

Study Guide For Teachers

Alden Phelps

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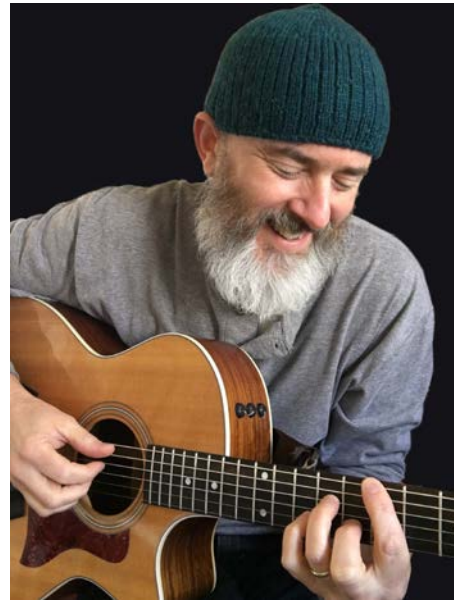
Word Play

presented by

Young Audiences

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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Alden's far-fetched, funny songs and impressive guitar playing delights every audience. Students sing along with original songs such as "My Mommy's a Pirate" and "Chocolate Pie." Word games woven into this musical performance bolster language skills and inspire love of language. Onstage audience volunteers will try to stump Alden with outlandish pairs of rhyming words, which he must improvise into his song. Get ready to awaken your musical senses and laugh with *Word Play*!

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Listen to music and stories springing from the folk tradition
- Learn the building blocks of creating a strong story and how a tune and melody can enhance storytelling
- Participate through music and movement.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Folk music is music originating among the common people of a nation or region and spread about or passed down orally, often with considerable variation.

Folk music has a communal heritage; it comprises songs that everyone can enjoy singing. In all cultures, it is music created and performed by many people; some are classically trained musicians, but many are not. Therefore, it is a special experience to have a folk artist in your school. Students may immediately participate in the art, and the artist not only enjoys performing for an audience, but better yet, WITH the audience!

Folk music is not limited to old songs, it can include popular songs that can be easily sung by many people. For instance, *Do Re Mi* from *The Sound of Music*.

Folk songs reflect the emotions of the person performing and are meant to inspire similar emotions in the listener.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

- Create a flip-chart that defines and gives examples of various types of figurative language (ie. simile, metaphor, onomatopoeia, alliteration, hyperbole, personification, etc.).
- Create a silly rhyming song using the names of the students in the classroom
- Rhyme Challenge: Using a rhyming dictionary, have students find pairs of rhyming words and then challenge others to improvise a song or poem on the spot using those words.
- Read a variety of mentor texts during shared reading that incorporate various types of figurative language. Possible text titles: "Quick as a Cricket" – Audrey Wood, "More Parts" – Tedd Arnold, and "Raining Cats and Dogs" – Will Moses.

VOCABULARY WORDS

- **Alliteration:** use of the same initial sound in a series of words.
- **Couplet:** two lines of verse, usually in the same meter and joined by rhyme, that form a unit.
- **Improvise:** create and perform (music, drama, or verse) spontaneously or without preparation.
- **Onomatopoeia:** the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named (i.e., cuckoo, sizzle).
- **Parts of Speech:** a category to which a word is assigned in accordance with its syntactic functions. In English the main parts of speech are noun, pronoun, adjective, determiner, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction, and interjection.
- **Rhyme:** correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, especially when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry.
- **Rhyming Dictionary:** a book that lists words and all equivalent words with corresponding sounds between the endings of those words.
- **Thesaurus:** a book that lists words in groups of synonyms and related concepts.

ARTIST INFORMATION

Alden Phelps is an artist and musician with over 20 years experience as a performer. He has performed at The National Theater, First Night Annapolis, Fells Point Festival, Columbia Festival of the Arts, Howard County Center for the Arts, Reisterstown Festival, Syracuse University, Eastern Connecticut State University, Gordon Center, Gaithersburg Book Festival, Harborplace Summer Children's Theatre Programs, libraries, and many multi-day workshops in elementary, middle, and high schools in the DelMarVa area.

A graduate of the Maryland Institute College of Art, Alden co-founded Open Space Arts center in 1989, where, for the next 14 years, he wrote and performed stageplays, musicals, and puppet productions. His latest CD of children's music is called *Totally Attached to His Head*.

RESOURCES

- Ogden Nash: Clever, funny poetry with word play and puns. Free online poetry database at www.westegg.com/nash
- Dan Zanes: his albums like *Parades and Panoramas* have lots of charming old songs performed with an eclectic band and a home-grown sound. See www.danzanes.com
- They Might Be Giants: unique songs with creative instrumentation and non-sequitor lyrics. See www.tmbg.com