



Second Stage study guide

December, 2009

AMAH! AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

Words and Music by Gian-Carlo Menotti

The Cast

Chandler Bridgman	Amahl
Megan Mount	His Mother
Chad Williams	King Kaspar
Leslie "Buz" Tennent	King Melchior
Gerald Altwies	King Bathazar
Jordan Savusa	The Page

The Artistic Staff

Director	Eric Johnson
Assistant Director	Amy Healey
Set & Props Designer	Joseph Dodd
Costume Designer	Sandra Payne
Light Designer	H. Bart McGeehon
Musical Director	Bebe Frietas
Stage Manager	Philip Richard II
Study Guide by	Daniel A. Kelin, II

WE WELCOME YOU TO HONOLULU THEATRE FOR YOUTH!

Introduction

TEACHER PREVIEW

HTY invites you & a guest FREE to *Amahl and the Night Visitors* on Sat., Dec. 5, 4:30 pm at Tenney Theatre. Please call ahead for reservations.

USING THIS GUIDE

BEFORE SEEING THE SHOW

Read aloud [Introduction and Synopsis](#)
Discuss [Theatre: Many Arts in One](#)
Guide Students to [Draw the Setting for Amahl](#)

SEE AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

AFTER SEEING THE SHOW

Create [A Sound Story](#) with the [FOR STUDENTS page: Sound and Story](#)
Try the writing project [What Happens after 'The End?'](#)
Talk about the [Questions to Discuss after the Play](#)
Write letters to the HTY actors, designers and director.
Explore the [Resources/Websites](#).

STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

The activities in this guide can help address certain HDOE Content Standards. Here's a list we feel apply to this play.

- **Fine Arts**
 - How the Arts Communicate
 - How the Arts Shape and Reflect Culture
- **Social Studies**
 - Historical Understanding
 - Cultural Anthropology
- **Language Arts**
 - Reading Comprehension
 - Reading: Literary Response
 - Writing
 - Oral Communication
- **Physical Education**
 - Movement forms & Cognitive concepts

CONTACT US! TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

Feedback Forms: Please return the evaluation form after seeing the performance. We often contact teachers for further information, so do include your name, school, address and email address.

HTY Online: Visit our website for last minute changes or special offers, www.htyweb.org.

Honolulu Theatre for Youth
1149 Bethel St., Suite 700
Honolulu, HI 96813
808 839 9885, 808 839 7018 (fax)

Louise King Lanzilotti, *Managing Director*
Daniel A. Kelin, II, *Director of Drama Education*
Eric Johnson, *Artistic Director*
Katie McClellen, *School Reservations Manager*

The year-round work of HTY is supported in part by a grant from the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts with funds from the Hawaii State Legislature. This support, with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and gifts from private foundations, the corporate community and individuals, enables HTY to offer plays to schools at nominal cost.

For Teachers

INTRODUCTION & SYNOPSIS

Synopsis: See the FOR STUDENT page, **Draw the Setting for Amahl** for a story synopsis.

From Eric Johnson, Artistic Director: Since first collaborating with Hawaii Opera Theatre several years ago, we have been looking for the right project to bring a family based opera to the HTY stage. Amahl is the perfect choice! One of the most popular English language operas it is a great Holiday story about a poor child's encounter with three Kings following a star. Although based on a biblical story Amahl and the Night Visitors is sure to appeal to everyone with its focus on the young boy's story and the universal message of charity and giving. As part of the performance we will teach each audience a small piece of an Aria (song) so that they can sing along with the professional cast and directly participate in the story!

THEATRE: MANY ARTS IN ONE

Theatre is a mix of many art forms, from music to dance to the visual arts. In this 09-10 Season, HTY celebrates both the art of theatre and the many arts in theatre. We encourage you to explore art forms incorporated in STRIPES & STARS as a part of your field trip to the theatre. Begin with this activity that encourages students to talk about theatre and art.

Back to Back: Cooperative discussion

Students stand back to back with a partner. When a question is asked, students turn to face each other and discuss their answers. Partners then share answers with the whole class. For each new questions, students find new partners. For very young students, you will want to start with defining different kinds of art.

What are your favorite stories?

Why do you like those stories?

What kinds of stories do you like to make up?

What makes a story so much fun to listen to?

What makes seeing plays in the theater feel magical?

When you listen to music, how does your body respond?

What makes you want to draw a picture?

