

ALPHASHOWS – SUMMARY & TEACHER CHEAT SHEET



We understand your time is very valuable! A great deal of thought and passion has gone into making our shows for you! Because of this, the downloads available at www.alphashows.com.au/downloads/ for each show are pretty long and detailed! In case you don't have time to use it all, here is a cheat sheet, for everything essential to know about our shows! Note – these items are all things that have cropped up as queries or concerns in the past, so we only include here to make the day the best it can be (not to order you around!). **Remember, Alpha loves you!**

LOGISTICS:

- Shows work up to Year 10 or so. Invite others.
- Set up 90 mins, pack down about 60–90 mins
- Whole show w/ Question time: about 105 mins; show should start on time, bring them in ready to start on time. **If you start late, we will finish late.** So if you don't want to go into recess/lunch/after school, ensure students are seated by start time. All teachers can help to ensure students are seated by start time.
- Feel free to take pictures and video for instagram/twitter, remember to tag @AlphaShows – we make take a picture, your students won't be recognisable in any photo we post
- Heaters off otherwise it could get too hot for performers.
- Seat children without an aisle; sensitive children near teachers – not in middle or front
- Fog machine is safe to breathe for asthmatics!
- Children should not be around lights or set
- Show can't be outside – wind will cause danger

BEFORE SHOW:

- What to expect – you can use the “screaming & listening” and “sensory acuity” activities in pre-show pack to help them understand how to be the best audience for this type of show. Lots of audience involvement, screaming and a lot of fun and interactivity. There is a specific activity in Pre-Show pack to help
- You could perhaps learn Fly Away – the finale song to all our shows. Details in pre-show pack. Download song from website.

SHOW SPECIFICS:

- Show is loud, kids are loud – maximises engagement but is safe (we test the sound level). Prepare in advance, pre-frame them with regards to how you want them to behave as an audience – if they are loud we will turn our sound system up to save our voices! If you want them to be polite and less loud, that's up to you, not us! We're not going to lose rapport with the audience by telling them to shoosh.
- Generally, don't shoosh or discourage their participation – let them have fun; but any inappropriate or rude behaviour or clear disruptiveness from one child/group of children, should be dealt with. Either speak to them or seat at back.
- **NOBODY IS PERMITTED BACKSTAGE ONCE WE SETUP! Cast change clothes backstage.** This includes getting chairs or for anything else, so prepare before we arrive.
- **Teachers fully participate – please!** It makes the show SOOOO much better, for the kids and actors. You're the leaders! So please participate and yell out and have

energy too. Also, you will be made part of the show by the actors, as children love this – play full out and have fun!!

- Teachers please **stand** when audience is asked to stand. Do not come on stage.
- **PLEASE TRY NOT TO BRING WORK TO SHOW / laptops**, or be disengaged. It gives permission for children to disengage also. Tell others who need to work to sit at back or stay in classroom. Nothing worse than performing to people not paying attention, the show is for you too!
- Question time is awesome – continue to fully participate and encourage great questions from your students.

AFTER SHOW:

- DO use the emotional anchors we've set (1,2,3 You rock, squeeze fist / hand on heart etc) to reinforce message.
- Have some sort of discussion about show / values. Each show focussed on a particular virtue or truth, which if you follow up with can have a measurable impact on social and emotional learning. If you're a kidsmatter school (government initiative on social and emotional learning (SEL) then work with those programs to supplement the message in the show. Tell Kidsmatter how the Alpha show impacted their programs positively. Anything you can do to integrate and reinforce main message, or sub-themes, of the show. For activities, use our guides from downloads on website.
- Remember our shows are a package of 10 shows to ensure an annual visit to reinforce positive role models and life lessons. It really only has an impact if they get a show every year. Your students will most likely want to see more, so encourage further participation and excitement about our shows (and theatre in general), as well as getting excited about personal development goals and ideas.
- Look for further ways to integrate what we do with what you do as a teacher – contact us if you have any ideas or need any help from us.
- **Spread the word about Alpha Shows! If you like us, tell others – if a school you talk to books, you will be offered a FREE iPad Mini as our gift and thanks to you!**

Please see the following page for two very important checks for show content, that are important to review before show day!

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IMPORTANT: HUMOUR & TABOOS – Is the culture at your school extra conservative?

We want to make the show just right for you! We sometimes use poo jokes and the like to make the children feel at ease and have jokes they understand and find funny – align with them at their own level, essentially. This maximises engagement and rapport, and ensures we have their attention for later in the show when we present the main message in terms of values education. Please discuss with us before the show if we might offend with this content so we can adapt to your culture.

