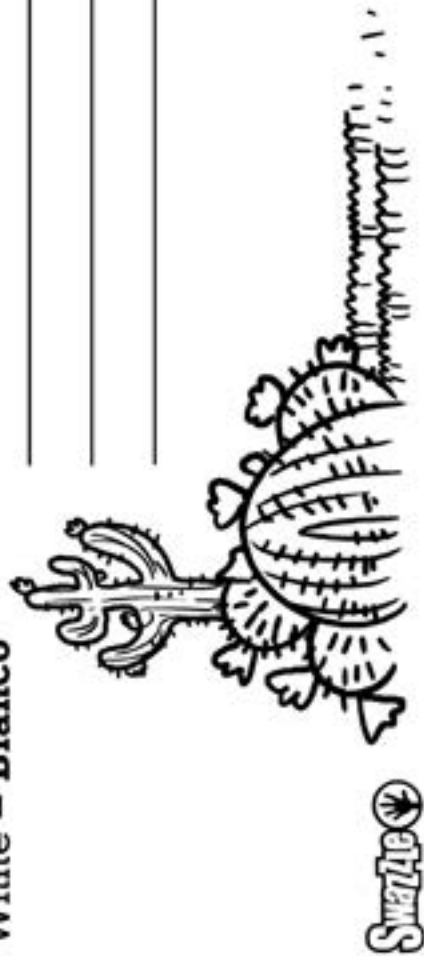
Green = **Verde**

Blue = **Azul**

Purple = **Morado**

Black = **Negro**

White = **Blanco**



DREAM CARVER

In the story *Dream Carver*, Matco's fantastic wooden animals are inspired by images he sees in his dreams.

Keep this page and pens, pencils, or crayons by your bed. When you wake up in the morning, try to draw the things you saw in your dreams. Maybe you'll be inspired to create something totally new too!

