

## DCM Exhibitions – Staff Training Materials

### Fantasy Festival (PART A)

#### Exhibition Overview:

Imagination reigns in *Fantasy Festival!* This exhibition combines a ship, castle and stage to inspire new heights of creative play, dramatic exploration and collaboration. In Discovery Castle, visitors enter the Medieval era and become queens, jesters, princes, kings, princesses or other members of the royal community. Guests in the castle’s throne room can create a customized throne while enjoying a puppet show. On the upper level, they’ll invent new castle models, don knight costumes and dump “boiling oil” on attackers. On the stage, visitors can develop their own productions and choose from a variety of backdrops and props, as well as costumes and lighting. On board the ship, visitors will load cargo, use a map and compass to set a new course, raise a flag, and fire the cannons. For the smallest visitors, quiet nooks with books and activities await.

#### Target Audiences:

Children ages 4-12 + adults (families), school groups (Pre-K – 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

#### Education & Experience Goals:

- Visitors experience three immersive environments that inspire imagination, creativity and dramatic play.
- Visitors engage in dramatic play/role-playing as a natural opportunity for expression and experimentation.
- Visitors understand the castle, stage and ship as “communities.” Everyone has a role to play as part of a “team.”
- Visitors create stories as part of their play.
- Visitors discover that certain activities can be divided into a set of sequential tasks. A coordinated group of people may be needed to complete the activity.
- Visitors encounter new topics (content) or information that prompts critical thinking.
- Visitors solve problems and make decisions individually or as part of a group.
- Staff supports visitors’ discoveries of new interests and/or natural aptitudes. Some visitors may discover they are natural actors, some may discover they enjoy reading maps and some may discover they’d like to learn more about Medieval history.

#### Key Takeaway Messages:

- **Storytelling is a creative process based on imagination.** Inspiration can come from many different sources. You can create spontaneous stories through dramatic play, props or puppets.
- **Stories can be simple or complex, brief or lengthy.** You can create complicated plots that involve several people or simple, short events in which you are the only character.

## **Appendix A**

### **Background Information:**

#### ***Medieval Period & Castles***

The Medieval period, also called the Middle Ages, is the era between about the fifth and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries in Western European history. “Middle” refers to its position between the collapse of Roman civilization and the start of the Renaissance period. Renaissance scholars – who viewed their own time as one of great cultural achievement – coined the term “Middle Ages.” They viewed the 1,000 years before their time as filled with decline and ignorance. However, most contemporary historians do not accept that characterization of the Medieval period. Today it is widely recognized that important developments occurred during Medieval times, including the introduction of new forms of political, social and economic organizations, as well as the world’s first universities and impressive Gothic cathedrals.

Communal life in the Medieval period was organized according to a “feudal” system, in which kings awarded land grants to important nobles in exchange for soldiers for the king’s military. The lord or master often lived in a castle with a “court” of other noble men and women. The castle was surrounded by a church, village and farm land. Peasants, or “serfs,” served their master by working in his castle and on the land, and received his protection in return.

The castle was a particularly European form of fortification that emerged first in the 10th century. In Medieval Europe, the castle was the most common type of stronghold and often the residence of the king or territorial lord. It played an important role in the military history of the Middle Ages. It was often employed by kings and nobles as a means to impose their authority on their territory. The castle remained the dominant fortification in western Europe until the 15th century, when the introduction of the cannon and gunpowder required the development of new forms of fortification.