Occasionally actors must go off-script for adlibs as all audiences are unique, so by knowing beforehand if you're a conservative school, we can ensure adlibs are also kept within suitable boundaries. Pre-scripted humour includes very tame sexual innuendo (eg. "you're hot"), teacher inclusion (children love this), characters that exhibit extremes in personality for comedic reasons, teasing/highlighting the villainy of the bad guy (what every kid dreams they had the courage to do, so they find it funny), the villain exhibiting bullying type behavior and name calling of 'good' characters (eg. 'stupid' or 'idiot'), and some naughty kid level jokes similar to Andy Griffith's "Bad Book" (fart/vomit/burp, that kinda thing) that has been seen as a great way to get kids to read – we use similar strategies.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT YOU TELL US BEFORE THE SHOW as we will not appreciate negative feedback if you don't tell us about your culture! Also – no need to worry too much – everything in the standard / scripted version of the show is G-Rated, it's perfectly appropriate and fine for 99% of schools, and fits perfectly fine into standard Australian culture and this generation of children. For instance, we never swear in the shows or encourage negative stereotypes or anything like that. Everything in the show is done with specific thought and intention for a specific and beneficial outcome, so you can trust us. However – please just tell us if you are a conservative school and we will mark you as such on our database and alter the show accordingly every year.

IMPORTANT: CONFLICT

Conflict is part of life, and it's part of good storytelling! Whether it's an internal or external opponent, overcoming hardships in life, something Alpha teaches students how to deal with effectively, is going to involve CONFLICT. All clashing of truth & error, love & fear, will result in conflict. It's not the absence of conflict that is important, but how we handle it. So because of this, we portray different types of conflict on stage – theatre being a safe place to explore conflict and how we respond to it. We can't avoid it in life, so we shouldn't avoid it on stage. When it comes to external opponents (eg. the villain) the hero of the story will often face the choice to use violence or a weapon of some sort. We usually have some sort of sword fight, along with the lesson that must be learned. We also sometimes change the meaning of the weapon to be something empowering or important in our real life. Sometimes it's appropriate to the time period or the original fairytale/book/myth, so we want to honour the story appropriately and tell the story as it was written.

Depending on your culture, some audiences will be VERY entertained/engaged and perhaps even over-excited by these scenes in our show. This is ok – this is why these scenes are in the show, to create a memorable experience, the excitement of a 'real sword fight using real swords', just like any good form of entertainment. However, it's important to note that we do NOT encourage or endorse any sort of audience interaction that condones violence, including the common school yard chant of 'FIGHT FIGHT FIGHT' or any other sort of yelling or screaming encouraging the use of violence. We highly encourage you to discuss this tendency with your students BEFORE the show and, especially if you agree with us that encouraging violence is inappropriate, show them that these sorts of chants are not to be done during the show. We try as hard as we can to channel the desire to chant into something more positive (such as chanting the name of the hero) but we sometimes do not succeed.

If you find that your audience is getting too rowdy or chanting/encouraging or revelling in the violence, it's important to try to either deal with this before and/or after the show – or you may even need to intervene during the show. Alpha's show does NOT endorse violence, we merely present real-life type scenarios on stage (in a fantasy setting) and then try to show the correct/loving way of dealing with conflict. For instance, we usually have the hero 'back down' or choose not to fight, or learn a lesson through the conflict that is relevant to the story and the character development/message. **AS WITH TABOO HUMOUR, WE WILL NOT APPRECIATE NEGATIVE FEEDBACK THAT ALPHA 'ENCOURAGES FIGHTING/VIOLENCE' or that we ENCOURAGED CHANTING 'FIGHT FIGHT FIGHT'. WE DO NOT. IF YOU REQUIRE CERTAIN BEHAVIOURS FROM YOUR STUDENTS, PLEASE HELP THEM TO UNDERSTAND THOSE EXPECTATIONS BEFORE THE SHOW AND HAVE A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE IMPORTANT ROLE CONFLICT PLAYS IN STORYTELLING, AND THAT IT IS NOT REAL!** Also help them understand prior to the show that what we present on stage is DEFINITELY not an invitation to mimic or re-enact the conflict out in the playground or to glorify violence or conflict. If you watch the whole show, especially the 'closed eye' message portion, you will see how we transform negativity, violence and conflict, through storytelling, into a powerful lesson that can be used in real-life conflicts. You should use these teachings that we present in post-show discussion so they learn positive conflict resolution techniques. Let us know before the show so we specifically address these issues in our Question Time.

If your culture is especially sensitive to conflict (eg. there has been a real-life violent incident in your school/community) or you are concerned that your students will not have the capacity to analyse and evaluate the conflict resolution steps and methods we present on stage and will instead just get carried away and over-excited by what they just see as 'violence' and nothing more, discuss with us before hand and we will look at how we can minimise physical conflict on stage and mitigate this issue for you. As above, we want to make the show JUST RIGHT for your school and group of children!

Thank you for your support of great storytelling and the theatre experience!