RESOURCES/WEBSITES

Amahl on Online Video

video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-2708548570131617639#

www.youtube.com/watch?v=_03iA_QvfWw

Book Versions of Amahl

Amahl and the night visitors illustrated by Michele Lemieux

Amahl and the night visitors illustrated by Roger Duvoisin

Books on Physical Disabilities

Bergman, T. *On our own terms: Children living with physical disabilities.*

Krementz, Jill. *How it feels to live with a physical disability.*

Wells, Rosemary, & Craik, Dinah M. *Little lame prince.*

Scott, Sharon. *Not better...not worse.. just different.*

For Teachers

DRAW THE SETTING FOR AMAHL

To help your students visualize what the play might look like; guide them to create a **set design** for the play. Copy and distribute the FOR STUDENTS page: **Draw the Setting for Amahl**. Together, read aloud the Amahl and the Night Visitors synopsis and talk through the instructions on that page.

After the students have finished their drawings, consider doing the following: 1) Having students share with each other to describe what they 'designed,' 2) hang the pictures up before seeing the HTY show to then compare them to the HTY set design or 3) bring the drawings to the theatre so the students can compare their design to the HTY set design.

A SOUND STORY

Copy and distribute the FOR STUDENTS page: **Sound and Story**. Together, talk through the instructions on that page to help the students brainstorm possibilities for creating sound for a story.

Divide the class into groups. Assign each group one character or mood. Instruct each group to experiment with different ways to make sounds to accompany the character or mood of the story. Guide one group at a time to play, helping them experiment with various tempos and dynamic levels. Work with them to find levels that best represent each character.

Explain that as the story is told, each student must listen for his or her character's name to be mentioned. When they hear their character's name, then they play along as you read. Read the story.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER 'THE END?': A WRITING PROJECT

After seeing the HTY production of Amahl, guide your students to consider what happens to the characters after the play is finished. Copy and distribute the FOR STUDENTS page: **What Happens after 'The End?'** Together, talk through the instructions on that page to help the students brainstorm possibilities for their writing.

After the students have written their 'After the End' stories, consider doing the following: 1) Having small groups of students share them with each other, 2) Seek volunteers to read their story aloud and then compare how the stories are similar and different or 3) Copy and send the stories to the HTY actors.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS AFTER THE PLAY

As a class talk about the questions on the *FOR DISCUSSION* page. Consider dividing the class into small groups to tackle the various questions, as opposed to having everyone talk about them at the same time. Assign each group a different question, so they become the momentary 'experts' that can share the ideas they discussed in their group.

For older students, experiment with a 'Jigsaw' discussion. After the groups discuss their question, create new groups that are made up of one person from each of the first groups. Each person in the new group then takes a turn sharing what their first group discussed.

For Students

DRAW THE SETTING FOR AMAHL

Every play has a set design. When it is built and painted, it shows the setting of the play or story and is the place where the actors perform. Sometimes the design is simple, like a painting that is in the background. Sometimes the set design is very real, with doors, windows, buildings, and other parts of real life.

Here is your chance to draw a set design. Follow the steps below.

- Read the story of Amahl and the Night Visitors.
- Where does the story happen? What time of the day is it? What needs to be on the stage to make the audience believe it is a real place?

Write your answers here _____

- On a separate piece of paper (or the back of this one), draw what you imagine should be the setting for this play. Be sure to use a pencil first, so you can change your ideas if you want.
- When you are happy with your drawing, color it the way you imagine it.
- You have created your own set design for Amahl.
- Think about what you drew when you see the HTY performance of Amahl and the night Visitors. How is your set design similar or different from the HTY set design?

THE STORY OF AMAHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS

It is almost bedtime. The winter night is dotted with stars. A Bright Star with a flaming tail fills the sky and floods the earth with a warm glow. Amahl, a poor crippled boy, sits outside his small, wooden hut playing his pipe. His mother, a strict but loving woman, is cleaning up after their small meal. She tucks Amahl into bed, but they are awakened by richly dressed strangers. The Three Kings and their servant are following the Bright Star to find the child born under the star. The visitors are welcomed and entertained by neighboring shepherds. The Kings have brought wonderful gifts – gold, incense and myrrh – to give the mysterious child. When the Kings fall asleep, Amahl's mother, worried that she and Amahl will starve, tries to steal some of the gold. But she is caught by the servant. Knowing it is wrong to steal even a very little, she gives back the gold and tells the Kings she wishes she could send a gift of her own to such a great Child. Amahl, also wishing to help, offers his crutch -- his most precious possession -- as a gift to the Child. The boy takes a step toward the Kings, and suddenly realizes he has moved without the help of the crutch. Miraculously cured of being crippled, Amahl follows the Kings to Bethlehem to thank the Child himself.

For Students

SOUND AND STORY

Amahl and the Night Visitors is an opera; that means there is a lot of music in the performance, from the orchestra who plays the instruments to the actors who sing what the characters say. With simple objects or instruments, you can create your own kind of 'music' for a story.