Sources:

#### **Annenberg Learner**

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/middleages/>

#### **Compton’s by Britannica, Britannica Online for Kids**

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-9275833/Middle-Ages>

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-9273553/castle>

#### ***Ships of Sail & Navigation***

Ships and boats are the oldest types of transport, and are used today to move heavy cargo between countries, for travel, defense, fishing, and leisure. The first sailing boats – used by the ancient Egyptians around 4,000 BCE -- were made of reed and used to sail the Nile River. This was an important invention because the power of the wind could take the place of human power to move vessels through water. Actually, for many centuries, sailing ships used not just the wind, but also human rowers, for power. Beginning in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, three- and four-masted wooden sailing ships commonly were used in battle, exploration and trade. European sailors protected their growing sea trade with ship-mounted cannons, cast from bronze and iron. “Clipper ships,” fast sailing ships with slim hulls and tall masts, were introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In modern times, ships' captains navigate (or find their way from one place to another) using electronic means, such as GPS or radar. In earlier times, navigation methods relied on observation and record keeping. In "piloting," a ship is guided from one place to another based on observing landmarks and measurements of water depths. "Dead reckoning" requires the navigator to keep careful records (or a "reckoning") of the distance and direction travelled from the point of departure. Finally, "celestial navigation," which has been used for centuries, involves the use of the position of celestial bodies (sun, moon, planets and stars) to determine a ship's location. Another way to determine direction is to use a magnetic compass, which works at all times of the year, in all weathers, and in most places. The compass works because the Earth itself is a huge magnet. Its magnetic poles are oval areas about 1,300 miles (2,100 kilometers) from the geographic North and South poles. Irregular lines of force connect the magnetic poles, and the compass needle simply aligns itself with these lines of force.

A location on Earth may be specified using latitude and longitude coordinates. These are lines that make up a big imaginary grid over the entire world. Latitude lines run horizontally (east and west), and longitude lines run vertically (north and south).

Sources:

**Compton's by Britannica, Britannica Online for Kids**

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-285049/ship-and-shipping>

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-210101/weapon>

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-9276043/navigation>

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-9273759/magnetic-compass>

### ***Theatrical Performance***

A theatrical performance is dramatic or musical entertainment performed in front of a live audience. Las Vegas, the "Entertainment Capital of the World," has been known for its theatrical performances since the 1940s and '50s when stars such as singer Frank Sinatra first visited the Strip. Live entertainment, such as comedy, magic, and music, makes up a major part of Las Vegas' modern economy.

The actors, musicians or magicians who perform on stage are the most visible members of a theatrical performance, but a large team is required to put together a live show. Professionals working together "behind the scenes" include the director, scene designer, scene carpenter, property master, costume master, lighting artist, and marketing director. Strong teamwork is critical to the success of a theatrical performance.

The origins of today's theater can be traced to song and dance festivals in ancient Greece. In fact, the modern English word "thespian" (or actor) is derived from the name of a Greek actor/dramatist named Thespis, who lived around 560 BCE.

Sources:

**Las Vegas, Nevada: An Entertainment Economy Lights Up the Desert (U.S. Embassy)**

<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/pamphlet/2012/09/20120921136416.html?CP.rss=true#axzz2EVE17XuK>

**Compton's by Britannica, Britannica Online for Kids**

<http://kids.britannica.com/comptons/article-9277317/theater>

**Resources:**

***Medieval Period***

<http://www.learner.org/interactives/middleages/>

Middle Ages, Annenberg Learner – teacher professional development and classroom resources (Annenberg Foundation)

<http://www.historyforkids.net/middle-ages.html>

History for Kids

***Ships of Sail***

[http://www.nps.gov/history/maritime/ships/lists/lnk\\_3hs4.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/maritime/ships/lists/lnk_3hs4.htm)

Connect to Resources for Learning About Historic Ships and the Current Maritime World (National Park Service – Maritime Heritage Program)

<http://www.rmg.co.uk/schools/national-maritime-museum/resources/>

Classroom Resources at the National Maritime Museum (Royal Museums Greenwich)

<https://educators.mysticseaport.org/>

Mystic Seaport - Educator Resources

***Theatrical Performance***

<https://knowitall.org/document/history-theater-intro-kids-work>

Know it All

<http://broadwayeducators.com/discipline/theatre-history/>

Broadway Educators