Think and talk about the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears to prepare for creating sound/music for the story.

1) Describe each character of the story

Papa Bear: A huge, slow-moving animal with a gruff personality

Mama Bear: _____

Baby Bear: _____

Goldilocks: _____

2) Describe the feelings or moods of the story

When the bears eat their porridge: _____

When Goldilocks breaks the chair: _____

When the bears discover someone has been in their house: _____

When Goldilocks and the bears see each other: _____

3) When the teacher puts you into a group, your job is to think of ways to make sounds that show what the characters are like. What might sound like a big Papa Bear walking through the woods? Maybe you might slap your hands on a desk or hit two books together. Experiment with many ideas with your group. Think about these questions: How fast or slow does your sound need to be? How loud or soft? Should you make the sound once, or repeat it? Should the sound last a long time or be very short?

4) After you practice, the teacher will read the story. Listen for your part of the story. Work closely with your group. Play the sounds only as your part of the story is read. When you are not playing, listen close to what the other student groups do. After the story is finished, share what you liked about the other groups or students. How could you change what you did to make it even more interesting to play or listen to?

For Students

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER 'THE END?'

What happens to the characters of Amahl and the Night Visitors after the play is finished?

At the end of the opera, Amahl leaves with the Three Kings. The Kings promise Amahl's mother that they will bring him back. Amahl's mother will now be living alone.

Questions to Think About

How long will Amahl be gone? How long will his mother live alone?

What will Amahl see or experience on his journey? What will happen when he meets the Child?

What will happen to Amahl and his mother after he returns? How will their life be different?

BRAINSTORM CHART

Which characters will you write about?

Where will the characters be? What will they be doing?

What problems might the characters face?

What question do you want to write about?

Use the other side of the paper to draw a picture to go with your ending.

For Discussion

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS AFTER THE PLAY

Teachers: Consider having students discuss the questions in pairs or small groups before sharing ideas with the whole class

- What is your favorite part of this story? Why is that your favorite?
- Why does Amahl's mother have trouble believing Amahl when he tells his stories?
- Read aloud the words of this song sung by Amahl. What does this tell you about him? What is he trying to do for his mother?

“Don't cry mother dear; don't worry for me.
If we must go begging, a good beggar I'll be.
I know sweet tunes to set people dancing.
We'll walk and walk from village to town - you dressed as a gypsy and I as a clown.
We'll walk and walk from village to town.
At noon, we shall eat roast goose and sweet almonds.
At night we shall sleep with the sheep and the stars.
I'll play my pipes, you'll sing and you'll shout.
The windows will open and people lean out.
The king will ride by and hear your loud voice and throw us some gold to stop all the noise.
At noon we shall eat roast goose and sweet almonds;
at night we shall sleep with the sheep and the stars.”

- Each of the characters faces different problems or challenges in the story. What problems does each of the characters face?
- What do you think was the major problem of the story? Whose problem was it? How did the problem get resolved?
- Which character do you think was the hero of the story? Why? What did he or she do that makes that person a hero?
- Which character of the story do you believe lives the best life? Why? What makes his or her life a good one?
- Which characters' life is changed by his or her actions? What actions did that character do that changed his or her life? Were those actions worthy of the reward the character received? Why or why not?
- Why do the Kings spend the night at Amahl's house? Are there other places they might stay?
- Why do the shepherds offer food to the visiting Kings?
- If you were one of the Kings, how might you have acted when you visited Amahl's house?
- Why did Mother steal the gold? Why did she think it was okay to steal?

HONOLULU THEATRE FOR YOUTH

**PRODUCTION EVALUATION FOR
Classes attending performances of
-AM AHL AND THE NIGHT VISITORS-**

We grow and come to understand your needs better through honest reactions and criticism from you and your students. Please share your thoughts.

TEACHER EVALUATION

Overall reaction to the production:

What was the time and date of the performance you attended?

Were there any delays in starting the show? How long?

STUDENTS overall reaction to production:

(We love getting letters and pictures from students.)

Was the show appropriate for your students' age level? Why or why not?

What specific topics or themes would you like addressed in future plays?

Which elements of this *Second Stage study guide* were helpful to you?

What areas would you like to see further developed in our *Second Stage study guides*?

How is the information contained in the Special Section on Health useful?

How else might the Special Section on Health information encourage students to be more active?

Any concerns or other comments?

Please return to:

School Performance Evaluation
Honolulu Theatre for Youth
1149 Bethel St., Suite 700
Honolulu, HI 96813
Or fax: 839-7018

School/Organization

Address

City

Zip code

Teacher

Grade Level

Teacher e-mail address

Your e-mail helps us inform you about last minute changes or special events.